



The Future of Food and Agriculture: FAO

For Prelims: FAO, Food Security, SDG, The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World.

For Mains: The Future of Food and Agriculture: FAO.

Why in News?

According to the [Food and Agriculture Organization's \(FAO\)](#) new report, **The Future of Food and Agriculture — Drivers and triggers for transformation**, the world will witness persistent **food insecurity** if agrifood systems remain the same.

- This report aims at **inspiring strategic thinking and actions to transform agrifood systems** towards a sustainable, resilient and inclusive future.

What are the Findings of the Report?

▪ Drivers of Agrifood System:

- There are 18 **interconnected socio-economic and environmental forces**, called drivers, which interacted and shaped the **various activities occurring within agrifood systems**, including farming, food processing, and food consumption.
- Poverty and inequalities, geopolitical instability, scarcity and the degradation of resources, and climate change are some of the key drivers and how they are and their management will determine **what the future of food looks like**.

▪ Concerns over Food Insecurity:

- The world will witness **persistent food insecurity**, degrading resources and unsustainable economic growth in the future if agrifood systems remain the same.
- The world is **“tremendously off track” to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)**, including agrifood targets.
 - Many of the SDGs are not on track and will only be achieved **if agrifood systems are transformed properly to withstand ongoing global adversity** that undermines food security and nutrition due to **growing structural inequalities and also regional inequalities**.
- By 2050, there will be **10 billion people in the world to feed and this will be an unprecedented challenge** if significant attempts are not made to reverse current trends.

▪ Future Scenarios:

- There will be **four future scenarios** for agrifood systems that bring diverse outcomes in terms of food security, nutrition and overall sustainability.
 - **More of the same**, that envisages continuing muddling through by reacting to events and crises.
 - **Adjusted future**, where some moves towards sustainable agrifood systems occur at a slow, uncertain pace.
 - **Race to the bottom**, that portrays a **world in disarray in the worst version of itself**.
 - **Trading off for sustainability**, where short-term Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

growth is traded **off for inclusiveness**, resilience and sustainability of agrifood, socioeconomic and environmental systems.

What are the Suggestions?

- Decision makers need to think **beyond short-term needs**. A lack of vision, piecemeal approaches and quick fixes **will come at a high cost for everyone**
- There is an urgent need to **change course so that a more sustainable and resilient future for agrifood systems is created**.
- There is a need to work on Key **'triggers of transformation'**:
 - Improved governance.
 - Critical and informed consumers.
 - Better income and wealth distribution.
- Innovative technologies and approaches.
- A comprehensive transformation, however, will come at a cost and **will require trade-off of contrasting objectives that governments, policy makers and consumers will have to address and balance**, while tackling resistance to the paradigm shift.

What is the Food and Agriculture Organization?

- **About:**
 - FAO is a specialised agency of the [United Nations](#) that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.
 - [World Food Day](#) is celebrated every year around the world on 16th October. The day is celebrated to mark the anniversary of the founding of the FAO in 1945.
 - It is one of the UN food aid organisations based in Rome (Italy). Its sister bodies are the [World Food Programme](#) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).
- **Initiatives Taken:**
 - [Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems \(GIAHS\)](#).
 - Monitors the [Desert Locust](#) situation throughout the world.
 - The [Codex Alimentarius Commission or CAC](#) is the body responsible for all matters regarding the implementation of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme.
 - The [International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture](#) was adopted by the Thirty-First Session of the Conference of the FAO in 2001.
- **Flagship Publications:**
 - The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA).
 - The State of the World's Forests (SOFO).
 - [The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World \(SOFI\)](#).
 - The State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA).
 - The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets (SOCO).

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q. The FAO accords the status of 'Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS)' to traditional agricultural systems. What is the overall goal of this initiative? (2016)

1. To provide modern technology, training in modern farming methods and financial support to local communities of identified GIAHS so as to greatly enhance their agricultural productivity.
2. To identify and safeguard eco-friendly traditional farm practices and their associated landscapes, agricultural biodiversity and knowledge systems of the local communities.
3. To provide Geographical Indication status to all the varieties of agricultural produce in such identified GIAHS.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (b)

Source: DTE

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