



CFS Bulletin

A Briefing Note of the 4th Meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)
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FOURTH MEETING OF THE OEWG ON SDGS OF CFS: 22 JUNE 2016

The fourth meeting of the Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) was held on 22 June 2016, at the headquarters of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), in Rome, Italy. Member countries and multi-stakeholder participants considered and finalized a proposal on CFS engagement in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) to be submitted to the CFS 43rd Plenary session (17-22 October 2016).

The OEWG on SDGs was established by CFS at its 42nd Plenary session (October 2015) to agree on how CFS, as a global, multi-stakeholder committee, will support progress in reaching the SDGs related to sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition, and in advancing the parts of the 2030 Agenda which fall within its mandate. CFS OEWGs are informal groups open to all CFS members, participants and observers. They review, discuss and make proposals related to the intersessional work of CFS but have no decision-making mandate. The outcomes of their work are conveyed to CFS plenary, which is the decision-making body.

At its first meeting, the OEWG addressed the OEWG workplan for the year, including its objectives, expected outcomes and activities; and started discussion on possible CFS work in support of implementation of the 2030 Agenda and achievement of the SDGs. The second meeting heard a presentation on the UN Secretary-General's report on critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at global level (UN Doc A/70/684); and discussed an outline of a proposal on CFS engagement to advance the 2030 Agenda. The third meeting addressed a zero-draft proposal on CFS engagement to advance the 2030 Agenda.

This report summarizes the proceedings of the fourth meeting of the OEWG.

REPORT OF THE MEETING

OPENING

OEWG Chair Willem Olthof, Senior Development Adviser, EU Delegation, opened the meeting and Josefina Stubbs, Associate Vice President, Strategy and Knowledge Department, IFAD, welcomed CFS members and participants.

Carla Mucavi, Director of the Liaison Office of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), New York, provided an update on developments related to the 2030 Agenda from the perspective of the Rome-based agencies (FAO, IFAD and World Food Programme), via video connection. She highlighted that, following the breaking of the silence procedure for the final draft resolution on the follow-

up and review of the 2030 Agenda, the ensuing consultations did not reach consensus and currently continue under the UN General Assembly President Mogens Lykketoft (Denmark). She said the draft: suggests broad themes for the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) meetings for the next three years and sets of goals to be reviewed each year; encourages coherence of the work of specialized agencies and other bodies with HLPF work; but falls short of providing specific guidance on inputs to be received from other entities for use at the thematic review. She added that lessons learnt from the 2016 session will help shape future developments.

Mucavi drew attention to preparations for the 2016 HLPF session, including its schedule, structure and ongoing consultations on the draft ministerial declaration, noting that one of the thematic discussions to be held on 12 July focuses on "Food security and sustainable agriculture, climate action, sustainable oceans and terrestrial ecosystems – adopting a nexus approach," in which CFS Chair Amira Gornass (Sudan) has been invited to serve as a lead discussant. The Secretariat added that a CFS side-event during the 2016 session will be co-hosted by Switzerland and Bangladesh and supported by the Gates Foundation.

PROPOSAL ON CFS ENGAGEMENT TO ADVANCE THE 2030 AGENDA

OEWG Chair Olthof said the proposal (CFS OEWG-SDGs/2016/06/22/02) results from discussions in the three previous OEWG meetings, comments received and work by the Secretariat and the task team. Urging members and participants to finalize it, he called for general comments before addressing it section by section.

GENERAL COMMENTS: Highlighting general support for the document, Ecuador expressed preference for a shorter document.

HOW CFS WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE SDGs: France, supported by IFAD and the Civil Society Mechanism (CSM), called for better reflecting the entire CFS mandate, including its role on global coordination, policy convergence, and support and advice to countries and regions, and for explicit reference to the CFS reform document (CFS:2009/2 Rev.2). IFAD suggested specifying that CFS will continue to fulfil its mandate in order to optimize its contribution to the implementation, follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda. The CSM proposed that CFS' contribution will unfold by fulfilling its mandate for global coordination and facilitation of collaborative action, as articulated in the CFS reform document, which was agreed.

Policy convergence: IFAD proposed, and the OEWG agreed, to refer also to policy coherence in the title. Discussion then focused on the suggestion for a longer-term, multi-year programme of work (MYPoW) aiming to bring more predictability to CFS work, and an activity on

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commissioning a note from the High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) on the nexus between food security, nutrition, and other SDGs.

France, Ecuador, Brazil and Switzerland said the proposal for a four-year MYPoW should be addressed in the OEWG on the MYPoW. Chair Olthof confirmed the proposal would be discussed in depth in that forum, should the OEWG on SDGs decide to keep this suggestion in the proposal as part of a reflection on how CFS can best advance the 2030 Agenda. Ecuador cautioned against being overly prescriptive, and Brazil, the CSM and the EU delegation stressed the need for more information and discussion. Noting a four-year MYPoW may be too ambitious, Bangladesh cautioned against dedicating all CFS work to the SDGs. Finland supported extending the MYPoW to a four-year one and, with China, asked about budgetary implications. Stressing the importance of retaining flexibilities, the Secretariat clarified that a longer-term MYPoW would be resource-efficient. Italy highlighted the advantages of a longer MYPoW as a strategic framework for CFS. The CSM proposed reflecting explicitly that the OEWG on the MYPoW is invited to consider the issue. The OEWG agreed to request the OEWG on the MYPoW to initiate a process to discuss the appropriateness of a four-year cycle.

