



## Summary of FAO Technical and intergovernmental bodies' inputs

### High-level Political forum 2019

*"Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality"*

**Goal 4.** Quality education; **Goal 8.** Decent work and economic growth; **Goal 10.** Reduced inequalities; **Goal 13.** Climate action; **Goal 16.** Peace, justice and strong institutions; **Goal 17.** Partnerships for the Goals.

This document summarizes policy deliberations related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of FAO Technical and Governing bodies and other bodies hosted in FAO, notably the FAO Committee on Agriculture (COAG), the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO), the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI), the FAO Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP), the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA), the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), and the Codex Alimentarius. According to their respective mandates, bodies analyzed progress, challenges and opportunities and provided policy guidance to ensure integrated approaches to food security, nutrition, and sustainable agriculture and food systems are adopted at country level in support to nationally agreed Sustainable Development Plans, Strategies, and Programmes.

#### I. Progress and challenges

- **The role of family farmers.** Some three billion family farmers, fishers, foresters, pastoralists and indigenous peoples produce three-quarters of the food we eat. They are the stewards of our natural resources and manage 85% of the planet's food biodiversity. Yet, these same people make up 80% of the global poor and are the ones most affected by climate change, conflict, disease and market shocks.
- **Rural employment.** Nearly 8 out of every 10 poor live in rural areas. Available rural employment opportunities (including fishery and aquaculture, forestry, and agriculture, pastoralism, as well off farm related activities) are often precarious, poorly remunerated and even hazardous. This can trap workers and their families in a vicious cycle of hunger and poverty, and push rural populations to migrate internally and abroad. Less than 20 percent of agricultural workers have access to basic social protection. Almost 60 percent of all child labour is found in agriculture, affecting nearly 100 million children.



- **Rural transformation.** Poverty is rural but rural is not poverty. Since the 1990s, rural transformation has lifted nearly as many people out of poverty as urban development. Some 750 million rural people have escaped moderate poverty, thanks to both agricultural development and non-farm, rural employment generation.
- **Market access.** Globally more than 80 percent of smallholders operate in local and domestic markets, with limited capacity to contribute to household income and national economic growth.
- **Biodiversity for food and agriculture.** Many key components of biodiversity for food and agriculture are in decline, and knowledge of associated biodiversity, in particular micro-organisms and invertebrates, and of its roles in the supply of ecosystem services is limited. Multiple interacting drivers of change are having major negative impacts on biodiversity for food and agriculture and the ecosystem services it delivers, and many of these drivers are at least partly caused by inappropriate agricultural practices. On the positive side, countries reported an increase in the use of a wide range of management practices and approaches, including using innovation in science, technology as well as policy, regarded as favourable to the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity for food and agriculture. .
- **Food crisis.** There has been an increase of 11 million people in need of urgent action, an 11 percent rise from 2016. This is largely attributed to new or intensified conflict and insecurity in Myanmar, north-east Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan and Yemen. Prolonged drought conditions also resulted in consecutive poor harvests in countries already facing high levels of food insecurity and malnutrition in eastern and southern Africa. Weather hazards, crop production shortfalls and conflicts have also prompted price spikes in a number of countries, hindering food access. In 2017, high – and even record – staple food prices affected a number of countries, restricting access to food and increasing food insecurity.

## II. **Key messages and policy recommendations for empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality**

- Ensuring access to resources and services, as well as improve social protection in rural areas for smallholder farmers, rural women, indigenous peoples and family farmers creates the enabling conditions for reduced inequalities and improved food security and nutrition.
- Effective cross-sectoral collaboration, policy and programme coordination are needed to successfully address root causes of hunger and poverty, to enhance resilience against shocks and the effects of climate change, to preserve and restore biodiversity, as well as to manage trade-offs between sectors. Establishing or enhancing such collaborations is a continuing challenge, and requires a step-wise approach and strong political commitment.
- Transparent and properly functioning food and agricultural markets are essential for inclusive growth and equality. Agricultural trade can play a crucial role, as an enabler to achieve the SDGs, particularly SDG 1 on ending poverty in all its form everywhere and SDG 2 on ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition, and sustainable



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agricultural development. The availability of credible and timely data, including on commodity markets is crucial for this.

### **SDG 4 Quality education**

- **Strengthen environmental education.** Environmental education needs to be strengthened incorporating sustainability in its three dimensions. It should cover the importance of forests, trees, plants, animals for a sustainable development, including the importance of sustainable management of resources and ecosystems, as well as adaptation and mitigation to climate change for livelihood and wellbeing of the ones left behind, particularly rural actors, women, indigenous peoples and youth. Education should also aim at increasing awareness of youth and consumers on their possible individual and collective contribution to the eradication of hunger and poverty, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, as well to the achievement of sustainable development in its three dimensions.
- **Strengthen nutrition education.** Nutrition has a fundamental role in ensuring the wellbeing of children and adults. Malnourished kids cannot learn, develop their potential and contribute as adults to the society. Effects of under nutrition and stunting are often irreversible. Holistic and coherent school programmes and policies are key to achieve children's human rights to food, education and health. Through complementary interventions such as healthy school meals and food and nutrition education, pupils can improve their diets, develop healthier food practices and extend these to their families and communities.

