



# Frequently Asked Questions

**UN Food Systems Pre-Summit  
Rome, Italy, 26 – 28 July 2021**

**Version as of 2 July 2021**

## Overview

This document contains an overview of the most frequently asked questions that are emerging in preparations for the Pre-Summit. It will be updated periodically as additional questions surface and new information is available.

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## General Pre-Summit Information

### What is the Pre-Summit gathering?

Ahead of the UN Food Systems Summit, which will take place in September in New York, the UN is hosting a Pre-Summit gathering in partnership with the Government of Italy. It will bring together the efforts and contributions of a global engagement process over the past year to transform food systems. It will gather together youth, farmers, Indigenous Peoples, civil society, researchers, private sector, policy leaders and ministers of agriculture, environment, health, nutrition, and finance among other players. The three-day gathering aims to deliver the latest evidence-based and scientific approach from around the world, launch a set of new commitments through coalitions of action, and mobilize new financing and partnerships.

### When and where will the gathering take place, and in what format?

The Pre-Summit gathering will be held in Rome, Italy from 26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> July 2021. It will take a hybrid format, with an in-person component complemented by a vast virtual programme and platform enabling the participation of all who would like to participate from all parts of the world.

### Who can participate in the Pre-Summit gathering?

The UN Food Systems Summit is a People's Summit, and the Pre-Summit gathering is no different. All interested parties are invited and encouraged to follow and engage in the gathering's activities virtually, even as a set of no more than a few hundred delegates will then be specifically engaged in-person at the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) headquarters in Rome. Every session that takes place with an in-person component will also have a virtual component, with in person and virtual speakers and audience. In this way, those participating virtually will be just as included in all programmatic sessions and elements of the Pre-Summit gathering as those participating in person.

### What portions of the gathering will be held in person, and who will be able to attend?

The nature of the in-person component of the Pre-Summit gathering in FAO will be determined by Covid-19 protocols and what is deemed safe and possible at the time of the event. In this regard, discussions are currently underway between the Secretariat, UN, Italian Government, and FAO to finalize Covid-19 protocols for the event. This discussion is drawing on the latest thinking and scientific information available from the UN and Italy. However, all interested parties are invited and encouraged to follow and engage in the gathering's activities virtually. Those participating virtually will be just as included in all programmatic sessions and elements of the Pre-Summit gathering as those participating in person.



## About the Program and Participation

### How is the main program designed?

The Pre-Summit program is designed to help consolidate all of the substantive work of the Summit over its more than year-long, intensive, and inclusive preparatory process to date and develop an emerging set of conclusions, approaches and accelerated actions in the lead-up to the Summit in September. The program particularly builds on the inputs from all of the priority workstreams – the Scientific Group, Action Tracks, Food Systems Summit Dialogues, work of the Champions Network and UN Task Force, constituency groups (Member States, civil society, indigenous peoples, private sector, producers, youth, and cities), the [foodsystems.community](#) online platform, and follow up and review.

Click here to find the latest version of the [Pre-Summit program](#).

### Will there be official side events? How do I request to hold or attend a side event?

As the Pre-Summit moment is an opportunity to bring the community together around all of the substance emerging from the Summit process, the program does not have any official “side events” that might pull stakeholders away from the Pre-Summit. Instead, given the richness of ideas coming through the Summit’s workstreams and self-organizing constituency groups over the past year, the main program sessions will serve to surface their key content and enable the exchange and engagement across all stakeholders.

That said, the Pre-Summit led a three-week public call for expression of interest in holding parallel sessions between the months of May and June. As a result of this call, a rich set of affiliated parallel sessions will be organized independently of the Secretariat by Member States and a range of leading institutions working on food systems. These sessions serve a key complementary role in bringing out additional valuable ideas and offering a platform to convene actors around the world to ensure more voices and ideas are heard, and more actors are thinking about how to take action in their own contexts.

Click here to find the latest list of [Affiliated Sessions](#). The window for session requests for the Pre-Summit is now closed.

### What are the opportunities for Ministers to engage over the three days of the Pre-Summit?

Ministers will have several opportunities to engage in the Pre-Summit. These include:

- 1) Providing Statements on National Pathways for Food Systems Transformation;
- 2) Attending and speaking in high-level plenaries;
- 3) Participating and speaking in Ministerial roundtables,
- 4) Participating and speaking in parallel thematic sessions; and
- 5) Bilateral meetings.



