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4. Impacts of multiple crises on the implementation of SDGs 1, 2, 13, 16 and 17 from the vantage point of your intergovernmental body.

The confluence of crises has sharply raised awareness of critical weaknesses and risks in societal, economic and environmental systems. It has also exposed governance weaknesses and inequalities in global agrifood systems, including within and among countries and population groups. Recurrent, interconnected, and prolonged crises are often compounding, reversing progress, and drastically reducing capacities, particularly for the most fragile countries and populations, including smallholder and subsistence farmers, pastoralists, fisherfolk and wage laborers, to recover and improve their lives. Agrifood systems are among the first and the most impacted by crises, and their lack of capacity to deliver and ensure access to healthy diets has direct negative consequences on both poverty and hunger, as well as on deterioration of nature, with consequent effects on peace and stability.

The 2023 edition of "The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World" (SOFI) recalls that hunger and food insecurity remain far above pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels and far off track to achieve SDG2. Global hunger, measured by the prevalence of undernourishment (SDG Indicator 2.1.1), remained relatively unchanged, affecting around 9.2 percent of the world population in 2022, compared with 7.9 percent in 2019. It is estimated that about 735 million people faced hunger in 2022, 122 million more people than in 2019, before the global pandemic. Food insecurity affects women more than men in every region of the world. Meanwhile, more than 3.1 billion people in the world – or 42 percent – were unable to afford a healthy diet in 2021. This represents an overall increase of 134 million people compared to 2019. Effects of multiple crises on food security and nutrition in particular, and the interconnection between food security, nutrition, climate change, and political as well economic instability were analyzed in SOFI reports of the last 5 years, presenting evidence of both negative effects of structural crises, as well as a mapping of lessons learned and possible solutions.

Referring to the SDGs under review in 2024, sectoral analysis and recommendations were made by FAO Technical Committees and other intergovernmental bodies:Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP); Committee on Agriculture (COAG); Committee on Forestry (COFO); Committee on Fisheries (COFI); Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC), International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) and the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA). All confirmed increasing challenges and impacts of multiple crises affecting food, climate, natural resources, genetic resources, health and trade systems across agriculture and food sectors. Individual submissions by the respective Technical Committees and intergovernmental bodies hosted by FAO highlight how these impacts have been felt in different sectors.

5. Three key areas where sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions for achieving the SDGs are being effectively delivered, especially related to the cluster of SDGs under review in 2024, bearing in mind the three dimensions of sustainable development and the interlinkages across the Goals and targets:

Despite the complexity of the global challenges and impacts of multiple crises, the global response during the past year bears promise to bring progress on track to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda). Three key areas in which this is visible are:

i) advancement of the convergence of efforts across existing agendas and actions of relevant multilateral fora;
ii) improved collection of and access to data, analysis and evidence to inform decisions and reinforce a systemic approach.
iii) comprehensive and multidisciplinary as well as sectoral policy and technical support to address crises while ensuring long term development across all sustainability dimensions.

FAO has contributed to these efforts.

First, FAO has provided support to several key global mechanisms (including the SDG Summit, UNFCCC COP 28, and the G20) seeking to advance policy convergence to address complex global challenges, multiple crises and bring results at scale. The FAO-led UN High Impact Initiative on Food Systems offers innovative tools and solutions to strengthen national capacities for country-led transformative processes for agrifood systems transformation. The Initiative builds on the FAO **Hand-in-Hand Initiative** currently being implemented in 68 countries. The Hand-in-Hand Investment Fora 2022 and 2023 offered opportunities to establish partnerships between member countries, investors, and key actors in the field of development, with an emphasis on agrifood systems. The first ever 2023 Global Conference on Sustainable Livestock Transformation facilitated dialogue on innovative pathways to efficiently produce more nutritious, safe and accessible animal source foods with a reduced environmental footprint. FAO is exploring options to establish a Sustainable Livestock Transformation Digital Platform to promote and facilitate cooperation at all levels, as a neutral, shared space for stakeholders to continue to share their sustainable livestock production initiatives and knowledge.

