

Sustainable Food Systems for Sustainable Development Sistemi Alimentari per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile (SASS)

A consortium project with support from the Italian Ministry of Research (2017-2018)

The SASS Project:

ECDPM, together with four Italian universities, is implementing a **two-year research and dialogue project focusing on what makes food systems more sustainable.**

Bringing together researchers from different disciplines, SASS will map and analyse the local food systems in three different areas in Tanzania and Kenya. Together with local stakeholders, strategies on how to change current practices, policies and partnerships will be explored so that these local food systems will be more sustainable.



Food systems are investigated in three locations in East Africa: the Arusha area in Northern Tanzania, the Southern SAGCOT region in Tanzania, and the Lake Naivasha area in Kenya.

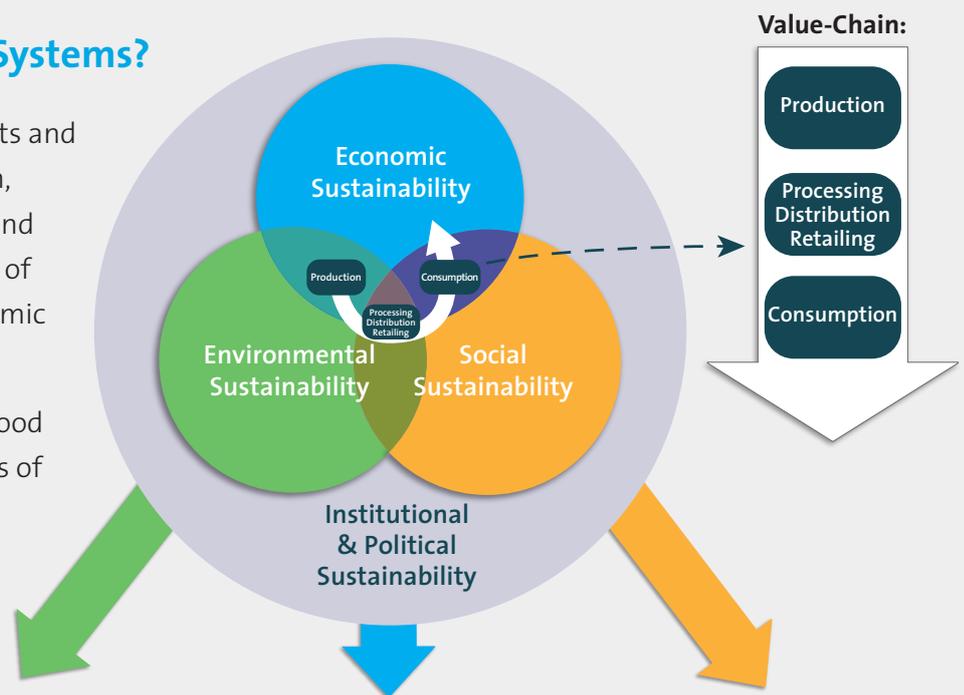
Our goal:

This multidisciplinary research aims to create **knowledge, policy dialogue and partnerships** contributing to **more Sustainable Food Systems**, with a focus on feeding policy processes in Africa, Europe and the UN Rome-based agencies.

What are Sustainable Food Systems?

A **Food System** gathers all the elements and activities that relate to the production, processing, distribution, preparation and consumption of food and the outputs of these activities, including socio-economic and environmental outcomes.

A **Sustainable Food System (SFS)** is a food system that explicitly meets the needs of **society** (people), **economy** (profit) and **environment** (planet) **over time.**



What we support:

Environmental Sustainability

- Enhancement of local agro-biodiversity
- Improved management of natural resources (soil, land, water, energy)
- Reduced negative environmental externalities (emissions, pollution, etc.)
- Reduced use of chemical inputs
- Reduced waste
- Reduced distance from farm to fork
- Enhanced resilience/adaptative capacity to climate shocks

Economic Sustainability

- Diversified enterprise opportunities & forms of income, esp. for farmers
- Better access to markets for smallholder farmers
- Better incentives for "short" value-chain actors
- Local value-chains are "competitive" enough against food imports

Social Sustainability

- Increased availability of local, diverse & nutrient-rich food
- Increased access to local, diverse & nutrient-rich food
- Optimized consumption of nutrient-rich food
- Global & local value chains are more inclusive
- Consumers & smallholders are empowered

Multi-disciplinary and participatory action research:

Research in different disciplines is conducted in synergy, while maintaining a common conceptual framework that will allow to give comprehensive, all-inclusive recommendations on SFS.

Partners in Italy and the Netherlands



Partners in Kenya and Tanzania

- Naivasha Basin Sustainability Initiative
- Oikos
- Local universities
- Local governments & stakeholders

Global Partners

- Bioversity (Environment)
- FAO (Rural development)
- ITC (Value chains)
- ...

How we work:

To better understand food systems, comparisons are made between very different types of value chains: Neglected & Underutilised Species (NUS) that are “short”, informal value chains, less served by infrastructure and international support, and “long”, formal value chains with the objective of commercial production.

In each region, the aspects of social, environmental, economic and institutional sustainability are addressed, with a special focus on different policy outcomes and specific solutions in the three different locations.

Key research steps and expected outcomes:

- **Food systems analysis:** mapping exercise of the entire existing food system in selected areas
- **Sustainability scoping exercise:** study of current sustainability of short and long value chains and their interactions, identifying possible solutions for SFS.
- **Viability exercise:** testing feasibility of the suggested solutions formulated in step 2
- **Policy & investment identification exercise:** recommendation of A) action-oriented guidelines/steps to scale up sustainable practices; B) required policies and investments to improve the sustainability of food systems.

What you can do:

We are looking for partners to support our work on Sustainable Food Systems. Get in touch with us to contribute your knowledge and ideas.

Visit www.ecdpm.org for more information.

Context

- The world population is expected to grow from the current 7 billion to 9 billion by 2050.
- With consumption already at 1.5 times the planet's replenishing capacity, current patterns are unsustainable.
- In addition, climate change will further exacerbate the risks faced by the agri-food value chains.
- The global challenge ahead of us is to find sustainable ways to feed a growing population with an increasing demand for food.
- This is easier said than done, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, where adequately but sustainably feeding a growing population is extremely pressing.

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