

GLOBAL
ALLIANCE
FOR THE
FUTURE
OF FOOD

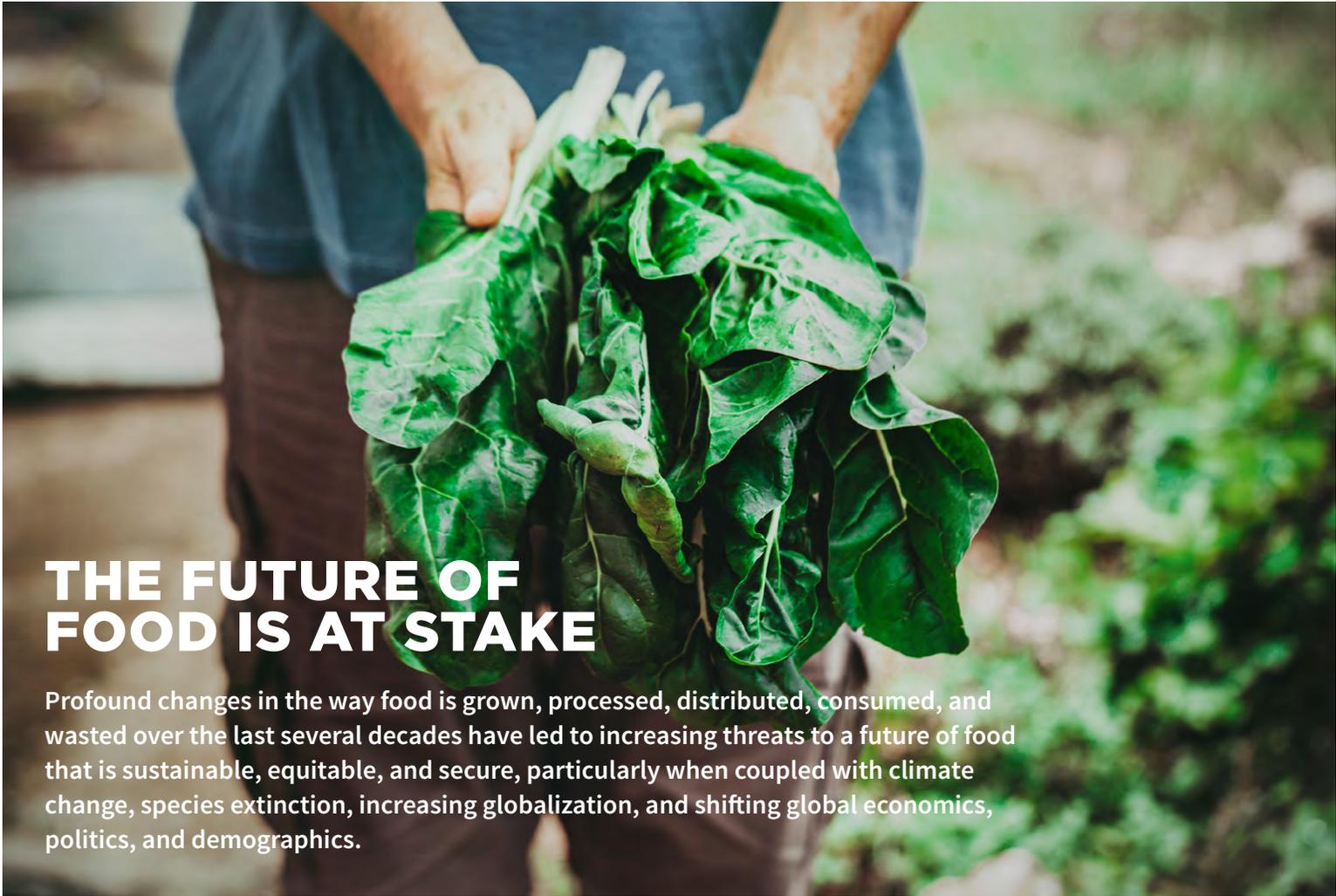
ACTIONABLE FRAMEWORKS FOR FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR THE FUTURE OF FOOD

2020

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THE FUTURE OF FOOD IS AT STAKE

Profound changes in the way food is grown, processed, distributed, consumed, and wasted over the last several decades have led to increasing threats to a future of food that is sustainable, equitable, and secure, particularly when coupled with climate change, species extinction, increasing globalization, and shifting global economics, politics, and demographics.

