



**TOWARDS A RESILIENT, SUSTAINABLE, EQUITABLE AND HEALTHY FOOD SYSTEM BY 2030**  
*NATIONAL PATHWAY FOR QATAR FOOD SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION (DRAFT FOR DISCUSSIONS)*

**1. Appreciation of the purpose of the current food system**

In Qatar food security became an issue of national security overnight not so long ago. Today our food system is widely recognized as resilient and a model for others. We effectively coped with significant shocks in our food supply and bounced back stronger than before. The credit for this goes to the concerted effort of many of our trade partners abroad and a wide range of public and private sector stakeholders at home. With the implementation of various initiatives, we have achieved close to a 100% supply guarantees for the most critical and essential food items - on a day to day basis, as well as in times of emergencies and crises. This despite the vulnerabilities of Qatar's harsh climate conditions and scarcity of natural resources.

Our local production tripled in a very short period from less than 10% not so long ago, to an average of 30%. For the most critical food items, fresh dairy products, fresh poultry and some of the most perishable vegetables we have now achieved over 70% and up to a 100% self-sufficiency. For essential storable food items, we built centralized storage reserves and established decentralized commercial buffer stocks across a broad spectrum of products, this in effective and innovative partnerships with public and private sector players.

Furthermore, a farm support program was implemented, now serving hundreds of our local farmers facilitating the marketing of their produce and also giving them a bottom price guarantee for a percentage of their harvest. We are preserving our local aquifers producing animal fodder using recycled water instead of our precious groundwater and have implemented offshore aquaculture projects to relieve the pressure off our local wild fish stocks. Every year we fund Research, Development and Innovation projects in Food Security facilitating innovations in local food production, food storage and supply chains. And we are in the process of implementing a world class single agency food safety authority. All these initiatives are aimed at making sure our food system is resilient, equitable, and safe, whilst protecting and improving Qatar's natural resources, freshwater aquifers, fish stocks, and arable lands for future generations.

How our pathway for food system transformation relates to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals is discussed under section 5 of this document.

**2. Clarify and agree on the expectations of the national food system in the coming decade**

We have achieved our food security initiatives in close collaboration with all food sector stakeholders: retailers, traders, producers, manufacturers, logistic companies, scientists, regulators and policy makers. Inspired and facilitated by this UN initiative we organized Qatar's first Food System National Dialogue bringing these same stakeholders, public and private sector parties, together in one theater style event – for the first time – to discuss how we can and should further improve our national food system beyond its current achievements. And indeed, the invited public did raise a few important items pressing our food sector players to go few steps further than they have done so far.



We obtained a strong mandate from our national dialogue to tackle the issue of food waste and food loss with some of our retailers already voluntarily committed to the 2030 SDG goal of a 50% reduction. Various actors stressed the need to consider further incentives to improve the economic feasibility and attractiveness of local food production and food manufacturing in Qatar, such as export allowances, improved quality standards and cost sharing programs for infrastructure upgrades and improvements. But also, to improve the market incentives for local producers to adopt year-round and environmentally friendly production methods. Furthermore, we found it important to know more about the extent of environmental issues in Qatar, particularly those that influence our food production capacity: land degradation, aquifer depletion, and water quality.

Both the public and some of the speakers addressed the need to educate consumers about the environmental impacts of their day-to-day food choices, for instance by adopting food labelling schemes that are already used in other countries showing the true cost of a food item (including the environmental costs) versus the actual cost (the current consumer price). This with the following motivation: every dollar you don't pay of the true cost today is a dollar that needs to be paid by the generations that come after us.

In light of the topic of climate change it was strongly felt that although Qatar already faces extremely harsh climate conditions one was not sure if Qatar was ready for what climate change impacts might bring to Qatar. The public raised the need for a significant assessment of climate change impacts on food production in Qatar.

In summary the national dialogue clearly gave us a mandate to improve on our current policies, but also to go beyond our current policy and strategy scope. Food system resilience and sustainability have been in focus for the last five years with great achievements. But there is ample room and urgency for improvements to effectively and comprehensively tackle the issues of environmental degradation, food waste, climate change and improve and sustain the economic feasibility and sustainability of food production and food manufacturing in Qatar.

### **3. Identify the changes to be made and decisions to be worked through in the coming three years**

Our national dialogue discussed and debated issues along the lines of four action tracks: food system resilience, nature positive production, equitable trade and food safety. Healthy and sustainable food consumption has yet to be discussed. Each action track led to separate initiatives and issues that need further action, study or exploration.

