

**Input for the 2025 High-level Political Forum**  
**The Committee on Agriculture (COAG)**

The Committee on Agriculture (COAG) is FAO's main technical advisory committee on agriculture. COAG provides overall policy and regulatory guidance on issues relating to agriculture, livestock, food safety, nutrition, rural development and natural resources management, and is responsible for: (i) reviewing major agricultural and nutritional problems and proposing concerted action by FAO Members and the Organization; (ii) advising the FAO Council on activities relating to agriculture, livestock, food, nutrition and natural resources management, with particular emphasis on all the social, technical, economic, institutional and structural aspects relating to agricultural and rural development in general. The biennial Sessions of COAG bring together its 136 Members and other international and non-governmental organizations to identify emerging policy and technical issues, to seek solutions and to advise on appropriate action to accelerate and scale up progress for attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and other related SDGs, as well as address interdisciplinary topics, reflecting the cross-cutting nature of major global challenges to achieve sustainable, inclusive and resilient agrifood systems. COAG's substantive inputs to the 2025 HLPF are based on relevant policy recommendations that have emerged from the 29th Session of the Committee (COAG 29), held from 30 September to 4 October 2024, comprising the outcomes of the Second Session of the COAG Sub-Committee on Livestock, held from 16 to 18 July 2024.

**Your assessment of the impacts of the multiple and interconnected crises on the implementation of SDGs 3, 5, 8, 14 and 17.**

Hunger and food insecurity remain far above pre-pandemic levels and far off track to achieve SDG 2. In 2023, global hunger, measured by the prevalence of undernourishment (SDG Indicator 2.1.1), affected around 9.1 percent of the world population and one out of ten people faced hunger. Without an immediate change, almost 600 million people would be chronically undernourished in 2030. The cost of a healthy diet rose globally by 6.7 percent compared with 2019, and more than one-third of the world population was unable to afford it in 2022. The number of countries with high levels of acute food insecurity requiring urgent humanitarian response is increasing.

Conflict negatively affects agrifood systems significantly impacting food insecurity. Climate variability and extremes adversely affect agricultural productivity and food imports. Crop contamination and outbreaks of pests and diseases also compromise the quality and safety of food.

The frequency of disaster events has risen abruptly in the last two decades. Over the last 30 years, an estimated USD 3.8 trillion worth of crops and livestock has been lost due to disaster events, that is around five percent of annual global agricultural GDP. Vulnerable populations suffer from increasingly frequent disasters. Economic slowdowns negatively impact access to food, leading to rises

in unemployment and declines in incomes, as well as to the displacement of rural populations.

The FAO report on the Status of Women in Agrifood Systems (SWAF) highlights that in 2019 globally 36 percent of working women were employed in agrifood systems along with 38 percent of working men. However, women's roles tend to be marginalized and their working conditions worse than those of men. Women have less secure tenure over land and access to credit and training. The report underscores how gender equality and women's empowerment are central for the transformation of agrifood systems.

**Three key areas where sustainable, inclusive, science-and evidence-based solutions for achieving the SDGs and leaving no one behind are being effectively delivered, especially related to the cluster of SDGs under review in 2025, also bearing in mind the three dimensions of sustainable development and the interlinkages across the Goals and targets.**

SDG 3 – COAG recommended FAO to enhance the mainstreaming of nutrition across its work and support to Members, accelerating policies and actions with impact across agrifood systems to enable healthy diets for all. It recommended FAO to develop approaches that support countries to ground the core principles of healthy diets, Noting the key contributions of food safety to One Health, COAG endorsed the Strategic Priorities for Food Safety within the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31.

The One Health approach is promoted by strengthening the performance of national and international integrated One Health systems. COAG welcomed the progress made in the adoption of the One Health approach and recommended FAO to accelerate its support to Members through the development and implementation of a Policy Framework on One Health in Agrifood Systems for Global Health and Food Security. It recommended to promote a Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS) to strengthen and scale up the implementation of the One Health approach in a coordinated manner.

SDG 5 – COAG encouraged its Members and FAO to intensify efforts to address gender inequality in agrifood systems, as highlighted in the SWAF Report and the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment. COAG noted the importance of collecting gender statistics and encouraged Members to invest in such data and policies that accelerate gender equality.

SDG 8 – COAG welcomed the progress made with the UN Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028 (UNDF), in view of the potential of family farming and the catalyzer role of the UNDF to facilitate the shift towards sustainable agrifood systems. It invited FAO to continue its coordination with IFAD in their leadership of the UNDF to mobilize financial resources to promote concrete actions on the ground and to strengthen the resilience of family farmers.

