

Action Brief for and with Farmers and Fishers

Farmers, pastoralists, and fishers are at the core of food systems transformation. Across diverse production types and practices, landscapes and settings, sizes and geographies, they are powerful agents of change, necessary to achieve the urgently needed transition to healthy, sustainable and just diets. Tremendous progress driven by innovations in agricultural sciences has ensured that food production has kept pace over the past several decades and has guaranteed sufficient caloric production. This is nothing short of a miracle. Now our challenge is to not only feed the world's population but to nourish it within planetary boundaries.

This Action Brief builds on the long-standing commitment by this community to lay out a clear direction forward. The 42 organisations that contributed to this document represent a diversity of food systems and geographies. However, this remains a small subset of the full diversity of actors who engage in producing nourishing food. It does not speak for all farmers, pastoralists, and fishers, nor attempts to replace officially mandated organisations.

This is a discussion document developed for engagement at the Stockholm Food Forum 2025. The design of the document will be finalised and available at a later date on www.eatforum.org.

Calls to Action

What this community must start, strengthen, or transform to drive change from within.

1. Farmers and fishers recognise and are committed to stewarding food, land, and water.

They are committed to nourishing the world, protecting and creating habitats for nature, and adopting farming and fishing practices that store carbon to mitigate climate change and regenerate the environment. Acknowledging their responsibility and power as primary producers, they want to leverage their trusted voices to organise and be proactively present at the decision-making table; to share their knowledge and experience with all food system actors, from consumers to policymakers; and to inspire action and ensure that farmers, fishers and pastoralist are recognized, respected, and celebrated for their work.

2. Make farming and fishing attractive and viable for youth.

Securing the future of food systems means securing the future of our youth. Farmers, fishers and pastoralists are best positioned to champion agriculture, aquaculture, and fisheries as rewarding careers that drive innovation, food and nutrition security, climate resilience and environmental sustainability, while offering viable livelihoods. This community can foster youth engagement through mentorship, training, and education, including on how to overcome barriers to entry.

Story of Progress: ● [Transforming Education through Regenerative Farming- Farm my School](#)

3. Adopt integrated, knowledge-based production practices and systems.

Combining what is local, traditional, and Indigenous with scientific knowledge enables optimisation of land and water use for crops, livestock, wild fisheries, and aquaculture. Implementing and scaling diverse farming and fishing practices that support biodiversity, respect landscapes' productive capacities, and strengthen climate resilience, is a key solution for sustainable food production.

Story of Progress: ● [Sustaining Brak Cultivation in a Changing Climate - Pacific Community](#)

4. Promote and enable balanced diets. Farmers, fishers, and pastoralists are committed to nourishing the world. By producing a diversity of foods suited to local conditions, they can provide the building blocks of balanced diets that honour culinary traditions and align with national food-based dietary guidelines within the reference Planetary Health Diet (PHD). While this community has limited control over processing and markets, they can support and build capacity to align production with healthy diets. Stronger within-community associations — backed by regional and national networks — are essential to drive agendas, shape narratives, and influence policies that enable everyone to access nutritious and sustainable diets within planetary boundaries. | *Stories of Progress:* ● [Strengthening Diets and Food Systems in Low to Middle Income Countries - Granja Tepeyac](#) ● [Nourishing People and Protecting the Planet - ARLA Foods](#)

5. Share experience and knowledge on tailored practices and management systems.

Farmers, fishers, and pastoralists are innovators, and building networks where they can visit each other's operations, share practices, and adapt successful ideas, strengthens capacities across diverse contexts. Celebrating this diversity highlights inclusive sustainable pathways towards healthy, just food systems. Partnerships with culinary professionals and urban communities can reconnect eaters to the care for land, water, and culture embodied in the production of food – bringing their lived experience directly to the plate.

Story of Progress: ● [Farmer-led Organic Agriculture - Pacific Community](#)

6. Collaborate on fair and consistent performance frameworks.

Collaborating with peers, scientists, and policymakers enables the co-creation of clear metrics for climate, biodiversity, and socio-economic outcomes such as livelihoods, profitability, and value creation, while ensuring they add value without distracting this community from their primary role of producing food. These frameworks can guide action, track progress, reward good practices, and strengthen accountability, inclusion and equity across the food system. Including indicators for climate resilience, secure tenure and access rights is necessary. | *Story of Progress:* ● [FarmAhead Technology - ARLA Foods](#)

7. Internalise environmental and social costs.

Farmers, fishers, and pastoralists can help drive a shift to economic systems where sustainable management and transparency is rewarded, polluters avoid and remediate the damage they cause, and fair working conditions are guaranteed across the value chain. Such systems realign market incentives, promote accountability, and acknowledge the public value farmers and fishers generate as stewards of land, water, and biodiversity. Farmers and fishers are ready to engage in policymaking – provided that they are enabled means and representation to do so – to help make healthy and sustainable food production the norm and not the exception. | *Story of Progress:* ● [Decreasing GHG Emissions from nutrient dense dairy products - Fonterra](#)

