



# CALL TO ACTION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEM

FRONTIERS  
OF CHANGE

5-7  
NOVEMBER  
2021





**F**ood systems need urgent and significant transformation to become sustainable.

The global food system is responsible for about one-third of global human-caused greenhouse gas emissions, with the majority of those emissions attributed to agriculture and land use (Crippa et al. 2001). The way the food system operates today contributes to biodiversity loss and environmental degradation, and it is also one of the world's most vulnerable sectors to extreme weather, storms and other climate shocks. At the same time the food sector is not delivering what we need to feed a growing population – malnutrition affects an increasing number of people with about 9.9% of the global population impacted in 2020. That is an increase from 8.4% in 2019, where the percentage remained virtually unchanged during the period 2014 –2019 (FAO 2021).

Companies in the food sector, such as Oatly, are committing to ambitious goals to take action on climate change, including focusing on sustainability within their supply chains, addressing land use change and managing waste. But we need support from governments to enable quicker action in the food sector.

Unfortunately, the sector is significantly under-represented on the COP 26 agenda and in global efforts to combat climate change when it should be considered an essential climate driver and part of the climate solution. For the health of people and the planet, we must elevate the cultivation, production and consumption of food in global climate action efforts.



At COP 26, we are asking policy makers to make food a core part of their national climate plans and to take six critical actions to put the food sector on top of the climate agenda:

1. Advance scientific research, education and awareness on the climate impacts of food, and sustainable food system solutions, such as plant-rich diets.
2. Set policies that promote the shift to sustainable food systems, and remove policy barriers and market distortions that prevent a level playing field for more low-carbon food products, such as outdated dietary guidelines, [imbalanced trade rules], and subsidies to high polluting sectors.
3. Invest in farmers and entrepreneurs, by providing financial and technical support for sustainable farming practices that transition the agricultural system to a model that creates income opportunities, builds resilience to climate and weather, improves soil health and reduces net greenhouse gas emissions across the sector.
4. Expand equitable access to healthy, sustainable foods, such as plant-based options, including through public programmes for school lunch and food assistance.
5. Empower consumers to make sustainable food choices by promoting transparency of the climate, health and environmental impacts associated with food products, for example by mandating carbon footprint declarations for products.
6. Prevent food loss and waste by investing in infrastructure and innovation to solve this missed opportunity. The World Wildlife Fund estimates one-third of all the food produced in the world goes to waste and that about 6% to 8% of human-caused greenhouse gas emissions could be reduced just by stopping food waste.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> WWF (World Wildlife Fund) . 2021. Fight climate change by preventing food waste. Accessed 22 October 2021. <https://www.worldwildlife.org/stories/fight-climate-change-by-preventing-food-waste>

## References

- Crippa et al. 2021. Food systems are responsible for a third of global anthropogenic GHG emissions. *Nature Food* 2: 198–209, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s43016-021-00225-9>
- FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations). 2021. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI), 2021. Accessed 22 October 2021. <https://www.fao.org/3/cb4474en/online/cb4474en.html>





#GLFClimate

## GLOBAL LANDSCAPES FORUM

The Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) is the world's largest knowledge-led platform on integrated land use, dedicated to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Climate Agreement. The Forum takes a holistic approach to create sustainable landscapes that are productive, prosperous, equitable and resilient and considers five cohesive themes of food and livelihoods, landscape restoration, rights, finance and measuring progress. It is led by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), in collaboration with its co-founders UNEP and the World Bank and Charter Members.

**Charter Members:** CIAT, CIFOR, CIRAD, Climate Focus, Conservation International, Crop Trust, Ecoagriculture Partners, The European Forest Institute, Evergreen Agriculture, FSC, GEF, GIZ, ICIMOD, IFOAM - Organics International, The International Livestock Research Institute, INBAR, IPMG, IUFRO, Rainforest Alliance, Rare, Rights and Resources Initiative, SAN, TMG-Think Tank for Sustainability, UNEP, Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation part of Wageningen Research, World Farmer Organization, World Agroforestry, World Bank Group, World Resources Institute, WWF International, Youth in Landscapes Initiative (YIL)

### Funding partners



THE GOVERNMENT  
OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG

