



Coping with the food and agriculture challenge: smallholders' agenda

**Preparations and outcomes of the
2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
(Rio+20)**

by

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CONTENTS

I.	About this document	1
II.	Preamble: small-scale issues in global scenarios	1
III.	Introduction	3
1.	Background on Rio+20	3
2.	FAO's involvement in Rio+20	4
3.	Basis of FAO collaboration with CSOs	12
IV.	Smallholders and family farmers at Rio+20	14
1.	Small-scale farmers at a glance	14
2.	Smallholders and family farmers' organizations' voice at Rio+20	18
2.1	How they get involved	18
2.2	Smallholders claims and demands at Rio+20	19
2.2.1	Environmental claims	20
2.2.2	Economics claims	21
2.2.3	Social claims	22
2.2.4	Governance claims	23
2.3	CSOs achievements at Rio+20: issues raised	23
2.4.	Rio+20 follow-up and the CPLP farmers' platform	29
V.	Conclusions	32
VI.	References	34
ANNEX I.	36
	Farmers Major Group Submission to Rio+20.....	36
ANNEX II	40
	Contributions from the Federations of Smallholder Farmers from the CPLP.....	40
ANNEX III.	43
	2014 IYFF FAO Concept Note.....	43

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACTUAR	<i>Associação para a Cooperação e o Desenvolvimento</i>
AFA	Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development
AIAB	<i>Associazione Italiana per l'Agricoltura Biologica</i>
CNA	<i>Confederação Nacional da Agricultura de Portugal</i>
CONTAG	National Confederation of Agricultural Workers
COPROFAM	Confederation of Family Farmers Organizations of the Extended Mercosur
CONSAN	Food Security and Nutrition Council – CPLP
CPF	Country Programming Framework (FAO)
CPLP	Community of Portuguese Language Speaking Countries
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
FENAPA	<i>Federação nacional dos pequenos agricultores de São Tomé et Príncipe</i>
FMG	Farmers Major Group
IAASTD	International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFOAM	International Federation of Organic Agriculture
ILEIA	AgriCulture Network (formally Institute for Low-External Input Agriculture)
IYFF	International Year of Family Farming
KAFO	<i>Federação Camponesa KAFO de Guinéa-Bissau</i>
LVC	<i>La Via Campesina</i>
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NRD	Natural Resources Management and Environmental Department (FAO)
PADRSS	Rural Sustainable Development and Solidarity
PAFO	Pan-African Farmers Federation
ROPPA	Network of Farmers' and Agricultural Producers' Organizations
UN	United Nations
UNAC	<i>União Nacional de Camponeses de Moçambique</i>
UNACA	<i>Confederação das Associações de Camponeses e Cooperativas Agropecuárias de Angola</i>
UNCED	UN Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit)
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNCSD	United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
WFFP	World Forum of Fisher People
WRF	World Rural Forum

I. About this document

This document was prepared under the supervision of Nadia El-Hage Scialabba, as part of “Preparations and Follow-up to Rio+20”, a project of the FAO Natural Resources Management and Environment Department (NRD). It highlights the positions and common agenda of small-scale farmers’ organizations who participated in Rio+20 with the support of NRD, by identifying and synthesising their views, demands, needs, constraints and strengths. With 2014 designated the United Nations International Year of Family Farming, this document identifies some of the opportunities that emerged from Rio+20. The main messages emanating from several internationally recognized institutions in favour of farmers’ claims are highlighted, including the need for an effective shift in partnerships processes.

II. Preamble: small-scale issues in global scenarios

The goals of establishing a common language that encompasses the whole community, identifying shared ideas and enabling stakeholders to combine resources, have become recognised as important elements in efforts to achieve sustainability. The central themes and messages of this document are summarised below. They represent a common position, as expressed broadly by a number of actors from different spheres, including farmers’ organizations and partners¹, international organizations and think tanks².

- **Small-scale producers.** The food and agriculture sector lies at the heart of the development process and is both a main cause of, and solution to, the world’s environmental (e.g. climate) and social (e.g. unsatisfied basic needs) problems. Coping with the spreading global crisis requires focusing on small-scale food producers³ as a driving force towards socially fair and ecologically sustainable agriculture systems. Over the millennia, small-scale producers have evolved to more resilient and climate-adapted forms of agriculture which are essential to biodiversity and natural resources conservation, as well as to meeting the poverty and hunger challenge.
- **Agro-ecology.** The over-arching paradigm of economic growth, considered the highway to secure development, has left the social and environmental dimensions of

¹ For example, *La Via Campesina*, CONTAG, ROPPA, AFA, Greenpeace, Biovision, ILEIA, WRF, PAFO, AIAB, CPLP, OXFAM, IFOAM.

² For example, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, IFAD, FAO, UNEP and the IASSTD Report.

³ Small-scale farmers produce over 70% of the world’s food needs. Contrary to the current perception, in nominal terms, the number of peasants and smallholders has increased.

sustainable development behind, as reflected by policies and programmes that disregard adverse impacts on existing social structures and natural resources. There is wide recognition that business-as-usual is not an option, that things need to change to attain food security while allowing future generations to meet their own needs. Agro-ecology, practiced by small-scale farmers, has demonstrated empirically its potential to achieve sustainability aims. It is not based on agronomic and technological fixes but rather on the ecological processes that underlie food production, involving in-depth knowledge of the interactions between what is produced, the soils and associated biodiversity.

- **Socio-economic and policy change.** With current rising global prices of food and land, many parts of the world are experiencing a new phase of land enclosure and dispossession and a parallel shift from individual and community control to corporate control of land, water and seeds. Behind this lies an on-going battle for food and agriculture between large-scale, industrial, energy intensive, earth-warming, water-wasting, unsustainable forms of agriculture production and on the other hand, a small-scale alternative which claims to be able both to feed the world sustainably and to provide employment and income to vastly greater numbers of people than industrial farming. Without a focus in socio-economic and policy change, it will be hard to transition the agriculture system on a sustainable path.
- **Renewed structures and relations.** Addressing global food security and environmental problems requires new partnerships, structures and types of relations that facilitate coordination and cooperation with farmers' and peasants' organizations as key actors for agriculture sustainability. Governments and policy-makers are at a crossroad in developing adequate policies, programmes and concrete actions for such transformation which includes, *inter alia*, access to land, water, credit and markets (current and new ones), the right to cultivate and use local seeds, as well as participatory research and learning schemes.

III. Introduction

1. Background to Rio+20

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) was held in Rio de Janeiro 20-22 June 2012, 20 years after the historic UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) – the ‘Earth Summit’. Hence the UNCSD conference has become known as “Rio+20”. UNCSD sought to renew political commitment to sustainable development, assess progress to date, and identify enduring gaps as well as new and emerging challenges to achieving sustainable development.

UN member countries have gathered regularly since 1992 through the Commission on Sustainable Development, to discuss and establish means and pathways towards sustainable development. Governments and relevant stakeholders have shown their commitment and willingness to find ways to manage and use resources in a manner that meets human needs, while preserving the environment, not only for the present, but also for future generations.

Nevertheless, due to the primacy of the economic growth paradigm, it has remained difficult to translate the idea of sustainable development into practice, by integrating economic, social and environmental objectives and approaches to achieve environmental and socially equitable growth.

Despite on-going and concerted efforts⁴, many environmental goals have not been achieved. According to many indications, the world situation in terms of hunger and poverty, the gap between rich and poor people, and environmental problems is even more precarious today. Climate change and a growing global population are putting additional pressure on natural resources and planetary boundaries. The ecological footprint of the world’s population has more than doubled since 1996 and we are using nature’s services 50 percent faster than the Earth can renew them.⁵

The world is now confronted by a multitude of crises, from food and fuel crises to climate and financial crises that are exacerbated by current development pathways. To tackle these challenges it will be necessary to first prioritise actions. By incorporating a holistic and systemic approach, it is possible to focus on the inter-connections and emerging properties among the different sustainability dimensions. To this end, a green economy⁶ in the context

⁴ The first global environmental conference, the UN Conference on the Human Environment was held in Stockholm in 1972.

⁵ Rockström, J. *et al*, 2009. Planetary Boundaries: Exploring the Safe Operating Space for Humanity.

⁶ Green economy is defined as one that results in “improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities” (UNEP, 2010).

of sustainable development and poverty eradication⁷, and an institutional framework for sustainable development, were the two main themes selected for the UNCSD.

2. *FAO's involvement in Rio+20*

During the preparatory process for Rio+20, national governments, UN agencies and civil society organizations were invited to provide their inputs and contributions for the preparation of the zero-draft document, as the basis of the Rio+20 “outcome document”. FAO participated in this process by providing elements pertaining to its mandate⁸. FAO’s active contribution to the preparatory process of UNCSD has contributed to the inclusion of food security across the priority areas under consideration. In addition, FAO carried out an analysis of the interactions between the green economy and the food and agriculture sector, including opportunities and constraints to address the key points in this regard.

According to FAO, sustainable development cannot be achieved without eradicating hunger and malnutrition, which are explicitly linked with natural resource management and poverty situations. This means that tackling poverty will not be possible without addressing the issues linked to sustainable agriculture and more resilient and equitable food systems, as they play a pivotal role in the transformation towards more sustainable societies. In fact, some 60 percent of global lands are occupied by agriculture and managed forests. In addition to providing food for the world’s population, the food and agriculture sector also provides 40 percent of all livelihoods (Scialabba, 2011).

A transition to a sustainable future also requires fundamental changes in the governance of food and agriculture systems and an equitable sharing of the transition cost and benefits among the different stakeholders. Synergies between achieving food security and sustainable consumption and production need to be captured and trade-offs managed. At the same time, there is a need to revisit agricultural production, distribution and access regimes and give special attention to reducing food waste and food production losses. To emphasize these linkages, FAO has defined three main messages for the Rio+20 Summit (FAO, 2012a).

⁷ Poverty eradication has been an overriding imperative for the international community for a long time and was given prominence in 2002 with the introduction of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). It remains one of the core themes in Rio+20, but now under the green economy umbrella that endeavours to drive sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and job creation, particularly for women, youth and the poor; in other words, enabling economic growth and investments, while increasing environmental quality and social inclusiveness.

⁸ FAO’s mission is articulated in Latin by its motto *fiat panis*, which translates into “let there be bread”. Achieving food security for all is at the heart of FAO’s work – to ensure regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives. FAO’s work extends across sustainable agriculture, forestry, fisheries and food systems. Wise use of natural resources and environmental protection, as well as economic and social equity and progress are central in FAO’s programmes.

The Rio vision of sustainable development cannot be realized unless hunger and malnutrition are eradicated.

The Rio vision requires that both food consumption and production systems achieve more with less.

The transition to a sustainable future requires fundamental changes in the governance of food and agriculture and an equitable distribution of the transition costs and benefits.

As part of this perspective, and considering a broad participatory approach to sustainability in the food and agriculture sector, FAO's Natural Resources Management and Environment Department (NRD) established a multi-donor trust fund project called "Preparation for and follow-up to the United Nation Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012". An important aim of this project was to support civil society and small-scale farmers' organizations to take part into the definition of the Rio+20 process.

More specifically, NRD objectives were to:

- facilitate producers and rural organizations' contribution to the Rio+20 agenda through their own country's processes;
- encourage the dialogue between civil society and government, especially in the definition of strategies for sustainable development and the role of the agricultural sector;
- bring the voice of millions of small-scale producers to the UNCSD Farmers Major Group.

