

A close-up photograph of a person's hands, wearing traditional, colorful, patterned sleeves, preparing purple rice. The person is using wooden chopsticks to mix white rice with purple rice in a large bamboo basket. A small white bowl filled with the purple rice is held in the person's left hand. The background is dark and out of focus.

# **UNTAPPED OPPORTUNITIES FOR CLIMATE ACTION: AN ASSESSMENT OF FOOD SYSTEMS IN NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS (NDCs)**

OCTOBER 2021

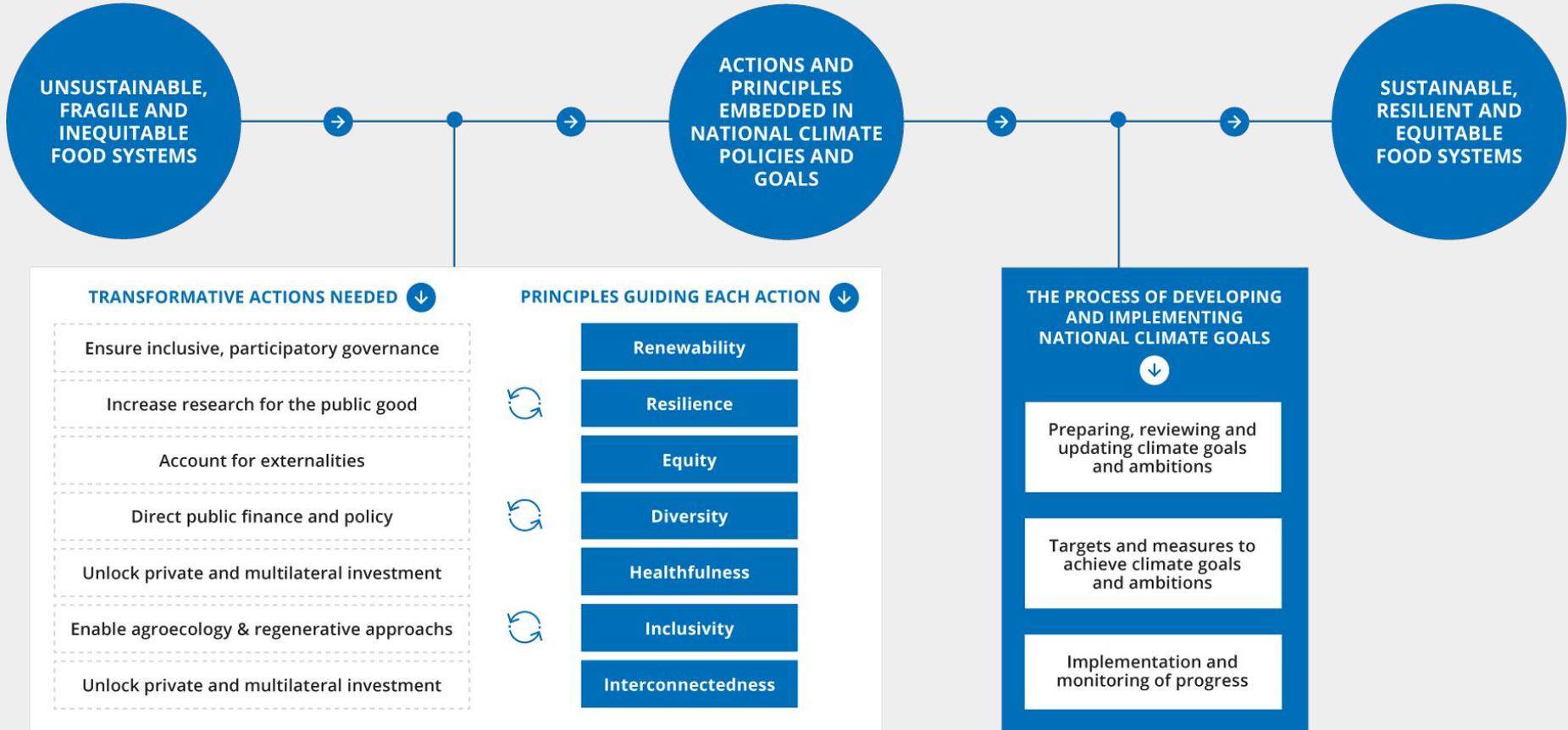
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## PROJECT OVERVIEW