Second, FAO provides a trusted structure for aggregating, analyzing and disseminating data on food and agriculture from many sources. This includes country driven global assessments that inform related global policy instruments, such as the *State of the World reports* on food and agriculture, on food insecurity and nutrition, on agricultural commodity markets, on forests, on fisheries, on genetic resources. The Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) has contributed to enhancing agricultural market transparency and policy responses for food security, reducing extreme price volatility, and promoting coordinated policy action. The Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture (GIEWS) proved to be an important source of factual information and a leading early warning mechanism globally. The Food Systems Countdown Initiative mmonitors the state of agrifood systems transformation through relevant data, independent of any established monitoring processes. This can help to align decision-makers around key priorities, incentivize action, hold stakeholders accountable, sustain commitment by demonstrating progress, and enable course corrections.

Third, building on its policy, normative and standard-setting expertise, FAO has provided integrated policy and technical support to its Members to make agrifood systems more sustainable, equitable and resilient. For example, the **new Codex Guidelines for the Safe Use and Reuse of Water in Food Production and Processing** (adopted in December 2023) provide Members with practical tools to facilitate access to sufficient safe water to ensure that the safety of food is not compromised. The **Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing (Multilateral System) of ITPGRFA** allows to facilitate discussions and cooperation among various stakeholders on policies, best practices, and transfer of knowledge and

technology to achieve better conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. The **Blue Transformation Initiative** supports countries to maximize the contribution of aquatic food systems to achieving the SDGs. The **Collaborative Partnership on Forests** supports the implementation of the UN Strategic Plan on Forests, and the Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire on reducing the reporting burden, enhancing synergies and increasing transparency of reporting processes and resulting data.

6. Three examples of specific actions, policies and measures that are most urgently needed to effectively deliver sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions to eradicate poverty and reinforce the 2030 Agenda, building on interlinkages and transformative pathways for achieving the SDGs.

To address complex and closely interconnected global challenges we need a systemic approach, seizing synergistic opportunities, while recognizing and addressing the intersecting issues that impede progress. The following three examples are particularly important:

First, linking interventions for agrifood systems transformation with robust climate and inequality actions. Based on extensive data and evidence, the FAO Global Roadmap for Achieving SDG2 without breaching the 1.5 C threshold emphasizes the opportunity within agrifood systems to enhance production efficiency while aligning with climate mitigation, adaptation, and resilience objectives. It indicates ten pivotal domains and 120 actions, representing areas where immediate action is imperative. Promoting three forest pathways[1] for green recovery and building inclusive, resilient and sustainable economies can help derive more tangible value from forests and trees while addressing environmental degradation and promoting resilience to climate change. Furthermore, collecting and analyzing science and evidence-based data on agriculture and forestry interdependencies, including on the direct and underlying drivers of deforestation and land degradation, plays a significant role to promote greater policy coherence and more effective support to small-scale producers, women, youth, local communities and Indigenous Peoples. Similarly, ensuring that the food and agriculture sector plays an active role in meeting the goals of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF) is crucial. Support to implementation of Codex Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Texts is further encouraging ways to forge new partnerships to underscore a holistic approach to food production. AMR is considered to be a "silent pandemic" and these approaches must urgently be built upon to combat the potential dangers to food security, health and the environment this threat represents.

Second, ensuring **predictable**, **affordable and accessible financing** for sustainable development and agrifood systems transformation. For example, implementing the new WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies to eliminate all forms of subsidies for Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and fishing-related activities in support of IUU fishing, and advancing the second phase of the ongoing WTO negotiations on fisheries subsidies contributing to overcapacity and overfishing. Public sector funding alone is not enough to achieve the SDGs by 2030. Facilitating partnerships and innovative initiatives to increase responsible and sustainable private sector investments in food and agriculture, including instruments like blended finance, is also needed. Also, continued, expanded and reinforced support to the Codex Trust Fund and other initiatives that support the participation of developing and transition economy

[1] 1) halting deforestation and maintaining forests; 2) restoring degraded lands and expanding agroforestry; and 3) sustainably using forests and building green value chains to help meet future demand for materials. FAO. 2022. *The State of the World's Forests 2022. Forest pathways for green recovery and building inclusive, resilient and sustainable economies*. Rome, FAO. https://doi.org/10.4060/cb9360en

countries in Codex will deliver the sustained strengthening and inclusiveness of Codex as a whole, and promote increased development of standards relevant to such economies.

