

Hundreds of Grassroots Organizations to Oppose the UN Food Systems Summit

Civil society and Indigenous Peoples' organizations, together with Slow Food, will launch a global counter-mobilization against the UN Food Systems Pre-Summit

By [Slow Food International](#)

Global Research, July 27, 2021

[Slow Food International](#) 19 July 2021

Theme: [Biotechnology and GMO](#), [Poverty & Social Inequality](#)

All Global Research articles can be read in 51 languages by activating the "Translate Website" drop down menu on the top banner of our home page (Desktop version).

Visit and follow us on Instagram at [@crg_globalresearch](#).

Over 300 organizations representing civil society, small food producers, researchers and Indigenous Peoples' from across the world will gather in a virtual and physical event in Rome from 25 to 28 July 2021 to protest against the [UN Food Systems Pre-Summit](#).

The "[People's Counter-Mobilization to Transform Corporate Food Systems](#)" is the latest in a series of criticisms against the UNFSS. Those opposing the Summit include a coalition of scientists who published a [petition](#) calling on their peers around the globe to join them.

The [People's Autonomous Response to the UNFSS](#) joins many others in arguing that the Summit is a dangerous distraction from the real problems facing people and the planet at this critical juncture of multiple, combined crises. Its organizers [have failed](#) to provide accountability and transparency to ensure peoples' inputs are incorporated into final outcomes.

The result of a partnership between the UN and the World Economic Forum – a body that brings together the world's top 1000 corporations – is that the Summit is disproportionately influenced by corporate actors. It is diverting energy, critical mass and financial resources away from the real solutions needed to tackle the growing hunger, climate and health crisis.

Carlo Petrini, Slow Food president and founder, says: "The aim of changing food and farming systems in a genuinely sustainable way can only march on the legs of millions of people in the local economy who are carrying out this ambitious and worthwhile transformation. For all these reasons, I think that the [People's Counter-Mobilization to Transform Corporate Food Systems](#) is a courageous and useful choice. That does not exclude dialogue, indeed, it brings it forward, but dialogue must involve everyone and not just the privileged few in a financial economic system that is responsible for this disaster".

"The United Nation Food System Summit has become a clear playground where corporate interests have decided to stamp the authority in the food system" adds Edie Mukiibi, Slow

Food vice president. “Industrial agriculture with its unjust practices like land grabbing, deforestation, eviction of people and many other practices which lead to climate change and other unjust production processes have resulted into widespread suffering of millions of people mostly in the global South. As Slow Food we are deeply concerned that the current rushed, corporate-controlled, unaccountable and opaque process for this UNFSS will not lead towards the transformation and the change in the food system we envision. It’s a big concern that this summit geared towards repeating the agri-business-as-usual model to solve the food and climate crisis cannot deliver on the holistic and systemic transformation of our food systems we need today”. He concludes: “As Slow Food we stand with hundreds of other civil society organizations especially from the global South, the Indigenous community organizations and all those who care about this planet and the food system to challenge the pre-arranged outcomes of the Summit and reclaim people’s sovereignty over food systems.

Globalized, corporate-dominated and industrialized food systems have failed the majority of the world’s people, and the Covid-19 pandemic has only [worsened the situation](#). The number of chronically undernourished people is rising. The people without access to adequate food rose steeply to include almost a third of the world, according to the latest [UN Report on the State of Food Security and Nutrition](#) published on 12 July. Much of the global South is still reeling from Covid-19 which has exacerbated long standing structural power asymmetries and highlighted the fragility and injustice that lies at the core of our food system.

The protesting movements of peasant and farmers, women and youth organizations, Indigenous Peoples, pastoralists, landless, migrants, fisherfolks, food and agricultural workers, consumers, urban food insecure and other civil society groups represent more than 380 million affiliated members globally. They [demand](#) a radical transformation of corporate food systems towards a just, inclusive and truly sustainable food system. They [equally demand](#) increasing the participation of small scale food provisioners and workers by strengthening already existing democratic food governance models, such as the UN Committee for World Food Security (CFS) and its High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE). The CFS, which the UNFSS threatens sidelining and bypassing, is the most inclusive intergovernmental institution addressing global food policy, and one of the few such bodies that prioritise a human rights-based approach and where those most affected by food policies and the actions of corporations can make their voices heard. The UN system is supposed to be a multilateral space, but it is [being hijacked](#) by corporate and market interests to provide legitimacy to further expand even more detrimental, technologically complex and costly versions of the food system that has led to the crises the world is facing.

Failed and controversial ideas such as nature-positive solutions, voluntary corporate sustainability schemes, GMOs and biotechnology, regenerative agriculture, and sustainable intensification of agriculture are just some of the [false solutions](#) touted by the Summit. Such solutions are neither sustainable, nor affordable for small-scale food producers and workers, and fail to serve public interest and public health. The Summit is an attempt by corporate actors to normalize and legitimize techno fixes that are harmful for people, livelihoods and ecosystems. These false solutions fail to address structural injustices and problems in society such as unequal access to land and resources, biodiversity loss and deepening economic inequality.

The counter-mobilization, which will take place in a hybrid format alongside the UN Food

Systems Pre-Summit, will illustrate the realities of small-scale food producers, workers and majority of the world's people, and their demands and visions for a profound, human rights-based and agroecological transformation of food systems. It will highlight the importance of food sovereignty and the need to protect small-scale sustainable agriculture, traditional knowledge, rights to natural resources, and the rights of workers, indigenous peoples, women and future generations, instead of high-tech, corporate-led agriculture. Real solutions such as binding rules for corporate abuses, stopping pesticide use, and promoting agroecology as a science, a practice and a movement will be proposed and discussed. The event will serve to raise awareness of the Summit's hidden agendas and expose the [public relations gimmick](#) that has been put in place to deflect accountability for today's crises. It will address the issue of co-option of solutions and measures proposed by social movements, small-scale food producers and workers, while perpetuating the very power imbalances that their solutions seek to redress.

A [call to action](#) launched in May 2021 to coordinate the peoples' response has had worldwide appeal. The program will include the following activities:

- 25 July 2021: A Global virtual Rally will bring together small-scale food producers and people's voices from territories around the world.
- 26 July 2021: Three public roundtable discussions will assess the context posed by COVID-19, the hunger and climate crises and analyse the fault lines of the Summit reading its narrative and false solutions, and its push for corporate capture of governance and science.
- 27 July 2021: 15 self-organized civil society events will illustrate a diversity of alternatives and visions on how food systems can work for the peoples.
- 28 July 2021: A closing panel will present a preliminary summary of the actions and discussion during the counter mobilization and a way to challenge the Food Systems Summit in September.

*

Note to readers: Please click the share buttons above or below. Follow us on Instagram, @crg_globalresearch. Forward this article to your email lists. Crosspost on your blog site, internet forums. etc.

Featured image is from OneWorld

The original source of this article is [Slow Food International](#)
Copyright © [Slow Food International](#), [Slow Food International](#), 2021

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Slow Food International](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca