

UN Food Systems Summit +4 Stocktake

SESSION REPORT

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Navigating transitions to inclusive, resilient, healthy and sustainable food systems

28 July 2025 | 15.00 – 16.20

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List of speakers, in all segments, and key messages

NAME AND TITLE OF SPEAKER	SEGMENT (opening, panel, closing, etc.)	KEY MESSAGES OR/AND RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS
1. Ms Lynnette Neufeld, Director, Food and Nutrition Division, FAO, Session Moderator	Opening	<p>Welcome Remarks from the Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcomed the audience and introduced the speakers. Set the stage with a few introductory remarks emphasizing that food systems vital contributors to national economic

		<p>well-being and growth and are major source of income for many people in both rural and urban areas in most countries globally but must also enable access to and consumption of healthy diets for everyone, all year round. She noted the important link to environmental goals, and resilience to the climate and other threats that we are now experiencing across most regions of the world and emphasized the importance of policy coherence across sectors and forward planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She highlighted this as the rationale of the event, and outlined the overall objectives. • Explained the flow of the event and provided a brief overview of the session structure.
2. Dominican Republic: H.E. Limber Cruz López, Minister for Agriculture	Panel	<p><i>Moderator's focus question to the panellist:</i> Agriculture in many Small Island Developing States (SIDS) – including the Dominican Republic - are highly susceptible to major climatic events often increasing dependence on trade for food. Please tell us about the policy approaches your country is undertaking to address these threats considering the relationship between the various economic, environmental, social and health aspects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Limber Cruz López began his response by noting that the Dominican Republic ranked among the ten countries worldwide most susceptible to significant adverse events. He highlighted that, particularly during the pandemic, this vulnerability prompted the implementation of more efficient production methods, and the adoption of swift, pragmatic policies aimed at enhancing resilience. • Examples of these policies included nationwide infrastructure renewal,

		<p>improved irrigation technology, and accessible solar panel installation for farmers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted that the deployment of drones across the country had enabled smallholder farmers to fumigate and apply fertilizer according to the specific requirements of each area. • Highlighted how the Dominican Republic had changed its extension approach: technicians now visited producers to advise them on improving efficiency and reducing costs to better adapt to climate change. • The importance of financing was highlighted, focusing on three categories: competitive, low, and zero interest rates for small producers. The Government also introduced a contingency bonus for smallholder farmers without credit access. • The Dominican Republic strengthened contract agriculture to clarify what, for whom, and by whom products were produced, aiming to maximise profits and speed up development. • Covered environmental factors of cocoa and coffee, including soil, seed type, and CO2 absorption.
3. United Arab Emirates: H.E. Amna bint Abdullah Al Dahak Al Shamsi, Minister for Climate Change and Environment	Panel	<p><i>Moderator's focus question to the panellist:</i> The UAE has consistently demonstrated leadership in driving sustainable agriculture and resilient food systems. Given the UAE unique environmental context with limited water and land resources, could you elaborate on the strategic vision and innovative approaches that underpin your nation's strong focus on strengthening local food production?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Amna bint Abdullah Al Dahak Al Shamsi began her response by stating that challenges could lead to opportunities, and opportunities could result in innovation.

- Highlighted that UAE's challenges in the agricultural sector stemmed from the country's geography, limited arable land, scarce water, and high temperatures. These issues were being viewed as opportunities to develop sustainable practices and resilient food systems.
- Referred to the UAE National Food Security Strategy 2051 that focuses on innovation and collaboration, the UAE Net Zero 2050 Strategy that addresses the agricultural sector and other sectors that impact or get impacted by the agricultural sector, and the UAE Water Security Strategy 2036 that focuses on reducing water consumption and demand.
- Referred to the COP28 UAE Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems, and Climate Action, which was endorsed by 160 countries and aligned with climate goals. COP28 also mobilized about USD 2.5 billion for food security while combating climate change.
- Mentioned that in partnership with the Gates Foundation, UAE has invested an additional USD 200 million in agriculture innovation.
- Stressed that UAE has expanded many sustainable and innovative agricultural practices, ranging from vertical farming to hydroponics farming, while equipping farmers with technology and solutions to reduce the carbon footprint.
- She also drew attention to efforts to increase the local production, reduce the UAE's dependence on imports, prioritise research and development, and support startups.
- An incentive programme supports agroecosystem growth and agricultural innovation through financial and non-

