



**The coalition for  
food systems transformation  
through agroecology**



# Background

Current agricultural and food systems face major environmental, climate and health challenges while responding to food security and nutrition challenges. Food systems are increasingly impacted by climate change. At the same time, they contribute a third of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and certain agricultural practices contribute to the erosion of biodiversity, environmental pollution, land degradation and the scarcity of water resources. The precarious livelihoods and social inequities, faced by many farmers and food system workers, exacerbate the difficulties in ensuring adequate nutrition for all.

**Agroecology** is a powerful lever for addressing these major challenges. It provides sustainable solutions to the issues of food security and

nutrition, the fight against poverty and social inequalities, the adaptation and mitigation to climate change, the preservation of biodiversity and natural resources, and the fight against zoonotic diseases.

The agroecology principles apply to all forms of sustainable agriculture and food production systems, including crops, livestock and pastoral systems, agroforestry, fisheries and aquaculture. They also apply to food processing, commercialisation and consumption. Applying these principles also contributes to improving gender equality, making agriculture more attractive for youth, creating dignified income and living conditions, and contributing to healthy diets.

These principles promote resilience, economic viability, social acceptance, cultural diversity and efficiency while protecting the environment.



Thus, they help to inform and guide decisions and ensure avoidance of siloed interventions, unintended consequences, and short-term solutions.

The transformation of food systems through agroecology is fully aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Climate Agreement's Long-Term Goal, the post-2020 Targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Land Degradation Neutrality objectives of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

Various ongoing initiatives and policies implemented by governments, producer and civil society organisations, or research institutions on all continents and across all scales, attest to the potential of agroecological approaches to respond to the multiple challenges facing food systems.

## Membership

The Agroecology Coalition was set up in September 2021, in the margins of the UN Food Systems Summit.

As of May 2023, coalition members comprise **around 50 countries** and regional commissions and **more than 110 organisations**, including farmers organisations, research institutions, indigenous peoples' organisations, UN agencies, philanthropic foundations and civil society organisations.

