



OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR THE FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT

Information Note October 2020

As a part of the [United Nations Secretary-General's High Level Panel of Experts \(HLPE\) Report](#), the United Nations 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 following quarterly Information Note is intended to provide an update on the status of the Summit process, particularly in light of the outcomes of the second meeting of the Food Systems Summit Advisory Committee.

RECENT UPDATES

Second Meeting of the Summit Advisory Committee: The UN Deputy Secretary-General (DSG) chaired the second meeting of the Advisory Committee on 9 October 2020. In opening the meeting, the DSG congratulated the World Food Programme, and by extension the entire UN System, Member States and partners, on winning the Nobel Peace Prize. The award is recognition of the continuing importance of multilateralism and underscores the essential nature of the work ahead.

The Envoy and Summit Secretariat then presented an overview of progress in rolling out the various work streams:

- ◁ [Independent Scientific Group](#): This Group's work on evidence, knowledge, and policy that will underpin the Summit, is now well underway with the framing and initiation of work. It has held two meetings and is developing a comprehensive work plan focusing on the dynamic interface with the Action Tracks; developing models to explore food systems approaches and plans; cross-cutting issues, such as innovation and indigenous food systems; and engagement in the national Food Systems Summit Dialogues (FSSDs). Draft Scientific Group papers will soon be shared for wider discussion and feedback.
- ◁ [Action Tracks](#): Initial leadership of the Action Tracks was [announced](#) in mid-September, and the Chairs and Vice-Chairs are working together to bring wider technical leadership, capacity, and diversity of perspective to the teams before work gets under way. Special attention was given to the leadership role assigned to youth across all five Action Tracks. Further build-out of leadership teams will be premised on ensuring representation of key levers of change (i.e. gender, finance, innovation and human rights), balanced representation and capacity to engage. The construction of the Action Tracks is based on three levels: (1) A Core Team serving as secretariat to the Action Track; (2) A Leadership Team, linking into important networks and driving the discussions and actions; and (3) Open Platforms for discussion, collective action and innovation that will serve as sources of game changing ideas, testing and socialization of ideas developed. Following confirmation of Member States and other stakeholders in each Action Track, the work will begin in earnest as of early November.
- ◁ [Champions Network](#): Work has been initiated in this work stream with the rollout of the initial [Contact Group](#) and it will soon open up for people everywhere



UNITED NATIONS

to engage. The Contact Group met in early October and is working closely with the Secretariat on how to strengthen the Network and refine its path forward, with ever greater diversity, inclusion, and regional engagement. This Network will serve as an important two-way communication channel and mobilizer for individual and collective action.

- ◁ Digital Platform: The Secretariat is advancing efforts to put in place a digital platform that will strengthen capabilities for the Summit to be inclusive and “A People’s Summit”. The objectives of the digital platform are to (1) provide information, ideas, etc... and effective knowledge management; (2) allow for an online engagement to build communities of action, networking and mobilization; and, (3) allow commitments and actions to be made at any level while tracking against the follow-up framework.
- ◁ Engagement Roadmap: The Summit process will continue to seek to connect with other processes that offer potential to showcase and capitalize on the linkages that underpin food systems, including the G20 and the significant meetings on climate, biodiversity, health, nutrition, and gender equality next year.
- ◁ UN Task Force: The Chair, Inger Andersen, Executive Director, UNEP, complemented the overview of the Special Envoy, and highlighted the potential to build on the strong outcome of the recent Nature Summit. The Task Force has held its first two meetings, engaging 36 UN entities as well as the IMF and World Bank. It is responsible for ensuring a strategic and coordinated engagement throughout the preparatory process to the Food Systems Summit. UNDP and UNICEF are confirmed as Vice-Chairs. The Task Force has begun to explore how to engage entities in the work of the Action Tracks and to support the process at country level.
- ◁ [Food System Summit Dialogues \(FSSDs\)](#): The Envoy was pleased to note that Dr. David Nabarro and his team at 4SD had been engaged to collaborate with the Summit Secretariat on the FSSD engagement programme. Dialogues are planned at three different levels: (1) Member State level led by national governments, (2) global level alongside high-level international events, and (3) independently by any constituency as long as they draw from the vision and principles of the Summit and provide feedback in a standard reporting template for analysis and synthesis. Dr. Nabarro focused in particular on the planned phased progression of Member State-led, multi-stakeholder FSSDs. He highlighted that support would be available from UN Country Teams as well as the potential linkages between Dialogues, Action Tracks and the Scientific Group, including the testing of the ideas and propositions emerging from the latter two groups at country level. The intention of working with Member States to evolve pathways to sustainable national food systems by 2030 and the elaboration of commitments to improve the functioning of food systems in-country was emphasized. The engagement program will formally begin in November. More information



next 3 months in order to move forward on high-priority activities and procurements. Some members noted that they were actively exploring contributions to the Summit. The potential of appropriate contributions from non-State actors was welcomed. Also welcome was the idea from a member that the Trust Fund should be open for review on how resources get invested and used.

- ◁ Timing and Venue: The DSG welcomed the robust feedback and interaction



UNITED NATIONS

2030
Sustainable Development Goals