- **OBJECTIVE:** To develop an Assessment Framework as a tool to identify opportunities for better integration of food systems within Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) — climate action plans required by the Paris Agreement — and to apply it to the NDCs of 14 countries.
- **WHY:** Integrating food systems in climate action is critical to delivering on interconnected ecological, biodiversity, health, economic, social, and cultural goals. Taking a food systems approach results in a diversity of context-specific solutions for food production, distribution, consumption, and waste.
- **METHODOLOGY:**
  - Countries selected based on geographical and economic balance, mitigation potential, adaptation needs and food security concerns, and climate negotiating blocks
  - Analysis based on NDCs submitted but also consider broader key food systems policies
  - Complemented by interviews with 5-10 in-country policymakers, advocates, sectoral experts to develop a comprehensive view of the challenges, ambitions, and needs in each selected country



# SCOPE OF THE NDC ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK



# WHICH COUNTRIES DID WE ASSESS?



## EMERGING KEY FINDINGS

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NDCs focused largely on supply-side aspects of food systems, with other areas and components of food systems being frequently overlooked



Highlighted the importance of food systems' resilience in light of changing climate patterns and more frequent extreme weather events



Majority of the NDCs assessed were spearheaded by the environment ministry and benefited from some level of cross-ministerial coordinations and subnational engagement



Significant differences in the extent to which the NDC construction processes were deemed to be gender inclusive



While the NDCs assessed indicated alignment with existing and forthcoming food systems policies, certain inconsistencies persist



None of the countries assessed sufficiently address ineffective, inequitable and harmful agricultural subsidies

# NDC DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

● Yes  
 ● Partially  
 ● No  
 ● Insufficient Information Available

CRITERIA/COUNTRY*	United Kingdom	Colombia	Kenya	Bangladesh	United States	Vanuatu	France	Germany
Coordination mechanism in place	●	●	●					
Cross-ministerial collaboration	●	●	●					
Consultation with food systems experts and other key stakeholders	●	●	●					
Development of targets based on holistic food systems research	●	●	●					

\* The table does not intend to offer a comparison across countries, as each country is unique in its national circumstances and policy environment. As such, the scoring has been based on the specific national context, taking account of barriers and opportunities for transforming respective national food systems. The results are derived from the Individual Country Assessments and the scope has been largely limited to the country's respective NDCs.

Countries assessed include Bangladesh, Canada, China, Colombia, Egypt, France, Germany, Kenya, Senegal, South Africa, Spain, United Kingdom, United States, Vanuatu.

# CONTENT OF NDCS

CRITERIA/COUNTRY*	United Kingdom	Colombia	Kenya	Bangladesh	United States	Vanuatu	France	Germany
Emission reduction	68%	51%	32%					
Target year	2030	2030	2030					
Reference year	1990	BAU	BAU					
Sectoral scope	Economy-wide	Economy-wide	Economy-wide					
Alignment with existing and forthcoming food systems policies								
Accounting for food systems' emissions								
Agroecology and regenerative approaches								
Conservation and regeneration of valuable ecosystems								
Promotion of sustainable fisheries and aquacultures								
Shift to healthy and sustainable diets								
Promotion of climate and food systems resilience								
Reduction of food loss and waste								
Gender responsiveness								
Engagement with farmers, local communities, and indigenous Peoples								
Creation of quality food systems job								
Recognition of positive and negative food systems externalities, including economic, social and health co-benefits								

# NDC IMPLEMENTATION

CRITERIA/COUNTRY*	United Kingdom	Colombia	Kenya	Bangladesh	United States	Vanuatu	France	Germany
Participatory and collaborative implementation process								
Participatory and transparent monitoring mechanism informed by food systems research								
Vehicles to direct public and private finance to food systems								

# EMERGING INSIGHTS: GOVERNANCE & JUST TRANSITIONS

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*Enabling an equitable, inclusive “just transition” for those working in food systems and who are most vulnerable to climate impacts – Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, workers, and others — requires processes and policy platforms built on transparency that enhance the participation of these groups in policy-making and implementation.*

- Most NDCs assessed did not provide details on the development process: difficult to assess if the process was inclusive and participatory, how stakeholder inputs were considered
- Food systems stakeholders, and in particular marginalized communities, were not frequently consulted, leading to knowledge and evidence gaps and compounding structural inequities.
- Few of the development and implementation processes meaningfully engaged with ministries, regional governments and local public officials.
- Engagement with non-governmental stakeholders such as private sector actors, smallholder farmers, women, local communities, Indigenous Peoples, and civil society is similarly limited.

