



# HAMBRE CERO

BARCELONA, 2-4 OCTUBRE 2024

V CUMBRE MUNDIAL DE LAS REGIONES  
SOBRE SEGURIDAD Y SOBERANÍA ALIMENTARIA

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Generalitat  
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CATALUÑA, DONDE LA COMIDA ES CULTURA

Concept note 2

## SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION

### *The principles of agroecology put into practice*

#### GOAL

To actively promote the adoption and application of agroecological practices as a sustainable approach to agricultural production. With this end in mind, the aim is to promote the implementation of agricultural methods that promote crop diversification, the conservation of agricultural biodiversity, the efficient management of natural resources and the reduction of the use of chemical inputs. By doing so, we aim to significantly contribute to food security, strengthen the climate resilience of farming communities, and preserve the health and integrity of natural ecosystems in different regions.

#### CONCEPTUALISATION

In his latest book, *The Age of Resilience*, Jeremy Rifkin supports governance based on bioregions. The author considers the bioregion in social, psychological and biological terms: a “place to live”, in which the population establishes a balance with other living beings and is in harmony with the processes of the planet (seasons, meteorology, water cycles), as they manifest themselves in the territory itself. Society is deeply linked to the place and the immediate ecosystem. Therefore, its economy and social life are closely related to the co-management of its communal goods. In the bioregion, the population ensures that activity does not exceed the load-bearing capacity of the territory, protecting its regenerative possibilities and living in accordance with seasonal and annual renewal.

This governance, surely the only one possible if, as Rifkin says, “we aspire to the survival and prosperity of our species”, corresponds to agricultural practices based on agroecology. This emerges as a comprehensive response to current challenges in food production, recognising the interdependence between agricultural systems and natural ecosystems. By integrating principles of diversification, equity and resilience, agroecology promotes agricultural systems that are not only productive, but also sustainable in the long term.

One of the fundamental pillars of agroecology is the conservation of agricultural biodiversity, promoting the use of local varieties adapted to the environment, as well as the preservation of the traditional knowledge of agricultural communities. This not only contributes to food security by ensuring the availability of a wide range of foods, but also strengthens the resilience and adaptation of agricultural systems to pests, diseases and adverse climatic conditions.

The promotion of sustainable agricultural practices entails an approach focused on the efficient use of natural resources, avoiding dependence on chemical inputs such as fertilisers and pesticides. Instead, the implementation of soil regenerative strategies, such as crop rotation, planting of cover crops, and integrated pest management, is



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encouraged. These practices not only improve soil health and reduce erosion, but also increase carbon sequestration capacity, thereby contributing to climate change mitigation and the achievement of UN Sustainable Development Goal 13 (Climate Action).

Accordingly, the promotion of agroecology not only benefits farmers and the environment, but also aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals established in the United Nations 2030 Agenda. It ranges from eradicating hunger and rural poverty (zero hunger) to climate action and promoting gender equality in the agricultural sector. This is how agroecology offers comprehensive solutions that address the interconnected challenges facing humanity in the 21st century.

According to FAO data, agroecology can increase agricultural productivity and improve farmers' livelihoods, while also contributing to the conservation of natural resources and adaptation to climate change. FAO has developed programmes and projects that promote the adoption of agroecological practices in various regions of the world, providing technical assistance, training and resources to farmers and rural communities.

In certain geographies there already exists what is called a biodistrict (or ecoregion, even though the experience does not coincide with any administrative region). This is a geographical area where farmers, citizens, tour operators, associations and public administrations establish an agreement for the sustainable management of local resources, adopting an ecological and sustainable model of production and consumption. The broadest track record of these experiences, supported by the European Union, is in countries such as Italy or France (biodistrict of Cilento and Biovallée), as well as some of the incipient initiatives in Spain or Portugal (ecodistrict in the region of Vinalopó Mitjà i Alt in Alicante or the Idanha-a-Nova ecoregion). All these initiatives are grouped in the International Network of Eco-Regions (INNER), a global network that supports the creation and development of biodistricts and works for the agroecological transition of the territories.

The implementation of agroecology, in short, not only allows us to conserve natural resources and promote adaptation to climate change, but can also improve the livelihoods of farmers.



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## QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

- How do you envision that agroecological practices should be identified and defined?
- What mechanisms can favour the promotion of agroecology in a territory?
- What aspects can slow down the implementation of agroecology on farms in a territory?
- Can agroecology be promoted by the region or (in the case of Europe) does it have to be promoted by the Commission?
- What should be the role of the regions in this agroecological transition process?

Regarding biodistricts:

- Who should determine that a region is a biodistrict and that agroecological practices should be promoted in this territory?
- How could it be proven that agroecological practices are actually being applied in a territory or biodistrict?
- What stakeholders are needed to promote the creation of biodistricts?
- Are already indicators designed to evaluate the progress of agroecology?