The predominant industrial food system is too dependent on fossil fuels and non-renewable inputs that result in pollution and environmental damage. It is also at the root of eroding human health, social cohesion, rural livelihoods, and important social, cultural, and spiritual traditions. Furthermore, it supports an economic system that results in interconnected human and planetary liabilities due to hidden costs, global trade vulnerabilities, declining rural economies, and increased inequality. These impacts are experienced unequally across the globe, with the burden placed on vulnerable and marginalized populations.

The future of food is at stake and the status quo is jeopardizing the efforts of many governments, businesses, farmers, civil society organizations, foundations, and others to promote food access, food security, food equity, human health, and a sustainable environment. Equally, continued reliance on single-focused interventions — increased yields, adequate nutrition, environmental sustainability — at the expense of other important issues like equity and fairness are insufficient and are bound to have unintended consequences.

Transformative change is needed and food systems reform requires that we craft new and better solutions at all scales through a systems-level approach and deep collaboration between farmers and food systems workers, Indigenous Peoples, government and policy-makers, philanthropy, researchers, grassroots movements, and the private sector.

WHAT ARE FRAMEWORKS FOR TRANSFORMATION?



“Frameworks for Transformation” create new ways of thinking about how to get to a better system. By changing the framework, we change the paradigm, we change the perceptions, and we change the actions and behaviors that flow from the framework.

Frameworks for Transformation help us understand, analyze, and shift systems – whether they are energy systems, political systems, social systems, or food systems – through their ability to highlight the short-comings or deficiencies of the current system and point to changes needed to bring about a more desirable future based on a set of values, knowledge, principles, and action. They set the agenda for inquiry; provide the focus of learning; are the container for knowledge; make theory possible; and, guide action.

Frameworks for Transformation play a key role in moving us from the status quo toward positive visions for the future. At the Global Alliance, we have created and applied these Frameworks for Transformation to guide and inform our activities, as individual foundations and as a collective. They are serving to unearth informative criticisms of the old paradigm, create visions for a new paradigm, identify pathways for transformation, and more. We are learning how beneficial Frameworks for Transformation are to systems-change initiatives, and we see the power of supporting the Global Alliance, our members, and like-minded organizations and individuals to develop deep expertise and practical experience through their development and implementation.

Faced with complex, global challenges and a growing demand for change, we know that the path forward can be uncertain and unpredictable: food systems transformation needs actionable frameworks to help us navigate this complexity and uncertainty.

This resource presents four *Actionable Frameworks for Food Systems Transformation* which can be used right away across sectors and issues, the global and local, the macro and the micro.

FRAMEWORK #1

GLOBAL ALLIANCE PRINCIPLES

Principles provide guidance about how to think or behave toward some desired result based on norms, values, beliefs, experience, and knowledge. A high-quality principle provides guidance about what to do, is useful for informing decisions and actions, provides inspiration as an expression of values, is relevant to diverse contexts and situations, and can be evaluated.

The Global Alliance's vision and its actions are guided by a set of shared principles. These principles shape our vision, express values, and encompass the change we want to make. When taken together, these principles help us to see food systems in necessary and powerful new ways and to make choices about how to realize a more positive future of food.

The Global Alliance principles are:

RENEWABILITY

Address the integrity of natural and social resources that are the foundation of a healthy planet and future generations in the face of changing global and local demands

RESILIENCE

Support regenerative, durable, and economically adaptive systems in the face of a changing planet

EQUITY

Promote sustainable livelihoods and access to nutritious and just food systems for all

DIVERSITY

Value our rich and diverse agricultural, ecological, and cultural heritage

HEALTHFULNESS

Advance the health and well-being of people, animals, the environment, and the societies that depend on all three

INCLUSION

Ensure meaningful and authentic engagement of diverse people and organizations in transparent deliberations, shared power, democratic decisions, and collective actions affecting food systems for the public good

INTERCONNECTEDNESS

Understand the implications of the interdependence of food, people, and the planet in a transition to more sustainable food systems

Principles are an effective and powerful framework to make more informed, comprehensive, and principled decisions. They provide actionable direction with broad application and multiple entry points to interpret within and adapt to specific contexts, as a way to approach change so we avoid siloed approaches, unintended consequences, and limited, narrow, short-term solutions. We have choices about how we face, engage, and deal with change. Principles inform and guide those choices. They do so by telling us how to act.

