

**FOOD SYSTEMS DIALOGUES (FSDs)**  
MADRID, COP25, 05 DECEMBER 2019

SUMMARY REPORT\*

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Proposals</b>	<b>3</b>
Proposal 1: Create policy which promotes sustainable food practices for farmers and consumers	3
Proposal 2: Promote collaboration in decision-making	3
Proposal 3: Provide financing to support farmers to transform their businesses	3
Proposal 4: Leverage data for sustainable farming practices	4
Proposal 5: Improve access for farmers to insurance	4
Proposal 6: Enable farmers to have a seat at the table in creating Nationally Determined Contributions	4
Proposal 7: Increase knowledge exchange about resilient production practices	5
Proposal 8: Promote a shift towards perennialized agriculture	5
Proposal 9: Launch a global framework for action on food systems	6
Proposal 10: Build a diverse set of incentives for change	7
Proposal 11: Empower local people to develop sustainability initiatives	7

\*The format of FSDs Summary Reports is under development. This report may be subject to change

## Executive Summary

On 05 December 2019, a Food Systems Dialogues (FSDs) event took place in Madrid, Spain, coinciding with the COP25 Climate Conference.

Approximately 70 participants attended, reflecting a range of actors working in Food Systems, ranging from national legislators to representatives of global food production and fertilizer companies, to management consultants, researchers and environmental advocacy groups.

Tables were asked to present one or more proposals to address a specific area of food systems, with a global focus. Ideally, the proposals were to be achievable within 3 years. The prompt themes for dialogue at this event addressed the following areas: agriculture practices contributing to national economies, climate change mitigation and adaptation; farmers achieving greater resilience to climate change; connecting farmers to the development of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs); agroforestry occupying an increased place in national agriculture, environment and climate policies; strengthening commitments to land restoration; and recognizing smallholder farmers' role in managing ecosystems.

The following is a summary of the tables' proposals for food systems transformation as well as the discussions that led them to their conclusions.

As is the norm at FSDs events, all Proposals outlined in this Summary Report are not attributed to any particular individual or organization. Each proposal did not necessarily receive universal support from all participants at the event; rather, the aim of this report is to capture recommendations made at the event, in order to allow continuity and consensus - a 'red thread' - to emerge across all FSDs events.

# Proposals

\*\*\*

*'Agriculture practices make significant contributions to national economies, climate change mitigation and adaptation.'*

\*\*\*

## **Proposal 1: Create policy which promotes sustainable food practices for farmers and consumers**

Broadly, governments should devise policies to support sustainable practices in food systems, and ensure that these policies are resourced with appropriate budgets. Policies should enable pathways toward change for both consumers and farmers. They must focus on ensuring that farmers are able to make money through regenerative practices, and that consumers are able to afford to move towards more plant-focused diets.

## **Proposal 2: Promote collaboration in decision-making**

Collaboration should be promoted between the public- and private- sector, as well as through partnerships with individual consumers.

Indeed, collaboration should become the norm for decision-making and engagement in regards to food systems, and it should elevate stakeholders who do not often carry weight to influence the formulation of policy.

\*\*\*

*'Farmers have enhanced their resilience to such an extent that they adapt without extra cost to the effects of climate change.'*

\*\*\*

## **Proposal 3: Provide financing to support farmers to transform their businesses**

Finance should be provided to support farmers and companies to transform their business models in such a way that they are able to prioritize sustainable practices.

Financial support is required to ensure that farmers are able to produce food in a sustainable manner; it enables them to test a range of practices and employ those that are found to be most appropriate to their circumstances. Access to financing is a key component of ensuring farmers can remain resilient to shifts in the market; they can be positioned at the crest of the wave of change, rather than needing to catch up, and bear the cost of transforming their businesses.

#### **Proposal 4: Leverage data for sustainable farming practices**

It is important to support increased collection of, and access to, data with respect to farming practices, including geospatial data collected from phones, and drones. A rich data environment will help to provide climate information which is a key input for farmers in the process of selecting the appropriate techniques to be effective and productive through the transition to sustainable practices.

#### **Proposal 5: Improve access for farmers to insurance**

Farmers need to be supported with improved access to insurance. Currently, insurance is unaffordable for the majority of farmers, with only 2% of farmers worldwide benefiting from insurance coverage.

