

Integrated policy approach needed to ensure sustainable food systems

New recommendations on the role of sustainable forestry in achieving food security and nutrition for all have been endorsed during the 44th Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) - *Making a Difference in Food Security and Nutrition*. Tenure of land and other resource were also highlighted as key in the recommended approach, and the committee acknowledged the greater role that the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Tenure could play.



Neil Palmer via [Wikimedia Commons](#)

The recommendations centred on the need for an integrated policy approach to forestry, agriculture, water and food security and nutrition by reinforcing cross-sectoral coordination.

Urbanisation and rural development

CFS also discussed urbanisation and rural development and offered a platform for stakeholders to work together and steer away from approaching urbanisation and rural development as separate sectors as has been the case in the recent past. This is especially pertinent in a context of an increasingly urbanised world and changing food systems. The number of people living in cities is to rise from 50 percent to 66 percent 2050.

Over the next two years, the committee will explore the impact of urbanisation on people with lower income and on furthering youth's and women's engagement and employment in food systems, including linking producers to markets.

Overhauling the world's food systems

The plenary session kicked off on Monday with FAO's call for new food systems to conquer malnutrition in all its forms. FAO Director-General Jose Graziano da Silva told delegates that "more active policies" are needed to ensure sustainable food systems, stressing that companies and consumers must play a bigger role in overhauling the world's food systems at a time when both hunger and obesity are on the rise.

During a day dedicated to nutrition, participants from civil society, the private sector, African small-scale farmers and others presented good practices and lessons learnt on investments in healthy food systems.

A recurring message throughout the week from all stakeholders was the importance of using existing CFS policy guidance, which would make a major difference in governments' ability to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Over 50 side events enabled participants to explore topics ranging from rural youth employment and entrepreneurship for food and nutrition security, school meals and social protection initiatives in the Middle East and North Africa to climate-smart agriculture, and agribusiness mega-mergers' threat to world food security.

The Committee on World Food Security elects new chair

At the closing ceremony, the committee welcomed the new Chair, Mario Arvelo, Permanent Representative of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations' Rome-based food and agriculture agencies. With a background in law and political science, Mario Arvelo has been a diplomat for over twenty years and acted as chair of key global and regional (Latin America and the Caribbean) food and agriculture-related committees and partnerships.

"CFS has a crucial role to play in amplifying the message that the goal to achieve food security and adequate nutrition for all is as ambitious as it is achievable. My priority as chair will be to continue harnessing innovative ideas from all stakeholders - member States, civil society, the private sector, academia, research centres, philanthropies and other actors, including UN agencies beyond Rome - toward eradicating hunger and malnutrition before 2030," said Arvelo.

The Committee also thanked the outgoing Chair, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Sudan, Amira Gorness for her outstanding service over the past two years.

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