



Food Systems and Agriculture at COP29

Summary

COP29 concluded on November 24th with a commitment to triple finance to developing countries, from the previous goal of USD 100 billion annually, to USD 300 billion annually by 2035. In addition to climate finance, food systems were a key topic discussed at the summit in Baku, continuing the momentum from the last COPs.

This year, November 19th was designated as [Food, Agriculture, and Water Day](#). This thematic day highlighted the interconnectedness of food systems, water, and climate change. Diverse discussions ranged from investment opportunities to the importance of evidence-based solutions to ensure resilient food systems. Key announcements included the following:

- [Baku Harmoniya Climate Initiative for Farmers](#). Launched by the FAO in partnership with the COP29 Presidency at the opening of Food, Agriculture, and Water Day, the Harmoniya platform will aggregate initiatives and networks to empower farmers, villages, and rural communities. The initiative will be hosted by the FAO as part of the Food and Agriculture for Sustainable Transformation ([FAST](#)) Partnership, a multi-stakeholder collaboration that aims to accelerate the transformation of agrifood systems.
- [COP29 Declaration on Reducing Methane from Organic Waste](#). Over 30 countries, collectively responsible for nearly 50% of global methane emissions from organic waste, committed to reduce methane from organic waste such as food. Methane emissions from food waste in landfills are a significant component (3%) of total greenhouse gas emissions.
- [COP29 Declaration on Water for Climate Action](#). This declaration was endorsed by nearly 50 countries who have committed to pursuing integrated approaches to combat the causes and impacts of climate change on water basins. The declaration calls for water to be a feature of national climate policies, a key theme that also emerged during the CRFS Alliance Water-Food-Climate Nexus event.

Summary Continued

- The FAST Partnership [reported on milestones and key achievements](#). These included the mapping of initiatives, development of engagement strategies, training for how to access Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Global Climate Fund (GCF) funds, and meetings with FAST Partnership members in different fora.
- Established at COP28, the [Alliance of Champions for Food Systems Transformation](#) continued its advocacy at COP29, emphasising the urgent need to increase climate finance for food systems. The group called for USD 500 billion annually over the next decade to address food systems' substantial role in greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation, and biodiversity loss.
- [Convergence Initiative](#). Also initially launched at COP28, this UN Food Systems Coordination Hub initiative promotes integrating food systems transformation and climate action. Shortly prior to COP29, Kazakhstan [was announced](#) as the first pilot country. [Discussions in Baku](#) touched on how collaborative approaches are helping to make progress on the goals of the initiative.
- The FAO published [new findings](#) showing that "food insecurity and biodiversity loss are among the leading climate-related risks, with 88% of national climate action plans addressing these issues. Additionally, 94% and 91% of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) highlight agri-food systems as key priorities for climate change adaptation and mitigation respectively". Despite this, the analysis reveals substantial gaps in mitigation efforts, with "NDCs covering only about 40% of emissions from agriculture and food systems. Of particular concern, 66% of livestock-related emissions remain unaddressed, and there is an 82% gap in tackling emissions from pre- and post-production stages".
- In the lead up to COP29, Denmark became the first country to introduce a tax on agricultural emissions, imposing a charge of USD 43 per tonne of methane (as per carbon dioxide equivalent) from livestock. This is a major step, as about [80% of agricultural methane emissions](#) are due to livestock systems.

CRFS Alliance Engagements at COP29

- The Climate Resilient Food Systems (CRFS) Alliance led several events exploring various aspects of food systems resilience and transformation. These events focused on [risk reduction](#), [building partnerships](#), [inter-organisational cooperation](#), and [the water-food-climate nexus](#). Julia Weatherhogg, CRFS Alliance Program Lead, also moderated a [discussion about agroforestry](#).
- Ministerial and other high-level speakers discussed progress on food systems issues as well as priorities moving forward. Across all events, the overarching themes were the need for holistic, risk-informed approaches, inclusive governance, and strong partnerships. Discussions underscored the urgency of transforming agrifood systems to effectively address climate and environmental challenges.



