

SEVENTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME THEME "Environment" ENV.2010.4.2.3-3 Brokerage activities to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns

Collaborative Project

Project acronym: FOODLINKS Knowledge brokerage to promote sustainable food consumption and production: linking scientists, policymakers and civil society organizations

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Documentation of the Conference: Sustainable food communities of practice – meet and eat

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Conference programme

9.00 - 10.00

Registration and welcome coffee

10.00 - 10.45

Conference opening and key notes – Plenary **10.00 - 10.05**

Opening (Bettina Bock, Wageningen University) 10.05 - 10.15

Knowledge Brokerage projects from the view of the European Commission (Wanda Gaj, FOODLINKS officer EU Commission, tbc)

10.15 - 10.35

Live Talk "How FOODLINKS changed my life: the ups and downs of collaboration between science, policy, and practice in promoting short food supply chains"

(Gianluca Brunori, Pisa University, Alistair Prior, Scottish Government and Monika Thuswald, Via Campesina Austria. Facilitation: Bettina Bock, Wageningen University)

10.35 - 10.45

Conference overview (Heidrun Moschitz, Hanna Stolz, FiBL)

10.45 - 12.00

Market Place: Presentation of project results and initiatives, such as:

- Urban Food Strategy: Tukums Urban Food Strategy, Latvia; Vitoria-Gasteiz Urban Food Network, Spain, and Guide to Urban Food Strategies
- Short Food Supply Chains: Delivery service Zolle, Italy, Meat box schemes, Spain, Direct sales Brin d'Herbe, France, SpeiseLokal!, Austria
- Public Procurement: UK, Green Cities, Denmark, School Food Matters, UK, ÖkoKauf Wien, Austria
- Toronto Food Strategy

12.00 – 12.30 PM

From the local to the global – moving towards sustainable practice (Prof.Dr.ir. JSC Han Wiskerke, project coordination) – Plenary Musical key note (Bart Kiers)

12.30 – 13.30 PM

Meet and eat: LUNCH

13.30 - 15.30 PM

Open space group discussions: Challenges and solutions to promoting sustainable food production and consumption in practice

- Linking civil society engagement with policy/administration activities (bottom-up vs. top-down)
- Effective knowledge brokerage between actors of urban and rural areas for achieving inclusive strategy
- Drivers and motivations for Public Authorities engaging in public procurement of Sustainable Food
- How can/do Civil Society actors get engaged in these processes?
- Further topics from the participants

15.30 – 16.30 PM

The menu for the future – Panel discussion and outlook (Annemiek Canjels, Limburg Province; Bent Mikkelsen, Aalborg University; Balint Balazs, St. István University; Brian Cook, Toronto Public Health and Pascal Aubree, FRCIVAM Bretagne. Facilitation: Helen Nilsson, City of Malmö)

Musical key note (Bart Kiers)



Conference documentation

On Wednesday 16 October 2013 the FOODLINKS team organised the conference "Sustainable food communities of practice – meet and eat" to present the results of its three-year project on Knowledge brokerage to promote sustainable food consumption and production: linking scientists, policymakers and civil society organizations (<u>http://www.foodlinkscommunity.net</u>).

The conference focused on **"Good cooperation between science, society and policy promotes sustainable food consumption and production"** looking more particularly into :

- How short food supply chains can effectively work as policy tools
- How to maximise the benefits of sustainable public procurement of food
- How to implement sustainable food strategies in European cities

The conference made a special effort to actively engage the participants' experience and knowledge in the field. The overall conference organisation was done by the FOODLINKS partner FiBL - The Research Institute of Organic Agriculture. The following conference documentation provides an overview on the contents and outcomes of the FOODLINKS conference. Besides this conference documentation, a short video summary is available at: http://www.foodlinkscommunity.net



Live Talkshow

After a short introduction into the FOODLINKS project, the conference started with a live talkshow about **"How FOODLINKS changed my life: the ups and downs of collaboration between science, policy, and practice in promoting short food supply chains"**. Monika Thuswald from Via Campesina Austria, Alistair Prior from the Scottish Government and Gianluca Brunori from Pisa University took part in the live talk that was facilitated by Bettina Bock from the Wageningen University.



