

Draft CSM comments for the Friends of the Chair meeting on MYPOW, 18 May:

The CSM perspective:

- The CSM Coordination Committee, with 40 delegates from 11 global constituencies and 17 sub-regions, discussed the topic at its meeting in the first week of May 2017.
- The CSM Coordination Committee is composed by organizations that together represent far more than 380 million people, among them more than 330 million farmers, fishers, pastoralists, agricultural workers and other food producers, and includes also large international networks of consumers, women and indigenous peoples.
- The CSM CC appreciated the fact that the proposal on agroecology for food security and nutrition has received the highest support in the CFS ranking exercise and also during the two OEWG meetings this year.
- On the discussion on the proposed HLPE report for 2019, the CSM CC has underlined the strong expectation that the centrality of agroecology in the formulation of the title and scope of the HLPE report will be kept, and that any combination with concepts that might dilute or confuse this focus is avoided.

On relevance:

- The relevance of agroecology for food security and nutrition has become evident in many ways. It is a practiced reality of hundreds of millions of people, food producers and consumers. Governments around the world have developed public policies in support of agroecology, as part of their efforts to foster sustainable food systems and food security.
- The Rome-based Agencies, particularly FAO and IFAD have been supporting these country efforts with specific programs and processes. The four Heads of FAO, IFAD, WFP and Bioversity International will speak on the afternoon of this day, 18 May, at an event on *“Building the sustainable food systems of the 21st Century: The agroecological alternative”*, co-organized by the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems.
- The new HLPE Note on Emerging and Critical Issues suggests agroecology among the priority issues for food security and nutrition that should be dealt with by the CFS.
- We ask: if agroecology is apparently considered as a relevant topic for food security and nutrition by so many governments, specialized UN institutions, food producers and consumers, why shouldn't it be possible to request the HLPE to provide a critical assessment of this theme?

On the use of “red-lines” in the MYPOW process:

- The CSM is deeply concerned about the way how the use of so-called “red lines” has recently been applied with the intention to prevent the CFS to fulfill its mission or to include a highly relevant topic into the MYPOW. This is not acceptable.
- In a context of negotiations on specific policy recommendations or normative policy guidelines, it might be useful that participants express in some few occasions which are the limits that their delegations won't be able to cross. In each case, very strong reasons need to be given in relation to very specific formulations, so that an alternative wording can be found on the specific topic in order to find language that is acceptable to all.
- However, using a red-line language to just block a highly relevant theme, or to explicitly condition the discussion of one theme to another one, brings the whole room into severe difficulties. What should we do in the CFS do, if several members and participants use this practice? This would paralyze the CFS as a whole. The agenda of the CFS would limited to the

lowest level of consensus. If the CFS is not able to deal with controversial issues that are relevant to food security and nutrition, the CFS loses relevance itself.

On the Scope and Title of the HLPE report:

- The experience of the last years shows that the scope of a request of the CFS to the HLPE should have a clear focus and a single theme. The fact that this best practice applied over several years was not used in the case of the HLPE report on “sustainable agricultural development, including the role of livestock”, was broadly recognized as a difficulty.
- At the last two OEWG meetings, the vast majority of participants said that the theme of the HLPE should be focused, and that this focus should be on agroecology and its contributions to food security and nutrition.
- If the original proposal from the CSM cannot be accepted, we would be willing to work also with the title and scope of the HLPE note (*Agroecology for FSN in a context of uncertainty and change*).
- Some members of the OEWG said that agroecology is not the only innovative approach towards sustainable food systems. To accommodate these concerns, the topic could also be formulated precisely in this way: “Agroecology as an innovative approach to sustainable food systems for FSN”. The title could even be formulated as an open question: “Agroecology – an innovative approach to sustainable food systems and FSN?” This may also accommodate some concerns of the more skeptical OEWG members.
- On the other topics that have been recently introduced into discussion as to be combined with the agroecology theme, we suggest that they should be brought as proposals to the next MYPow process and its discussions on prioritization.