Integrating Food Systems Into the Rio Conventions

CGIAR Pavilion, November 15, 17:30–19:00

Discussions focused on harmonising food systems with the Rio Conventions' goals.

- **Key themes:**
 - **UNEP & CBD:** Advocated for policy coherence and integrating indigenous and biodiversity-focused practices.
 - **FAO & CGIAR:** Stressed data-driven approaches and promoting agrobiodiversity through gene and seed banks.
 - **World Bank & EU:** Highlighted financing for nature-based solutions and policy frameworks addressing biodiversity, climate, and desertification.
- **Core message:** Integrating cross-cutting solutions and flexible indicators can help avoid maladaptation and strengthen resilience.
- [Link to recording](#)
- [COP29 also saw the launch of the Rio Trio Initiative](#). It aims to streamline work by the presidencies of the UN Convention on Climate Change from Azerbaijan, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity from Colombia and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification from Saudi Arabia.



Safeguarding Agrifood Systems: Coherent Approaches to Disaster and Climate Resilience

World Bank Pavilion, November 19, 9:00–9:45

This session highlighted the vulnerabilities of agrifood systems to climate change and disasters.

Key insights:

- **UNDRR:** Advocated for risk-informed agrifood systems, emphasising early warning systems and financing.
- **World Bank:** Stressed the financing gap in food systems, promoting integration of food systems into NDCs and NAPs.
- **Lesotho:** Called for better disaster prediction and regional collaboration.
- **WFP & GNDR:** Discussed risk management tools like insurance and emphasised the role of communities in creating nature-based solutions.
- **Core message:** A systems approach is critical, with investments in early warnings, inclusive governance, and sustainable practices.
- [Link to recording](#)



Building Climate Resilient Food Systems through Global Partnerships

UNFCCC Pavilion, November 19, 13:30–14:30

This event explored partnership-driven pathways to food system transformation.

- **Key contributions:**
 - **Lesotho:** Emphasised soil and water conservation and infrastructure development.
 - **FAO & FAIRR:** Advocated for avoiding project duplication and reforming subsidies to align with climate goals.
 - **WFP & IWMI:** Highlighted food allocation inefficiencies, the climate-nutrition nexus, and the need for water-smart food systems.
 - **The Commonwealth:** Called for community-led nature-based solutions across multiple crises.
- **Core message:** Cross-sectoral collaboration and local ownership of solutions are essential for resilient food systems.
- [Link to recording](#)



Water-Food-Climate Nexus Approaches

SHARE Hub, November 20, 14:00–15:00

This event brought together a panel of experts to discuss the intersection of water, food, and climate issues.

- **Key contributions:**
 - **World Farmers Organisation:** Farmers need financing to be able to access solutions in the face of water shortages.
 - **IWMI:** Technological solutions and different aspects of the enabling environment all need to be addressed.
 - **Sanitation and Water for All:** Strategies and communication are needed to deal with water shortages.
 - **VITO:** Accurate data and access to it are critical. Discussed Lake Tanganyika project.
 - **FAO:** We must shift from conversation about crises to focus on solutions.
- **Core message:** The enabling environment, resources for farmers, data, and nature-based solutions all must be considered to meet global water challenges.
- [Link to recording](#)
- [The COP29 Declaration on Water for Climate Action](#) aims to foreground the importance of water in future discussions.