More details on each of these opportunities can be found in the latest [Government Guidance Note](#).

## How do Member States join in the high-level plenary, the ministerial roundtables, and other thematic sessions?

All sessions on the main Pre-Summit program are open and inclusive to in-person and virtual delegates and will be livestreamed on the event's virtual platform. Member States are encouraged to share any priorities for the participation of their Ministers and Heads of Delegations with the Secretariat by writing to [FoodSystemsSummit@un.org](mailto:FoodSystemsSummit@un.org).

## How will Ministerial roundtable sessions be oriented? What will be their focus, and will these be public-facing discussions streamed for all participants or only open to Ministers and their delegations?

The Ministerial roundtables on 27 July are moments for Ministers to share experiences with each other, to indicate their priorities, to analyse similarities and divergence in their positions, and identify lessons that are being learnt and applied. The roundtables will also offer opportunities for Ministers to hear from specialists and practitioners, including from local authorities. During the roundtables, Ministers will be invited to reflect on questions such as, Why is food systems transformation required in our country? What kinds of transformation are necessary? How is transformation being taken forward? What are the key features?

These sessions will focus on inter-ministerial engagement and privilege engagement between Member State delegations, but they will be open discussions livestreamed for all participants.

## Will countries whose dialogues are still ongoing be able to make a statement? Is it worth for a Minister to come in person if s/he does not have much to present?

Yes. The Pre-Summit is specifically designed to offer Ministers a platform for sharing progress and experience and learning from other Ministers who will also be at various stages within their own process. The Pre-Summit will also be an opportunity to connect with leaders from other Summit work streams and constituencies, as well as emerging coalitions for action. These actors and coalitions could support the implementation of the national pathways that are being explored in the national dialogues.

## How will the sessions be structured in order to allow multi-stakeholder participation?

The Pre-Summit program is intentionally designed to be multi-stakeholder, and the Secretariat has provided guidance on the sessions' structure to support this engagement and convergence of the Summit's process. The sessions will provide an opportunity to engage across



stakeholders and Summit constituencies, and the virtual platform will provide functionality for comments, questions, and live polling on key issues.

### Is active participation also possible without being part of a Member State's national delegation?

The Secretariat is putting in place a virtual platform for the Pre-Summit that will be open to any stakeholders wishing to engage. The virtual platform will enable all stakeholders to not only view a livestream of the event, but also to be able to pose questions and comments to the organizers and respond to polls and surveys on the subject matter.

Member States' national delegations are more limited as these need to be able to fit within the maximum number of registered delegates that will be drawn on for direct video or audio engagement within sessions as appropriate in any given session.

### How will bilateral meetings take place and how can people participate?

For those participating in the Pre-Summit on its virtual platform, there will be a networking function that enables delegates to meet with others on similar interests. More information on this function will be provided in the lead up to the Pre-Summit.

For those participating in the Pre-Summit in person, there will also be time and opportunity for bilateral meetings between delegates. There will be a limited number of rooms available for these meetings inside the FAO building and the organizers will provide assistance where they can in order to help broker priority bilateral meetings. Further information on how to request space and support for bilateral meetings will be provided in due course.

### What is the possibility of participation for civil society, the private sector, science etc. who are not part of a national delegation?

The Pre-Summit expects to bring together thousands of stakeholders from member states, civil society, private sector, producers, Indigenous Peoples, youth, research, and beyond. Members of each of these constituencies will have delegates at the Pre-Summit that are drawn from the Summit's workstreams and self-organizing constituencies, and they will also be invited to register on the Pre-Summit's virtual platform to actively engage remotely and access every session on the program. Registration through the virtual platform opens in early July and participation will not be limited.

### How can I get involved in the Pre-Summit gathering?

Registration for the Pre-Summit opens in early July through the Summit's website and virtual platform. Please see the Pre-Summit [webpage](#) for the latest information at any time.



## About Registration and Logistics

Is it possible to extend the deadline for the communication of the national delegations?

The Secretariat has extended the original deadline from 2 July until 13 July, in order to give Member States more time to determine their national delegations where it is helpful to have a deeper understanding of the Pre-Summit's modalities, program opportunities, and COVID-19 protocols. The original deadline for the communication of the national delegations was set in order to allow time for planning the approach to the program and health and safety, and the Secretariat welcomes and appreciates all the communications received. The extended deadline of 13 July will be important for finalizing all programmatic and logistical arrangements.

Which of the Missions is in charge of the official registration for delegates and when should the delegations be communicated?

As a Secretary-General led Summit, the Pre-Summit invitations and government guidance note were shared through all Permanent Missions in New York. Recognizing that the Pre-Summit is in Rome, the Secretariat will welcome official registrations from Missions in New York or Rome as well as from Capitol.

As mentioned in the [Government Guidance Note](#), Member State delegations are requested to be formally communicated to the Pre-Summit organizers with a letter as soon as possible and by no later than 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2021 in order to enable preparation of registration, accreditation, and all logistics.

How should Member States submit their delegation?

Member State delegations in line with the [Government Guidance Note](#) are requested to be formally communicated to the Pre-Summit organizers with a letter as soon as possible and by no later than 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2021 in order to enable preparation of registration, accreditation, and all logistics. The letter should indicate the names, titles and contacts of delegates participating in the Pre-Summit and should specify the Head of Delegation as well as who is participating in person and who is participating virtually. It should be sent to the attention of the Special Envoy for the Food Systems Summit at the address below. Without an official notification from Member States with these details, registration will not be possible.

Dr. Agnes Kalibata  
Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General 2021 Food Systems Summit  
Nairobi, Kenya  
E-mail: [FoodSystemsSummit@un.org](mailto:FoodSystemsSummit@un.org)



## What should the country delegation composition be? Are companies, CSOs invited through a different trajectory, or will they be part of delegations?

The Pre-Summit will be open to all constituencies to attend and participate, and so companies, civil society actors, and others will be able to register themselves on the virtual platform once it is fully developed. This will enable their participation in all sessions of the main program.

Each Member State can include whomever they like in their delegation. The Secretariat leaves it up to Member States to determine who they want to include in their official delegations of up to 15 individuals registered on the virtual platform. This is expected to be representative across government from different ministries, agencies, and institutions given the multi-sectoral nature of food systems, but partners from non-state actors are also welcome in these delegations where Member States want to send a signal.

The only difference with Member State delegations is that the 15 individuals from countries will be the priority to get into the zoom platform where their faces and audio might be heard in sessions where appropriate, while others in the virtual platform will engage with a webcast where they can submit questions and comments but not take the floor as a speaker.

## Can only Minister +1 enter the FAO building?

The current [Government Guidance Note](#) allows for a Minister +1 to enter the building in person. Delegations not attending at Ministerial level or with a Minister's official delegate will be permitted 1 individual to enter the venue. This will continue to be reviewed as the Covid-19 protocol is finalized and capacity constraints are finalized.

## Can the Minister's +1 change for in-person participation?

The event organizers are seeking to put in place a delegate registration system and management approach that might allow minister's +1 to change over the different days, but not during the course of the same day. This constraint is a reflection of the Covid-19 protocol and health and safety measures that will be put in place for the event.

## Will interpreters and security officers be included as minister +1?

The current arrangement only allows for Minister +1 given capacity in the venue under the Covid-19 protocol. The choice of a Minister's +1 is entirely up to each Member State that is participating. Security service will be provided by FAO, while interpretation during sessions will be provided in the six official UN languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish) plus Italian.

## Would it be possible to use the link of 1 delegation's member for other interested persons who are not on the delegation list?

The Pre-Summit will be open to all individuals, everywhere to engage in the events by registering on the virtual platform, where they will be able to view the livestream but also engage





with questions and livestreaming. The current cap on delegations of 15 individuals per Member State is linked to the expectation that these individuals will be those that need a higher level of access in order to be included within the main Zoom platform of the programme and able to take the floor at some point to show their face and speak. The organizers recommend that the 15 members on the list be focused on individuals that may need to speak at some time during the program and that other delegates register for the broader virtual platform. Links for speaking in sessions will be for individual use only.