The live talk addressed:

- To what extent did the project enabled policy makers to bridge the gap between policy makers and science ? And does improved collaboration indeed contributes to the the development of more effective policies?
- What in particular has made the project participation a success for Civil Society organisations?
- What had been different if policymakers, instead of researchers had organised the process? Which problems/failures could have been avoided?
- Has the collaboration between policy makers, civil society organisations and research improved the understanding of short food supply chains, and if so, how?

Market place

In the **13 market stands** listed below, FOODLINKs members as well as representatives of other initiatives presented and discussed innovative knowledge brokerage methods and outcomes.

Market stand 1: Field trip of the Vienna meeting and DVD about journey in East Ayrshire 'school food revolution'. Roberto Ruiz, Monika Thuswald, Leo Dvortsin
Market stand 2: Complexity of the food supply systems by means of spider web exercise. Pieter van de
Graaf
Market stand 3: Sustainability evaluation of case study with marbles: one case study with four options
to vote for. Alistair Prior, Fraser Dryburgh and Otto Schmid
Market stand 4: Making the case for RPP to urban policy-makers. Robin Gorley, Annemiek Canjels, Julie
Smith
Market stand 5: Sustainable food procurement in the city of Malmö. Gunilla Andersson
Market stand 6: Tukums case. Anita Thaler and Janis Luksevcs
Market stand 7: Two cases from Denmark: Svendborg and Aalborg. Bent Mikkelsen, Dorte Ruge
Market stand 8: Urban Food Strategy Guide. Ana Moragues Faus, Helen Nilsson
Market stand 9: Tukums case: Story telling with time line. Talis Tisenkopf, Ilze Neimane, Monika
Thuswald
Market stand 10: Vitoria case. Roberto Ruiz
Market stand 11: Toronto Food Strategy. Brian Cook
Market stand 12: Urban Agriculture Basel. Tilla Künzli, Bastiaan Frich
Market stand 13: Rations: interactive game and participatory model of engagement for food systems
planning. Lynn Peemoeller





Summary of the market place: from the local to the global – moving towards sustainable practice

In his presentation "Moving towards sustainable practices - commonalities and key concepts", Professor Han Wiskerke from Wageningen University summarised the presentations and discussions in the market place. He discussed the relevancy of geographical proximity (local for local) but underlined in particular the importance of social proximity, which reflects the pertinence of direct relations between producer/supplier and consumer/customer/client. He stressed that food is more than a commodity or

carrier of calories and nutrients (energy for the body). The food provisioning system (including production, processing, marketing, purchasing and cooking) is increasingly also evaluated in relation to issues of waste, water, climate change, health, energy, transport, employment, and regional economy. Food is, hence, becoming a very powerful entry point to link and integrate different public concerns. As a result local and regional public authorities regain responsibility for food policy, a domain they have hardly



been involved in during the last decades when national government withdraw from food policy issues (such as expressed in the Common Agricultural Policy) and transferred responsibilities to supranational authorities (EU) and international treaties (e.g. GATT). With the growing understanding of foods relation to sustainability and health concerns, we increasingly see municipal and regional governments taking on that responsibility. "There is no blueprint solution for any of the sustainability challenges we are facing", professor Wiskerke explains. "Instead, we need to learn from different settings and work across professional boundaries (so indeed linking research, policy, advocacy and business). That this is not an easy task, yet very necessary, as has also been made very clear by this project."

Short food supply chains, new public food procurement policies and urban food strategies may be perceived as expressions of relocalizing systems of food provisioning, as well as countermovements against the globalization of our food system. It is a movement that is rapidly growing in Europe but also beyond; many cities or metropolitan regions take up that new responsibility, such as in Toronto, New York, Havanna, Belo Horizonte, Rosario, Casablanca, Amman, Hanoi and Beijing. It is the beginning of a global movement of place-based solutions for sustainable food provisioning systems. Prof Wiskerke thought that this development was well summarized in the Mayors' declaration at the June 2013 ICLEI Resilient Cities Congress: "We call upon local governments to develop and implement a holistic approach for developing city-region food systems that ensure food security, contribute to poverty eradication, protect and enhance local biodiversity and that are integrated in development plans that strengthen urban resilience and adaptation."

Musical key note

Bart Kiers, a Singer and Songwriter who writes songs on the spot, summarised the morning and afternoon sessions in a sharp and humorous manner.

