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**REPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR**  
**“Identifying Critical and Emerging Issues for Food Security and Nutrition:  
The contribution of science to the global policy debate”.**  
Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2016  
Agropolis International, Montpellier, France

This international seminar was hosted by Agropolis International and co-organised by Agropolis International, UNESCO Chaire on World Food Systems and the HLPE Steering Committee, as a contribution to the HLPE process of identifying *Critical and emerging issues for food security and nutrition (FSN)*, with the view to inform the policy debates in the CFS and to contribute to advancing the 2030 Agenda. This event attracted a large audience coming from public and private sectors, from farmers unions, as well as from academia and civil society and allowed fruitful discussions between the HLPE Steering Committee and French stakeholders. It will help the HLPE to inform CFS debates at the global level with inputs coming from the ground.

This half-day seminar was organised in two sessions. Video records of the whole seminar are available online<sup>1</sup>.

During the first session, Wilfrid Legg, HLPE Project team leader, presented the main findings and recommendations of the last HLPE report on “*Sustainable agricultural development for food security and nutrition: what roles for livestock?*”. The discussions with the different panelists showed how this global report has been or could be used to feed reflexions and political strategies at the national level. Alexandre Ickowicz (UMR SELMET) considered that the typology of livestock systems proposed in the report is very helpful for the elaboration of concrete and context-specific solutions at a territorial level. Etienne Gangneron (Fédération Nationale des Syndicats d'Exploitants Agricoles, FNSEA) showed the importance of the HLPE report to inform policy debates. By enabling a constructive discussion on substance, the HLPE report overcomes sterile ideological disputes. Bertrand Mathieu (Agronomes et Vétérinaires Sans Frontières, AVSF) explained how the HLPE report was already used by AVSF as a solid scientific reference in their dialogues with governments, farmers and other actors on the ground in different countries. Hervé Durand (French Ministry of agriculture), giving the example of the forthcoming discussions on the European common agricultural policy (CAP2020), explained how this HLPE scientific and independent report will help the governments to elaborate their positions in international negotiations.

During the second session, Sophia Murphy (HLPE Steering Committee member) and Marion Guillou (Chair of Agreenium, former HLPE Steering Committee member) presented the HLPE process and methodology used in 2014 to identify critical and emerging issues, taking into

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fao.org/cfs/cfs-hlpe/news-archive/detail/en/c/450603/>

account diverse forms of knowledge. Marion Guillou highlighted the need to conduct this process on a regular basis in order to share experiences, assess progress made, and point out new challenges. She called for a holistic approach, “breaking the silos” across countries (North and South) as a lot of challenges are now global, and across sectors. Malnutrition should not be considered only as a food issue neither only as a health issue. According to Alexandre Ickowicz, Eve Fouilleux (CNRS-CIRAD) and Anne Bichard (Institut de Recherches et d’Applications des Méthodes de développement, IRAM), appropriate solutions will imply multisectoral coordination (e.g. between health, food, agriculture, and water experts and agencies), multistakeholder platforms and participatory decision making processes.

Philippe Collin (Confédération Paysanne), Christian Roqueirol (Via Campesina), Eve Fouilleux stressed that, in order to achieve FSN for all now and in the future in the overall framework of the 2030 Agenda, we do not only need to design adequate technical tools but also to better take into account the political dimension of the debates on FSN. There is a need to better understand the unbalance of power between stakeholders, including gender issues, in the FSN governance.

This report highlights the six main critical and emerging issues raised and discussed during these two sessions .

## **1. Social dimensions of FSN: Human right and human dignity**

Nicole Darmon (INRA), Magali Ramel (ATD Quart Monde) and Christian Roqueirol, supported by some participants in the audience, replaced their intervention in the overall perspective of the progressive realization of the **Right to adequate Food**. Food is a fundamental dimension of human **dignity** and food assistance mechanisms should be designed in that perspective, taking also into consideration cultural aspects. People, in particular vulnerable groups, including small producers, women, and poor consumers should not be considered only as beneficiary of food aids, but should be empowered to make their own food choices at individual, household, and country levels (“food sovereignty”).

For Philippe Collin, Christian Roqueirol, and Sébastien Subsol (French Ministry of Foreign Affairs), considering the cohorts of youth that will arrive on the jobs market in future decades, particularly in Africa, different agricultural and food systems should be assessed according to their ability to provide not only jobs, but **decent jobs**, including in rural areas. Agricultural policies and subsidies should support rural and agricultural employment.