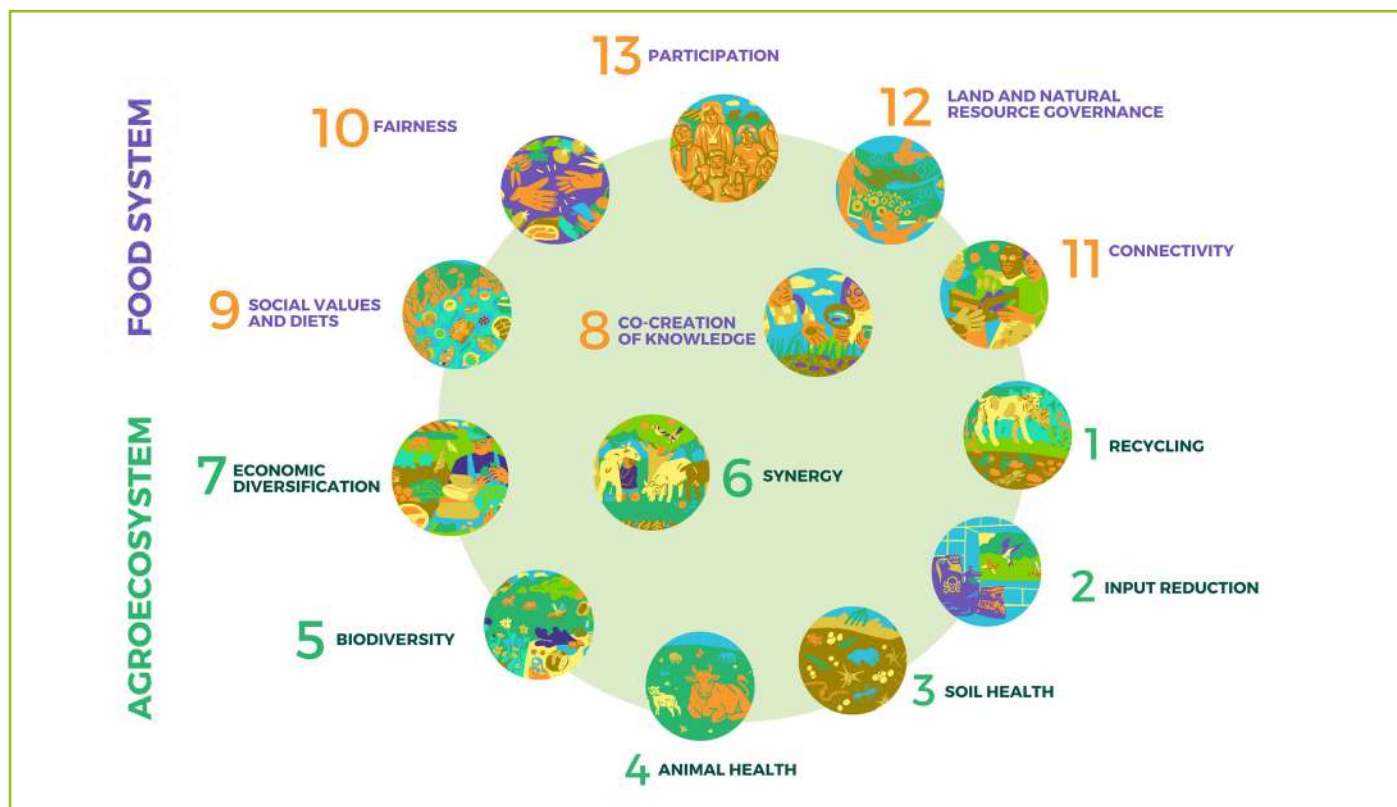




# Purpose and functions

The purpose of the Coalition is to **accelerate the transformation of food systems through agroecology, guided by the 13 principles of agroecology** defined by the High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) aligned with the 10 Elements of Agroecology<sup>1</sup> adopted by the 197 FAO Members in December 2019.

## The 13 principles of agroecology



Illustrations: Dorottya Poór  
Agroecology Europe

## Links of the Agroecology Coalition

The Coalition will make voluntary reports on progress to the Committee on World Food Security and other bodies as appropriate.

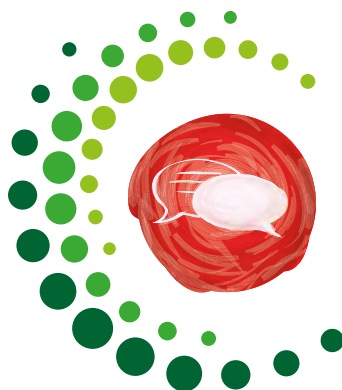
The Group of Friends of Agroecology continues to play an important role in promoting agroecology in the Rome-based agencies and in highlighting the work of the Coalition.<sup>2</sup>

1. Wezel A, Gemmill Herren B, Bezner Kerr R, Barrios E, Gonçalves ALR and Sinclair F (2020). Agroecological principles and elements and their implications for transitioning to sustainable food systems. A review. *Agronomy for Sustainable Development* 40:40. 13pp. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13593-020-00646-z>

2. The Friends of Agroecology is the informal group of countries that have provided financial and political support for FAO's agroecology process over the years, raising awareness among each other and reaching out to other countries.

# The functions and added value of the Agroecology Coalition

The Coalition will support food system transformation through agroecology and the implementation of country pathways in three areas:

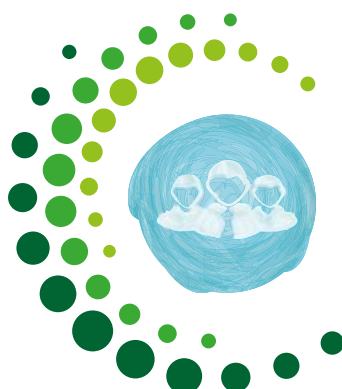


## Facilitating co-creation and exchange of knowledge

- Engaging in participatory research, inter-cultural innovation and co-design with stakeholders
- Facilitating capacity building, including peer-to-peer learning between countries (e.g., on agroecological policies) and between organisations
- Showcasing best-practice in agroecology as well as holistic monitoring and evaluation frameworks
- Documenting cost-benefit analyses of agroecology
- Contributing to co-learning between scientists, policy makers and civil society actors
- Contributing to gender transformation and promoting gender-inclusive opportunities

## Promoting increased investments in agroecology

- Catalysing coordinated investments for collective action
- Contributing to providing support for agroecology initiatives (expert guidance, match-making, facilitating access to funding, etc.)
- Ensuring adequate support for agroecology movements and networks, including small farmers, women, youth, indigenous peoples' organisations and local communities to advance agroecology



## Seeking political engagement and increased commitment to the agroecological transformation

- Mobilising political will for food system transformation through agroecology
- Mainstreaming of agroecology in international organisations and other international fora
- Collating commitments by members of the Coalition and increasing the visibility of agroecology and of the commitments by members
- Promoting the adoption of agroecology through large-scale landscape initiatives
- Partnering with biodiversity, climate, water, sustainable landscape actors to promote the agroecological transformation

# Principles of governance and structure

- As a “**coalition of the willing**,” the Coalition is open to members that commit to implementing food system transformation through agroecology in harmony with the 13 principles of agroecology by signing the [Declaration of Engagement](#). This may include organisations that do not yet implement all of the 13 principles when they join the Coalition but commit to moving towards this goal.
- The governance of the Coalition should reflect the 13 principles of agroecology. It should be inclusive, participatory and involve all types of actors.



