

Hungarian comments on the Rapporteur's Note regarding the  
CFS POLICY CONVERGENCE PROCESS ON AGROECOLOGICAL AND OTHER INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

We welcome the Note and appreciate the hard work done and efforts made by the Rapporteur and the CFS Secretariat, along with the Technical Focal Points appointed by the Rome-based UN Agencies and Bioversity International. We are grateful for the flexibility of the Rapporteur and the Secretary allowing Stakeholders to submit their comments and reflections after the meeting.

We consider important that the recommendations of the Note follows the ones of the High Level panel of Experts (HLPE), as requested by the majority of stakeholders.

Regarding the "*other innovative approaches*" we think these should be named and defined and most importantly scrutinised against the criteria of sustainability in order to recommend their use.

We consider important that recommendations are based on scientific and empirical evidence, including those mentioned in the HLPE report.

For the sake of policy coherence, we propose to pay due attention to and build on existing CFS products, including the ongoing process of the elaboration of the Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition.

In addition, we suggest to highlight the strong link of this policy convergence process with the FAO Resolution "*Further integration of sustainable agricultural approaches, including agroecology, in the future planning activities of FAO*" and the *Ten Elements of Agroecology*.

Among the list of Stakeholders in paragraph 7 we propose to mention peasants and farmers, the producers of our food.

We welcome the human rights based approach in paragraph 9, and the explicit reference to the Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Adequate Food in the context of National Food Security.

In Recommendation 1 under the second bullet point of b) and in Recommendation 2 h) we propose to use the terminology of "sustainable healthy diets", as defined jointly by FAO and WHO.

Regarding subsidies (policy incentives) in Recommendation 2 a) we agree with the elements listed but we propose to slightly adjust them and put them in logical order. Start with assessing the state of play, the impacts of subsidies on economic viability of food systems. Follow with the need to develop and use performance metrics (using also the existing tools) to assess positive and negative externalities of various food systems. Outcomes of the assessment should serve as a basis for creating appropriate policy incentives to promote sustainable practices. Finally, use monitoring and evaluation to measure whether subsidies and incentives foster transition towards sustainability of food systems and improved food security and nutrition.

Under the last bullet in Recommendation 2 c), in addition to adaptation we propose to highlight and add mitigation, as agroecological and other sustainable approaches can improve carbon sequestration and contribute to reduce emissions for example through no tillage and other environment-friendly cultivation practices.

At the end of the second bullet point of Recommendation 2 f) we propose to replace "reduce" with "optimize".

The first bullet point in 3 a) should not be general but should explicitly refer to the need to increase investments in research related to agroecology and other sustainable innovative approaches.

We propose to modify the title of Recommendation 5 a) as follows: "*Performance evaluation as a basis for providing policy incentives.*" It should be clarified in the second bullet point in Recommendation 5 a) that performance evaluation framework should cover all food systems of different types and size.

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Finally, we wish to offer some considerations regarding innovation.

- Innovation is important but we should not “innovate just for innovation”. In other words, innovation should not be considered as an objective itself. Rather, it should serve as one of the means to reach our shared objectives: to eliminate poverty and hunger.
- To achieve these objectives, we should make sure that innovations are available, accessible and affordable also in the most remote areas, and for the poorest of the poor.
- In the poorest countries priority should be given to those innovations which are focussing on the basic needs (for example produce solar panel based electricity for water pumps). Other innovations (precision agriculture, drones, etc.) should come later.
- Innovations including biotechnology, should be seriously scrutinised, checked against the criteria of sustainability, based on **neutral** science. Only those innovative methods or solutions should be promoted which fully comply with the 3 dimensions of sustainability.
- We should depart from the past and present prevailing practice in innovations (aiming at increasing production, yields, productivity, etc.) innovations should address and offer solutions to current challenges: to preserve biodiversity, restore soil fertility, modernise rural infrastructure and reduce the digital divide, preserve and create rural (including non-farm) jobs, improve education, etc. All these are having essential role in achieving the basic objectives: eliminate poverty and hunger.
- In addition to technical and technological issues, innovations' scope should include other, non-material innovative solutions as well.