Third, promoting a more ambitious and interlinked **science-policy-society interface for evidence-based analysis and policy recommendations** to support agrifood systems transformation and its role in achieving all SDGs. Overcoming specific trade-offs demands measured consideration, and in this respect the true cost accounting methodology emerges as a valuable tool in quantifying these intricacies. Geospatial and digital technologies play a key role in collecting and analysing data and information. Trade policies should foster well-functioning, transparent and open global markets, especially in times of uncertainty and crisis, and improving agricultural productivity and efficiency and reducing trade costs to make trade an avenue for growth.

7. Follow-up actions and measures being undertaken by your intergovernmental body or forum to support implementation of the Political Declaration of the SDG Summit.

FAO, in collaboration with other UN agencies and partners, has a highly catalytic role in supporting implementation of the Political Declaration of the SDG Summit, as a provider of high-quality data, tools, analysis, norms and standards, and as a neutral advocate and convenor and an enabler of contributions by others.

The launch of the Global Road Map for Achieving SDG2 without breaching the 1.5 C threshold will have a significant role to play in implementing the Political Declaration commitments. FAO supports to enhancing the transparency and efficiency of food and agricultural markets and of trade through the provision of timely and objective information and analyses, assistance to countries, and facilitation of policy dialogue contributes to implementing commitments related to addressing food price volatility and keeping trade channels and markets open for the movement of food, fertilizers and other agricultural inputs and outputs. In support to sustainable consumption and production patterns, the Food Loss and Waste Database is the largest online collection of data and information from openly accessible databases, reports and studies measuring food loss and waste across food products, stages of the value chain, and geographical areas.

The CGRFA contributes to efforts to achieve many of the objectives highlighted in the Political Declaration's call to action, particularly those related to ending hunger and food insecurity and to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the KM GBF.

The FAO flagship report on The Impact of Disasters on Agriculture and Food Security published in 2023 provides a timely and comprehensive overview of how disasters are affecting agriculture and food security around the world. It estimates agricultural production losses caused by disasters over the past three decades, analyzes the complex interplay of underlying risks, such as climate change, pandemics, epidemics and armed conflicts, and provides examples of actions and strategies for investing in resilience and proactively addressing risks in agriculture.
Relating to commitments concerning forests, the FAO-chaired Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) that launched its Joint Call to Action for Forests towards 2030 at the 2023 SDG Summit calling for urgent global action to unlock the potential of forests for people and the planet. The CPF Joint Call to Action is a vehicle to bring much-needed attention to the forefront of achieving global forest-related goals and to the contribution of forest conservation, restoration and sustainable use.

The work of the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (WASAG) contributes to work on sustainable management of water resources, in addition to FAO's initiatives to understand the complexity

of water rights, and to identify actionable and context-specific avenues to improve the governance of water tenure.

Safe, nutritious and healthy diets are at the heart of the Codex Alimentarius. Its work on commodity standards that have a very regional specificity and cultural value can help open markets for developing economy countries, including their food businesses and entrepreneurs, that otherwise struggle to participate in and benefit from international trade. Examples include kava and noni fruit juice, which are important trade products for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the southwest pacific and for which regional Codex standards have been adopted in recent years.

8. Recommendations and key messages for inclusion into the Ministerial Declaration of the 2024 HLPF.

Agrifood systems bind us all – people, plants, animals, forests, mountains, lakes, rivers, fisheries and oceans. Fostering efforts and investments in governance, institutions and capabilities for agrifood systems transformation can accelerate the realization of the SDGs and contribute to more peaceful, inclusive and just societies. Agrifood systems transformation has been identified as a critical synergetic SDG accelerator and one of the six key pathways towards achieving all 17 SDGs.

