

COP23 High Level Roundtables on SDG2: Climate Action for Zero Hunger

Report
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From the content group to the Champions

The High Level Roundtables on SDG2: Climate Action for Zero Hunger aimed to explore how the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can be achieved, with a particular focus on SDG2: “to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote resilient and sustainable agriculture”. The roundtables emphasized that actions to achieve the SDGs must be linked. In particular, hunger, poverty and climate change need to be tackled together, creating opportunities to transform the agricultural sectors and food systems to make them more sustainable and climate-smart.

Despite steady progress in the past decade, the number of hungry people around the world increased again in 2016, and now counts 815 million. Climate change contributes to this increase, threatening food security and nutrition, as well as adding to a downward spiral of conflicts, protracted crises and fragility. To reach Zero Hunger, we urgently need to take the following priority actions:

1. In the mid-term, we must: **Recognize** the role of the rural poor as key agents of change and as stewards of biodiversity, natural resources and vital ecosystem services. More than 80 percent of the world’s extreme poor live in rural areas - their lives are materially linked to sustainable and climate-resilient use of land, soil, water, fish, forest, and pasture resources. The knowledge and experiences of Indigenous Peoples and local communities are particularly important in this respect, including putting farmers and communities at the heart of decisions and enabling them to both prosper and become agents or champions of tackling climate change
2. **Ensure** that women have equal access as men to productive resources, goods and services for agricultural development, employment and to markets; and participate equally in decision making in rural institutions, in shaping policies and laws; as they hold great promise for reducing hunger, poverty and inequalities.
3. **Ensure** that policies and programmes aim to empower rural communities and enable rural transformation that builds on important rural-urban linkages.
4. **Promote** more inclusive, productive, dynamic, sustainable and resilient food systems that embrace innovative initiatives that help increase agricultural productivity, reduce food losses and waste, reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the agricultural sector, and improve market-oriented dynamics to create diverse opportunities for rural employment, especially for women and youth.
5. **Ensure** that the sustainable and resilient management and use of natural resources are central to any global strategy for ending hunger and anticipating, absorbing shocks and adapting to climate change, calling for the review and adapting of existing policies and practices in the crop, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture sectors.
6. **Promote** integrated landscape approaches that present important frameworks for multi-sectoral governance and for building cross-sectoral alliances to sustain coherent action

over time. Coordination among sub-sector stakeholders and across levels of government are of central importance in this respect

7. **Promote** sustainable forest and landscape management that simultaneously promote inclusive, resilient and sustainable development and combat the impacts of climate change, including through Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+), including by creating key enabling conditions such as: permanent forestlands, legal frameworks, sustainable forest management plans, inclusive stakeholder engagement, tenure governance, and improved information-gathering, monitoring and reporting systems.
8. **Promote** approaches to improve resilient and sustainable productivity in the livestock sector that reduce emission intensity, thereby simultaneously enhancing food security and mitigating climate change. Promote the transformation of agricultural systems that increase natural resource-use efficiency and agricultural yields, reduce dependency on chemical inputs, and increase reliance on the interactions between living beings to control pest and non-useful species.
9. **Realise** the opportunities of achieving more resilient and low emission food systems by bringing together the agriculture, food and transport communities to take action. This means promoting better urban-rural linkages, and seeing roads as assets drivers of prosperity for farmers and their communities. It means taking action to help reduce food loss and waste by improving rural access and the development of low-emission value chains. This includes the development and use of low emission preservation and refrigeration storage systems. Together, successful agriculture and infrastructure development can generate income opportunities throughout the food sector, underpin sustainable and inclusive rural transformation, and reduce emissions.

In the short-term:

1. **Ensure** that strategies to end poverty and hunger, promote sustainable development of agriculture, and address climate change, including **enhanced investment in sustainable, low-carbon and resilient agribusiness, infrastructure and food systems** in order to complement sectoral strategies to promote sustainable development in crop agriculture, fishing, forestry, livestock and rural access.
2. **Build on and expand inclusive public-private partnerships** to develop, enable and sustain integrated climate risk informed strategies, programs, policies and investments. The private sector has an essential role to play in supporting the transformation of resilient food systems. Their potential contributions can only be unlocked through conducive policy and regulatory frameworks, as well as project-level partnerships that directly leverage private sector investment.
3. **Recognize** the important convening, normative and standard-setting functions of the United Nations to create enabling environments for inclusive, effective cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder alliances and partnerships. The UN should also help to ensure that data is collected, analyzed, and shared so as to enable all stakeholders to evaluate impact, informed early action and guarantee that no one is left behind.
4. **Further recognize and address the unique and urgent challenges faced by Small Island Developing States (SIDS) by endorsing the following recommendations to implement the Global Action Programme (GAP) on Food Security and Nutrition in Small Island Developing States: tailor food systems to be more inclusive** of vulnerable fishers and family farmers, including addressing gender discrimination in access to productive resources, technology and credit; harness value chain actors in **reshaping resilient**

food systems and in promoting intra-regional trade; and **support community-based mechanisms** for climate change adaptation and disaster risk management while mainstreaming food security and nutrition considerations.

Recommend increase in partnership; strengthen international cooperation; increased financing from all sources, development and transfer of reliable, affordable, modern technology; capacity-building assistance; and replicating and scaling up successful initiatives and approaches.

5. **Reiterate** that food security is a human right and by extension, it is a violation of human rights if we do not mitigate climate change.

Overall, the High Level Roundtables on SDG2 identified important actions, initiatives and partnerships to transform the agricultural sectors and food systems by integrating climate change mitigation and adaptation/resilience into the entire food system, from production to consumption, in both urban and rural areas. Only then can we create a more prosperous, peaceful and sustainable world in which no one is left behind.