

III Session SDG OWG – 22.05.2013 - Interactive exchange of views on “Food security and nutrition, sustainable agriculture, desertification, land degradation and drought”

Reaction from the Local Authorities Major Group

Thanks Co-chair. I am Maruxa Cardama from ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability, speaking on behalf of the Local Authorities Major Group. We would like to thank the co-chairs, distinguished delegates and the Secretariat for encouraging a format based on interactive discussions involving Major Groups.

Building upon the knowledgeable presentations and inspiring discussions this afternoon, I would like to leave with you a proposal for a concrete target within a global goal on agriculture, food and nutrition; as well as comment on one of the possible targets that has been put forward.

Local and subnational governments would like to put forward a target for a holistic and ecosystem-based approach for enhancing city-region food systems.

Why the city-region approach? We have heard along the day the need to connect urban and rural realities and challenges around the agriculture and food security topic. The city-region approach represents a tool for interconnecting urban-rural linkages as it allows to organise food systems in a whole territory beyond its administrative boundaries.

Why a holistic and ecosystem-based approach? We are also hearing today the multi-facet reality of the topic we are discussing. This is also true for food and agriculture systems in cities. However, we tend to think only about urban - or at most peri-urban – agriculture, underestimating that the potential for action is much wider. Actually cities working on food system are having to address topics ranging from lessening food crises for poverty alleviation or disaster management; to managing a rise in obesity, and promoting a sustainable diet; whilst also working on waste management and adapting to the changing climate to ensure the resilience of the food supply within their community.

The good news is that **there is work going on out there towards a holistic ecosystem-based approach for enhancing city-region food systems.**

This is for instance the case of the city of **Vancouver**, which has a full Food Strategy as part of its local governance planning.

This is also the main topic that will be addressed at the [Resilient Urban Food System Forum](#) that ICLEI is organising next 1st June on the occasion of its annual [Resilient Cities Congress 2013](#). Elected representatives and officials will be exchanging and learning from each other on how to achieve diverse, distributed, natural, innovative, social and inclusive resilient urban food systems. We would be most happy to share the preparatory work and outcomes of this Forum.

As regards the possible targets that have been indicated by our guest experts today, I was **glad to see a target (target 5) to ‘establish inclusive, transparent and equitable legislative and other decision-making processes on food and agriculture at global, regional, national and local levels’**. I would add that **any policy and legislation should contain a strong element of knowledge sharing and skills, particularly as regards the creation of synergies**. There are currently cities leading the way. But there is room for furthering the synergies between the work already undertaken by local and subnational governments on biodiversity and ecosystem services, green buildings, ICT or public procurement. At the end of the day, this will mean liveable, inclusive and environmentally-respectful communities, able to withstand a disaster, bounce back, and rapidly move on afterwards.

Thank you very much for your attention.