

CFS virtual meeting on agroecology and other innovative approaches; Swiss speaking points

Switzerland would like to thank you for organizing this virtual meeting on the Zero Draft and the written submissions and the implications of Covid-19 on the policy coherence process. The present crisis emphasizes the need for improved resilience of food systems so that they can support food security and nutrition. Agroecological approaches aim at building resilient and sustainable food systems. The currently developed policy recommendations are therefore timely and important.

Allow me to start with a general remark followed by remarks on some of the topics highlighted in the Summary of Feedback on the Zero Draft CFS Policy Recommendations and the way forward:

Switzerland took note that the Zero Draft has substantially deviated from the usual procedure of CFS policy convergence processes, not taking into consideration the deliberations of the open meeting held on 27 January 2020, the written submissions and the CFS MYPOW 2020 – 2023 decision adopted at CFS 46: “the preparation of the policy recommendations will be informed by the scientific evidence provided by the HLPE report”. Equally, we took note that the structure and the content of the Zero Draft has been substantially changed compared to the Rapporteur’s Note and the feedback from the consultation on the Rapporteur’s Note.

In our view, the development of the First Draft should substantially valorise and build on the content and findings of the HLPE report on “Agroecological and other innovative approaches”.

That said it must express a clear emphasis on:

- (1) the much needed transformation towards sustainable food systems;
- (2) agroecology at the centre of this transformation and differentiate agroecology from the other innovative approaches;
- (3) “other innovative approaches” should be framed and addressed by an assessment of their impacts on sustainable food systems, human rights, environment and economic conditions. The HLPE report has presented a good framework of assessment (or “performance metrics”), where innovations could be “evaluated” against criteria not only related to productivity, but also agency and ecological footprint, for example;
- (4) a rights based approach;
- (5) all relevant stakeholders should be addressed in accordance with their roles and responsibilities;
- (6) gender and strengthen gender equality throughout the document.

The Swiss Submission on the Zero Draft addressed these points as well as other issues that are of importance for Switzerland and remains valid. We would like to see that all the valuable feedback on the Zero Draft will feed into the First Draft, not uniquely concentrating on the “Informal Discussion Document”, uploaded on the CFS working space.

With regard to the process and the upcoming negotiations, we support the postponement of the start of the negotiations due to the Coronavirus pandemic until we can all meet face to face again.