# Alliance of Champions for Food Systems Transformation (ACF) Membership Terms of Reference (FINAL EDIT – 6 NOV 2023)

## INTRODUCTION

Food-systems globally are failing to deliver on multiple fronts, with devastating consequences for people and the planet. While the UN Food Systems Summit in 2021 helped kick-start important national transition pathway processes in many countries, most remain narrow, under-resourced, or lack intra-governmental coordination to maximize policy synergies and resolve trade-offs. There are currently too few compelling examples of what it means to actually *transform* food systems in line with food security, nutrition, climate and nature goals. Many countries are understandably reluctant to be first movers, given their embeddedness in international trade and markets. There is an urgent need for ambitious countries to step up and lead by example.

Greater political focus on these issues is vital; greater financial and technical support are also needed for countries to develop and implement meaningful national food transformation pathways that are consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals, Paris Agreement and Global Biodiversity Framework.

The Alliance of Champions for Food Systems Transformation (ACF) is a coalition of ambitious countries, determined to act urgently to close the ambition and implementation gaps on food systems and – as a bloc - speed up international progress. By joining ACF, vanguard countries are committing to driving systemic change, taking a 'whole of government' approach to transforming food systems such that they deliver better outcomes for people, nature, and the planet. Working collaboratively, they will facilitate learning, disseminate knowledge, accelerate innovation, and inspire others to go further, faster, supported by civil society, academia, and private sector actors.

The Alliance will sit outside formal multilateral processes but will ensure coherence with these wider processes – building, for instance, on the CoP28 Emirates Declaration on Resilient Food Systems, Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Action. It draws upon similar high ambition political models in which a small group of leading countries that are committed to taking domestic action and driving the global agenda, coordinate and collaborate to accelerate progress. The extent to which this model can influence change has been seen in other successful efforts to shift perceptions of what is possible, such as the <u>Powering Past Coal Alliance</u> or the <u>Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance</u>.

## **MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA**

Membership of the Alliance of Champions for Food Systems Transformation (ACF) is open to any government that commits to meeting the membership criteria. Countries joining the Alliance are committing to take ambitious action on food system transformation, to share that knowledge with their peers and with civil society at regular intervals, and to proactively advocate for narratives of food systems transformation on the global stage.

The parameters around the level of ambition, and requirements for membership will be signed off and decided by appointed Alliance co-chairs. The past twelve months of engagement with governments and civil society by the Food Systems Collaboration Network (FSCN) has provided a template for what a widely accepted membership structure might look like. The following provides an indicative, high-level outline of

what might be deemed acceptable.<sup>1</sup>

## **UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES**

We anticipate certain principles will underpin the successful transformation of food systems in any country and invite Alliance countries to embrace and model these as part of their membership. These are to:

- 1. Ensure **food systems transformation** leads to positive changes across all five key outcomes food and nutrition security, equity and livelihoods, adaptation and resilience, mitigation, and nature and biodiversity to the benefit of nature, people, and the planet.
- 2. Promote **equity and inclusivity** through meaningful and impactful engagement with all stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs).
- 3. Create the **enabling conditions** that tackle the **root causes** of societal and environmental degradation.
- 4. Ensure a **whole of government** approach, with all relevant Ministries engaged.
- 5. Work collaboratively and transparently with all relevant stakeholders both internally 'within country' and with other governments and partners internationally to facilitate learning, knowledge sharing, and financial and technological cooperation.

## ACTIONS

Alliance countries are asked to commit to three actions:

- 1. Update or develop new national visions and **Food Systems Transformation Pathways,** inclusive of the ten priority intervention areas listed below, and consistent with science-based targets.
- 2. Update NDCs, LT-LEDS, NAPs and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans in line with the National Food System Transformation Pathways and/or Implementation Plans by 2025.
- 3. Communicate on progress and **report annually** on targets and priority intervention areas (noting that a monitoring framework is expected to be developed by the ACF Secretariat, and approved by Members, aiming to avoid duplication and minimize any reporting burden).

