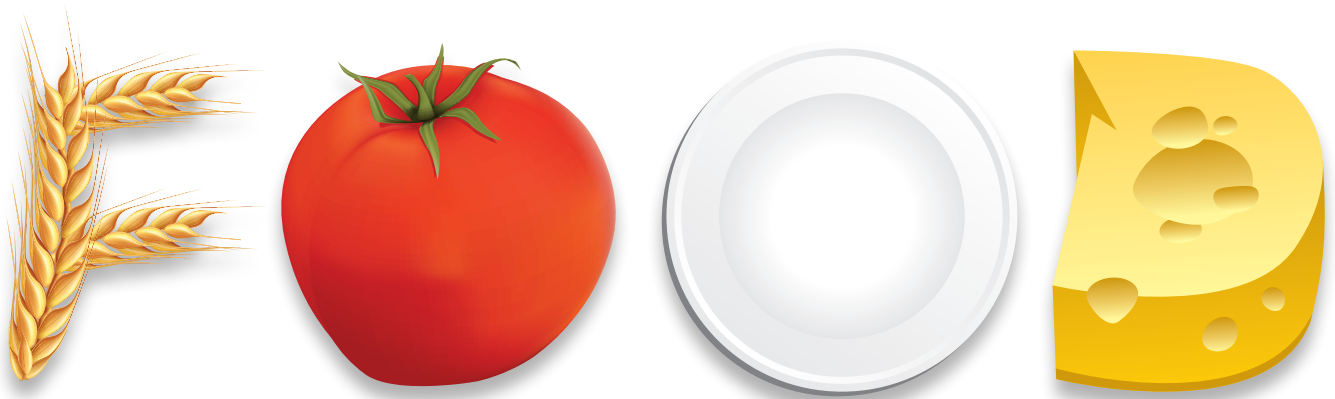




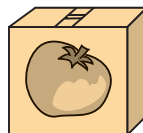
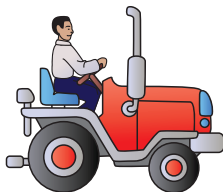
Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



# SUSTAINABLE



# SYSTEMS PROGRAMME



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,  
Education and Research EAER  
Federal Office for Agriculture FOAG

# THE FAO-UNEP SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS PROGRAMME

Food consumption and production trends and patterns are among the main causes of pressure on the environment. Fundamental changes in the ways food is produced, processed, transported and consumed are indispensable for achieving sustainable development.

**Sustainable consumption and production** in food and agriculture is a consumer-driven, holistic concept that refers to the integrated implementation of sustainable patterns of food consumption and production, respecting the carrying capacities of natural ecosystems. It requires consideration of all the aspects and phases in the life of a product, from production to consumption, and includes such issues as sustainable lifestyles, sustainable diets, food losses and food waste management and recycling, voluntary sustainability standards, and environmentally friendly behaviours and methods that minimize adverse impacts on the environment and do not jeopardize the needs of present and future generations. Sustainability, climate change, biodiversity, water, food and nutrition security, right to food and diets are all closely connected.

Agrifood systems develop within a finite and sometimes shrinking resource base. They therefore need to make use of natural resources in ways that are environmentally, economically, socially and culturally sustainable to conserve the ecosystem. Growth of agrifood systems must be inclusive, must target objectives beyond production (including efficiencies along the food chains) and must promote sustainable practices and diets.

Consumer choice plays a leading role in orienting production, as consumers select certain types of product according to place of origin, production processes or producer. Consumers also exert strong influences through the ways they buy, transport, conserve, cook and consume their food. Food consumption is affected by a wide range of factors, including food availability, food accessibility and food choice, which may in turn be influenced by geography, demography, disposable income, socio-economic status, urbanization, globalization, religion, culture, marketing and consumer attitudes.

*As defined by the High Level Panel of Experts on food security and nutrition (HLPE) “a sustainable food system (SFS) is a food system that delivers food security and nutrition for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental bases to generate food security and nutrition for future generations are not compromised”.*

At the Rio+20 Conference in 2012, a Ten-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP-SCP) was adopted to enhance international cooperation to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production in both developed and developing countries. Food systems are a priority area of interest.

The **Sustainable Food Systems Programme (SFSP)**, established by FAO and UNEP in 2011 with the support of the Government of Switzerland, is catalysing, through the Agrifood Task Force, partnerships among United Nations agencies, other international agencies, governments, industry and civil society whose activities can promote the necessary transition of food systems to sustainability. The overall objective of the SFSP is to add value by bringing together various initiatives and workstreams, in FAO and with partners to build capacity for the uptake of more sustainable consumption and production (SCP) practices across food systems and develop new multistakeholder engagement to build synergies and cooperation towards mutual objectives.

Four main working areas have been identified: (i) develop and enhance information platforms on agrifood products and sustainable food systems; (ii) ensure reliable and sustainable communication of food product information throughout the supply chain; (iii) create the enabling conditions for uptake of sustainable production; and (iv) use market-based approaches.

The Programme brings together various initiatives of FAO and its partners, to catalyse action. It organizes events and dedicated workshops on specific topics, such as on voluntary standards in 2013 and on knowledge for sustainable food systems in 2014. The Programme supports countries in organizing national round tables on sustainable consumption and production in the agrifood sector, with three round tables organized by Ghana, Mozambique and South Africa.

In line with its focus on the relationship between consumption and production, the Programme has developed activities on sustainable diets, in partnership with the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Studies (CIHEAM) and with the Youth and United Nations Global Alliance (YUNGA) programme. It also provides support to the Save Food Initiative on food waste linked to consumption and consumer behaviour.

**For more information:**

<http://www.fao.org/ag/ags/sustainable-food-consumption-and-production/en/>