

CFS Bureau meeting

Dates: 29 October 2021 (09:30 – 12:30)

Venue: virtual meeting (via ZOOM)

Bureau Meeting Outcomes

Agenda

1. Introduction of the new Chairperson, Bureau Members and Alternates – Tour de table
2. Election of the CFS Vice-Chairperson (with Bureau decision)
3. Composition of the CFS Advisory Group (with Bureau decision)
4. CFS-49 Follow-up. The UN Food Systems Summit and implications for the CFS
5. Any other business

CFS Chairperson, Ambassador Gabriel Ferrero y de Loma-Osorio, opened the virtual meeting and welcomed all Bureau members and alternates to the first meeting of the new CFS Bureau. A moment of silence was observed in memory of Her Excellency Eudora Hilda Qaurtey Koranteng, who recently passed away.

The provisional agenda was approved without additions/deletions and the CFS Chair noted that the meeting would be recorded by the Secretariat to use in drafting this Outcomes document.

1. Introduction of the new Chairperson, Bureau Members and Alternates – Tour de table

CFS Bureau members and alternates introduced themselves and shared their views and expectations for the biennium 2021-2023.

Several Bureau members and alternates underlined the critical period ahead to fulfill CFS' vision of ending hunger and malnutrition in all its forms, and pointed to: i) CFS as the most inclusive platform to discuss and build consensus on tackling FSN-related issues; ii) the implementation of CFS policy products; and iii) the completion of the current MYPoW, as ways to further develop that vision. In particular, many referred to the planned CFS workstreams on gender, youth, data, and inequalities as important 'levers of change'.

Some members and alternates also spoke about the need to connect CFS's work outside of Rome, to regional, national and local levels, to foster uptake and implementation of CFS guidelines and recommendations, and to linking CFS to regional and national strategies such as the African Regional Strategy to end hunger by 2030, in accordance with CFS's 2009 Reform document.

Members and alternates congratulated the new Chairperson on his appointment, welcomed his full-time dedication to the CFS, and expressed appreciation for his leadership and approach towards impact and efficiency.

Ambassador Jardim (Angola), supported by several members, highlighted the importance of multilingualism for inclusive debates and decisions within CFS, especially during negotiations, and notwithstanding resource implications. The Secretariat was requested to provide Bureau members with specific cost estimates for interpretation of Bureau meetings and translation of Bureau documents into FAO's six official languages, to permit a follow-on discussion based on specific budget estimates and context of what impacts such measures might have on the CFS budget.

Egypt underlined the need for global policy guidelines to address impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on global food security and nutrition.

Switzerland recommended strengthening RBA ownership of CFS and its products.

Argentina suggested that, given the early stage of the discussion on potential follow-up mechanisms of the UNFSS among RBAs, CFS should concentrate its actions and resources on accomplishing the MYPOW.

In conclusion, CFS Chair shared his own views and priorities:

- Implementing the MYPOW (Gender, Youth, Data and Inequalities), with two policy convergence processes to be completed before CFS 50, in October 2022;
- Increasing the impact of CFS and HLPE products, and fostering implementation of CFS products at regional, national and local levels;
- Making CFS and its HLPE more visible and its products more actionable;
- Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on FSN;
- Promoting food systems that deliver on the three dimensions of sustainability;
- Increasing participation of Members and invited guests in CFS meetings, including participation of colleagues from capitals; and,
- Establishing a climate of trust and openness with Bureau members and alternates, including possibly organizing an informal retreat in the near future.

2. Election of the CFS Vice-Chairperson (with Bureau decision)

Angola and Kenya, on behalf of the Africa Regional Group, highlighted the dire conditions of hunger and malnutrition of the continent, and expressed the view that an African representative should be considered for the role of Vice-Chair. Angola further suggested that Mr Anthony Murithii (Kenya) would be an excellent candidate for the role of Vice-Chair.

Several Bureau members and alternates supported the nomination of a representative of a developing country, highlighting the importance of regional balance and rotation.

The CFS Chair welcomed the nomination of Mr. Murithii and expressed his willingness to work hand in hand with the Africa Regional Group-nominated candidate to Vice-Chair, ensuring strong African engagement and leadership to achieve CFS' vision.

Bureau decision:

Bureau unanimously elected Mr Anthony Murithii (Kenya) as Vice-Chair for the period 2021-2023.

