Joint Submission: "Views from Parties and non-Party stakeholders on the elements for the consideration of outputs component taking into account the informal note by the co-chairs"

Introduction

This submission brings together a wide range of civil society organisations working on food systems[1] and climate change to highlight the need for a Global Stocktake (GST) outcome which strongly encourages ambitious and urgent action to address the food-climate nexus. The need for such action has been extensively established both outside and within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, most recently in the *Synthesis report by the co-facilitators on the technical dialogue*, released on September 8, 2023.[2]

Key Messages

1. Addressing the food-climate nexus is essential for meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement and achieving food security, climate adaptation and climate mitigation.
2. The Global Stocktake must encourage comprehensive and ambitious action to improve the food system from production through consumption.
3. The Global Stocktake must signal a commitment to justice in climate action throughout the food system to avoid maladaptation.
4. The Global Stocktake should inspire action on keystone areas of opportunity for international cooperation.

Submission Structure

Food and the Goals of the Paris Agreement

The outputs of the technical phase of the GST reveal that collective progress in reaching the goals of the Paris Agreement leaves critical needs which must be addressed.

Food security and elements of the food system are specific and explicit topics of concern in the Paris Agreement.[3] However, since 2019, food insecurity and hunger have risen significantly, driven to a large extent by climate change.[4] Furthermore, the food system is of pivotal importance across the goals of the

Paris Agreement. If current trends continue, emissions from the food system are projected to rise significantly in coming decades,[5] both contributing further to these effects and to jeopardizing the temperature goals of the Paris Agreement—even if fossil fuels were phased out immediately.[6] And apart from any considerations related to the emissions of food systems, the food system is essential to adaptation efforts as one of the most important—and sometimes the most important—determinants of the integrity of other domains that must adapt to change, including (but not limited to) human rights, gender equality, health, livelihoods, poverty eradication, food and nutrition security, ecosystems, biodiversity, animal welfare, and nature.

While food systems transformation is essential for climate action, it is equally important that this transformation accounts for the cross-cutting nature of food systems to ensure that climate action in food systems contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other global priorities and avoids the maladaptive risks of siloed interventions on other priorities such as livelihoods, nature, and food security.

As a result, this submission identifies priority needs for the GST in three areas:

1. Encouraging more ambitious and comprehensive climate action addressing the food system
2. Encouraging climate action addressing the food system to be integrated, holistic, and just
3. Inspiring international cooperation on keystone opportunity areas

1. MEETING CLIMATE GOALS REQUIRES MORE AMBITIOUS AND COMPREHENSIVE ACTION TO ADDRESS THE FOOD SYSTEM

Priority 1.A: The GST outcome should recognize the critical need for global climate action, including adaptation, mitigation, and actions to respond to loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, to address all aspects of the food system, from production through consumption.

The expert messages from the technical phase, including from the IPCC and UNEP, are explicit: for food security, climate adaptation, and climate mitigation, both food production and consumption must be addressed.[7]

While, promisingly, most NDCs now include policies related to agriculture, actions to address the food value chain post-harvest are limited—only a minority of NDCs contain provisions related to food waste or diets.[8] From an adaptation perspective, the IPCC notes that "Demand-side adaptation, such as adoption of healthy and sustainable diets, in conjunction with reduction in food loss and waste, can contribute to adaptation through reduction in additional land area needed for food production and associated food system vulnerabilities."[9] From the perspective of mitigating food system GHG emissions, the IPCC has highlighted that demand-side mitigation opportunities are of comparable scale to supply-side mitigation opportunities.[10]

Additionally, the success of key supply-side adaptation/mitigation actions (e.g. crop diversification) is largely influenced by consumer demand factors (e.g. market environments to facilitate consumer access or public procurement), thus the entire chain should be integrated into policy.