You can find out more about the Global Alliance and its principles as a Framework for Transformation [here](#).



PRINCIPLES CASE STUDY **SWIFT FOUNDATION**

Globally, the capital needs of small farmers and food system entrepreneurs are unmet. While this field is inherently complex and geographically and location-specific, it is clear that current corporate financing solutions and analysis are not aligned with transformational food systems work but often perpetuate the detrimental forces of industrial agriculture.

For the Swift Foundation, in addition to grant-making, advocacy, and leadership, this has meant holding their endowment accountable to their mission, which includes supporting the knowledge systems, agroecological practices, and biocultural dynamics that shape agriculture, with special attention to Indigenous food sovereignty and the defense of territorial rights to land, water, seeds, and food producing habitats.

The foundation aligns with the Global Alliance principles of renewability, resilience, equity, diversity, healthfulness, inclusion, and interconnectedness – as principles that are embodied in the practice of agroecology – and strives to live up to these principles in practice through both their grant and investment portfolios. In this way, they are part of a wide effort to catalyze a broader reframing of the food systems impact investing conversation.

Other Global Alliance member foundations, such as the Fondation Daniel et Nina Carasso and the Agropolis Foundation, are also adopting the Global Alliance principles as a decision-making tool in their investing and a guide to their grant-making.

FRAMEWORK #2

BLUE MARBLE EVALUATION

Global challenges that face current food systems – such as climate change, food insecurity, migration, non-communicable diseases, inequality, and the erosion of ecological and cultural diversity – operate beyond borders and silos of all kinds. Global systems change initiatives working to address these challenges are beginning to acknowledge and address the complex, dynamic, and interconnected world system.

Evaluation based on tracking indicators against predetermined project bounded goals and/or assessing impacts against narrowly defined criteria is far from being able to support the kind of transformations currently needed to face global challenges. The deficiencies of this kind of narrow and silo-ed evaluation is a block rather than an enabler for the transformations we urgently need.

Blue Marble Evaluation (BME) is an innovative, leading-edge evaluation approach for global systems transformation. Blue Marble Evaluation encourages users to embrace and act on a “whole-Earth” perspective, looking beyond nation-state lines and across sector and issue silos to connect the global and local, the human and ecological, the macro and the micro, through evaluative thinking and methods. As such, the Blue Marble perspective is both an approach to evaluation and a way of thinking about all aspects of systems change initiatives and interventions, at all levels at which they occur from local to global.

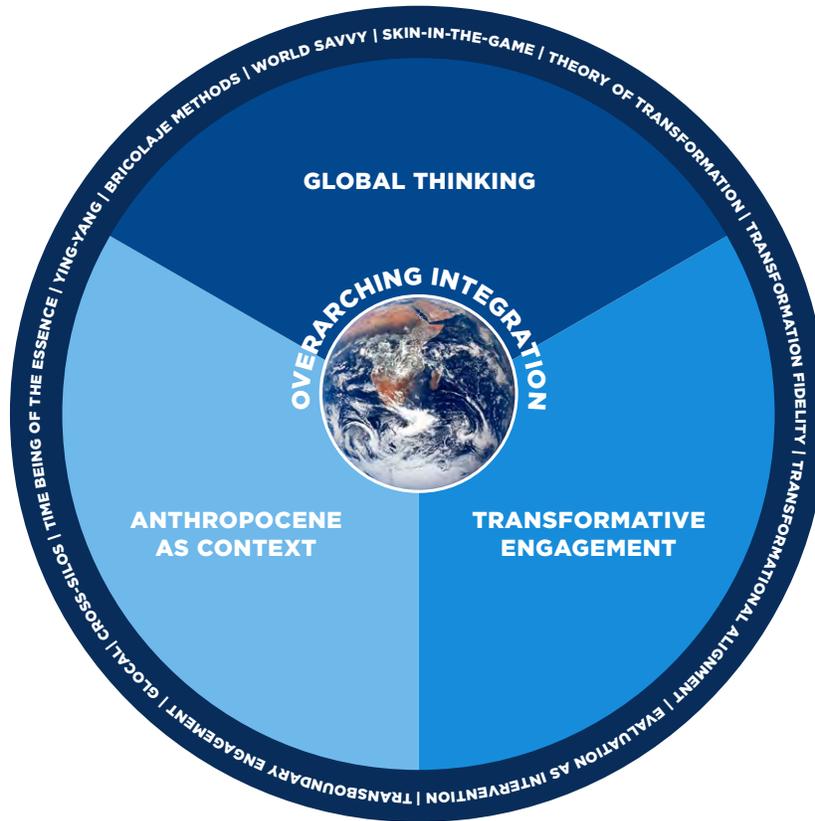
While the focus of BME tends to be placed on Blue Marble Evaluation, the Blue Marble principles can guide other situational analysis, design of interventions, and work to bring about systems transformation, as well as evaluation of those efforts.