At the heart of ACF's suggested membership criteria sit the ten priority 'action areas' referenced above, which are set out at Table 1. Alliance members will commit to acting across all ten of these areas as they transform their domestic food systems and advocate for more ambitious international action. These interventions will contribute to multiple outcomes across food and nutrition security, equity and livelihoods, adaptation and resilience, mitigation, and nature and biodiversity. Some countries will naturally be able to make more progress in certain areas than others. But to affect genuine food system transformation, progress is likely to be needed across all ten areas. Action in any given area should – at a minimum – not undermine action in another.

These priority action areas will be discussed and shaped by Alliance members in the run-up to launch. Annex 2 expands upon the range of intervention options that might be used by governments to deliver against

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In developing this thinking FSCN has consulted extensively with interested countries, civil society and multilateral agencies.

these ten action areas. These are neither prescriptive nor binding, but commanded broad support amongst those governments and other stakeholders and are intended to represent a sensible level of ambition for a 'leadership' group.

Table 1: 10 priority intervention areas	Mitigation	Adaptation & Resilience	Food & nutrition security	Nature & Biodiversity	Equity & Livelihoods
1. Increase the affordability and availability of nutritious, diversified and sustainably produced foods (including blue foods, nutrient rich foods, alternative proteins, pulses, legumes, fruits, and vegetables), without sacrificing yields	√	✓	V	V	√
2. Improve livelihoods for those working throughout food supply chains, including increasing incomes, creating jobs and economic opportunity, including for youth, and ensuring a just transition for producers and for rural and coastal communities		✓	~		√
3. Build and enhance the resilience of food systems and their associated supply chains, reducing exposure to climate-, energy- and water-related risks, protecting vulnerable communities and actively promoting climate-smart agriculture		~	~	√	V
4. Improve gender parity and income equality, including increased protection of IPLCs rights and access to land, water, and resources		√			√
5. Protect and restore nature, including forests, peatlands, oceans, freshwater habitats, wetlands, and coasts, as well as other natural ecosystems, thus supporting biodiversity and contributing to climate change mitigation	~	~	~	~	✓
6. Increase the share of land, ocean, and freshwater under nature positive, ecosystem-based, and sustainable management practices (including agroecological, regenerative and other sustainable agricultural approaches)	√	~		√	
7. Reduce all GHG emissions throughout the entire food value chain (including from AFOLU and energy sectors, and including post-farm and consumption-related activities); increase carbon removal activities in the AFOLU sector; and scale land mitigation opportunities in line with Paris Agreement targets.	~			$\checkmark$	
8. Reduce food loss and waste (SDG 12.3)	✓	✓	1	✓	
9. Realign public financial and policy incentives to promote low emission, resilient, nature positive production and healthy diets	√	✓	✓	✓	✓
10. Accelerate innovation through increased investments in R&D and digital technology	√	✓	~	✓	√

## FORMAL PROCESS FOR JOINING THE ALLIANCE

Membership of the Alliance is for governments only and is on an open and voluntary basis, in line with the Terms of Reference (TOR) outlined above.

Alliance action will be driven by its members, with the support of the Food Systems Collaboration Network and, once formed, the Alliance Secretariat.

Member governments will be invited to assess and re-state their intention to continue engaging at the end of the scoping, and beginning of the implementation, phase.

#### Alliance Member State:

**Minister's Signature:** 

## Name and designation:

Date:

Stamp:

### **Representative of ACF:**

Signature:

Name and designation:

Date:

## TIMELINE OF ENGAGEMENT AND RESOURCING IMPLICATIONS

We envisage an initial commitment of at least 2.5 years (to COP30 in Brazil), and ideally beyond. This would carry the Alliance through its initial consultation and scoping phases, and well into implementation. We envisage that members will commit beyond that, as it will take time to build the Alliance, carry out the domestic scoping work and then start to work together internationally to expand what's deemed 'possible' at the international level.