A more comprehensive scope of action provides more opportunities for adaptation and mitigation. Further, considering all stages of the food system is essential for policy coherence. For example, policies that encourage the production of more resilient cultivars will also impact human nutrition—positively or negatively depending on the national context. Considering these linkages is important due to the breadth of climate impacts. For example, production changes can involve synergies or tradeoffs with areas such as human health due to the role that the food policies play in reducing the incidence of communicable and non-communicable diseases.[11]

While there has been significant progress in recognizing the importance of these issues, this progress must accelerate rapidly for the goals of the Paris Agreement to be achieved. The GST outcome is an essential moment to signal to Parties and non-Party stakeholders that progress in climate action depends on transformative policies across the food system.

Priority 1.B: The GST outcome should call on Parties to incorporate in their updated nationally determined contribution referred to in Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Paris Agreement, and other relevant plans, strategies, reports, and instruments, as determined by Parties, a clear description of how all stages of the food system are considered within climate adaptation and mitigation plans.

The technical phase of the GST revealed that where agriculture and the food system are included in NDCs and adaptation communications, significant untapped opportunities remain[12] at all stages—including production, transport, manufacturing, retailing, consumption, and waste.[13]

The IPCC notes that "AFOLU mitigation measures have been well understood for decades but deployment remains slow and emissions trends indicate unsatisfactory progress despite beneficial contributions to global emissions reduction from forest related options (high confidence)…AFOLU mitigation options are demonstrably effective and with appropriate support can enable rapid emission reductions in most countries."[14] For example, only a minority (63 out of 134) updated NDCs consider livestock,[15] the largest share of agricultural emissions.[16]

This is also reflected across climate action in the food system more broadly. For example, globally, more than 13% of food is lost during post harvest stages on the farm or during transport, storage, wholesale, and processing value chain steps.[17] WFP estimates that "in some developing countries, smallholder farmers can regularly lose 40% of their harvest due to inadequate storage."[18] However, only 36 out of 134 NDCs consider post harvest food storage, processing, and transportation.[19]

The next round of NDCs and adaptation communications presents a key opportunity not only to respond to the growth in the science policy interface on food systems, but to, importantly, capture and solidify commitments made in recent years. Some of the most significant of these include:

- The Kunming-Montreal Framework: In December 2022, 196 Parties adopted the framework, commiting to collective efforts towards the targets. A number of these are highly relevant to food systems such as Target 10 (sustainable management of areas under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries, and forestry), Target 16 (ensuring people are encouraged and enabled to make

sustainable consumption choices and halving global food waste by 2030), and Target 18 (identifying and eliminating, phasing out, or reforming subsidies harmful to biodiversity).[20]

- Food Systems Summit national pathways: More than 125 countries developed national pathways for food systems that address multiple stages with actions relevant to climate adaptation and mitigation.[21]
- The Global Methane Pledge: More than 150 countries have signed the Global Methane Pledge[22] which includes a commitment to seek to abate agricultural emissions.

Leveraging this progress can allow for increasing the ambition of NDCs and adaptation communications, as well as support these policies through, for example, climate finance streams.

Clear guidance from the GST will be essential for achieving more comprehensive action in the next round of NDCs.

2. CLIMATE ACTION ADDRESSING THE FOOD SYSTEM MUST BE INTEGRATED, HOLISTIC, AND JUST

Priority 2.A: The GST outcome should explicitly recognize that because food systems are cross-cutting, climate action to address food systems should account for interfaces with human rights, gender equality, health, livelihoods, poverty eradication, food and nutrition security, ecosystems, biodiversity, animal welfare, and nature.

Food systems critically impact multiple global priorities. Food systems transformation is required for meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement, but it is also essential that transformations to meet one goal (such as mitigation) do not negatively impact other priorities (such as adaptation or human rights).