Blue Marble Evaluation is developed through a set of principles. There are two “sets” of Blue Marble Principles: “overarching” principles and “operating” principles. Overarching principles provide big picture, general guidance; operating principles provide more specific guidance.

Blue Marble is also a growing, global network of practitioners working to ensure that evaluators, along with funders, implementers, innovators, researchers, and other agents of change, are prepared to engage with and evaluate global efforts towards transformative change.

You can find out more about Blue Marble Evaluation as a Framework for Transformation at: www.bluemarbleeval.org

BLUE MARBLE EVALUATION PRINCIPLES



OPERATING PRINCIPLES

<p>TRANSBOUNDARY ENGAGEMENT</p> <p>Act at a global scale.</p>	<p>GLOCAL</p> <p>Integrate interconnections across levels.</p>	<p>CROSS-SILOS</p> <p>Engage across sectors and issues.</p>	<p>TIME BEING OF THE ESSENCE</p> <p>Act with a sense of urgency short-term and support resilient sustainability for the long-term.</p>
<p>YING-YANG</p> <p>Harmonize conceptual opposites.</p>	<p>BRICOLAJE METHODS</p> <p>Conduct utilization-focused evaluations incorporating Blue Marble Principles to match methods to the evaluation situation.</p>	<p>WORLD SAVVY</p> <p>Engage in ongoing learning relevant to Blue Marble Principles and practices.</p>	<p>SKIN-IN-THE-GAME</p> <p>Acknowledge and act on your stake in how the Anthropocene unfolds.</p>
<p>THEORY OF TRANSFORMATION</p> <p>Design and evaluate transformation based on an evidence-supported Theory of Transformation.</p>	<p>TRANSFORMATION FIDELITY</p> <p>Ensure that what is called transformation constitutes transformation.</p>	<p>TRANSFORMATIONAL ALIGNMENT</p> <p>Transform evaluation to evaluate transformation.</p>	<p>EVALUATION AS INTERVENTION</p> <p>Integrate and network evaluations to inform and energize transformation.</p>

OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

<p>OVERARCHING INTEGRATION</p> <p>Integrate the Blue Marble Principles in the design, engagement with, and evaluation of systems change and transformation initiatives.</p>	<p>GLOBAL THINKING</p> <p>Apply whole Earth, big picture thinking to all aspects of systems change.</p>	<p>ANTHROPOCENE AS CONTEXT</p> <p>Know and face the realities of the Anthropocene - and act accordingly.</p>	<p>TRANSFORMATIVE ENGAGEMENT</p> <p>Engage consistent with the magnitude, direction and speed of transformations needed and envisioned.</p>
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BLUE MARBLE EVALUATION CASE STUDY **McKNIGHT FOUNDATION'S CCRP PROGRAM**

McKnight Foundation's Collaborative Crop Research Program (CCRP) funds 85 agriculture research projects in the Andes and Africa. CCRP's work has an Agroecological Intensification (AEI) focus based on using ecological principles to sustainably cultivate land. The emphasis is on principles, because the actual practices will vary according to social and ecological contexts.

AEI is part of a broader global movement on agroecology. Agroecology represents a paradigm shift from "conventional" or industrial agriculture, which emphasizes the use of external inputs, hybrid varieties, mechanization, irrigation, and commodity exports in order to maximize yield and income. It can also represent a departure from "traditional" agriculture, which often relies on high levels of labor and large extensions of land, both of which are increasingly scarce as population and migration increase. An agroecological vision of the future includes equitable local food systems that are anchored in diverse and nutritious crops.

