

**Plenary Session 1: Food Systems Transformation in Practice-  
Successes, Challenges and the Way Forward**

**United Nations Food Systems Stock Taking Moment 24-26 July  
2023**

*Q1. What are some food systems transformation successes that have occurred in your country since the Food Systems Summit 2021 and how can these be scaled up and shared?*

*Q2. What are some food systems transformation challenges and bottlenecks that are disrupting progress and how these can be overcome to accelerate the transformation to sustainable food systems.*

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to discuss the progress we have achieved since the Food Systems Summit and to assess the challenges faced in transforming food systems.

Our reality as a small island state with an extremely high population density and intrinsic vulnerabilities, dictates that we strike the right balance between supporting local production – by guaranteeing producers fair access to land, finance, and markets – and safeguarding the trade of food.

Our vision for food systems transformation focuses on reforming the food and agricultural sector to put in place permanent structures and mechanisms that can increase resilience and maximise food security.

We have worked to reform our legal framework for agriculture and made improvements in relation to the access to agricultural land.

In 2021 we have established the Malta Food Agency which is responsible for the sales and marketing of food from farming and fishing.

We have also focused heavily on education by creating the *Let's Talk Farming Programme* which promotes farming and food production in primary schools by increasing awareness of where our food comes from as well as the importance of fresh primary produce in a healthy balanced diet.

We are developing Malta's first ever national policy for food security and sustainability, and we are committed in establishing a single authority for food systems that shall be responsible for security of supply and official controls for food, feed, animal and plant health.

In seeking solutions for challenges and bottlenecks, firstly, I think that we must minimise ecological disruption on one hand, and intensifying investment in biological solutions on the other.

Secondly, I believe that the future of the agricultural sector and security of food supply rely on farmers improved financial return. For this reason, we need to balance our ambition in creating more sustainable food systems addressing food producers' decrease in yields, increase in costs of production, and making technological solutions more accessible and affordable.

To address these challenges, we need to guarantee access to land; a healthy start-up business ecosystem for farmers; insurance and risk mitigation tools.

In the end, this can help us address the sustainability of the agricultural sector together with the social dimension of sustainability in ensuring that affordable food supply is more available for consumers, directly contributing to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal No. 2.