## Contribution to on-line consultation on scope of the HLPE report

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Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on the proposed scope of the HLPE report on ‘Agroecological approaches and other innovations for sustainable agriculture and food systems that enhance food security and nutrition’.

We welcome that the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) has decided to play an important role in advancing this important topic and we see this as an opportunity to further strengthen CFS’s contribution to the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition over the next years until 2025.

I would like to provide the following overall comment:

The analysis of the contribution of agroecological and other innovative approaches to meet future food demand in a sustainable manner should give attention to food in terms of quality in line with the outcomes of the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), and contribute to the understanding of the protective benefits of agroecology and other approaches to increase dietary diversity and therefore generate improvements in nutrition and human health.

The HLPE report, therefore, shall address the following questions, to what extent can agroecological and other innovative approaches, improve production diversification and access to and availability of diverse nutritious foods in agriculture and food systems that enable healthy diets? I would like to underline the importance of healthy sustainable diets to shape the agriculture production and food system.

In a world that expects to welcome another 3 billion people to the middle class in a few decades, producing and eating more sustainably will be key. With reference to SDG 12, the links between production and consumption are important to sustainable food systems in order to have the richest possible food diversity on plates, sustainably sourced from the agroecological supported diversity that underpins agricultural systems. The HLPE report therefore would benefit from also including and addressing the importance of a diversified food production that enables healthy diets for food security, improved nutrition and health outcomes.

A healthy diet helps protect against malnutrition in all its forms, as well as noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), including diabetes, heart disease, stroke and cancer. Unhealthy diets are among the leading causes of risk of disease and premature mortality.

Today’s human diets evolved over time, being influenced by many factors and complex interactions driven by increased urbanization, changes in lifestyle and the evolution of food systems that affect the availability and affordability of healthy foods, influence preferences, beliefs and cultural traditions, as well as geographical, environmental, social and economic factors that all interact in a complex manner and shape individual dietary patterns.

Therefore, promoting a diversified food production enabling balanced and healthy diets, is an essential base to reach the global targets of the World Health Assembly, the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition and the 2030 Agenda. This requires involvement across multiple sectors and stakeholders, including government, and the public and private sector.

Governments have a central role in creating a conducive environment that enables people to make the right food choice for healthy dietary practices possible. Effective actions by policy-makers include creating coherence in national policies and investment plans, including trade, food and agricultural policies, to promote a healthy diet and protect public health. This needs to include increased incentives for producers to diversify the food production in a sustainable environmental friendly way, and increase the production and retail of more diverse fresh products like fruits and vegetables, but also legumes, nuts and others that are part of a healthy diet. At national level countries are developing food based dietary guidelines that should be guiding also the food production side for more alignment with the food that is needed to support healthy dietary choices and improved nutrition for health outcomes.

The HLPE report should very clearly address the qualitative production issues of food commodities and foods under a sustainability and human health lens. In this way, the report could provide a substantial contribution to the understanding of the protective benefits of agroecological and other approaches to increase production diversity and dietary diversity and therefore supporting the access to and availability of food that enables healthy diets sustainably produced, for improved nutrition and health outcomes.

Reference is made to the outcomes of the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) and the related recommendations in its Framework for Action. Reference is also made to the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition and its work programme action area 1 on Sustainable resilient food systems for healthy diets.

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