



UNITED NATIONS
FOOD SYSTEMS
SUMMIT 2021

Information Update on the Pre-Summit 12 May 2021

About the Pre-Summit

The Pre-Summit of the UN Food Systems Summit will set the stage for the Summit in September by bringing together diverse actors from around the world to leverage the power of food systems to deliver progress on all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Hosted by the Government of Italy, the Pre-Summit will take place in Rome from 26-28 July 2021. These dates are slightly adjusted from the originally announced dates in order to support the broadest participation possible, and these new dates are now finalized between the UN system and Italian Government. The event -- which is open to all who would like to participate -- will take a hybrid format, with an in-person component complemented by a vast virtual program and platform.

Under the leadership of UN Secretary-General António Guterres and Prime Minister of Italy Mario Draghi, the Pre-Summit event will bring together thousands of youth, producers, Indigenous Peoples, civil society, researchers, private sector, policy leaders and ministers of agriculture, environment, health, nutrition, and finance, among other participants. The gathering aims to deliver the latest evidence base and scientific approaches from around the world; launch a set of additional commitments through coalitions of action; and mobilize new financing and partnerships.

The overall goal of the Pre-Summit is to consolidate all of the substantive work of the Summit into a common vision and initiate commitments to action that will set an ambitious tone in the lead-up to the UN Food Systems Summit in September in the context of the UN General Assembly in New York. The Summit will then take this ambition even further with a bold statement by the Secretary-General and many more commitments from Heads of State and Governments and other public and private leaders. The world will come together at that moment to deliver bold action to improve food systems around the world throughout the Decade of Action for the SDGs.

Vision of Success of the Pre-Summit

Within its broader goal of accelerating food systems transformation in support of achieving the SDGs by 2030, the Pre-Summit aims to achieve a number of specific outcomes:



1. **Bring together the best ideas** from all of the Summit's structures while also **identifying priorities** and **distilling a common vision** aligned with the 2030 Agenda. These ideas and priorities will be at the heart of the UN Secretary-General's statement of action at the Summit. The statement by the Secretary-General will be a concise document, reaffirming our commitment to the 2030 Agenda while recognizing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and accompanied by an annex capturing the richness of the Summit process.
2. **Advance multi-stakeholder collaboration** for food systems between governments, businesses, civil society, and other players around game-changing solutions that address the complex issues of our food systems.
3. Provide an opportunity for a select number of Heads of State and Government, including the Italian Prime Minister, and other public and private leaders to feature and advance their commitments to action, **set a tone of leadership and bold ambition**, and inspire the engagement of many others by the time of the Summit.
4. **Promote a global discourse and narrative** on food systems at the center of achieving the SDGs, with vast virtual engagement and a coordinated advocacy and communications campaign reaching into all regions and of the world. This discourse will highlight the importance of food systems for progress on climate, development finance and other global priorities.
5. **Foster a sense of community** by bringing together countries, stakeholders, and constituencies in all parts of food systems from all parts of the world.
6. **Feature and mobilize the types of public and private investments** needed to drive food systems transformation and prioritized game-changing solutions.

Anticipated Deliverables

In line with its intended outcomes, several deliverables are expected to emerge during the Pre-Summit from its year-long, intensive and inclusive processes. The deliverables will lay the foundations for the Summit moment, as well as significantly increase ambition and momentum for even greater deliverables by the time of the Summit in September.

The following chart details early thinking of what this portfolio of deliverables could include based on discussions to date. The Pre-Summit organizers welcome any feedback and ideas in mid-May.



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Table 1 – Early Thinking on Deliverables for the Pre-Summit and Summit Moments

	Pre-Summit	Summit	Total Envisioned
Statement of Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of key insights, lessons, and points from the whole process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SG Statement of Action build on the summary from the Pre-Summit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SG Statement of Action (a concise document accompanied by annex)
Coalitions of Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~5-10 launched (~15 strengthened) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remaining ~15-20 launched (others on table for follow up) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~25 Coalitions of Action
Commitments from Member States and Constituencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~5 HoS ~10 Eminent Persons (linked to the coalitions of action) 1 commitment from each major constituency – producers, IPs, youth, civil society, private sector, finance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~50+ HoS ~20 Eminent Persons and influencers (linked to coalitions of action and themes) 1000+ Commitments from constituency members Finance mechanisms launched and/or scaled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~55+ HoS ~30+ Eminent Persons 1,000+ commitments from constituency members Finance mechanisms and commitments scaled
Follow Up and Review Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment around 90+% of mechanisms to prioritize 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch of the priority follow up and review mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A set of follow up and review mechanisms

Taking A “Hybrid” Approach

The Pre-Summit will take place over the course of three days, **from 26-28 July**. Given the current state of affairs, the moment will inevitably be shaped programmatically and operationally by COVID-19.

