

CountrySide

European Landowners' Organization

N° 198

MARCH-APRIL 2022 - BIMONTHLY - EN



Forum for the Future of Agriculture 2022:

Striving for food system transformation

Per Espen STOKNES,
Ass. Professor BI Norwegian Business School



Contents

- 3** Closing speech of the month of March pronounced during the wrap-up session on March 29

- 7** Integrating climate mitigation and biodiversity regeneration in food system transformation

- 8** Unlocking greater collaboration between the EU and Member States to deliver food system transformation

- 9** Food price mechanisms: How does the food system pay for its true cost transformation?

- 10** Making healthy food the easier choice

- 11** Annual Conference closing session

- 12** Forum for the Future of Agriculture 2022 wrap-up session

- 14** The ForumforAg 2022 Month of March consisted also of moderated panel discussions and dialogues

- 16** ForumforAg 2022



Editorial

Thierry de l'ESCAILLE, *Secretary General*

The European Commission is indeed attempting to address the climate and biodiversity crises, however, in perspective, what is developing is unfortunately done in a hasty way, and so is addressing the urgency of the matter but is not taking into account the geostrategy of food security

Today the agricultural and forestry sectors are in an extremely complex position as one can no longer ignore the geostrategic situation. It is too short-sighted of the College of Commissioners to justify themselves by saying that it is only giving a non-binding vision when at the same time the Commission is also setting its ambitions into legislation.

Even the organic sector, which people thought to be greatly favoured by the Green Deal, has been plunged into an unprecedented market crisis: I can but be dismayed by the total lack of awareness of the problems of this sector and horrified to witness the growing numbers abandoning the sector as they shut down.

We expect the Commission to take responsibility for putting in place a policy that takes into account all three challenges at once. Let us give ourselves time for strategic reflection and not just "political" time, which is usually no more than one term of office.

Let us organise these sectors by giving them real prospects for the future and do so with the private companies, farmers and foresters to face the great challenges of climate change, biodiversity and food geostrategy. But please, let us work with them, and not in an empirical way.

The Green Deal must bring hope, it must be the occasion of a great evolution, and must, thanks to technological evolutions, allow us to stop consuming our planet but rather produce in a serious manner. It is under these conditions that we will be able to achieve the three objectives (biodiversity, climate, food security) without one destroying the other.



ForumforAg 2022 Team



Janez POTOČNIK, Opening speech of the Annual conference on March 15

Closing speech of the month of March pronounced during the wrap-up session on March 29

Janez POTOČNIK, Chair ForumforAg 2022 and Chairman RISE Foundation

We have now come to the end of a fascinating month of the Forum for the Future of Agriculture. Over these last weeks over 2000 of us have come together to debate and listen to the views and opinions of others on our food system. And in doing so, we have hopefully moved closer to breaking down the silos that surround us and finding the means to create transformation.

For those who joined us for the main day of the ForumforAg on the 15th of March, you will have heard from an impressive array of speakers - policy makers, farmers, food industry and NGOs. I don't have the time here to summarise each session, or to pay credit to each of the speakers and I urge those who haven't already, to visit the Forum website to re-watch the events. Instead, I will summarise what were for me some of the key messages that developed over the day.

Firstly, I was extremely encouraged to hear that every one of the speakers embraced the need to transform our food system. This may seem a small thing, but I can tell you, 10 years ago we were still debating if the food system needs to be changed. The acceptance that changes must happen

Janez POTOČNIK welcomed participants to the 2022 annual Forum on March 15th with its overarching theme of Striving for food system transformation.

He pointed out that the conference, meeting for the first time live and online since Covid had forced its cancellation in 2020 and restricted participation to online in 2021, was taking place *"under the shadow of the conflict in Ukraine"*.

He expressed the Forum's condolences and support to all those suffering in the war and warned it would have a substantial impact on Europe's food system.

However, the day's events should focus on the Forum's core mission: *"to contribute to realising the vision of sustainable agriculture in harmony with nature, where farmers can enjoy a decent life and all have access to healthy nutritious food"*.

should be recognised as an important first step forward, but the challenge now is that we need to find a way to make it happen. The most frequently repeated sentence by many in the last decade was that there is no more time to lose. These are messages given with good intention, and if given without intention, they are only phrases that make us feel better in the moment and serve only to lose us time.

