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Center for  
Development Research  
University of Bonn



**UNITED NATIONS  
FOOD SYSTEMS  
SUMMIT 2021**

<https://sc-fss2021.org/>

## **Key insights from the Food Systems Summit that are highly relevant for policymakers and for the general public at large**

### **Joachim von Braun**

**Professor for Economic and Technological Change, Bonn University; Chair of the  
Scientific Group for the UN Food Systems Summit 2021**

The National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA), Thailand and the  
Office of National Higher Education Science Research and Innovation Policy Council  
(NXPO) webinar on "The Role of Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy for  
Transforming Food Systems in Asia-Pacific and a round the World, 16 June 2022

# Key insights from the Food Systems Summit

## Overview

1. **The UN FSS advanced food systems thinking**
2. Main outcomes from science communities for UN FSS
3. Considering the food crisis and way forward

# The Food Systems Summit Made It Clear that Transformative Action in Food Systems is Fundamental to Achieving the SDGs...

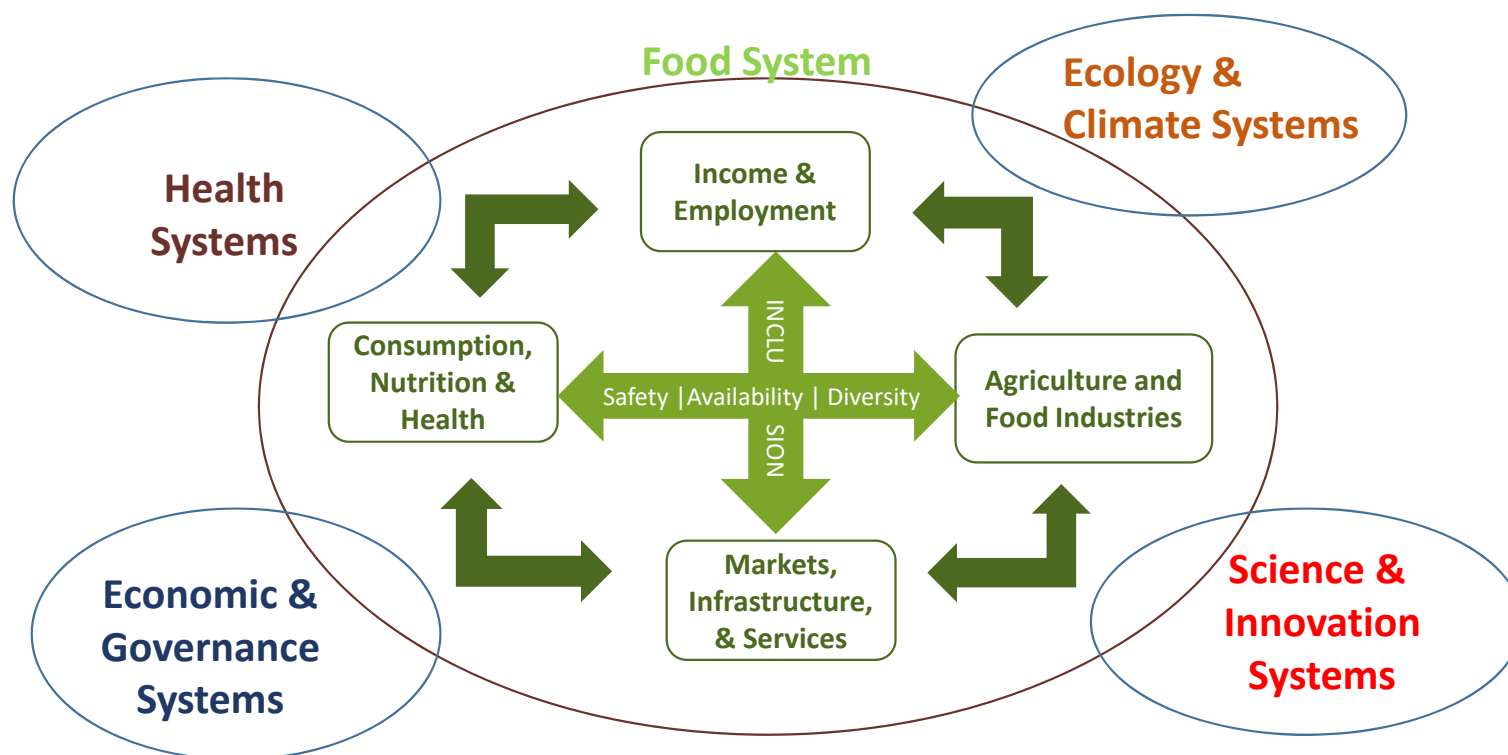


*“Across the SDGs, the world has established clear and ambitious goals for food systems...; we need to move boldly – now – to implement the transformative actions needed to achieve the goals we have.”* (Secretary-General’s Chair Summary and Statement of Action on the UN Food Systems Summit)