8. Reduce food loss, valorise by-products and advance circularity.

Farmers, fishers, and pastoralists can help cut food loss through improved crop and fish management, irrigation, storage, processing, and local infrastructure. Investments in circular and sustainable practices, on-farm or through partnerships with other farms, industries, or cities, keeps nutrients and materials in use, reduces losses, and strengthens resilience. Safe food waste can be reintegrated into production as compost, feed, or energy, while by-products from feed, crops, and animals can be upcycled to add value and conserve resources. Safely processing harvests, while retaining their nutritional value, extends shelf-life and preserves value, including for foods with minor cosmetic flaws. For fisheries, local cold chains, smoking, drying, and value-added processing can reduce spoilage and boost incomes, keeping more benefits in the community.

Story of Progress: ● [Embracing Innovation, Resiliency, and Nature-Based Solutions in Californian Almond Production - Almond Board California](#)

9. Strengthen financial skills and agency.

Farmers and fishers can take charge of their financial future by managing debt, tracking expenses and planning for growth. They can actively engage in markets, negotiate fair prices and diversify income streams to stay resilient, recognising, however, that this is easier said than done and requires action from others. By building skills to navigate volatile seafood and agricultural markets, farmers and fishers can make informed decisions and secure opportunities for the next generation. Specific farmer and fisher groups, particularly women and youth, should be empowered to assert their voices and leadership in financial and business decisions, with support from both within and outside the community.

Stories of Progress: ● [Gender Equity in Fisheries Increases Sustainability and Resilience - Environmental Defense Fund and Aquatic Blue Food Coalition](#) ● [Women Empowerment in Dairy Development - Friesland Campina](#)

10. Invest in local communities and economies.

Locality can, depending on the context, span from small communities to regions and territories. Engaging with such markets, even when producing global commodities, can increase the value generated locally. Collaborating with local actors creates new market opportunities, strengthens long-term demand, and highlights the environmental (e.g., clean air, water, recreational spaces) and cultural contributions that farmers and fishers provide.

Story of Progress: ● [From Farm to Table with dignity: CSA is a SNAP - Glynwood](#)

Actions to Stop

Actions currently undertaken by our community that hinder progress towards healthier, more sustainable, and more just food systems and should be stopped or done differently.

1. Challenge top-down, exclusionary, concentrated decision-making both in the public and private sector. Actively participate in shaping policies and practices that affect farmers and fishers' livelihoods and communities, demanding that these are inclusive, equitable, and just. By contributing with their knowledge, experience and leadership, farmers, fishers, and pastoralists can ensure that solutions are built from the ground up to reflect the different realities of farming and fishing operations, rather than imposed from the top down.

2. Stop supporting unsustainable production. Push for the redirecting financial incentives, public subsidies, and trade rules that reward producers investing in sustainable production systems. Prioritise practices that sustain the land, protect ecosystems, and grow resilient crops and communities. Invest time, resources, and energy in approaches that benefit people, nature, and the long-term economy.

3. Stop relying on damaging inputs and polluting practices. Commit to production methods that reduce harmful inputs and environmental pollution. At the same time, advocate for supportive policies and incentives, research and funding for alternatives, as key enablers to make this commitment realistic and economically viable.

4. Stop focusing on quick fixes without considering system impacts.

As farmers and fishers, we need to work together to guide innovations that fit different purposes and contexts. Quick fixes and one-size-fits-all solutions often overlook social and ecological realities. Technology and innovation are important when striving to produce more with less. However, solutions need to take into account the realities and unintended consequences of the timescales in which change can be made to avoid the risk of idealising silver bullet fixes without a holistic appreciation of how such change can be incorporated and financed. By promoting holistic approaches to farming and transformation pathways, we can ensure technologies strengthen both livelihoods and ecosystems.

5. Stop wasteful and destructive fishing practices.

Cease the use of illegal or destructive fishing gear and minimise to the highest degree possible the levels of bycatch and fish waste. These practices deplete marine ecosystems, waste valuable nutrition, and threaten the livelihoods of small-scale fishing communities.

Unlocks

Asks from this community to other communities that are necessary to overcome systemic barriers to action (“lock-ins”), pointing to opportunities for collaboration.

1. Policymakers

Create inclusive, outcomes-focused, science-driven policies that support diverse farmer, fishers and pastoralist contributions to social, environmental, and health outcomes.

- a. Engage directly with farmers, fishers and pastoralists of all scales and typologies, of all local and global perspectives.
- b. Incorporate environmental and social costs across the value chain through consistent policy incentives.
- c. Simplify existing regulations and coordinate across different regulatory authorities to create good opportunities for farming and fishing.
- d. Prioritise local production in public procurement (including from small farms and fisheries), such as school meals and seafood, integrating criteria that include social, environmental, and health impacts.
- e. Enact science-driven, non-ideological policies, e.g. the sustainable application of pesticides, fertilisers, and veterinary medicines and the phase-out of harmful fishing subsidies.
- f. Secure tenure/co-management rights for small-scale farmers and fishers including access to credit, ensuring commitment to sustainable production, as well as access for young farmers (new entrants), women, and other marginalised groups.
- g. Adapt trade policies to local and territorial contexts, supporting production while enabling fair access to markets.
- h. Embed climate resilience as a core objective of agricultural and fisheries policies.