There are a number of risks of maladaptation[23] in food systems action. The IPCC notes that "[w]here carefully and appropriately implemented, AFOLU mitigation measures are uniquely positioned to deliver substantial co-benefits…If AFOLU measures are deployed badly then, when taken together with the increasing need to produce sufficient food, feed, fuel and wood, they may exacerbate trade-offs with the conservation of habitats, adaptation, biodiversity and other services."[24]

The technical phase of the GST revealed significant cause for concern about maladaptation in current climate action. For example, although some countries consider the impacts of climate action on food on groups such as small-scale food producers and Indigenous People and Local Communities in their NDCs, the majority do not.[25]

The GST should clearly encourage Parties to design their food system transformations to take advantage of synergies and co-benefits and to avoid maladaptation. A commitment to the principle of just transitions will also be important to ensure that vulnerable groups have a voice in the process and are fairly supported in light of the burdens they face from any food systems policies as well as the broader impacts of climate change.[26]

Priority 2.B: The GST outcome should urge Party and non-Party stakeholders to upscale financial support for sustainable healthy food systems and to make these finance flows consistent with a 1.5 C pathway, including particular attention to the promotion of sustainable healthy diets and improving small-scale food producer access to finance.

The technical phase of the GST revealed that only three percent of climate finance goes to agriculture,[27] and the IPCC AR6 Synthesis report lists AFOLU as the most underinvested sector relative to climate mitigation needs (estimating a needed annual increase in the range of 10 to 31 times).[28] There are also significant shortfalls in the degree to which existing climate finance for food systems is aligned with the Paris Agreement. For example, the World Bank relies in large part on conformity with NDCs to signal alignment, despite recognized shortfalls in NDC commitments[29] (*see also*, **Opportunity 1: Aligning food systems incentives,** below, for further discussion of the need to reform existing food systems finance).

The GST can play an essential role in raising awareness and mobilizing positive finance for food systems.

3. THE GST SHOULD INSPIRE ACTION ON KEYSTONE AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

In addition to the needs outlined above, the GST outcome should inspire international cooperation on keystone issues. This section presents three opportunities:

- Aligning food systems incentives
- Reconciling needs for collective shifts to sustainable food consumption with differing national contexts
- Conserving production systems for food security

Addressing any or all of these points of focus in the GST outcome could unlock broader transformation throughout food systems.

Opportunity 1: Aligning food systems incentives

The GST outcome can urge Parties to upscale and align incentives and innovation for sustainable food systems, while seeking to collectively eliminate, phase out, or reform agricultural incentives, including subsidies, harmful for climate mitigation, adaptation, or food security, in a proportionate, just, fair, effective, and equitable way.

The technical phase revealed critical gaps in policy coherence with respect to food systems. A 2021 report by FAO, UNEP, and UNDP found that although the agriculture sector receives $540 billion USD per year globally, "[c]urrent support to agricultural producers worldwide works against the attainment of the SDGs, the targets of the Paris Agreement and our common future. This support is biased towards measures that are harmful and unsustainable for nature, climate, nutrition and health, while disadvantaging women and other smallholder farmers in the sector…Over two-thirds of this support is considered price-distorting and largely harmful to the environment."[30] The World Bank reached a similar conclusion in 2023, noting that agricultural subsidies tend to reduce technical efficiency, "are rarely pro-poor," and "[b]oth input and output subsidies are tied to the level of production and therefore almost

always benefit richer households—which tend to be larger farms with higher levels of production—more than poorer households."[31]

The Kunming-Montreal Framework, noted above, recognizes the importance of aligning incentives with the conservation of biodiversity. The GST can integrate this recognition into climate processes.

The GST is an opportunity to communicate that, in addition to the need to upscale support (discussed further below), there is an urgent need to realign existing sector support with health, development, and climate goals.

Opportunity 2: Reconciling needs for collective shifts to sustainable food consumption with differing national contexts

The GST outcome should call for Parties to collectively commit to shifting globally to more sustainable food consumption patterns, inclusive of sustainable healthy diets and reducing food waste, and to supporting this shift with national efforts in line with principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

