

DIALOGUES



A Just Rural Transition: How farmers can drive the transformation agenda

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A Just Rural Transition: How farmers can drive the transformation agenda

by Melissa Pinfield, Executive Director, Just Rural Transition Secretariat

Farmers and rural communities the world over are under huge stress. COVID-related disruptions, climate and environment impacts, shifts in consumer demand and customer requirements, access to finance and insurance are very real and growing challenges.

While farmers are first and foremost in the business of producing food, fibre and fuels, they are increasingly recognised—but rarely rewarded—for the role they play in environmental stewardship, nutrition and food security, and the backbone of rural economies.

The [Just Rural Transition](#) initiative, launched at the UN Climate Action Summit in September 2019, seeks to bring increased global, national and local attention to these issues. Stakeholder Associations (such as the World Farmers' Organisation) are working together with governments, agri-food companies and investors, knowledge and implementation partners around one of the key challenges of the coming decade: **providing nutritious food for a growing global population while protecting the vital natural systems which sustain life.**

The JRT seeks to unlock two key opportunities: (a) supporting governments repurpose agricultural subsidies and import barriers away from harmful practices and towards incentives that reward farmers for delivering public goods and (b) scaling innovative investment partnership that promote sustainable agriculture while also improving rural livelihoods.

There is a huge opportunity to leverage upcoming international meetings, such as the Food Systems Summit and the COP26 climate conference to make progress on this agenda. Initiatives like [Climakers](#), which bring farmers voices to these global processes, play such an important role in highlighting the need for solutions that work for people on the front-line. Top-down political commitments are important, but it will be through innovative, multi-stakeholder partnerships which put farmers in the driving seat of the transformation agenda that real change will happen. We look forward to working with the World Farmers' Organisation as a key partner in taking forward this initiative.



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