



## **EXPERT GROUP ON GENERAL FOOD LAW AND SUSTAINABILITY OF FOOD SYSTEMS**

**20 MAY 2022, 10.00 – 13.00**

### **MINUTES**

#### **1. WELCOME BY THE COMMISSION**

The Commission welcomed participants to the second meeting of the expert group on general food law and sustainability of food systems.

#### **2. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK ON SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS (FSFS): STATE OF PLAY BY THE COMMISSION AND EXCHANGE OF VIEWS**

The Commission provided an update on the state of play of the initiative with a focus on the upcoming consultation activities and presented the different policy options for push and pull measures to be analysed in the context of the impact assessment (IA).

The discussion with Member States related to the following aspects:

- One Member State asked for further information with regards to the methodology that would be used for the future sustainability label (issues related to the PEF methodology were raised) and how its response to the FSFS open public consultation (OPC) should be conveyed.

The Commission explained that the FSFS was a framework legislation and that general rules on a harmonised sustainability label would be part of the proposal in 2023 but not its specifications such as the methodology to be used for the substantiation of the different components of the label. The Commission clarified that it was aware of the issues raised around the PEF methodology and that works were ongoing to further adapt/improve this methodology.

With respect to the OPC response from Member States, the Commission indicated it would be helpful to receive one coordinated answer among all ministries per Member State.

- One Member State asked to take into account all dimensions of sustainability in the definition of sustainable food systems and in the context of the IA.

The Commission indicated this would be the case and that the three dimensions of sustainability were considered in all building blocks (both push and pull measures).

### **3. MONITORING OF THE FARM TO FORK STRATEGY: PRESENTATION BY THE COMMISSION AND EXCHANGE OF VIEWS**

The Commission presented the outline of the workstream for the development of a monitoring framework for the Farm to Fork Strategy, the approach and the indicative timeline and milestones.

The discussion with Member States related to the following aspects:

- One Member State inquired how health would be considered in the monitoring framework. The Member State also recalled that the EU has done work with Member States on defining sustainable healthy diets in the context of UN discussions for Voluntary Guidelines Sustainable Food Systems. It suggested the Commission to use the work done in that context, to derive indicators. The Member State further inquired about the Commission's approach of having headline indicators, and whether there would not be a need for more granular indicators.

The Commission explained that health was viewed as an integral part of the social dimension of food system sustainability, with a particular focus on nutrition and healthy diets from various angles (e.g. availability, affordability of healthy diets, prevalence of their up-take etc).

As regards the headline indicators, the Commission explained that they would be meant to show the overall direction and progress in implementing the F2F Strategy. They can of course be underpinned by more granular indicators.

- One Member State asked whether the Commission was considering to use knowledge of Member States' experts for this monitoring framework.

The Commission replied that it aimed at discussing with Member States on the basis of a concrete proposal, in order to keep the process efficient, and be able to advance quickly. It further clarified that the monitoring framework was not a static exercise and might be revised as needed. The Commission explained it had not considered so far establishing a network of scientists for this, but acknowledged this was a pertinent idea, which goes beyond the monitoring framework, to other elements such as the Do No Significant Harm principle. Sustainability is an area where different disciplines come into play. To cover all the possible angles, EFSA but also other agencies are involved.

- One Member State recalled that in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals there are many relevant indicators such as on malnutrition, overweight, mortality to NCD etc. It also underlined the need to monitor food consumption.