		<p>financial rewards for companies. The UAE's Ne'ma initiative aims to reduce food loss and waste nationwide with awareness campaigns, policies, incentives, and technical solutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasized the need for partnerships, international cooperation, sharing knowledge and practices, and enhancing global capacity to support collective action and the development of climate-resilient food solutions.
4. Senegal: H.E. Mabouba Diagne, Minister for Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Livestock	Panel	<p><i>Moderator's focus question to the panellist:</i> As mentioned in my opening remarks – and indeed the title of this session – we are placing high expectations on transformation of food systems to deliver those that are inclusive, resilient, healthy, and sustainable. Please tell us how Senegal is approaching food systems transformation towards these multiple objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> H. E. Mabouba Diagne highlighted the critical production factors of water, seed, input supply, soil and electricity. Water and seeds were directly brought to the farmers. There was also a farmers' input supply programme, for which, the Government in the last two years spent about USD 270 million and supplied farmers with fertilizers. Support was provided by the World Bank to this programme. Referred to the strategic focus on capacity development for farmers, on the organization of farmers in agricultural cooperatives and on bringing blended finance to the farmers to increase productivity and profitability. Emphasized the importance of amending soil organic matter and use agricultural waste to produce organic fertilizer.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlighted the President's focus on a Green Agri Strategy to bring electricity to farmers by putting solar devices and bio-digesters. Mentioned that the private sector was brought in and public-private partnerships were built as an accelerator for the transformation. Gave examples of recent engagements with Brazil, China, Italy, South-Africa and the United States of America to discuss challenges and share knowledge for the preparation of a strategy for food sovereignty.
5. People's Republic of Bangladesh: The Honorable Ali Imam Majumdar, Adviser, Ministry of Food and Ministry of Land	Panel	<p><i>Moderator's focus question to the panellist:</i> The importance of policy coherence has been on the political agenda for some time in Bangladesh. Can you please tell us how Bangladesh is using food systems transformation agenda to advance across multiple economic, social, environment, and health domains?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Honorable Ali Imam Majumdar illustrated the challenges arising from limited arable land and high population density in Bangladesh for the agrifood system in the economic, social, environmental and health domains. He explained that in the <i>economic domain</i>, Bangladesh was strengthening agrifood value chains, diversifying agricultural production, and expanding agribusiness and agri-processing to boost value addition and farmers' incomes. The emphasis was on investments, market access, public-private partnerships, rural infrastructure, SMEs, and food entrepreneurs. In the <i>social domain</i>, key priorities included nutrition-sensitive social protection, rice fortification, school meals,

		<p>gender and youth inclusion, empowerment of women and youth in agriculture, nutrition education, behavioural change, and dietary diversity campaigns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the <i>environmental domain</i> climate-smart agriculture, disease-resistant crops, integrated farming, sustainable land, water, and soil management, and food loss and waste reduction were key entry points. • Under the <i>health domain</i>, he mentioned addressing malnutrition, including undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies and overweight and obesity as well as non-communicable diseases, improving dietary quality, national food-based dietary guidelines, and food safety. • Also highlighted the importance of food safety, mentioning the role of the Bangladesh Food Safety Authority functions under the Ministry Food and the Food Safety Act 2013, which outlines the rules and regulations. • In conclusion, he recalled the significant challenges posed by the reduction of agricultural land due to urbanization, infrastructure development, housing expansion, industrial activities, and increasing soil salinity.
6. Ecuador: Mr Marco Antonio Oviedo Cajas, Vice Minister for Development and Rural Innovation	Panel	<p><i>Moderator's focus question to the panellist:</i> Moving now to Ecuador, a very different context but facing similar challenges of limited fiscal space, climate and other challenges to food systems resilience. Please tell us about some of the ways in which you are advancing towards inclusive, resilience, healthy and sustainable food systems transformation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Marco Antonio Oviedo Cajas started his intervention by emphasizing the need for the current and for future