\*\*\*

*‘Practices that have been developed by farmers and that have proven to be successful, make significant contributions to Nationally Determined Contributions to climate action (NDCs).’*

\*\*\*

#### **Proposal 6: Enable farmers to have a seat at the table in creating Nationally Determined Contributions**

Farmers should have a seat at the table, participating in the process of developing countries’ Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for climate. A mechanism should be developed by which farmers can pool information about successful agricultural practices, and elevate these to decision-makers, to inform planning and climate strategy at the highest level.

To promote strong involvement from farmers, farmer-facing communications should be improved; currently, there is a communications gap in regards to NDCs, whereby proceedings and updates do not reach farmers.

To formalize farmer participation, national ministers of agriculture should have sign-off on NDCs.

\*\*\*

*'Farmers have increased their resilience to the effects of climate change by for example, shifting to production in greenhouses.'*

\*\*\*

[Refer to Proposal 3 for additional ideas developed in relation to this subject area.]

### **Proposal 7: Increase knowledge exchange about resilient production practices**

A platform should be created to support stronger exchanges of information between farmers, to share knowledge about sustainable techniques that are trialed by farmers. Currently, farmers are not able to fully take advantage of the first-hand information and advice which exists.

An information sharing platform could include 'playbooks' to help farmers and organizations understand specific steps for the transition.

Access to information, and education about techniques which are effective, is important to facilitate farmers' choices, and to make the transformation of their farming practices more appealing (and less risky). Supporting the involvement of farmer collectives and young farmers, would strengthen this information-sharing initiative.

\*\*\*

*'Agroforestry is a major element of national agriculture, environment and climate policies.'*

\*\*\*

### **Proposal 8: Promote a shift towards perennialized agriculture**

Globally, agriculture should begin to move towards a perennialized production system in agriculture. This would entail planting and harvesting crops which are perennial, and to promote a shift towards trees and shrubs as the main source food supply, oils protein starch and carbohydrates.

Perennialized agriculture will increase climate resilience, enhance sustainability and drawdown and store vast amounts of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. It would also help secure resilient livelihoods for farmers.

Success in this initiative will entail the removal of the numerous policy barriers to agroforestry which currently exist. It will also involve building capacity to transform farming to perennial systems, and devising blended financial mechanisms to increase the diversity of perennial enterprises on farms.

The global campaign for Evergreening the Earth may be able to provide a framework for the worldwide efforts to perennial wise agricultural systems.

\*\*\*

*'Nations commit to large scale land restoration as a contribution to climate action, biodiversity and combating desertification.'*

\*\*\*

### **Proposal 9: Launch a global framework for action on food systems**

A global framework for action on sustainable food systems should be established, with a target announcement at the Food Systems Summit in 2021. This framework will be developed over coming years and will promote integrated recommendations across health, trade, environment and agriculture. A suitable timeline to be set for implementation of the framework is 2030.

The coming two decades are pivotal to conversation and action around sustainable food systems, as illustrated by recently-announced U.N. Decades of Action pertaining to food systems. In 2019, the Decade of Action on Ecosystem Restoration was passed by the U.N. General Assembly. This is added to the Decade of Action on family farming, which spans 2019-2028, and the Decade of Action on nutrition, which commenced in 2016. The momentum for action generated by these Decades should feed into the development of a holistic framework for action on sustainable food systems.

\*\*\*

*'Right farming practices are applied and smallholder farmers' role in managing ecosystems is recognized (and compensated).'*

\*\*\*

### **Proposal 10: Build a diverse set of incentives for change**

A diversity of incentive systems should be created to promote scientific best practices in sustainable production among farmers. If sustainable production is increased on the supply-side of food, consumer interest will likely follow.

Success in the transition towards sustainable food systems will be evidenced by achieving increased affordability and accessibility of healthy and sustainable food, which should become part of mainstream consumption. Uptake of sustainable food options should demonstrate an upward trajectory year by year, with the share of sustainable food consumption increasing as a portion of the overall social food consumption 'plate'.

An increased offering of sustainable food presupposes that farmers are rewarded for this transition; if this is not the case, the transition will not be successful over the long term (or will falter even before gaining traction).

### **Proposal 11: Empower local people to develop sustainability initiatives**

To promote collaboration, and involvement of a greater number and range of citizens in the transition to sustainable and environmental practices, some initiatives could be decentralized. Local people could be empowered to drive solutions.

For example, in the case of optimizing water distribution in some developing countries, government initiatives have proven to be inadequate to incentivize people in the community to save water. If the responsibility to develop ideas was given to user groups, they would likely have a better chance of encouraging behavior change among fellow community members. Local people are better placed to bring a range of stakeholders together and communicate effectively to all those people.