OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Wednesday, 30 June 2021 14:30 GMT +02:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Mainstreaming Regenerative Agriculture
CONVENED BY	Forum for the Future of Agriculture and Nestlé
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/17111/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	No borders

The outcomes from a Food Systems Summit Dialogue will be of use in developing the pathway to sustainable food systems within the locality in which they take place. They will be a valuable contribution to the national pathways and also of interest to the different workstreams preparing for the Summit: the Action Tracks, Scientific Groups and Champions as well as for other Dialogues.

1. PARTICIPATION

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS 77

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0	0-18	11	19-30	41	31-50	24	51-65	1	66-80	0	80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

43	Male	34	Female	0	Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

36	Agriculture/crops	2	Education	0	Health care
0	Fish and aquaculture	6	Communication	0	Nutrition
0	Livestock	4	Food processing	2	National or local government
1	Agro-forestry	1	Food retail, markets	0	Utilities
8	Environment and ecology	4	Food industry	4	Industrial
2	Trade and commerce	2	Financial Services	9	Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

3	Small/medium enterprise/artisan	1	Workers and trade union
1	Large national business	5	Member of Parliament
18	Multi-national corporation	0	Local authority
0	Small-scale farmer	2	Government and national institution
6	Medium-scale farmer	0	Regional economic community
2	Large-scale farmer	1	United Nations
3	Local Non-Governmental Organization	1	International financial institution
7	International Non-Governmental Organization	7	Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance
0	Indigenous People	1	Consumer group
7	Science and academia	13	Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

HOW DID YOU ORGANIZE THE DIALOGUE SO THAT THE PRINCIPLES WERE INCORPORATED, REINFORCED AND ENHANCED?

The Independent Dialogue was built in order to guide the discussion on a respectful, holistic and pro-active approach. While put in place, the event was constantly reviewed in order to provide Facilitators, Curators and Participants with the maximum of comfort, assistance and voice.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The Convenors made sure to select a wide range of assets and skills around the tables, balancing the age and gender repartition. All Participants, Facilitators and Convenors included, had a direct field expertise in the main topic, to secure the legitimacy of the debate and the quality of the recommended outcomes. All details of the events were shared beforehand in a transparent worry, including the specificities of the debate and the related questions of the sub-groups. The Curator remained available to questions the whole length of the event preparation, during the event and afterwards. Convenors provided training sessions (pre-event rehearsals) with the Facilitators and Curator in order to enhance coordination and fluidity of information flow. During the Independent Dialogue subgroup exchange, Facilitators made sure to present themselves, and asked everyone in their respective sub-groups to present themselves. Cameras on Zoom were up all the time, allowing a friendly and open discussion. During the debates, the Facilitators made sure every voice was heard from, asking for precisions and wrapping up main arguments to ease the continuity of the argumentation. Going further, Facilitators made sure to moderate the debates to ensure expertise was shared in a polite, honest and constructive way. In addition, Convenors took the liberty to have one Rapporteur per breakout for summarising the discussions. Finally, all sessions were recorded and made publically available.

DO YOU HAVE ADVICE FOR OTHER DIALOGUE CONVENORS ABOUT APPRECIATING THE PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT?

Trainings and test-runs in advance with Facilitators were greatly appreciated in order to guide them through their role. Transparency of the event building enabled all participants to seize the topic beforehand with enough perspective to be proactive on the event day. The diversity of views around the table ensured a balanced discussion while creating bonds and dialogues across the food supply chain. After the Independent Dialogue, a survey was shared to all in order to gather feedbacks and build on the key learnings for the organization team. Finally, the option of virtual shared white boards increase participation in the breakouts; and using the chat function to share in written form thoughts, helped increase the level of exchange.

3. METHOD

The outcomes of a Dialogue are influenced by the method that is used.

DID YOU USE THE SAME METHOD AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CONVENORS REFERENCE MANUAL?

