



FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION PROGRESS REVIEW

Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting with the Food Systems National Convenors

29 April 2024

Conference Room 4, ESCAP Office, Bangkok, Thailand

Introduction

The UN Food Systems Coordination Hub is organizing a series of Regional Meetings with Food Systems National Convenors as a follow-up to the United Nations Food Systems (UNFSS+2 STM) Stocktaking Moment which took place in Rome in July 2023. These meetings are being conducted in collaboration with the UN Regional Commissions, the Regional Offices of the UN Agencies supporting the Hub, and other relevant UN and regional bodies.

The main objectives of these Regional Meetings are to share the progress made since the UNFSS+2 STM, facilitate regional knowledge sharing, identify emerging patterns and solutions across different regions, familiarize participants to the 6 areas of action in the [UNFSS+2 call to action](#) by the UN Secretary-General, in preparation to the next Stocktaking Moment in 2025.

These meetings are built upon the discussions held during the 2023 Regional Preparatory Meeting and UNFSS+2 STM, where Member States shared their achievements, perspectives, best practices, lessons learned, and challenges related to food systems transformation. The importance of accelerating food systems transformation for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals was emphasized during these dialogues.

The primary participants of these meetings include National Convenors from the respective regions and their teams, UN Resident Coordinators, members of UN Country Teams, and other stakeholders in the Ecosystem of Support.

Background

The first UN Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment (UNFSS+2) took place in Rome, Italy from 24 – 26 July 2023, at the premises of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). It was Convened by the Secretary-General and hosted by Italy, in collaboration with the Rome-based UN Agencies (FAO, IFAD, WFP), the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, and the wider UN system.

The UNFSS+2 Moment built on the momentum of the 2021 Food Systems Summit and created a conducive space for countries to review progress on the commitments to action and identify successes, enduring bottlenecks, and priorities to close the implementation gap by effectively and efficiently utilizing the Means of Implementation for food systems transformation. It was also an opportunity to further socialize the powerful role of sustainable, equitable, healthy, and resilient food systems as critical SDG accelerators and advocate for urgent action at scale, building on the latest evidence that sustainable food systems contribute to better and more sustainable outcomes for people, planet and prosperity leaving no one behind.

The summit saw over 3300 participants, including delegations from 182 countries, 21 world leaders and 126 ministers, 225 Non-state Actor organizations, and close to 900 UN system representatives, gather to share efforts and steer global action towards sustainable food systems.

At the end of the UNFSS+2, the Secretary-General launched a Call to Action for accelerated Food Systems Transformation. The Call focuses on six concrete objectives: embedding food systems strategies in national policies; establishing food systems governance with a whole-of-society approach; investing in research, data, innovation, and technology capacities; promoting business engagement and accountability for sustainability; including full participation of marginalized groups



including women; farmers, youth, and Indigenous Peoples; and ensuring long-term, concessional finance for food systems transformation.

In Asia and the Pacific, progress in achieving food security and nutrition objectives has stalled or regressed compared to the period before the COVID-19 pandemic (SOFI, 2023). Simultaneously, the Asia-Pacific region is encountering significant hurdles in attaining Sustainable Development Goal 13 (SDG 13). Food systems contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emissions. Moreover, this region is particularly vulnerable to climate change, not least because of its extensive coastlines, numerous small island nations, and diverse topography ranging from low-lying coastal areas to high mountainous regions. Demographic change, gender and other forms of inequality, and the increasing vulnerability of smallholders and family farms mean that climate change threatens the health and prosperity of people in the region.

During the Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting with National Convenors held in March 2023, the UNFSS+2 STM side event on Food Systems at Risk in Asia and the Pacific held in July 2023, and the most recent APFSD11 side event on Food Systems Transformations held in March 2024, National Convenors and stakeholders highlighted that the crisis in Ukraine, COVID-19, and the impacts of climate change necessitates an urgent paradigm shift to build back better through the transformation of food systems. They also stressed the importance of adopting a **nexus approach** that combines crisis response, mid-term development needs, and long-term structural changes to transform while building resilience to future shocks and threats. Member States advocated for a **systemic approach that deals with the interlinkages between food systems and climate change**.

This approach is aligned to The Emirates Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems, and Climate Action adopted at COP28, which highlighted the importance of the Integration of Food System Transformation into climate plans. It is imperative to integrate strategies for food system transformation into Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and reciprocally incorporate climate considerations into food system planning, bolstered by clear sectoral targets.

Aligned to the Secretary-General Call to Action at the UNFSS+2, this regional meeting aims to support national convenors in their efforts to transform food systems and converging food and climate commitments to deliver on environment and food security goals, in preparation for upcoming global events in 2024, and towards the next Stocktaking Moment and COP30 planned for 2025.

