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## National Pathway

### Transformation of food systems: Ukrainian context

**Introduction.** Ukraine is committed to the values and goals indicated in the Agenda for Sustainable Development-2030. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are integrated into public policy on a "leaving nobody behind" basis. According to the results of 2019 (Sustainable Development Goals. Ukraine. Voluntary National Review. 2020), Ukraine achieved progress in 15 of the 17 goals: with a high probability of achieving the targets in Goals 1, 3, 4, 5; key Goal 2 for the transformation of food systems has an average probability of achievement. The agricultural sector is extremely important for Ukraine's economy, which generates more than 15% of GDP, provides up to 17% of employment (including self-employed) and almost 40% of the country's exports. At the same time, Goals 13, 14 and 15 require close attention, especially considering high involvement of natural resources in the production process, which is manifested in the directions of transformation of food systems identified in the results of the National Dialogue.

In addition to worldwide common global challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the climate change effects, the temporary occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Sevastopol and parts of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts remains an obstacle to the implementation of plans to achieve SDGs.

Food systems play an important role in shaping the agenda for Ukraine, and the potential for ensuring their sustainable development is great.

The national dialogue on the food systems transformation based on the seven principles of involvement lasted from June to September 2021 and involved a significant number of stakeholders: public authorities, more than 120 NGOs, educational and research institutions, local communities, consumers. As a result of the discussion, the three national priorities identified below were chosen.

**National priorities in the transformation of food systems by 2030 in the context of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 and national ways to achieve:**

**HEALTHY NUTRITION (Balanced Nutrition) (Tracks 1, 2)** Despite Ukraine is a global exporter of food products, holding leading positions in trade in a number of commodities, processed and food products, our country's position is ranked 54 among 113 countries in the Global Food Security Index. This highlights the problem of availability of healthy and balanced food for all segments of the population (nutrition). Nevertheless, the pandemic had a significant impact not on agricultural production but rather on distribution network, changing it significantly, which draws attention to the development of new opportunities for food producers on the principle of inclusiveness with an emphasis on ensuring participation of small producers in food chains.

**The key result of “Healthy and varied food in sufficient quantities for everyone in Ukraine” is by:**

- Development of a national system of responsible consumption, reduction of food losses and reduction of waste;
- Introducing a culture of adherence to standards and best practices at all levels of the "from farm to fork" chain;
- Ensuring the availability and accessibility of special food products for people with partial food intolerance;
- Increasing the share of fortified foods in accordance with the "WHO Recommendations for increasing the content of vitamins and trace elements in food";
- Improving the national nutrition system in schools;
- Introduction of a traceability system at all levels of activity of food market operators "from farm to fork";
- Creating programs to support and encourage processing of agricultural and fishery products.

**The key result of “Changing the culture of food consumption and recovery after a pandemic” is by:**

- Increasing market share of semi-finished and ready-to-eat products;
- Ensuring post-pandemic recovery of the HoReCa segment;
- Supporting initiatives aimed at improving the well-being of workers in various food-related sectors, including HoReCa;
- Development of gastrotourism and support production of craft and local products;
- Promoting development of a national culture of wine consumption, increasing the consumption of Ukrainian wines.

**ECO FRIENDLY PRODUCTION (Track 3)** Issues related to the impact of production processes on the environment and vice versa have become one of the key ones in preparing the agenda of each country. Extensive involvement of natural resources in agricultural production and suffering of some parts of Ukraine from climate change require changes in public policy approaches and unification of all stakeholders in expanding the use of environmentally friendly technologies.

**The key result of "Adaptation of agriculture to climate change" is by:**

- Development and presentation of the national structure and platform of carbon agriculture;
- Development and implementation of system of voluntary measurement, reporting and verification of greenhouse gas emissions in agriculture;
- Preparation, approval and submission to the Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change of Ukraine's Second Nationally Determined Contribution to the Implementation of the Paris Agreement in accordance with the principles of the Coronavian Program;

Development of the information platform focused on the adaptation of Ukrainian food systems to climate change.

**The key result of the “System of state policy, state support and financial and credit system takes into account the requirements of environmental and social management in enterprises” is by:**

- Incorporate a system of standards needed to receive assistance from the European Union and national GAEC indicators (appropriate agricultural and environmental conditions) into state support policy;
- Introduction (or stimulation) of the use of environmental criteria in public procurement of food products;
- Development of the national system of green financing and insurance;
- Harmonization of legislation with the approaches of the EU Strategy "From farm to fork";
- Capacity building in the field of chemical pesticides circulation with an emphasis on post-registration compliance;
- Improving the fertilizer management system;
- Reducing the use of non-biodegradable plastic in food chains, establishing an effective system for recycling plastic waste.

**The key result of “Sustainable Natural Resources Management” is by:**

- Improving the national soil management system and soil quality monitoring system;
- Strengthening the monitoring of bio-resources and natural resources (except soil and land);
- Self-seeded forest management;
- Wood line management;
- Strengthening control over value chains, which include goods produced in deforested areas, supporting the development of such value chains at the state level is prohibited;
- Introduction of innovative irrigation technologies, machinery and pipelines;
- Ensuring the availability of water of proper quality for irrigation;
- Ensuring dual use of reclamation systems in the north and central part of Ukraine;
- Ensuring the closed cycle of water resources use (including reuse of prepared water from domestic treatment plants for irrigation) in all food production chains;
- Increasing the share of environmentally friendly modes of transport, such as rail transport and inland waterways;
- Development and implementation of a system for monitoring compliance with environmental standards in the production of agricultural products.