For these purposes, broad networking processes were carried out within the different regions of the world prior to Rio+20, financial assistance was given to representatives of farmers and CSOs for travelling to Rio and holding self-organized events during the People Summit⁹ and the Conference. Likewise, activities directed to political sensitization, awareness raising, information dissemination and empowering social structures for fostering sustainable food

⁹ The People Summit was an event organized by global civil society groups between the 15 and 23 June, in Rio de Janeiro, on the occasion of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), Rio+20. The People Summit is part of a historical process of accumulation and convergence between local, regional and global struggles, which have anti-capitalist, anti-racist, anti-patriarchal and anti-homophobic political frames. For more information refer to <http://cupuladospovos.org.br/en/>.

and agriculture systems were undertaken in Rio. A detailed account of the actors, their activities and main achievement follows.

National Confederation of Agricultural Workers (CONTAG)

Based in Brazil, CONTAG is the largest confederation of rural workers in Latin America. It represents and defends the interests and rights of more than 4,200 unions of rural workers within the trade union action for the construction of an alternative project for a Rural Sustainable Development and Solidarity (PADRSS). It focuses on ensuring integration between rural and urban areas, the recovery and strengthening of family agriculture and their organizations, and the improvement of the living conditions of the rural dwellers.

CONTAG has worked alongside four regional farmers' organizations to carry out several activities to strengthen the voice of family farmers and rural organizations, and to support the participation of representatives of its members in Rio+20 and related activities. Figure 1 illustrates the main programme goals.

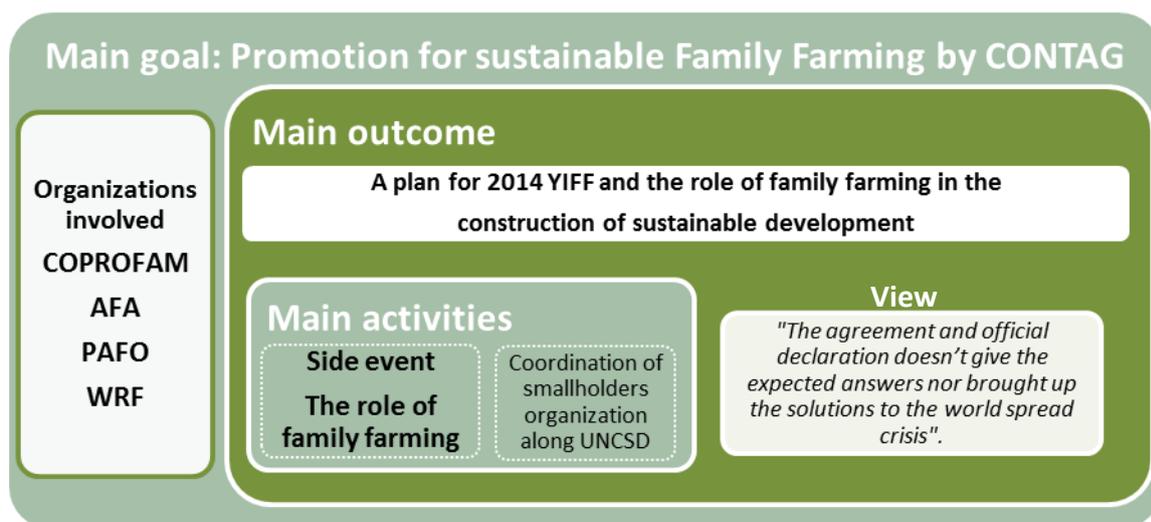


Figure 1. CONTAG's performance at Rio+20

The organizations involved were:

- **COPROFAM** – International Confederation of Family Farmers Organizations of the Extended Mercosur
- **AFA** – Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Farmers Development
- **PAFO** – Pan-African Famers Federation
- **WRF** – World Rural Forum

One of the features of CONTAG's side event, "The role of Family Farming in the Construction of Sustainable Development", was the high level of involvement, where more than 400 people participated in different panels. The event counted the presence of FAO's Director General, José Graziano da Silva, and of Brazilian Minister of Agrarian Development, Pepe Vargas, who signed an agreement¹⁰ aiming to build policies in favour of family farming and to boost and strengthen civil society organizations.



Source: CONTAG archives

In addition, the opportunity to gather CSOs from around the world contributed tremendously to defining and boosting actions that will be undertaken at national and international levels to promote the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF). The objectives are to stimulate small-scale farming-oriented policies in order to effectively combat poverty and hunger and promote a rural development, based on the respect for the environment and biodiversity.

The Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries - CPLP

The CPLP is an inter-governmental organization of eight Portuguese-speaking countries¹¹ that have made a commitment to fight against food insecurity within their own countries by promoting locally-based sustainable agriculture models. As part of their efforts, they work closely with CSOs of smallholder and farmer organizations at different levels¹².

¹⁰ The Ministry of Agrarian Development will provide FAO 1.5 million Real (720,000 Euros) to support the process in the regions.

¹¹ Africa: Angola, Cap Vert, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Sao Tome et Principe; Asia: East Timor; Europe: Portugal; South America: Brazil.

¹² In 2007, a regional Civil Society Network for Food Security and Nutrition from the African Portuguese speaking countries was launched in Brazil, further incorporating organizations from East Timor and Brazil.

In 2011, CPLP approved a Regional Food Security and Nutrition Strategy (ESAN-CPLP) based on the Right to Adequate Food and the enhancement of governance of the food system. Increased food production based on models of sustainable production, with a broad participation of smallholders, farmers and civil society was prioritised for targeted regions.

CPLP participation in Rio+20 included both government and civil society events, including mobilization and dialogue before, during and after UNCSO. Civil society organizations from Africa, Europe and Latin American took part in the CPLP framework:

- *Associações de Agricultores de Cabo Verde*
- **FENAPA** – *Federação nacional dos pequenos agricultores de São Tomé et Príncipe*
- **KAFO** – *Federação Camponesa KAFO de Guiné-Bissau*
- **UNAC** – *União Nacional de Camponeses de Moçambique*
- **UNACA** – *Confederação das Associações de Camponeses e Cooperativas Agropecuárias de Angola*
- **CNA** – *Confederação Nacional da Agricultura de Portugal*
- **ACTUAR** – *Associação para a Cooperação e o Desenvolvimento*
- **CONTAG** – *Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores na Agricultura*

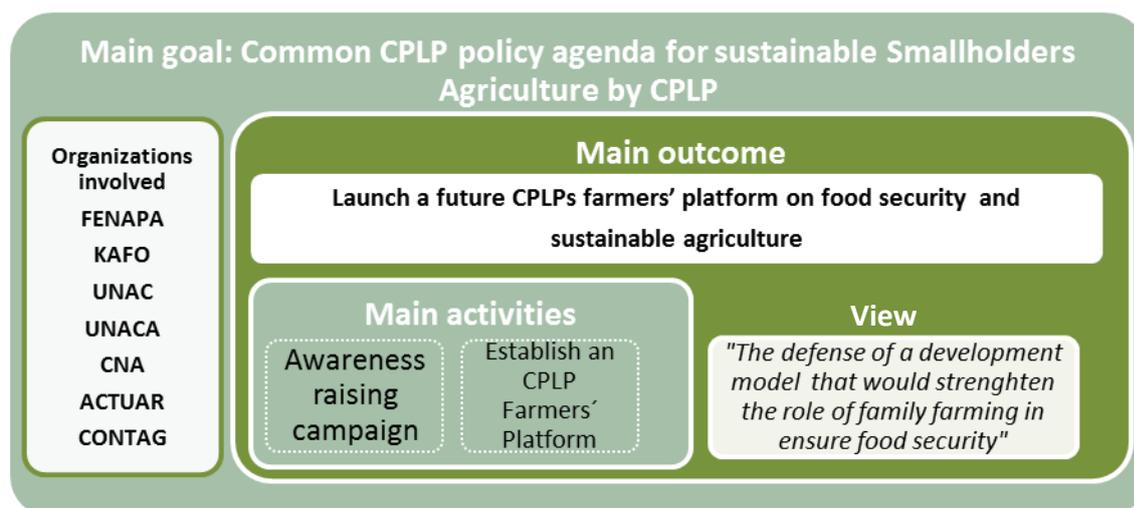


Figure 2. CPLP farmer organizations' performance at Rio+20

Figure 2 depicts CPLP's performance at Rio+20. Among the activities undertaken, CPLP farmers' delegation held an official workshop called "A common Agenda for a Sustainable Family Farming: Contribution from the Federation of Small Farmers of CPLP" at the People's Summit. A position paper, The Manifesto (see Annex II) was presented at the workshop, advocating for a development model that would strengthen the role of family farming in food security. It also presents the need to strengthen the global alliance of small farmers and rural workers, and to promote local, low-carbon and climate-oriented food production. The workshop also publicly announced the CPLP Farmers' Platform, which had been launched in Rio just prior to the workshop.

CPLP Farmers' Platform

Is a space of articulation between organizations representing family farmers and small farmers of the Portuguese-speaking countries.

It intends to influence the political agenda related to family farming, food sovereignty and the right to food at the national, the CPLP and the global level.

The Platform started its action in 2012 during the Rio +20 Summit with the aim of strengthening the fight together to defend the interests of small farmers and family farms.

CPLP member governments sought to increase inter-sectorial coordination and policy coherence within the existing strategic frameworks, in order to redirect efforts to fight hunger towards a sustainable path for both governments and civil society organizations. In order to enhance this approach, agriculture and environment ministries developed a common position paper that envisages the main challenges for the UNCSO. Governments also committed to establishing a family farming working group within the CPLPs Food Security and Nutrition Council (CONSAN).



Source: CPLP archives

La Via Campesina (LVC)

La Via Campesina is an international movement with a constituency in the world's largest grouping of smallholders and farmers. It comprises about 150 local and national organizations in 70 countries from Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. LVC represents about 200 million farmers in total. It has a long track record of lobbying and working in the global institutional spaces of the United Nations to fight for, propose and defend policies and positions in favour of smallholder-based sustainable agriculture and fisheries and food sovereignty. Therefore, LVC is now recognized as a main actor in the food and agricultural debates.