The Pre-Summit will take a “hybrid” format, during which a group of in-person delegates will participate in person at the offices of the UN Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Rome on any given day, interacting with thousands of others from around the world who will be engaged through a vast virtual platform. This approach will enable meaningful global engagement and inclusion of thousands or even millions of people in countries, cities, and communities all around the globe.

This approach requires innovative thinking from the Pre-Summit organizers, but it also provides an exciting opportunity to develop a new approach to a Summit of this kind, and an opportunity to establish some new models and a “new normal” for inclusive, exciting, and effective programming. Discussions are already underway about what is technically and logistically ideal and possible.

The nature of the in-person component of the Pre-Summit at FAO will be determined by COVID protocols and what is deemed safe and possible. In this regard, discussions are currently underway between the Secretariat, UN, Italian Government, and FAO to develop scenarios for the Pre-Summit moment to be ready for whatever COVID protocols allow in the coming months. This discussion and the eventual approach and protocols will draw on the latest thinking and scientific information available from the UN and Italy, and the Pre-Summit organizers have



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initiated conversations with WHO in order to benefit from tools and guidance available for event planning, preparations, and risk mitigation.

Participation and Ensuring Inclusivity

The UN Food Systems Summit is a People's Summit, and the Pre-Summit gathering will be no different. All interested parties are invited and encouraged to follow and engage in the gathering's activities virtually, and this will be the primary mode of engagement even as a relatively modest number of delegates will participate in person on any given day in the FAO building. Ensuring inclusivity is essential, and this will influence the technical approach, as well as the nature and design of the program itself in terms of substance, speakers, interactivity, languages, and session timing. Every session that has an in-person component will also have a virtual component to take full advantage of the hybrid approach. So those participating virtually will be just as included in all programmatic sessions and elements of the Pre-Summit as those participating in person.

In terms of expected participants, the Pre-Summit will crowd in global leadership, eminent persons, and leading stakeholders from across the food systems landscape from multiple sectors in order to best ensure the success of this "food systems" event. This will include UN Leadership and a balanced set of Heads of State and Government and Eminent Persons (between 5-10) that are ready to step forward to help set the tone for bold ambition and commitments alongside H.E. Mario Draghi, Prime Minister of Italy.

Nevertheless, the Pre-Summit will be primarily a Ministerial-level event, and will seek to ensure Ministers are engaged from Member States around the world, both in person and virtually, along with leaders from all other constituency groups, including youth, producers, Indigenous Peoples, civil society, researchers, private sector, finance, and cities. Ministers are expected to speak about the progress they are making in shaping a national food systems transformation pathway that will enable them to achieve the 2030 Agenda, as well as what they need to see from others in order to come through on such a pathway. More specific guidance and information will be provided in the coming weeks in order to help delegations with their preparations.

Everyone is requested to Save the Dates on their calendar for 26-28 July. More information on registration and invitations will be available by the end of May.

The UN does not charge a fee for registration and participation.