## ... And Generated a Range of Deliverables that Serve As A Strong Basis for Follow-up Action



## Systems Perspective now broadly accepted



Joachim von Braun, Kaosar Afsana, Louise Fresco, Mohamed Hassan and Maximo Torero (2021) Food system concepts and definitions for science and political action. Nature Food. Sept 2021. <https://rdcu.be/cxPxJ>

## Five Action Areas in SG's Statement of Action at UNFSS

Action must be driven at country-level by governments in their local contexts.

Five action areas to help inform the transitions needed to realize the vision of the 2030 Agenda have emerged from the Summit process. These include:

- (1) Nourish All People;
- (2) Boost Nature-based Solutions;
- (3) Advance Equitable Livelihoods, Decent Work and Empowered Communities;
- (4) Build Resilience to Vulnerabilities, Shocks and Stresses; and
- (5) Accelerating the Means of Implementation.

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## The 7 Science and Innovation Proposals by Sc. Group for UNFSS

1. A bundle of context specific policy and institutional **innovations to end hunger and increase availability and affordability of healthy diets** and nutritious foods
2. **De-risk food systems** and strengthen resilience, in particular for climate-neutral, climate-positive, and climate-resilient food systems
3. Innovations for efficient and fair **land, credit, and labor arrangements**
4. **Bioscience innovations** for peoples' health, systems' productivity, and ecological wellbeing
5. Technology-based and policy innovations for productive **soils, land and water, and to protect the agricultural genetic base and biodiversity**
6. Innovations for sustainable **fisheries, aquaculture**, and protection of coastal areas and oceans
7. **Digital innovations** for efficiency and inclusiveness of food systems and rural communities

J von Braun, K Afsana, L Fresco and M Hassan. 2021. Food systems: seven priorities to end hunger and protect the planet. *Nature* **597**, 28-30 (2021) <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-021-02331-x>

## Understanding TRUE COSTs OF FOOD

**Market** prices do not take into account...

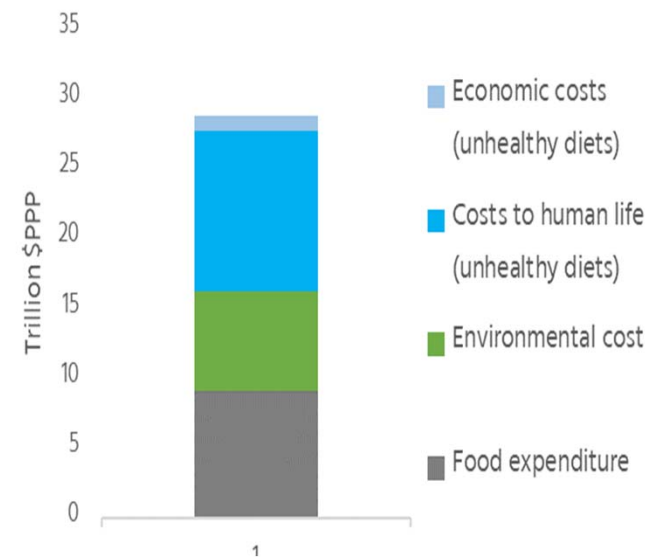
- benefits of affordable or healthy food
- costs of unhealthy or unsustainable food

