

The 2021 Food System Summit

Dialogue with the CFS Bureau and Advisory Group

Rich or poor, young or old: Everyone needs to eat. Food is essential to life on Earth. Nutritious and safe food allows for healthy and productive lives. It's as important as the air we breathe and the water we drink. People produce food. Many farmers create vibrant livelihoods out of food production, while others struggle to get ahead. All become stewards of the natural system on which food production is based. The methods by which food is produced and delivered to our plates – and even where our leftovers go – are an integral part of the global economy and affect every person on earth.

Yet today, the world's current food systems are failing – for people, for the environment, and for our shared future. This is only getting more difficult with continued population growth in parts of the world, changes in diets, and increasing challenges from climate change.

There are only ten years left to achieve the SDGs. The time is now to renew our ambition to move at the scale and speed required to achieve our shared agenda by 2030. The good news is that solutions exist to change our unsustainable food systems in a way that enhances inclusive economic growth and opportunity, while also safeguarding the global ecosystems that sustain life. Scientists have identified food systems and nutrition as one of a few key entry points to accelerate the world-wide transition to a more sustainable trajectory.

As such, and as announced by the Secretary-General on World Food Day last year, the Secretary-General is convening a Food Systems Summit in 2021 aimed at empowering people to leverage food systems as accelerators of progress to realize the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Summit will be convened as part of the Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs. This is a call to the world to significantly and rapidly ramp-up action at the local, national, regional and global levels for people and planet. The Decade of Action belongs to everyone and can help to galvanize, engage and connect people and actors from every walk of life and every corner of the world to take action for an inclusive and sustainable future.

In line with the overall objectives of the Decade of Action, the aim of the Summit is to help Member States and stakeholders maximize the co-benefits of a food systems approach across the entire 2030 Agenda and meet the challenges of food security, malnutrition, climate change, natural resource degradation, and economic well-being. As a key contribution to the Decade of Action, the objectives of the Summit are to generate momentum, expand the knowledge base, and share experiences and approaches to unleash the benefits of food systems for all people. The Summit will also offer a catalytic moment for global public mobilization and actionable commitments to invest in diverse ways to make food systems inclusive, climate adapted and resilient, and support sustainable peace.

The Secretary-General appointed Dr. Agnes Kalibata as his Special Envoy to provide leadership, guidance, and strategic direction for the Food Systems Summit. Dr. Kalibata has begun to form a Secretariat that will coordinate Summit preparations under the leadership of a multi-stakeholder Advisory Committee, Scientific Group, and Champions Group. These groups will work with all parts of the global community through agile and innovative consultations, build on existing evidence, knowledge, and efforts, and draw in as broad a range of constituencies as possible. Dr. Kalibata's team will be further supported by the entire UN system, and in particular by the leaders and assets of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) throughout the process.

Recognizing the essential role of the CFS in global food systems, Dr. Kalibata looks forward to a first opportunity for dialogue with the CFS Bureau and Advisory Group on March 31st, 2020 as an early opportunity for input into the vision and design of the Summit ahead of a first Summit Advisory Committee Meeting. This dialogue is an opportunity for Dr. Kalibata to better understand the role of CFS constituencies, what they each believe should be achieved with the Summit to advance shared goals in the Decade of Action, and how the CFS can make key contributions in the preparations and transformative actions of the Food Systems Summit.