*When the costs and benefits of food systems transformations are not distributed equally across society, transitioning towards more sustainable and healthier food systems will likely involve social trade-offs.*

- Most NDCs assessed lacked quantification of implementation costs, which are crucial to unlock external funding.
- NDCs which emphasized the potential for green jobs were not linked to food systems.

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SPOTLIGHT ON  
**COLOMBIA**

- Most inclusive and democratic NDC development process in consideration of food systems (of NDCs assessed)
- Includes comparably ambitious set of agroecological measures (of NDCs assessed)
- Includes measures to improve sustainability of livestock



# EMERGING INSIGHTS: PRODUCTION

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*Locally-led, context-specific “nature-positive” solutions contribute to GHG emissions mitigation while ensuring a strong role for local institutions, communities, smallholder farmers, Indigenous Peoples, and women; ensuring the protection and expansion of rights; and improving food security and health.*

- Majority of the NDCs assessed promote some aspect of agroecology, regenerative approaches and “nature-positive” solutions.

*Redirecting public sector finance and fiscal policy away from harmful food and farming practices towards regenerative, ecologically-beneficial forms of farming supports resilient livelihoods and healthy communities.*

- All of the NDCs assessed lack concrete efforts to redirect public resources away from carbon-intensive farming and towards more diverse and regenerative approaches.

*Determining how livestock production fits in a resilient and healthy food system, with appreciation for contextually dependent factors, is critical given its significant climate and ecological footprint.*

- Some NDCs included measures to improve the sustainability of livestock production.

*Reducing and repurposing food loss and waste are central to mitigating climate change as well as delivering ecological, health, economic, and social co-benefits by reducing cropland area, contributing to food security, and, overall, cutting GHG emissions.*

- Few of the NDCs assessed include efforts to address food loss and waste.

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SPOTLIGHT ON  
**KENYA**

- NDC process was relatively more transparent, participatory, equitable, and holistic than others in consideration of food systems
- Of the NDCs assessed, Kenya includes comparably ambitious set of agroecological measures