**Do permanent representatives need to be included in the national delegations to participate to the Pre-Summit sessions? Or will they have access to FAO given their status of permanent representatives?**

Permanent representatives will need to be part of the 15 members of the national delegations to be included in the Zoom platform, and they will need to be included in the Minister +1 delegation in order to enter the FAO building given the strict Covid-19 protocols and capacity limitations.

The organizers are reviewing any possibility for amendments to this protocol as the Covid-19 protocol is finalized in order to allow maximum engagement from Member States and support to Ministerial delegations during the Pre-Summit.

**Are there any requirements for entering Italy, such as vaccination or prior Covid-19 tests to travel? What are the existing travel bans and quarantine measures depending on country of travel applicable to participants travelling for the Pre-Summit?**

The Pre-Summit organizers are working closely with the Government of Italy and the FAO on how to ensure that the Pre-Summit is inclusive for both in person and virtually participants. Matters on health requirements are still being discussed, but Covid-19 vaccination certificates and normal quarantine times are not anticipated as a pre-condition so long as delegates follow the stipulated protocol for testing and control measures that will be specified for the event. This is expected to regular testing requirements and health and safety protocols in order to ensure the event is safe for all delegates. Locations for testing will be provided and supported for delegates to the Pre-Summit.

**Do Pre-Summit in-person participants have to be fully vaccinated for Covid-19?**

Matters on health requirements are still being discussed, but Covid-19 vaccination certificates are not anticipated as a pre-condition for participation so long as delegates follow the stipulated protocol for testing and control measures that will be specified for the event. The Pre-Summit organizers will share more information on the Pre-Summit's Covid-19 protocol as soon as available in July.



## How many people will be allowed to enter the venue, the meeting rooms and Italy?

The final numbers will depend on the Covid-19 protocol and will be provided once this is finalized. There is commitment that Member States will all be able to have Minister +1 physically in the FAO building. The number of individuals that might enter the country specifically under a protocol for the Pre-Summit event will be determined by the Government of Italy as part of the Covid-19 protocol and communicated as soon as available in July.

## What logistic support is offered for the Pre-Summit invitees?

The Pre-Summit organizers are working closely with the Italian Government on a logistics approach and health protocol that will facilitate visas and Covid-tests on arrival at Rome's Fiumicino International Airport. All other travel, hotel arrangements, and logistics will be the responsibility of the delegates themselves. Final details of all arrangements, as well as a list of hotels near FAO headquarters, has been provided in a more detailed delegates information guide.

Click here to find the latest [General Delegate Information Guide](#).

## Can those who are not able to travel delegate the invitation to the Pre-Summit to another person? Are passes transferrable?

Given Covid-19 constraints, all invitations are individual and non-transferrable.

## Miscellaneous Questions

### Must members of UN Agencies be part of the delegations for the Pre-Summit or will they have access to the sessions as part of the UN system?

Entities of the UN system are being invited in their own right. Members of UN Agencies and UN Country Teams are encouraged to register for participation throughout the Pre-Summit on the virtual platform.

### Will there be test sessions in preparation of the virtual participation?

There will be an opportunity to have tutorial sessions closer to the event in order to help Member States and other stakeholders understand the virtual platform and how it functions. All participants who will intend to take the floor virtually during the Pre-Summit events are strongly encouraged to attend one of the familiarization sessions that will be organized in advance of the event and to test their equipment and connection from the location at which they intend to intervene.



Will delegates inside the FAO building be able to access the virtual platform when not in sessions physically?

Yes. Delegates participating in-person will have access to wifi throughout the venue and in bilateral rooms and open spaces. That said, it should be noted that there will be no devices put at the disposal of delegates, therefore delegates should bring their own PCs/Tablets/Phones to the venue to access the virtual platform. No IT equipment will be made available by the organizers or FAO.

What languages will be translated at the three-day event? Can Ministerial statements be recorded in any national language?

As an official UN event, the Pre-Summit will be conducted in the six official UN languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish). Through the partnership with the Italian Government around the event, they have also made resources available for Italian interpretation for all events just for the Pre-Summit. These seven languages will therefore be the languages interpreted in all sessions over the three days. There unfortunately are no other technical capabilities to add interpretation for other national languages.

Apart from the FAO, will other Rome-based UN agencies host any of the activities?

There are not currently any plans for formal activities outside of the FAO building. This will continue to be discussed in the Pre-Summit preparations and revisited if a need arises.