- The Coalition will aim to disseminate and implement the CFS policy recommendations on agroecological and other innovative approaches.
- Decision-making is based on “broad consensus”, i.e., that a large majority of members are either in agreement or can “live with” the proposals.
- The scaling-up agroecology initiative hosted by FAO is an important part of the Coalition.
- ▶ Efforts will be made to reach out to more members from all regions.



## Coalition members

At the front and center of the Coalition are its members from different stakeholder groups. By amplifying the work and harnessing the combined experience and expertise of the members, we believe that we can have a greater impact together in advancing food systems transformation through agroecology.

### Steering Committee

An inclusive Steering Committee has been selected from among the members and reports to the full membership. The different regions and stakeholder categories select who will represent them in the Steering Group.

The Steering Committee is composed of four member countries (from different continents: Asia-Pacific, Africa, the Americas, and Europe) and one member per group of actors (farmers organisations; research organisations; indigenous peoples' organisations; UN agencies; philanthropic foundations; civil society organisations) to facilitate the functioning of the Coalition.

### Working groups

In order to operationalise the Coalition and drive forward its work, five initial working groups have been formed, and Coalition members have been asked to join the working group(s) they want to contribute to. These are:

- 1. Research, co-innovation and education**
- 2. Policies**
- 3. Financing and investment**
- 4. Communications**
- 5. Implementation**

The working groups determine their way of functioning and regularly report to the Steering Committee. Additional working groups may be formed as appropriate.

### Secretariat

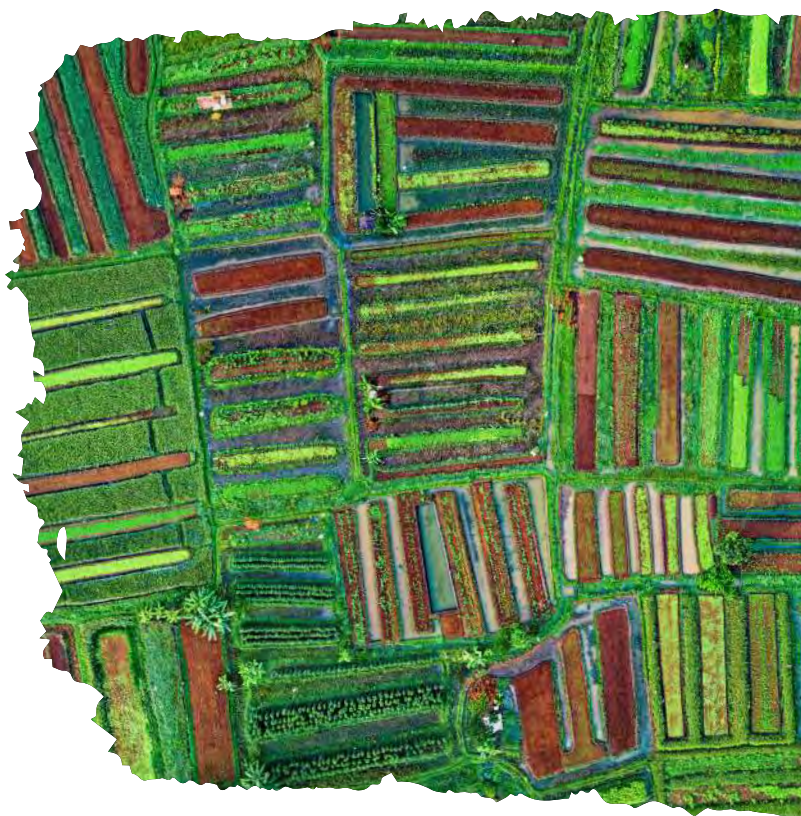
The permanent Secretariat of the Coalition is composed of the following staff and is hosted by Bioversity International, based in Rome, Italy.

**Coordinator:** Oliver Oliveros

**Associate Coordinator:** Amélie Steu

**Communications Officer:** Valentina Pavarotti

**Senior Advisor:** Emile Frison





### Agroecology Coalition

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