Structure and Objectives of the Regional Meeting

The Regional Meeting will be a one-day meeting held on 29 April in Bangkok, Thailand.

The meeting will build on the [Regional Preparatory Meeting in Asia and the Pacific](#) that took place in 2023, and respond to the Secretary General Call to Action at the UNFSS+2, which guides the workplan of the Hub.

The event objectives:

- i) **Review progress in food systems transformation** since the UNFSS+2 STM made by participating countries in their food systems transformation efforts. This will provide a systematic approach to evaluating achievements and identifying areas that require further attention and improvement.
- ii) **Capacity Development** on thematic areas to foster regional knowledge sharing with experts and stakeholders to align action in support of national food systems transformation processes.
- iii) **Fostering of regional collaboration and regional communities** by exploring strategies for planning and coordinating future collaborative efforts among participating countries and stakeholders, emphasizing the need for continued cooperation and the setting of shared goals.

- iv) **Increasing knowledge on the complex interplay between food systems and climate action** and explore strategies for aligning food systems transformation processes through the Hub Convergence Initiative;

Expected Outcome

The expected outcome of the meeting is a summary report that will include the shared key messages among participating countries and stakeholders to strengthen their collaborative efforts in the transformation of food systems. By the conclusion of the meeting, it is expected that National Convenors will have a clearer understanding of the way forward on a **systemic approach that deals with the interlinkages between food systems and climate change**. This will serve as the foundation for enhanced cooperation and coordination in the pursuit of sustainable food systems and will be a tangible representation of the collective will to work together towards sustainable and resilient food systems, contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement objectives.

Participants And Registration

Kindly register below for participation:

- Online: <https://zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tJYsf-itri0rH9YIOc2-VdqAodA1WsbyF8Lf>
- In-person: <https://indico.un.org/event/1011254>

Kindly confirm your in-person participation by sending an email to Michelle Seck at Michelle.Seck@fao.org and Nozheen Murad at Nozheen.murad@fao.org.

For further information, kindly contact Khaled Eltaweel, UN Food Systems Hub Senior Program Coordinator at Khaled.Eltaweel@fao.org.

Provisional Agenda

TIME FRAME	SESSION	SPEAKERS
8:00 – 9:00	Registration	
09:00 – 09:20	Opening	<p><u>5 minutes each</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Sethakiat Krajangwongs, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Minister of Agriculture, and Cooperatives Thailand • Mr. Jong-Jin Kim, Assistant Director-General and FAO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific • Ms. Lin Yang, Deputy Executive Secretary, ESCAP • Mr. Stefanos Fotiou, Director, UNFS Coordination Hub <p>Moderator: Sridhar Dharmapuri, Senior Food Safety and Nutrition Officer, FAO-RAP</p>
09:20 – 11:00	Session 1: Review and stocktake on the progress of food systems transformation: Progress, challenges, and best practices	<p><u>Scene setting (8 minutes each)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitomi Rankine, Chief of the Environment and Development Policy Section ESCAP - SDG 2 Goal Profile and insights from the 11th APFSD • Svante Helms, National Pathway Manager, UNFS Coordination Hub

		<p>Roundtable interventions by National Convenors (70 minutes)</p> <p><i>National convenors and representatives are requested to prepare for the discussion based on the guiding questions found in Annex 1, listed below. Each participant will be allocated a 4-minute intervention time. Stakeholders present will also be welcomed to intervene after the national convenors.</i></p> <p>Moderator: Filippo Dibari, Regional Nutrition Senior Advisor, WFP-RBB</p>
11:00 – 11:20	Coffee Break	
11:15 – 12:30	Session 2: Thematic session: Financing for food systems transformation.	<p>Presentations (30 minutes total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christopher Brett, Lead Agribusiness Specialist, World Bank on <i>Priorities, Progress and Plan of Action for the financing agenda</i> (virtual) • Lucas Lindfors, Programme Officer, IFAD (virtual) • Priscilla Muiruri, Chairperson of the National Food Systems Technical Working Group, on behalf of Kenya National Convenor, on <i>Experience in piloting the tool to track financial flows to food systems</i> (virtual - tbc) • Shingo Kimura, Principal Natural Resources and Agriculture Economist, Asian Development Bank on <i>financing food systems transformation in the region</i> (virtual) <p><u>Discussion and QnA: 45 minutes</u></p> <p><i>National convenors and representatives are requested to prepare for the discussion based on the guiding questions found in Annex 2, listed below. Each participant will be allocated a 4-minute intervention time.</i></p> <p>Moderator: Maria Tuazon, Senior Nutrition and Agrifood Systems Specialist, FAO-RAP</p>
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch – Thai Buffet	