So take your shoes and step on SFSC ask Otto or David. Or catch a bumblehoo aud bumblebee chown yourself in politacal thought llie ... marbe you'll'inderstand, but don't ask me why.



Open space group discussions – Challenges and solutions to promoting sustainable food production and consumption in practice

The afternoon group discussions were inspired by Open Space Technology, that was adapted to the specific circumstances. The Open Space Technology intends to provide space space to discuss what really interests the conference participants, and is inspired by the experience that conference participants often considered the talks during coffee breaks as most valuable. The participants were asked to suggest topics in addition to the topics that were prepared in advance. We arranged tables around certain topics, and appointed a facilitator per table. At each table topics were discussed in two



rounds of 45 minutes, each. The contents of the parallel group discussions were briefly summarized by Balint Balazs, St. István University; Bent Mikkelsen, Aalborg University.



Topic 1: How can Short Food Supply Chains (SFSC) effectively work as policy tools?

Chair: Otto Schmid and Gianluca Brunori, Minutes: Francesca Galli Participants: Francesca Galli, Leonid Dvortsin, Alistair Prior, Roberta Sonnino, Bettina Bock, Balint Balazs, Bastiaan Frich, Han Wiskerke (not complete!)

Summary of the discussion:

The outcomes achieved in terms of sustainability depend on the definition of SFSCs applied; benefits and costs are, moreover, not absolute but relative. This also means that SFSCs do not always excel in sustainability compared to regular chains. The discussion then focused on how SFSCs can best be used as a tools in a sustainability policy. What can SFSCs do to fulfil policy goals? We tried to identify policy areas, types, and examples. SFSCs play an important role in several policy areas and at various levels:

- Common Agricultural Policy
- \circ Local / Regional development
- o Public health
- o Public Procurement
- Urban Food Strategies
- o Business Development (SFSCs as a mean for creating business opportunities for farmers)

During the discussion additional relevant policy domains were identified: Citizen Networks (ex. community based initiatives such as GAS in Italy) and Urban Development Policy (for example when it comes to organising farmers' markets). In fact, food is a way to gather people in a urban context and can be an instrument for Urban Planning. Other policy domains are Rural Food Strategies, Environmental Policies (e.g. meat production with waste processing - grass cuttings -) and Spatial Planning.

Topic 2: What are the motivations for public authorities engaging in public procurement of sustainable food? Role of CSOs

Session 2.1

Chair and minutes: D. Barling, J. Smith

Participants: City University London: David Barling, Julie Smith, City of Zurich; CSO – urban agric Basel, President Consumer Association, Sweden, Elba Estrada - Fair Trade Europe Advocacy Office, Gunilla Andersen – City of Malmo, Robin Gourlay – Scottish Govt, Niels Lagerroth - Swedish Rural Network Unit, Bent Mikkelsen – Aalborg University, Austrian Farmers movement – Via Campesina

Summary of the discussion:

The discussion started with the facilitator briefly introducing the range of actors involved in revaluing public procurement. He explained that municipalities may have different motives for adapting their public procurement policies focusing on environmental sustainability, public health or the local economy. There are different barriers hampering the reorientation of procurement policies. Sweden, for example, faces problems that have to do with costs and price limitations but also national legislation (eg animal welfare legislation in Sweden). The City of Zurich experienced difficulty in defining sustainable food, and appointing criteria that complied with the procurement law. The discussion then focused on the following question: "What do we want to get out of Public Procurement (PP)?" In Scotland consumers spend 9 billion pound in supermarkets of which public procurement is only 150 million (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ % of total). Still the public sector can function as an exemplar. The problem is how to involve SMEs and enable local public procurement. This requires a restructuring of public contracts so that SMEs can join the tender just for some products and some smaller geographic lots. Fair trade is one way of using sustainable punlic procurement, that people in the UK are already familiar with. The Basel group pointed out that consumers are faced with a myriad of sustainability labels, which often provide scarce information; this means that consumers might not even know that they are drinking fair trade coffee; another problem is that the supply of fair trade products may not always be guaranteed. Scotland has a Scottish Procurement Information hub - with all kind of statistics available. We finally discussed the sustainability goals and leadership roles from a public sector and private sector perspective.

