

Private Sector Mechanism Position Paper

STRENGTHENING CFS REFORM OUTCOMES

The private sector values the UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS) as a unique multi-stakeholder decision-making forum of global importance. Private sector engagement, as well as the coordination mechanism, have been significantly strengthened over the past number of sessions and negotiations. Our constituency has demonstrated its ability to consult and coordinate the many voices representing business and industry in the global agri-food value chain. The private sector believes that it has a strong role to play in translating CFS decisions into operations, in facilitating the impact of CFS products 'on the ground', and in finding synergies with other multilateral processes.

In our opinion, a key challenge for the CFS post-reform is to ensure that it can make use of its convening power to further its impact in practical terms. Over the past 12 months, negotiations on responsible agricultural investment, fisheries and food waste, have generated much feedback from PSM members. They have expressed a common concern that there should be a window of opportunity for the CFS to better embrace the technical aspects of its products.

Through there has been willingness to engage at CFS from the entire agri-food value chain we represent (including farmers, input providers, cooperatives, processors, small and medium enterprises, and transnational corporations), we sense that we are at a juncture where the next step for the CFS is to focus on products that can be practically operationalized not only by business actors but also by governments and civil society.

The PSM suggests the following proposals to strengthen linkages with the CFS and to foster working relationships within it:

Operationalising CFS “products”

1. The CFS should use its convening power to enhance partnerships and uptake of its products.
2. For major outcomes such as VGGT and RAI, an Implementation Work Group should be considered in which businesses or other target audiences can review the outcomes of negotiations. It would consult with those operationalizing the goals. For instance, with the objective to check that they will work on the ground. Formal technical reports from the Implementation Work Group could be drafted between the negotiation process and final approval at the CFS plenary in October, assessing the potential for operationalization and suggesting approaches to implementation. The changes should be technical in nature and not resume the negotiations and be limited to the precise wording of the document.

Increasing the efficiency of CFS negotiations

1. To Increase the consistency of CFS plenary and other processes, convene a briefing prior to the meeting with the rapporteurs and leaders of Friends of the Chair, as well as with the scribes and CFS Secretariat. This would be an opportunity to increase efficiency and best practices to avoid circular discussions and re-introductions of the same text.
2. The process of seeking written inputs into major workstreams is beneficial and allows coordinating constituencies to consult.
3. Establish a finite number of times when non-state actors can intervene on a given issue and provide a guidance on this for all constituencies.
3. During negotiations, provide a timeline or cut-off whereby new issues can no longer be introduced to a given document. The purpose of negotiations would be to refine and finalise a text.

Advisory Group composition

1. The PSM calls for parity of seats with the CSM on the CFS Advisory Group, given the breadth of the private sector actors involved at CFS.
2. The PSM also calls for the inclusion of two farmer seats on the Advisory Group to recognize the unique role of farmers in food security discussions. Any change in seats on the Advisory Group should be inclusive though not unmanageable.
3. Outreach should be conducted to support more vibrant participation from the science and technology sector.
4. The PSM supports a diversity of actors at CFS. The PSM believes in the principle of self-organising and we emphasise the importance of encouraging all Advisory Group representatives to have modalities to enable larger participation in a transparent manner.

MYPOW

1. CFS should handle issues that are important, non-duplicative, and likely to result in action.

Convening and Mobilizing

1. Maintain a time-controlled environment so that CFS can be an efficient and relevant decision maker.
2. Ensure CFS uses precious resources of time and funds in the most cost-effective, focused manner possible.

3. Address the length and accessibility of documents for a diversity of stakeholders. Encourage shorter documents with links to case-studies and decisions.
4. The CFS Plenary is an important global event of cross-cutting relevance to other global processes. Workstream outcomes can include convening moments that call for greater engagement and focus on coordination and uptake. The capacity for announcements should also be explored.
5. The CFS Secretariat and Chair should have a mandate to promote major outcome documents through speaking engagements, communication tools and outreach efforts.