At Rio+20, LVC mobilized its membership's voices, promoting smallholder-based and agro-ecology-based production models as the way to strengthen sustainable food systems. Activities were carried in cooperation with the following farmers' organizations:

- **AIAB** – Associazione Italiana per l'Agricoltura Biologica
- **ROPPA** – The Network of Framers' and Agricultural Producers' Organizations
- **WFFP** – The World Forum of Fisher People

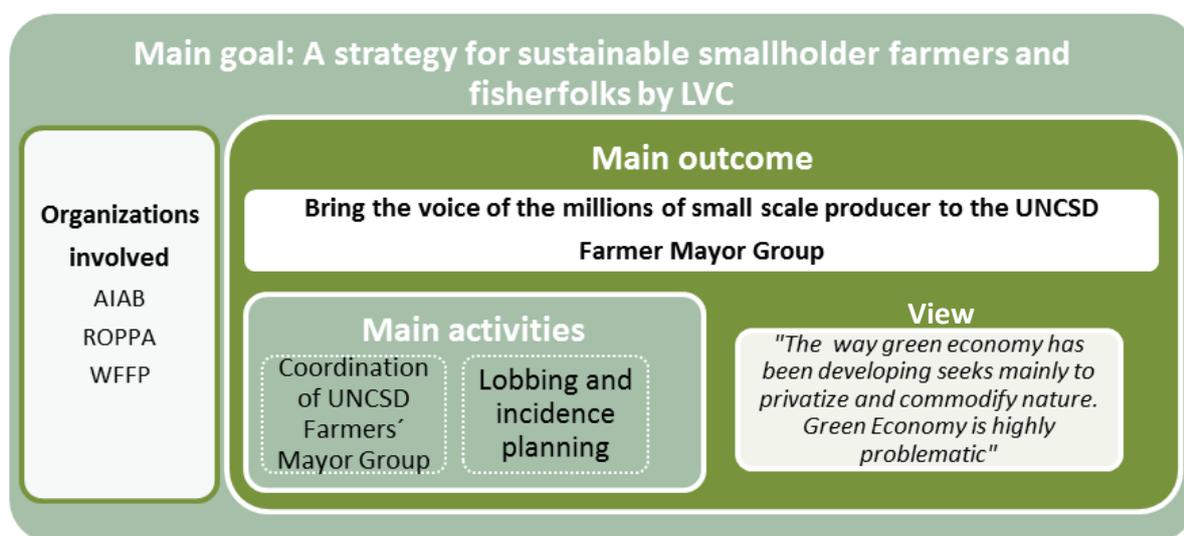


Figure 3. La Via Campesina's performance at Rio+20

Figure 3 illustrates the main goals of the programme. La Via Campesina also developed a midterm incidence strategy¹³ aiming to bring smallholders and peasants voices to the UNCSO, especially the Farmers' Major Group position. It fosters the agro-ecological production model as the way to cope with sustainable development, stressing the need for a new value chain approach. As part of its advocacy actions, LVC has worked to communicate cross-cutting messages and common positions advocating adequate natural resources management for a sustainable and inclusive food production system. LVC has collaborated to formulate alternative proposals to the Rio+20 agenda under the title "Rio+20: what are the options when business as usual is not an option (Time to Act, 2012)".¹⁴



Source: LVC archives

¹³ Throughout 2011-2012, positions were presented in ten official side events of the Rio+20 preparatory processes. La Via Campesina has become a reference point for the debates and discussion that take place inside of the official space which helps to form the position of other UNCSO Major Groups. Therefore, the Women and Youth Major Groups have also adopted food sovereignty as part of their platform.

¹⁴ The complete document is available at <http://www.timetoactrio20.org/pdf/en.pdf>.

The AgriCulture Network - ILEIA

The AgriCulture Network, formally known as the Institute for Low-External Input Agriculture (ILEIA), shares knowledge and provides information on small-scale family farming and agro-ecology production models. It emphasizes the fact that agro-ecology uses a holistic approach and has long been considered trans-disciplinary, meaning it integrates progress and methods pertaining to the social and natural fields of knowledge; the agro-ecosystem is viewed as a socio-ecological system.

As part of ILEIA's knowledge dissemination strategy, members from Brazil, China, India, Kenya, the Netherlands, Peru and Senegal work to produce six regional and one global magazine that is distributed in 150 countries. For Rio+20, it produced a special issue of its global magazine "Farming Matters" called "From farmers' fields to Rio+20: Agro-ecology works!"¹⁵ The special issue concentrated on the idea of promoting food system transition, without falling in the trap of technological quick fixes which too often are presented as the only option to feed the world by 2050. The magazine articles questioned the current food system and presented examples from throughout the world to showcase the importance of local knowledge and the opportunities that can be brought by local sustainable agriculture. Empirical data suggested that reviving traditional management systems, combined with the use of agro-ecological principles, could offer a viable and robust path toward increasing the productivity, sustainability and resilience of agricultural production systems.

3. Basis of FAO collaboration with CSOs

FAO's engagement and collaboration with smallholders and family-farmers' organizations is based on the need for: i) a transition to a sustainable agricultural system, grounded in an ecosystem approach, which includes increased adoption of agro-ecological practices, especially those developed by smallholders and family farmers (FAO, 2012) and ii) a fundamental change in governance systems which requires all actors involved to progressively shape agriculture, forestry and fisheries systems towards environmentally friendly and social inclusive systems. This includes determining who will be involved and how they will participate.

Supporting engagement between FAO and farmers' organizations in the Rio+20 process is in harmony with the renewed Organizational impetus launched by the FAO Director General to determine the future strategic directions of FAO.¹⁶ Partnerships and engagement with civil

¹⁵ This special issue was produced in 6 different languages and disseminated 25,000 copies.

¹⁶ The process supports development of FAO's main strategy and programming documents, including revision of the existing Strategic Framework 2010–19 and preparation of the new Medium Term Plan 2014–17, as well as the Programme of Work and Budget 2014–15.

society are considered essential components of FAO's strategic objectives, especially the goal of ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. Meeting this challenge will require perspectives, capacities, knowledge, skills and influence from multiple actors working together towards a common goal. It will also require construction of participatory and representative decision-making processes, supporting parallel self-organized processes and perspectives, and pursuit of common benefits through equitable socio-economic assessment metrics. To achieve these objectives will require wide-spread commitment, as this challenge will only be reached if reliable partnerships are established, founded on trust and mutual recognition.

FAO support to farmers' organizations can also be as part of the UN-wide orientation shift towards a result-oriented, bottom-up approach that duly considers inclusiveness, representativeness and the importance of process.¹⁷ In support of the FAO position advocating an increase and strengthening of partnerships,¹⁸ a long consultative process was carried-out developing the renewed Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society (FAOc, 2012). This strategy outlines different levels of collaboration with CSOs and the mutual benefits that can be realised.¹⁹ Reinforcement of these partnerships will help to build adequate national policy frameworks and aid the implementation of sustainable and community-based rural development programmes in which agriculture plays a catalytic role. Partnerships must ensure dynamic interactions and processes where local actors – mainly the powerless – take an active part in their own development. Ultimately, greater inclusion and ownership in decision making processes will lead to higher levels of effectiveness and sustainable outcomes.

¹⁷ Some examples of steps taken in line with the new approach include development of the Country Programing Framework (CPF), virtual consultations to build up national policies and FAO Regional Conferences.

¹⁸ Successful partnerships do not necessarily imply the complete acceptance of all of the other partner's views or positions. All partnerships will be established on the basis of accepting certain basic principles, then working to agree on outputs, without compromising individual nature of respective partners' positions.

¹⁹ Engagement between FAO and CSOs is based on mutually beneficial relationships. FAO must work with partners to fulfil its mandate, while CSOs gain an ally to help enhance their capacity to act within their own national context.

RATIONALE BEHIND FAO-CSO PARTNERSHIPS

- a. FAO acknowledges that eradicating hunger, malnutrition and poverty is a fight that can only be won by joining forces with different stakeholders. Civil society actors are crucial to empower, protect and improve the livelihoods of those most affected.
- b. FAO recognizes the capacities, knowledge and skills civil society possesses as well as their tremendous field work scope and their ability to appraise local situations.
- c. FAO believes that bringing their technical expertise together with Civil Society's outreach and local knowledge, enhances and multiplies the outcomes of development activities targeting vulnerable communities. These mutual benefits provide the basis for FAO to engage in partnerships with CSOs.
- d. FAO notes that collaboration with civil society provides longer-lasting results in the reduction of food insecurity and the elimination of poverty.

IV. Smallholders and family farmers at Rio+20

1. Small-scale farmers at a glance

Agriculture has always been central to increasing human wellbeing and national economic growth. Its importance is in part due to its multi-functionality as livelihood provider and source of income and jobs for rural households. Agriculture's contribution to rural communities' cohesion, through the maintenance of ecosystem services (e.g. water supply and purification, pollination, pest and disease regulation) and transformation of local economies (IAASTD, 2009), illustrates the importance of agricultural issues.

Within the agricultural sector, small-scale farmers have remained central to agricultural development and continue to play important roles promoting an ecologically rational and socially just food system. Small-scale farmers and farming systems are themselves extremely

diverse, as influenced by geographical region, national governance system and management type.²⁰

It is difficult to categorize smallholders and family farmers according to a common typology of attributes or components. Their productive and social structures often do not follow rigid patterns. Smallholders and family farms vary in terms of the activities they engage in, the assets and resources available to them (such as land area and quality, water resources, animal stocks, infrastructure and machinery, financial assets) and their access to these productive resources. They also differ according to land tenure – the type of contractual arrangements which can include renting or share-cropping; the control of the natural resources used; the scale of production; the share of family labour utilized (who in the family manages what and how); the extent and nature of wage labour employed; the degree of market integration; and the distance of holdings from the family residence. Furthermore, the interaction of these variables with national standards of living must also be considered.

Keeping in mind the diversity described above, any definition of the characteristics of small-scale farms and family farming²¹ will depend on the definitions that each region/country adopts for itself, settled in extensive and binding consultations with relevant stakeholders. Nevertheless, scale measurements of the farm size are often used to classify producers. According to the IAASTD (2009), there are 1.5 billion men and women farmers working on 404 million small-scale farms of less than 2 ha. However, the 2 ha farm size is not a universal characteristic. Smallholding sizes vary across regions from an average of 0.5 to 10 ha – and even 500 ha is considered a smallholding in Australia.

²⁰ For example, families living in the Andean highlands farms have different characteristics than family farms in the Sahel.

²¹ An agreed definition of what constitutes a small-scale farmer must include a territorial and socio-economic assessment that considers the level of technology and external inputs used, the production process used and its relation to the local environment, agro-biodiversity involved in the production process and type of employment existent, among other factors.

AVERAGE SIZE OF AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS (ha)

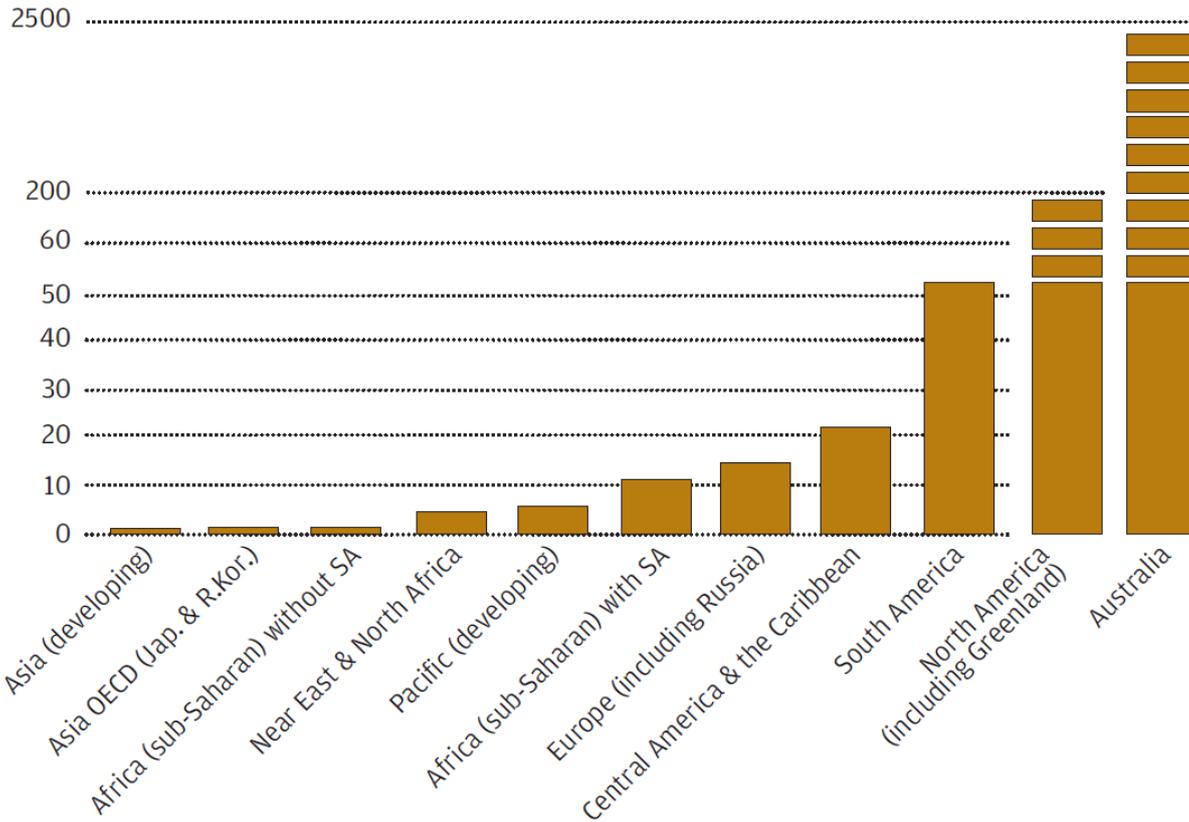


Figure 4. Average size of agricultural holdings (ha). Source: FAO (2012) “Smallholders and Family Farmers Fact Sheet.”