Session 2.2

Chair and minutes: David Barling

Participants: City University London: David Barling, Elba Estrada - Fair Trade Europe Advocacy Office, Robin Gourlay – Scottish Govt., Dorte Ruge - Aalborg University, Janis Luusevics - Tukums Municipality, Uxue Arbe - Zadorra Founsdstion (Basque region Spain); Joined later (footstepped in): Niels Lagerroth -Swedish Rural Network Unit, Gunilla Anderson – City of Malmo

Summary of the discussion:

In the second session of this workshop Uxue from the Basque Country explained which problems they had experienced in Vittoria-Gasteiz, that has been appointed as the European Green Capital in 2012. They never succeeded in greening their public procurement strategies. At this moment five Kindergarden Schools have adopted a sustainable public procurement strategy (following the example from San Sebastian). They are now busy to build a NGO/CSO coalition in order to push for a new public procurement strategy; Roberto Ruiz is playing a key role in this. Dorte Ruge from Denmark explained that school meals are voluntary in Copenhagen and Denmark and, hence, economically not as important as in Malmö. This cultural factor demarcates what is considered as a public ir private sphere in different countries. In Sweden free school meals are considered as a public responsibility ever since 1960s. In Denmark it is seen as a family responsibility and part of the private sphere. Tukums in Latvia offers free school meals for 6-7 year olds. This is also the case in the UK. We then discussed more in detail about the different politics around public procurement and school meals in the different countries represented.



Topic 3: IT tools for Knowledge Exchange

Chair: Corrado Boscarino; Minutes: Pieter Van de Graaf

Summary of the discussion:

Wageningen University and the Free University of Amsterdam are collaborating in the field of food ontology, developing semantic web technologies that interpret the meaning of statements about food. They will lead a new European project on the ontology of agricultural innovation, VALERIE.

The key research question is how to share information about new products and procedures, and what on-line tools or web platforms should be developed for this? Translation and communication are key to transforming research outputs into practical innovation. Too many academic results do not make it across the "valley of death" between theory and practice.

We also discussed how this problem could be explained and what obstructs collaboration between science and practice. Just introducing IT as a tool is not enough; users need training and too many tools can be confusing. If we create a new on-line platform/community with each new research, stakeholders will never be able to keep up. We then discussed about how to keep people engaged. Many social media lack the fun factor. They also need an active facilitator whoconnects people and facilitates their networking. Users should be engaged in the selection of a new IT tool. Nevertheless, it is difficult to prevent all technical barriers asparticipation is already discouraged if you have to actively sign up. It would be much better if new projects would link their tool to existing on-line groups or platforms so that users don't have to register on a new site again. Each on-line group/tool should be clear about its target audience, and secure a core group of dedicated users/contributors, including senior scientists.

In addition, it is recommendable to turn the use of on-line tools for knowledge exchange into a regular

part of scientists' activities. One of the problems is now that this kind ofknowledge exhcgange does not result in academic publications, which most importantly promote academic carriers. Another challenge is that IT tools evolve so fast: How do you keep people engaged when they constantly have to learn using new tools and techniques? How do you keep them engaged when (financial) incentives disappear after the closure of research projects ? We need a platform that can outlive individual projects, and that links them in one



place; a platform that offers a wide range of IT tools to choose from, evolving with new technical developments. Basically, a "European knowledge hub plus" is needed.

Topic 4 "How to organise processes to link civil society engagement with policy / administration activities (bottom-up vs. top-down)?"

Chair: Robert Marshall Pederson (Aalborg University); Minutes: Sandra Karner, Anita Thaler

Participants: Sandra Karner (IFZ), Uxue Arbe (Fondacion Zadorra), Pascal Aubree (FR CIVAM), Tessa Avermaete (KU Leuven), Brian Cook (Torronto Public Health), Julie Debru (Unesco Chair on World Food Systems), Bastiaan Frich (Urban Agriculture Basel), Femke Hoekstra (Wageningen University), Christine Marshall (South West Food & Drink), Ilze Neimane (Tukums Municipality), Helen Nilsson (City of Malmö), Adanella Rossi (University of Pisa), Michal Sedlacko (RIMAS), Irmtraud Salzer (Via Campesina Austria), Monika Thuswald (Via Campesina Austria), Talis Tisenkopfs (Baltic Studies Centre).

