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SA4 - Sustainability

Ensuring sustainable food production and distribution to accommodate the increasing world population

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RESEARCH
REPORT



Forum: Sustainability Committee (GA4)

Issue: Ensuring sustainable food production and distribution to accommodate the increasing world population

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Introduction

Currently, the world is confronted with global food security and nutrition issues. Despite the fact that current food production levels are sufficient to feed everyone on the earth, recent estimates indicate that roughly 870 million people are undernourished, with 825 million of them living in developing nations. This statistic corresponds to 12.5 percent of the world population, or one in every eight individuals, proportions that, while declining in recent years, remain unacceptably high.

According to the Food and Agriculture Association (FAO), the world's population will reach 9.1 billion by 2050, up 34% from the present. Developing countries will account for nearly all of this population growth. Urbanization will intensify, with around 70% of the world's population living in cities (compared to 49 percent today). The amount of income will be several times higher than it is now. Food production (net of food used for biofuels) must grow by 70% to feed this bigger, more urban, and wealthier population. The United Nations' sustainable development goals include the eradication of hunger. To feed 10 billion persons in 2050, the world must get the trade-offs right between sustainability, food security, food safety, and making better use of food already produced.

Definition of Key Terms

Sustainable: Refers to the ability of something to maintain or "sustain" itself over time.

Rural: Located in, connected to, or resembling the countryside rather than the city.

Agriculture: The science or practice of farming, which includes soil cultivation for agricultural production and animal rearing for food, wool, and other goods.

Food Security: The condition of having consistent and dependable access to a sufficient supply of inexpensive, healthy food.

Compost: Organic matter that has decomposed and is utilized as a fertilizer for plants.

Agro-Ecology: the application of ecological concepts and principles in farming.

General Overview

Global efforts, such as the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals and the 'Zero Hunger challenge established at Rio+20 in 2012, are aimed at ensuring nutritional security and reducing the number of people who face famine. However, in order to feed the whole world, it is now widely

acknowledged that the world cannot continue to produce food with the same procedures that have been used in the past.

Scientific data has shown that the world's way of food production has a harmful impact on the environment. As a result, the notions of sustainable food systems, which may offer nutritional security without jeopardizing the long-term health of ecosystems and the cultures and communities that produce our food, are reflected within the UN's global programs.

The population of emerging nations is currently more rural than urban (3.1 billion people or 55 percent of the population). The number of individuals relocating from rural to urban regions, on the other hand, is expected to rise in the future. According to some estimates, the overall rural population will peak between 2020 and 2025, after which it will begin to drop as the developing world's urban population overtakes its rural population (IFAD, 2010). As the number of people working and living off the land declines, consumption patterns associated with urban, industrialized lives grow, this shift in living patterns will have significant ramifications for future food supply and demand.

The global food system makes a significant contribution to climate changing greenhouse gas emissions with all stages in the supply chain, from agricultural production through processing, distribution, retailing, home food preparation and waste, playing a part. It also gives rise to other major environmental impacts, including biodiversity loss and water extraction and pollution. Policy makers are increasingly aware of the need to address these concerns, but at the same time they are faced with a growing burden of food security and nutrition-related problems, and tasked with ensuring that there is enough food to meet the needs of a growing global population. In short, more people need to be fed better, with less environmental impact.

Agriculture must fulfill the demands of current and future generations while maintaining profitability, environmental health, and social and economic equality in order to be sustainable. Sustainable Farming Association (SFA) contributes to all four pillars of food security – availability, access, utilization, and stability – as well as all four dimensions of sustainability (environmental, social, and economic). SFA is promoted by the Food and Agriculture Association (FAO) in order to assist nations throughout the world in achieving Zero Hunger and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

Finland: Finland, ahead of Ireland and the Netherlands, was declared the top country for food security in 2020.

United States: The industrial food system in the United States produces a lot of food at a low cost, but most of it is unhealthy, and the system is not sustainable. Although the majority of food in the United States is consumed through this industrial system, healthier and more sustainable alternatives are becoming more available.

France: With clear aims and strong, complete policy responses, particularly on food loss and waste, nutrition, and health, France is deservedly regarded as one of the world's leaders in sustainable food and farming.

China: China has always aspired to be self-sufficient in terms of food production. The government published a white paper in 1996 that set a goal of 95 percent self-sufficiency for cereals like as rice, wheat, and corn. China's domestic output has mostly increased in response to the country's rising demand.

Treaties and Events

2012: RIO+20 - Zero Hunger Challenge

The UN Secretary-General's Zero Hunger Challenge calls on all nations to work toward a future in which everyone has access to adequate nutrition and resilient food systems.

015 : United Nations Sustainable Development Summit : Goal 2

The United Nations Summit for the implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, a high-level plenary assembly of the United Nations General Assembly, took place in New York from September 25 to 27, 2015. By 2030, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 aspires to eliminate hunger and malnutrition in all forms. 2016 -2025 : United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition

Resolution 70/259 of the United Nations General Assembly calls on the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization to lead the implementation of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016–2025), in collaboration with the World Food Programme, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and the United Nations Children's Fund, and to identify and develop a work program based on the Rome Declaration and its Framework for Action.

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

The latest National Food Security Act in India will enable 800 million people to have access to food that is either publicly supported or subsidized. The government will distribute coarse grains such as millet, sorghum, and maize, in addition to the core staples of rice and wheat, thanks to the involvement of partners M.S. Swaminathan Foundation and Bioversity International. Coarse grains are nutrient-dense, and they're also resistant to climate-related pressures like drought and flooding.

Colombian farmers who used to have consistent rainfall are increasingly being harmed by catastrophic floods and droughts, which wiped away the cash and food crops they rely on. The International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) and national partners in both nations organized a knowledge exchange with farmers in Senegal to assist them adapt to these tough circumstances.

Possible Solutions

Managing Food Waste:

Experts have suggested that a worldwide campaign to eliminate food waste be initiated, since it may be the single most critical issue that can be solved relatively easily. One option is to improve the efficiency of the food chain by implementing waste reduction strategies at all stages, from farm loss to transportation, processing, retail, and consumer levels. To help with this, good governance is required, which will contribute to other policy priorities such as minimizing the demand for more landfill space, hence lowering greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Rethinking land management and agricultural techniques:

Achieving high levels in food security requires new ways of working with the land to ensure a continuous supply of resources, whilst mitigating the effects of pollution, biodiversity loss, and climate change.

Agro-Ecology:

One solution to global food security is the adoption of ‘agro-ecological’ farming practices, which can improve yields and livelihoods whilst minimizing cost and environmental impacts. These methods, which increase organic nutrient inputs, build soil organic matter, increase soil moisture retention, and reduce the need for synthetic fertilizers, have proven successful in developing countries. Experts in the field describe them as “one of the most robust pathways towards designing biodiverse, productive, and resilient agroecosystems available today”

Mitigating Climate Change:

Farmers in underdeveloped nations, notably in Sub-Saharan Africa, are the most likely to be affected by climate change, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Providing funding for agricultural adaptation initiatives that include techniques that will assist pastoralists and smallholders in adjusting to more extreme weather events, higher temperatures, and more livestock and crop disease is one strategy to lessen the consequences of climate change.

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