

## Participation of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub at COP28 8 to 12 December 2023 Dubai, United Arab Emirates

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### Background

Following a year of active engagement between the Hub and the COP28 Presidency, the Hub participated for the first time in the United Nations Conference of the Parties on Climate Change (COP) in the United Arab Emirates at its 28<sup>th</sup> Session (COP28).

The COP28 Presidency has elevated the role of food systems in achieving the SDGs and Paris Agreement targets. The Presidency's Food Systems and Agriculture Agenda, launched in Rome during the UNFSS+2, prioritizes key food system objectives, such as aligning national food systems and agricultural policies with Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) by 2025.

Under the framework of the partnership between the Hub and the COP28 presidency, it was possible to contribute to leveraging the importance of food systems transformation for achieving both the climate goals and the SDGs.

The Hub was also recognized as one of the key partners to follow up on the implementation of the Emirates Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems, and Climate Action which was endorsed by 159 countries as per today. The Hub supported the COP28 Presidency by utilizing the network of the Food Systems National Convenors for meaningful consultation on the "Emirates Declaration".

### Events co-organized by the Hub with other partners

The hub co-organized three events during the COP food, agriculture, and water day on December 10<sup>th</sup> and on the 11<sup>th</sup>, with the main following results:

#### **Implementing the COP28 UAE Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems, and Climate Action event, 10<sup>th</sup> of December:**

The flagship event of the "Food Agriculture and Water Day" was co-organized between UAE, Italy, and the UN Food Systems Hub, the event convened the UN Deputy Secretart General

(DSG), Ministers from the UAE, Italy, and other regions to discuss the implementation of actions and committed intentions outlined in the leaders Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems, and Climate Action. The Declaration builds upon the outcomes of the UN Food Systems Summit in 2021 and the stocktaking Moment in 2023. It showcased country efforts, introduced new initiatives, and emphasized priorities for a two-year Roadmap, concluding in 2025. Major political milestones, including the G7, G20, Summit for the Future, and COP29 in 2024, were highlighted as key points for the implementation. In the opening of this event the **DSG Ms. Amina J. Mohammed launched the Convergence Initiative** as a platform to support the implementation of the Emirates Declaration.

The Hub Director moderated a Ministerial Session with Ministers from UK, Siera Leone, Norway and Netherlands, which focused on the implementation at the country level. He also referred to the efforts led by the Hub in transforming food systems to be more sustainable and resilient.

- **Food Systems and Healthy Diets for Climate Action event 10<sup>th</sup> of December:** co-organized between the Hub and the Nordic Council of Ministers, the session brought together experts and thought leaders, including the Hub Director to emphasize the interconnectedness between food systems, health, nutrition, and climate. It explored the path to healthy food while preserving the planet's and identified interventions to promote sustainable food systems and equitable food environments.
- **Synergizing Agrifood Systems Transformation and Climate Action event 11<sup>th</sup> of December:** Co-organized with the Nordic Council, the event introduced the Convergence initiative as a key step in understanding the interconnected challenges of climate change and food systems, emphasizing the need for a coordinated approach aligning government actions.

The Hub Director delivered welcoming remarks and identified up the objectives of the session of exploring best practices, identifying opportunities and challenges, and charting the Action Plan for a common approach to tackle food systems transformation and climate action

at the national level.

The Hub Programme coordinator moderated a session with FAO, the COP28 Presidency, the USDA, CGIAR which focused on how to ensure synergies between climate action and food systems transformation through the Convergence initiative.

- **Reception: Food Systems for climate action 10th of December:** aimed to create a meeting space for food systems actors at COP28 to meet each other, discuss and reflect on the food systems day at a COP.

### Interventions and statements delivered in other sessions at the COP28

In addition to the events co-organized, the Hub also participated as speaker in many sessions, including:

- **A Prioritization of Policy and Programmatic Options: What are the actionable points of synergy between Agri-Food Systems Transformation, Poverty Reduction, Nutrition and Climate Action? event:** The Hub Director statement reflected on integrated interventions for climate, food systems, nutrition, and poverty reduction – from ambition to action.
- **Accelerating Food Systems Transformation: Multi-stakeholder Action event:** The hub Director emphasized the role that multi-stakeholder partnerships play in promoting the efforts and drive the commitments of the Emirates Declaration and the UNFSS+2. He also identified the next steps to drive food systems transformation so that we can see countries updating their NDCs with ambitious action on food and already taking action by COP30.
- **Transforming Bhutan Food System: a commitment to innovation transformation, and climate resilience:** The Hub Programme Coordinator delivered an intervention focusing on the role of the Hub in supporting food systems transformation at the country level focusing on the case of Bhutan.

### Coordination meetings

At the sidelines of the Cop28, the Hub held several bilateral meetings, that provided visibility and advocacy on the important work of the hub at the national, regional and global levels, including:

- **Interamerican development bank - IDB:** Meeting with the Managing Director for Advisory Services and the Head of Climate to discuss cooperation for food systems transformation in Latin America through the empowerment of the private sector.
- **United Nations Economic Commission for Europe – UNECE:** Meeting with the Deputy Executive Secretary, to discuss the preparations for a side event and the dedicated regional meeting with convenors on the sidelines of the UNECE RFSD.
- **ESCWA:** preparation for the meetings during the Regional forum for Economic development.
- **The Dutch Government:** information exchange on the Convergence initiative.
- **4SD:** cooperation and implementation of the Convergence Initiative.
- Meeting with **the CFS PSM, WBA, GAIN and different Stakeholders** on supporting the development of a Corporate Accountability Framework.
- **The Gates Foundation:** discuss possible cooperation with the Hub on the Convergence Initiative.

### Major achievements:

- I. Food systems were at the center of the discussion during COP28, emphasizing the need to transform them to be sustainable and aligned with climate requirements.
- II. The Hub's Convergence Initiative gained recognition as an important step in the implementation of the COP28 UAE Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems, and Climate Action.
- III. The hub was recognized as a crucial partner in the implementation on the ground.

### Next steps and the way forward:

1. The Hub will follow-up and continue to support the UAE COP28 presidency on the implementation of the Declaration.
2. The Hub will start the implementation of the Convergence initiative to showcase results and evidence of the benefits at COP 29 and COP30. The Hub will work directly with the COP Presidencies to ensure a coherent follow up between COPs. On implementing the Initiative

the Hub will work with the 4SD Foundation as a strategic partner.

3. The Hub will organize regional meetings with the national food systems convenors in an annual basis, to provide a platform for exchange of experiences, lessons learned and best practices, on the process of the transformation of their food systems and the Convergence initiative.
4. The Hub will initiate discussions with Azerbaijan and Brazil, incoming Presidents for COP29 and COP30, to ensure that Food Systems Transformation remain a priority in the next two COPs and ensuring the Success of the Convergence Initiative.