

## **HLPE Zero Draft Report on Sustainable Agricultural Development for Food Security and Nutrition including the Role of Livestock**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this zero draft of the new HLPE report on Sustainable Agricultural Development for Food Security and Nutrition including the Role of Livestock.

We welcome the systemic approach that is taken, looking at sustainable agricultural production at its interface with climate change and aspects of socio-economic development. The report also links agricultural food production with nutrition and health outcomes. With this regard, we would like to submit the following proposal, as we believe they could further strengthen some of the aspects addressed in the report.

The Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) Rome Declaration recognized that Food and agriculture systems, including livestock production systems, need to be addressed comprehensively through coordinated public policies, taking into account the resources, investment, environment and people' (Rome Declaration para 14. e). We would like to draw the attention to the commitment made by Member States to increase investments for effective interventions and actions to improve people's diet and nutrition (Commitment 15b) and to empower people and creating an enabling environment for making informed choices about food products for healthy dietary practices (Commitment 15h).

With this regard, the ICN2 Framework for Action gives concrete recommendations for sustainable food systems promoting healthy diets, and the recommendations 8 to 12 are particular relevant for this HLPE report of which we would like to state the following two in particular as they address the aspect of nutrition sensitive agriculture and diversification of food production and appropriate production of animal-source products:

- Recommendation 8: Review national policies and investments and integrate nutrition objectives into food and agriculture policy, programme design and implementation, to enhance nutrition sensitive agriculture, ensure food security and enable healthy diets.
- Recommendation 10: Promote the diversification of crops including underutilized traditional crops, more production of fruits and vegetables, and appropriate production of animal-source products as needed, applying sustainable food production and natural resource management practices.

### **Nutrition sensitivity of sustainable agriculture**

We would like to suggest more language on the nutrition sensitivity of sustainable agriculture including livestock. As the report states, despite progress, multiple forms of malnutrition remain pervasive around the world. Attaining Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG2) and especially its target 2.2 of ending malnutrition in all its forms, which includes achieving the Global nutrition targets adopted by the World Health Assembly and the nutrition targets included in the non-communicable disease targets, will need more concerted efforts and contributions from multiple sectors beyond nutrition/ health, and agriculture including livestock is one major sector to play its role in this.

Referring to the urgently needed shift towards sustainable food production and healthy food in order to sustainably feed the over 9 billion world population in 2050, this HLPE report will be a key element for translating the current knowledge and ambitions in the wake of the ICN2 and the new agenda 2030 into concrete policy recommendations for multistakeholder action to aim at changing the way we produce food and ensuring that the production meets people's needs and enables a healthy diet.

## **Policy coherence**

We propose more and stronger language on the need for policy coherence. Policy coherence for sustainable development is an approach designed to help ensure that actions taken to achieve different policy objectives (e.g. in agriculture, nutrition, health) can support rather than undermine each other. It focuses particularly on ensuring that policies promoting economic growth (like in agriculture etc) are better linked with those focused on social aspects of development and human rights, and this includes nutrition. We would like to suggest that the report could be stronger on the need for policy coherence for nutrition-sensitive agriculture, the need for agricultural production and policies to be responsive to the nutritional needs of people.

The adoption of the SDGs in 2015 creates an important opportunity for greater coherence between economic and social development goals. Target 17.14 of the SDGs is 'enhance policy coherence for sustainable development'.

With this regard we also like to refer to the final recommendations of the LiveWell for Life project (a pioneering project which aims to contribute towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from the EU food supply chain, and demonstrate what sustainable diets could look like for different European countries). The final report recommends the development of more coherent and integrated policy frameworks with the aim to link up food relevant policies in agriculture, health and environment.