Accelerate the transformation to more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems to reduce poverty and hunger, improve access to healthy diets and equitable future, adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate crisis, and promote peaceful and inclusive societies. Targeted and coordinated action across sectors and actors at all levels is crucial to ensure effective, coordinated, and equitable implementation of relevant international agreements (including the CBD and the KM-GBF, the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement) and instruments, including in the food and agriculture sector.

Increase financing and target investment for agrifood systems transformation and climate actions. Investments in agrifood systems transformation should address food security and nutrition needs, but they host a large number of actions aligned with mitigation, adaptation and resilience objectives. Simultaneously, the climate agenda could mobilize climate finance to unlock the potential of these systems and drive their transformation. Targeting climate finance towards social protection, aligning policies with healthy diets and climate actions, reinforcing risk management, and fostering transparent global trade systems are pivotal for inclusive agrifood systems and sustainable development, as elaborated in *FAO Global Roadmap for Achieving SDG2 without breaching the 1.5 C threshold*.

Ensure national ownership and commitment in leading sustainable transformation of agrifood systems through systemic approaches, concrete interconnected and coherent actions and adequate funding. It is important to link policies related to agrifood systems to context specific solutions that help overcome multiple interconnected crises.

Link interventions for agrifood systems transformation with robust climate actions. While our paramount focus is anchored in realizing the right to food for all, the path to sustainable achievement of all SDGs intertwines inseparably with climate actions. This symbiotic relationship establishes the crucial link between providing nourishment for today and ensuring a sustainable food supply for tomorrow. In this vein, it is key to strengthen transformative local, national, regional and global partnerships across sectors, actors and geographies on the basis of mutual trust, solidarity and collaboration is key.

Engage all actors and tackle inequalities within and across countries as this is a crucial prerequisite to progress across all the SDGs and their targets. Many small-scale producers, especially women and youth, Indigenous Peoples and other populations in vulnerable situations lack capacities to engage in decision-making processes and suffer from precarious working conditions. Building their resilience and strengthening equality within and across countries is at the forefront of a just transition process, recognizing that equitable progress is indispensable for sustained agrifood system transformation, and thus for affordable healthy diets, resilience to climate change, peace and security.

Enhance the collection of and access to open statistics/data to monitor SDG progress and collaborate on alternative data sources. Evidence-based decision-making can improve the effectiveness, efficiency and equity of the decisions made, while also enhancing accountability and transparency. Co-creating and integrating knowledge from different knowledge systems and across various sectors, scales and social actors is key to ensure a nuanced understanding of different agrifood systems.

Strengthen policy convergence and collaboration among intergovernmental bodies and agreements to promote development of more comprehensive and coherent tools for Members to improve the capacities of all to deliver on their mandates. Recognize the possibility for mutually reinforcing multilateral and regional approaches in tackling environmental externalities of global reach.

Promote a freer, fairer, predictable, and non-discriminatory, rules-based multilateral trading system, under the WTO and consistent with its rules, for promoting agricultural and rural development and contributing to achieving food security and improved nutrition for all. Ensuring market transparency and timely and objective market information, particularly in view of the increasing risks and uncertainties caused by conflicts, climate variability, pests and diseases, and economic shocks is an important catalyst to improve multilateral trade and strengthen resilience to socio-economic shocks, conflicts, pandemics, and extreme weather events.

Provide timely responses and adequate social protection, building resilience to address short-term needs, and taking the necessary steps towards inclusive rural transformation and longer-term sustainable development.

Enhance the potential of forests and aquatic food systems to contribute to the implementation of SDGs 1, 2, 13, 16 and 17, and to mitigate the impacts of global challenges including hunger, poverty, climate change, biodiversity loss and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Global fisheries and aquaculture production is at a record high and the sector will play an increasingly important role in providing food and nutrition in the future.