3. Composition of the CFS Advisory Group (with Bureau decision)

The CFS Chair introduced the discussion and recalled the *status quo*, whereby the three RBAs have since CFS 46 plenary decision been serving as *permanent members* of the Advisory Group, with other groups/organizations invited by the CFS Chair, in consultation with the Bureau, as 'ad hoc' guests. The CFS Secretary gave a brief framing of the Advisory Group selection process, starting with the decision at CFS 46 to make the RBAs *permanent members* of the CFS Advisory Group. Don Syme (New Zealand) provided an overview of a working group process he led as Vice Chair on this topic, presenting what the working group had discussed and its conclusions. He highlighted the importance for the Bureau to nominate an inclusive and representative Advisory Group to stay coherent with the 2009 CFS reform document, which had transformed CFS into the foremost multi-stakeholder platform for FSN, yet at the time had not included certain groups/constituencies that are relevant to the Committee's mandate and vision.

CFS Secretariat shared a link to the final report of the Informal Working Group on the CFS Advisory Group from April 2020:

https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs1920/Bur/17_April/CFS_Bur_2020_04_17_03_Advisory_Group.pdf

Dominican Republic complimented the former Vice-Chair's leadership and committed work in this effort, and drew attention to the fact that several groups do not feel adequately represented in the Advisory Group, for example youth, academicians, parliamentarians and indigenous peoples, requesting that the Bureau continue the discussion to reach a satisfactory way to strengthen the Group's advisory role in an open and inclusive manner.

Bureau decision:

CFS Chair proposed, and Bureau agreed, that, in the absence of a clear consensus of the Bureau on deciding the precise composition of the Advisory Group beyond the three permanent members, that the Bureau continue the discussion while presently maintaining 'ad hoc' invitations on the Chair's authority to groups/organizations that have heretofore been regular participants of the Advisory Group, along with others that have indicated strong interest in the CFS and its work.

The CFS Chair indicated he would be reaching out to constituencies that had expressed interest in CFS and its Advisory Group (e.g.; Parliamentarians, Youth, Women, Farmers, Local authorities, etc.) to explore their continued interest, their potential contributions, and in the spirit of inclusivity and partnership.

New Zealand suggested that Bureau review the basic role and responsibilities of the Advisory Group to optimize their inputs in the interest of strengthening the role and impacts of the CFS, particularly connecting the Committee's work to regional, national and local levels.

Argentina suggested that civil society and private sector be represented in the Advisory Group as per paragraphs 16 and 17 of the 2009 Reform document (CFS: 2009/2 Rev 2), with Brazil recalling that PSM and CSM were established as autonomous mechanisms for coordination with the private sector and civil society, respectively, and their autonomy as facilitating bodies for consultation and participation in the CFS, as established by the Reform Document, should be defended and preserved. The Secretary reminded the group that FAO's Legal Advisor had already addressed questions linked to CSM and PSM's respective roles in the Committee, which could be found in Annex 1 to the final report of the Informal Working Group on the CFS Advisory Group from April 2020 (see link above).

4. CFS-49 Follow-up. The UN Food Systems Summit and implications for the CFS

The CFS Chair presented a summary of decisions taken during CFS 49. In particular, he mentioned (i) the agreement to give continued due attention to the impacts of COVID-19 on FSN in all MYPoW workstreams, and (ii) a request to Bureau to further analyze the potential implications of the UNFSS on the CFS and its HLPE, and consider next steps within the Bureau, in consultation with all Members, the Advisory Group, and other participants.

The CFS Chair explained that he would like to tackle the latter item as a priority, to demonstrate CFS relevance and "responsiveness," as per the UNSG's invitation for CFS to provide leadership in achieving food security and nutrition through sustainable and inclusive food systems. He underscored that the task for CFS is not to align itself with 'outcomes' of the UNFSS Summit, but rather to offer Member States and all stakeholders its full potential as the most inclusive and relevant intergovernmental platform to end hunger and malnutrition, including for sharing national strategies and providing space for connecting existing and new initiatives. In other words, by living up to the 2009 CFS reform, including by fulfilling Phase II of that reform, as appropriate.

Several members argued that the UNFSS did not produce any multilaterally-negotiated "outcomes" and, thus, there was no legal mandate to implement the Secretary-General's proposals. In the same vein, since numerous countries had developed "national pathways" as local strategies to improve food security and nutrition through sustainable food systems, CFS should advocate for use of its products and HLPE reports as references.

