



#FOODSYSTEMS4PEOPLE

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WEBINAR

PRESS RELEASE

«WHO IS GOVERNING OUR FOOD SYSTEMS?»

ONLINE EVENT - FEBRUARY 9TH 2022 (14:30-16:30 CET)

On February 9th, European members of the Peoples' Autonomous Response to the UNFSS are organising a webinar to explore with Members of the EU Parliament (and the Commission?) how global public food governance is being reconfigured and the main threats compromising its democratic foundations.

It is increasingly recognised that the current food system is not delivering for people and the planet. In 2020, between 720 and 811 million people in the world have faced hunger; which is 160 million more than in 2019. The COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and unsustainable agriculture & food systems have been critical factors.

The EU recognised that food systems are at once part of the problem and the solution for healthy, sustainable and just societies and the planet [1]. But transforming food systems is not an easy task as changing agricultural practices is not sufficient. All the food system –from the fields to the plates– and the governance of it must evolve also compromised. Nevertheless, the pathway of change has raised many questions and disputes regarding how to organise governance and decision-making in ways that are inclusive, democratic, just and lead to sustainable solutions.

Food governance has become a contested political arena since the globalisation of food systems [2]. Interests and power relations of different actors have converged and activated unequal resources to exert their influence in decision-making. International efforts by an ensemble of state and social actors have been concerted for building public regulatory and institutional capacity to promote the right to adequate food and nutrition[3].

The vision of a public global food governance has been effectively addressed via a system of multilateral coordination for democratic control. Nevertheless, recent initiatives such as the UN Food Systems Summit, risk fragmenting the public sphere that sets the rules, norms and decisions concerning food and agriculture-related policies to make room to private interest which relies on technological fixes, financialisation, public-private partnerships and trade liberalisation, regardless of their consequences for the environment and human wellbeing⁴.

The primacy and legitimacy of the European public sphere to defend what is deemed to be most beneficial for the planet and the people who inhabit it is therefore confronted by an undue interference of corporations in the international and regional policy spaces. The EU's role to take global leadership in strengthening global food governance upon democratic foundations and inclusive multilateralism is crucial.

The European institutions' capacity to reinforce the right-holders agency and safeguard the public sphere as the legitimate and accountable space to regulate corporate accountability is practicable under the Farm to Fork strategy, the Sustainable Food System legal framework and the Sustainable Corporate Governance initiative and is needed now.

Representing the European regional stream of the People's Autonomous Response to the UNFSS, we are organising [an event, on February 9 at 2:30 pm](#) with interested Members of the European Parliament, to trigger a debate around the following question:

"How and to what extent new modalities of global food governance are challenging the public sphere and democratic decision-making for transforming our food systems?"

This event will gather representatives from civil society organisations together EU officials from different Parliament Committees (DEVE, INTA, AGRI) and from various political parties to analyse the actual state of food governance and discuss the role of the EU in the future of food systems.

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[1] European Commission. 2020. «A Farm To Fork Strategy For A Fair, Healthy And Environmentally-Friendly Food System». Brussels: COM(2020) 381 final.

[2] McKeon, Nora. 2021. «Global Food Governance». Development 64 (1-2): 48-55. doi:10.1057/s41301-021-00299-9.

[3] Summary Report». 2021. In 49Th Session Of The Committee On World Food Security (CFS 49). International Institute for Sustainable Development. [online] Available at: https://enb.iisd.org/sites/default/files/2021-10/cfs_49_summary_0.pdf.

[4] Clapp, Jennifer, and Doris A Fuchs. 2009. Corporate Power In Global Agrifood Governance. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.



9TH FEBRUARY 2022 - 2.30 PM / 4 PM



PROGRAM DETAILS

"Who is governing our food systems?"

"How and to what extent are new modalities of global food governance challenging the public sphere and democratic decision-making for transforming our food systems?"

INTRODUCTION

The governance of our food systems. What's at stake ? By Nora McKeon, Terra Nuova (10')

The corporate capture of the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) and the People's Autonomous Response to the UNFSS. By Paula Gioia (European Coordination Via Campesina/ Civil Society Mechanism to the Committee on world Food Security) (10')



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Panel 1 : Food Governance in its global dimension

Participants : Maria Noichl (S&D), Beata Kempa (ECR), Saskia Brickmont (Greens), Sofia Monsalve (FIAN Int'l)

New modalities of global food governance are challenging the public sphere and democratic decision-making for transforming our food systems.

How can the EP and the EU defend and promote a democratic multilateral food governance grounded in human rights ? Who needs to be at the table and on what conditions ?

With the Committee on world Food Security (CFS), WTO, FAO, World Bank, CBD, UNFCCC, UN Food Systems Summit, ... food governance is fragmented, uncoordinated, weak and often contradictory. Human rights are not considered in all spaces with the same degree, or completely ignored. Member States take different positions in the different spaces, sometimes distant from the urgency or best practice for food systems transformation.

Which spaces to strengthen at global levels to ensure policy coherence and governance accountability for a transition towards sustainable food systems that put people and the planet at the center?



https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_F4MD74MGRPOanS8bSdPWdg

Panel 2 : EU food policies and global food governance

Participants : EC Commissioner (tbc), Claude Gruffaut (Greens) (tbc), Anja Hazekamp (GUE) (tbc), Atilla Szocs (Ecoruralis)

Corporate power concentration in the food systems continues to grow, as well as their political influence, including through a narrative based on innovation, technology, digitalisation and corporate-led multistakeholders' initiatives,

How to address corporate power concentration and avoid the capture of democratic institutions for public food governance ?

In the European Green Deal, the EU aims a transition towards sustainable food systems, with difficult - but needed - policy choices.

What EU policies, mechanisms and means should be leveraged to strengthen democratic and right-based governance of food systems ?

The transition towards sustainable food systems require a holistic approach dealing with different policy domains (eg. climate, environment, biodiversity, trade, finance).

How to increase EU leadership and coherence by connecting different policy domains for a holistic governance approach to transform food systems ?

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Éric Andrieu (S&D) and Morgan Ody (International Coordinator La Via Campesina)