DRIVING COMMITMENT TO A SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEM: CONSUMER AND PRODUCER PERSPECTIVES

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Diet and nutrition are essential factors in promoting and maintaining good health throughout life. Their role as determinants of chronic non-communicable diseases is widely recognized. Additionally, the demand for food involves relevant environmental burdens that have to be taken into account on the way to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The immediate need to build resilient food systems that support demand for water resources and greenhouse gases emissions is an immediate challenge. Food systems have the potential to sustain human health and support environmental sustainability. Nevertheless, they are a complex net of people and activities that comprise the production, processing, transport, and consumption of food. The foundation of food systems is agriculture and animal husbandry for food among to other uses. Current food systems, while significantly increasing food production, have had negative effects on the environment. Excessive use of agrochemicals and unsustainable use of water and energy have contributed to a multitude of global issues –water and air pollution, uncontrolled use of water and energy, loss of biodiversity, and risks to human health. In numerical terms, food systems are responsible for one third of global anthropogenic GHG emissions and 30% of the world´s total energy consumption. Therefore, the key challenge in the coming decades will be to produce enough safe and nutritious food for future populations without running out of resources or destroying Earth's ecosystems, i.e. without exhausting the biological and physical resources of the planet. That is, agri-food system needs to be climate sensitive and public health friendly. Sustainable and resilient agriculture is critical to tackling climate change whilst delivering food security and reducing dependence on finite resources such as fossil fuels. A drastic and sustainable transformation of conventional food systems is required to achieve the SDGs and the Paris Agreement. With these needs and challenges in mind, initiatives have been developed to lay the foundation for public food and nutrition at the national and global levels as well as focused on introducing changes on the cropping practices such as promoting legume-cereals rotations instead of conventional monoculture. All these issues will be presented and analysed in detail.