Summary of the discussion:

One needs to distinguish between the different levels, at which policy, administration and civil society meet. While there is more continuity on the municipality and county level, on the national and

European level changes are more likely. The relationship depends on the type of politician and CSOs; each CSO is using different strategies, which may range from cooperation to activism. Coalitions and alliance building is the main thing, but sometimes difficult! Linking civil society with policy needs resources and capacities from both sides.

Evidence based vs. evidence informed policy making:

There is difference between policy based

on research findings and policymaking based on expert opinion. There is also policy based on practice, for instance successful case studies or best practices. CSOs should "market" their experiences, demonstrating that there are best practices, which may inform policymakers. Good media contact is important for communicating about evidence, but also about interests (information, awareness rising). Everybody agreed that what works well on the ground, has a good potential to be transferred into politics through CSOs providing the information. The question is if civil society could more easily provide information to policy makers/administration if an exchange would be institutionalised, e.g. through *Food Councils*. For a successful institutionalisation of civil society - policy linkages certain capacities need to be built up:

- ⇒ Policy: needs be open minded, to be open for networks, to allow for experimentation
- ⇒ Civil society: needs people, who network and work in the interface between policy and practice; Umbrella organisations are useful actors in this regard (e.g. Basel)

Cooperation of individuals is an important motor but problematic as people quite rapidly change from between organisations and optics, whereas stable coalitions of people are particularly useful. They may act as bridges that link initiatives with institutions (e.g. one person from the Bristol Food Policy Council established a link to the city council; celebrities also could be useful). Personal connections open doors to other institutions and important to gain commitment and support.



Public Private Partnerships: PPPs (including CSOs, NGOs, Foundations) were also identified as useful tools, which link actors from different fields; e.g. Urban agriculture initiatives in Chicago are based on such a model.

We then discussed the problem of the "Policy corset". There was ambiguity about how tight or how flexible policies should be in order to support shifts towards more sustainability. On the one hand strict rules might push developments faster; on the other hand they may restrict developments if they allow for variable interpretation, of it they are not matching with the needs, expectations and commitments of those concerned. Policies that give a clear direction, but also allow for flexibility in terms of how to reach the aims, could be the most effective approach towards change. Besides, the following topics were discussed:

- Power issues: Policy making is also about power civic movements may take power away from policymakers; they may, hence, not always be keen to cooperate.
- Values in policy decisions: Who is allowed to put values up to discussion in the context of policy decisions? Mainly CSOs apparently do so at this moment, but it is not always considered as legitimate.
- Alliances: Building alliances between CSO's and researchers could be a way to provide evidence from practices. CSOs may subcontract researchers to explore and collect evidence for policy making; researchers may profit from that cooperation as it may help them to communicate their results. (e.g. social scientists have difficulties in communicating about food issues to policy)
- Overcoming assumed oppositions between actor groups: Differences between actor groups are
 often overly accentuated whereas there are also big differences within the same actor groups;
 moreover, the assumed oppositions often do not exist anymore. It may also regard more a
 difference in strategizing than in objectives
- Food as a multi-sectorial issue: There are many issues which relate to food, which underlines its relevance for many different policy domains. Still, it is difficult to realise integration within a political system that is organised along sector-lines; often it is even difficult to identify the right department or person to address. An institutionalisation of a multi-actor group around food, can help (e.g. food council).

Topic 5: Short food supply chains as opportunity for food and drinks business Chair: Jiri Kolman; Minutes: Leo Dvortsin

Summary of the discussion:

At the beginning of the session the participants expressed their thoughts about the opportunities for connecting Short food Supply Chains (SFSCs) and the food and beverage industry. The opportunities can be summed up as following:

 Lower CO2 footprint, close relation to the consumers, usage of several sales channels, socially responsible business conduct, connecting with



public procurement, supporting rural development, promotion of cooperation among producers, new combinations of business models based on stronger focus on the environment by small scale producers, and scaling up of initiatives.

One of the main issues during the group discussion was whether big business and SFSCs could go together. Why should the industry be interested in developments that take place at niche level? From the discussions we concluded that SFSCs provide something special. They are able to distinguish themselves from the products sold in the supermarkets by providing different products and sometimes even services. These products have a different (higher) margin, and as result are also responsible for different business models applied by SFSCs compared to the conventional supply chains.

