

HLPE report on

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

HLPE consultation on the V0 draft of the report

From 4 October 2018 to 5 November 2018

During its 44th Plenary Session (9-13 October 2017), the CFS requested the HLPE to produce a report on “Agroecological approaches and other innovations for sustainable agriculture and food systems that enhance food security and nutrition”, to be presented at CFS 46th Plenary session in October 2019.

As part of the process of elaboration of its reports, the HLPE is organizing a consultation to seek inputs, suggestions, and comments on the present V0 draft (for more details on the different steps of the process, see the Appendix in the V0 draft). The results of this consultation will be used by the HLPE to further elaborate the report, which will then be submitted to external expert peer-reviewers, before finalization and approval by the HLPE Steering Committee.

HLPE V0 drafts prepared by the Project Team are deliberately presented early enough in the process – as a work-in-progress, with their range of imperfections – to allow sufficient time to give proper consideration to the feedback received so that it can play a really useful role in the elaboration of the report. It is a key part of the scientific dialogue between the HLPE Project Team and Steering Committee, and the whole knowledge community.

To participate, please visit the dedicated HLPE e-consultation website:

http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/cfs-hlpe/discussions/agroecology_innovation-v0

Contributing to the V0 Draft

The present V0 draft identifies areas for recommendations at a very early stage, and the HLPE would welcome suggestions or proposals. In order to strengthen the report, the HLPE would welcome submission of material, evidence-based suggestions, references, and concrete examples, in particular addressing the following important questions:

- 1 The V0 draft is wide-ranging in analyzing the contribution of agroecological and other innovative approaches to ensuring food security and nutrition (FSN). Is the draft useful in clarifying the main concepts? Do you think that the draft appropriately covers agroecology as one of the possible innovative approaches? Does the draft strike the right balance between agroecology and other innovative approaches?
- 2 Have an appropriate range of innovative approaches been identified and documented in the draft? If there are key gaps in coverage of approaches, what are these and how would they be appropriately incorporated in the draft? Does the draft illustrate correctly the contributions of these approaches to FSN and sustainable development? The HLPE acknowledges that these approaches could be better articulated in the draft, and their main points of convergence or divergence among these approaches could be better illustrated. Could the following set of “salient dimensions” help to characterize and compare these different approaches: human-rights base, farm size, local or global markets and food systems (short or long supply chain), labor or capital intensity (including mechanization), specialization or diversification, dependence to external (chemical) inputs or circular economy, ownership and use of modern knowledge and technology or use of local and traditional knowledge and practices?
- 3 The V0 draft outlines 17 key agroecological principles and organizes them in four overarching and interlinked operational principles for more sustainable food systems (SFS): resource efficiency, resilience, social equity / responsibility and ecological footprint. Are there any key aspects of agroecology that are not reflected in this set of 17 principles? Could the set of principles be more concise, and if so, which principles could be combined or reformulated to achieve this?
- 4 The V0 draft is structured around a conceptual framework that links innovative approaches to FSN outcomes via their contribution to the four abovementioned overarching operational principles of SFS and, thus, to the different dimensions of FSN. Along with the four agreed dimensions of FSN (availability, access, stability, utilization), the V0 draft also discusses a fifth dimension: agency. Do you think that this framework addresses the key issues? Is it applied appropriately and consistently across the different chapters of the draft to structure its overall narrative and main findings?
- 5 The V0 draft provides an opportunity to identify knowledge gaps, where more evidence is required to assess the contribution that agroecology and other innovative approaches can make progressing towards more sustainable food systems for enhanced FSN. Do you think that the key knowledge gaps are appropriately identified, that their underlying causes are sufficiently articulated in the draft? Is the draft missing any important knowledge gap? Is this assessment of the state of knowledge in the draft based on the best up-to-date available scientific evidence or does the draft miss critical references? How could the draft better integrate and consider local, traditional and empirical knowledge?
- 6 Chapter 2 suggests a typology of innovations. Do you think this typology is useful in structuring the exploration of what innovations are required to support FSN, identifying key drivers of, and barriers to, innovation (in Chapter 3) and the enabling conditions required to foster innovation (in Chapter 4)? Are there significant drivers, barriers or enabling conditions that are not adequately considered in the draft?

- 7 A series of divergent narratives are documented in Chapter 3 to help tease out key barriers and constraints to innovation for FSN. Is this presentation of these divergent narratives comprehensive, appropriate and correctly articulated? How could the presentation of the main controversies at stake and the related available evidence be improved?
- 8 This preliminary version of the report presents tentative priorities for action in Chapter 4, as well as recommendations to enable innovative approaches to contribute to the radical transformations of current food systems needed to enhance FSN and sustainability. Do you think these preliminary findings can form an appropriate basis for further elaboration, in particular to design innovation policies? Do you think that key recommendations or priorities for action are missing or inadequately covered in the draft?
- 9 Throughout the V0 draft there has been an attempt to indicate, sometimes with placeholders, specific case studies that would illustrate the main narrative with concrete examples and experience. Are the set of case studies appropriate in terms of subject and regional balance? Can you suggest further case studies that could help to enrich and strengthen the report?
- 10 Are there any major omissions or gaps in the V0 draft? Are topics under- or over-represented in relation to their importance? Are any facts or conclusions refuted, questionable or assertions with no evidence-base? If any of these are an issue, please share supporting evidence.

We thank in advance all the contributors for being kind enough to read, comment and suggest inputs on this V0 draft of the report.

We look forward to a rich and fruitful consultation.

The HLPE Project Team and Steering Committee