



GOVERNMENT OF TUVALU

Statement by

His Excellency Dr. Tapugao Falefou

Permanent Representative of Tuvalu to the United Nations

United Nations Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment

Rome, Italy 24 – 26 July 2023

Prime Minister of Italy

Distinguished Presidents and Prime Ministers

Excellencies

Esteemed Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour and privilege for me to address this august assembly as the representative of Tuvalu. I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to the people and Government of Italy for their gracious hospitality extended to me and my delegation. I wish to also commend the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) for their exceptional organization of this Food System Summit.

Excellencies,

Tuvalu had the privilege of participating in the 2021 Food Systems Summit, a global gathering aimed at developing transformative solutions for sustainable food systems. Our nation greatly benefited from this Summit and the subsequent national food system dialogues, which laid the groundwork for the development of our National Pathway. This Pathway outlines the necessary steps for Tuvalu to achieve tangible transformative results.

Over the past two years, Tuvalu has prioritized establishing food security and enhancing nutrition amidst the challenges of rising living costs and the impact of climate change on our national food system. To address these issues, we have amalgamated our Food Systems Pathway, the Tuvalu Sustainable Healthy Food Security Strategy (TSHFSS), and the Government Half Acre Initiative into a comprehensive planning document. This document encompasses key components for the implementation and achievement of our National Pathway, aligning with the 2030 Agenda.

As a result, we have developed a project concept to reduce food imports, develop food value chains, promote climate-smart food production technologies, and strengthen intra-island trade and market linkages. Tuvalu recognizes the pivotal roles of agriculture and fisheries in ensuring food security and diversifying income sources. The Government of Tuvalu has provided full support by leasing additional land on all islands for agricultural sites and nurseries, aimed at increasing local food production and promoting food security at the community level. Development partners have also supported the establishment of community gardens, meeting the demand for local produce.

We are actively promoting inter-island trade through local initiatives that facilitate access to agricultural produce. Currently, local produce is mainly traded to the capital, where more than half of our population resides. However, our planning document envisions expanding trading between all islands. Increasing local food production to supplement or replace imported food is crucial for ensuring access to balanced and nutritious diets.

Despite our national efforts, Tuvalu faces several constraints in food production, including limited arable land due to being a small low-lying atoll developing nation. Additionally, the poor fertility of atoll soil hampers crop production, necessitating the importation of improved organic fertilizers. The presence of exotic pests and diseases has also significantly impacted inter-island trading of certain local produce. Furthermore, the impact of climate change on farming remains a pressing concern, as evidenced by last year's drought in the northern islands of Tuvalu. We are collaborating with development partners and UN agencies to enhance community resilience to such shocks.

Excellencies,

These endeavors are not only crucial for enhancing our food security but also for fulfilling our National Vision. Through the successful implementation of Tuvalu's Food System initiatives, we will fortify our food security and improve the quality of life in our small and vulnerable islands. Moving forward, Tuvalu remains committed to collaborating with stakeholders at local and international levels to advance our National Pathway. As we engage in this Stocktaking Moment, we eagerly seek to glean valuable insights from the commendable practices of other nations, accelerating our collective efforts towards the transformative overhaul of food systems in alignment with the effective realization of the 2030 Agenda. Together, let us forge a sustainable and resilient future for all.

Thank you!

Tuvalu mo te Atua.