

FAO/UNEP Sustainable Food Systems Program

Proposal for 10 Year Framework of Programmes (10YFP) on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP)

Preamble

Today, almost one billion people are hungry. Another billion is malnourished, lacking essential micronutrients. Of course it is not only greater availability of food which is needed, but also economical and physical accessibility. Still, food production has to increase, both in quantity, quality, and diversity, especially in developing countries. Both population and income growth will drive an increasing demand, especially in developing countries. Considering these trends, FAO estimates that production has to increase by 70% between now and 2050, especially in developing countries. Food systems have to satisfy this growing demand, both in quantity, quality and diversity. As only a small fraction of this additional production can come from increasing the land area under cultivation, a crucial question becomes how to increase production on the same or less land while enhancing agroecosystem functions to deliver agroecosystem services, in order to improve the sustainability of food production.

At the same time food production and consumption already exerts a considerable impact on the environment. It is an important source of greenhouse gases. Agriculture is responsible of 70% of freshwater use. It is an important driver of deforestation and loss of biodiversity. However it can also provide solutions to reduce environmental degradation, and towards climate change mitigation.

Food systems valorise resources which are becoming ever more fragile and scarce. These include especially land, water, and biodiversity (and the ecosystem services it provides). Therefore food systems have to become more efficient in their use of resources, at every stage, from primary production to transformation, distribution and consumption.

All food systems have to face this same challenge of increasing efficiency in the use of resources in order to become more sustainably productive. They shall aim to produce more output per unit of input - land, water, energy or nutrients. Food systems are very diverse, including from an overall economic and social point of view. In particular the importance of the various stages of transformation depends on products and countries. Their environmental, economic and social impacts are also very diverse. Therefore the program shall be adapted to various local and regional specificities and take into account different levels of development.

Goals and objectives

The goal of the sustainable food systems program is to improve resource efficiency and reduce pollution intensity of food systems from production to consumption while improving food and nutrition security. The program will address these issues all along food chains. To do so it will involve all concerned stakeholders, including farmers, agro industry, retailers and consumers.

It will consider:

- Techniques and practices to increase productivity, profitability and sustainability at every stage of food chains and enabling conditions and tools to promote them
- Tools to assess sustainability of food systems, including life cycle methodologies and data needs
- Policy options to improve environmental performance of food systems and to recognise and valorise sustainable productions and products, including market based mechanisms
- Ways and tools to communicate information on sustainability to processors, retailers, consumers and other interested stakeholders, with a view to establishing guidelines in order to increase transparency.

Activities

Four activity clusters have been identified by stakeholders (governments, business and NGO's) at a Scoping meeting organised by UNEP in November 2010.

Activity Cluster 1: To re-focus and re-orient more effectively existing information platforms on sustainable agriculture and agri-food products to be shared more widely, with producers and consumers by a) the provision and dissemination of information to increase the efficacy of extension services in order to support the uptake of sustainable practices and b) the development of global partnerships to compile open-source inventory of life-cycle data. Together these could encourage the development of a common protocol for data collection to support design of sustainable food chains/systems, explore and develop the business case for the shift towards SCP in the sector and fulfil the demand for data on carbon, water, nitrogen, footprints etc. for eco-labelling and eco-certification of food products and food systems.

Activity Cluster 2: To deliver meaningful and reliable communication about agri-food products to create markets and incentives to foster sustainable consumption and production patterns by a) the design and provision of a broad set of principles that can guide the development and assessment of sustainability "claims" and b) the identification of leverage points within supply chains to direct the choices and behaviour of consumers towards more sustainable food systems.

Activity Cluster 3: To create enabling conditions in developing countries for the uptake of SCP in Agri-food through:

- a) capacity building provision to governments and policy makers to facilitate (i) the sustainable management of natural biological processes to increase efficiencies for sustainable intensification (ii) the uptake of new technologies for production, processing, and for the mitigation of negative externalities; (iii) assessment of policy options, including cost-effectiveness and welfare analysis, (iv) the building of capacity for regulation, enforcement,

and EIA processes; and (v) regional cooperation to promote sustainable resource management and expand markets for sustainable products;

b) promote the building of Public Private Partnerships to, for example, expand access to finance for agri-food stakeholders developing sustainable products, demonstrate and replicate sustainable supply chains programmes and to develop and deliver targeted information to education programmes on SCP to both the producer and consumer. Activities will seek to utilize existing institutions as platforms, in order to build their capacity to address these challenges and deliver support at national and regional levels to test new approaches and techniques.

Activity Cluster 4: To promote productivity enhancing and resource efficient production methods through market-based approaches by: a) scaling up the use of proven tools including effective and reliable certification and standards, b) strengthening and developing links along the supply chain between producers and consumers for more sustainable products in particular between developing countries and interested regional and developing country markets (match-making, consider capacity building, financing, etc.) and c) identification, and piloting the viability of innovative market mechanisms for environmental services in the agri-food supply chain, and scale-up (e.g. the role of Payments for Ecosystem Services).

Delivery Mechanisms of the Programme

The program will be delivered using existing capacities and institutions involved in sustainable production for effective implementation and roll out. It will build upon experiences and lessons learned from initiatives of the private, public and academic sectors. It will in particular draw upon FAO's programs for sustainable intensification of crop production, increased sustainable livestock production and sustainable management and use of fisheries and aquaculture resources. It will enhance public-private and business-to-business partnerships aimed at improving sustainability of food chains. It will identify and up-scale regional and local multi-stakeholder partnerships designed to increase resource efficiency, reduce pollution, food waste and other unintended negative impacts, and maximize productivity and the welfare gains from food production activities.

One partnership to be considered as a key delivery mechanism of the Programme would be the Agri-food Task Force on SCP formed following a UNEP-convened meeting in November 2010.

Leading Actors

The Programme would bring together leading actors from relevant UN agencies and other intergovernmental organizations, national governments, and civil society organizations including representatives of farmers, agro industry and consumers. FAO as the specialized UN agency for food and agriculture would assume the international lead coordinating role, in close partnership with UNEP, and take responsibility to implement the programme and

monitor and report results towards the international community, in close cooperation with other lead actors, including IFAD, UNDP, DESA, CGIAR

The Agri-food Task Force on SCP will play a lead role in identifying and catalyzing partnerships between UN agencies, other intergovernmental organizations, national governments and civil society organizations whose activities can, jointly or singly, promote the transition to SCP in the agri-food sector.

Metrics of success (indicators to measure progress)

The overall impact metric for the programme is the decoupling of production increase from growth in non-renewable natural resources consumption and pollution generation, and the corresponding enhancement of ecosystem functions and increased ecosystem services supporting agri-food systems. The programme will develop appropriate metrics to monitor and assess production and resources consumption.

The program will also develop activity based success metrics such as:

- Number of partnerships
- Progress in data collection
- Number of projects in developing countries
- Number of projects using market based approaches

Technical and financial resources (means of implementation)

The technical resources required for the effective implementation of the proposed programme modules is largely available in existing initiatives, programmes and networks, yet needing improved coordination for achieving synergies and scaling-up. Much can be done through a multi-stakeholder, multi-partner approach focused on adjusting existing supply chains, or creating new, more resource efficient and equitable ones. In many cases this need not imply finding additional financial resources, but rather a combined effort to develop joint projects, innovative policies and incentives, and deliver capacity building to enable their application.

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