The CCRP is committed to contributing to the larger agroecology movement and its vision of systems transformation. To do this, evaluation is used to translate findings and outcomes between micro, meso, and macro levels to better understand the program's past and current contribution to systems transformation, which, in turn, informs future strategy and action.

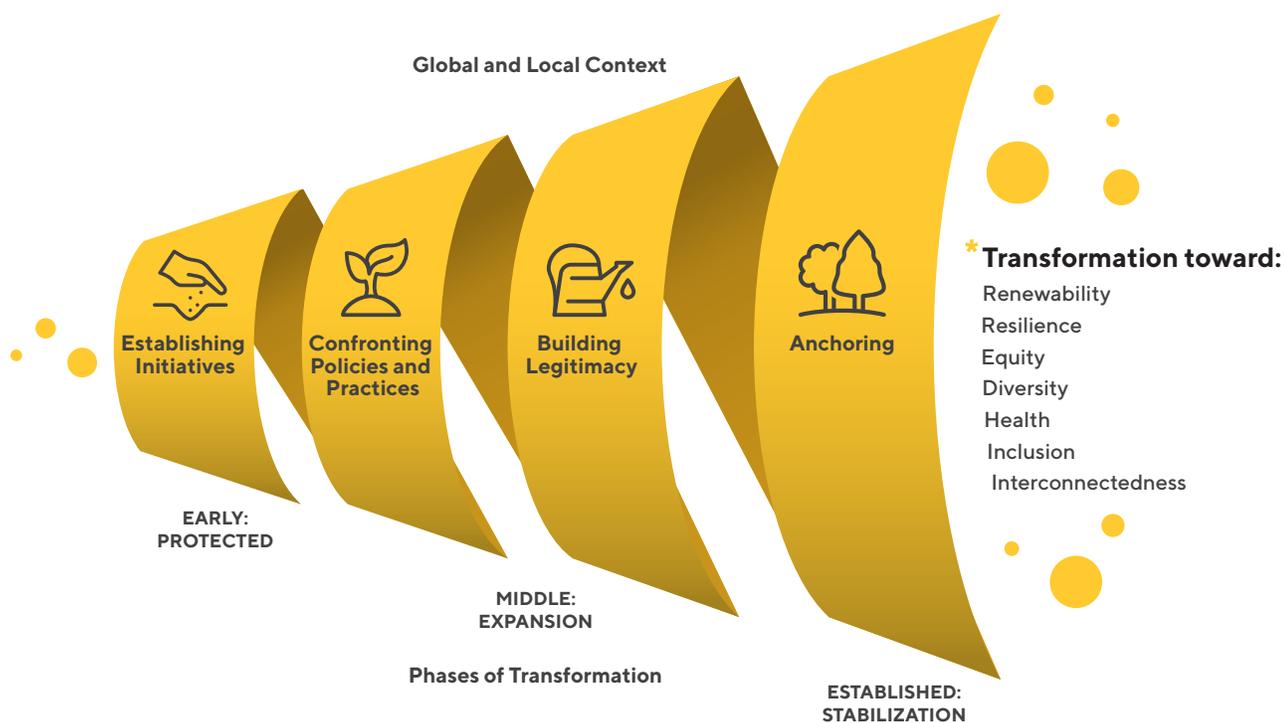
To move beyond the threats that the Anthropocene presents to our planet, the agriculture system at a global level needs to change. There is much that can be learned and leveraged at the local level, and a Blue Marble Evaluation stance helps to envision new ways that growers and consumers, as well as all the actors in between, can participate in a sustainable and productive agriculture system.

FRAMEWORK #3

BEACONS OF HOPE

The Beacons of Hope initiative seeks to better understand sustainable food systems transformations around the globe. Through a research report and dedicated website, it showcases 21 initiatives from across the world that are working in diverse ways to achieve sustainable, equitable, and secure food systems. Each contributes inspiring solutions to urgent global issues such as the climate emergency, migration, urbanization, and the need for healthier and more sustainable diets.

The Beacons of Hope initiative also provides policymakers, funders, businesses, and researchers with a comprehensive Food Systems Transformation Toolkit built on the Global Alliance's principles of renewability, resilience, equity, diversity, health, inclusion and interconnectedness as a guide for collective action.