Several members also expressed the view that the CFS Chair should participate in discussions with the RBAs and others on the potential establishment of an as-yet-defined 'Coordination Hub', recalling the role of the HLPF.

CFS Chair wrapped up the discussion highlighting that the UNFSS created a momentum for CFS to fulfil its mandate on ending hunger and malnutrition in all forms and on the right to food, and underscored that it is our collective responsibility to ensure that CFS is even more relevant than ever.

He also highlighted that there seems to be scope within the 2009 reform document to work towards improving the impact of the CFS at regional and national levels in support of countries' national efforts, working more closely with the RBAs.

Last, he shared his intention to establish an Informal Friends of the Chair group, open to all CFS Members and members of the 'ad hoc' Advisory Group, to carry-out further analysis and discussions over the coming weeks, and present a plan for consideration by the Bureau – including concrete actions and options, in coming months, in synergy with the RBAs' Coordination Hub initiative, as a complementary role for CFS, avoiding competition and overlaps.

5. Any other business

The USA expressed disappointment over the final session of CFS 49, whereby it asserted that the core principle of CFS – i.e., "consensus"- based decision-making – had been undermined by another Member who had prepared a written statement attacking the U.S. which was posted on the CFS website under Item II, where the issues contained in that statement had not been raised nor responded to. In this light, they requested the CFS leadership to be cognizant of similar process issues in future CFS activities, including plenary debates, and to take appropriate steps to avoid such politicization.

CFS Chair encouraged Bureau members to have their Ambassadors attend Bureau meetings, where practical, especially for the beginning of the meetings when we will adopt agendas and invite senior experts to provide opening briefings on global topics.

CFS Chair also requested that the Secretariat systematically widen its outreach to the Membership.

CFS Secretary informed of the following:

- Next Bureau meeting will be held on November 24th PM (with Advisory Group) and on November 25th AM (Bureau only).
- 2022 will mark the 10-year anniversary of the CFS VGGTs, hence we will request support of the Bureau to promote them.
- WTO Trade Dialogue on Food held on 28 October 2021 can be accessed here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cJ_6u8MzVdg
And more information on the event are also available here: <https://www.fao.org/cfs/events/events-details/en/c/1446650/>

Annex 1: Attendance list Bureau meeting

CFS Bureau Members:

H.E. Gabriel Ferrero (CFS Chair/Spain); Mr Guillermo Spika (Argentina); H.E. Maria Jardim, Ms Antonietta Patricelli, Mr Abias Moma Huongo, Mr Carlos Amaral (Angola); Mr Manash Mitra (Bangladesh); Mr Felipe Antunes (Brazil); Ms Li Xi (China); Ms Mina Rizk (Egypt); Ms Silke Stallkamp (Germany); Mr Anthony Gikandi Muriithi (Kenya); Ms Cheikh Oubey Mohamed Lemine (Mauritania); Mr Don Syme (New Zealand); Mr Tim Kränzlein (Switzerland); Mr Andrian McAdams (USA).

CFS Bureau Alternates:

Ms Lamia Ben Redouane (Algeria); H.E. Mario Arvelo, Ms Berioska Morrison, Ms Liudmila Kuzmicheva (Dominican Republic); Mr Juan Tinoco (Ecuador); Mr Caka Alverdi Awal (Indonesia); Ms Manar Al Sabah (Kuwait); Mr Eric Hilberink (Netherlands); Ms Ekaterina Vybornova (Russian Federation); Mr Barend Jacobus Lombard (South Africa); Mr Kayoya Masuhwa (Zambia).

Observers:

Mr Damien Kelly (EU Delegation); Ms Delphine Babin-Pelliard (France).

CFS Secretariat:

Mr Chris Hegadorn (CFS Secretary), Mr Evariste Nicoletis (HLPE Coordinator), Ms Elise Benoit, Ms Françoise Trine, Ms Giorgia Paratore, Mr Emilio Colonnelli, Mr Fabio Isoldi, Ms Chiara Cirulli, Ms Paola Termine, Mr Waiganjo Njoroje, Ms Sylvia Orebi, Ms Tatiana Moruz, Mr Martin Schunk, Ms Marina Calvino, Mr Massimo Giorgi.