

CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition
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Comments are submitted according to topics in the Elements Paper from CFS Policy Convergence Process. I am especially concerned that Indigenous Peoples' food systems require unique considerations and need to be addressed in the Voluntary Guidelines. Therefore, there needs to be 4 classification groups: Traditional food systems; mixed food systems, modern food systems, and Indigenous food systems. Indigenous food systems are characteristically based in biocentric approaches that must be considered in the guidelines that are currently written as anthropocentric considerations. This is important in our current food production status within climate change and the climate crisis; it is important to consider Indigenous approaches to food systems that foster sustainability, resilience and adaptability that depend on the health of the natural resource base of the planet.

1. Food Supply Chains

a. Production systems.

It is important to consider food generating activities from the natural resource base that are not "mass produced by agricultural technologies" such as local small-scale indigenous technologies. Unique indicators and metrics are needed, such as "biodiversity variety and micronutrient richness" per surface area. Energy neutrality in food generation is another indicator that needs to be developed.

b. Storage and distribution

Unique storage and local distribution systems need to be considered that are based on indigenous values of sharing and well-being. These should also take into account provisioning of natural medicines that are also foods, cultural and spiritual resources provided in the natural land base that also generates food.

c. Processing and packaging

Consider how processing and packaging can be reduced with greater local distribution and use of food.

d. Retail and markets

Include Indigenous Peoples in policies to shape retail and market use of local resources. Give credit and address and resolve fair intellectual property rights of unique resources (including seeds) known and protected by Indigenous Peoples.

Ensure that retail markets provide healthy foods to Indigenous areas.

2. Food Environments.

a. Availability and physical access (proximity)

Protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples to their traditional territories. Provide incentives for Indigenous Peoples to provision their local communities with healthy foods. Always address the Right of Indigenous Peoples to Free, Prior and Informed Consent in developing food markets.

b. Economic Access

Address trade policies in the local circumstances of Indigenous territories and farmers, and their values, before and during development of national policies.

c. Promotion, advertising and information

Provide education in the local languages of Indigenous farmers and communities about healthy food options that include their local products. Include Indigenous food knowledge in school curricula.

d. Food quality, safety

Provide education on food safety. Consider Indigenous technologies for keeping food safe.

3. Consumer Behaviour

a. Food and nutrition education

Include Indigenous Peoples in developing local education strategies, dietary guideline development, and social protection programs that improve nutrition. Address Indigenous values and preferences.

b. Be aware that Indigenous values may be independent of other “traditional” values within a region or country, and address these respectfully.

4. General Comment

Include the United Nations agencies that address Indigenous Peoples in all activities of the CFS, and especially in the development of these Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition.