

CFS OPEN MEETING

AGROECOLOGICAL AND OTHER INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

14 April, 2020, Rome

PSM

Olawole Olagbaju, Managing Director, Real People Concept

Thank you Chair

As an animal scientist and practicing farmer I was pleased to attend the CFS last October and I'm speaking to you today from Ibadjan, Nigeria. Thank you for the summary of feedback which the PSM members have reviewed, and all the other comments made by CFS participants. We recognize many of the topics and comments raised and I'd like to focus on 4 areas.

As has been pointed out by others, PSM agrees that there needs to be more balance and equitable analysis as to how the recommendations address agroecological and other innovative approaches. As the Ten Elements indicate, agroecology is one approach, among others. There is also a need to distinguish between approaches such as agroecology, regenerative agriculture, agroforestry and organic agriculture on the one hand, and techniques and practices, for example, precision agriculture, biotechnology, ecosystem restoration and digitalization, on the other. It has been suggested by FAO to use a previous draft categorisation and by the EU to develop a 'non-exhaustive list'. We'd agree with both approaches in order to deliver sustainable agriculture approaches and food systems.

This diversity of approaches and techniques is important because different technologies provide a valuable 'toolbox' of interventions that can be used by every farmer regardless of the farming system or approach. This allows farmers like myself to determine the most appropriate way to manage their farming practices. We need to have the ability to assess and select the management approaches that best work for us in our specific farm and country contexts. We need to know which concepts, methods, practices and techniques can be improved in order to address some of the challenges we face.

We do need definitions and examples of digitalization and agree that it shouldn't be used as a 'catch-all' for internet-enabled technologies. Importantly, we need to recognize the existing technological divide between farmers and the need for capacity building and support including better infrastructure in rural areas, including bandwidth. This will support digital agriculture and better link businesses of all sizes. This will allow us to assess the affordability and utilization of these technologies by all types of farmers, and develop the appropriate frameworks for data use and data privacy.

The challenges I've mentioned are faced by a wide diversity of family farm types and sizes and we need appropriate policy guidance that applies to all farm sizes. Farmers work well together already, they exchange knowledge and ideas and this is an opportunity to build on that. Additionally, it is important

that these policy recommendations build on the CFS multistakeholder platform and are addressed to all stakeholders, not just member states.

As a livestock farmer, the health and well-being of my animals is of paramount importance. Agrochemicals should only be used in accordance with international standards, guidelines and best practices, including those aimed at ensuring food safety. But all farmers should be able to use all available farm management strategies, subject to regulatory requirements, and we welcome further research on a One Health approach.

Thank you.

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Brian Baldwin, Development and Policy Advisor, PSM Secretariat

Thank you Chair

Following the intervention by my colleague, Olawole Olagbaju, I'd like to make some further comments on the feedback on the Zero Draft. With regard to the comments on assessments. The HLPE Report Recommendation (5 a), had originally recommended that 'States and IGOs, in collaboration with academic institutions, civil society and the private sector, should': "develop practical, scientifically grounded and comprehensive performance metrics and indicators of agriculture and food systems. This would include "total factor productivity of livelihoods, land equivalent ratio multifunctionality of landscapes and ecological footprint of food systems, and other indicators, as appropriate". The PSM believes this to be an important recommendation by the HLPE and reflects the actual content and findings of the HLPE report which is well balanced and pragmatic. Importantly, it also emphasizes the number of different stakeholders that should be involved, reflecting the approach of CFS.

This approach is also reflected in another HLPE Report Recommendation, since amended which had originally recommended that stakeholders should: "increase investments in public and private research and development, and in national and international research systems to support programmes in agroecological and other innovative approaches, including to improve technologies". This is a recommendation that should be retained.

As the HLPE Report has noted, "there is no one size fits all". Inclusivity means that different approaches can coexist, and perhaps we need to recognize that there are multiple routes that can get us to our destination. It seems only reasonable that farmers should have room to approach the challenges they face differently. Sustainable agricultural approaches and systems are not something that you can create on a single farm. You need a region (s), a country with many, different farmers together providing direction and commitment.

Chair,

Focusing on gender, we also need to recognize the role of women in knowledge generation, agricultural production and marketing. Women that do well socially and economically, not only improve the livelihood and the nutrient of their families, they will also set a precedent for future generations. In response to your request to address how this draft can support and address COVID-19 issues. PSM is pleased to see FAO is coordinating with WHO and OIE using the One Health approach, since greater alliances between animal and human health researchers are needed to manage disease. Prioritizing coordinating action to exchange the valuable scientific data and information will be key. The Zero Draft highlights the need for better sourcing and use of data. These lessons can help governments make the best evidence-based decisions required to identify the correct actions.

Finally, and this speaks to the comments made on markets in the Zero Draft, we believe it is important to keep food moving: domestically and around the world. This is not the time for isolated country-level policies, but rather to harmonize all operational guidelines and learn from each other on a global level. Trade enables food & nutrition security, and this could not be more important than now. Food and medicines (human and animal) should be top priorities for movement