

CEFIPRA funded joint Indo-French Seminar

Sustainability Transitions in Agri-food Systems: Evidence and Options for Action in India and France

18th - 21st March 2024

India Habitat Centre, New Delhi

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Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee

Sustainability Transitions in Agri-food Systems: Evidence and Options for Action in India and France

Background and objectives

This seminar addresses an important knowledge and policy concern in India and France. It explores how India and France as two nation states and dynamic economies handle knowledge and policy for the much-needed sustainability transitions in their respective agri-food systems.

Agriculture and food are back at the centre of local and global challenges of the 21st century. Since the food crisis in 2008-09, several national governments, international organizations, domestic and transnational agrarian movements, climate scientists and environmental activists have expressed their apprehensions about prevalent frameworks and norms that govern modern agri-food systems¹. Worsening the agri-food crisis during the past couple of years, the Covid pandemic, Ukraine crisis, and climate change (evident in droughts, heat traps, wildfires, floods and hurricanes) bring new apprehensions about food and nutrition security and sovereignty, and about possible solutions that science and technology (S&T) and policies can provide. While agroecological transitions, complex systems analysis, and the post-normal sciences needed to address uncertainty (beyond reasonably accurate estimates of risk) are beginning to get some traction, there is a dire need to confront the knowledge-policy gaps within nation states and in the international state system that governs agrifood systems.

As theoretically foreordained, the agricultural sector is expected to dwindle in its share in the economy (Gross Value Added) and in the workforce as economic development takes place. The modernisation process of agriculture for economic development, is based on specialisation, industrialisation and capital-labour substitution processes that turns agriculture into a net energy consumer. In India and in France, modern agrifood systems are simultaneously feeding people but are not sustainable and healthy enough. Even as the Governments in France and India are planning new initiatives to support the sustainability transitions in agriculture, there are questions ranging from the macro-economics of development and sustainability, to the field practices, content of scientific research and orientation of productive organisations that demand more research and more public engagement.

In India as in France, there is a need for new participatory and interactive processes, knowledge about poly-cultural contexts of quasi-public-private activities/sectors, and horizontal policy and practice capacities. In this context, the seminar aims to take stock and evaluate the responses of stakeholders, public policies and research (natural and social sciences) to this issue, in order to identify technical, organisational and institutional levers of action relevant in the French and Indian contexts.

This Indo-French seminar proposes to address two main questions:

- 1. How are the international and domestic crisis in agriculture and the much-needed sustainability transitions being addressed within the prevalent policy processes, agricultural sciences (natural and social), social and environmental movements?**
- 2. How can appropriate knowledge inputs and knowledge-policy relationships be enabled for the possible transitions to agroecological, sustainable, resilient and nutritious agri-food systems in India and in France?**

¹ Agri-food systems "(e)ncompass the entire range of actors, and their interlinked value-adding activities, engaged in the primary production of food and non-food agricultural products, as well as in storage, aggregation, post-harvest handling, transportation, processing, distribution, marketing, disposal and consumption of all food products including those of non-agricultural origin." (FAO 2021, pg. xii)



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The seminar will foster cooperation between Indian and French agricultural scientists and thus reinforce their capacity to support transitions towards sustainable food systems. The existence of agroecological research programmes, public policies and social movement in both countries call for a strengthening of this theme in the cooperation of the two countries. Moreover, agro-ecological transitions echo many initiatives under development on the Franco-Indian axis, which can be expected to have a stronger impact: creation of the Franco-Indian-Pacific campus dedicated to health (nutritional and environmental risks of diseases), Indian interest in One-Health initiatives (e.g. Prezode -Preventing Zoonosis Disease Emergence- an international activity supported by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

Planned outcomes

The presentations and discussions will be distilled into:

- Joint publication project between participants from the two countries
- White paper on appropriate knowledge inputs and knowledge-policy relationships be enabled for the possible transitions to agroecological, sustainable, resilient and nutritious agri-food systems in India and in France
- Maturing of joint collaborating project

18 March, Inaugural Session

Sustainability Transitions in Agri-food Systems: Evidence and Options for Action in India and France

Marigold Hall, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi (11.00am-2:30pm)

Prof. Rajat Kathuria (Shiv Nadar University (Institution of Eminence): **Welcome Address - Towards Indo-French collaborations on sustainability and public policy**

Prof. Didier Raboisson (Attaché for Science, Embassy of France in India): **Introductory Remarks**

Seminar Theme Paper:

Dr Marie Dervillé (ENSFEA -University of Toulouse, INRAE) and Prof. Rajeswari S. Raina (Shiv Nadar University) **Prevalent policy frameworks and instruments: Evolution and Opportunities**

Keynote Address:

Dr. Benoit Dedieu (INRAE): **Open innovation for sustainable food systems**

Enabling Sustainability Transitions in Agriculture: Address by

Dr. Bikash Mandal (ADG, International Relations- ICAR-DARE, Gouvernement of India)

Prof. Ramesh Chand (Member, NITI Aayog)

Ms. Monique Tran (Agriculture Advisor, Embassy of France in India)

Prof. Nitin Seth (Director, IFCPAR (CEFIPRA), DST)

Lunch (1.30pm-2:30pm)

Travel to IIT Roorkee (3.00pm-7.00pm)

Dinner: IIT Roorkee (7.30-9.00pm)



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19 March, Technical Sessions

Policy Processes for Agri-food Sustainability Transitions

Conference Room, Centre of Excellence in Disaster Mitigation & Management, IIT Roorkee
9.00am – 7.00pm

Prof. Sumit Sen (IIT Roorkee) **Agri-food Systems S&T and Policy Research: Sustainable Collaborations**