The Toolkit aims to amplify the power and potential of food systems transformations and contribute to the global discussion about sustainability transitions more broadly. The Framework and supporting Discussion Guide build on the key interventions, lessons learned, and patterns identified across the 21 Beacons of Hope. The Discussion Guide provides key questions to facilitate conversation, reflection, and action.

You can find out more about Beacons of Hope as a Framework for Transformation at: www.foodsystemstransformations.org/



BEACONS OF HOPE CASE STUDY ZERO BUDGET NATURAL FARMING

The Climate Resilient Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) approach, led by the Government of Andhra Pradesh's Department of Agriculture, is on target to engage 1 million farmers by 2019–2020 to increase yields and promote resilience through agroecological processes. It is a broad state policy with multiple objectives including enhancing farmers' welfare, consumer welfare, and the conservation of the environment. The work is done through farmer-to-farmer mentoring, short tutorials and films, and modern communication methods.

ZBNF pioneered by an Indian agriculturist and Padma Shri awardee, Dr. Subhash Palekar, is built on four core principles: 1) BEEJAMRUTHAM: Microbial seed coating through cow urine and dung-based formulation; 2) JEEVAMRUTHAM: Enhance soil microbiome through an "inoculum" of fermented cow dung, cow urine, and other local ingredients; 3) ACHHADANA (cover crops and mulching): Ground to be kept covered with crops and crop residues; and 4) WAAPHASA: Fast build-up of soil humus through ZBNF leading to soil aeration, soil structure, and water harnessing. These principles help farmers by reducing costs, increasing yields, reducing risks, reducing water required, enhancing soil fertility, promoting biodiversity, providing higher pricing, and enhancing resilience to climate change. This approach features: farmer-to-farmer dissemination of training and support; an agriculture ministry focused on building the capacity of farmers; community-based leadership and resource people, making ZBNF inputs available; building farmer's institutions, especially women's organizations; a focus on the very poor; and, a strong information and communications technology (ICT) background.

Vijay Kumar Thallam, advisor to the Government of Andhra Pradesh, shares that it is extremely important to take unprecedented measures to tackle global warming and climate change. ZBNF is "smart" agriculture where farmers not only enjoy the direct economic benefits but also get resilient crops, improved health due to safe agriculture practices, and consumption of chemical-free food, increased biodiversity, soil and water security, along with ecosystem regeneration.

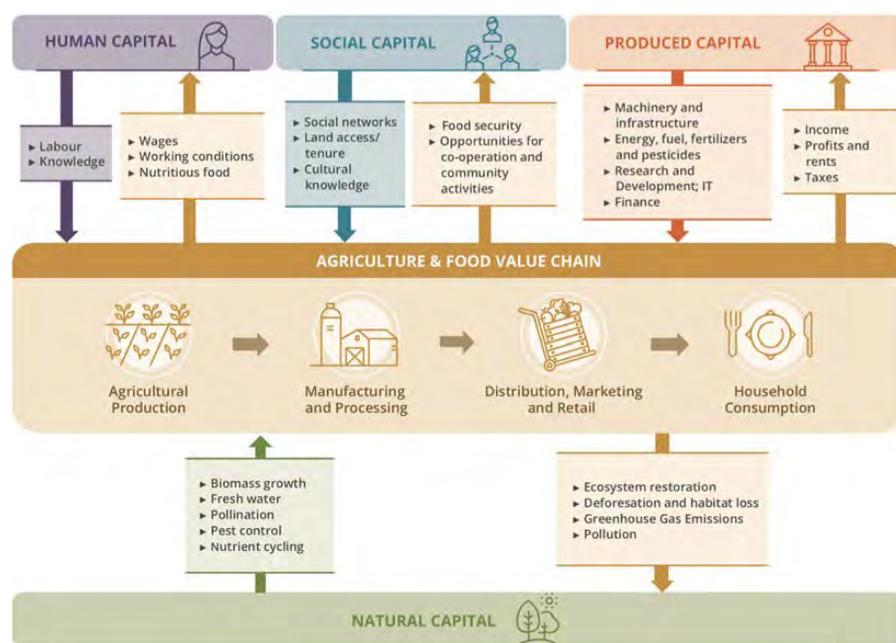


FRAMEWORK #4

TEEBAGRIFOOD

The UN Environment TEEBAgriFood initiative has developed a comprehensive evaluation framework to capture externalities and address the question: “What should we value, and why?” The initiative looks at the positive externalities of food systems, such as regenerated land and enhanced biodiversity, improved local livelihoods, and the availability of healthy food. Negative externalities captured range from degraded landscapes, desertification, and the collapse of insect populations to poverty and diet-related chronic disease. Conventional economic assessments fail to capture this total picture of the food system.