Some members and participants then shared their concerns on the HLPE note. France, with Argentina, noted that requesting *ad hoc* notes may result in degrading the quality of HLPE reports. Emphasizing that the OEWG on the MYPoW has already decided to commission an HLPE report on a topic related to the SDGs, France suggested that such a note could be developed by the specialized agencies. Italy stressed that HLPE should work on the nexus concept in order to address a gap, and Chair Olthof recalled that the suggestion for the note came from the HLPE Chair. Switzerland and the US said the HLPE activities should be addressed by the OEWG on the MYPoW, and the Private Sector Mechanism (PSM) drew attention to HLPE budget constraints.

IFAD stressed the need for analytical work on not only mapping nexus areas, but also understanding trade-offs and win-wins, and identifying tools and measures countries need for policy coherence. Highlighting three major SDG-related challenges, FAO emphasized: measures to ensure inclusiveness; platforms to promote multi-stakeholder collaboration; and making data accessible to, and used by, all stakeholders, to improve outcomes. The OEWG agreed to highlight the merit of work on the nexus and recommend that the OEWG on the MYPoW consider the issue, without specific reference to HLPE involvement.

Sharing of lessons: The OEWG agreed to a CSM suggestion of inviting contributions also by those affected by food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms.

ENGAGEMENT WITH THE HLPF: Discussion focused on the process for approving and submitting CFS inputs to the HLPF, including the role of CFS Plenary, the Bureau and/or an OEWG, and a potential rescheduling of plenary sessions from fall to spring of each year, to allow for more timely input to the HLPF sessions in July.

With regard to rescheduling plenary sessions, France outlined elements to be taken into account, including the scheduling of other activities of the Rome-based Agencies, publication of the State of Food Insecurity in the World report, and the need for efficient organization of intersessional work. The CSM considered such a rescheduling premature, with Switzerland, Norway and the US cautioning against being prescriptive, for plenary to decide on the basis of lessons learnt following the 2016 HLPF session. The OEWG agreed not to suggest rescheduling plenary sessions.

Ecuador and the PSM stressed inputs should be decided upon by plenary. The CSM welcomed a mandate by plenary to the Bureau to finalize a contribution prepared through an inclusive process, and, with FAO, suggested inviting the OEWG on the MYPoW to consider the possibility of a continued OEWG to support the process after 2018. Finland and the Gates Foundation drew attention to budgetary implications of a continued OEWG. The Secretariat noted the need for further reflection on a process involving guidance from plenary, consideration of inputs by an OEWG and preparation for the upcoming plenary.

Science-policy interface: Argentina and the PSM called for clarity on the nature and status of HLPE reports versus CFS policy recommendations based on these reports.

COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH: The OEWG discussed reference to possible amendment of the Rules of Procedure to improve involvement of regional bodies in CFS processes. Switzerland, France and the US argued the current rules provide enough space for such involvement. The Secretariat noted that experience calls for a dedicated discussion on involvement of regional bodies, but the issue should be considered by the OEWG on the MYPoW. The OEWG agreed to encourage better integration of regional bodies to CFS work, with no reference to amending the Rules of Procedure.

Following a question by IFAD on a proposed communication strategy, the Secretariat stressed the need to think how to demystify the CFS tools with regard to SDG-related challenges.

The Secretariat said the proposal will be revised according to discussions and circulated by 24 June, for final comments to be received by 1 July, in time for the upcoming Bureau meeting on 8 July.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR CFS 43

In light of discussions on the Committee's contribution to the 2017 HLPF session, the OEWG agreed that the annotated agenda of CFS 43 would be amended to allow time in plenary for a substantive discussion. The OEWG agreed that Chair Olthof will forward a request to the Bureau to consider this matter.

DRAFT DECISION BOX

The OEWG addressed a draft decision on CFS engagement in advancing the 2030 Agenda (CFS OEWG-SDGs/2016/06/22/04). They discussed a paragraph that CFS will provide annually agreed inputs directly to the HLPF to contribute to the thematic review. Switzerland stressed the need for flexibility, and the OEWG agreed that CFS will provide regular agreed inputs, as deemed appropriate. They further agreed to mandate the CFS Bureau to endorse the contribution elaborated by the OEWG on SDGs, to be conveyed to the HLPF 2017 meeting under the authority of CFS Chair. The revised draft decision will be circulated along with the revised proposal.

MAPPING OF CFS PRODUCTS FOR THE 2030 AGENDA

The Secretariat presented the revised mapping document and requested feedback on its scope. Switzerland pointed out that only SDG 9 (industry, innovation, infrastructure) is not addressed by CFS products.

Chair Olthof expressed appreciation for the mapping document, thanked all participants for their contributions, and closed the meeting at 6:15 pm.