*Ref.: WWF/Friends of Europe. On our plate today. Healthy, sustainable food choices - LiveWell for Life final recommendations. Available at:*

*[http://awsassets.panda.org/downloads/livewell\\_for\\_life\\_rec\\_report\\_english\\_final.pdf](http://awsassets.panda.org/downloads/livewell_for_life_rec_report_english_final.pdf)*

## **Trade**

We recognize that the current draft mentions that there is a role of trade and markets in fostering sustainable development and improved food security and nutrition. We would like to suggest further elaborating on this important and often neglected aspect, especially of the role of trade and its contributions to food security and nutrition outcomes.

The 2014 Rome Declaration of the ICN2 identified trade policy as one aspect of economic development that could play a greater role in contributing to fostering food security and achieving nutrition objectives. Trade policy is also included as a cross-cutting strategy for development throughout the SDGs.

With this regard we would like to refer to a forthcoming UNSCN discussion paper that will be published in the second week of December 2015. The paper has been written by Dr Corinna Hawkes and underwent a wide consultation process:

*Ref.: UNSCN (2015). Enhancing coherence between trade policy and nutrition action. A nutritional perspective. UNSCN Discussion paper.*

*With a nutrition-centric perspective, this discussion paper takes a first step towards exploring the question: What actions do policy makers need to take next to enhance coherence between trade policy and nutrition action? Given the emphasis of recent and current trade policy on opening up trade, it focuses on policies to liberalize trade through global and regional agreements.*

*The paper provides an overview of the objectives of nutrition action and of modern trade policy and explores the potential for both coherence and incoherence between trade policy and nutrition action. It highlights four actions policy makers can take to enhance coherence between trade policy and nutrition action: 1) the development of analytical tools that countries can use to conduct context-specific analysis of coherence between trade policy and nutrition action as relevant to their own populations; (2) the identification and implementation of complementary policies to enhance synergies and manage risks between trade policy and nutrition action; (3) build stronger capacity for cross-sectoral coordination; and (4) improve governance of policy-making processes. The paper ends with eight specific recommendations for key actors relevant to trade and nutrition.*

With regard to trade we would like to propose the following:

On page 65 line 47, where the report addresses trade and food security, we would like to propose to also pay explicit attention to nutrition. Decisions made about trade policy can be supportive of nutrition objectives, and they can also undermine nutrition objectives. Therefore, a better understanding of the opportunities and the risks presented by trade policies for nutrition is needed. Relevant tools need to be developed in order to be able to assess the impact of trade policies not only on food security but also on nutrition and vice versa.

Furthermore, we suggest to take up this point under the Recommendations on page 85 point 14: We would like to propose to especially address the need to enable and motivate policy coherence also with regard to trade and nutrition. In this regard it should be included that better analysis of the coherence between trade policy and nutrition action to both enable a common understanding of the opportunities and risks presented by trade policy for nutrition action (and by nutrition action for trade policies) and to identify complementary policies to enhance synergies and manage risks. This is needed for international and regional trade agreements, but most importantly, at the national level at which trade policies are actually implemented and people experience food insecurity and malnutrition.

#### **Association between meat consumption and noncommunicable diseases.**

We would like to draw the attention to a paper recently issued by the International Agency for Research of Cancer (IARC) - a WHO specialized agency - on the risks of the consumption of red meat and processed meat. The report highlights a link between processed meat and colorectal cancer, and red meat and pancreatic and prostate cancer. This adds to the existing evidence base on the link between meat consumption and noncommunicable diseases, and we would like to suggest including this in the report.

*Ref: International Agency for Research on Cancer. Volume 114: Consumption of red meat and processed meat. IARC Working Group. Lyon; 6–13 September, 2015. IARC Monogr Eval Carcinog Risks Hum (in press).*

Furthermore, on this topic, the HLPE zero draft report seems to give unclear messages concerning the link between red meats and human health. While in some places the report states that there is insufficient evidence (page 28 (lines 23-24 and page 41 lines 27-29) in other parts the report recognizes a link between consumption of red meat and NCDs (for instance, on page 82 lines 14-16,

p. 51 lines 11-15, and page 17 lines 49-51). We would like to suggest expressing in a more consistent way the messages given on the link between consumption of red meat and health outcomes throughout the paper.