TEEBAgriFood considers environmental, social, cultural, and health-related externalities that are not typically addressed by conventional economics. For example, studies on corn systems in Mexico, Malawi, and the USA revealed the huge economic, social, and cultural value smallholders provide by managing genetic diversity, as well as the ecological and health impacts of conventional GM corn value chains compared to organic corn value chains.



The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) (2018). TEEB for Agriculture & Food: Scientific and Economic Foundations. Geneva: UN Environment.

FRAMEWORK #4: TEEBAGRIFOOD

TEEBAgriFood can be applied at regional, national, and local contexts and across sectors. It can be applied by businesses to support decision-making and transparency, by policy-makers to evaluate national and international policies, by governments to inform national accounting, by farmers to assess agricultural practices, and by academics to understand research priorities, for example, the Malawi study found that disproportionate funding goes into maize research programs at the expense of support for dryland cereals, and more.

The initiative's study of South America's La Plata basin found that 250 billion USD of annual agricultural production is at risk because of the impact of deforestation in the Amazonian rainforests on the water cycle. In the same region, palm oil production caused 43 billion USD of natural capital losses in 2013 – over 80 per cent of the commodity's 50 billion USD total market value.

By providing a means of holistically analysing and evaluating food systems, TEEBAgriFood equips decision-makers across sectors to identify risks, understand trade-offs, and make more informed policy and strategic choices.

You can find out more about TEEBAgriFood as a Framework for Transformation at: www.teebweb.org/agrifood/



TEEBAGRIFOOD CASE STUDY

REGENERATIVE LIVESTOCK GRAZING SYSTEMS

The Global Alliance is commissioning a research team led by Kathleen Merrigan at Arizona State University (ASU) to undertake a TEEBAgriFood application of regenerative livestock systems in the USA. The strategic objective of the study is to assess evidence related to the potential for agroecological transitions that can contribute to the post 2020 global policy priorities, including the SDGs, Climate Agreement, and Convention on Biological Diversity.

Building on the first generation of TEEBAgriFood studies, this research will focus on regenerative livestock grazing systems in the USA, with possible expansion to the EU and Brazil. The US, Brazil, and European Union are the largest livestock producing countries globally. Understanding how production methods can minimize negative impacts and optimize positive benefits are central priorities for the global policy agenda, related to climate, biodiversity, and health and well-being broadly. This proof of concept study will compare regenerative and conventional livestock systems in the USA.

The TEEBAgriFood evaluation framework will be used to examine all externalities, positive and negative, across the four capitals (human, social, built, and economic). Although impacts and externalities across the four capitals identified in the TEEBAgriFood Evaluation Framework will be analyzed, a significant focus of the study will be on understanding on-farm soil health dynamics and phytonutrient parameters in each of the comparative systems, and fleshing out the appropriate metrics and methodologies.



CONCLUSIONS



Ensuring the sustainability, security and equity of our food systems is one of the most defining issues of our time.

We believe that genuine food systems transformation takes place when diverse actions, networks, and individuals intersect across sector and issue silos, the global and local, the macro and the micro. These intersections facilitate convergence around shared visions and values and, ultimately, build critical mass and momentum behind tipping points that lead to healthy, equitable, renewable, resilient, inclusive, and culturally diverse food systems that dynamically endure over time.

It is our hope that these *Actionable Frameworks for Transformation* aid our members, other foundations, and the broader community of system actors committed to a radical change agenda in effectively maintaining a systems perspective, putting true transformation at the center, and elevating the importance of food systems as a powerful lever for change.

ABOUT THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR THE FUTURE OF FOOD



The Global Alliance for the Future of Food is a strategic alliance of philanthropic foundations working together and with others to transform global food systems now and for future generations. We believe in the urgency of transforming global food systems, and in the power of working together and with others to effect positive change. Food systems reform requires new and better solutions at all scales through a systems-level approach and deep collaboration among philanthropy, researchers, grassroots movements, the private sector, farmers and food systems workers, Indigenous Peoples, government, and policymakers.