#### Pre-launch 'Consultation' Phase (to November 2023)

Countries willing to join the Alliance during this consultation phase will:

- Collaborate with the other Alliance members to co-design an initiative which can continue and grow beyond COP28, setting common metrics for ambition and progress, and agreeing on a common framework for national-level and plurilateral actions to accelerate this progress.
- Refine and collectively agree the underlying principles, actions, and key intervention areas.
- Wherever possible, leverage existing initiatives and diplomatic capacity to push other countries for domestic commitments and actions and to move into the Alliance.

#### Launch (December 2023)

Leaders' summit, 1 December:

• Potential announcements via Heads of State of co-chairs and/or members.

Launch event, 10 December:

- Ensure Ministerial representation at a blue zone event at COP28 as a member of the Alliance committing to the Alliance and its objectives.
- Have Ministerial representatives open to media questions.

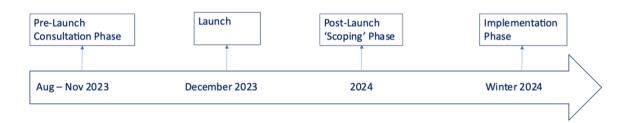
#### Post-Launch 'Scoping' Phase (2024)

- Attend one Ministerial meeting of the Alliance (organized by the Secretariat of the Alliance and held in the margins of a key moment such as COP29 or UNGA).
- A Senior Advisor (or equivalent) to attend one meeting of the Alliance per quarter to discuss progress, challenges, and opportunities for the Alliance.
- Work behind the scenes as required with the eventual Secretariat to shape thinking and to drive ambition around the Alliance.
- Create a workplan and ensure 'readiness' for the implementation phase. This will involve looking across existing national commitments and plans in the food systems space, mapping gaps between existing work and ACF priority interventions, and – at a cross ministerial level – agreeing policies and workplans to address these gaps.

### Implementation Phase (Late 2024 onwards)

- Countries to execute their workplans.
- Countries to share knowledge and exchange best practice with co-members of the Alliance.
- Countries to report against agreed reporting metrics (aligned with existing demands and legitimised by civil society monitoring).
- Support a global public relations effort to promote and demonstrate the benefits of food systems transformation for climate, biodiversity, nutrition, and equity.

#### Figure 2: Timeline



## The role of the key contact

The Alliance requests that each candidate country nominates a key contact (normally a Senior Advisor to a relevant Minister or equivalent). This role will help to devise and implement an appropriate political and diplomatic strategy for the Alliance, as well as providing active coordination for those activities of the Minister and other leadership roles within their respective government. This role will be an international one, requiring the ability to liaise with key international stakeholders and to mobilise domestic constituencies for the overall aims and ambitions of the consortium. In particular, the role will require:

### **Political strategy**

- Understanding and helping to set preliminary targets and commitments for the Alliance which are acceptable domestically, but which are also accepted by international civil society as ambitious and agenda-setting.
- Mapping of existing coalitions/civil society partners to support implementation.
- Understanding future resourcing needs and liaising with national and international partners to prioritise on this basis.
- Building networks/relationships domestically to support implementation.
- Working with senior leadership to understand the key moments for leadership.
- Drafting presentations and briefings to progress the Alliance's work.

#### **Alliance Coordination**

- Feeding in on governance/strategy document development as appropriate.
- Attendance at quarterly Alliance meetings.

• Drafting and/or signing off on Ministerial speeches, as well as press releases and communications assets to support public relations and storytelling for the Alliance, with a view of inspiring further governments to invest in systemic action on food systems.

## THE SECRETARIAT

The Alliance is designed to be driven by governments, for governments - along the lines of the <u>Beyond</u> <u>Oil and Gas Alliance</u>. The Secretariat will be guided by the Alliance Co-Chairs and member states, and support them with ongoing dialogue and outreach. It will provide administrative support and manage daily operations; seek to further secure and manage available funding for technical assistance; and build, manage and facilitate relationships between Alliance Members with thought and implementation partners.

The ACF Secretariat is responsible for five objectives:

- 1. To assist Members in their diplomatic efforts to bring in further Members and Partners.
- 2. To further secure and enable Members to access funding.
- 3. To support Members in implementing and monitoring their ACF commitments;
- 4. To create a community of practice by helping Members disseminate learnings, discuss thematic issues, and access technical advice and resources; and
- 5. To communicate progress by Members in achieving the goals and objectives they have committed to.