2. Financial Institutions, Investors, and Philanthropies

- a. Commit to long-term investments that de-risk the implementation of sustainable practices and innovative technologies and build social justice.
- b. Provide assistance, financial support and infrastructure financing for sustainable agriculture and fisheries of various forms, sizes, and business models.
- c. Provide financial tools tailored to small-scale farmers and fisheries (e.g., risk insurance, low-interest loans, cooperative savings models).
- d. Offer financial management training and additional livelihood programs to strengthen economic resilience and guarantee dignified livelihoods for all.
- e. Empower historically marginalised communities with their self-identified needs, including capacity-building, technology, and tailored financial support.

3. Businesses (Public–Private Partnerships)

Build fair, sustainable, innovation-driven partnerships that valorise holistic outcomes, expand markets, and add value for producers.

- a. Build public-private partnerships with corporate actors and farmers and fishers, including those of smaller scale, to strengthen market access and build markets that drive healthy food consumption.
- b. Drive public–private innovation and R&D that turns food waste and by-products into value, advancing circular systems across production, packaging, and quality standards to directly benefit producers.

4. Educators

Embed food literacy, sustainability, and nutrition into educational programmes.

- a. Integrate education on healthy sustainable food production and plant-based, animal-optimised diets into curricula from an early age, creating awareness on where food is produced, by whom and how, with particular focus on local producers, cropping systems, and ecosystems.
- b. Build awareness in formal education systems of the environmental, social, and cultural value of farmers' and fishers' practical knowledge and their contribution to society and the economy.

5. Science

Co-create and communicate research that drives change and resonates with both policy and the public.

- a. Conduct participatory action research involving farmers and fishers directly, considering social as well as environmental and economic outcomes.
- b. Ensure research is communicated in ways that find resonance, steer interest and generate understanding with farmers, fishers, and consumers.
- c. Provide clear, precise, and context-relevant science that can inform both policy and consumer choices.
- d. Partner more closely with producer groups to ensure the applicability, relevance, and need for particular research trials with the goal of improving on-farm practices and techniques.

Acknowledgements

This Community for Action is co-hosted by EAT, Regen10 and the Agroecology Coalition and curated by Convene. 42 organisations (and 46 individuals) from across the globe contributed to this Action Brief over a period of three months, participating in at least one of three dialogues, sharing insights, feedback, and building collective intelligence. Contributing organisations include:

Almond Board of California, Agroecology Coalition, AGRUCO Faculty of Agricultural and Livestock Sciences, University Mayor de San Simon (UMSS) Aquatic Blue Food Coalition, Arla Foods, Association of Social Entrepreneurs in Vihiga (Kenya), Bharat Krishak Samaj (Farmers Forum India), Convene, EAT, Environmental Defense Fund, European Landowners Organization (ELO), Fonterra Co-operative Group, FrieslandCampina, Global Dairy Platform, Global Farmer Network, Glynwood Center for Regional Food and Farming, Granja Tepeyac, Open Food Switzerland, Quail Ridge Dairy LLC, Regen10, Sustainable Food Trust, The University of Zambia, Youth in Agroecology and Restoration Network (YARN).

This Action Brief is not a consensus document but echoes and summarises the voices of the CfA. While contributing organisations participated in discussions and informed the development of the brief, this does not imply endorsement. The process did not include representatives from all farming and fishing regions and systems and does not replace official positions of mandated organisations. Participating in the CfA is voluntary. We are committed to keeping this CfA open and invite the full diversity of representatives from the farmer, fisher and pastoralist communities to contact us if interested in participating in further actions.

The **Agroecology Coalition** and **Regen10** are committed to ensuring that farmers and farmer organisations' voices, particularly those of smallholders, are meaningfully represented in shaping food systems. We share a strong commitment to advancing a just and equitable food system with sustainable, economic, environmental, and socio-cultural outcomes that center farmers. While recognising that participation in this Action Brief is not fully representative of such diverse and non-homogeneous constituencies, smallholder voices in particular must be amplified alongside those of larger producers, enabling decision-making processes that are inclusive of the full diversity of farming and fishing realities worldwide. Looking ahead, it is essential that farmers and fishers are not only included in dialogue but actively supported and empowered to advocate for the policies, resources, and conditions they need. As the backbone of the food system, their full participation is indispensable, and by taking action together with allies across sectors who listen to and learn from each other, we can progress towards a just, sustainable, and healthy future for people, planet, and climate.

Regen10 is a global multi-stakeholder initiative working to support an inclusive, regenerative and equitable food systems transition.

The Agroecology Coalition is a global coalition of willing countries and organizations working to accelerate food-system transformation through agroecology, guided by the 13 principles set by the UN's High-Level Panel of Experts.