In addition, we also like to highlight the following very relevant reference: *WHO/FAO. 2003 Diet, Nutrition and the Prevention of Chronic Diseases. WHO Technical Report Series, No. 916*. This technical report describes global and regional food consumption patterns and trends, and gives clear recommendations for nutrient intake by population groups for the prevention of noncommunicable diseases. The experts looked at diet within the context of the macroeconomic implications of public health recommendations on agriculture, and the global supply and demand for foodstuffs, both fresh and processed.

### **Concerning projection studies:**

As stated in the HLPE draft report, “Demand for livestock products in the future could also be moderated by socio-economic factors such as dietary and human health concerns and changing socio-cultural values” (page 43, lines 47-49). With this regard we like to refer to a UNEP report published in 2010, which addresses the question of sustainability of the Western high meat diet. The report addresses the increasing environmental impacts from agriculture due to population growth, increasing consumption of animal products, and outlines that substantial reduction of impacts would only be possible with a substantial worldwide diet change, away from animal products.

Reference: UNEP (2010) *Assessing the Environmental Impacts of Consumption and Production: Priority Products and Materials*, A Report of the Working Group on the Environmental Impacts of Products and Materials to the International Panel for Sustainable Resource Management. Hertwich, E., van der Voet, E., Suh, S., Tukker, A., Huijbregts M., Kazmierczyk, P., Lenzen, M., McNeely, J., Moriguchi, Y

Another project relevant with this regard is the ‘LiveWell for LIFE’ project that addresses this issue of major importance to society: how can we change our food consumption patterns to achieve lower environmental impacts and better health that will benefit us and our planet? Their report outlines how future food systems should be driven more by demand and social innovations in a number of directions such as community-supported agriculture and short food chains, responsible sourcing policies from schools and public administrations, urban vegetable gardens etc.

Ref.: WWF/Friends of Europe. *On our plate today. Healthy, sustainable food choices - LiveWell for Life final recommendations*. Available at:

[http://awsassets.panda.org/downloads/livewell\\_for\\_life\\_rec\\_report\\_english\\_final.pdf](http://awsassets.panda.org/downloads/livewell_for_life_rec_report_english_final.pdf)

### **Nutrition objectives (chapter 3)**

The HLPE draft report addresses food security and nutrition objectives especially in chapter 3 and mentions these also in some other places in the text. We would like to suggest to further spell out what these objectives are. Especially with regard to nutrition, we would like to suggest to further specify these objectives in light of existing agreed targets.

Important references here include:

- WHO. Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (WHO, Geneva 2013).
- WHO. Global Nutrition Targets 2025: Policy Brief Series. WHO, Geneva 2014

- WHO. Comprehensive implementation plan on maternal, infant and young child nutrition. WHO, 2014. Available at: [http://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/CIP\\_document/en/](http://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/CIP_document/en/)

Examples of concrete nutrition objectives could include the following. From a nutrition perspective, sustainable agriculture should contribute to improved nutrition. This means that agriculture and food policy should be coherent with actions that enable and motivate:

- All people to consume adequate, safe, nutritious, diverse, healthy diets and safe drinking water all year round.
- All people to have an adequate intake of micronutrients such as Vitamin A, iron and iodine, especially during periods when nutrient requirements are specific and high (e.g. pregnancy, infancy, early childhood, or during illness).

It also means agriculture and food policies are synergistic with meeting intermediate outcomes along the pathway of nutritional improvement such as:

- Women are empowered.
- People are educated and knowledgeable about positive nutrition behaviours.

Furthermore, the outcome (page 45 line 32) named 'other outcomes' should better be labeled 'food safety outcomes'. In addition, we would like to suggest an additional bullet on 'nutrition outcomes'.

### **Production of fruits and vegetables as important element of a healthy diet**

A healthy diet contains among others also fruits and vegetables, nuts and whole grains. The practical advice for adults regarding fruits and vegetables is that eating at least 400 g of fruits and vegetables per day reduces the risk of noncommunicable diseases. Ref is made to the WHO publication on healthy diet that should be included in the HLPE report. We would like to suggest seeing this issue addressed in some details.

