

HLPE 2019 – COMMENTS ON THE SCOPE

NEW ZEALAND

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the matters to be addressed and expected outcomes of the 2019 HLPE Report, currently proposed to have the following title: “Agroecological approaches and the use of innovative technologies for sustainable food systems and food security and nutrition”.

New Zealand would like to make the following points in no particular order:

- We are happy with the proposed title of the Report which we think has a sufficiently broad focus while still making direct reference to agroecological approaches.
- We would like to see the Report rise above the sort of debate that we have been having within the MYPOW OEWG to finalise the subject of this Report. This debate has tended to focus on terminology and catch-phrases rather than on the specific agricultural practices, technologies and innovations that can make agriculture more sustainable while providing for food security and nutrition. So rather than having a report about “Agro-Ecology” or “Biotechnology” or “Climate-Smart Agriculture” or “agricultural innovation” we hope that the Report can break down the key sustainability challenges being faced across the diverse agricultural systems that exist around the world (e.g. climate change, water quantity and quality, soil health, impacts on ecosystem services) and then objectively discuss the potential of specific practices, farming techniques, technologies or innovations to help address those challenges while also meeting food security and nutrition objectives.
- We agree with comments made at the last meeting and referred to in your email below that issues of the potential of certain practices to deliver at scale (i.e. to address global food security), and the impact of practices on prices and on climate change should all be considered. Issues such as the potential impact on employment and other socio-economic impacts should also be considered to the extent possible.
- The report should consider the trade-offs that will invariably need to be made by policy makers and by farmers when considering adoption of different approaches. Are there certain approaches that can be usefully combined to produce better outcomes?
- The report should also highlight practices that can generate multiple benefits (such as the “triple-win” of increased productivity, lower GHG emissions and greater resilience). Soil and land-use practices are areas that would be relevant here. Conversely, are there some agricultural practices that might be producing short term benefits but are likely to be unsustainable in the longer term?
- The report should seek to identify any significant barriers to the adoption of certain agricultural practices – what are the factors that are holding things back and how might they be addressed? Presumably many of these factors will be beyond the control of farmers themselves. Are certain approaches better suited to different stages of agricultural development in a country?

We understand that the HLPE Report will not be able to provide definitive answers to address all the diverse agriculture systems and circumstances around the world. However, we believe that a broad report that summarise the evidence in support of various agro-ecological approaches and innovative

technologies while also situating discussions in a broader policy context of food security imperatives and sustainability challenges will be helpful in fostering greater policy convergence within the CFS.