



Brussels, 28th October 2022

CELCAA Statement on Draft Commission Non-Paper on Food Security in preparation of the Agricultural Outlook Conference at the 8th and 9th December 2022

CELCAA – The European Liaison Committee for agri-food trade welcomes the opportunity to support the European Commission's effort to tackle the acute global food insecurity, which has been accelerated by the outbreak of the war in Ukraine and its effect on global food supply chains.

Question 1: Which drivers have the most significant-positive or negative-impact on EU and global food security, in the short and medium-long term?

Regarding the main drivers, CELCAA members have identified the following ones as the most significant ones driving global food insecurities:

Economic drivers:

Trade openness: European as well as global agri-food trade continues to be subject to manifold technical, SPS, and administrative barriers to trade, which hinder seamless agri-food trade globally. Attention to the improvement of market access conditions for agri-food trade will significantly help to secure short-term and long-term food and nutrition security in critical hunger hotspots.

Functioning of the supply chain: The functioning of the food supply chain is a key driver for delivering food and will need further review to ensure better distribution.

Economic sustainability of producers: The economic sustainability of producers is crucial to ensure the availability and affordability of agri-food products globally as a primary source of food.

Lack of investment in innovation: The transition to more resilient and sustainable food systems and supply chains is a long-term driver for the creation of global food security. However, this transition must consider the need for scaling up global food production, which requires additional investments, innovation, and incentives to be moved forward. The agri-food sector is currently experiencing a lack of trade enabling solutions as well as an overall horizontal framework for EU innovation.

Environmental drivers:

Climate change continues to be a continued threat to short-, medium-, and long-term global food production:

Societal drivers:

Food production and trading system inclusivity: By excluding entire production or trading systems or entire food groups (organic, local, or short supply chains,...) and highlighting some as more sustainable than others, we limit our ability to ensure adequate food production. Short-and long-term reflections on food and nutrition security as well as on the definitions of sustainable food systems should take into account, that a scaling up of food production will be needed to maintain global food and nutrition security based on science-based approaches and not by means of popular concepts.

EU legislation and its impact on goods movement: Rigid implementation of EU food law during a crisis further slows response to acute food crises.



Horizontal drivers:

International cooperation: European and global agri-food trade as well as reflections about food systems and their contribution to food security need to include a broader and more integrated system beyond the EU-27. Food and nutrition security, as well as broader sustainability considerations, cannot happen in an EU-centric conversation but must necessarily take place in international fora.

Strategic autonomy and interconnectedness: Both elements are crucial to ensure more diverse sources to reduce the fragility of food supply chains. Better integration of commodity flow aids could be a starting point to avoid vulnerable sourcing.

Contingency plans in place for official controls and food safety management: As key learnings from the COVID-19 pandemic and continued evidence demonstrated by the effects of Ukraine's invasion on food security, the strict interpretation of EU food quality and safety can pose another obstacle to ad-hoc crisis management and seamless trade under difficult conditions.

Question 2. What are the interlinkages, in terms of synergies and trade-offs, between the different drivers, what actions should be undertaken at EU and/or national level in the short term, in light of the current circumstances arising from the war in Ukraine in particular and without jeopardising the EU's long-term commitments under the Green Deal?

From an agri-food trade perspective, the following synergies and interlinkages have been identified, which need to be considered when discussing short-term as well as long-term measures:

International cooperation is crucial to ensure a continued debate on the scope of the sustainability of food systems in a global environment and to build a food system that serves the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in a holistic manner and not only for Europe. Given the global interconnectedness of agri-food trade, international standard-setting based on the FAO guiding principle: "Sustainable agriculture shall contribute to all four pillars of food security: availability, access, utilization, and stability.", shall be leading these discussions by principle.

Inclusiveness: Food systems worldwide differ from each other, and there is no "one" sustainable food system, but many different paths to sustainability depending on the production needs in different regions of the world. By creating technical requirements which may not fit in the geographic context, they will neither help to ensure seamless agri-food trade flows to and from critical regions, nor serve the purpose of scaling up food production.

Scaling up food production is crucial to ensure a growing food supply for an increasing population. To transform food systems and accelerate efficiency, innovation, and investments, as well as a critical regulatory environment for advancing research and innovative food production approaches, will be essential.

Healthy diets and the availability of food options: Next to acute hunger hotspots, malnutrition remains a global problem, including in the EU. A balanced and healthy diet is comprised of the entire range of food products. By excluding food groups or specific products, the availability of food choices will be minimized rather than accelerated.

Environmental and economic sustainability: Environmental and economic sustainability must be able to address ambiguities at all levels of the food chain. Producers are challenged by a continuously shrinking toolbox for eg. mitigating effects caused by climate change, and at the same time, they must



scale up production. Producers would be willing to move to new production technologies or modify existing ones, while simultaneously the consumer perceives those food products as unsafe to consume. These ambiguities need to be tackled, when considering long-term transitions.

Flexibility on policy directions: Flexibility on the minimum requirements of the SFS must be considered to cushion external shocks to food systems. Legislation must ensure a variety of options for "sustainable" food systems, including considerations for third-party countries.

What actions should be undertaken in the short-term without jeopardising the EU's long-term commitment under the Green Deal? I

From an agri-food trade perspective, the following short-term actions should be considered, amongst others:

Measures to enhance the redistribution of food "trade flows": Measures need to be taken to remodel how surplus products can be more efficiently and sustainably distributed to be able to reach the hunger hot spot. The worsening food and nutrition security situation is evidence of the increased need for agricultural trade and improved distribution and accessibility of agri-food products.

Increase transparency in the markets: Transparency and predictability are critical for efficient management of the current food and nutrition security situation. Supporting e.g. a strengthened Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) for inputs such as fertilizers as well as on the availability of food products (such as suggested by the OECD) would significantly help the public and private sector to coordinate short-term support.

Sustained international dialogue: International dialogue in all international fora addressing TBTs, SPS barriers, aspects of taxonomy, and sustainability considerations with a view to ensuring short- and long-term food and nutrition security must be strengthened.
