AGROECOLOGY by Pacific CSOs

The High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE),
(the science-policy interface of the UN Committee on World Food Security : CFS),
has released its Zero Draft of the Report on:

"Agroecological approaches and other innovations for sustainable agriculture and food systems that enhance food security and nutrition"

and the CSM Agroecology WG will facilitate a collective CSM response to the draft, (as it was done on previous occasions).

WORKING REFERENCE:

1. Overarching comments on the Zero Draft: please provide in bullet-point format your overall comments on the draft. We would particularly appreciate your comments on the following key issues:
   a. How to strengthen the public policy recommendations on Agroecology?
   b. The report will include “other innovations”. How to ensure these are problematized and clearly differentiated from Agroecology?
   c. How can we best capture the innovative and transformative dimension of Agroecology without falling into the trap of classifying it as one among many innovations?

2. Specific comments to particular sections of the Zero Draft: Please provide any specific comments you might have on particular chapters and/or sections of the report (please state clearly the chapter/section the comments refer to);

3. Cases, stories and experiences: Please provide any relevant cases, experiences and stories that might be relevant for inclusion as “boxes” in the report. Please make sure that these cases, experiences and stories are short and sharp, as boxes are very concise;

4. References: Please provide any relevant support reference of key articles, papers, books and reports that might be useful to the HLPE to support our arguments.
FIRST PACIFIC ISLANDS PROPOSALS:

1. a- The Pacific has raised the possibility of working on a standard on agroecology and gain recognition by all Pacific Island Countries & Territories (PICTS) as it did for its Pacific Organic Standard. An approach that has been very successful. Obviously, the draft HLPE mentions the need for references defining agroecology (criteria, parameters ...), for the Pacific the references in this field must be defined by the communities who practice agroecology for thousands of years; then scientists are welcome to assist, explain, propose improvements or elaborate equations about performances ... or innovations...

1. b- Innovations are not the priority, the foundation is. The grassroots must be the designers, innovations are then welcome as long as they are inclusive, accessible, affordable by all humble farmers (Family farms produce about 80 percent of the world's food - FAO 16 oct. 2014) and without making them dependant. The innovations should be rather oriented in order to mitigate the climate crisis. Organic farming and agroecology are the innovations for fixing carbon in soils and much more, the crucial need is the united momentum to implement them worldwide, otherwise nobody will need technology (“innovation”) anymore… and even food.

1. c- Agroecology has always been practiced by ancient civilizations, this is the case in the Pacific where high population densities have fed themselves easily. The innovation now lies in:
   • knowledge, diversity enrichment, exchange and selection of varieties adapted to local contexts, by locals, including cultural aspects.
   • the transmission of independent knowledge and know-how : the empowerment of farmers.

2. The importance of the diversity of crops and livestock is very often mentioned in the draft but is not the subject of a real chapter, while everything revolves around the diversity of original crops or useful plants or diversity of the macro and microorganisms, though they make :
   • the biological balances,
   • the growth efficiency
   • the phytosanitary stimulation or control.
This agro-biodiversity is even the cradle for wild beneficial biodiversity when agro-systems are properly managed. Nowadays many Organic Farmers know how to deal with a wide range of this biodiversity and are ready to share their knowledge…

The biodiversity management is the essential part of agroecology.

3 and 4. Agroecology shall clearly includes and take in account:
Organic farming standards, Agroforestry and Permaculture, the other concepts are too vague and are not based on a real grassroot foundation. Facing so much crisis, humanity has no other choice than relying on these 3 concepts which can be summarised through the term Agroecology.

The concept of agroforestry (a part of AGROECOLOGY) that has always been practiced organically in the Pacific Islands:
Productivity comparisons over 1 hectare, over 1 year:

=> Integrated diversified orchards: tens of tons of various foods and a great diversity of other productions such as livestock products, inputs, medicinal plants, handicrafts, etc...) each year during decades and restoring ecological balances.

while:

=> Cereals (organic or not): the world best average is around 4 tons of human food or livestock feed (with deforestation, GHG, high levels of water and energy consumption) https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/AG.YLD.CREL.KG

=> Pasture (organic or not): a few hundred kg of meat and a few hundred of milk (with deforestation, GHG in mass)
As it has been deployed for organic farming, it is imperative to develop AGROECOLOGY standards that are adapted to each region of the planet.

The PoetCom, Pacific Organic & Ethical Trade Community has developed for the benefit of its region:

=> an organic standard for the island Pacific recognized in all PICTs (Pacific Island Countries & Territories) and by IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements).


=> a Policy Tool Kit to the attention of the leaders of the PICTs in order to inspire their regulations and budget decisions …


The Pacific Community (of which PoetCom is a part) is an international organization working for the PICTs of the region and that develops all socio-cultural, technical and scientific components to the direct benefit of the Pacific populations (open to other regions) and especially in the field of land resources. The project developments are based on the pillar of the Pacific culture, the key that has maintained the best possible social equilibrium for peace between Pacific Islanders and with their environment and through the traditional practice of the farming concept now called AGROECOLOGY.

The urgency to act very quickly is evident facing the various global crises, the worst of which are the conflicts and climate disruption already experienced by many world’s communities, including the recurrent need for food and nutrition security, but only the omnipresence of respect for the original cultures and ancestral wisdom can bring balance, stability and abundance beyond simple agro-techniques.

That is why it would be good to work quickly on the concrete criteria and parameters and establishing at the forefront the values in the general principles of an AGROECOLOGY standard (Agro-Eco Standard).

2 infographics are attached as a proposal for a basic draft in order to reach a consensual base for the AGROECOLOGY TRANSITION.