

UN Food Systems Summit

Debriefing for the Dutch network. 5 November 2021

Introduction

This meeting gathered Dutch network partners with an interest in food systems transitions, and was meant to share information on the formal outcomes of the UN Food Systems Summit, the key take-aways for the Dutch government and other stakeholders, and on expected next steps. After a more generic briefing on the Summit outcomes during the Dutch [World Food Day event](#), this meeting provided an opportunity for a further expert exchange on the Summit outcomes and follow up.

At the start of the meeting, **Marcel van Nijnatten** (Ministry of Agriculture, Nature & Food Quality) provided a short live update about the COP26 meeting in Glasgow. "The COP 26 is like a Jamboree", a whole range of negotiations and side events. The Dutch Ministries of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality; Foreign Affairs; and Health, Welfare and Sports work together closely. Key topics:

- Science-policy interface: better linking science and policy & politics.
- Agriculture
- National pathways

For the Netherlands it is important that UN FSS results are well introduced in COP discussions. There seems to be progress, as there is more attention for agriculture. The next COP will be a "Agriculture and FS"-COP, to be held in Egypt (2022). A debriefing is foreseen on 22 November, see below.

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Wilma van Esch (Head of Food & Nutrition Security division, IGG, Ministry Foreign Affairs):

The UNFSS gathered many people, showed high energy levels, and much has been achieved. Recognition of the need that hunger crises are addressed, and -hence- of the urgency of food system transformation. It is an ongoing journey, and the most hard part will come now: What is the follow up? How are we going to work together to achieve joint action?

- National Pathways. Assuring national ownership is of key importance for the Netherlands. The Ministry has asked Embassies for their feedback: their opinion and insights on [national dialogues, pathways, NDCs](#), next steps, and resources. Netherlands will work with different agencies to support the national pathways process (in development cooperation partner countries), a/o with IFAD, Foresight for Food.
- There are many differences between countries, lots of good things are going on.
- Using a system approach & Inclusiveness are key notions.

- Collaboration with international agencies such as IFAD and FAO continues.
- The governance of the UN FSS follow up is still being developed.
- Evidence-base is important. Improved science-policy interface was emphasised by the NL. Not yet defined what the institutional setting will be. (EU paper Feb 2022 on this topic foreseen)
- The UN FSS will be followed by various international summits (COP26, Nutrition for Growth, etc). Connecting the dots is the challenge: how to ensure keeping FS on the agenda.

Further observation is that there is no 'national pathway' document for the Netherlands, as this has to await the formation of a new government. The Netherlands have registered for 5 UN FSS action coalitions; that landscape is still evolving.

Hans Brand (Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality)

Shares the observations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Both Ministries now wait for a new Government: new direction, new guidance; and for the development of a governance arrangement for the UN FSS follow up (central role probably for Rome based agencies; FAO, IFAD, WFP). Realises that a key moment will be the next UNFSS review in 2023: that moment needs to show the progress. Also of relevance, in the meantime, is the work of the [HLPE](#) - High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Q and A

General questions

- Would it be useful to share each other's roadmaps (government, PS etc)? A/MinFA: Yes, can NFP support? A/NFP: included in the below action list
- Conclusions on financial contributions pledged at the UN FSS? A/MinFA: Several pledges were made indeed, though not in one overview & not sure to what extent these are new resources. E.g.:
 - USA [10 billion USD](#)
 - Private sector Zero Hunger pledge estimated at 23/9/2021 at [345 million USD](#)
 - Gates Foundation [922 million USD](#)

Questions about national pathways

- Does the Netherlands government make commitments to support other countries' pathways? A/MinFA: we provide support locally with food systems transitions. Hope that other development partners will follow and collaborate.
- In relation to effectively supporting national pathways a few observations were made by WUR, building on the research done for the [IFAD Rural Development Report](#): The 'what' is often better known than the 'how', with a bias towards the 'what'. WUR proposes to pay more attention to the 'how', i.e. the socio-economic and political pathways and the governance of



food systems. And to explore what is known and what not. Result pathways need to move from unilateral processes (→ from agriculture to food) towards multilateral/multidimensional processes. It will be critical to reshuffle some of the power structures and agendas! Larger environment of the dialogues is important, and the science-policy link.