#### Secretariat Staffing

**Phase 1:** Staffing of the Secretariat should reflect its functions and be agreed by Alliance Members. To ensure support is available to Members from 1st Jan 2024, however, we suggest providing bridge staff coverage for nine months supported by the current project team, and in the current structure, from the Food and Land Use Coalition (FOLU) and Chatham House.

**Phase 2:** By 1 October, we expect a Secretariat to be established with new staff in key positions. Alliance Members should agree formal structure of the Secretariat, staffing for which is suggested below. At this point, any adjustments in resourcing needs (for example, to support increasing Membership numbers and associated activities) could be reviewed, with further reviews built in every 12 months.

- Head of Secretariat: Lead of the Secretariat and official representation.
- Deputy Head of Secretariat: Member support and convening, supporting implementation, monitoring and accountability.
- Program Manager: Member liaison and administration.
- Communications Officer: Overseeing all campaign, press and public relations related activities as well as communication with the Members.

## GOVERNANCE OF THE ALLIANCE

We propose five key components of ACF:

**The Steering Committee:** The Steering Committee is ACF's ultimate decision-making body. Led by the Co-Chairs, accompanied by three further member country representatives reflecting regional balance to the greatest extent possible, it will be governed by countries, for countries, with the Head of Secretariat providing administrative support. The Alliance's founding Co-Chairs should agree with Alliance Members ways of working and might consider rotating every 1-2 years, with the principle of having one North and one South representative, wherever possible. Other country representatives could also rotate on 1-2-year cycles, on alternative years to the Co-Chairs. The Steering Committee's first task would be to determine the permanent host for the Secretariat, working in partnership with the temporary bridging team.

The Members: Members are exclusively made up of national governments.

The Secretariat: as outlined here and reporting to the Steering Committee through:

- An annual ministerial meeting for ACF Members. This closed-door session will be used to discuss strategy, take stock of progress, assess Taskforce outputs and coordinate outreach and strategic communications.
- Quarterly meetings of the Steering Committee of ACF. Meetings should ensure that the Secretariat is delivering on the following activities:
  - Establishing, guiding, and disseminating the work of the Taskforces.
  - Advising on strategy, providing feedback and suggestions to the Secretariat on key decisions and issues.
  - Decisions to accept and/or reject new Members, which should be made by consensus and informed by advice from the Secretariat. In cases of disagreement there should be the option of a majority vote. In the event the decision is still tied, the co-chairs will cast deciding votes.
  - Impactful strategic communications for the Alliance.

**The Taskforces**: Accountable to the Steering Committee, Taskforces will be time-bound and created in response to specifically defined problems or obstacles, which they will be tasked with resolving. They will report into the Steering Committee twice annually and will, in most cases, be dissolved upon resolution of the problem or obstacle. Taskforces would be led by appointed partners (typically civil society) as commissioned, with all ACF Members having input into taskforce composition (but final decisions taken by the Co-Chairs). All persons who volunteer to participate in a Taskforce commit to engaging actively in its meetings and activities.

**The Friends**: Friends are comprised of civil society representatives and non-governmental groups who wish to support governments with implementation. Organizations can provide support pro-bono, through thought leadership, or in-kind support, as well as via fundraising efforts to deliver specific projects within a country. The friends may also be appropriate organisations to commission for the Taskforces and annual reporting on progress, to be identified on an ad-hoc basis.