### **SDG 8 Decent work and economic growth**

- Pro-poor investments to stimulate growth.** Targeted investments in pro-poor growth and social protection measures are needed to stimulate entrepreneurship in rural areas and create jobs beyond agriculture. Investments, sustainable value chains and enabling frameworks need to be created or strengthened to unlock agriculture (including forestry, fisheries, pastoralism,) contributions to enhancing economic growth and decent employment.
- **Address rural-urban linkages.** Addressing the needs of rural and urban populations together through territorial development approaches as outlined in the New Urban Agenda answer the SDGs' call for transformation. Societies networked from field to town to city can stimulate entrepreneurship and empower women, create decent and diverse jobs for rural youth, and provide fresh and nutritious food to cities.

### **SDG 10 Reduced inequalities**

- **Enhance legal frameworks.** Reducing inequalities requires legal frameworks that recognize and secure rights of access to productive resources and services for smallholders, family farmers, foresters, and local communities. We need policies to



incentivise private sector engagement in sustainable market activity conducive to increased participation of rural actors to national economies as well as reduce inequalities within countries.

- **Strengthen institutional capacities.** There is a need to strengthen the human and institutional capacities to better undertake analysis on the implications of, and opportunities arising from, trade and related policies for food security and nutrition.
- **Foster market integration of smallholder farmers.** It is important to develop policies and strategies to support smallholders' integration into markets and value chains. Efforts to increase the productivity of smallholders and family farmers to ensure inclusive, gender equitable rural and agricultural development would only have limited impact if linkages to markets and value chains are not strengthened simultaneously. Small family farmers can also benefit from increased market transparency and better access to market information.

### **SDG 13 Climate action**

- **Enhance resilience of rural populations.** Focused attention to increase the resilience of people dependent on forests and agriculture and promote the involvement of stakeholders, including rural and indigenous communities, in climate actions is a priority to both accelerate climate actions and reduce inequalities;
- **Enable market access to address causes of climate change.** Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are particularly vulnerable to climate change and the way it negatively affects their food production, and thus the need for open, transparent, equitable and non-discriminatory international and regional agricultural markets, which would enable them to meet their food requirements.
- **Promote private sector engagement.** International community should promote the role of the private sector in forest and agriculture related actions, including the promotion of responsible investments that are consistent with the conservation and sustainable use of forests, sustainable agriculture and sustainable management and use of resources and ecosystem service for adaptation and mitigation of climate change.

### **SDG 16 Peace justice and strong institutions**

- **Strengthen agriculture sectors to prevent migration and conflict.** Peace and food security are mutually reinforcing. Conflict damages agricultural production, devastates livelihoods and disrupts market access, but ensuring food security and creating a healthy agricultural sector can be central to efforts to prevent conflict, reduce forced migration and sustain peace.
- **Promote the right to food.** The full realization of the human right to adequate food in the context of national food security contributes to achieving stable and peaceful societies and vice versa.

## **III. Successful experiences and lessons learned on HLPF theme**



- [The United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025](#) aims to trigger intensified action to end hunger and eradicate all forms of malnutrition worldwide, and ensure universal access to healthier and more sustainable diets for all people, whoever they are and wherever they live. Within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and building on the momentum created by the Second International Conference on Nutrition ([ICN2](#)) the Nutrition Decade presents a unique opportunity for all countries and stakeholders to align activities around a shared framework and timeline, and to increase the visibility, coordination, and effectiveness of nutrition actions worldwide. Action Networks have been created promoting concrete commitments around specific issues (nutrition labeling, fisheries etc).
- **UN Decade on Family Farming 2019-2028.** Building on the momentum created by the International Year on Family Farming in 2014, the UN Decade aims at raising awareness on the role of family farmers to ensuring global food security, eradicating poverty, ending hunger, conserving biodiversity, achieving environmental sustainability, and helping to address migration. The UN Decade on Family Farmers will catalyze actions at country level that will support integrated implementation of SDG, and empower rural communities contributing to leave no one behind.
- The Joint initiative “**Research and Investment on Agriculture and Rural Development for Achieving SDGs 1 and 2**”, initiated in 2016. FAO, IFAD, the World Bank's Center for Development Data and the Independent Science and Partnership Council of the CGIAR are collaborating to achieve a common understanding of priorities and actions to support the achievement of SDG 1 and SDG 2.
- [The five principles of Sustainable Food and Agriculture](#), developed by FAO and endorsed by its members, identify key areas ensuring sustainable food and agriculture systems. FAO, working with partners, has helped developed and facilitate a set of concrete tools and guidelines for countries to prioritize SFA in an integrated way to achieve SDGs. The tools include the [Transforming Food and Agriculture to achieve the SDGs: 20 interconnected actions to guide decision-makers](#), a concrete guide to decision makers including suggestions on how to implement the five SFA principles to ensure integrated approaches to food and agriculture sectors to achieve the SDGs, and include a set of additional tools and resources. The SFA Principles are being implemented in countries with the support of FAO and its partners.
- [The Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Biodiversity Mainstreaming across Agricultural Sectors](#), which took place in May 2018 in Rome. The establishment of the [Biodiversity Mainstreaming Platform](#) at FAO is expected to facilitate the adoption of practices that will support the conservation and sustainable use and management of biodiversity across all agricultural sectors in an integrated manner, including practices allowing inclusion of marginalized groups and resilience to climate change.



