June 24, 2021

UN Food Systems Summit - Updated status including wave 2 game changers

- After each UN FSS action track released in late March a "synthesis paper" highlighting chosen solutions from Wave 1 submissions, the secretariat further narrowed the game changers it proposes to advance in the FSS process and reorganized the game changers into 15 "action areas." In June, a second wave of synthesis papers was published. While the second wave of synthesis reports appear to more faithfully reflect ideas submitted by all stakeholders (whereas the Wave 1 lists appeared quite limited to certain submissions), there is still little indication of any overarching rationale, evidence base, or Member State input/review utilized to make the selections. For example, solutions continue to include:
    - Proposals targeting specific foods (e.g., meat and dairy, processed foods broadly) with unjustified restrictions, e.g., taxes, warning labels/labels "related to carbon footprint), marketing restrictions, product formulation mandates, measures based on the "true cost of food."
    - Proposals seeking to restrict or denigrate conventional agriculture and modern practices in favor of agroecology/organic production
    - Proposals that could undermine or conflict with existing international standards.

The following comments are not exhaustive but provide highlights of opportunities and challenges. More information is available here.

Action Area 1.1 *Promote food security and reduce hunger*	● Wave 1 solutions 1.2, 1.5, and 1.16 support (to varying degrees) use/expansion of technology (e.g., clean energy, precision ag, digital connectivity, biofortification). ● Wave 2 solution 128[1] at least acknowledges the value of livestock farming in developing economies.	● **Updated action area excludes multiple action track 3 wave 2 proposals on technology, biotechnology, gene editing, nutrient use, and even the US/UAE Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate.** ● Misses opportunities to broadly encourage innovation and to specifically promote the value of biotechnology, ensure evidence-based regulatory frameworks, and promote consumer acceptance. ● Technological innovations have facilitated dramatic improvements in food security while reducing environmental impact, enabling farmers to produce high quality, high-yielding crops that have a direct bearing on improved food security and poverty alleviation, while also, for example, increasing resilience to heat and drought. ● Misses opportunities to focus on nutrient density, e.g., through encouraging production and consumption of nutrient-dense meat, milk, and eggs.
Action Area 1.2 *Improve access to nutritious foods*	● Wave 1 solution 1.6 focuses on cold chain. ● Wave 1 solution 1.15 focuses on ending anemia but fails to explicitly encourage increased production and consumption of high-quality iron from animal-source foods. ● Wave 1 solution 1.13 value of innovation; should be careful not to mischaracterize or denigrate food processing, which allows many such innovations to be brought to	● Wave 2 solution 138 differentiates "helpful processing" from "ultra-processing" which is inconsistent with previous consensus and with evidence ● There is no single, universal healthy diet or definition of individual foods as nutritious without context of an overall balanced diet. Solutions should ensure that consumers are supported in accessing and choosing foods that meet their needs, tastes, budget, cultural context, etc. Innovation in food processing, product formulation, storage, and distribution support these needs. ● Should include greater emphasis on the positive role of rules-based international trade: Rules-based international trade is a major contributor to food security around

[1] Wave 2, AT1, solution 7

	market.	the world, as it increases access, availability, and affordability of food.
Action Area 1.3 *Make food safer*	●Focus on food safety is appropriate, but should increase focus on internationally food safety standards under Codex Alimentarius leadership, as well as evidence-based food safety regulation.	●Misses opportunities to highlight lessons learned such as from the U.S. regulatory framework where science, data and research have led to tremendous innovations, for example USDA has worked to: patent new technology for protecting pasteurized liquid eggs; examine the safety of beef trim imports; and publish genomes of six dangerous strains of E. coli.
Action Track 1: Cross-cutting *Food systems pathways and data*	Wave 2 solution 144[2] proposes national development plans for sustainable livestock, acknowledges the value of livestock for farmers and nutrition. Solution 9.1[3] proposes FAO lead development of holistic solutions to address LCA methodological weaknesses.	●**Updated action area excludes multiple AT3 wave 2 proposals (including some from member states) on sustainable livestock, net zero emissions in dairy, animal feed, and livestock feed additives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.** ●Wave 2 solutions 145 and 146[4] reflect many of the issues raised with the Science Group's paper on the "true cost of food."
Action Area 2.1 *Enabling, inspiring and motivating people to enjoy healthy and sustainable options*	●Solutions focused on education could be beneficial in theory, but not if they fail to promote nutrient-density, diet diversity, and overall balanced diets and also reflect the value of science, technology, innovation in building healthy and sustainable diets. ●Similarly, school feeding, procurement, and market-based solutions should allow adaptation to national and other contexts and should not erect barriers to trade, which is instrumental in increasing access to and availability of diverse foods.	●Multiple proposals are overly narrow, prescriptive, and unjustifiably target specific foods (including nutrient-dense meat/dairy, "processed food" broadly) ○Wave 1: Solution 1.3 - Fiscal Policy, Solution 1.8 - Equitable food marketing, Solution 2.8 - Labeling, Solution 2.10 - Demand package ○Wave 2: 2.1.1 - Demand generation, Solution 2.1.2 Challenging the masculinity of meat, Solution 2.1.3 - Consumer information, Solution 2.1.4 - Public sector marketing, Solution 2.5.2 - Government-led reformulation, Solution 2.5.3 - Emphasis on appropriate food processing ●These approaches and proposed actions (e.g., taxes, warning labels/eco-labels, marketing restrictions, product formulation mandates, "true cost of food") are not based on evidence and contradict previous international consensus, may undermine ongoing work on international standards (e.g., food labeling in Codex). ●Wave 2 solutions 8.1 and 8.2 require careful examination for evidence-based approaches to managing antimicrobial use responsibly and understanding the impact of animal health on human AMR.

[2] Wave 2, AT1, solution 23
[3] Wave 2, AT2, gap 9, solution 1
[4] Wave 2, AT1, solutions 25 and 26

Action Area 2.2 *Slashing food loss and waste*		● **Updated action area excludes proposal (AFIA) to encourage the use of natural positive co-products to reduce waste.**
Action Area 3.1 *Protect natural ecosystems*		Solution 4 proposes to create a "Codex Planetarius" international standard-setting with no detail on creation, governance, mandate, scope, funding, etc.
Action Area 3.2 *Manage sustainably existing food production systems*	● Wave 1 solution 3.7 acknowledges the role of livestock as a sustainability solution. ● Wave 2 solution [AT2] 7.2[5] proposes to develop for meat a "definition of sustainability that is visible and traceable all the way along the value chain to consumers." ● Wave 1 solution 3.8 refers to regenerative practices but lacks specificity	● **Updated action area excludes multiple AT3 wave 2 proposals (including some from member states) on sustainable livestock, net zero emissions in dairy, animal feed, and livestock feed additives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.** ● Wave 1 solution 2.15 mischaracterizes the environmental and nutritional impact of producing nutrient-dense animal source foods from livestock and calls for restrictions that are not consistent with previous international consensus or evidence. ● Wave 1 solution 3.9 focuses narrowly on agroecology and does not acknowledge that all production systems can be made more sustainable and that producing enough food for the world's population is not feasible without technology and innovation.
Action Area 3 *Restore degraded ecosystems and rehabilitate soil function*	Offers potential space (including Wave 1 solutions 3.22 and 3.23) to increase focus on modern agricultural practices, regenerative agriculture, land use, conservation, sustainable livestock production practices, soil health, carbon sequestration, land use.	**Updates to the action area do not include all relevant submissions, for example multiple AT1 wave 2 proposals on sustainable fertilizer use, nutrient principles, and soil health.**

[5] Wave 2, AT2, gap 7, solution 2