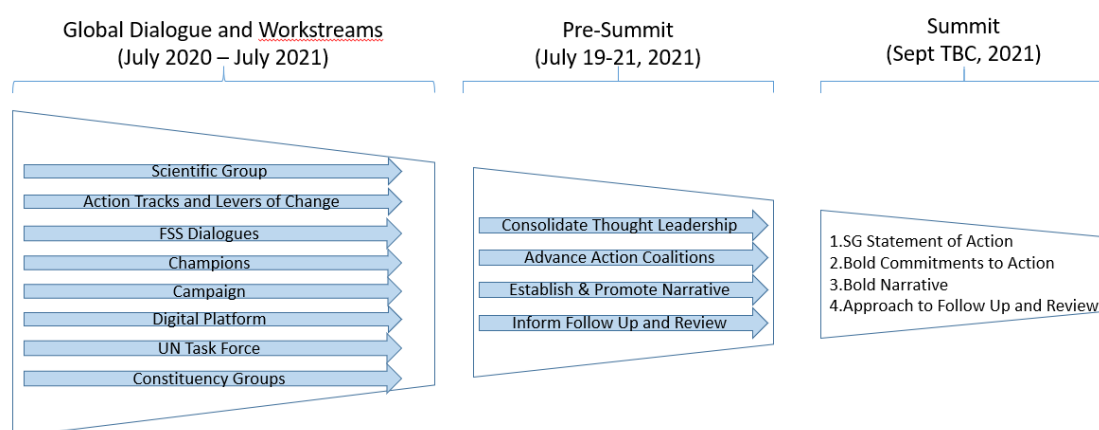


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Program and Events

The Food Systems Summit leadership is now hard at work in producing the draft program that will deliver on this ambitious vision and set of outcomes, in the context of what is technically and logistically feasible.

The overall Pre-Summit program will build on the substance of the Summit preparatory process to date, including inputs from the Scientific Group, Action Tracks, Food Systems Summit Dialogues, work of the Champions Network and UN Task Force, constituency groups (Member States, civil society, Indigenous Peoples, private sector, producers, youth, and cities), and approach to follow up and review. The following graphic depicts consolidation of the Summit processes in the months ahead.



At this stage of the preparatory process, the Summit leadership has worked through many elements of the initial architecture for the Pre-Summit program, particularly based on discussions with technical partners and with FAO as the host venue. As a result, it is known that the Pre-Summit program will enable for a maximum of 5 parallel sessions at any given time if they are to be hosted on the Pre-Summit technical platform. Given the spaces available in the FAO venue for programming, it is also known that only a maximum of 3 of these sessions will be able to take place with a physical component in FAO's Plenary Hall, Green Room, or Red Room, while the other 1-2 parallel sessions would be held in virtual format only. The Summit leadership has also heard several design considerations from the Summit Advisory Committee and various constituencies that it will take onboard. In particular, it will:

1. Promote less talk, more action – focus on operationalization of propositions and solutions to improve food systems and achieve the entire 2030 Agenda rather than discussions on the challenges of food systems.
2. Ensure interaction – focus on inclusion and engagement of all Member States and all constituencies, both in potential speaking roles and in the ability to interact with the main speakers
3. Engage people – ensure this reflects a “People’s Summit”



4. Ensure program diversity and balance – focus on gender balance, representation from all regions, and significant engagement of youth, producers, Indigenous Peoples, and under-represented constituencies
5. Account for time zones – engage all time zones, with Rome as the mainstage
6. Showcase innovation – include great, innovative speakers – virtually and physically in Rome – to bring vibrance, energy, and the latest in novel ideas

The Summit leadership is now working within this emerging architecture to define the proposed content that can be featured in the Pre-Summit program to best deliver on its intended outcomes. A full draft of the program with specific session titles will soon be available. On 1 April, the Secretariat provided an update on emerging propositions and areas of action that have been heard through the preparatory process, and Member States and all constituencies were given until 1 May to provide feedback and additional ideas to help strengthen the substance. The Secretariat will therefore need to maintain some flexibility in the program to ensure a Pre-Summit that features and enables engagement around all of the best emerging ideas and opportunities from this process and broad set of inputs.

Many Member States and stakeholders have asked questions regarding the possibility of convening side events to the Pre-Summit gathering. As the Pre-Summit moment is an opportunity to bring the community together around all of the substance emerging from the Summit process, the program does not intend to have any official “side events” that might pull stakeholders away from the Pre-Summit, but is rather seeking to incorporate ideas and leadership from all constituencies into a set of on-program “parallel sessions” that will complement plenary sessions.

There will be limited slots for parallel sessions, and the Food Systems Summit Secretariat would appreciate hearing from interested stakeholders over the coming weeks to help inform the final program, as well as a set of supportive lead up events that can help build awareness and momentum. Those interested are requested to fill out the session request form [here](#). The deadline for submission for consideration of inclusion in the program or a lead up event is Friday, 28 May 2021. This approach is expected to provide maximum space for all stakeholders and participants to discuss substantive matters on the food systems agenda in greater detail. Stakeholders are encouraged to put forward joint parallel sessions for the Secretariat’s consideration, as this would best enable the presentation of diverse perspectives and support the inclusive approach of the Food Systems Summit process.

A full draft program is expected to be available by early June.

For any questions, please contact the Food Systems Summit Secretariat at foodsystemssummit@un.org.