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Food Safety Aspects of Integrated Food Systems

The European Green Deal The 'farm to fork' approach

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One of the major challenges for humanity in the twenty-first century will be to find ways to feed the whole world's population while at the same time coping with Earth's capacities. There is a growing consensus that this can only be achieved by a reorientation of global food policies and related laws, and a rethink of the operationalization of food systems so as to take full account of the complex interactions between food production, trade, environmental protection, social justice and human well-being at local, national and international levels.

It is against this backdrop that the concept of **food sustainability** has emerged. It presents a **holistic vision of food systems** and integrates a number of food-related factors, including those of an economic, political, social, cultural and ecological nature, in assessing the performance of food systems.

Food sustainability also integrates general principles that inform the concept of **sustainable development**, especially the democratic governance of natural resources, intergenerational equity and the observation of human rights standards.

Outline

- Setting the Scene: SDGs and Zero Hunger Challenge
- The FAO Approach
- The EU Approach
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Setting the Scene: SDGs and Zero Hunger Challenge

In 2012, the Rio+20 Conference called for enhancing food security and nutrition and a more sustainable agriculture, initiated the formulation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be integrated in the UN's Post-2015 Development Agenda (United Nations, 2012), and launched the Zero Hunger Challenge.

After decades of steady decline, the number of people who suffer from hunger – as measured by the prevalence of undernourishment – began to slowly increase again in 2015.

Today, more than 820 million people regularly go to bed hungry, of whom about 135 million suffer from acute hunger largely due to man-made conflicts, climate change and economic downturns. The COVID-19 pandemic could now double that number, putting an additional 130 million people at risk of suffering acute hunger, according to the World Food Programme.

Setting the Scene: SDGs and Zero Hunger Challenge

2 ZERO HUNGER



END HUNGER, ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY AND IMPROVED NUTRITION AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

A profound change of the global food and agriculture system is needed if we are to nourish the more than 820 million people who are hungry and the additional 2 billion people the world will have by 2050. Increasing agricultural productivity and sustainable food production are crucial to help alleviate the perils of hunger.

The FAO Approach



Summary

In **2014**, the Organisation has adopted a report illustrating its vision for sustainable food and agriculture.

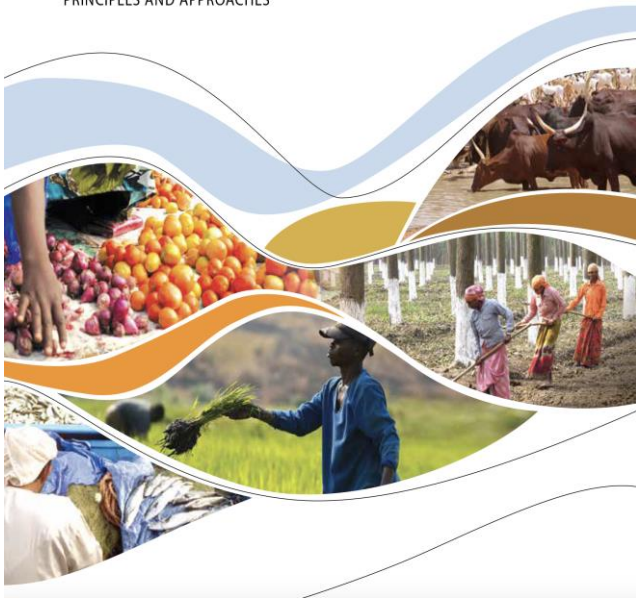
The report sets out **five key principles** that balance the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability:

- 1) improving efficiency in the use of resources;
- 2) conserving, protecting and enhancing natural ecosystems;
- 3) protecting and improving rural livelihoods and social well-being;
- 4) enhancing the resilience of people, communities and ecosystems; and
- 5) promoting good governance of both natural and human systems.

These five principles provide a basis for developing national policies, strategies, programmes, regulations and incentives that will guide the transition to an agriculture that is highly productive, economically viable, environmentally sound, and which is based on the principles of equity and social justice.