In performing economic, social, cultural, environmental and reproductive functions, family farming can itself be a means of maintaining family patrimony and social status, cultural heritage, territories, landscapes and communities. As a result, the motivations of family farmers often go far beyond maximizing economic profit to encompass other social, cultural and ecological motives. Agriculture (in its broad sense) is a critical foundation for family farmers’ livelihoods due to its important role in providing income and employment, food supply and a direct household basic consumption source. However, smallholders and family farmers often diversify their activities to complement incomes or reduce risks, participating in non-farm activities or bearing temporary migration. For these reasons, the view of a small-scale farmer as much more than an agrarian economic actor is gaining in prominence. Rather, a small-scale farmer can be thought of as a nuclear unit for the environmental management of land and its biodiversity, an important source of cultural value and a fundamental pillar of the national development.²² As such, smallholders and families become a means and unit of organizing agriculture, forestry, fisheries, pastoral and aquaculture production systems. The

²² Recognized in the official “Resolution 16/2011 *The International Year of Family Farming*”, 2011.

family and the farm are linked, co-evolve and combine economic, environmental, reproductive, social and cultural functions.²³

While the working-group's draft definitions that follow represent a starting point, owing to the complexities described in this section, there is currently no agreement or consensus on the definition of smallholdings and family farming that can be used to guide policy development at different levels.

La agricultura familiar (en inglés, *family farming* o *family agriculture*) es una forma de organizar la producción agrícola, forestal, pesquera, ganadera y acuícola que es gestionada y administrada por una familia y depende principalmente de la mano de obra de sus miembros, tanto mujeres como hombres. La familia y la finca están relacionadas entre sí, evolucionan conjuntamente y combinan funciones económicas, ambientales, sociales y culturales.

Family Farming (also *Family Agriculture*) is a means of organizing agricultural, forestry, fisheries, pastoral and aquaculture production which is managed and operated by a family and predominantly reliant on family labor, including both women's and men's. The family and the farm are linked, coevolve and combine economic, environmental, social and cultural functions.

L'agriculture familiale est un mode d'organisation dans lequel la production agricole, forestière, halieutique, pastorale ou aquacole est gérée et exploitée par une famille et repose essentiellement sur une main-d'œuvre familiale, à la fois féminine et masculine. La famille et l'exploitation sont liées, évoluent ensemble et remplissent des fonctions économiques, environnementales, sociales et culturelles.

²³ Based on the draft family farming definition, identified by the IYFF inter-departmental working group of FAO in November 2012. Economic functions include production and employment. Environmental functions include soil enrichment, carbon sequestration, water purification, pest control, pollination and biodiversity enhancement. Reproductive and social functions include childcare, nutrition, water and energy provisioning, education, health, social security, insurance and risk management. Cultural functions include transmission of identity, symbolic and religious values of resources and territories, knowledge and technologies.

2. Smallholders and family farmers' organizations' voice at Rio + 20

2.1 How smallholders get involved

The participation of civil society organizations, particularly smallholders, in the preparatory political dialogue of the UNCSO was principally carried out through the submission of comments and proposals to the Zero Draft document to the UN/DESA Secretariat. Farmers and smallholders organizations were active in revising and sending back their concerns for shaping a complex document presented to the Summit for negotiation and finally endorsed by governments. As part of this process, farmers' messages were presented throughout 2011–2012 through written submissions published on the UNCSO dedicated Web page and at least 10 official side events of the Rio+20 preparatory process.

La Via Campesina, one of the world's largest peasant groups, co-organized the Farmers Major Group (FMG) at Rio+20. Through FMG, small-scale farmers and smallholders came from all parts of the world to raise their voices in support of a shift toward an agro-ecologically sustainable model of agriculture. They argued that an agro-ecological agricultural model is a favourable alternative compared to resource losses, human-induced climate variability, social breakdowns, rural impoverishment, food insecurity, under-nourishment and increasing economic dependency. It was also emphasised that there is a close link between rural poverty and natural resources availability, so enhancing agricultural biodiversity could contribute to a better livelihood for farming communities and build more resilient and sustainable agricultural systems. Annex 1 presents the Farmers Major Group Submission to Rio +20.

In a parallel process, CSO representatives organized themselves on the occasion of the UNCSO to define their common positions, claims, strategies, and the changes required to reach the "Future that We Want". As a starting point, a call was put forward to implement inclusive participatory processes involving the broad participation of agricultural stakeholders and using a multidisciplinary approach. It argues that most vulnerable people, strongly dependent on their land and resources, are left out of the political process that determines their lives and those of future generations.

The Peoples' Summit Conference, held in Rio 15–23 June 2012, mobilized and gathered peasant and marginalized groups from all over the world, facilitating exchanges, synergies, feedbacks and linkages among organizations from the different regions. It resulted in several declarations through which small-scale producers put forward their demands and solutions for tackling for major challenges facing the agricultural sector. This allowed governments and other relevant decision-makers to identify the needs and demands constructed by and for the people in terms of sustainable agriculture. In the following sections this document is presented in detail.

Finally, the adoption of 2014 as International Year of Family Farming²⁴ has triggered family farmers' organizations to gather and work at different levels and in different areas of engagement. This cooperation has three central aims: i) to identify the external threats and constraints to achieving a sustainable agricultural model base in small-scale agro-ecology farming; ii) to gain recognition for actors in the food chain as world food suppliers, promoters of human nutrition and environmental conservation, and iii) to translate their needs into concrete measures for prompt financial and technical assistance.

2.2 Smallholders claims and demands at Rio+ 20

As described above, agriculture has been a central component of civilization development, not only because of its basic function as a food provider, but as a provider of income generation, provision of vital goods and services, promoter of rural development, source of employment and biodiversity custodian. At the same time, industrial practices and a hegemonic and unilateral approach to food production has emerged. The increasing corporate control of natural resources favours short-term gains at the expense of social and environmental endowments, while exacerbating inequalities and degrading the natural resource base. In spite of the findings that the world faces a sustainability crisis, smallholders and family farmers have been disenfranchised and disregarded.

In the midst of this global food system crisis, small-scale and family-farmer organizations gained the attention of the global community at Rio+20 by illustrating the interconnections between agriculture and food systems and the social, environmental, economic and good governance aspects of sustainability. There is a need to tackle food security and poverty eradication objectives that remain unfulfilled, and cope with fundamental natural resources scarcity and ecological limits, while mitigating and adapting to climate change. In particular, the need to enhance agricultural system resilience and food self-reliance has been highlighted, alongside the problems of coping with increased costs of fossil fuel-based agricultural inputs. Agricultural development can and must be reshaped in order to cope with this expanding global crisis in a sustainable way.

Smallholders and family farming organizations recognize themselves as key actors in fostering sustainable development. They assert that family farming is the base of sustainable food production – able to guarantee food security, food sovereignty and environmentally sound management of land and its biodiversity, while preserving the important socio-cultural heritage of rural communities and nations. In summary, small-scale and family farming represents a strategic sector due to its economic, social, cultural and environmental functions which reflect all dimensions of sustainable development.

²⁴ On 22 December, 2011, through Resolution 16/2011, the General Assembly declared 2014 as the International Year of Family Farming. The Declaration was a joint achievement of more than 350 organizations from 60 countries and 5 continents that supported the World Rural Forum Campaign.

While this document does not claim to be exhaustive in detailing the diverse claims and self-assessments put forward by family farmers' organizations, the main concerns advanced in the lead up and during Rio+20 are summarised below for each of the sustainable development dimensions – environmental, economic, social and governance sustainability.

2.2.1 Environmental claims

Through agro-ecological and other sustainable approaches to agriculture, smallholder and small-scale family farmers could play an important role to offset elements of the present environmental crisis. These approaches commonly involve the maintenance or enhancement of biodiversity, and represent a viable long-term strategy to improve agro-ecosystem resilience to the effects of climate change. An example of such a production management strategy involves enhancing soil structure by adding organic matter to increase water retention capacity.²⁵ The use of diversification within production systems can also significantly reduce vulnerability and protect livelihoods (De Schutter, 2010).

Smallholders and family farmers have had to adapt to climate variability before the phenomena has become more widely recognized. In that sense, small-scale and family farming is itself a way of adapting and mitigating the adverse impacts of climate change. Small-scale agriculture is less carbon-demanding and less dependent on fossil fuel, producing low-carbon food. Therefore, investing in small-scale and family farming agro-ecological models, technologies and practices is a way to ensure both proper management of natural resources (land, soil, forests, water, biodiversity) and climate resilience. With this in mind, smallholders request improved access and control over natural resources, mainly land, water, forests and seeds.

²⁵ Based on a large-scale study of 180 communities of smallholders in Nicaragua, it is been demonstrated that farming plots cropped with simple agro-ecological methods (including rock bunds or dikes, green manure, crop rotation and the incorporation of stubble, ditches, terraces, barriers, mulch, legumes, trees, plowing parallel to the slope, no-burn live fences and zero tillage) have on average 40 percent more topsoil, higher field moisture, less erosion and lower economic losses than control plots on conventional farms affected by Mitch Hurricane in 2008. On average, agro-ecologically farmed plots lost 18 percent less of their arable land to landslides, and had 69 percent less gully erosion, as compared to conventional plots.

SMALLHOLDERS APPROACH TO AGRO-ECOLOGY

- Is **site-specific** and its performance is not due the techniques *per se*, but rather the ecological processes that underlie sustainability. It avoids dependence on external inputs, emphasizing use of agro-diversity and beneficial synergies
- Is a **culturally acceptable** approach, as it builds upon traditional and indigenous knowledge, in improving agro-biodiversity and local natural resources while increasing food availability and improving nutrition
- Is **socially beneficial**, as its diffusion requires constant farmers participation and community building
- Is a promoter of **processes of governance** as it is built on greater participation in decision-making, social empowerment, inclusiveness and locally adequate measures and approaches
- Is **ecologically sound**, as it does not attempt to modify the flows of energy and nutrients of existing systems, but rather tries to optimize their performance through adaptation
- Is **economically beneficial**, as it increases the real value of capital input, while constituting a major source of income and jobs for farmers and families, helping to reduce poverty.