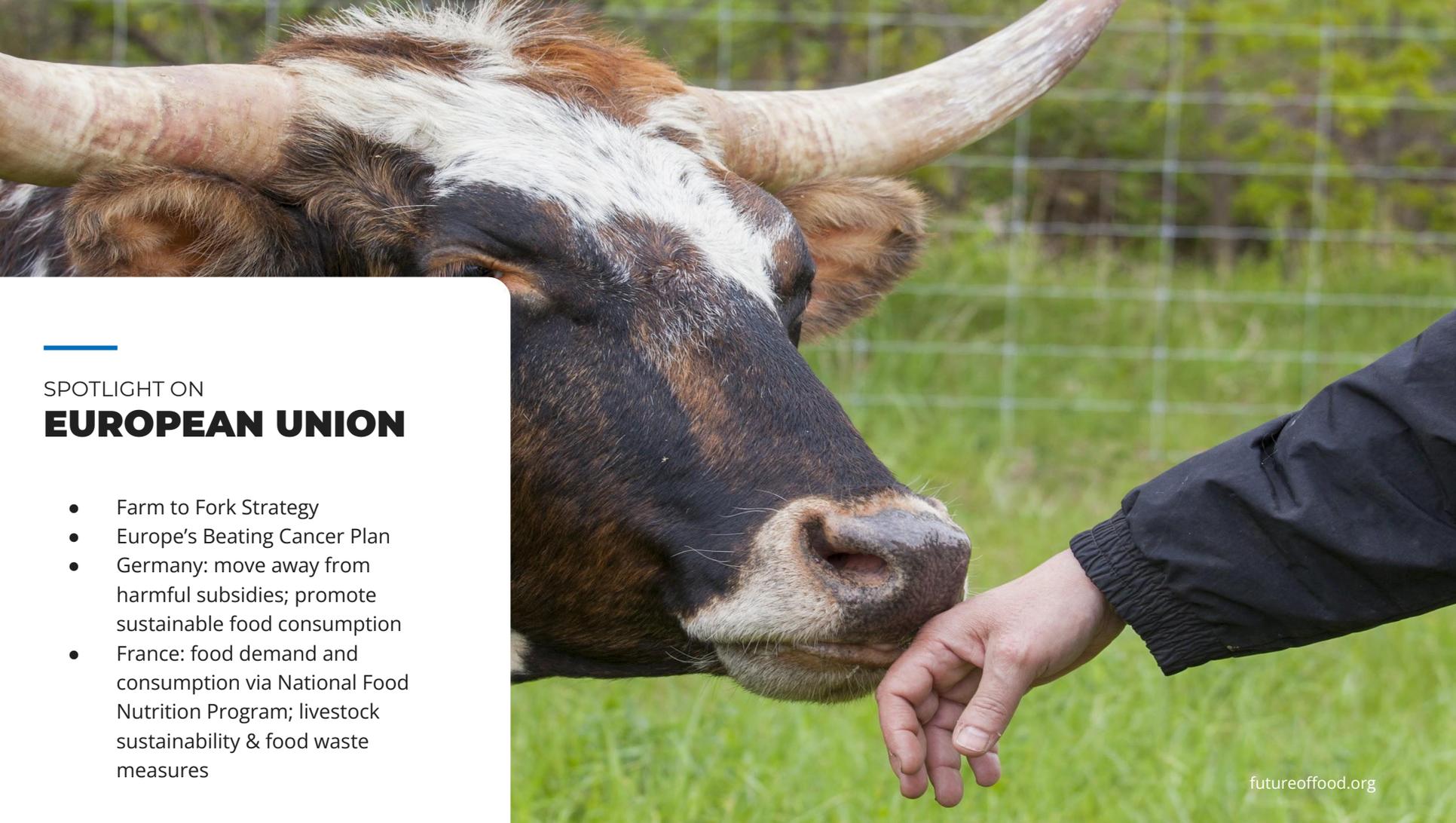
# EMERGING INSIGHTS: CONSUMPTION & DIETS

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*When public support and the policy environment incentivizes land-use intensive food production and high levels of animal protein consumption, isolated efforts to increase the production of healthy and sustainable food will be insufficient to catalyze a shift toward sustainable food systems.*

- None of the NDCs assessed considered food systems emissions in a systematic way.
- Most NDCs assessed omitted the potential of diet shifts and neglected food loss and waste.
- None of the NDCs assessed put forward measures to reduce the consumption of animal protein.
- None of the NDCs assessed fully account for emissions associated with food imports, particularly those related to deforestation and the conversion of ecosystems.



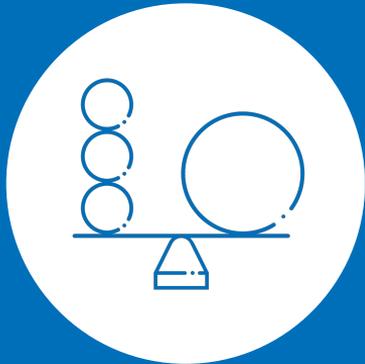
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SPOTLIGHT ON  
**EUROPEAN UNION**

- Farm to Fork Strategy
- Europe's Beating Cancer Plan
- Germany: move away from harmful subsidies; promote sustainable food consumption
- France: food demand and consumption via National Food Nutrition Program; livestock sustainability & food waste measures