		<p>administrations to continue the development path towards achieving the goal of rural well-being, with a focus on small- and medium producers and social inclusion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He mentioned two policies that seek to turn this vision into reality – the Agriculture Policy and the Intersectoral Programme for Rural Women. • In illustrating the scope of this initiative, he listed three out of seven priorities: commercialization, enhancing productivity, and improving access to financing and agricultural insurance. Cross-cutting to all these actions is giving emphasis to the role of women and anchoring the actions in the realities of the specific territories. • In this context, the significance of strong institutional foundations, intersectoral planning, and effective governance—encompassing coordination among ministries, multisectoral implementation, key programmes that translate policy into practice, social inclusion, partnerships, and sustainable policy financing—was also highlighted.
7. United Kingdom: Ms Ruth Davis, Special Representative for Nature	Panel	<p><i>Moderator's focus question to the panellist:</i> You are the first Special Representative for Nature in the United Kingdom; a role that focusses both on actions in the United Kingdom and in support of nature-positive actions in your international collaboration. Within this portfolio, please tell us about key entry points that you see to link your work with the transformation of food systems, both at home and abroad.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Ruth Davis explained her role as Special Representative by indicating that she reported directly to the Foreign Secretary and worked both with the

		<p>agriculture and the environment ministers and that this new role was a recognition of the fact that nature, including biodiversity, natural systems (forests, wetlands) and natural resources (water, soil) underpinned the productive economy of the world and productive inclusive food systems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stressed that addressing food systems challenges required identifying synergies between the agendas for food systems transformation and the agenda for nature and explore evidence-based trade-offs. • Presented a case study from the UK that focused on expanding investments in nature-based solutions to safeguard productive agriculture facing challenges from droughts and floods, while emphasizing the critical role of evidence in informing these initiatives. • Furthermore, the evidence supporting healthy soils as a means to enhance the productivity of farming systems was highlighted, along with the importance of incorporating farmer-driven, locally led, and often traditionally informed knowledge sources in combination with modern technology to improve the productivity and profitability of food systems. • Concluded by mentioning three current priorities for the United Kingdom: domestic reform of the subsidy regime aimed at increasing the resilience, productivity, and environmental sustainability of food systems; ensuring coherence across international frameworks relating to climate, biodiversity, water, and food, which may sometimes have conflicting targets; and facilitating private sector investments in food systems.
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<p>8. Mr Máximo Torero Cullen, Chief Economist, FAO, Keynote address</p>	<p>Keynote address</p>	<p>Key points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing interconnected crises, such as climate events, food loss, gender and youth exclusion, and financing gaps, required a systemic approach to build resilience in agrifood systems. • Significant investment needs: Approximately \$1.1 trillion annually is required for climate-resilient transformations, alongside \$8.5 billion for digital systems to enhance productivity and resource efficiency. • Attracting climate finance to food systems is essential: Current climate financing for food systems is low (around 4%), and even lower for small holder farmers (around 0.8 %) necessitating efforts to make these systems more attractive for investment, especially in smallholder agriculture. • Broad scope of agri-food systems: Policies must encompass not only food production but also non-food agricultural products, infrastructure, logistics, energy access, and environmental factors due to their interconnectedness with nutrition and sustainability. • Addressing environmental externalities: Agri-food systems contribute significantly to emissions (30%), biodiversity loss, and water use, requiring strategies that address the full cost of food systems (true cost accounting) and tackle these root causes for a sustainable transformation. • Systems thinking and policy coherence: Recognizing interconnections and trade-offs across sectors and timeframes is vital, must be supported by tools like greenhouse gas accounting and mapping
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		<p>exercises to coordinate effective policy bundles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complementary policy bundles: Combining policy instruments can advance multiple goals such as increased productivity, sustainability, and emission reductions, enhancing efficiency, coherence, and long-term development outcomes. • Systems thinking means recognizing interconnection, not-isolated problems, working across sectors, outcomes and timeframes, looking at trade-offs that every action will have, identifying leverage points, minimizing externalities related to environment, social and health, coherent policies over time, mapping of coordination of policies and ensuring that policies complement each other to address multiple goals (e.g. right to food, more production, more productivity efficiently, ensuring sustainability, less emissions). • Touched upon the need to repurpose policies that support agriculture and to promote coherent evidence-based policy development and financing to help achieve multiple goals through a proper analysis of agrifood systems and trade-offs across multiple goals.
9. Private Sector: Ms Eija Hietavuo, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer, Tetra Pak	Panel	<p><i>Moderator's focus question to the panellist:</i> Tetra Pak has placed particular emphasis on reducing food loss and waste as an entry point for more sustainable and resilient food systems, that favour livelihoods and healthy diets. Please tell us a bit about this work, and how they can support national efforts towards the common goals of food systems transformation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explained that Tetra Pak was a business-to-business company focusing on food