2.2.2 Economic claims

The multitude of crises currently facing humanity has demonstrated the limitations of the economic growth paradigm. Within the food and agriculture sector, unequal competition has been introduced by international trade liberalization, while distorting subsidies remain. A lack of priority given to smallholders and family farming in national policies has diminished access to financial resources leading to the marginalization of a large section of the world population, specifically smallholders.²⁶ The neoliberal model of industrialised agriculture has not “trickled-down” into more social well-being. In contrast, it has contributed to the global environmental and employment crisis and disconnection from local realities (White, 2011). Farmers’ organizations at Rio+20 put forth their ideas on how to cope with these challenges and improve agricultural performance.

²⁶ Summary of several farmers’ organizations’ submissions during the Rio+20 process.

The challenge is to ensure timely and appropriate policies which take into account the current characteristics of small-scale holders at each level of intervention. This requires consideration of market power of family farmers, their types of production, the role of intermediaries, up-to-date food regimes,²⁷ and tariff and non-tariff barriers. As providers of nearly 70 percent of the world's food supply, smallholders and family farmers need an adequate and just framework that enables them to produce and market their products collectively, and that facilitates investing in building their individual and organizational capacities. This includes improving interactions among local, national and regional market agents, and supporting the creation of value-added of smallholder productions in order to improve incomes and create alternative labour or employment opportunities. At the same time, the vulnerability of smallholders to food and energy price volatility calls for reforming and integrating regional markets to protect them from global imbalances and disparities.

2.2.3 Social claims

Rural social structures have changed over time. New and powerful actors have emerged, affecting social power structures and relationships, as well as territorial heritage practices. The spread of intensive, highly mechanized and carbon-demanding food production systems has caused profound and continued social impacts on rural communities. For example, in developing countries, cases of both foreign and domestic land grabbing and market gripping have been documented.²⁸ There is evidence of social breakdowns with negative consequences in community resilience and territorial permanence, aging populations and changes in social structures due to urbanisation. Nevertheless, small-scale holders and rural households still constitute two-fifths of humanity (FAOb, 2012) and possess intrinsic survival strategies. It is a priority to strengthen farmers' organizations and small-scale food producers as a self-sustaining element of rural societies while investments in public goods, rural infrastructure must also be enhanced.

In this regard, women and youth have been the most affected, encouraging already existing disparity and discrimination. Therefore, mechanisms must support and help strengthen the participation and role of women, while promoting their empowerment and funding gender-sensitive credit services. Globally, 60 to 80 percent of peasant growers are women; in Africa, women produce 90 percent of the continent's food supply and contribute to about half of global food supply. Yet in sub-Saharan Africa, only 15 percent of landholders are women, receiving less than 10 percent of credit and 7 percent of extension services (UN DESA, 2011).

²⁷ The food regime concept allows us to refocus from the commodity as an object to the commodity as a relation, with definite geopolitical, social, ecological and nutritional relations at significant historical moments. The concept was developed initially by Harriet Friedmann and Philip McMichael in 1989.

²⁸ In the last few years, reports of both mainstream international agencies and NGOs have established beyond doubt that large-scale land acquisitions and the accompanying dispossession of local farmers, pastoralist and forest users is occurring on an unprecedented scale, particularly but not only in sub-Saharan Africa.

The extent of food system resilience would substantially increase if both female and male farmers had independent access to resources for managing their production systems. There is a need to eliminate gender discrimination in national legislations (especially regarding land and livestock tenure, access to resources and contractual rights) in order to ensure rights to land and resources of female and male family farmers, pastoralists and indigenous peoples, as well as decent jobs and fair wages for agricultural workers.

2.2.4 Governance claims

Strengthening smallholders and family farmers' organizations requires a focus on raising awareness and capacity building to enable these groups to act as primary partners in decision-making and agricultural service delivery. Smallholder and family farmers' organizations can be seen as a social movement. Empowering these groups can help to lay the foundations for democratic and vibrant societies.

The current global crisis has also raised awareness that the increased plurality of actors, their diverse interests, power and social positions has increased the complexity of the development processes. The growing inter-connectedness among actors of the same (or related) sphere of action has added even greater complexity and requires unprecedented levels of intersectional collaboration at all levels.

In terms of natural resource governance, farmer organizations have stated loudly that business as usual is not an option. Neither is governance as usual. It is imperative to change the path of how, where and who makes decisions. Inclusive and binding participatory processes that focus on equity are of fundamental importance. There is a need to improve the representation of agricultural stakeholders in the design of policies and plans at national level, chiefly through the channel of smallholders and family farmers' organizations.

All countries should establish their own policy structures and mechanisms to strengthen the role of family farmers' organizations in maintaining resilient local food systems based on agro-ecological models. Good governance calls for greater attention toward establishing equal power relationships, with sufficient awareness given to the interactions and relationships between state and non-state actors. This requires institutional mechanisms that facilitate heightened and coordinated participation of all stakeholders in achieving multiple, and sometimes conflicting, objectives.

2.3 CSOs achievements at Rio+20: issues raised

Rio+20 generated significant expectations and mobilized efforts in pursuit of a international political commitment to secure a sustainable global development path. Discussions relating to sustainability within the food and agriculture sector strongly indicated the need to consider family farmers' concerns – because of their intimate link with natural resources and intrinsic interest in maintaining their production base and livelihoods. Unfortunately, the broad

consensus among CSOs was that Rio+20 failed to deliver a comprehensive political agreement outlining clear pathways for change. For example, opinions were divided on an over-arching theme of the UNCSO, the concept of a green economy within the context of poverty alleviation and sustainable development (as shown in Figure 5).

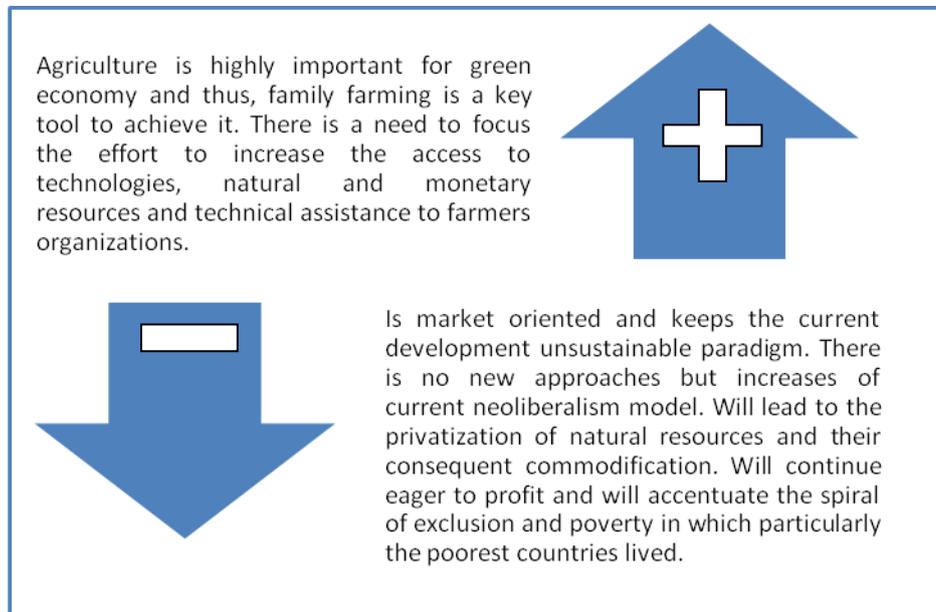


Figure 5. Views on the green economy concept

Among the outcomes and issues raised at Rio + 20. Major farmer’s organizations, with the support of FAO, were able to: i) bring their voices into the international political arena and ii) strengthen and enrich their own capacities and knowledge for acting within the global policy context. These dual processes helped to enhance CSOs ability to contribute in international fora. Table 1 seeks capture some of the measurable and more intangible benefits associated with this process.

Table 1. Results obtained at Rio+20 by smallholders and farmers' organizations

Internal results	External results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowered organizations • Enhanced capacities and knowledge sharing between organizations • Presented joint political positions • Enhanced interconnections and synergies between CSOs and international institutions • Established new national and international platforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statements and positions reflected in high-level policy meetings/documents • Messages spread throughout different stakeholders and levels • Visibility as relevant actor in food and agriculture sector increased. • Agro-ecology-based, local production models promoted • Food sovereignty issues stressed • Awareness of civil society on farmer organizations role enhanced • Stressed the necessity to build bridges between agricultural development and social policies in the context of renewed food security strategies, along with a Right to Food perspective

Figure 6 illustrates small-scale farmers' self-assessments and requirements for achieving sustainability in the food chain, in each of the sustainable development dimensions.

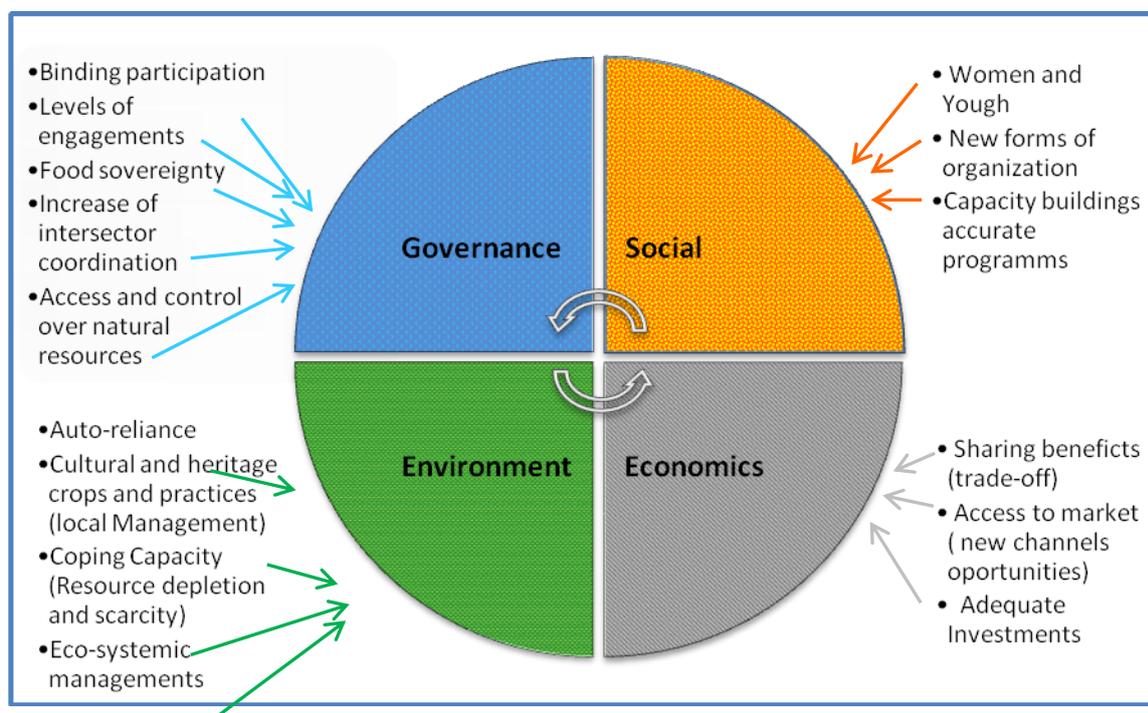


Figure 6. Family farmer organizations' priorities and needs, as expressed at Rio+20

The key elements of a sustainable agricultural model shown in Figure 6 are expanded upon in the following section. Specific attention is paid to the linkages, synergies and feedback loops between the different dimensions.

