

Policy convergence process on Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches

Written Comments from the United States

February 3, 2020

The United States appreciates the opportunity to provide input to this policy convergence process on Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches. We continue to support a diversity of approaches, adapted to local conditions and challenges, that can contribute to improving the sustainability of food systems and emphasize that the policy recommendations should offer an objective assessment of agroecology and other innovative approaches for their measurable contributions to *sustainable agriculture and food systems that enhance food security and nutrition*.

The recommendations of the HLPE are exceedingly broad and cover the whole spectrum of sustainable food systems and in some areas, overlap with recommendations from other reports and policy convergence processes. We again strongly recommend that for developing the most practical and relevant recommendations, this process draw from those HLPE recommendations that are most immediately relevant to agroecology and other innovative approaches and technologies.

We have significant concerns (United States submission November 2019) that do not appear to have been taken into consideration in defining the policy-relevant areas described in the Rapporteur's Note. A number of policy-relevant areas under recommendation 2 (Support transitions for diversified and resilient food systems) are problematic and outside the scope of CFS mandate and this policy convergence task. Specifically, the United States wants to emphasize that **this CFS workstream is not the appropriate forum for making policy recommendations on trade agreements, agricultural subsidies, food labelling, or intellectual property rights**. We strongly urge the Rapporteur and the CFS Secretariat to focus its zero draft of the CFS Policy Recommendations on those HLPE recommendations that are most immediately relevant to agroecology and other innovative approaches and technologies and their measurable contribution to *sustainable agriculture and food systems that enhance food security and nutrition*.

We see the greatest added value for the prospective recommendations to highlight the following concepts:

- The importance of cross sectoral, multi-stakeholder collaboration
- The need to build the evidence base for agroecological and other innovative approaches through relevant metrics that consider the environmental, social, as well as economic impacts of various policies and approaches.
- The need to strengthen support for research and foster co-learning in knowledge generation and sharing (HLPE recommendation 3 which we find particularly relevant)
- A recognition that international obligations including trade obligations must be considered in countries implementation of policies to promote agroecological and other innovative approaches.
- Incentivizing and facilitating the adoption of agroecological and other innovative approaches.

The **United States will shortly submit written comments on specific textual areas of the Rapporteur's Note** and will appreciate additional time to consult internally with U.S. government agencies.

We look forward to working with CFS and its members in this process to ensure the development of a set of focused, practical [apolitical] and evidence-based voluntary policy recommendations that CFS members can consider in adopting approaches to enhance food security and nutrition.