The most relevant discussion topics that would require further action, study or exploration, in progressing action track food systems resilience:

- The need to find more effective ways to protect our local industries and their investments post the economic blockade.
- The need to consider allowances for regional exports to improve the economic feasibility and attractiveness of food production and food manufacturing in Qatar.
- The education and training of home-grown agronomists
- The urgent need to take action in establishing reserves for agriculture inputs



- A strong mandate from the public to tackle the issue of food waste.
- Monitoring global, regional and localised food system risks on a continuous basis to anticipate crises events before they occur
- Hold regular “fire drills” to test and further develop our emergency preparedness
- Test using renewable energy in food production
- Assess climate change readiness of Qatar’s food system, as well as the impact of our food system on climate change.

The most relevant discussion topics that would require further action, study or exploration, in progressing action nature positive production:

- To get to know the extent of environmental issues in Qatar that influence our food production capacity: land degradation, aquifer depletion, and water quality.
- The use the Global GAP (Good Agriculture Practice) certification as minimal standard for local food production and food imports to ensure our food is safe: for consumers, farm workers and as well as for the environment.
- The need to educate consumers about the environmental impacts of their day-to-day food choices by adopting food labelling schemes that are already used in other countries showing the true cost of a food item (including environmental costs) versus the actual cost (the current consumer price).

The most relevant discussion topics that would require further action, study or exploration, in progressing action track equitable trade:

- Local producers are not rewarded for their efforts to produce in summer, using more capital-intensive growing systems and adopt environmentally friendly production methods. Further discussions are needed to identify effective producer incentives to achieve this next level up in local production or find alternatives for year-round product availability and eco-friendly production practices.

The most relevant discussion topics that would require further action, study or exploration, in progressing action track healthy and sustainable food consumption:

- Not yet discussed (tba)

#### **4. Define how stakeholders can work well together for collective action**

It is the ambition to organize sub dialogues for each action track addressed above and work out the ambitions, goals and action plans for each. In this case we will seek collaboration and coordination with representatives with the existing Qatar National Food Security Committee<sup>1</sup> consisting of high level and senior representatives of the Ministry of Municipality and Environment, including the undersecretary for Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, the Ministry of Economy and Commerce, including the undersecretary for Consumer Affairs and head of the Strategic Storage working group ,

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<sup>1</sup> Committee to follow up on the implementation of food security policies in the public and private sectors.

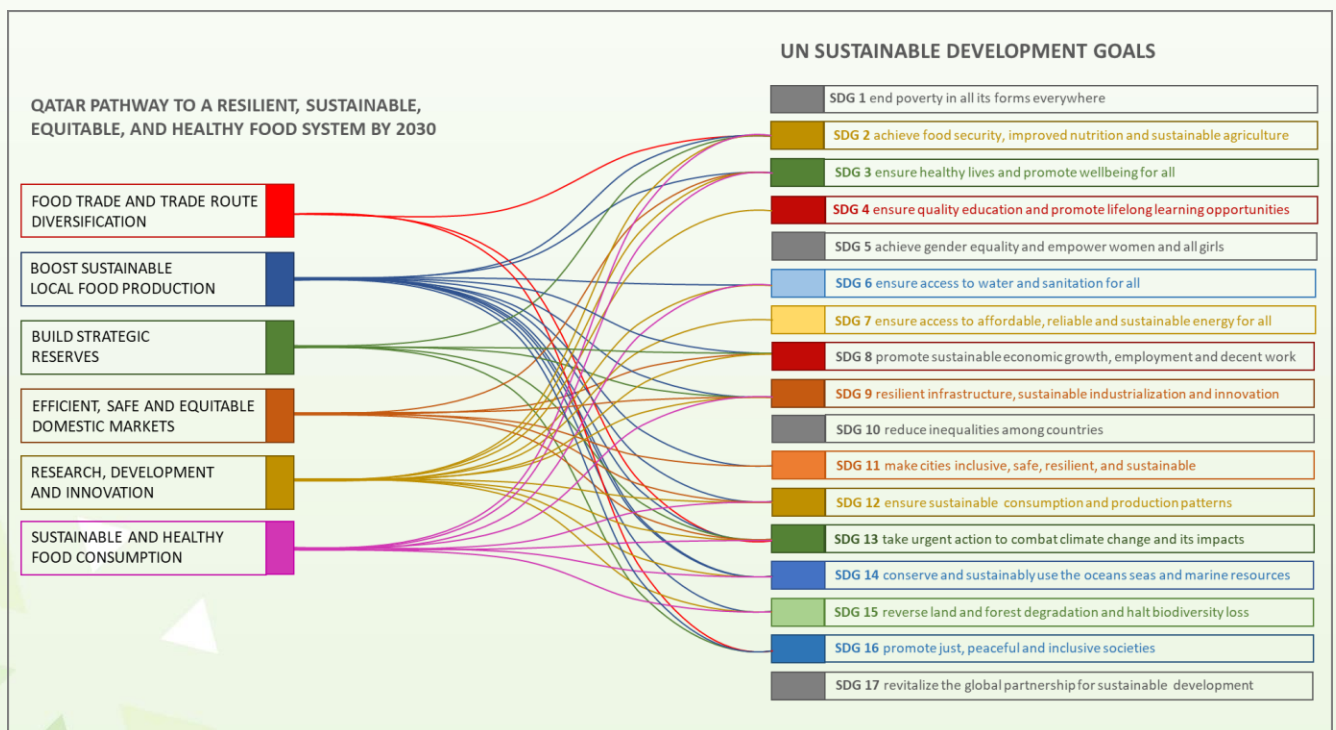


Ministry of Finance, Hassad Food Company, Qatar Development Bank, Qatar Chamber of Commerce, soon to be complemented with the director of Food Safety and Environmental Health from the Ministry of Public Health and Qatar's National Council for Research, Development and Innovation.