Good governance

Food sovereignty:²⁹ refers to a system that returns the land to its social function as the producer of food, puts the people who produce, distribute and consume food at the centre of decisions about food systems and policies, as opposed to the demands of markets and corporations. It is based on small-scale farmer-driven agriculture that prioritizes local and national economies, as well as markets based on environmental, social and economic sustainability. Food sovereignty implies new social relations.

Access and control over natural resources: refers to the role of governments in securing smallholders' access to land, territories, water, seeds, livestock and biodiversity. Calls for improved land tenure systems, water rights and legislation, and investment in on-farm and rural infrastructure, such as storage facilities, roads, access to basic services.

Social wellbeing

Focus on women: recognizes women as both drivers and change agents for sustainable agriculture. It incorporates gender in key aspects of agricultural participatory research, policy design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The concept calls for targeted investments to enhance women's knowledge, training and innovation with regard to sustainable production and conservation.

Smallholders and family farmers' organizations: recognizes small farmers' organizations as key partners in decision making and in providing agricultural services by creating institutionalized, representative, inclusive and binding spaces for participation.

Promote agriculture amongst youth: refers to developing policies and providing programmes that will make agriculture challenging, meaningful, attractive, and profitable, and promoting farming as a credible career option for youth – inspiring them towards further innovations in farming.

²⁹ Food sovereignty focuses on six principles: food for people; valuing food providers; local food systems; local control; building knowledge and skills; working with nature. More information about the concept can be found at: <http://www.foodsovereignty.org/FOOTER/Highlights.aspx>

Environmental integrity

Cultural and heritage crops and practices: refers to small-scale food producers' knowledge of producing under the most variable conditions, while acknowledging that cultural diversity and knowledge of local resources, such as agro-biodiversity, are declining.

Ecosystem management: refers to agro-ecological farming techniques and practices that raise yields, improve soil fertility, conserve natural resources and reduce dependence on expensive external inputs. This approach involves the maintenance or introduction of agricultural biodiversity, including a diversity of crops, livestock, fish, pollinators, insects, soil biota and other components that occur in and around production systems. It involves the community at the core of the process.

Economic development

Access to markets and new market channels: refers to access to market information (e.g. price information, weather forecasting), in support of producer organizations in order to strengthen their linkages within value chains, as well as their access to social safety nets.

Adequate investments: refers to increasing and re-aligning finance flows to sustainable smallholder agriculture, as well as increasing investment in smallholders, including extension services and rural infrastructure. There is a need to greatly increase incentives and support to small-scale farmers through a clear financing strategy for scaling-up proven sustainable approaches, as well as monitoring and evaluation systems that account for externalities.

Family farmers' organizations have raised interesting action points with their cross-cutting agenda, demonstrating their capacity, commitment, advocacy power and outreach potential. CSOs have proven to be reliable actors and shown that by working together, the future could be really "what we want".

To further appreciate the achievements of farmers' organizations in Rio+20, it is noteworthy to mention that FAO has included the IYFF 2014 within its biennial Strategic Plan 2012–2013. The IYFF is not seen as an end in itself but the beginning of a process through which family farming and its many professional associations will be recognized as the leading force of their own rural development. The Strategic Plan identified four main areas of action: international relations and advocacy; scientific; communication; and cooperation.

International Year of Family Farming (IYFF)

In 2008, the development organization World Rural Forum (WRF), whose field of action is rural development in solidarity, and especially the defence and promotion of Family Farming (FF), launched an international campaign aimed at the declaration of an International Year of Family Farming-IYFF by the UN. This Campaign has gained more and more legitimacy and support from agricultural organizations, civil society and governments, reaching at this moment more than 365 supporting farmers' and civil society organizations from 60 countries altogether. More than 10 governments have also expressed support to the campaign. Brazil, Belize, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Chile, Paraguay, Philippines, Peru, Pakistan, Spain, Switzerland, Uganda, etc.

The prime objective of the IYFF is to promote, strengthen, expand and maintain family farming and family agriculture, involving crop, livestock, fisheries and/or forest types, as a socially needed, culturally acceptable, economically viable, environmentally sustainable, and politically relevant system in all countries and regions of the world. For this objective, the IYFF will advocate for real active policies in favour of the sustainable development of farming systems based on the family unit, provide guidance to put them into practice, to boost the role of farmer organizations and to raise the awareness on the part of civil society of the importance of supporting family farming. And all this is to fight against poverty, to seek food security and food sovereignty, and to achieve an active land and agricultural activities based on respect for the environment and the biodiversity.

2.4. Rio+20 follow-up and the CPLP farmers' platform

CPLP smallholders' organizations launched in Rio+20 a regional platform for small-scale holders on food security and sustainable agriculture as a concrete action towards a common policy and advocacy agenda, to be scaled up in all CPLP countries.

The existence of a formal mechanism for civil society participation in public policy making within the CPLP's food security and nutrition strategy, contributed to a renewed mobilization of national farmers' federations from Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, East-Timor, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal and Sao Tome e Principe.³⁰

The Regional Platform of Smallholder Farmers of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP)³¹ can be seen as an opportunity to involve thousands of smallholder farmers, enhancing policy dialogue and increasing public awareness on family farming and food security in 8 different countries within 5 different regions.

Altogether the CPLP region comprises a population of almost 250 million inhabitants, including 28 million living in conditions of food and nutrition insecurity.³² 16 million are from African member countries of the CPLP. While the reliability of statistics varies between countries, it is estimated that about 70% are smallholder farmers and/or living in rural areas, particularly women and youth. Family farmers hold the majority of farms (e.g. 98% in Mozambique, 100% in Sao Tome and Principe, 89% in Cape Verde, 88% in Guinea-Bissau, 76% in Portugal, 84% in Brazil) and produce more than 70% of all food in CPLP member countries. Nevertheless, according to farmers' organizations, the landownership is concentrated leaving a small area to smallholder farmers (e.g. 8% in Mozambique, 6% in Cape Verde, 16% in Guinea-Bissau, 11% in Portugal, 24% in Brazil).

³⁰ The CPLP is an intergovernmental forum with legal status and a political mandate for strengthening cooperation and diplomatic coordination within its member-States. The existence of a common language and a common historical, political and cultural process allows these countries to share and maintain ties of friendship and cooperation, both at governmental level and among CSOs. CPLP headquarters are based in Portugal. In October 2011 the CPLP was granted observer status in the World Committee for Food Security (CFS). For further information please visit www.cplp.org.

³¹ For further information about the Regional Platform of Smallholder Farmers from the Community of Portuguese Language Countries please visit <http://www.pccplp.com>.

³² Angola (27.4%); Cape Verde (8.9%); Mozambique (39.2%); Sao Tome and Principe (7.7%); Guinea-Bissau (8.7%); East-Timor (38.2%); Brazil (6.9%). Source: FAOSTAT.

Table 2: Members of the Platform of Smallholder Farmers from the CPLP Countries

Country	National farmers federation	Date of constitution	Number of member organizations	Number of smallholder farmers
Angola	UNACA – National Farmers Federation of Angola	1990	8302	736,596
Brazil	CONTAG – National confederation of farmers and rural workers of Brazil	1963	27 federations, 4000 farmers and rural unions	16,000,000
Guinea-Bissau	KAFO – National Peasants Federation of Guinea-Bissau	1996	10	23,454
São Tomé e Príncipe	FENAPA – National Federation of Smallholder Farmers	1997	72	2,900
Mozambique	UNAC – National Peasants Federation of Mozambique	1987	2122	86,000
Portugal	CNA – National Confederation of Agriculture	1978	68	40,000

In July 2011 the CPLP Heads of State Summit took place in Maputo, Mozambique. The first session of the CPLP Council for Food Security (CONSAN-CPLP) also took place in Maputo and was attended by the CPLP Platform of Smallholders Farmers as well as other civil society representatives. In the framework of the CONSAN-CPLP it was proposed the constitution of the “Family Farming Working Group” composed by government representatives, the Platform of smallholder’s farmers of the CPLP and interested Universities. Similarly to what normally happen in the CFS, this working group will develop specific policy proposals to be discussed by governments at the next CONSAN’s meeting that will take place in 2014, in the context of 2014-YIFF.

In order to build capacity to engage in such negotiations, the Platform is trying to promote knowledge exchanges within the region and with other regions. A first exchange took place in 2012, in the context of the specialized meeting on family farming from MERCOSUR organized in Montevideo - Uruguay.

The Platform will develop several activities in 2014 including policy position papers demonstrating the importance of small-scale farmers for national food security and nutrition in all CPLP member countries. The Platform will also try to develop specific proposals for national legislation aiming to achieve the recognition of small-scale food producers’ category as well as legislation for national public food procurement and programs based on the positive discrimination of local small-scale food producers.

The recent experience from the CPLP farmers’ platform seems to indicate that mobilization, networking and participation of family farmers in public policy making could be stimulated if appropriate mechanisms for social participation are established. This means that advocacy strategies to promote family farming (in the context of YYFF) should consider the inclusion of appropriate governance mechanisms in Food Security strategies, to promote social participation, particularly from small-scale family farmers. This will create better conditions to deliver social and environmental policies, reduce transaction costs for family farmers and contribute to a stronger and more coherent global multi-level food governance system.

Table 3: SWOT analyses of the CPLP’s farmers platform process

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different affiliation from national farmers organizations involved, representing the diverse range of global famers movements • Common language enabling trustful relations and easier consensus • Acting in partnership with other civil society organizations allowing a more holistic approach to food production • Acting as a network - lighter structures, faster reactions 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced technical and financial capacities from some member organizations • Recent partnership
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existence of CPLP’s regional food security and nutrition strategy with priority for pro - small-scale farmers policies and their participation in CONSAN • The International Year of Family Farming 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CONSAN not functioning: appropriation of CPLP’s regional food security strategy by specific interest groups • Lack of technical and financial resources

V. Conclusions

The policies adopted and the measures taken with regards food and agriculture have deeply changed rural territories in the past decades, causing profound changes in social structures, land tenure, employment, natural resources availability and quality. Despite these challenges, smallholders and family farmers remain essential actors for food security, poverty eradication and environmental conservation. Smallholders and family farmers are diverse entities that have shown remarkable resilience to economic, environmental and social changes. Smallholders and family farmers fulfil multiple functions including food and non-food production, maintaining cultural heritage, providing a source of community interaction for asset and resource management, and conserving biodiversity and genetic resources. Nevertheless, they remain marginalized and far from mainstream policies.

It is time to re-consider smallholders and family farmers' potential to combat current global challenges while recognizing the constraints of adopting site-specific agro-ecological food systems – the challenge is not technical but political. As stated by the IAASTD Report, “a fundamental change in the course of global agricultural policy is an absolute necessity”.

The traditional top-down process at all levels of decision making needs to give way to a bottom-up approach, based on a binding participation of relevant stakeholders and representatives of small farmers, fishermen and indigenous people, including the most marginalized and under-represented. There are examples of inclusive processes in the international arena with interesting results that could be followed. The endorsement of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure is one example. Still, the adoption of non-binding principles is only a starting point in terms of what is necessary. A more challenging proposition is to reform existing power asymmetries. The reform process at the UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in 2009, whereby CSOs were included in the decision-making process³³ is one promising option.

