MINISTÉRIO DO DESENVOLVIMENTO AGRÁRIO E AGRICULTURA FAMILIAR
ASSESSORIA ESPECIAL DE ASSUNTOS INTERNACIONAIS

Call for Inputs - CFS Policy Convergence on Building Resilient Food Systems

In attention to the Rapporteur for the CFS Policy Convergence Process on Building Resilient Food Systems, Ambassador Jhenifer Mojica Flórez, the Ministry of Agrarian Development and Family Farming from Brazil presents the following contributions to the three raised questions.

Priority Issues: What key issues should be addressed through the policy recommendations, bearing in mind the needs of potential users and implementers at national and local levels? (500-word limit)

Policy recommendations on food systems must begin by recognizing that transformations toward agroecology and sustainable, inclusive agroforestry systems are necessarily gradual and process-based. They require differentiated types and levels of support at each stage, tailored to territorial realities and grounded in social participation. Because countries and territories face diverse environmental, social, and economic conditions, policies must be context-specific and designed alongside the communities that will implement and benefit from them.

A central priority is ensuring that food systems transformations remain people-centered. Food systems are complex and interconnected, and effective policies must acknowledge their holistic nature. This includes strengthening the links between healthy, affordable diets, agroecological production, social protection, and the environmental benefits that arise from these approaches. The design of such holistic strategies must be closely connected to territories, incorporating local knowledge and inclusive methodologies that ensure meaningful community engagement.

Within this landscape, public policies must serve as a fundamental pillar to support, accelerate, and protect agroecological and agroforestry transitions. Among these policies, school feeding programs stand out as perhaps the most important. They simultaneously shape healthy eating habits from an early age and ensure adequate

nutrition for children and youth, improving learning outcomes and overall well-being. At the same time, because of their scale and regularity, school feeding programs generate stable demand capable of driving broader system-wide transformations. By linking public procurement to agroecological and family farming production, these programs can anchor local food economies and enhance the resilience of territorial food systems. Other kinds of public procurement—from the armed forces, hospitals, and other public institutions—should also be encouraged to reinforce these dynamics.

A crucial priority is the role of small-scale and family farmers, who must be recognized not only as highly vulnerable to climate change, but also as front-line agents of biodiversity recovery and expansion. With proper public support—particularly extension services, access to finance, adequate machinery and equipment, guaranteed markets, and preferential procurement—they can restore soil health, protect water sources, and increase ecosystem resilience through agroecological and diversified agroforestry practices.

Strengthening **capacities and knowledge systems** is essential for ensuring that these transitions are effective and durable. Traditional top-down training approaches—such as short, technical seminars provided by external specialists—are often insufficient to convince rural producers of the viability of agroecological transitions. Instead, the campesino-a-campesino methodology, based on long-term exchanges, peer learning, and hands-on experience, has proven crucial. By enabling farmers to learn directly from other farmers who have successfully navigated similar challenges, these exchanges build trust, demonstrate feasibility in real contexts, and accelerate collective adoption of agroecological and agroforestry practices.

Given that the transition to agroecology is a progressive and medium-term process, enabling conditions must be strengthened at each phase. Public procurement programs, including school feeding, can provide strong incentives for farmers who are transitioning by offering stable markets that reduce exposure to price volatility and other risks. This is particularly important in the early stages of transition, when yields or income may be temporarily unstable. Such programs not only protect small-scale and family farmers, but also create the scale of demand necessary for wider adoption of agroecological practices.

Importantly, scaling up transitions to sustainable and inclusive agroecological and agroforestry systems provides a clear example of bouncing forward—moving beyond merely recovering from crises toward building stronger, fairer, and more resilient food systems. This approach transforms vulnerability into opportunity by strengthening ecosystems, improving nutrition, and expanding economic inclusion.

Finally, policies must ensure economic viability and social well-being. Agroecology and inclusive agroforestry will only succeed if they provide decent incomes for producers and their local economies, while advancing food and nutrition security for families and communities. For this reason, procurement programs, territorial markets, capacity-building systems, and fair-price mechanisms must be central components of the policy architecture.

In sum, the priority issues center on understanding that agroecological and agroforestry transitions are long-term, context-specific, socially rooted processes, and that public policies—especially school feeding, public procurement, and farmer-to-farmer knowledge exchange—are essential to anchor, scale, and sustain these transformations, enabling societies not just to recover, but to bounce forward.

Complementary Elements: Are there additional elements or considerations that should be integrated to complement the analysis and recommendations presented in the HLPEFSN Report? (500-word limit)

To complement the analysis and recommendations of the HLPE-FSN Report, several additional elements merit deeper integration, particularly regarding the enabling conditions required for successful transitions toward more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable food systems.