✓ **Yes**

No

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

This independent Dialogue was set to contribute to the discussions of the UNFSS Action track 3: Boost nature-positive production at scale. It was entitled: “Mainstreaming Regenerative Agriculture”, and covered all geographical regions of the world.
Regenerative agriculture is an increasingly prominent topic of discussion as it provides opportunities and solutions for many of the economic, social, environmental and climatic challenges facing agriculture and our food system today. This Food Systems Summit Dialogue aimed at exploring the key questions on how to broaden the appeal of regenerative agriculture and accelerate the transition both in Europe and globally.
Each of the six discussion groups focused on one particular aspect related to defining, scaling, and facilitating the implementation of regenerative agriculture. From the definition and alignment of key principles, to farmers engagement, policy and governance implication, and the need to monitor the benefits and centralise results in order to drive continous improvement.
The 6 breakout discussion groups were:
1- How do we define and build alignment on the key principles and practices of regenerative agriculture?
2-How do we inspire and ignite the interest of all farmers and overcome barriers to participation?
3-How can the food value chain support the adoption and scaling of regenerative agriculture?
4-How can policy & governance accelerate change?
5-How can we define and monitor the benefits and centralise results to drive continuous improvement?
6-How can we build social awareness and understanding of regenerative agriculture and catalyze support?

ACTION TRACKS

	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
✓	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

✓	Finance	✓	Policy
✓	Innovation	✓	Data & Evidence
	Human rights	✓	Governance
✓	Women & Youth Empowerment	✓	Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate

MAIN FINDINGS

Currrently, there is no precise definition for regenerative agriculture that is recognized and approved by the entire food chain, academic and public authorities. As a concept, regenerative agriculture focuses on how to 'restore and enhance capacity of soil health and biodiversity'. Regenerative agricultural practices look at the positive impact on the natural assets, as well as the social and economic dimensions of agriculture.
Understanding the baseline from which the farmer can start applying regenerative practices is crucial to measuring progress. Regenerative agriculture is a holistic approach to farming which takes into account the biophysical environment of the soil, but also the broader efficiency of land use. It is looking at a multiple range of public goods production, and involves practices looking at soil protecting and regenerating systems, biodiversity-friendly operations, integration of better water management systems, restoring soil life and more As knowledge about regenerative agriculture continues to grow, farmers and the value chain are learning that practices must be flexible to take into consideration the region-specific, and climate-specific context of the land. Only with a strong legislative framework, orchestrated efforts upstream and downstream of the food value chain will farmers be able to adapt and change practices. But if the legislators, buyers, and processors don't recognize the need for change, it will fail just like past attempts to implement widely nature-friendly agricultural systems.
There was a large consensus on the need for a common language among all stakeholders of the food system to agree on terminology, to avoid greenwashing. Further, farmers need to be put at the center of the food systems, by listening to their needs, supporting them with proper advisory systems that would come from independent bodies. The latter seems to be a key trigger to the transitioning towards sustainable practices at scale.
Possible solutions could include organizing independent payable grassroots advice and developing new tools to help farmers to understand the impact of their practices on climate, environment, and health. By ensuring long-term relationships among the food chain actors, this builds trust and gives the farming community the long-term security they need to be able to be economically viable. Most importantly, regenerative agriculture needs to be easy to understand for farmers and lower levels of administrative burden by building the reporting and data collection systems into the existing ones rather than creating new reporting grids. This would help them to communicate their work and raise public awareness while transferring their knowledge; it would accelerate the consumers' education, motivate them to make better choices provided the food distributors reflect the farmers' efforts and processors equalize prices.

The major current challenge is socio-economic: how to integrate those practices, while continuing the business and be profitable. Current processed food sourced from Regenerative farms are mostly premium products; the challenge for many processing companies is to make those products mainstream. To do so, costs of production need to be reflected and somehow shared among the value chain in order to secure farmers in this transition.
Hence, local systems need to change holistically, if it is to be mainstreamed. Trying to set strict, rigid standards for larger scales can only fail, due to systems' complexity and variety.
Recommendations: Data collection and centralization: establishing National and Regional food Councils that can be a centralized body for advising all and creating protocols to guide food systems transitions including data measurement and certification. Also, building coalitions around specific outcome objectives such as resolving the many certification schemes in harmonizing requirements would support knowledge exchange and education of all stakeholders, and would allow stronger communication campaigns being picked up by the various bodies engaged in the process.
-Step up the dissemination of expertise, both information, advice and best practices through the creation of Communities of Practice. Lots of knowledge has been built up and introduced to farmers, but processors, retailers and consumers have to be educated as well. Public authorities could create an investment fund for communication and awareness-raising.
-Reinforce public and private collaboration: organize farmers in communities of practices, promoting the ambassador role of first movers. A other actors of the food value chain would also benefit from closer collaboration in public-private partnerships. It would help to close the gaps and misinterpretation of today's farming systems.
Subsidy schemes, farmers' incentives (price premiums), sustainability outcome (carbon) markets and differential taxation systems could mitigate true transition costs and pricing; products produced by nature should be less taxed than processed ones. Further, regenerative agricultural practices could be used as the backbone of carbon farming standards delivering carbon certificates to buyers and processors, as an indicator to show applied practices' impact.
The evolution of farmers' profession over the past forty years calls for a crucial adaptation of their training; redefining the focus of already-existing public-private training systems would enable farmers to progress on sustainable practices. Agronomic schools & universities should integrate regenerative practices in their educational programs.

