



BigPicnic policy brief 2: Climate change

BIGPICNIC TOPIC



CLIMATE
CHANGE

FOOD 2030 PRIORITIES



CIRCULARITY



CLIMATE



INNOVATION



NUTRITION

SDGs



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES



12 RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION



13 CLIMATE
ACTION



15 LIFE
ON LAND

United Nations Sustainable
Development Goals

Recommendations

Overall: Increase the resilience of citizens, especially vulnerable groups, to climate change and increase climate neutrality of food systems.

- Ensure that agricultural as well as general climate change mitigation and adaptation policies, programmes, strategies and actions are fully consistent with existing food security related commitments.
- Support Civil Society Organisations, small-scale producer organisations, and women farmer organisations, as well as local communities and vulnerable groups to participate in decision making and the implementation of food security policies and programmes to address climate change and support climate change adaptation.
- Provide training and support, at all levels of the food system, on climate smart agriculture as a means of mitigating and adapting to climate change.
- Reduce excessive food imports.
- Reduce agriculture that is based on monocultures and protect biodiversity as a means of climate change resilience.

Background

Climate change is increasingly recognised as an issue of urgent concern and an imminent threat on a global scale. Around 10-12% of annual emissions and 75% of global deforestation come from agriculture¹. Therefore, climate change is an issue that our food systems must play a part in mitigating, as their contribution is significant. In addition, climate change has the potential to

affect food security across a range of areas such as access, utilization and price stability². Therefore, our food systems must be resilient if we are to ensure global food security. The BigPicnic Partners have organised a wide range of activities that addressed directly or indirectly the topic of climate change in relation to food security.



Findings

Participants in BigPicnic activities had a clear understanding of the links between climate change, agriculture and food security. They expressed their concerns about the overexploitation of resources, habitat degradation, erosion and deforestation, loss of biodiversity, pollination, pollution and pesticides or plagues. More specifically, the outcomes of the data gathered had a direct relevance to issues of climate change and environmental sustainability.

Audiences expressed their concerns and mentioned how changes in the climate threaten food production and how, at the same time, such changes are also influenced by food transport and consumption. These threats led to discussions about farmers' insecurity and the need for better state support while also demonstrating the fear that certain members of the public have. Farming practices that are unfriendly to the climate, unnecessary consumption patterns and the excessive import of products were also seen as elements with a negative impact on the climate. Monocultures impacting on the diversity of agriculture and the loss of species or traditional varieties were also highlighted as important concerns. Additionally, the potential for climate change causing infestation of pests and diseases that reduce the value of certain crops was also underlined as an important factor. Therefore, we must create conditions to facilitate access to a broader variety of food plants and crops including their genetic resources as well as a fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their use.

Conclusion

It is essential to acknowledge the urgent need for actions to address the effects of climate change on food security. To achieve this, adaptation to climate change must be a priority for all farmers and food producers, including small-scale producers in urban environments. Approaches to mitigate and build resilience against climate change must take into account equitability and participatory approaches that enable both men and women to gain equitable access to information and resources when addressing food security in the context of climate change. At the same time, future programmes, actions and strategies must be fully consistent with existing food security related policies and frameworks.

Quotes

“If the climate changes as during this year, there won't be more food anymore anyway, technology won't help, the world is changing.”

Participant in Warsaw, Poland

“What is creepy is that we do not take care of the Earth and that we postpone doing something about climate change. It can be drought. Or colder here. We import a lot of food. We have very little production of our own food, well we have little access to food at all.”

Participant in Oslo, Norway

“We have to teach people what is sustainable because often what is economic is not sustainable. Often food that is cheap comes from the other side of the world.”

Participant in Lisbon, Portugal

¹Cruz, A. (2016). *Flipping the issue: agriculture contributes to climate change?* [online] Available at: https://ccafs.cgiar.org/blog/flipping-issue-agriculture-contributes-climate-change#.XGVz8_Z2uUm
²IPCC (2014). *Summary for policymakers*. In: Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Part A: Global and Sectoral Aspects. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

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