As discussed above, addressing food consumption patterns will be essential for climate adaptation and food security[32] as well as climate mitigation.[33] The IPCC also recognizes that shifts to sustainable healthy diets represent a mitigation and adaptation solution with multiple SDG synergies. In line with this, EAT-Lancet Commission's landmark report poignantly notes that "[f]ood is the single strongest lever to optimize human health and environmental sustainability on Earth" and adds that diets "rich in plant-based foods and with fewer animal source foods…are 'win-win' in that they are good for both people and planet."[34] The IPCC noted that plant-based diets have the greatest potential to 'shift' demand-side emissions across all sectors[35] and that changes to sustainable healthy diets have the potential to reduce GHG emissions by up to 8 GTCO2e annually.[36]

In furtherance of this, the GST outcome can also urge developed country Parties to include in their updated nationally determined contribution referred to in Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Paris Agreement, emissions reduction targets for food systems or the AFOLU sector and a description of how these align with efforts to achieve the 1.5 C target.

Emissions reduction goals for food systems in line with 1.5 C targets in developed country NDCs will better upscale and align required action towards reducing food system emissions with core principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

As noted above, failing to address food systems emissions places the temperature goals of the Paris Agreement at risk. However, food systems also represent a particularly crucial mitigation opportunity as they comprise 60 percent of anthropogenic methane emissions.[37] As these temperature goals are at imminent risk, reductions in methane emissions are especially important as methane is a short-lived GHG relative to CO2.

The technical phase of the GST revealed key opportunities for higher income countries in particular. From the perspective of production, the greater financial capacity of developed countries is significant—IPCC notes that "The limited gains from AFOLU to date appear largely to result from lack of investment and other institutional and social barriers, rather than methodological concerns (high confidence)." From the perspective of consumption, UNEP highlights that "Life cycle analyses indicate that meat production—from inputs in its production to retail—has a median value of CO2e per 100g of protein that is significantly higher than alternative plant-based sources…In upper-middle-income countries and high-income countries, average meat consumption is far above recommended levels with 105g/ cap/d in upper-middle-income countries and 154g/cap/d in high-income countries."[38] The technical phase revealed a range of policy opportunities to address this and deliver key synergies including improving access to healthy foods, public procurement policies, and aligning incentive mechanisms such as subsidies and pricing with climate and public health goals.

Appropriate actions will vary according to national context. The GST outcome should therefore clearly recognize that global progress is required but that the circumstances of Parties and their food systems differ.

Opportunity 3: Conserving production systems for food security

The GST outcome can recognize the importance of prioritizing the production of food for direct human consumption in fisheries and arable land under agricultural use.

Climate change is placing significant demands on land resources, with these impacts disproportionately felt by vulnerable communities. Biomass and feed production risks place additional stresses on these areas with resulting impacts on food security, small-scale food producer livelihoods, and the environment.[39] Raising the profile of these issues in the GST will be critical for advancing policy coherence and just transitions.

APPENDIX: PROPOSED LANGUAGE

This section outlines key high level political messages in the form of proposed language within the indicative draft structure from the informal note by the co-chairs.

Priorities and Opportunities (as identified above)	**Suggested Language**	**Applicable sections in indicative draft structure from the informal note by the co-chairs.**
Priority 1.A	*Recognizing* the critical need for global climate action, including adaptation, mitigation, and actions to respond to loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, to address all aspects of the food system, from production through consumption.	Preamble Context and cross-cutting considerations
	[ALT] *Requests* that Parties make greater efforts to integrate demand-side action into their nationally determined contributions.	Context and cross-cutting considerations
Priority 1.B	*Requests* Parties to incorporate in their updated nationally determined contribution referred to in Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Paris Agreement, and other relevant plans, strategies, reports, and instruments, as determined by Parties, a clear description of how all stages of the food system are considered within climate adaptation and mitigation plans.	Context and cross-cutting considerations Guidance and way forward
	[ALT] *Urges* Parties to include more comprehensive actions to address all stages of the food system within climate adaptation and mitigation plans.	Context and cross-cutting considerations Guidance and way forward
Priority 2.A	*Recognizes* that because food systems are cross-cutting, climate action to address food systems should account for interfaces with human rights, gender equality, health, livelihoods, poverty eradication, food and nutrition security, ecosystems, biodiversity, animal welfare, and nature.	Context and cross-cutting considerations Efforts related to response measures
Priority 2.B	*Urges* Party and non-Party stakeholders to upscale financial support for sustainable healthy food systems and to make these finance flows consistent with a 1.5 C pathway, including particular attention to the promotion of	Means of implementation and support / finance flows Enhancing international