The SFSCs are communicating trust. This aspect is important when selling of local products. Trust can hardly be expressed through labelling. The consumers seem not to be interested in yet another label proclaiming something. Also the farmers are not interested in communicating through labelling, as certification and labelling are costly and add bureaucratic burden to their activities. On the other hand the retail sector and food and beverage industry demand labelling and certification.

Finally, SFSCs have potential for connecting agriculture, rural development, and environmental management and for embedding it in local networks. But this potential strength needs institutional support through local sourcing by local authorities. Another important barrier to the further development of SFSCs potential are access to financial resources and lack of infrastructure. Banks should be motivated to provide seed money, invest into local agri-food incubators, provide loans (especially to young people who would like to acquire farm land or start a food enterprise). In terms of infrastructure SFSCs need social infrastructure (such as networks, knowledge brokers, etc.) to be in place besides new local logistical hubs.

Topic 6: How can knowledge be brokered effectively between actors of urban and rural areas so that an inclusive strategy can be achieved

Session 6.1 Chair of the discussion: Ana Moragues; Minutes: Roberto Ruiz Participants: Roberto Ruiz; Laura Venn, Blaise Berger; Julie Debru

Summary of the discussion:

It is important to involve rural areas into the decision-making around short food supply chains; the Local

Food Systems could function as an alternative but also as a complement to the Global Food System; so far, urban policymakers have patronised the rural and it is important to share and co-produce know-how. The question is how to do this given the actual distribution and demarcation of competences across administrative bodies.



Knowledge brokerade activities

based on face-to-face interactions between stakeholders from rural, urban and peri-urban areas may be an effective way of sharing experiences, and may result in the establishement of civic food networks. Yet, such networks usually focus on alternative production and consumption, whereas conventional producers are still in the majority. Moreover, even farmers who produce alternative food, often gain the largest share of their income from the conventional food system. (i.e. River Food box scheme in UK). Another challenge is how to connect with policy-makers. Assessing how much land is needed to meet the food demands of the population within a particular city can be an effective way to raise awareness.

Session 6.2 Chair of the discussion: Ana Moragues; Minutes: Roberto Ruiz

Participants: Roberto Ruiz; Adanella Rossi; Michael Sedlacko; Freek Jansens; Helen Nilson

Summary of the discussion:

(Big) Cities were narrowly linked to the surrounding territory in the past and depending on local primary production. In the eventuality of a collapse of the current food system, cities that maintain relations with their rural hinterland, might be more resilient. One of the participants reported on an interesting initiative, in which cities in the area of Amsterdam collaborated with the aim of reconnecting countryside and city. They organised some very successful events, e.g. tasting and experimental gardens. However, the collaboration was not continued for reasons of lacking leadership and political changes in the government. Another topic discussed was how to tackle consumer preferences, attitudes and freedom of choice. This is not an issue of being a urban or rural citizen: the attitude towards food is usually the same in both areas. In fact, less concern about the impact of consumption patterns can be observed in rural areas in comparison to urban citizenship. However, more knowledge is not enough: suitable facilities are necessary for allowing committed consumers to express their freedom of choice by having easy access to sustainable food.

Closure: The menu for the future Panel discussion and outlook

The panellists were Roberta Sonnino from Cardiff University, Annemiek Canjels from the Limburg Province, Brian Cook from Toronto Public Health and Pascal Aubree from the FRCIVAM Bretagne. Helen Nilsson from the City of Malmö chaired the panel discussion. The following topics were addressed in the panel discussion:

- "What is the ONE thing that you will remember from this conference?"
- What did you learn today that will help you to further develop your projects on sustainable food production and consumption?
- At the beginning of the conference, we heard how difficult it is a researcher to change roles and engage in a rather unknown adventure with people from practice and policy. What can researchers learn from this day and the whole project? What do you think is needed to encourage such engagement in future?
- As a policymaker, what do you think you could do to make this exchange happen? Where do you see the next steps for promoting/supporting sustainable food production and consumption across Europe?
- After having seen the examples across Europe, what do you think we can learn from a "flagship" approach as the Toronto Food Policy Council? Is there any inspiration from Europe that could be transferred to Canada?
- Where do you see the role of CSO in supporting sustainable food in future?
- What inspired you today for addressing the challenges you face regarding sustainable food production and consumption?



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