ACTION TRACKS

- [ ] Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- [ ] Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
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- [ ] Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- [ ] Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

- [ ] Finance
- [ ] Innovation
- [ ] Human rights
- [ ] Women & Youth Empowerment
- [ ] Policy
- [ ] Data & Evidence
- [ ] Governance
- [ ] Trade-offs
- [ ] Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/6

Breakout group 1 focused on the definition of Regenerative agriculture and its key principles.

On the key principles and definitions there were two main directions of comments from the participants, a certain degree of confusion over the definition may be useful to avoid dogmatisms and exclusion. In this regard it was mentioned that a word cloud highlighting the various terms involved in regenerative agriculture can be more meaningful than a long definition. One is the need to set goals not only for soils (and especially not only for carbon sequestration which was seen as a too narrow focus in the current debates) but also for water, air and biodiversity. It was mentioned that the principles of regenerative agriculture could actually be defined to address these four elements; what has most been repeated is the importance on aligning the language.
A key outcome to align stakeholders was finding an alignment on the goals for regenerative agriculture while taking into account the complexity of the different situations globally. It was also stressed that the focus should be placed on 'what' and 'how' is measured to achieve a set of goals rather than on agreeing on a narrow definition of principles based on a fixed set of practices. Thresholds could be set to determine whether a farm can be called regenerative or not, although constant improvement in the key principles should be demonstrated. Collaboration among all stakeholders, securing benefits for farmers and the social impacts should also not be forgotten.

Another important aspect is that soil is not static but dynamic, and accounting for a continuous improvement of soil is important when setting targets. In addition to this, there was consensus on the importance of the context in which the farmer operates and that global differences need to be taken into account, which has not been the case in the past. Participants also stressed the importance of how public money is spent to ensure that food remains affordable. Public spending should not only support the farmer but contribute to the necessary transition. It cannot be left to the markets alone.
There were two final issues to consider. One is that education and social dimensions should not be forgotten. Bringing science to the farm. And there should be a shared responsibility along the food chain. The second is that there may be areas that are not suitable for agriculture and which would need to be returned to nature, while others may have to be intensified.

ACTION TRACKS

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KEYWORDS

	Finance		Policy
	Innovation		Data & Evidence
	Human rights		Governance
	Women & Youth Empowerment	✓	Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/6

Breakout group 2 focused on how to inspire and ignite the interest of all farmers to overcome the barriers to participation.

On how to inspire them, transform their interest into active participation, and overcome any barriers in this process, one major outcome was the need to focus on long-term vision, as well as a shift in mindset and behaviour from the entire food value chain to enable the transition towards regenerative agriculture. Due to the lack of awareness and lack of understanding on how regenerative farming practices are beneficial for the entire value chain, but also how the efforts made by farmers are integrated in the market, the number of barriers hindering the mainstreaming of regenerative agriculture are too numerous. Discussants have identified the following potential solutions to overcome barriers: Advisory and training programs for farmers, Peer networks, Subsidies (with a shift from action to a measurable outcome), Flexibility of farmers, Access to funding and incentives, Research and scientific clarity on definitions and measurement methods.

In terms of overcoming barriers and, more broadly, steps to get farmers more involved, the team identified several valuable tools to help farmers become more aware and correctly assess risks and opportunities
- Advisory and training programs for farmers
- Peer networks
- Subsidies (with a shift from action to a measurable outcome)
- Flexibility of farmers
- Access to funding and incentives
- Research and scientific clarity on definitions and measurement methods.