13:30 – 15:00	<p>Session 3: Roundtable: convergence of food systems transformation and climate action. Country experiences and breakout groups</p>	<p>Scene-setting/ Capacity building (10 minutes each)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stefanos Fotiou, Director, UNFS Coordination Hub <i>on the convergence initiative, linking the COP28 and UNFSS+2 outcomes.</i> - Sanjay Srivastava, Chief of Disaster Risk Reduction Section, ESCAP <i>on climate change's impacts on agriculture</i> - Salman Hussein, TEEB Coordinator, Head a.i. Economics of Nature Unit Ecosystems Division, UNEP <i>on scaling up investments in sustainable food systems and nature-based solutions (virtual)</i> <p><u>Country experiences:20 minutes</u> <u>4 min intervention time.</u> Country experiences on converging food systems and climate, demonstrating positive impact on food systems transformation.</p> <p><u>3 Breakout Groups discussion time: 40 minutes</u> Divided into subregions: South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands.</p> <p><i>National convenors and participants of the meeting will be organized into smaller groups and will be asked to discuss guiding questions found in Annex 3, listed below. Groups will be asked to report back on the discussion after the coffee break.</i></p> <p>Moderator: Makiko Yashiro, Programme Officer, UNEP-ROAP</p>
15:00 – 15:20	Coffee Break	
15:20 – 15:45	Takeaways from Session 3	<p>Report back from result of breakout group discussions.</p> <p>Discussant: David Nabarro, Strategic Director, 4SD (virtual)</p>
15:45 – 16:45 pm	<p>Session 4: Thematic Session: Ecosystem of Support</p>	<p>Based on the regional priorities identified at the regional meeting in 2023 and the UNFSS STM, UN agencies and stakeholders are invited to present their current initiatives to National Convenors.</p> <p><u>5 minutes each</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shenggan Fan, Member of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), Chair Professor at the College of Economics and Management at China Agricultural University (virtual) - Wannika Wutthi, representative from Youth Leadership Program - Imelda Bacudo (Dada Bacudo), ASEAN Advisor and SEI Researcher – on climate smart agriculture (virtual) - Irish Baguilat, coordinator of the Sustainable Agriculture and Women Farmers Agenda, Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA) (virtual)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lynnda Kiess, Coalition of Action on Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems for Children and All (HDSFS) (virtual) <p>Discussion time: 35 minutes</p> <p>Moderator: Meeta Punjabi Mehta, Senior Food Systems Officer, FAO-RAP</p>
16:45 – 17:00 p.m.	Wrap – up and closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stefanos Fotiou, Director, UNFS Coordination Hub • Sridhar Dharmapuri, Senior Food Safety and Nutrition Officer, FAO RAP

Guiding Questions

To assist in the preparations of interventions, find below the guiding questions for each segment:

Annex 1: Review and stocktake on the progress of food systems transformation: Progress, challenges, and best practices

1. Could you outline, what further steps have been taken to upgrade or implement the national pathways since the UNFSS +2, and to keep them dynamic as a driver for national food system transformation? Please emphasize entry points, specific innovative approaches or institutional changes or interesting examples at local level.
2. Are you holding regularly national dialogues with stakeholders? Could you share your experience regarding the usefulness of the dialogues and what are the results?
3. How can food system governance structures effectively drive the national food system agenda? (e.g. national or also local governance structures, focused or with a wide set of actors, who is chairing?).
4. In what ways can we enhance regional collaboration to transform food systems and bolster resilience? What are the main challenges and lessons learned within the regional approaches to food system transformation?

Annex 2: Roundtable: Financing for food systems transformation

1. How can we effectively integrate and leverage diverse financing sources—including public funds, private investment, and innovative financing mechanisms like green bonds or impact investing—to support a holistic transformation of food systems?
2. What are the key challenges and opportunities in aligning these varied sources of finance with long-term sustainability and resilience goals?
3. How to integrate the hidden costs of food systems? What role do these frameworks play in attracting and retaining investment, and how can they be used to bridge the gap between sustainable development goals and investor risk-return profiles?

Annex 3: Roundtable: convergence of food systems transformation and climate action. Country experiences

1. How is your country working aligning food systems and climate agenda?
 - o Are there food systems transformation strategies?
 - o Is there a strategy for the inclusion of National Pathway to NDCs, NAPs?
 - o What climate risks have you considered?
 - o Is there collaboration between the different Ministries? I.e. Working groups, ministerial desks?
 - o Is there collaboration with other stakeholders? I.e. formal channels, platforms, working groups?
2. How can the Hub Convergence initiative support country level efforts to link food systems and climate action agenda? I.e. Technical support, capacity building, etc.