Also in line with the ICN2 recommendations, the report should address this topic and how sustainable agricultural production can ensure that the relevant amount of fruits and vegetables that are essential part of a healthy diet are produced and can be made available to consumers.

*Ref.: WHO. Healthy diet. Fact sheet No 394. Updated May 2015.*

### **Data gaps – food consumption**

On important data gaps that need to be addressed, we like to add the need for more and regular data on food consumption. Reference is made to the joint statement of the UN agencies with a mandate in nutrition on the need to include the women's dietary diversity as an important priority indicator into the SDG framework.

As malnutrition has persisted in many populations despite sufficient quantities of food available, the quality and diversity of foods consumed are increasingly recognized as critical for a healthy diet and positive nutrition outcomes. Indicators of individual-level diet diversity capture important information on diet quality and adequacy for women. Moreover, recent studies emphasize the negative association between dietary diversity and stunting. The recommended priority indicator of adequate diet quality is: Minimum Dietary Diversity for women of reproductive age (MDD-W). These data are essential to better be able to link food production to the need of the consumers and to enable a healthy diet.

*Ref.: UNSCN. Nutrition Targets and Indicators for the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals. Accountability for the Measurement of Results in Nutrition. A Technical Note and Policy Brief. 2015. Available at <http://www.unscn.org/en/publications/nutrition-and-post-2015-agenda/>*

## **Food safety**

We like to reinforce the Recommendations from the ICN2 Framework for Action on food safety, notably the following ones and would like to suggest to adequately incorporate them into the recommendations of the HLPE report on age 85.

- Recommendation 53: Develop, establish, enforce, and strengthen, as appropriate, food control systems, including reviewing and modernizing national food safety legislation and regulations to ensure that food producers and suppliers throughout the food chain operate responsibly.
- Recommendation 57: Develop and implement national guidelines on prudent use of antimicrobials in food-producing animals according to internationally recognized standards adopted by competent international organizations to reduce non-therapeutic use of antimicrobials and to phase out the use of antimicrobials as growth promoters in the absence of risk analysis as described in Codex Code of Practice CAC/RCP61-2005.

## **Regarding the final recommendations on page 83:**

With this regard we like to refer to the conclusions of the ICN2 roundtable on nutrition in the post 2015 development agenda. This roundtable had put into sharp focus the linkages between nutrition, food and agricultural systems. And one of the five key messages was that the following: “The nutrition community needs to clearly define what is meant by “adequate nutrition” across societies, age groups, genders and health conditions so that nutrient needs and forecasting for food security can be appropriately determined”. We would like to highlight that it is also the role of other sectors like agriculture, to pro-actively demand these inputs to be able to make their policies more sensitive to the nutritional needs of people and produce in a sustainable way the foods that enable a healthy diet. Therefore we recommend including this in the final recommendations.

Finally, please find also some more specific comments on wording of certain issues in the text:

- **Malnutrition** manifests itself in many different forms, including undernutrition, over-nutrition and micronutrient deficiencies. It is not always correctly worded in the text that malnutrition includes overnutrition. E.g. page 85 line 35, where it says ...malnutrition and overnutrition.....
- Furthermore, **obesity** is not a noncommunicable disease. It is a nutritional risk factor for NCDs, notably for diabetes. This needs some correction on page 24 line 33.
- **Reference on ICN2 outcome documents** - The ICN2 was jointly convened by FAO and WHO. The reference to the ICN2 outcome documents should read correctly (page 87 line 51):
  - FAO and WHO. 2014a. Rome Declaration on Nutrition. Conference outcome document prepared for the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), Rome November 19–21.

- FAO and WHO. Framework for Action. FAO/WHO, 2014b. Conference outcome document prepared for the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), Rome November 19–21.

With best regards

The UNSCN Secretariat Team