ACTION TRACKS

	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
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KEYWORDS

✓	Finance		Policy
	Innovation	✓	Data & Evidence
	Human rights		Governance
✓	Women & Youth Empowerment		Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/6

Breakout group 3 focused on how the food value chain can support the adoption and scaling of regenerative agriculture.

One main outcome was the analysis that there was no structure of collaboration between farmers and the rest of the food value chain actors, and a major need to educate the stakeholders of the food chain on what Regenerative agriculture means, and why it needs to be valued and supported by them, and the larger public. Further, discussants came to the conclusion that it would be better to set a number of minimum standards what is not sustainable and exclude those products from the market. Supply chain traceability and transparency is needed to allow for independently-verified and enforced standards for the production and supply of sustainable food. Food suppliers and retailers should commit to providing and incentivising sustainable food options – it needs to be the easy choice for consumers, not a burden. A label should incorporate all the relevant aspects from a consumer points of view, health, climate, environment, social, agricultural. Food companies can offer longer term contracts and/or higher prices to farmers that agree to produce more sustainably (measured against their own operation/benchmark and verified by an external party), to derisk and financially incentive the transition to more sustainable practices. Finally, the stakeholders recognized the need to create a harmonized label system, in order to avoid confusing consumers.
Harmonized approach in labels and certifications would support the transition. We discussed how and who should provide support to farmers with education and financially. We also discussed how consumers can increase demand by making choices. We should also consider if new marketing channels are needed for sustainable products to get visibility and shorter route from farmers to consumers. Creating market demand and translating the sustainability work to consumers. All stakeholders should crate consistency in measures and communication. We discussed the complexity in food systems and supply chains and the financial aspects and how to address them. Investments are needed and not having enough demand yet to develop further. Interesting aspect was also to discuss if regenerative agriculture is a good business case or just more cost for farmers.

ACTION TRACKS

	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
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KEYWORDS

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	Women & Youth Empowerment	✓	Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/6

Breakout 4 focused on how policy and governance can accelerate change.

The main outcomes came out as the need to capitalize on and accelerate what already exists, and that eco-schemes are a first move towards change. Now the question is how to speed up the uptake. Therefore, we need also private initiative. They are impatiently waiting for clarification on the promised regulatory framework.
Regarding reward for farmers, it is crucial to recognise the farmers' efforts (farmers are not rewarded for the eco-services they deliver). Regarding incentives, they could be either public or private through a right market price for the product & services produced. We also need to take into consideration the disincentives (prohibit certain practices) cf. GAEC. Should we not set limits on e.g. emissions, water use, … in line with the planetary boundaries?
Farmers shall receive independent advice to accompany their journey, asking here the question of: Who will be eligible and according to what criteria?
Another strong statement in the acceleration of change is the involvement of consumers.
It appears essential to rethink the policy toward an integrated food policy, that not only focusses on targets, but also offers methods and incentives, based on true cost accounting and where consumers must change their dietary attitudes.
Finally, an issue reflects as addressing the funding gaps focusing on smallholder farmers in less developed countries especially female smallholder farmers (closing the gender gap) including land access guarantees.

As key next steps, the following has been identified:
1. Empower farmers to be co-innovators
2. Create a public/private partnership developing financial incentives complementary to the CAP support
3. Organise independent payable grass roots advise and develop new tools to help farmers to understand the impact of their practices on climate, environment, health, …
Enhancing effectiveness of nature positive agriculture by adapting or by replacing conventional agriculture?
4. Recognise and scale up the dozens of local initiatives
5. Stimulate innovation (products, processes, systems)
6. More participation of all stakeholders in the policy making process
7. Step up dissemination of expertise (knowledge & experience)
A lot of knowledge has been built up and introduced to farmers, but also processors, retailers and consumers have to be educated
A label can play a role, but consumers are not waiting for the next new label. A label should incorporate all the relevant aspects from a consumer points of view, health, climate, environment, social, agricultural, …
Organise farmers in Community of Practice; promote the ambassador role of first movers.
8. Differential taxation can help
(e.g.) Products produced by nature included agriculture should be less taxed than others

ACTION TRACKS

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KEYWORDS

✓	Finance	✓	Policy
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	Women & Youth Empowerment		Trade-offs
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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 5/6

Breakout group 5 focused on how we can define and monitor the benefits of Regenerative agriculture and centralise results to drive continuous improvement.