**Three examples of measures to accelerate progress towards SDGs through well-coordinated actions**

**in key transitions to bring progress to scale (food security, energy access and affordability, digital connectivity, education, jobs and social protection, climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution), building on interlinkages between SDGs to ensure cohesive progress.**

COAG advised on the following:

- Welcomed FAO's work on bioeconomy for sustainable food and agriculture encouraging Members to formulate and implement policies, strategies and action plans. It requested FAO to develop possible options to engage Members in dialogue on approaches to bioeconomy, to be presented at the FAO Council, and recognized the need to initiate a global bioeconomy partnership for sustainable agrifood systems.
- The COAG Sub-Committee on Livestock recommended FAO to develop, a negotiated Global Plan of Action for Sustainable Livestock Transformation, through a holistic approach.
- To scale up climate action, commended the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031, and welcomed FAO and UNEP's co-leadership for the implementation of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030, and recommended FAO to address the restoration of agricultural production ecosystems.
- Underscored the need for better synergies between agriculture and forestry. Invited FAO to support Members to improve complementarity between agriculture and forestry and strengthen coordinated policy responses.
- Invited FAO to scale up support for the climate change, biodiversity, food security and nutrition nexus approach, recognizing equal importance and balance of all these dimensions.
- Noted the opportunity of neglected and underutilized species (NUS) in accelerating the transformation of agrifood systems and recommended FAO to strengthen its support to Members in their efforts to promote NUS.
- Underlined the role of integrated water resources management to achieve sustainable agrifood systems transformation. Acknowledged FAO's Conceptual Framework for Integrated Land and Water Resources Management.
- Recommended FAO to continue integration of technologies and innovations into its work to promote their uptake and scaling-up, and to support Members in creating enabling environments, mobilizing resources and improving capacities of agrifood innovation systems.

**Follow-up actions and measures being undertaken by your intergovernmental body or forum to support implementation of the 2023 SDG Summit Political Declaration and the outcomes of the 2024**

**Summit of the Future, to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**

- COAG acknowledged FAO's plan to update the Vision and Strategy for FAO's Work in Nutrition. It recommended FAO to enhance its work on mainstreaming nutrition across all areas and support to Members.
- COAG underlined the role of integrated water resources management to achieve sustainable agrifood systems transformation. It acknowledged FAO's Conceptual Framework for Integrated Land and Water Resources Management, and progress made and encouraged Members to support its implementation.
- COAG recommended to further develop the proposed Voluntary Code of Conduct on the Sustainable Use and Management of Plastics in Agriculture in consultation with its Members. It acknowledged FAO's assessments to address knowledge gaps on plastics in agriculture and encouraged FAO to continue engaging with the intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC) on plastic pollution.
- COAG noted FAO's work for applying the One Health approach to sustainable agrifood systems. Recommended FAO to strengthen and scale up the implementation of the One Health approach, to promote MHEWS and support Members to integrate hazards to the agrifood systems in their national early warning systems. COAG requested that FAO strengthen collaboration with the Quadripartite to accommodate Members' perspectives.
- COAG recommended FAO to continue integration of technologies and innovations into its work to promote their uptake and scaling-up by relevant stakeholders.
- COAG noted progress in the implementation of the FAO's Strategies and Action Plans on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors, on Climate Change, and on Science and Innovation, to provide support to Members across the food security and nutrition, biodiversity and climate agendas. It invited FAO to scale up support for the climate change, biodiversity, food security and nutrition nexus approach and to continue enhanced collaboration with the three Rio Conventions.

**Recommendations and key messages to be considered for inclusion in the Ministerial Declaration of the 2025 HLPF.**

- To achieve the 2030 Agenda, the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions needs to address multiple global challenges, such as climate change, conflicts, economic shocks, transboundary diseases, biodiversity loss, combined with increasing inequalities.
- Sustainable agrifood systems are critical for ensuring food security, nutrition, and healthy diets for a growing world population and in the fight against poverty.

- There is an urgent need to scale up actions for sustainable, inclusive and resilient agrifood systems, address food insecurity and malnutrition, support livelihoods of vulnerable groups, and to step up efforts to close gender gaps.
- It is crucial to promote the sustainable use and management of natural resources through strengthening cross-sectoral collaboration and promoting policies, strategies and programmes to support food security, agriculture and forestry linkages, to mitigate deforestation and biodiversity loss not to create unnecessary barriers to trade consistent with the WTO's provisions and to benefit small-scale producers.
- Agriculture can play a significant role in climate action, and be part of the solution, by building climate-resilient agrifood systems, strengthening climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and resilience of communities.
- Integrated approaches, such as One Health, are key in achieving sustainable agrifood systems. The climate change, biodiversity, and food security nexus approach can lead to holistic and integrated solutions with multiple benefits. Developing the potential of neglected and underutilized species provides a critical opportunity in accelerating the transformation towards more sustainable agrifood systems, while conserving and sustainably using biodiversity.
- Improving the uptake and the scaling-up of technologies and innovations can have a positive impact on production, nutrition, environment and the livelihoods of people relying on agriculture.