In national contexts, policies need to meet the needs and demands of smallholder farmers as productive economic units by creating the enabling conditions to establish an agro-ecological mode of production. Country-driven approaches that create the local conditions to access markets (or create new ones), and to produce for self-reliance, are the basis for a sustainable future in rural as well as urban areas.

In addition, acknowledging natural resource scarcity requires holistic systemic approaches to design and provide the instruments that simultaneously safeguard ecological systems, stabilize the economy and secure people's livelihoods. In the context of increased food demand, economic supremacy and further population growth, natural resource management needs to provide the overall umbrella to assess feasibility. Public support of agriculture needs

³³ Through the Civil Society Mechanism (CSM).

to be re-directed towards the provision of essential public goods for rural areas, such as infrastructure. Greater public investment in community capacity development and social infrastructure is indispensable for transitioning to sustainable natural resource use and improving the livelihoods and incomes of millions of small-scale fishers, pastoralists, forest dwellers and farmers. Additional public funding is needed for research and dissemination of sustainable food production and handling technologies. Institutional conditions should be established that facilitate appropriate private investment.

The outcome document of Rio+20 includes several references to family farming and small-scale producers, recognizing their catalytic role in the improvement of rural livelihoods and their important contributions to sustainable development through activities that are both environmentally sound and sustain economic growth. The International Year of Family Farming will offer an important opportunity to strengthen small-scale family farmers' participation in the civil society network and to further emphasize their important role in the context of poverty eradication, ensuring food security and coping with environmental crises.

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ANNEX I

Farmers Major Group Submission to Rio +20

Introduction

Farmers represent one-third of the world's population and one-half of its poor. Support for farming contributes to social and economic growth, including reducing poverty and hunger in developing countries, and fosters rural development and employment. Farmers and fisher folks provide multiple goods and services to society, such as production of food, fibres, delivery of ecosystem services, and land stewardship.

Call for Action

1) **Increase the proportion of overseas development assistance focused on agriculture and rural development to 20%. Encourage countries to meet their commitments in l'Aquila, CAADP (Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme), and other regional commitments.** Reduce poverty by supporting smallholders since farmers represent one half of the world's poor and despite high profile promises, woefully few resources have truly begun to flow to help farmers break the poverty cycle. Agriculture and rural development must be treated in a holistic manner including establishing enabling conditions for investments for sustainable development in rural areas, which **prioritize the needs of small scale food producers, including women, indigenous peoples, peasants and the rural poor.**

2) Use a **knowledge-based** approach of best practices that sustain production and minimize the negative impacts of farming activities on the environment. **Committing to increasing support for participatory approaches to farmer-to-farmer training, and participatory extension systems.** Modern extension services must increase their capacity for two-way information sharing – between experts in research and farmers themselves who have essential information on farming. Research and extension should be functionally linked and there should be pluralism in the approaches to implementing this form of education. Mobilisation of the scientific, donor, business, NGO, and farmer communities are needed to improve knowledge sharing. Recruiting, training, and retaining young people to farming and agricultural sciences is essential.

3) Develop new approaches to **reward farmers for ecosystem services that also foster sustainability and address poverty by enabling smallholder farmers to break the subsistence cycle** and include women farmers in these approaches.

4) **Rural Women need equitable access to secure land tenure; programs to address poverty, worklessness, and poor educational options; foster value added and collective marketing options; and increase their participation and representation in farm organizations and politics.** Women account for 60 to 80% of peasant growers and produce 90% of food in Africa and about half of all food worldwide. Yet in sub-Saharan Africa, only 15% of landholders are women and they receive less than 10% of credit and 7% of extension services. Policies that address gender inequalities could, conservatively, increase yields on women's farms by 2.5% to 4%.

5) **Guarantee the rights of farmers to participate in decision making processes in all aspects of agriculture processes** including research, production, distribution, pricing, marketing, standard setting, policy making and regulation of the agricultural commodities market, and empower them to exercise these rights.

6) Agriculture must be enabled to **nourish all people and communities**, both today and in the future, with healthy, diverse and culturally appropriate food that respects animal welfare and the integrity of natural ecosystems at both the local and global level.

7) **Prompt the creation and development of regional, national and local agricultural policies, in collaboration with representative farm organizations.** These must be able to provide a framework adapted to developing sustainable agricultural production, to mobilise investment, accompany the development of local production, open up rural areas, ensure the viability of agricultural activity which guarantees a fair income for farmers, the installation of young farmers and the renewal of generations and strengthens farm organizations.

8) At the same time, **the reduction of post harvest losses, food waste and excessive consumption are essential to improve health and reduce environmental damage.** Today, the average adult in an OECD country eats an unnecessary and unhealthy extra meal each day (roughly an extra 750 Cal). About 25% of the energy and water – and the associated greenhouse gas produced used in OECD countries is wasted. At least 50% of OECD adults are overweight or obese. Obesity costs the OECD states almost \$300 billion per year – an amount that is more than enough to meet all of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, with around \$100 billion leftover.

9) Ensure small scale food producers, pastoralists, indigenous peoples, peasants and the rural poor are provided with enhanced access to information as a basis for decision-making; access to justice; and free, prior and informed consent for both policy development and implementation actions on the ground, including issues that pose a threat to local food security and tenurial rights such as land-grabbing.

10) **Reference the recent and successful work of CSD-17 as negotiated text and develop means to implement the outcome.**

Agriculture and the Green Economy

All three aspects of sustainable development – social, economic, and environmental – remain equally important. The goal must be to: **continuously improve agriculture around the world** through knowledge sharing to improve the lives and livelihoods of farmers while reducing the footprint of farming.

The social aspect

Achieving Millennium Development Goal #1 of alleviating poverty and hunger demands a focus on agriculture to:

- Develop policies with farmer-centered approaches;
- Understand, analyze, and appreciate the knowledge of farmers at the local level;

- Focus research on farmers' needs and involve participatory processes with farmers;
- Popularize new policies, extension programs, practices and technologies to beneficiaries in their languages and considering the farmers' level of education;
- Ensure that investments made in agriculture must be beneficial to local communities;
- Develop special, culturally-sensitive programs for women smallholder farmers and indigenous communities;
- Engage youth in current social and economic transformations, including farming;
- Increase access to health and social services in remote areas;
- Fight against all kinds of social inequalities.

The economic aspect

Considering the fact that farmers feed the planet and contribute to the world economy, it is shocking that they are the first victims of food insecurity and chronic poverty. Accordingly, policy makers must:

- Empower farmers in organizational frameworks and encourage them to organize in marketing groups;
- Evaluate agricultural improvement not only in terms of production but also in terms of farmers' income indicators;
- Analyze and take care of their decisions' impact on local farmers;
- Consider the impact of the agricultural sector on national economies, and allocate budget to this sector matched with its real value;
- Reduce administrative costs of agricultural programs so that beneficiaries can benefit from them;
- Ensure international and regional markets don't impede local ones;
- Develop infrastructure in rural areas where agriculture is done.

The environmental aspect

It is vital to safeguard our natural resources such as land, water, air, forests, animals and others. So, human beings have to:

- Control exploitation of natural resources;
- Increase resource efficiency, particularly of nutrients and water;
- Create a better collaboration with farmers, the scientific world and environmental policy makers;
- Use practices which improve our biodiversity, soil quality, and watershed management;
- Encourage breeding and production of underutilized crops;
- Foster sustainable and humane livestock management and encourage good animal husbandry;
- Focus research on new practices which address climate change, sequester and store carbon in the soil and reduce releases from waste materials and energy sources;
- Clearly explain environmental issues in easy terms understandable by a farmer;
- Regularly inform farmers on weather conditions to allow them to plan their farming activities accordingly;
- Respect equity and equality principles on natural resources use and benefits.

Governance

- 1) Sustainable Development is a valuable concept that requires a unique mechanism for governance linked to ECOSOC. It is important to remain focused on approach that integrates all elements of sustainable development.
- 2) Science and scientific review and research are vital to policy development in sustainable development and sustainable agriculture. This is needed in international, regional, and national policy making and decisions should be science-based. Research is needed into all forms of agriculture and respecting traditional knowledge. Funding for community-based knowledge systems, such as participatory extension services, must receive equal priority to agricultural research and development, both public and private.
- 3) UN specialist agencies, such as FAO, IFAD, and WFP, must retain leadership in their areas of core expertise. Agriculture requires better co-ordination throughout the UN system under the leadership of the specialist agencies.

Emerging Issues

- 1) Disaster Risk Reduction is more than forecasting disasters. It is creating resiliency to cope with change and challenge. A particular focus is needed on disaster risk reduction for smallholder farmers and those affected by long and short term climate change.
- 2) Drought and Desertification is increasing. Programming must support better rain water harvesting, more efficient use of water in agriculture, and crops better adapted to dryland conditions. Targets for reclamation of lands are essential.

COMMON AGENDA FOR A SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Contributions from the Federations of Smallholder Farmers from the CPLP (Community of the Portuguese Language Countries)

(Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao
Tome and Principe)

MANIFESTO

Why are we at Rio+20?

Forty years after the Stockholm Summit and twenty years after the Earth Summit (Eco 92), countries around the world gather again in the Rio +20 Summit. Thus far, we found that the global problems of hunger and poverty have worsened, the gap between rich and poor is increasing and environmental problems have increased. This development paradigm of neoliberal nature and subjugated to the logic of free trade has failed and we need to change course! This requires a reversal in the global, regional and national paradigm towards a more sustainable environmental and social development. The CPLP Strategy for Food and Nutrition Security, adopted in 2011, shows evidence of being able to contribute to this change since it focuses on smallholder farmers and on strengthening governance from the perspective of the right to food.

What do we condemn at Rio+20?

In the context of the Rio +20, we express a firm stand against the way the "Green Economy" model is being proposed and we call attention to the possible dangers:

- The alleged environmental preservation based on the logic of profit will not solve the problems of poverty and won't lead us to achieve resources and environmental sustainability;
- The green capitalism behind this proposal will lead to privatization of natural resources and their consequent commodification and financialization, maintaining and replicating the mistakes of the current development paradigm, now with new clothes;
- Instead of sustainable development we will see a "greening of the model" that will continue eager to profit and will accentuate the spiral of exclusion and poverty in which we live in, particularly for the poorest countries;
- The "green economy", as is being proposed, is more of the same, and will only serve to legitimize the current exclusionary policies and continue to favour large corporations in the agricultural, food and energy sectors;

What do we claim at Rio+20?

Given the complete failure of the current development paradigm that promotes the exclusion of family farmers and small producers and aggravates poverty and food insecurity, we are clamming for a clear break with this model, namely due to:

- The need for agricultural, trade and environmental policies that favours small producers, recognizing their importance in economic, social and environmental terms;
- The need to protect and regulate the use and management of land, territories, water, seeds, livestock and biodiversity, ensuring fair and equitable access and manage for local communities, particularly small producers;
- The need to ensure access to markets for small producers focusing on short circuits and direct marketing;
- The need to prioritize the production of local food staples, instead of crops for export;
- The need to increase public investment in family farming and adopt positive discrimination measures to protect and strengthen small producers;
- The need for effective public regulation of food production and trade;
- The need to explicitly recognize the agroecological model as a guarantee of the social and environmental pillars of sustainable development;
- The need to reject the patenting of living beings, the use of genetically modified organisms and the use of crops dedicated to biofuel production that endangers food security and sovereignty;
- The need to recognize the right of peoples to decide and manage their own agricultural, food and environmental systems, in order to protect their products and producers based on the principles of food sovereignty and the right to food;
- The need to strengthen global governance for sustainable development and the fight against hunger, recognizing the small producers as legitimate speakers and essential for the development of policies;

What do we propose at Rio+20?

