

Food Systems Stocktaking Moment 2023

Regional Preparatory Meeting in Europe and Central Asia

Tuesday, 28 March 2023, Geneva

Executive Summary of Key Messages¹

Key takeaways

- The European and Central Asia (ECA) region is showing strong leadership in food systems transformation both at the national, regional and global levels.
- The Stocktaking Moment (STM) should be action-oriented and help to maintain the momentum of food systems transformation, express of sense of urgency and a need for acceleration and provide valuable opportunities for peer learning and inspiration.
- The differences in food systems between the sub-regions mean that finding context-specific culture-sensitive solutions and actions is essential.
- The war in Ukraine, COVID-19, and the impacts of climate change necessitate a paradigm shift to build back better through the transformation of food systems.
- Adopt a nexus approach that combines crisis response, mid-term development needs and long-terms structural changes to transform while building resilience to future shocks and threats.
- Member States advocate for a systemic approach that deals with the interlinkages between food systems, climate change including in COP28, food security, water scarcity, and other areas.
- Coalitions are key to the process and they should be connected to the country needs and national priorities.
- Build on the existing knowledge and tools of the UN system, regional bodies and other institutions such as CFS, to accelerate the transformation of food systems.
- Access to adequate and sustainable financing is a primary challenge for many countries to advance their national food systems pathways. ODA assistance can be used to strategically leverage support.
- The budgeting tool currently being developed by IFAD and the WB will help countries better understand their needs and areas with the highest return on investment.
- Repurposing agriculture support and incentives to be more conducive to the transformation.
- The SDG fund food systems window is an essential instrument to support countries delivering on their food systems.

Progress in the region

- Countries have taken steps to implement, upgrade and integrate their national pathways into national strategies using a systemic, whole of government and whole of society approach. Monitoring frameworks should constitute important component of the implementation efforts.
- Several countries are organizing national dialogues and creating institutional platforms and inter-ministerial bodies to oversee the follow-up to the 2021 Food Systems Summit. These

¹ This is an executive summary of the deliberations in the meeting. A detailed report will be released in due time.

which offer important opportunities to better address trade-offs and leverage synergies, should be inclusive and multi-stakeholders, including the civil society and the private sector.

- Several countries are adopting a sub-national level approach to involve cities and municipalities in the process.
- The EU Farm to Fork Strategy aims to accelerate the transition to sustainable food systems with a neutral or positive environmental impact and can help mitigate climate change and reverse the loss of biodiversity.
- Countries of the region advocate for food systems transformation as a priority in international fora, including the G7 and G20.
- Governments are engaging parliamentarians and ensuring that legislation, regulations and coherent policies are supportive of the transformation process.
- Youth and women are actively engaging in food systems dialogues and actions and should be given the space to influence, support and benefit from transformation.

Priorities to transform the region's food systems

- **Agroecology** is an important framework for sustainable food production, protecting biodiversity, as well as improving access to food and social equity.
- Supporting **smallholders** is key for creating a better livelihood.
- **Food Loss and Waste** is a priority in the region to enhance food security and mitigate climate change.
- **Healthy diets** and access to affordable, available, accessible and appealing food especially for socially and economically vulnerable people in the region
- Estimating the **true cost of food** with a focus on environmental footprint.
- Need to better leverage **trade** to support food systems transformation.
- **Consumer education and nutrition literacy** are key for better choices.
- Fostering **public-private partnerships** to foster the transition to more sustainable production.
- **Research, Innovation and technology coupled with capacity-building** to support countries and advocate for science-based solutions.
- A **One Health Approach (OHA)** approach can play an important role in the transformation and sustainability of food systems
- A **Human-rights based approach** including the right to food but also the right to natural resources such as seeds, land and water.

¹ This is an executive summary of the deliberations in the meeting. A detailed report will be released in due time.