#### ANNEX 2: POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE 10 PRIORITIES

Action	Rationale	Priority Activities
availability of nutritious, diversified and sustainably produced foods (including blue foods, nutrient rich foods, alternative proteins, pulses,	Malnutrition is pervasive worldwide, with almost 2 billion people overweight, a further 2 billion suffering from micronutrient deficiencies, and 820 million undernourished. This action area seeks to improve food and nutritional security by ensuring that healthy, nutritious food is affordable and available to all – and is produced in a way that reduces environmental impacts.	<ul> <li>can also support local agriculture and markets while simultaneously improving health, nutrition and education, making communities more resilient.</li> <li>Establish proper safety nets for vulnerable groups.</li> <li>Diversify sources of, and increase access to, protein rich foods.</li> <li>Increase sustainable blue food and alternative protein production and</li> </ul>
working throughout food supply chains, including increasing incomes, creating jobs	This action area seeks to reduce income inequalities that undermine social cohesion and economic development, ensuring decent standards of living for farmers and creating the enabling conditions for a just transition.	fisherfolk, and workers in agriculture, including opportunities for women and youth.
their associated supply chains, reducing exposure to climate-,	Record-breaking floods, droughts and other climate-related extreme weather events are expected to pose particularly significant challenges to farmers and fisherfolk worldwide. This action area seeks to mitigate some of these risks, with a	<ul> <li>Improve access to insurance, shock-responsive social protection and safety nets to support those affected by climate impacts and other shocks to food systems.</li> </ul>

communities and actively particular focus on support for the r promoting climate-smart (including women, youth, children). agriculture.	<ul> <li>Improve access to, and promote adoption of, sustainable water management technologies at farm and landscape level (rainwater harvesting, drip irrigation, supplemental irrigation, agroecology and managed wetlands, etc.).</li> <li>Diversify production systems at all scales to reduce climate risk, including ensuring that all lands and water are under multifunctional land and water use planning.</li> <li>Promote an integrated risk management approach through platforms that connect early warning systems with early action and finance.</li> <li>Invest in research to support the development and equitable scaling up of digital agriculture and climate services as an integral component of enhanced investments in food system transformation.</li> </ul>
4. Improve gender parity and increased protection of IPLCs rights and access to land, water and resources. This action area aims to empower and other marginalized groups who in food production but often face dis barriers in accessing land, resource services.	play a vital rolegroups in accessing land, resources, markets, and decision-making processes.crimination and• Strengthen institutional capacity and available mechanisms to secure and protect
5. Protect and restore nature, including forests, peatlands, oceans, freshwater habitats, wetlands and coasts, as well as other natural ecosystems, thus supporting biodiversity and contributing to climate change mitigation.	<ul> <li>Restore forests, degraded lands, oceans, peatlands and other ecosystems through natural or assisted regeneration including (where relevant and appropriate) afforestation, reforestation, rewetting, maximizing use of indigenous species and other NBS.</li> <li>Implement zero-deforestation commitments by governments, private sector actors, civil society, and consumers to halt the expansion of agriculture into</li> </ul>

ocean, and freshwater under nature positive, ecosystem- based, resilient, and esocean nature ecosystem- des	his action area seeks to enhance the nature ontribution of agriculture including improving soil ealth, fertility, and productivity, which are ssential for food security and ecosystem ervices.	<ul> <li>Increase the share of land under regenerative, resilient and adaptive practices.</li> <li>Implement low-disturbance and carbon-enhancing practices such as no-till agriculture, cover crops, crop rotation, intercropping, organic fertilizers, integrated pest management and paludiculture.</li> <li>Measure impacts on soil health, yields and livelihoods, contributing to local data collection efforts that support regenerative agriculture systems.</li> <li>Improve water use efficiency and management in agriculture through technologies, practices, policies, and incentives that reduce water demand, increase water productivity and conserve water quality.</li> <li>Plan and enforce the use of marine and freshwater resources in a way that is equal to that afforded to land.</li> <li>Enhance bio-circular economy through recycling of food and other organic waste, and support reuse of biowaste as renewable energy.</li> <li>Ensure zero agricultural land expansion on high-carbon landscapes.</li> <li>Improve transparency and accountability of finance and major commodity supply chains driving conversion of high-carbon landscapes.</li> <li>Develop early warning systems and information management for food demand and supply outlook.</li> <li>Support farmers in reducing pesticide usage without compromising production.</li> </ul>
throughout the entire food value co chain (including from AFOLU er and energy sectors and including es post-farm and consumption- related activities); increase (e carbon removal activities in the AFOLU sector; and scale land co	Food systems, including their energy onsumption, account for ~30% of global missions. Reducing these emissions by 83% is assential to mitigating climate change and neeting existing global agreements and targets e.g., SDGs, Paris Agreement, Global Methane Pledge). The agrifood system has the potential to ontribute actively to the energy transition, in oordination with better use of renewables.	<ul> <li>Reduce methane emissions from agriculture (e.g., rice cultivation, livestock management including enteric fermentation, manure management and herd reduction where necessary).</li> <li>Improve nitrogen management including in fertilizer application without compromising food security.</li> <li>Abate CO2 emissions throughout the food value chain, including production, processing, distribution, packaging, and retail – as well as consumption, where dietary shifts should be actively promoted. Energy-related abatement could include the replacement of traditional biomass (e.g. charcoal) for cooking in low income countries and households, utilization of renewable energy for agriculture production, processing and distribution (solar-powered irrigation, electrification of the transportation system, low emission maritime shipments), and the direct contribution of agricultural, including forestry, products to energy production, either as primary use (e.g. energy crops) or for residuals (conversion of food waste or underutilized crop residues).</li> </ul>