**Business' profits** not reflect value created/reduced for society

**GDP** of food system does not reflect contribution to welfare

> Sustainable & healthy food is too expensive

> Unsustainable & unhealthy food is too cheap

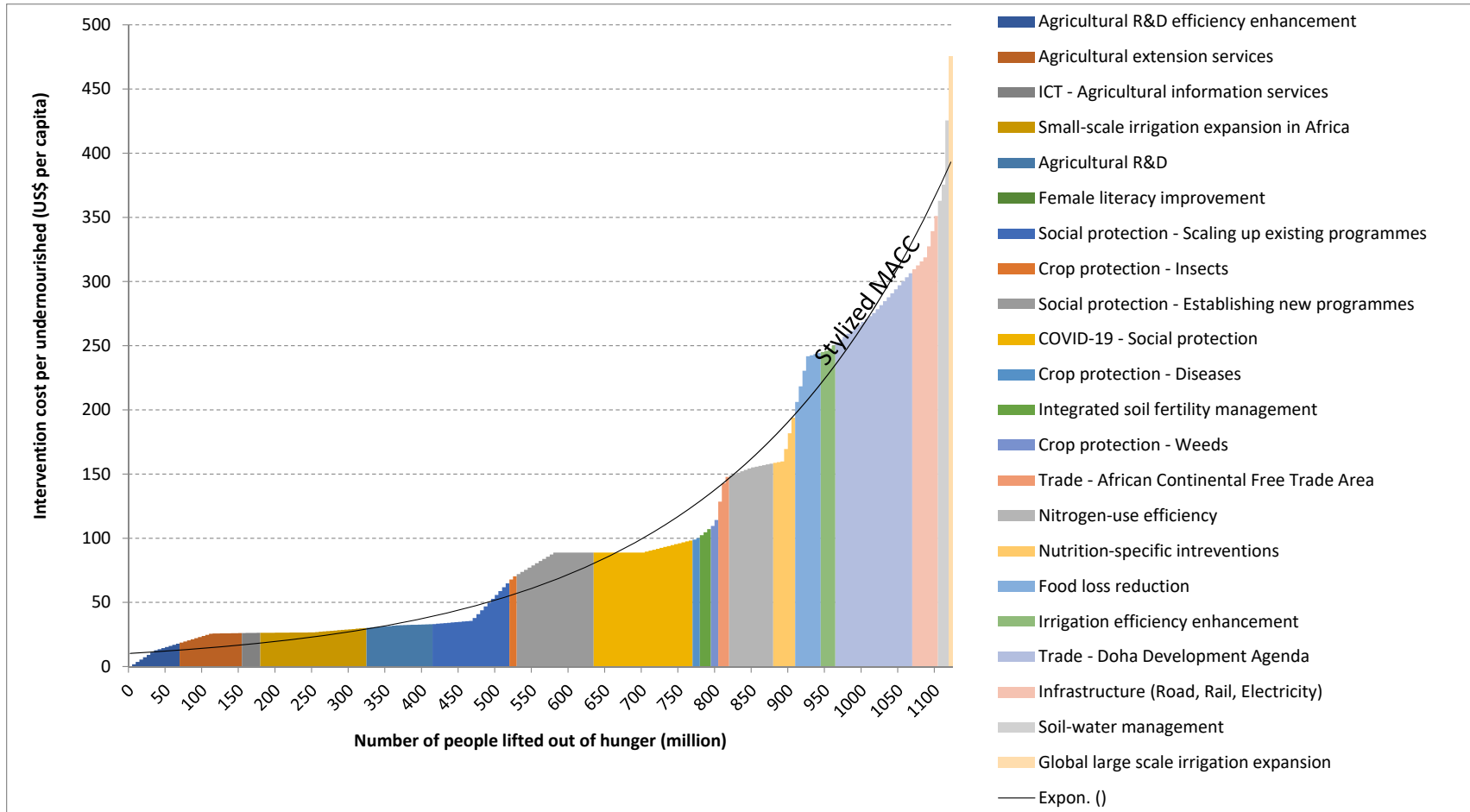


**US\$ 9 trillion in market**  
**28 trillion True Costs per annum**

S. Hendriks et.al. 2021. The True Cost and True Price of Food. A Brief for the Scientific Group UN FSS



# Estimation of the Incremental Costs of Hunger Reduction



Source: B. Chichaibelu, M. Bekchanov, J. von Braun, M. Torero. In Food Policy (Oct, 2021).

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0306919221001299> Lyon Braun June 16, 2022

## Science and innovation prominently in UN Secretary General's Statement of Action at UNFSS 2021

- “There is a recognition that we must build on good practices — such as Indigenous food systems — **invest in science and innovation**, and engage all people — particularly women and youth, Indigenous Peoples, businesses and producers — in achieving the SDGs.
- There is also a need to **shift and scale public and private financing for food, including for science and research**. This innovation and change in financing approaches must avoid excessive hidden costs and support healthier, more inclusive, and more sustainable outcomes.
- Progress will require local and global communities of practice and stakeholders coming together with national governments under the umbrella of these action areas. In particular, **support to enhance implementation through financing, data, science and innovation**, governance and trade.
- Global initiatives to **reinforce the ambition of science-based solutions** will be key to deliver on the 2030 Agenda.