	sustainable healthy diets and improving small-scale food producer access to finance.	cooperation for climate action
	Recognizes that ensuring sustainable healthy diets is a priority for climate finance and requires a human rights-based approach.	Means of implementation and support / finance flows Enhancing international cooperation for climate action
	[ALT] *Calls* for reform of climate finance to improve access for small-scale food producers.	Means of implementation and support / finance flows Enhancing international cooperation for climate action
Opportunity 1	*Urges* Parties to identify and collectively eliminate, phase out, or reform agricultural incentives, including subsidies, harmful for climate mitigation, adaptation, or food security, in a proportionate, just, fair, effective and equitable way, seeking opportunities to shift incentives to support more sustainable food systems.	Means of implementation and support / finance flows Enhancing international cooperation for climate action Guidance and way forward
Opportunity 2	*Collectively commits* to shifting globally to more sustainable food consumption patterns, inclusive of sustainable healthy diets and reducing food waste, and to supporting this shift with national efforts in line with principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.	Context and cross-cutting considerations Enhancing international cooperation for climate action Guidance and way forward
	Urges developed country Parties to include in their updated nationally determined contribution referred to in Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Paris Agreement, emissions reduction targets for food systems or the AFOLU sector	Mitigation Guidance and way forward

	and a description of how this aligns with efforts to achieve the 1.5 C target.	
Opportunity 3	*Recognizes* the importance of prioritizing the production of food for direct human consumption in fisheries and arable land under agricultural use.	Adaptation

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Yaşamdan Yana Derneği
Youth in Agroecology and Restoration Network

Climate Action for Lifelong Learners

CLIMATE ALARAMMA
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

CLIMATE SAVE MOVEMENT

Club Humanitaire sans Frontières

CAAWO
Coalition of African Animal Welfare Organisations

COBASE
Cooperativa Tecnico Scientifica di Base

COMPASSION in world farming
ciwf.org

Conservative Animal Welfare Foundation

EAT

ESSERE ANIMALI

ESR
Ethical Seafood Research

EUROGROUP FOR ANIMALS

FÓRUM NACIONAL DE PROTEÇÃO E DEFESA ANIMAL

FAIR START MOVEMENT

Freedom For Animals

Future Food 4 Climate

GAIA

GLOBAL LAW ALLIANCE FOR ANIMALS AND THE ENVIRONMENT
LEWIS & CLARK LAW SCHOOL

GREEN ADVOCATES INTERNATIONAL INC
LIBERIA
GREEN ADVOCATES

GAYO
GREEN AFRICA YOUTH ORGANIZATION

REV .institute

HUMANE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

Impactful Animal Advocacy

IN DEFENSE OF ANIMALS

Coller Foundation

LTE
Leadership Initiative for Transformation and Empowerment
Creating Safe Space for Peace and Development Action

MERCY FOR ANIMALS

MIGHTY EARTH

new roots INSTITUTE


ONE ACRE FUND


PLANTBASED TREATY


REAL FOOD SYSTEMS
for individual & Planetary Health


Plantlife


proveg
international


ROWDY GIRL
Sanctuary


SDG ISRAEL


SHE
changes climate


SOCIETY FOR ANIMAL AND RANGE DEVELOPMENT
SARD


SHELLFISH NETWORK
Fighting neglected cruelty


SINERGIA ANIMAL


SVB
Sociedade
Vegetariana
Brasileira


WORLD
ANIMAL
PROTECTION


THE HUMANE LEAGUE


Trocaire
TOGETHER FOR A JUST WORLD


WORLD FEDERATION
FOR ANIMALS


FOUR PAWS
Animal Welfare.
Worldwide.


YARN