		• Reduce nutrient losses through technologies, practices, policies, and incentives that balance fertilizer demand and supply, enhance fertilizer uptake by crops, and prevent fertilizer runoff and leaching into water bodies.
8. Reduce food loss and waste (FLW).	30% of the world's food supply is currently lost or wasted. This action area addresses these inefficiencies whilst also increasing food availability, reducing GHG emissions, saving natural resources (water, land, energy), and boosting economic growth.	<ul> <li>Improve post-harvest handling and storage of food products (e.g., increase prevalence of temperature and humidity-controlled storage).</li> <li>Measure national baselines, identify hotspots for food loss and waste and improve data availability.</li> <li>Promote tracking of quantity of food wasted throughout food supply chains.</li> <li>Raise public awareness, combined with targeted policies, incentives and regulatory frameworks aimed at reuse and reutilization, including the reduction of household waste.</li> <li>Encourage private sector actors to implement food loss reduction technologies and practices, and to require their supplies to do the same.</li> <li>Commit to enhanced monitoring of FLW – and to a 50% FLW reduction target at national level.</li> </ul>
9. Realign public financial and policy incentives to promote low emission, resilient, nature positive production and healthy diets.	Public finance needs to shift urgently towards supporting more sustainable and resilient modes of production. Similarly, public procurement and tax structures, which can shape consumption choices and thus promote healthy diets, should also be redirected such that they deliver better outcomes for people and the planet.	<ul> <li>Redirect agricultural subsidies to ensure they avoid perverse incentives for forest and ecosystem conversion / degradation. Policy (including subsidy) design should also ensure bioenergy crops do not compete with food crops for land.</li> <li>Develop investment pipelines to support agriculture research and innovation – including in alternative proteins R&amp;D and manufacturing capacity development.</li> <li>Use government purchasing power to promote, and build demand for, healthy, sustainable diets.</li> <li>Align food pricing structures within public procurement and taxation, with consumption guidelines that respect human and planetary health.</li> <li>Consider how fiscal incentives can be used to support the development of more sustainable and resilient food systems and consumption by those who cannot afford healthy diets.</li> <li>Support sustainable, or regenerative, or nature positive agricultural research and innovation notably on under consumed healthy foods.</li> </ul>
10. Accelerate innovation through increased investments in R&D and digital technology.	Digitisation of food and land use systems is occurring through precision farming, gene-editing techniques, and enhanced logistics, enabling producers and consumers to make better	<ul> <li>Invest in R&amp;D of innovative, low-emission technologies, practices and products that can enhance the sustainability and resilience of food systems (e.g., cold chain, alternative proteins, irrigation solutions, reducing GHG emissions from crops (e.g., rice) and livestock (e.g., Enteric methane), drought resistant /</li> </ul>

informed choices. Similarly, new technology is enabling real-time tracking of natural resources, whilst also enhancing productivity.	
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