Food and Agriculture in the Media During COP29



- Hundreds of industrial farming lobbyists attended COP29
- The Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate (AIM for Climate), a partnership between the US and UAE that was launched in 2021, announced it has reached USD 29 billion in funding
- Meat-heavy food offerings at COP29 criticised along with mislabeling of vegan and vegetarian options
- Alliance of Champions called on governments and financial institutions at COP29 to prioritise climate finance for food systems
- Pontential withdrawl of the U.S. from Paris Agreement is a blow, though, according to some, "could open up a path for other countries to prioritise mitigating emissions from animal agriculture"
- GEF and GCF are failing to channel vital financing to grassroots farmer organisations according to research published by Family Farmers for Climate Action

COP Presidency Events on Food, Agriculture, and Water Day

Time	Event
9:00-10:30	Opening and Launch of Baku Harmoniya Climate Initiative for Farmers: Empowering Farmers for Climate Resilience (<i>Organizers: COP29 Presidency, Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan, FAO</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This event served as the official opening of the Food, Agriculture and Water Day, where, in partnership with FAO, the COP29 Presidency launched the Baku Harmoniya Climate Initiative for Farmers, closely aligned with the FAST Partnership. More information here
9:30-10:30	Science and Innovation for Low Emission and Resilient Food Systems (<i>Organisers: COP29 Presidency, FAO, CGIAR</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This event convened stakeholders to share progress in climate action, showcased successful joined-up solutions across food, land, and water systems, maximising synergies and minimising trade-offs. The session highlighted progress through whole-of-government coordination and the potential returns from increased R&D, technology transfer, and more harmonised technical cooperation, highlighting future R&D priorities in developing new solutions and helping adopt and bundle proven innovations and technologies in an enabling environment. More information here
11:00-12:30	COP-to-COP Agrifood Legacies: A Key to Achieving Global Climate Goals (<i>Organisers: COP29 Presidency, Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan, FAO</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This high-level event highlighted the importance of COP-to-COP collaboration to ensure that agriculture was properly addressed in international negotiations and that adequate climate finance contributions are made available to support the sustainable transformation of agrifood systems. More information here
13:00-14:30	From Global Goals to Local Action: Regional Initiatives To Strengthen Resilient Agrifood Systems (<i>Organizers: COP29 Presidency, Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan, FAO</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This event highlighted exemplary regional initiatives on agrifood systems and their essential role in advancing national action and the execution of global climate agreements. More information here
13:15-14:45	High-Level Dialogue - Moving Forward with NDC Acceleration in Agrifood Systems: Climate Technology Uptake (<i>Organizers: COP29 Presidency, Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan, FAO</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This high-level event convened a diverse set of ministers, local and regional leaders, financial institutions, and non-government stakeholders to agree on a suite of multilevel, Paris-aligned actions for cooperation in the UNFCCC space, focused on joint policy and finance for sustainable climate technology uptake in agrifood systems. More information here
15:00-16:30	Financing the Agrifood System Transformation (<i>Organizers: World Bank, IFAD, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, FAO, COP29 Presidency</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This event explored how to scale up investments to increase resilience, ensure food security, reduce emissions, and protect the environment.
15:45-17:15	Food and Agriculture for Sustainable Transformation (FAST) Partnership Ministerial Meeting (<i>Organizers: FAO, COP29 Presidency</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FAST members and stakeholders shared their experiences and lessons learned on the importance of strengthening collaboration to accelerate climate finance for agrifood systems transformation, with a special focus on vulnerable groups. More information here
17:00-18:30	Making Climate Finance Work for Farmers: On-Farm Experiences and Concrete Solutions (<i>Organizers: COP29 Presidency, Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan, FAO</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This event explored the critical role of farmers in global food security and rural development, their disproportionate exposure to climate risks, and the pressing need to unlock access for them to climate financing. More information here
17:30-18:30	Enhancing NDC 3.0 Agrifood System Climate Ambition and Action (<i>Organizers: FAO, WWF International, COP29 Presidency</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This event served as a dialogue between different stakeholders on how to accelerate climate ambition and action in agrifood systems through the NDC 3.0 process, building on tried-and-tested experiences to date on NDC implementation and enhancement and leveraging new and forward-looking financial and technical support being made available from a wide range of resource partners.