



GLOBAL DAIRY PLATFORM

**Submission by Global Dairy Platform (GDP)
Regarding the full draft Ministerial Declaration for the fifth session of the UN Environment
Assembly.**

'Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals'

The Global Dairy Platform (GDP), a member of the UNEP Business and Industry Major Group, is a not-for-profit industry association that represents the global dairy sector. GDP membership, which includes more than 95 leading corporations, companies, associations, scientific bodies and other partners has operations in more than 150 countries and collectively produces 33% of all the world's milk. GDP through its membership and additional collaborations creates, guides and governs programs in support of the dairy sector's commitment to responsible food production. GDP seeks to advance awareness of the global dairy sector's ongoing activities to produce nutritious food, efficiently and safely, and to contribute to future multi-sectoral efforts that can ensure a global sustainable food system in support of a growing world population. The dairy sector is the largest agricultural commodity traded by value and the third largest by volume.

The global dairy sector consists of some 133 million dairy farms, 37 million of which are led by women. The sector supports 1 billion people including 600 million who live on farms and 400 million who are supported through dairy sector employment. The average herd size globally is 3 cows. (FAO).

GDP acknowledges and welcomes the draft declaration and has reviewed it in detail. The global dairy sector views sustainability as a pre-competitive topic and collaborates to enhance knowledge and seeking continuous improvement opportunities. As a dynamic and extremely diverse sector, this sharing of knowledge and strategies to improve sustainability performance in a quantified manner is essential.

The dairy sector recognizes the interaction between the three pillars of sustainability: social, economic and environmental. The sector implements a holistic approach to sustainability and encourages systems-based evidence research and modelling to generate the data on which to make informed, strategic decisions related to addressing topics of concern.

As with all agriculture, nature is at the heart of dairy production. The symbiosis of nature and dairy farming systems is essential. If nature is challenged, so too is the ability of the dairy farming system to perform effectively. Since cattle are extremely effective recyclers of a range of human food wastes and cattle manure is an important source of nutrients for the soil, dairy farming has long been applying the circular economic approach to its operations.

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GDP recognises that more can be achieved by the sector to ensure that nature remains at the heart of the production of sustainable nutrition and deliver the SDG's. We ask the UNEA community to recognise the current efforts of the dairy sector in ensuring that nature is incorporated as a vital component of sustainability journey we are all on together.

There are several ongoing projects initiated by the dairy sector that seek effective and responsible ways of achieving nature positive and climate stabilizing food security. Efforts by the dairy sector to align its sustainability targets to those of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) underpins progress. These activities are found in the following annex.

ANNEX

NATURE POSITIVE DAIRY PROJECTS

1. **Dairy Sustainability Framework (DSF)**: Seeks to align the sector sustainability actions under 11 key 'Criteria' within the three pillars of sustainability; Environmental, Economic and Social. The 11 Criteria are - GHG emissions, Biodiversity, Soil Quality and Retention, Soil Nutrients, Water, Waste, Animal Care, Product Safety and Quality, Rural Economies, Working Conditions and Market Development. The DSF works with dairy supply chains across the world (30% of global milk production, which is equivalent to almost 50% of global formal milk production). DSF generates robust data sets that allow the sector to more accurately assess its strengths and weaknesses through a sustainability lens. This supports the generation of pathways to a more sustainable sector. The DSF is a pre-competitive and collaborative initiative that monitors and reports the dairy sectors continuous sustainability improvement.

The Strategic Intents and Indicator Metrics generated for each of the 11 DSF Criteria to monitor progress support the ambitions of UNEA, by driving knowledge generation and quantified improvement actions.

The DSF 2020 annual reporting can be seen [here](#).

2. **Mapping of the DSF Criteria to the SDG's**: Recognizing the critical importance of the Sustainable Development Goals and the role the dairy sector has to play in supporting the SDG's delivery, the DSF collaborated with Rabobank, to understand how the DSF Criteria aligned with the SDG's. The report, clearly demonstrates the value of the dairy sector in proactively delivering improvement programs that contribute substantially towards the delivery of the SDG's.
3. **Pathways to Dairy Net Zero (P2DNZ)**: This a ground-breaking new climate initiative, launched September 22, 2021. More than 60 leading organizations, including 11 of the 20 largest dairy companies in the world, have already declared their support for the effort. Collectively, these supporters represent more than 30 percent of total milk production worldwide. Founding partners include Global Dairy Platform, FAO, International Dairy Federation, International Livestock Research Institute, Sustainable Agriculture Initiative, Dairy Sustainability Framework and the IFCN Dairy Research Centre. The Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Emissions is the initiative's knowledge partner. P2DNZ utilizes a science-based approach to identifying the many



different global dairy production typologies and establish mitigation pathways for these typologies to achieve Net Zero (acknowledging that all GHG emissions must be reduced, but not all need to attain zero to achieve the desired outcome) in the second half of this century. Progress will be monitored via the FAO GLEAM model and reported through the DSF.