## **2. Agroecology**

Sébastien Subsol, Alexandre Ickowicz, Bertrand Mathieu and Christian Roqueirol highlighted the need to **scale up agro-ecological practices** adapted to local conditions.

Those practices, relying more on natural resources and processes (including ecosystem services, recycling, agro-biodiversity, genetic resources, insects, pollinators, biological pest control...), could increase the **efficiency** and the sustainability of agricultural production systems, improving their environmental impact (on soil, water, biodiversity). They could also increase the **resilience** of food systems and their capacity to adapt to external shocks (including climate change). As a consequence, such systems could contribute to improve FSN for all now and in the future.

According to Etienne Gangneron, agricultural systems could produce more and better. Agriculture should not only be seen as a problem but also as a solution to address important challenges such as climate change, biodiversity and landscape management.

### **3. Organization of Food supply chains**

Alexandre Ickowicz, Etienne Gangneron, Philippe Collin, Eve Fouilleux, Hervé Durand and Sébastien Subsol, supported by some participants in the audience suggested that the HLPE should not limit its work to the production systems and highlighted a number of issues related to the organization of the food supply chains, including:

- Concentration and distribution of **power** along the food chains: relationships between farmers (including smallholders), farmers organizations on the one hand, processors and distributors (including large companies) on the other hand.
- **Access** for small producers to resources, services, credit, markets and information on markets.
- **Logistic** aspects (process, transportation, cold chain), that are essential to limit the environmental impacts of the food chains, to reduce food losses and waste, and to ensure food quality and food safety.
- Distribution of **value added** along the food chains, **price stability**, and **“fair” price level** for producers and consumers in the context of long-term decrease in food prices.
- **Globalization** of the food chains, **standardization** of food processes and products that can exclude “traditional” or “local” products from the markets.
- Importance of **information, accountability** and **transparency** along the food chains in order to restore trust between producers and consumers.

### **4. Territorial approach: governance at different scales**

Alexandre Ickowicz called for a **territorial approach** and invited researchers to examine the interaction, competition and integration of agricultural and food systems at a local level. According to Nicolas Bricas, adapted solutions can be found at the local level to contribute to address global issues: cities and urban regions can play a key role in shaping agricultural and food systems.

Philippe Collin and Sébastien Subsol, supported by some participants in the audience, showed the interest of the “relocation” of food systems, through **short food chains** at local and regional levels, in order to improve small producers livelihoods and restore their dignity, to strengthen the link between producers and consumers, to foster local development and to support a diversity of local food systems.

### **5. Competition to access resources, exclusion, conflicts and migrations**

Bertrand Mathieu, Philippe Collin and Christian Roqueirol, supported by some participants in the audience, questioned the possible **coexistence** and highlighted the **tensions** existing between the so-called “industrial agriculture” and “smallholder agriculture production systems” around the world, given the competition between those systems for the access to services (credit, market, information...) and natural resources (land, water...).

According to Amadou Allahoury, HLPE Steering Committee member, this question of coexistence between systems is particularly important in developing countries, in particular for pastoral systems. The competition for land and water can even become a question of national security, a source of forced displacement (land grabbing) or of important conflicts (e.g. between farmers and pastoralists). On this point Bernard Hubert, Agropolis International Chairperson, brings to attention that the International Rangeland Congress Continuing Committee, from which he is a member, took an initiative toward a United Nations resolution designating 2021 as the International Year of the Rangelands and Pastoralists.

## 6. One Health, animal welfare

The discussion on the HLPE report on “*Sustainable agricultural development for food security and nutrition: what roles for livestock?*” highlighted the importance of animal health and welfare. Alexandre Ickowicz highlighted the interest of the **One Health** approach and the need to improve prevention and early management of crisis. He also called for more research on the optimal consumption of animal products. Etienne Gangneron stressed the importance of **animal health and welfare** policies and legislations and their additional costs for farmers. He also highlighted the progress recently made in France in terms of reduction of antimicrobial use. He called for a better risk management including through insurance mechanisms. Amadou Allahoury recalled the cultural dimension of animal welfare and the huge differences existing between countries in terms of animal welfare requirements.