## 5. Highlight and reinforce connections between the pathway and other planning documents

In line with the ambitions of this Global Food Summit it was already in Qatar's Vision for 2030 to build a high performing food system that supports our diversified and competitive economy and improves our standards of living, whilst also achieving perpetual harmony between economic, social and environmental development. In short, prosperity for our people, our planet and our economy.

The Qatar pathway will assist in achieving the SDG's in multiple mutually enforcing ways. Trade diversification will prevent stockouts in supermarkets, mitigate the impacts of climate change, and will secure peace in our society. The same accounts for boosting sustainable local food production, which in addition help regenerate water and land resources, promote good health through high quality and food safety standards, waste water recycling into feed production ensures access to water resources as well as the sustainability of Doha as a city. Just to name a few examples of interactions between our national pathway and the SDGs (see graph below).





## 6. Indicate key milestones along the timeline of the pathway

Once ambitions, target KPI's, strategic priorities and initiatives are verified with key stakeholders (see graph example below), the implementation strategy, required resources and budgets can be defined and activities scheduled in a program with milestones.

### National Pathway for Qatar Food System Transformation

**FIRST DRAFT**  
FOR DISCUSSIONS

Ambition	QATAR'S FOOD SYSTEM IS RESILIENT, SUSTAINABLE, EQUITABLE, AND HEALTHY BY 2030		
Targets (examples)	<b>RESILIENCE (AND EQUITY)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>35 % market share for traders and exporting countries (max.)</li> <li>70% production target for most perishable commodities</li> <li>Price setting protocol that promotes year-round local production</li> <li>6 month reserves for critical storable commodities (incl. inputs)</li> </ul>	<b>SUSTAINABILITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50% reduction in food waste and losses along the supply chain</li> <li>50% reduction in groundwater use</li> <li>50% increase in groundwater and soil quality</li> <li>50% decrease in food system related carbon emissions</li> </ul>	<b>HEALTH</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50% reduction in childhood obesity</li> <li>50% reduction in adult obesity and type-2 diabetes</li> <li>80% of residents are metabolically healthy</li> <li>50% reduction in consumption of ultra processed food items</li> </ul>
Strategic priorities	<b>1 STRENGTHEN</b> the capacity of Qatar to anticipate, cope with, and recover from food supply shocks and price hikes, including the impacts of climate change.	<b>2 ENSURE</b> Qatar's food system is designed to provide food for all, indefinitely, restoring and regenerating natural resources, biodiversity, land, water and air quality	<b>3 AIM</b> to eliminate poor nutrition and diet-related health conditions by finding effective ways to shift dietary preferences to healthier, nutritious options.
Initiatives (examples)	<b>A MONITOR</b> and assess local, regional and global food supply risks on a regular basis  <b>B DEVELOP</b> trigger and release protocols, with "fire drills" for strategic reserves for times of crises and emergency  <b>C IMPLEMENT</b> 6-month strategic reserves for essential agriculture inputs  <b>D CREATE</b> the regulatory and market environment for year-round production of the most perishable vegetables.  <b>E ESTABLISH</b> a transparent price setting mechanism that enables local producers to become price setters.	<b>A IMPLEMENT</b> food quality and environmental standards both for imports as well as local produce (a level playing field).  <b>B PROMOTE</b> consumer preference for products produced with minimal environmental footprints.  <b>C PROVIDE</b> support and regulation for producers to implement nature positive production methods.  <b>D MONITOR</b> impacts of food production practices on land, water and air quality, at home, but also abroad.  <b>E CERTIFY</b> produce, imports and local produce that are grown using ecologically sensitive production methods.	<b>A IMPLEMENT</b> food quality standards that go beyond food safety but include nutritional and environmental benefits  <b>B PROMOTE</b> the health benefits and consumption of non-processed foods  <b>C MONITOR</b> retail sales of ultra processed foods with high salt, fat and sugar content and sanction those that don't reduce these sales.  <b>D CONSIDER</b> the introduction of sugar, salt and fat taxes on products that are way beyond healthy levels of these ingredients.  <b>E ADVERTISE</b> the dangers of consuming ultra processed foods in the same way tobacco advertises warn for the adversarial effects of smoking