It was suggested that we are still speaking different languages, and I have to

agree. Only by bringing everyone around the table, and jointly creating a true narrative framing the transformation can we move forward collectively. In In Per Espen words, *"we need to move beyond just the small story to a larger narrative"* and ask ourselves *"how can we paint an authentic story about what a nature positive and climate positive food system really looks like?"*

And metrics will play an important role here. Through metrics we can better un-

derstand the true cost of our food system, design our policies accordingly, transform our business models and better inform consumers. Metrics can help create the shared language we need.

Part of this narrative also lies with who holds the burden of transformation, an issue that was brought up repeatedly throughout the day. Farmers are often lauded as the solution, the ones that can simultaneously create resilience in our food systems, improve biodiversity and reduce GHG emissions, or the problem. But this was rightly questioned. Farmers can indeed be the solution, but the burden of change should not lie solely on their shoulders. There were calls for the responsibility, the cost, and the risk of the transformation to be equally and fairly shared amongst the whole food chain, from farm to fork.

I was particularly struck by the comment of one speaker, Zeno PIATTI, an Austrian organic farmer, a farmer who clearly wanted to do right by the environment, and the climate, but who honestly told the forum that market mechanisms are pushing farmers like him to marginalise biodiversity if they want to survive. On the one hand we have the courageous Green Deal pushing farmers in one direction, and market mechanisms in another. The comment of Mr PIATTI was the perfect example of the urgent need to align the two. And as Amina MOHAMMED succinctly put it, to stop investing in short term profits over long-

term goals aligned with maximisation of the social wellbeing.

The sharing of the burden of our food system will also fall on the consumer and this was a central part of the discussion of two of the sessions on food pricing. There is of course a concern that if we apply true cost accounting to food, we risk increasing the price of food which will hit the poorest the most. But as said by Pavan SUKHDEV, we are already paying for the externalities of food, only through different wallets. We have the money we pay for food through the supermarket wallet, but we also pay through the health wallet, the wallet for the costs to future generations and the wallet for the impact of climate change. The problem is only that these wallets are not kept in the same pocket, nor are the interests connected to them linked to same people.

The message on consumption also came through loud and clear. That if we want to transform our food system, a focus on production alone will never be enough. We must simultaneously address consumption and move our society towards a sustainable diet, for their health, and for the environment and climate. But again, without proper incentives coming from the market, it is hard to expect that people will behave responsibly against their rational behaviour incentives.

These debates, introduced at the main Forum, were taken further in over 14 we-

binars held throughout these two weeks – addressing transatlantic dialogue, innovation, livestock systems, scaling regenerative agriculture, soil, and biodiversity targets. Again, I urge you to go to the Forum website and watch again what were some excellent moments of the convergence of ideas.

The crisis in Ukraine has caused some of us to waver in our march forward for change. But it shouldn't. Yes, we do need to develop short term strategies to address the immediate worrying concerns regarding global food security, but I was encouraged to hear from Maciej GOLUBIEWSKI, the Head of Cabinet of Commissioner for Agriculture, Janusz WOJCIECHOWSKI that he believes this shouldn't be at the cost of long-term strategy of the Green Deal. Because crisis will keep coming, and they will keep coming faster and harder as the effect of climate change intensifies. And unless we take urgent action now, our resilience to buffer these inevitable future shocks will diminish, and the effects will be worse and more widespread.

Dear friends, Sustainable Development Goals have set the right compass to humanity, the European Green Deal is a visionary document acknowledging that future wellbeing depends on how we will build and respect our relation to nature, and the Farm to Fork Strategy is a well-intentioned and designed implementation document. The closer we come creat-



6R SERIES



**GO SMART,
DO MORE**

Are you fed up with scribbling notes and wasting time clicking on displays?
With **1-Click-Go - Autoseup**, you can reduce in-field setup time by up to 50%:
your preplanned work tasks in the Operations Center automatically appear on the
Gen4 Display when a machine with JDLink™ connectivity enters the field. All the
operator has to do is confirm the details with **one click**, and they're ready to go.

**SIGN UP FOR A FREE ACCOUNT AT
OPERATIONSCENTER.DEERE.COM**

**1CLICK-GO[📶]
AUTOSETUP**



JOHN DEERE

NOTHING RUNS LIKE A DEERE



ing concrete steps that require agreement and support, the higher the potential resistance and this comes with no surprise. But change is the only, at least reasonable, option. Constructive engagement on how to make this change happen, is thus the only logical approach. Also, when it comes to Farm to Fork document. Everything else would (again) postpone the necessary transition and this would not help anybody, including farmers.