Building a common vision for
sustainable food and agriculture

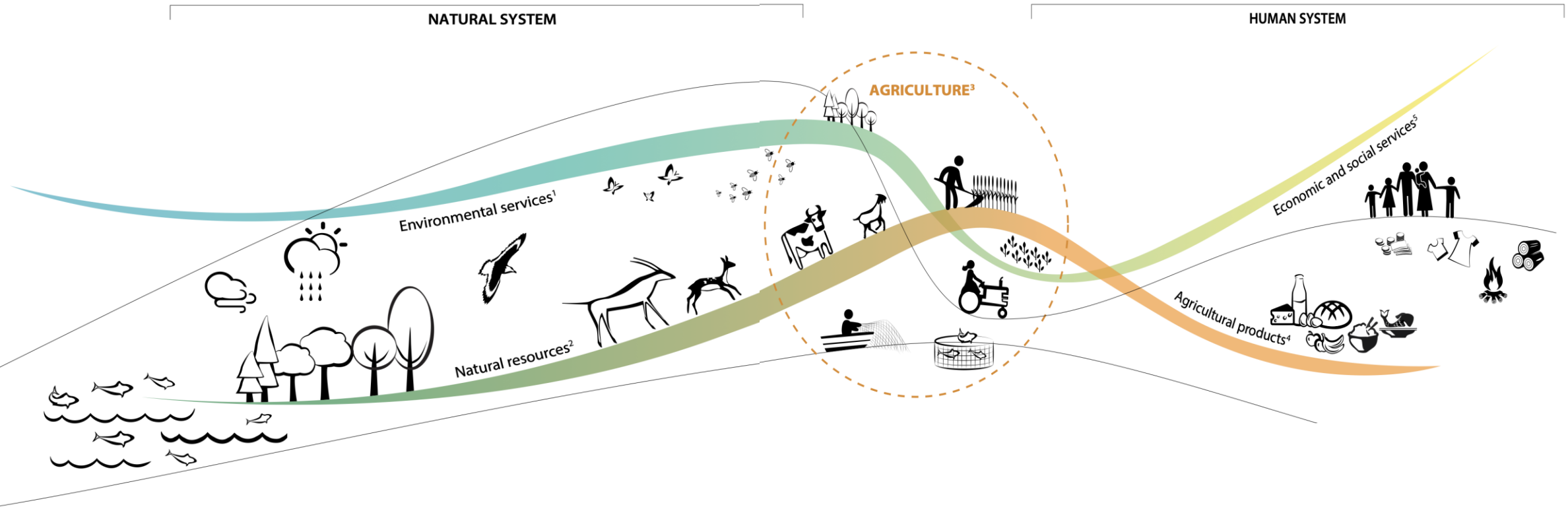
PRINCIPLES AND APPROACHES



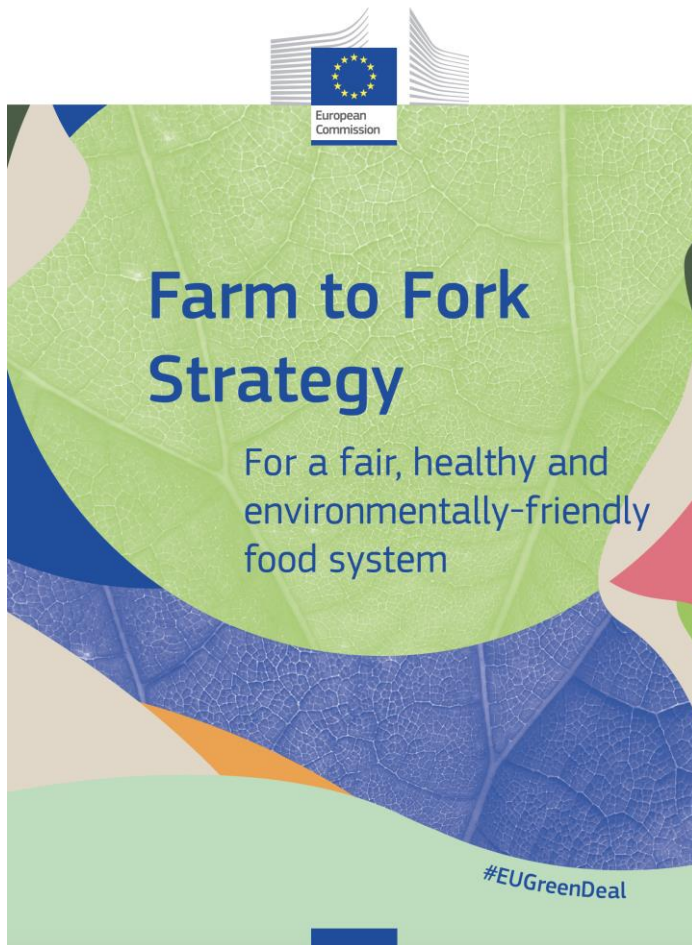
The FAO Approach

Agriculture as the interface between the world's natural and human systems

FIGURE 1.
THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL UNDERPINNING THE VISION



The EU Approach



A Farm to Fork Strategy (20 May 2020)

The European Green Deal sets out how to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. It maps a new, sustainable and inclusive growth strategy to boost the economy, improve people's health and quality of life, care for nature, and leave no one behind.

The Farm to Fork Strategy is at the heart of the Green Deal. It addresses comprehensively the challenges of sustainable food systems and recognises the inextricable links between healthy people, healthy societies and a healthy planet. The strategy is also central to the Commission's agenda to achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). All citizens and operators across value chains, in the EU and elsewhere, should benefit from a just transition, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic downturn. A shift to a sustainable food system can bring environmental, health and social benefits, offer economic gains and ensure that the recovery from the crisis puts us onto a sustainable path.

The EU Approach

A Farm to Fork Strategy (20 May 2020)



The sustainability of food systems is a global issue and food systems will have to adapt to face diverse challenges.

The **EU can play a key role in setting global standards with this strategy**. It sets key targets in priority areas for the EU as a whole. In addition to new policy initiatives, enforcement of existing legislation, notably for animal welfare, pesticide use and protecting the environment legislation, is essential to ensure a fair transition.

The approach will take into account different starting points and **differences** in improvement potential in the Member States. It will also recognise that a **transition to sustainability** of the food system will change the economic fabric of many EU regions and their patterns of interactions.

The EU Approach

A Farm to Fork Strategy (20 May 2020)

The pillars of the new strategy:



1. Ensuring sustainable food production
2. Ensuring food security
3. Stimulating sustainable food processing, wholesale, retail, hospitality and food services practices
4. Promoting sustainable food consumption and facilitating the shift to healthy, sustainable diets
5. Reducing food loss and waste
6. Combating food fraud along the food supply chain

The EU Approach

A Farm to Fork Strategy (20 May 2020)

The need to promote a global transition

The EU will support the global transition to sustainable agri-food systems, **in line with the objectives of this strategy and the SDGs**. Through its external policies, including international cooperation and **trade policy**, the EU will pursue the development of Green Alliances on sustainable food systems with all its partners in bilateral, regional and multilateral fora. This will include cooperation with Africa, neighbours and other partners and will have regard to distinct challenges in different parts of the world. To ensure a successful global transition, the EU will encourage and enable the development of comprehensive, integrated responses benefiting people, nature and economic growth.



Conclusions



Holistic approaches in search of enforceable instruments

The bottom-up approach of the European Union

An historical opportunity? The UN Food Systems Summit and the role of the EU in the global agenda of food sustainability

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