		<p>manufacturing and packaging, especially in the perishable food sectors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasized the key role of food processing and packaging in the supply chain, and Tetra Pak's commitment to sustainable solutions that support food system transformation. • Illustrated that to address food loss and waste, Tetra Pak worked on product development optimizing the use of local ingredients, enhancing nutritional value and maximizing manufacturing efficiency by leveraging side products and valorising waste. • Packaging was identified as a critical area in which technological advancements drove transformation, such as receptacle packaging that extends shelf life and minimises reliance on cold chains.
10. Civil Society: Ms Nancy Rapando, Africa Food Future Leader, WWF	Panel	<p><i>Moderator's focus question to the panellist:</i> WWF in your food systems transformation strategy emphasizes the importance of linking global and community level actions as part of systemic transformation. Please tell us about how you achieve this approach of being inclusive of communities, highlighting the challenges and opportunities of working in this way at scale.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Rapando presented the WWF approach to food systems transformation, highlighting the importance of involving communities as integral partners in sustainable food production and in securing their livelihoods. She stressed that food systems needed to be at the centre of environmental action and the transformation should be in line with the commitments made under the Rio Convention and Regional Policy Frameworks, such as the Kampala Declaration.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She outlined four key priorities of the WWF strategy: Planet—aligning food policies with planetary boundaries and amplifying the voices of smallholder farmers, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities; Places—protecting and restoring marginal food-producing landscapes through planning and conservation; People—centering development on inclusive participation, diverse food cultures, indigenous systems, and children's nutrition; Prosperity—ensuring food systems support livelihoods, resilience, and economic viability by accounting for environmental and social costs.
11. Ms. Doreen Lynn Robinson, UNEP	Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In summary, Ms. Robinson noted that the session underscored several recurring themes addressed by multiple speakers, including innovation, blended finance, systematic approaches, policy harmonization, and a commitment to inclusivity. • She emphasised that additional efforts were required to implement both preventive and restorative actions. • Finally, she underscored that there was enough knowledge, evidence, science, food and money to feed the world, but that a collective choice to do so was missing, stressing that for truly systemic change, tough choices needed to be made.

Interventions from the floor

SPEAKER	QUESTION OR KEY POINT OF INTERVENTION
1. Morocco	The intervention focussed on how geopolitical uncertainties, pressure on natural resources and the impact of climate change was exacerbating vulnerability of farmers. Called for a

	collaborative approach and South – South collaboration for the African Continent.
2. Russian Federation	Highlighted the significant role of the agricultural sector in the Russian Federation and the efforts made to boost production and reduce climate change. Emphasized the importance of food security, stability of food markets, and enabling conditions for trade and logistics.
3. Niger	The intervention addressed the climate shocks affecting the country, the disruption of markets, and the integration of technology into agricultural practices. It also underscored the importance of innovation to enhance agricultural output and emphasised the necessity for financial support to facilitate technology transfer. The speaker mentioned a 67% increase in investment, while stressing the urgent need for more predictable funding and greater stability amid ongoing conflict and terrorism.

Overall session summary, conclusions and recommended actions (max 250 words)

The Ministerial Roundtable on "Navigating transitions to inclusive, resilient, healthy, and sustainable food systems" brought together national leaders and global partners to discuss the hidden costs of food systems and share countries' experiences with and strategies for agrifood systems transformation. The panel emphasized the importance of coherent policies informed by evidence and aligned with economic, social, environmental, nutrition, health, and equity priorities.

Key conclusions drawn from the discussion include the necessity of effective production practices, infrastructure renewal, and the adoption of innovative technologies to build resilient food systems. Securing sustainable financing, commercialization and market development were identified as critical for long-term success. The panel highlighted the need to address environmental constraints, such as limited arable land and water scarcity, through sustainability initiatives, technological innovation, and reducing food loss and waste.

Additionally, capacity development, nurturing start-ups, and fostering cross-sector and South-South collaboration were seen as essential for ongoing adaptation and resilience. Policy coherence and attention to social inclusion, e. g. for women, youth and indigenous

communities, were deemed vital for building equitable and healthy food systems. Institutional anchoring and local participation were emphasized to ensure policies are relevant, adaptive, and grounded in community needs.

Overall, the panel concluded that successful transitions to inclusive, resilient, healthy, and sustainable food systems depend on a holistic approach that combines innovation, financing, social inclusion, policy coherence, and community engagement.