**The key result of “Improving the energy efficiency of food systems” is by:**

- Increasing the share of bioenergy in the national energy balance;
- Promoting the use of technologies aimed at reducing the use of fossil fuels within food systems;
- Stimulating the use of bioenergy of local production in agricultural production;
- Introduction of "best available technologies" and "best available practices" in the field of energy efficiency in agricultural enterprises.

**RESISTANCE TO MARKET INSTABILITY AND FOOD AVAILABILITY FOR ALL (Tracks 5, 4)** Global challenges and instability in food markets increase Ukraine's responsibility as a global food supplier while increasing social responsibility to consumers of Ukrainian products. As our country did not introduce any restrictions on food exports during periods of pandemic market fluctuations, Ukraine's predictability as a reliable partner in trade relations needs further consolidation in action. At the same time, an important role in the development of the agricultural sector of Ukraine is played by small producers (about half in gross production),

who need support in the introduction of new technologies adapted to climate change, inclusion in food chains, and support for exploiting the opportunities offered by the opening of the agricultural land market. Thus, there is a need of balancing and developing of the domestic market and ensuring external demand, which is reflected in the following directions:

**The key result of "Ukraine – is one of the key guarantors of global food security" by:**

Implementation of export food policy in accordance with the Strategy for the development of exports of agricultural products, food and processing industries of Ukraine for the period up to 2026;

Creating a network of hubs for food distribution;

Signing memoranda with humanitarian organizations to provide emergency food aid;

Promotion of Ukrainian agricultural products and food products in foreign markets;

Adherence to the principles of transparency and predictability of behaviour as a supplier in the foreign market.

**The key result of "Increasing the share of small and micro agricultural producers in food systems" is by:**

Creation of a nationwide system of support for small food producers;

Establishment of a national system of advisory services;

Extensive training of small agricultural producers in the latest technologies, especially climate-neutral;

Development of a network of pilot smart-farms (for demonstration);

Encouraging participation of small farmers and self-employed producers of agricultural products in organized product promotion chains.

**Key result "Introduction of innovations in the agricultural sector. The increasing role of science and education" is by:**

Development of national reporting standards for compliance with the principles of sustainable development and their inclusion in the corporate reporting system on a voluntary basis;

Putting amendments to national legislation and by-laws aimed at harmonizing approaches with the EU animal health and welfare standards;

Application of animal husbandry practices in compliance with the principles of sustainable development, including the introduction of new innovative feeds;

Strengthening the role of agricultural science and education in the transformation of food systems;

Improving vocational agricultural education and developing lifelong learning;

Development of agrometeorological systems;

Digital transformation of food production chains;

Improving systems for forecasting the development of the agricultural sector of the economy;

The growth of organic production is ensured and supported;

Accelerate the process of harmonization of legislation with the provisions of the EU Directives and Regulations.

**Cooperation and partnership.** Food systems, as a combination of all activities related to the production, processing, transportation, and consumption of food, concern every aspect of human existence and therefore cannot be in the field of the agricultural sector alone. They affect human health, the environment, the economy, and culture. National dialogues have shown high interest and involvement of stakeholders in the process of transformation of food systems in Ukraine. Accordingly, the processes of transformation, identification of topical issues and decision-making will be carried out through multilateral cooperation of

governmental authorities with public and business associations, local communities, scientific and educational community in the model of interaction and development of joint decisions.

**Link to other documents.** The draft Roadmap for the transformation of food systems prepared as a result of the National Dialogues and coordination of stakeholder positions is based on the Decree of the President of Ukraine "On Sustainable Development Goals in Ukraine until 2030" (2019) and is related to strategic documents of various sectors due to the cross-sectoral nature of the issue. In particular, it is the National Economic Strategy for the period up to 2030 (2021), the Strategy for the development of exports of agricultural products, food and processing industry of Ukraine for the period up to 2026 (2019), the Strategy to promote private investment in agriculture until 2023, (2019), Strategy of irrigation and drainage in Ukraine for the period up to 2030 (2019), Conception of implementation of state policy in the field of climate change for the period up to 2030 (2016), Strategy of state environmental policy of Ukraine for the period up to 2030 (2019), National Transport Strategy of Ukraine for the period up to 2030 (2018), National Youth Strategy until 2030 (2021), National Strategy for Building a Safe and Healthy Educational Environment in the New Ukrainian School (2020), State Strategy for Regional Development for 2021-2027 ( 2020), Energetic Strategy of Ukraine for the period up to 2035 (2017).

**Conclusion.** Transformation of food systems towards the Sustainable Development Goals, climate neutrality of economic processes with high social efficiency, economic development and environmental friendliness on the basis of inclusiveness and involvement of all stakeholders, is the only possible way to develop national communities and the global world to implement the Agenda on sustainable development until 2030.