SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS, BIODIVERSITY AND HEALTH

YOU ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN AN EXCITING DIALOGUE TO:

→ Explore the co-benefits to environment, biodiversity and health of the promotion of sustainable and healthy food systems. Showcase national and community strategies to promote sustainable food systems and diverse and healthy dietary patterns while protecting biodiversity.

→ In line with the findings of the WHO-CBD State of Knowledge Review, discuss strategies to foster pragmatic, scalable and inter-disciplinary policy solutions fostering biodiversity, health and food and nutrition security. Discussions will aim to jointly support the implementation of the Paris Agreement, the ICN2 commitments and UN SDGs.

→ Explore possible pathways for collaboration and identify convening platforms and accountability mechanisms under the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) and the Decade of Action on Nutrition to bring governments, academia, NGOs and other stakeholders together to contribute to the transition towards sustainable and healthy food systems within the Climate and the 2030 Development Agendas.
Join speakers from the Government of Tuvalu, CBD, IUNS, UNEP and WHO

Moderator:
- Maria Neira, WHO Director, Department of Public Health, Environmental and Social Determinants of Health.

Setting the Scene:
Sustainable Food Systems, Biodiversity and Health: Opportunities to advance the Climate Agenda
- Cristina Tirado, Chair of IUNS task force on Climate and Nutrition.
- Cristina Romanelli, UN Secretariat of the Convention of Biological Diversity.

Panel members:
- Satini Manuella, Minister of Health of Tuvalu, Challenges & opportunities for co-benefits in the Pacific.
- Francesco Branca, WHO Director, Department of Nutrition for Health and Development, The Decade of Action on Nutrition: a 10-year opportunity for action towards healthy diets for all through sustainable food systems.
- James Lomax, UNEP Programme Officer (Food Systems and Agriculture), Using nutrition as an effective driver for sustainable food systems.

KEY MESSAGES

→ SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO BOTH A REDUCTION OF EMISSIONS AND IMPROVED PUBLIC HEALTH AND NUTRITIONAL OUTCOMES. To foster healthy and sustainable eating patterns worldwide it is necessary to reshape food production and consumption patterns. The IPCC [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change] AR5 report highlighted the opportunities to achieve co-benefits from actions that reduce emissions and at the same time improve health by shifting consumption away from animal products, especially from ruminant sources, in high-meat consumption societies, toward less emission intensive healthy diets. Measures of success of food systems should go beyond the narrowly-defined indicators of agricultural performance and include benefits such as reduced health risks, production of healthy food, high resource efficiency, decent job creation, and resilience to shocks among others.

→ WELL-MANAGED AGRICULTURE AND ECOSYSTEMS, AND THE PRESERVATION OF GENETIC DIVERSITY, ARE CRITICAL TO NUTRITION SECURITY AND HEALTH OUTCOMES. Food biodiversity represents a nutrition resource that is capable of addressing the multiple burdens of malnutrition by providing dietary energy, macro- and micronutrients and other beneficial bioactive constituents. Inter-disciplinary analysis and cross-sectoral collaboration is essential to ensure the mainstreaming of biodiversity and health into policies, programmes and national and regional plans of action on food and nutrition security and ultimately better conservation and sustainable use of resources as climate change proceeds.

→ AT THE LOCAL LEVEL, TRADITIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS CAN JOINTLY CONTRIBUTE TO NUTRITION SECURITY, SUSTAINABLE USE AND RESILIENT CLIMATE MITIGATION/ADAPTATION. Indigenous Peoples’ food systems are remarkably diverse and represent important repositories of knowledge related to healthy and resilient diets which have had minimal impact on the environment and ensured food and nutritional security. Strengthening and leveraging Indigenous Peoples’ food systems is one important strategy in a multidisciplinary approach to improve diets and reverse negative food-related health outcomes. These food-based approaches potentially improve nutrition and health in a sustainable manner and provide novel opportunities to address climate challenges.

→ SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS PROMOTING HEALTHY DIETS REQUIRE COHERENT PUBLIC POLICIES FROM PRODUCTION TO CONSUMPTION ACROSS RELEVANT SECTORS. Since food systems have become increasingly complex and strongly influence people’s ability to consume healthy diets, coherent action and innovative food system solutions are needed to ensure access to sustainable, balanced and healthy diets for all. Policy coherence needs to be ensured through institutional and cross-sectoral collaboration and good governance. The Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) Framework for Action recommendations, adopted by the FAO and WHO Member States, proposes policy options and actions to be implemented to ensure that food systems become more sustainable and promote diverse and healthy diets. Agreement on shared principles of sustainability in promoting healthy diets is needed.

→ NUTRITION-SENSITIVE CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION HAS CO-BENEFITS FOR BOTH HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT. A combination of nutrition-sensitive, climate-smart strategies and technological development, nutrition-smart investments in the agriculture and food sectors as well as in social protection, education and community-based disaster risk reduction areas can contribute to ensure food and nutrition security in a changing climate. This requires a multisectoral food system approach involving nutrition, agriculture, health, biodiversity conservation, trade, education, water supply and sanitation and social protection, as well as taking into account cross-cutting issues like gender equality, governance, and state fragility. The nutrition community should engage in multisectoral mechanisms for climate adaptation, mitigation and biodiversity conservation. This includes the development of nutrition sections for National Adaptation Plans, the Nationally Determined Contributions to the UNFCCC and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.