

## The future of food systems: recent trends and game changers

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What could be the futures of food systems in the world? To answer this question and provide decision-makers with information, two French institutions, CIRAD and INRAE conducted a four-year foresight study with a hundred or so experts. In 2018, five scenarios of possible changes for food systems, land use and food security, based on proven facts, were published. These scenarios reveal threatening futures, but also show a narrow and feasible path towards food and nutritional security for all in a preserved environment.

Over the last five years, what important events have taken place and changing the possible futures of food systems? Important global game changers have taken place such as Brexit, the Covid-19 pandemic, civil wars and strong tensions in African, the Middle-East, Asia, and between Ukraine and Russia, tensions between major powers, all contributing to restrictions in national and international trade, sharp rise in energy and transport prices, food insecurity, increased inequalities, difficulties in food access and rise of local and national sovereignty concerns. Climatic disruptions have continued and there have been major fires, floods and droughts. Agricultural commodity prices have continued to increase due to higher prices of energies, chemical inputs, mechanisation and long-distance transport. Use of water in agriculture is each time more generating concerns.

However, there has also been positive trends such as the United Nations Food Systems Summit and the acknowledgment of food systems transformation as a driver for sustainable development, in particular through the new agroecology coalition, the approval of Voluntary Guidelines by the UN Committee on World Food Security, One Health initiatives, evolution of policy instruments and adoption of the Farm to Fork Strategy by the European Commission. A new generation is taking over the top positions and hiring 25-year-old persons helps recognizing that food systems are responsible for up to one third of GHG emissions and that they are impacted by emissions. At local levels, there are many initiatives to reduce waste, to consume local products, to request transparency and develop sustainable food systems. Private investments are also shifting towards more sustainable strategies. Digital technologies are spreading rapidly and may help addressing sustainability challenges.

The positive trends in Europe towards a holistic and systemic vision for sustainable food systems must be recognized and strengthened to transcend the on-going paradigm. Europeans must be socially and technologically innovative by adopting common - public & private – norms and standards and critically engage producers, retailers and consumer organizations at local levels.

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