Session 1

Inputs: Water, energy and other transitions

9.00am – 11.00 am

Chair: Prof. D. Narasimha Reddy, APCNF

Prof. P.S. Vijayshankar (Nature Positive Farming & Wholesome Foods Foundation, Bangalore):

Managing Sustainable Transitions in Water and Agriculture

Dr. Bhavana Rao K. (Foundation for Ecological Security, Anand): **Crop-Livestock Systems and Sustainability Transitions: An Alternative Policy Framework**

Prof. Claire Aubron (SupAgro, Montpellier): **Socio-metabolism approaches and their relevance for analysing agricultural transitions**

Prof. Sonal K. Thengane (HRED, IIT Roorkee): **Energy transitions in Agrarian and Rural India**

Tea/Coffee: 11.00am- 11.30 am

Session 2

Markets & Consumption: Essential Policy Processes for Agrifood System Transitions

11.30 am - 1.30pm

Prof. Sukhpal Singh (Centre for Management in Agriculture, IIM-Ahmedabad): **Environmental and Social Standards in Agriculture: Role of Contract Farming and FPOs**

Prof. Frederic Landy: (French Institute of Pondicherry): **Ambiguous categories: Natural farming and desi cows (Pondicherry-Tamil Nadu)**

Dr. Edmond Rock (Preventive nutrition - INRAE CLINSFOOD) (Saint John Research Institute): **Nutrition view of Sustainable Transitions in Agri-food Systems**

Prof. Aparajita Singh and Roopam Shukla (IIT Roorkee): **Navigating nutritional paradigms: insights into India's evolving food policy?**

Lunch: 1.30 - 2.30 pm

Session 3

Policies, Institutions/Norms: Meso-level Transitions and Alternatives

2.30pm - 4.30pm

Chair: Prof. Akali Sema, Nagaland University

Dr. Sebastien Bainville (SupAgro, Montpellier): **Organic farming in India, start of a transition or default choice?**

Mr. Muralidhar Ganduri (RySS, Community Managed Natural Farming, Andhra-Pradesh): **Policy Processes for Natural Farming and Food Systems**

Dr. Rajashree Joshi, Dr. Iranna Hugar, Dr Ganesh Bedare (BAIF, Pune) **Agroecology Transition under Living Lab initiative as introduced jointly by INRAE France and BAIF Development Research Foundation in Bilikere, Karnataka**

Dr. Debashish Sen (Peoples Science Institute, Dehradun) **Reflections from Policy Processes for Upscaling SRI in India**

Tea/Coffee: 4.30pm - 5.00pm



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Session 4

Policies, Institutions/Norms: Meso-level Transitions and Alternatives

5.00pm – 7.00pm

Dr. Anita Sharma (Shiv Nadar University): **Pastoralism and the State in the Time of Climate Crisis**
Pravin Muchhadiya (Satvik, Kuchhch) **Ram-mol: Towards Building a Relationship between Society
Wisdom and Ecological Production System - Food Security for All.**

Prof. Elena Lazos Chavero (Autonomous University of Mexico, on sabbatical in SNU): **Biodiversity
Policies: Challenges and Opportunities in Mexico**

Dr. Sabyasachi Das (Watershed Support Services and Activities Network – WASSAN, Hyderabad): **Policy
Development for Rainfed Agriculture in India: Learnings of the RRA Network**

Technical sessions highlights

7.00pm- 7.30 pm

Dr. Marie Dervillé (ENSFEA -University of Toulouse, INRAE) and Prof. Rajeswari Raina (Shiv Nadar University): **Key findings towards policy white paper on appropriate knowledge inputs and knowledge-policy relationships be enabled for the possible sustainability transitions**

Networking Dinner: 7.45pm-9.00pm

20March, Technical Sessions in the Field Organic farm visits, interaction with the community & two plenary sessions

Luxar, Haridwar, 9.00 am to 6:30 pm

Travel from IIT Roorkee to Shahpur Shitla Khed, Haridwar

Visit to Organic Farming villages, Luxar, Haridwar and interaction with the farming community

Session 5

Experience in organic agriculture in Uttarakhand in the last 20 years

11.30 am-12.30pm

Binita Shah (CeO SARG): **Drivers and barriers to the transition to organic farming in Uttarakhand**

12.30 - 1.30pm

Panel Discussion: **Uttarakhand State Government Initiatives in Sustainability Transitions**

Lunch in a farm: 1.30 - 2.30 pm

Session 6

Diversity, Variability and Sustainability

2.30pm-3.30pm

Dr. Vasant Saberwal (Centre for Pastoralism, Delhi): **Pastoral Knowledge Systems and Policy for
Sustainability**

Evening cultural visit Ganga Aarti, Haridwar

Dinner – 7.30 pm-9.30 pm (in Roorkee)



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21March, Wrap-up meeting and planning

IIT Rorkee, Conference Room, Centre of Excellence in Disaster Mitigation & Management

9.00am- 12.00pm

Dr. Marie Dervillé (ENSFEA -University of Toulouse, INRAE) and Prof. Rajeswari Raina (Shiv Nadar University (IoE)): **Sustainable interactions and relations: seminar highlights and planning**

9.00am – 10.00am

- Joint publication project between participants from the two countries
- Policy white paper on appropriate knowledge inputs and knowledge-policy relationships be enabled for the possible transitions to agroecological, sustainable, resilient and nutritious agri-food systems in India and in France
- Maturation of future projects: support for students working on sustainability transitions; planning of next year's seminar in France; joint project application.

Specific project meetings Bilikere living lab; TransIndiandairy project

10:30 am – 11.30pm

Departure from IIT Roorkee (12.00pm)

Lunch (en route)

Local Organizing Committee:

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