First, greater recognition is needed of the essential role that adequate and affordable machinery and equipment play for food producers, especially smallholders and family farmers. Mechanization adapted to their scale and socio-economic reality is crucial for sustainably increasing production and productivity, reducing the drudgery of manual labor, and making agricultural livelihoods more attractive to younger generations. These aspects are fundamental in a sector facing serious demographic challenges, including the aging of the farming population and the declining interest of rural youth in agricultural activities. Strengthening the availability, accessibility, and affordability of such equipment should therefore be considered an integral part of food systems transformation and a key dimension of bouncing forward—moving toward improved, rather than merely restored, systems after crises.

In this regard, policies and investments should prioritize the development of machinery and technologies specifically tailored to family farming, including the incorporation of appropriate digital tools. Digitalization, when designed for inclusion, can improve precision, reduce input use, enhance soil and water

management, and facilitate market access and extension support. However, this requires overcoming current barriers related to connectivity, digital literacy, and cost. Ensuring equitable access to digital tools should be treated as a foundational component of inclusive modernization.

Equally important is the promotion of machinery and equipment for value addition, processing, and integration into sustainable and equitable value chains. For many family farmers, low value capture and dependency on intermediaries are major constraints. Access to small-scale processing equipment—such as for drying, milling, fermenting, packaging, or cold storage—can generate higher incomes, reduce post-harvest losses, and strengthen local food systems. These technologies also play a crucial role in reducing the unpaid and often invisible workload of women, who are frequently responsible for food preparation within households. By facilitating processing and reducing time-intensive manual tasks, such equipment contributes to greater equity, frees up women's time for income-generating activities, and enhances their participation in agricultural decision-making.

To ensure that these technological and economic opportunities are accessible to all, it is essential to promote forms of collective organization among producers and consumers. Cooperatives, associations, community-supported agriculture models, and territorial networks can counterbalance power structures rooted in market concentration, improving bargaining capacity, reducing transaction costs, and facilitating fairer commercial relationships. Moreover, collective organization significantly increases the feasibility of mechanization for small-scale farmers, enabling shared ownership, cooperative use, or joint maintenance of equipment that would otherwise be financially inaccessible. These arrangements also help disseminate knowledge, create economies of scale, and strengthen the resilience of both production and consumption systems.

Practical Examples: Building on the Action Plan to Strengthen the Uptake of CFS Policy Products and on the "boxes" provided in the HLPE-FSN report, could you share Q!!!: concrete case study from your country or constituency that illustrates how the fmihcoming policy recommendations might be applied in practice? (500-word limit)

The National Program of Productive Forests aims to restore altered or degraded areas through the production of healthy food and products derived from socio-biodiversity. It encourages the restoration of degraded areas through agroforestry systems, combining two specific objectives: generating income for people living in the forest and contributing to climate solutions through forest recovery. In this

process, the family farmers' production will contribute to enhancing food and nutrition security.

The program is implemented by the Ministry of Agrarian Development and Family Agriculture (MDA), in partnership with the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MMA), and funded with different resources, from the national budget to the Amazon Fund.

The actions are based on forest restoration, expansion of technical assistance and rural extension, access to credit, financing for the development of agroforestry systems, and the promotion of agricultural practices more resilient to climate change.

By integrating crops, livestock, and forests, the initiative enables the recovery of degraded green areas by increasing the cultivation capacity of economically profitable foods such as cocoa, açaí, cupuaçu, and passion fruit—linking forest restoration to income generation. Moreover, the program's pillars reverse the historical trend of deforestation driven by monocultures in the forest. With the diversity of species, forest recovery can make agroforestry systems more profitable per hectare than livestock farming.

In addition to valuing the cultivation of foods typical of socio-biodiversity, the Productive Forests program also encourages the production of crops such as pumpkin, watermelon, gherkin, okra, corn, beans, rice, papaya, pineapple, yam, and cassava. Adapted to short-term cultivation models, these foods make it possible to expand the program's actions and offer immediate income to forest dwellers while tropical tree species grow and degraded green areas are restored.

Technical Assistance and Rural Extension (ATER) form the foundation of the program, providing direct support to beneficiary families and strengthening sustainable agrifood production.

The state of Pará is the starting point of the National Program of Productive Forests. In the state, 18 settlement projects, two federal conservation units, and one quilombola territory were selected to implement sustainable production systems that combine family farming products with socio-bioeconomy and forest recovery. The Program will initially serve 1,680 families and is expected to restore 1,008 hectares.

The MDA also plans additional projects in the states of Amazonas, Acre, and Amapá. It is expected that, by the end of 2026, 7,646 families will be benefited and 1,593 hectares restored.

The Productive Forests program aims to address major national challenges such as climate change, the increase in food supply, and higher income generation for rural

families, while also helping Brazil meet its commitments under the Paris Agreement, approved by 195 countries in 2015, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the framework of sustainable development.

PS: Information adapted from https://www.gov.br/mda/pt-br/noticias/2025/11/restoration-of-degraded-forest-areas-advances-with-the-national-program-of-productive-forests