

A sustainable agriculture for Africa's future



In the next three decades, Africa's population is expected to double. How can the continent in spite of the negative consequences of climate change feed itself sustainably in the future? This was the subject of an international conference in Tanzania at the beginning of September.

A GREAT CHALLENGE

The *Africa Food System Summit* with the theme: „*Recover, Regenerate, Act, Handeln - Africa's Solution Food Systems Transformation*“ brought 5400 participants from 90 countries to Tanzania in the beginning of September.

Producing enough food sustainably is a prerequisite for Africa's peaceful development. The challenges are enormous:

- Although birth rates in Africa have been slowly declining since 2015, the continent could have an estimated population of 2.4 billion by 2050.
- Africa is the continent that contributes less than 4% of global carbon dioxide emissions, but is particularly hard hit by climate change.
- Although many regions of Africa are richly blessed with fertile soil and a climate that allows for multiple harvests a year, Africa's population cannot feed itself and must import much of its food needs. The Ukraine war has exacerbated the situation.

CONCLUSIONS AND RESOLUTIONS

The transformation to a system that assures a sustainable and stable food supply requires major efforts in many areas. Some examples:

- **Research** should be promoted more strongly. It can make a major contribution to food security by breeding new varieties that deliver better crop yields, require less water, are adapted to different soils and need less time to be cooked. In many regions, farmers replace the popular maize with traditional crops like millet and sorghum, which require only a third of the water and can be harvested twice a year.
- **Women and youth:** Women play a predominant role in agriculture in Africa and should be given greater support. Young people should be empowered to set up their own farms. To this end, government and private development partners should provide more funds.
- **Market access:** An important factor for the transformation of the agricultural sector is to provide local producers with access to local and international markets

and to build value chains. In order to be able to compete in the international food trade, African farmers must be enabled to meet international standards in their production methods.

- **Finance:** Adequate measures to mitigate climate change and ensure a sustainable food supply require large financial resources. The industrialized nations have so far failed to deliver on their promise to contribute \$100 billion annually. The summit called for a greater public and private sector effort to help Africa address climate challenges and develop a secure and sustainable food system. This would also require generous debt relief for many heavily indebted countries.

Numerous agreements could be reached with the private sector through an Agribusiness Deals Negotiation Room.

CRITICAL VOICES

The list of recommendations from the Africa Food System Summit is long and comprehensive. Most of them have been raised for many years. What is missing are not declarations of intent, but the political will to implement them against vested interests. Whether the summit will provide the strength to do so remains to be seen.

A document from 500 African climate activists, who met at a side-event, criticized the decision of African politicians to achieve climate financing targets primarily with proceeds from emissions trading and carbon credits. This practice, comparable to indulgence trading in the middle-ages, allows Western industries to continue their climate-damaging production methods, and to buy their way out with climate credits. The reality is that acquisitions of "carbon sinks" as also many agricultural projects by governments and private investors often go hand in hand with land purchases and the displacement of indigenous populations without adequate compensation.

Full report:: <https://agrf.org/>

„Why should Africa, which contributes the least to global emissions bear the brunt of mitigation responsibilities while the primary culprits persist in their harmful emissions?“

[Zikora Ibeh - Auctioning off Africa's last hinterland](#)