4. **[FAO study on Climate Change and the Global dairy Cattle Sector](#)**: the report analysed GHG emissions from the dairy sector over a ten-year period from 2005-2015. A time series analysis is extremely valuable to a sector that is focused on collaboratively addressing challenges. During the 10 year period, the global dairy sector saw production increase by 30%, absolute emissions increase by only 18% and emissions intensity fall by 11%. This study also identified potential mitigation measures focused on reducing both emission intensity and absolute emissions further. Additional data will be collected approximately every 5 years and further research will be undertaken using the FAO GLEAM model to assess sectoral progress and identify areas where further research and development may be necessary to accelerate mitigation opportunities and action.
5. **[Dairy Nourishes Africa \(DNA\)](#)**: This initiative is a public-private partnership founded by Global Dairy Platform that leverages the collective strength of the global dairy sector and local stakeholders to improve nutrition and food security, spur economic growth and support livelihoods while minimizing environmental impact across the dairy value chain. Starting in East Africa, DNA works with farmer-allied enterprises in the dairy sector, such as processors and input providers, to increase business performance, strengthening the full dairy value chain including their farmer-partners.
6. **Joint Research report with FAO entitled [Dairy Developments Impact on Poverty Reduction](#)**: The report cites data indicating dairy provides a major pathway out of poverty, and generates employment opportunities in many low- and middle-income countries (SDG1). The reviewed literature on the economic impacts of dairying on household and community welfare provides strong evidence that dairy development makes a significant contribution to poverty reduction, both at household and aggregate community level.
7. **A study assessing [cattle health and GHG emissions](#)**: In collaboration with the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases (GRA), The DSF commissioned this project in three different geographical regions (UK, Kenya and Chile) to better understand the benefits of improved cattle health and associated emissions. A shorter briefing note can be accessed [here](#). In addition, in partnership with FAO, IFAD and the World Bank, this project is now developing guidelines to incorporate Animal Health Improvement Measures and their impact on GHG emissions into their Nationally Determined Contributions reporting.
8. **[C-Sequ](#): Draft LCA guideline for the calculation of Carbon Sequestration in cattle Production Systems**: The first life-cycle assessment-(LCA) based methodology for calculating carbon sequestration in cattle production systems was launched in September 2021 for pilot testing. The methodology, C-Sequ, was developed by a consortium of dairy and beef organizations, global soil scientists and LCA specialists.



Carbon capture and sequestration are potential mitigation solutions to the global climate challenge, but current methods to quantify the sequestered carbon are complex or not overly robust. The C-Sequ guidelines include a straightforward, step-by-step guide for the quantification process as well as useful examples. Pilot testing will finish in February 2022 and a revised version of the methodology will be launched in Q2, 2022.

9. **GWP* for Methane:** better measurement is always at the heart of the dairy sectors efforts. Farmers and processors want to know that actions they are taking are making a difference. The GWP* methodology, assists with the quantification of individual 'short-lived' GHG emissions such as methane. A group of dairy and beef organizations collaborated to commission a [literature review](#) on the GWP* approach to appreciate how it might be effectively applied in the cattle sectors. Since publishing this work, the collaboration has also commissioned invaluable modelling work to better inform the sector on the pathways to effectively reducing methane. This modelling work will be published in early 2022 for use by the cattle sector.

In recognition of the need to mitigate GHG emissions, GDP is a supporter of the Global Methane Pledge. Launched by the US and the EU during COP26, the pledge aims to reduce global anthropogenic methane emission levels at least 30% by 2030 (from 2020 levels).

10. **International Dairy Federation (IDF) A common carbon footprint approach for the dairy sector.** The IDF [common methodology for the lifecycle assessment](#) (LCA) of dairy production and processing was first published in 2010. The guide is designed to assist the dairy industry with its journey to reduce GHG emissions across the value chain and enables the dairy community to '*speak the same language*' in terms of measurement and mitigation.

The current methodology is, aligned with other guidance in this topic area, IPCC, ISO, FAO LEAP, FAO GLEAM and is embedded into other dairy related GHG measurement tools. The IDF Action Team continues to interact with these and other initiatives such as the EU PEF (Product Environmental Footprint), to achieve or maintain the desired alignment where possible

The IDF is currently pursuing a more forensic review and update of the methodology which was last updated in 2015. This transparent process involving over 40 experts from 17 different geographies will ensure that the IDF guide is fit for the future and that the dairy sector continues to work at the cutting edge of LCA knowledge. The next version of the guideline will be ready for publication in 2022.