It is critical to first establish a robust baseline so that farmers can get started on the journey. Without this anchoring point is can be difficult for farmers to know where to get started.
The importance of taking a holistic system view is at the heart of the debate, which encompasses environmental, social and economic indicators, and potentially not disparate indicator, we need to think of it more broadly across the food system as well.

A full range of indicators was discussed, regarding soil organic matter, above ground biomass, land and resource efficiency measures, nutrient density, nutrient management, nutrient surplus, measures related to circularity, measure dedicated to farmer livelihoods, collective agreements in the sector, water retention, soil fertility and consumption related metrics. This only shows the complexity of this area and shows that isn't yet a framework that aligns all parties. So, in the need for accelerating transition is it obviously area to find alignments on.
The general consensus was that data and sharing data is absolutely critical to transition. We are able to share data, not only because it provides transparency trust to prevent the authenticity of the journey of the transition progress, but also because the sharing of the story and building positive momentum around regenerative agriculture would inspire further ones. How can we capture and profile more of these stories to build interest of farmers?
Then, sharing data is crucial because it can furnish really good agronomic advice back to farmers, which is a critical point here. Indeed, data should be shared in two directions, this isn't just from farmers to some measurement reporting body, but farmers need to see that they are getting something back which is useful for them as well in terms of knowledge and advice. Further, data is going to be critical in unlocking new income streams for farmers around ecosystems outcomes that they can generate.
More broadly, really understanding catchment area impact which can only do if you aggregate data from multiple sources. It is critical that we create clarity and alignment about what the metrics and outcomes should be. There are currently no alignment and farmers may be asked for different measures from different sources – urgently need to harmonise. We need to find a way and a robust system so that we ask for that data once, not multiple times from different parties with different quotes, we need to think clerkly about the efficiency of data collection and the systems that we will aggregate and then think about the multiple uses of that data from centralized system.
Really critical to establish global standards for data collection – not just an EU standard
Without data one cannot have strong themes and reporting and verification.

Clear next steps indicated were:
1. Move to practice by proving and demonstrating at value chain levels for specific crops and regions with multiple actors involved, how regenerative systems can work. This leads to data sharing, as different actors need to open their box.
2. Pragmatic tools for farmers to be efficient, use the ones already exciting at a large scale. How can we make this area accessible and appealing to farmers?
3. Establishing European, National and Regional Food Councils that can be a centralized body for advising all and creating protocols to guide food systems transitions including data measurement and certification addressed to specific targeted challenges.
4. Build coalition around specific outcomes objectives such as resolving certification, outcomes or moving toward healthier diets.
5. Focus on farmers and the value proposition for them, how to make their lives easier and not more difficult.
6. Need to align on what the data can and should be used for

ACTION TRACKS

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KEYWORDS

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 6/6

Breakout group 6 focused on how we build social awareness and understanding of regenerative agriculture and catalyze support.

Paritcipants looked at which stakeholders have the potential to have the largest impact on raising awareness and public support. The main groups identified were:
● Farmers and Food producers - they have the chance to become independent and have autonomy for the value they put into food
● Next generations - young people are making these approaches mainstream, demanding more than sustainability (which, to them, is “table stakes”) - it’s all about regenerative and circular economy
● Companies - can use their marketing power and experience to share stories and inspire consumers (who may have a hard time getting their heads around the complexity that is inherent to this topic (“they still don’t understand organic and now here comes something new and different)
● Policymakers & Authorities - can help to validate and and add credibility - e.g. through labeling schemes. The important thing here is to allow for experimentation and change, and not to overregulate. How do we find this balance?

There are no easy answers because regenerative agriculture is so diverse and specific to farms and crops and locations. It is hard, if not impossible, to explain complexity to the consumer. Marketing messages need to be clear and simple to understand. That said, people tend to understand complexity in their own local contexts and communities. They get it when they can see it (e.g. showing them and not telling them). With this in mind: how can we drive more localized “showing” approaches to build awareness and understanding?

For farmers, the message is all about getting them more independence and more value for the hard work they do. Helping them see that they can be supported economically by taking the right approach. The perception that regenerative approaches are harder or more expensive is actually wrong - farmers want to do this, and will make money doing this - even under existing systems. But, they need to have confidence in this during the transition so that they don’t feel like they are taking on extra costs and risks.
The fundamental issue here is that we are trying to build a new system from our current way of thinking. So first we need to change our thinking. A first step is to recognise that we need to think in terms of living systems principles. Principles rather than prescriptive processes. How are we creating the conditions conducive to life?

