



**GDP response to the e-Consultation on the draft scope of the study:
“Agroecological approaches and other innovations for sustainable agriculture
and food systems that enhance food security and nutrition”**

Global Dairy Platform commends the CFS and HLPE for undertaking this initiative and welcomes the opportunity to provide comment on the scope of this particular proposal. We fully support the linkage between innovation, sustainable agriculture and food systems that enhance food security and nutrition. This approach is vital when considering a growing world population where already in excess of 800 million people are malnourished

GDP leads the development of a collaborative, unified approach on common dairy industry issues and the nurturing of innovative research to improve our sustainable production efforts and provide science-based information so consumers understand the value of milk and dairy products as naturally nutritious, enjoyable and an essential part of a healthy diet. Our membership of CEOs, executives and researchers from corporations, communication and scientific bodies work in partnership to align and support the dairy industry in the promotion of sustainable dairy nutrition.

We believe that the HLPE must continue to be a source of scientific advice to the CFS and in that view to consider agroecology as a *science* that examines agriculture systems within the framework of ecological and productive systems. We encourage the HLPE to ensure that there is equal emphasis placed on the other innovations and technologies which are to be included in this report and that the HLPE team also look at the many positive ways in which innovation and technology have contributed to the improvement of the agricultural sector. The HLPE team should be instructed to take a holistic approach to the question of sustainable agriculture, recognizing that sustainability is based on 3 pillars, social, economic and environmental.

Agroecology is a component of the dairy sectors sustainable agriculture efforts. We recognize the interdependencies and optimization of soil, air, water, biodiversity, waste, market development, rural economies, working conditions, product safety & quality and animal care in agricultural production.

We encourage the panel to consider all the interdependencies and the balance required to deliver ‘Ecological and productive systems’. We would like to stress it is “AND” not an “either/or” approach, thus the concept requires optimization and discussions of balance between the environment/social/economic aspects with agriculture production systems. Further, there is no one size fits all approach, the concept of agroecology is highly interdependent. Agroecology, just like sustainability, should not be viewed as a destination, but rather as a framework for continuous improvement that allows one to examine economic, environmental and social tradeoffs.

It is a critical that we take every opportunity to sustainably increase agricultural productivity and livelihoods; build the adaptive capacity and resilience of agriculture; and deliver ecosystem services, carbon sequestration, water resource management, and reduced or avoided GHG emissions from



agriculture. In support of these broader principles, we would like to suggest that the HLPE Committee also includes in its inquiry and scope:

- How can the science of agroecology be advanced? How do we encourage interdisciplinary science that examines yields to meet global demand and optimized for the environmental conditions relative to the land? Already there is a decrease in the global world-wide investment in agricultural research, there is a need to provide the right framing to advance funding of research in this space.
- Recognize that with more than 570 million farms in the world, each farm is unique within the diverse environmental systems in which it participates. Therefore, we would like to suggest the panel considers the many tools that already exist that take an outcome based approach rather than a focus on specific processes/practices. The researchers should evaluate optimization and outcome based methodologies. Optimization refers to agriculture's productivity in relation to environmental impacts and capacity constraints.
- Quantification of progress is essential as detailed in the scoping document. It is recommended that the HLPE do not generate new measurement models, but look to what is already in existence and what is being achieved. In the dairy sector, the Dairy Sustainability Framework (DSF) is a private sector initiative aimed at aligning and connecting the global dairy sector on continuously improving sustainability performance and is investing heavily in quantifying progress at an aggregate global level. This DSF model working on a pre-competitive and collaborative basis is one that already has some 31% of the global dairy sector reporting through the frameworks umbrella.
- Traditionally the barriers to adoption of new innovations are at the implementation phase. There is a considerable quantity of existing knowledge and innovation that support the aspirational outcomes of this study, though they are not being implemented. This report should explore these barriers and identify ways and means of increasing the uptake of new and existing innovations.
- With the dairy sector alone being responsible for 240 million full time jobs that support the livelihoods of 1 billion people, we encourage the HLPE to consider the impacts that recommendations may have on livelihoods up and downstream from the farm as well as at a farm level.

In conclusion, we applaud the panel tackling this ambitious topic. This is a grand challenge and, as such, everyone (e.g., industry, academics, not-for-profits, government, etc.) should be welcome at the table to help achieve common goals. We encourage the actions and decisions of the panel be made within the context of total food systems. We encourage the panel to create an environment where people from many disciplines can participate and collaborate.