



Chair's Summary

Policy Dialogue on Accelerating Transition to Sustainable Agriculture through Redirecting Public Policies and Support and Scaling Innovation

The Policy Dialogue on Accelerating Transition to Sustainable Agriculture was co-convened by the UK as in-coming COP Presidency and by the World Bank. Its intent was to catalyse efforts to deliver the global transformation in agriculture and land use so urgently needed to tackle climate change, to produce nutritious food, to support jobs and economic growth, and to protect our planet.

Launched in April 2021, 34 countries participated in the period up to COP26 either at Ministerial and, or senior technical levels, mainly through Ministries of Agriculture. Participating countries and representative institutions include: African Union, Angola, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, European Commission, Ethiopia, Germany, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Madagascar, Malawi, Morocco, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Philippines, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, UEA, Uganda, UK, USA, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

In joining this Policy Dialogue, participants recognised the importance of agriculture in producing food and providing livelihoods for billions of people across the world, as well as a major economic sector. At the same time, agriculture is the second main driver of greenhouse gas emissions after energy and the major cause of biodiversity loss, which in turn undermines food systems, and poses risks for farmers, communities and economies.

Participants agreed that there is an urgent need and potential for transformation in agriculture and food systems. Globally, countries provide over \$700 billion per year in support to their agriculture sectors whether through subsidies, market price supports or other mechanisms. Through the Policy Dialogue, participants shared evidence and experiences on designing and implementing public policies and support to re-shape agricultural practices and investments. This included both the challenges and the opportunities of redirecting public finance, and also the trade-offs involved in changing policy to incentivise and support farmers and businesses to invest in sustainable, resilient agriculture.

There was discussion of new approaches to research, development and innovation to help catalyse the needed transition to sustainable food systems.

Participants also highlighted the importance of partnerships for action; between governments and other national stakeholders and through government-to-government collaboration.

Experiences shared through the Policy Dialogue suggest that action is needed at multiple levels: on policy design and implementation; exchange of knowledge, information and tools; coordinated research to identify and develop effective approaches and technologies; support for farmers to develop, adopt and take effective practices to scale; and to develop a shared understanding of 'sustainable agriculture', how to assess this and how to integrate it into markets.

The Dialogues covered a range of topics, summarised below:

Farmers as stewards of nature: Government policies can create incentives and support to help farmers invest in sustainable land use. With this aim, some countries have introduced payment for eco-systems services and others are redirecting policies and support towards schemes that reward farmers for protecting or restoring the environment, reducing emissions and increasing carbon sequestration.

Some countries are adopting an integrated landscape approach, including recognition of tenure rights, to improve the sustainability of agricultural practices. It was noted that international markets play a significant role, where consumer demand for sustainable products and a fair price to farmers can enable sustainable production of food crops and agricultural commodities such as soya and palm oil.

Research and innovation: Increasing productivity whilst limiting land use (preventing deforestation or agriculture expansion onto other fragile eco-systems), reversing harm to the environment and increasing carbon sequestration will all be needed to deliver sustainable food systems.

Investment will be needed in new technologies or practices, according to local context. For instance, this could be to scale up agro-ecological approaches or to reduce emissions from livestock. Government support may be needed to promote and scale farmer-led innovations appropriate to local context and needs.

Collaboration and partnerships including public-private partnerships are key to increase investment in innovation at scale; to catalyse private investment; to ensure farmers are heard and help to shape innovation; to build consensus and to identify effective approaches to scale up what works.

Ambition to Action: Building a shared understanding of why we need sustainable agriculture and opportunities to get there is critical for the transition. This includes engaging with farmers, businesses and other stakeholders.

Stakeholder consultations including with farmers and other key players are helping governments to formulate and secure buy-in to new policies, for instance

to decarbonise agriculture and adapt to climate change, whilst ensuring productivity for food and economic benefits. Cross-government approaches, building consensus with farmers and setting ambitious targets can help to accelerate change. Consumer choices are instrumental in deciding what gets produced and need to be considered in policy reforms.

Measuring and monitoring progress, for instance on emissions reduction, are needed to keep actions on track.



Forward Look

Rich experiences shared through the Policy Dialogue are reflected in a growing **Compendium of Country Case Studies**. Interested lead countries have each contributed a policy briefing note that reflects on policy actions taken to advance the transition to sustainable agriculture. This online Compendium will be launched at COP26 and provides a living platform for further sharing. To date, contributing countries include: Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ghana, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Malawi, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Sierra Leone, Switzerland, UK, US and Vietnam.

Experience shared through the Policy Dialogue has led to the development of a **Policy Action Agenda (PAA)**. This is a non-prescriptive framework for action, to guide governments and other stakeholders in finding pathways to sustainable agriculture. It provides a working definition of sustainable agriculture and, drawing on contributions to the Policy Dialogue, it illustrates the type of actions that governments and others can take.

In endorsing the PAA, stakeholders commit to progress a just transition to sustainable agriculture, through appropriate policies, investments and support according to their context and mandate.

The PAA is further supported by a Global Action Agenda on **Transforming Agricultural Innovation** which provides a joint vision, objectives and a set of joint research priorities.

The Policy Dialogue – both as an independent channel and through other, existing fora – will continue to provide a platform beyond COP26 to share knowledge and experience, to build partnerships and to collaborate as we jointly seek to resolve policy and practice related issues as well as other barriers to sustainable agriculture.

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