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## **Assessing UNFSS 2021: Positive Outcomes**

- 1. Political and societal Engagement at scale**
- 2. Food system focus**
- 3. Science Engagement**
- 4. Action agenda**
- 5. National level implementation.**

## Assessing UNFSS: Unfinished business

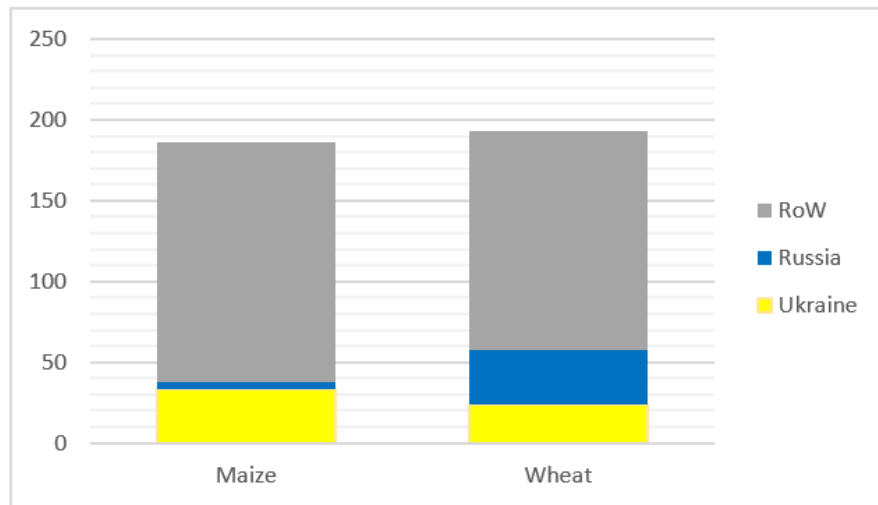
1. Strengthening **capacities** for national level implementation of actions in emerging economies.
2. Developing a strong **finance** agenda for needed investments.
3. Establishing improved **science - policy interfaces**.
4. Facilitating **synergies with other key areas** (climate policy, Covid-19-, trade policy; peace and security; food crises)

UN DSG (Dec 29, 2021) [https://sc-fss2021.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2021-12-29\\_DSG\\_to\\_Joachim-von-Braun.pdf](https://sc-fss2021.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2021-12-29_DSG_to_Joachim-von-Braun.pdf)

# A complex food crisis in 2022 and beyond

1. Covid19
2. Russia's war in Ukraine
3. Climate disruptions / Droughts

Fig.: Global maize and wheat trade - 2021/2022 forecast



Source: AMIS (2022).

## Price crises

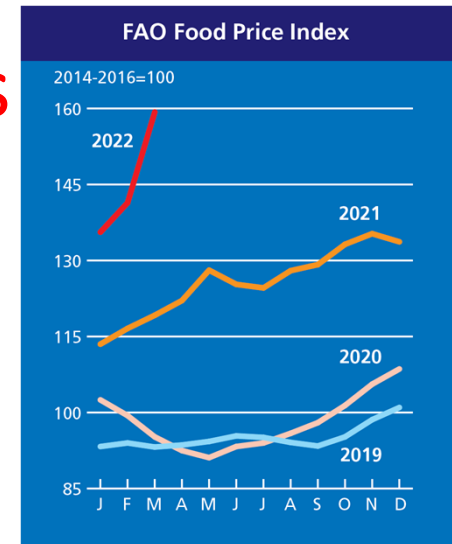
### Trade disruptions

### Food riots ?



# Political Responses to complex food crises

- UN: Committees and Task Forces
- G7 & G20: Alliance for Food Security (with UN)
- Superpower food dissonances
- Gov.s: social protection; increased debts
- Civil society and NGOs: initiatives
- Private sector: engagement
- Consumers: inflation concerns
- Science policy interface needs innovation



AP file photo Times of India

Kornher, Baumüller, von Braun. G7 Development Assistance for Food Systems to Lift 500 Million People out of Hunger by 2030 Policy Brief, March 2022.

[https://www.zef.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/ZEF\\_Policy\\_Brief\\_39.pdf](https://www.zef.de/fileadmin/user_upload/ZEF_Policy_Brief_39.pdf)

J von Braun June 16, 2022

15

# Actions required in response to the global food crisis 2022

## Short term:

1. Global cooperation to keep food and fertilizer markets open
2. Grain stock releases by EU, USA, India, China...
3. Controll excessive speculation in food commodity markets
4. Short-term shift in usage of production – reduce bioenergy and feed
5. Social protection and nutrition actions

## Long-term:

1. Further investment in food systems infrastructures for resilience
2. Massive increase in R&D for sustainable agriculture and productivity



# Key insights from the Food Systems Summit

1. Continued need for food systems transformations
2. Accelerated action at national and international levels
3. Strengthening resilience of food systems
4. Key role of science for sustainable food systems and nutrition