There is then the idea of knitting together the social and technological aspects of regenerative agriculture; in western economies it is first a foremost thought of in terms of technologies and process applications. Whereas in the global south it is thought more about as delivering social justice too.

On the point of “Global vs Local” - a question of what/how do we change the food system to more resiliently produce locally where possible, and what has to continue to be produced within a local system.

ACTION TRACKS

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

Given the diversity of the participants, the emergence of a number of areas of divergence was to be expected during this dialogue on regenerative agriculture. These mainly focused issues related to the benefits of regenerative agriculture, how to measure these, who captures or shares in the value, and how to ensure that the grower is both at centre of the movement and is fully supported during the transition process. All of these elements reveal how complex it is to make regenerative agriculture mainstream and scalable.

Benefits

One of the key areas of divergence lay in the definition and evaluation of the benefits. Some participants felt that the primary benefit of making regenerative agriculture mainstream and scalable lies in the acceleration of low environmental impact farming with a specific focus on the greater adoption of biological inputs and processes like precision farming.

Others saw the primary benefit in regenerative agriculture as supporting a systemic transformation based on the principles of circular economy but also encompassing carbon farming or the recycling of raw materials.

In addition, there was a view that the benefit actually lays in the creation of increased value for regenerative agriculture production techniques which could be shared across the food chain although, not surprisingly, there was a question about how much would filter back to the primary producer – the farmer.

Finally, there was a question about whether regenerative agricultural practices should solely focus on improvements in soil health when monitoring progress, or whether it should be broadened to embrace biodiversity, livestock and sustainable water use.

Measurement

The divergence on benefit was subsequently reflected in the discussion about what and how to measure outcomes both to understand impact and drive continuous improvement. Most of the criteria mentioned in order to measure progress were oriented towards environmental measurement and even social impacts but it was impossible to ignore the economic dimension given the important role it plays in incentivising and sustaining behaviour change.

It is clear that building a consensus on the key benefits to include in the scope of regenerative agriculture and an effective and holistic criteria for measuring progress will be essential if the goals of mainstreaming and scaling are to be achieved.

Finally, there was limited or no agreement on whether measurement should be exclusively outcome based or also include action-based approaches.

Transition and the role of the farmer

The question of benefit and what and how to measure progress was clearly linked to the role of the farmer. There were, at times, passionate exchanges between participants who felt that growers were being asked to respond to the latest protocol from public and private sector actors who may not fully understand what works at the farm level. And, inevitably, this catalyzed a further discussion about the extent to which the farmer (bearing all of the transition risk over an extended period of time) would be rewarded for making and sustaining changes by public or private actors (who may only be interested in one or two aspects of the benefit matrix).

This clearly showed up in relation to soil protection where some participants argued that an exclusive focus in one area could lead to a negative impact in others (e.g. yield).

There was a very strong view, articulated by some participants, that mainstreaming and scaling regenerative agriculture needs to start with the farmer at the centre of this. Several participants argued that only lip-service is being paid to this and that the change or innovation model still serves the interests of the established agri-businesses.

Although none of these areas of divergence are insurmountable, they do seem to touch on the fundamentals of how to mainstream and scale regenerative agriculture.

There is a need to speed up radical rethinking of our food policy framework, towards an integrated food system policy that is able to rebalance forces. Redefining consumption from owning to using; redefining production from mass sales to providing efficient functionalities; redefining core economic incentives such as taxation and subsidies. It would also mean integrating well-being across all policies; measuring sustainability with a lifecycle perspective and looking at innovation in categories of economic ecosystems that provide societal functions, rather than in categories of production sectors.

ACTION TRACKS

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KEYWORDS

- Finance
- Innovation
- Human rights
- Women & Youth Empowerment
- Policy
- Data & Evidence
- Governance
- Trade-offs
- Environment and Climate

ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

RELEVANT LINKS

- **A tentative definition of Regenerative Agriculture by IUCN**
  https://www.iucn.org/news/europe/202006/sustainable-agriculture-explained
- **An agronomic perspective on the definition of Regenerative Agriculture**
  https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0030727021998063#