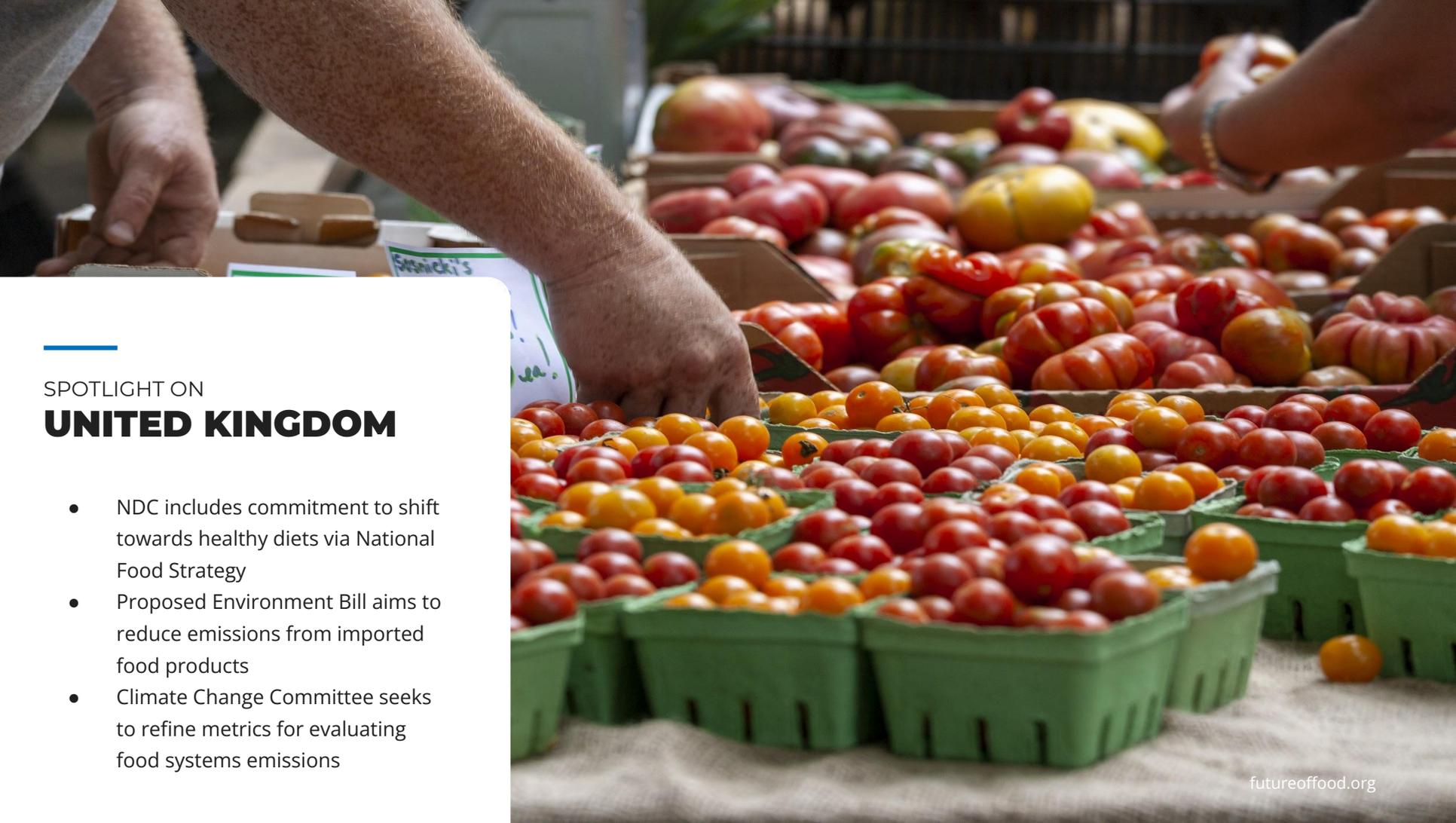
# EMERGING INSIGHTS: HEALTH CO-BENEFITS

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*Promoting nutritious, whole-food diets underpinned by sustainable, diversified food production adapted to local ecosystems and sociocultural contexts can deliver multiple health co-benefits.*

- All assessed countries face nutritional and health-related challenges linked to food.
- In all assessed countries, a shift to sustainable and healthy diets can reduce the prevalence of obesity and overweight, as well as address undernourishment and food insecurity. These benefits also imply reduced healthcare expenses and economic benefits.
- None of the assessed countries explicitly included consultations with health & nutrition experts, missing opportunity to maximize these health co-benefits.



SPOTLIGHT ON  
**UNITED KINGDOM**

- NDC includes commitment to shift towards healthy diets via National Food Strategy
- Proposed Environment Bill aims to reduce emissions from imported food products
- Climate Change Committee seeks to refine metrics for evaluating food systems emissions

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## NEXT STEPS

- Seek feedback on initial key findings and issues
- Finalize remaining country assessments
- Integrate feedback and remaining assessment findings into final report with recommended priority actions
- Translate specific country assessments into national language
- Launch in Q1 2022

VIEW ALL EMERGING INSIGHTS  
AND PROVIDE FEEDBACK:

<https://tinyurl.com/FoodNDCs>



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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