In order to keep the discussion alive and to continue the fight for these and other common positions, we decided to proceed with the establishment of the "**CPLP Farmer's Platform**".

Specifically, and in view of the consecration of **2014 as the International Year of Family Farming**, we propose to fight and work together in order to:

- Achieve a definition and recognition of smallholder farmers for the purpose of political dialogue and definition of the object of public policies that impact on agriculture and food security and sovereignty;
- Require that 80% of public funds (national, regional and global) invested in agriculture are directly channelled to support small producers and family farms;
- Require policies, programs and strategies to promote agro-ecology and strategic orientation focused on family farms and small farms, as well as an effective regulation of the emerging "technology package" associated with the third green revolution;
- Fight for the consecration of agrobiodiversity and traditional knowledge as an universal public good and require an effective regulation of access to and sustainable management of land, water and other natural resources.

MESSAGE

We call attention to the need to strengthen the global alliance of small farmers and rural workers and we demand that the United Nations recognize it as a legitimate and essential counterpart to the political discussion.



Support:



ANNEX III

2014 IYFF FAO Concept Note

Background:

The General Assembly of the United Nations, at its 66th session, declared 2014 as the “International Year of Family Farming” (IYFF) and invited FAO to facilitate its implementation in cooperation with governments, the United Nations system and relevant non-governmental organizations. The overall aim of the IYFF is “to promote international awareness and support country-owned plans aimed at strengthening the contribution of family farming and smallholders in eradicating hunger and reducing rural poverty leading to sustainable development of rural areas and food security”.

Introduction:

For the purpose of the IYFF, it is proposed to outline common principles that define Family Farming. *Family Farming* (which includes all family-based agricultural activities) is a means of organizing agricultural, forestry, fisheries, pastoral and aquaculture production which is managed and operated by a family and predominantly reliant on family labor, including both women’s and men’s. The family and the farm are linked, co-evolve and combine economic, environmental, social and cultural functions.

FF is one of the most predominant forms of agriculture worldwide, in both developing and developed countries. Diversity of national and regional contexts, in terms of agro-ecological conditions, territorial characteristics, infrastructure availability (access to markets, roads, etc.), policy environment, and demographic, economic, social and cultural conditions, influences FF structures and functions, as well as livelihood strategies.

The sector comprises a wide spectrum of farm sizes and types. At one end of the spectrum are very large landholdings of several hundred hectares in high-income economies where farms can be easily cultivated by one or two family members with the use of labour-saving machinery and hired labour. At the other end of the spectrum, in low-income economies, FF usually consists of smallholdings of a few hectares or less, often oriented towards subsistence with low marketable surplus.

This document aims to establish the reference framework to gain insight into the scope and targets behind the celebration of the IYFF.

Re-positioning FF at the centre of agricultural, environmental and social policies (as well as in the agendas of FAO and other UN agencies) is the goal of the IYFF, and identifying gaps and opportunities to promote a shift towards a more equal and balanced development of the

people, the territories they contribute to manage, and the need to produce sufficient food and goods for 9.15 billion people by 2050³⁴ is our FAO challenge.

Historical role of FF

The complex, systemic and transversal role of FF in food security and nutrition, in supporting local economies and rural employment, and in territorial management, is understood intuitively and well-known socially, but difficult to capture in simple, scientific and economic terms. For this reason, despite having been overlooked and ignored during the last two centuries as a policy target, FF continues to be the backbone of food security, territorial development and social cohesion and resilience. Particularly during the last 30 years, policy agenda and economic priorities have often disjointed agricultural production from management of resources and from the role of farmers in society. The IYFF is strongly supported by civil society and social movements that have recognized the central role of FF in rural development and livelihoods. It is also inserted in a context where certain countries have started to adopt policies and institutional arrangements for making the most of FF livelihood diversification and production potential.

The multiple functions of FF

Production:

While FF is well positioned in the policy framework of various countries, policy-makers around the globe need compelling evidence of the advantages of FF in terms of productivity. With a new vision of the basic production unit, FF may offer the space for greater impact of sector policies previously directed either to small-scale agriculture or commercial agriculture.

The agricultural sectors, including crops, livestock, forestry and fisheries and aquaculture³⁵ produce greenhouse gases and use significant amounts of energy derived from fossil fuel. Agriculture activities also contribute largely to loss of biodiversity and soil degradation (the Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands (LADA) project assessed that one-quarter of the global areas is affected by biophysical degradation, including biodiversity degradation). According to *The State of the World's Land and Water Resources for Food and Agriculture (SOLAW)*, there is a large number of systems at risk facing a progressive breakdown of their

³⁴ World Agriculture towards 2030/2050, the 2012 Revision. ESA Working Paper No.12-03, June 2012.

³⁵ The term “agriculture” includes agriculture, forestry, fisheries, pastoral and aquaculture activities and a combination of these.

productive capacity. A future free of hunger demands joint efforts to foster the transition from non-balanced to more sustainable production practices, focusing on improved management of ecological processes and the use of innovative technologies. Renewed policies including fiscal regulations must capture the entire FF system, which is knowledge-intensive and is linked to the territory as it manages biodiversity, soil fertility, water and wastes, and social settings. These will reduce the vulnerability of FF and enhance their capacity to invest and produce. The linkages between production, food systems, nutritional security and the value chain will need to be adjusted to FF systems.

Environment:

The world is witnessing an increased erosion of natural resources (land, water, forests, fisheries, air, fossil energy and genetic resources), which impacts on food safety, human health and the long-term productivity of land. The key challenges are to reduce/avoid natural resource depletion and degradation and associated cost increases, as well as high levels of related pollution. The role of family farmers in food production at global and national level requires to be analysed (for Latin America it has been estimated that FF produces 60%³⁶ of the basic food supply), and consolidated evidence is needed on the advantages of FF in terms of potential to generate positive environmental externalities. The challenge is to develop complex mechanisms to reach a large number of farmers scattered over vast territories and using very diversified technologies and sustainable agricultural practices.

Globally Important Agricultural Heritage systems (GIAHS) Initiative

To promote the role of FF in sustainable management of natural resources FAO has developed the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage systems (GIAHS)1 Initiative that recognizes the crucial importance of the well-being of FF communities in an integrated approach while directing activities towards sustainable agriculture and rural development. It further seeks to support the present-day resilience of these traditional agricultural systems and thus provide a sustainable legacy for the benefit of future generations. This global initiative is not just a collection of local projects; it has a global focus within the framework of policies promoting local food security through sustainable systems.

Livelihoods and governance:

The territorial dimension of FF is a key element contributing to stability, employment and cultural integration. Family farmers are highly motivated to manage natural resources sustainably as there is a solid interdependence between the activity developed and the

³⁶ FAO. 2010. Panorama de la seguridad alimentaria y nutricional en América Latina y el Caribe 2010. Santiago, Chile.

maintenance of their habitat; therefore they play a crucial role in stabilizing and improving the social, ecological and economic governance of territories. The multiple functions of the ecosystems become part of economic cycles through FF activities and might return into the system. FF could be considered both a livelihood and economic system that interrelates forms of territorial uses and that creates synergies between the various uses of the land and labour. To promote policy action in favour of FF, existing evidence should be consolidated on the capacity of FF to maintain and increase productive employment when families can sustain their livelihoods with viable production units. Strong evidence on the capacity of FF to control land fragmentation, on the one hand, and land accumulation, on the other hand would undoubtedly be welcomed by policy-makers.

Family farmers face a multitude of entrepreneurial risks linked to natural resources variability, market conditions, changing climate, etc. Their participation in the economic process faces those risks by increasing complexity, maximizing flexibility and accentuating the resilience of family livelihoods. They invest their own capital and their own work and, if supported by enabling policies, information and sustainable land tenure rights, they can invest for their own future and the future of their territory. The vulnerability of family farmers has therefore to be protected by addressing the issue of territorial governance, to avoid migration and to minimize the risk factors related to climate changes, price volatility and alterations in international trade. A good territorial governance aims to ensure the maintenance of the natural resource base for future generations, and at the same time to develop policies with the goal of creating positive conditions in order to encourage new generations to keep working on the family farm.

As a result of their critical role in promoting a good governance of the territories where they live and work, there is a critical need to propose a convergent path between the IYFF and the activities related to the Implementation Phase of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the context of National Food Security.

Family farmers are not only a fundamental element of local social cohesion but they also contribute to maintaining a balanced relationship between cities and the rural environment. Therefore, regional planning involving cities and their territories could facilitate the management of food security and natural resources in a more sustainable way while promoting a better integration of local markets.

Family farmers are also inextricably linked to consumers, and enabling investments in rural areas promoting local and national markets, nutritious and healthy and sustainable food production, development of appropriated production and transformation technologies will lead to improved diets and food security, increased rural employment opportunities and reduced migration, enhanced integration between production systems and local markets, and maintenance of the natural resource base.

FAO's role

Two different FAO roles can be distinguished: one as facilitator and another as a specialized agency that will make specific contributions.

1. In its role as facilitator and in the framework of MDGs 1, 7 and 8, FAO is responsible for creating a dialogue space and promoting a partnership that covers all stakeholders, including national and international organizations, civil society, research centres and the private sector. FAO will facilitate the development of a concerted agenda to raise awareness of the links between FF, food and nutrition security, poverty reduction and sustainable management of natural resources and their territory.

In order to determine this agenda that has to deal with these challenges and strengthen the FF potential, a wide range of topics need to be addressed that may fall beyond the capability of any organization, such as: access to and tenure of physical resources (land, water, air), to finance, markets, food chains, technologies tailored for low inputs, diversified systems, climate resilience, employment (especially of the young and women), improved governance, fiscal policies and payments for the provision of ecosystem goods and services that are providing broader externalities, basic rights and equity policies (health, education, social protection), cultural and intercultural policies, and sustainable production.

The participation of a broad range of stakeholders and the ability to promote partnerships will be key elements to enable the contribution of each stakeholder in leading one or several thematic guidelines according to their expertise and comparative advantages.

2. FAO, in its role of as a specialized agency, and according to the priorities set by member countries at their Regional Conferences and to the Strategic Objective targets being determined for 2014–2015, could focus its work on:

- integration with local markets and food systems;
- sustainable intensification and climate change adaptation;
- pro-FF policies and institutions.

On a cross-cutting basis, FAO will facilitate the flow of information and enable dialogue to develop common understanding and planning capacities with special focus on the young and gender equity. As FF has been identified by the FAO Regional Conferences in Latin America as a priority area, FAO will also promote, through its Strategic Objectives, pilot activities and networks that will last beyond the IYFF, and organize stock-taking of information related to the role of FF in food security, production and nutrition, management of natural resources, and social stability and employment.

The Right to Adequate Food and the Voluntary Guidelines on the Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the context of National Food Security context, will be cross-cutting themes of the IYFF.