- A/MinFA recognises that there are large differences in power balance between stakeholders, between countries, and this needs attention during implementation. The reshuffling has to come from countries themselves. We can support them, while they have to do it.
- Did participants in this call hear from their LMIC partners about the national pathway processes? If so, which impressions did they get?
 - A/Oxfam Novib: no news yet.
 - A/WUR/Nutrition: Very different from country to country, for example also regarding who has the main lead. Ethiopia: strong process, a/o. with WUR input; Vietnam: also a regional (sub-national) level process; Bangladesh: point of attention to incorporate the independent dialogues in the national pathway (too).
- How can we strengthen each other? Would be good to have the perspectives of EKNs. To understand the financial pledges and frameworks that apply to the country, and to understand whether certain available resources would be rechanneled or refocused to realise food system transitions. A/MinFA: sharing is always good. We will have to check what EKNs know. There is no analysis yet. A/NFP: NFP could step in here to facilitate sharing.

Questions about international action coalitions

- It seems the Netherlands are involved in 5 coalitions (Zero Hunger, Healthy Diets, Food Loss and Waste, AgroEcology, +tbc), and some are still developing. Will NL focus only on those 5 or also follow other coalitions? It seems only one focuses on conflicts; would UN FSS have been too early for them? How about the True Price coalition? A/MinFA: several Ministries are involved, MinAgri, MinHealth; and yes, NL are involved in more than 5. It is still a phase in which we clarify the meaning of being involved. Please be reminded there is limited staff capacity within Ministries.
- A/MinAgri: the UN FSS coalitions are still evolving, we are waiting for a general structure to develop towards concrete objectives. This applies to the group of coalitions that the NL is interested in as well: what are the most interesting for NL? Considerations are whether we are willing to spend our limited resources & how we can do that. Will our role be leading, facilitating; or acting and following?
- Update on coalition for Healthy diets? High ambitions, next steps remain unclear so far.
- Update on True Price coalition? How about the NL engagement? A/MinLNV: Discussion ongoing in the Ministry on this topic: value of food, how to price food.
- Business propositions needed in addition to policy interventions to make it work and scale it.
- Timeframe for coalitions: when will that be clearer? A/MinFA: We don't know. There are many different stages and engagements. Lots of flexibility. Netherlands formally joined the listed 5. The relevance will also depend on the direction a coalition takes. Within 2 weeks there will be



an evaluation moment of whether/not the selected set is relevant or whether additions are needed.

Next steps

- Upcoming briefing meeting on COP26 about Food systems - 22 November 15-16h CET
- Continue the conversation on the follow up processes to the UN FSS:
 - Shared roadmaps are proposed as tools for synergy and efficiency. Action point for NFP/partners.
 - Sharing about how we work with national pathways may help realising quality interventions in collaboration not only with LMIC national governments, but also with other stakeholders in these countries (a/o tapping into expertise on food systems approaches; clarifying financial resources pledged or reallocated). Action point for NFP/partners.
 - Sharing about coalitions. Several institutions and companies in this network are involved in UN FSS related coalitions (e.g. Soils, TruePrice, Smallholder digitalisation); there is an interest to continue communicating about the activities of these coalitions, as well as about how the national pathways would be their entry point.
- International governance structure for the follow up to the UN Food Systems Summit. Dutch government closely watches international processes and is kindly requested to share any relevant news with this network.

References

- Outcomes of the UN Food Systems Summit:
https://www.nlfoodpartnership.com/insights/Food_Systems_Summit_Outcomes/
- Website UN Food Systems Summit: <https://www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit>