- The [2nd International Symposium on Agroecology](#), which took place in Rome in April 2018, supported by an [agroecology knowledge platform](#). It reported on the growing set of public policies that support agroecology and promote integrated approaches to agriculture.
- The [Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture \(WASAG\)](#), launched at the UNFCCC COP 23 in 2016. It is currently gathering 55 member organizations partnering to develop and implement solutions to the growing issue of water scarcity in agriculture.
- **FAO's Blue Growth Initiative** has proven to be an effective platform for developing programmes towards achieving the various goals under Agenda 2030. The Blue Trade component of the Blue Growth Initiative includes the Blue Forum, a multistakeholder platform involving government, industry, fisherfolk associations, NGOs, and Civil Society but with a particular focus on the private sector. The Blue Forum would address issues that require comprehensive and coordinated approaches and shared solutions. These could include decent working conditions in the seafood value-chain, human trafficking, sustainability as well as climate change impacts threatening sustainable socio-economic development.
- **Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS)**. The work of AMIS consists of enhancing the quality and availability of data and information on global markets of the four covered commodities (wheat, rice, maize and soybeans), analysing the global market situation and outlook; engaging in capacity building activities at country level, and promoting policy dialogue among AMIS participating countries, especially in times of market uncertainty. AMIS has certainly contributed to improving market transparency and accessibility to data and information on global food markets.
- **Funding Strategy for the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources**. Twelve projects were successfully closed. The projects facilitated activities improving the management of animal genetic resources for more than 50 different national breed populations belonging to seven species. A review found that awareness raising was a key component of all projects and most of the projects included capacity-building activities. An ex-post informal survey indicated that in 10 of these projects, the activities started by the projects either continue or have evolved into new activities. The extent of the activities range from continued contact between the project implementer and beneficiary livestock keepers (e.g. Bolivia and Peru) to full government buy-in to ensure sustainability (e.g. Ethiopia).
- In order to support the conservation and sustainable use of Plant Genetic Resources to Food and Agriculture (PGRFA), the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture established the **Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing** (Multilateral System) to facilitate exchanges of plant genetic materials for agricultural research, training and breeding. Under the Multilateral System, countries grant each other facilitated access to their plant genetic resources, while users of genetic resources from the Multilateral System share benefits that they derive from the use of these genetic materials,



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especially with farmers in developing countries. Important collaboration is therefore happening under the International Treaty on exchange of information, access to technologies and capacity-development, while monetary benefits are shared through the **International Treaty's Benefit-sharing Fund**. As of March 2019, there are 145 Contracting Parties to the International Treaty, and the Multilateral System contains more than 2.5 million of plant genetic materials of the most important food crops. Since January 2007, over 4.6 million genetic resources samples have been transferred globally through over 68,000 Standard Material Transfer Agreements (SMTAs) that set out the conditions of genetic material exchange under the Multilateral System, including obligations for benefit-sharing by those receiving material. All projects focus on the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture with the overall objective of enhancing farmers' resilience in the face of climate change and improving their food security situation.

#### IV. Resources

- [The State of Food insecurity in the World \(SOFI\)](#) “Building Climate Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition”. (SOFI, FAO 2018).
- [The State of Food and Agriculture](#) “Migration, Agriculture and Rural Development”. (SOFA, FAO 2018)
- [The State of World's Forests](#) (SOFO) “Forest Pathway for Sustainable Development”(SOFO, FAO 2018)
- [The State of World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture](#) (CGRFA, FAO 2019)
- [The State of World's Fishery and Aquaculture](#) “Meeting the Sustainable Development Goals”(SOFIA, FAO 2018).
- [The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets](#) “Agricultural Trade, Climate Change and Food Security”(SOCO, FAO 2018)
- [Global Report on Food Crises 2018](#)
- [Climate-Smart Agriculture e-learning modules on water, soils, crops and livestock](#). These knowledge products will help countries to strengthen capacities in managing natural resources and implement good practices for adaptation and mitigation of climate change across the food and agriculture sectors.
- **E-learning courses** on other key areas of sustainable development including food security, nutrition, rural employment, agriculture statistics are available at the following link <https://elearning.fao.org/course/>,