Let's keep listening to one another and keep building a collective language to move forward, but...to really move forward.

Basically, there are two main problems, which would deserve special attention.

First, our focus and our behaviour are too much short-term based. This, through passing time, exposes all our problems linked to fragility and security, and the unwanted events are becoming even more frequent and severe. The Covid experience and the consequences of terrible war in Ukraine, are making that more than obvious. Fixing those consequences is of course necessary, but more than that, it is important to start systematically building more resilient economy and society. Only that way we can avoid, or at least limit, the shocks repetitively surprising us, and only that way we will remain credible when claiming necessary attention to be given to food, energy, metals, or any other security and strategical autonomy related challenges.

And second, our efforts to green/clean/

optimise existing economic model will unfortunately not be enough to meet the decarbonisation and decoupling targets and limit - in high-income countries reduce - the use of virgin natural resources. If questions related to over-consumption and to the shadows of resource-based imperialism, which have led us to huge resource import dependency, are not addressed sincerely and effectively, the divide among high- and low-income countries will only widen. This would not create conditions for the effective international partnerships and sharing of sovereignty needed will be needed. In this interconnected and interdependent world, partnerships based on fairness are critical if we want to fix the

challenges we are collectively facing. And we should not forget that standards and behaviour patterns linked to the current economic model were set by high-income countries. We are thus bound to show that we are willing and capable to change the reality we have created, and lead the transition efforts.

I know that the challenges we face today can at times seem insurmountable, but we as humans have risen time and time again through history to face enormous change. And as Margaret MEAD once said: *"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."*



SESSION 1

Integrating climate mitigation and biodiversity regeneration in food system transformation

During his address, Per Espen STOKNES, Ass. Professor BI Norwegian Business School, explored how to successfully convince the European Union's 450 million food eaters and all actors in the food chain to apply the solutions research and science are developing. He strongly counselled against an information deficit approach in which consumers are simply fed facts and data. "Research shows that showing people research doesn't work." Such a strategy prompts five psychological mechanisms. These are: distance (the problem is somewhere else), doom (a limited capacity for bad news), dissonance (tension between knowledge and action), denial (burial of uncomfortable facts) and identity (criticism of food choices is an attack on individuals).

He explained how five tools can overcome these negative reactions. Emphasise the social dynamic not facts and charts, keep it simple, make food communication supportive for health, opportunities and society, have signals for feedback and tell a story. "Each food comes with a story and we need to move from a small story to a larger narrative."

In the subsequent panel discussion, Alberto ARROYO SCHNELL, Head of Policy and Programme, International Union for Conser-



vation of Nature (IUCN) European Regional Office stressed the need for transformation. "All actors need to be part of the solution or we are doomed," he said, placing special emphasis on farmers as "from the environmental perspective, only farmers are the ones who can make a change".

During the panel, Robert HORSTER, Global Sustainability Director Agricultural Supply Chains and Food Ingredients & Head of Environmental Markets, Cargill, noted: "We need to produce more food with less emissions, thus preserving nature. That is almost an impossible jigsaw puzzle to solve." However, by combining momentum from companies, NGOs, banks, investors and governments and sufficient capital to scale up existing initiatives "we will be on our way".

Continuing the discussion, Heske VERBURG, Managing Director, Solidaridad Europe, speaking on zoom from Ghana, made a strong appeal to stop treating farmers as either victims or perpetrators of climate change. They should be considered "climate

heroes" using low carbon practices and the enormous potential to store it on their land. "We have to start paying for it and it should be a business case for farmers to transition to sustainable practices."

Adding to the dialogue, Dirk JACOBS, Director General, FoodDrink Europe, highlighted the "four Cs of crisis" companies face: covid, conflict of war, climate change and costs. He called for stability in business relations and "the need to build in derisking of transition, address volatility that will increase over time and incentivise farmers". Regulation can create the necessary conditions, but voluntary codes of conduct help set common visions and pathways for the way ahead.

There was general agreement among the panellists that farmers must play a key role in the transformation, they, especially small producers, require financial support, and the war in Ukraine should not deflect the EU from its current energy, environmental and agricultural strategies.



Dirk JACOBS, Robert HORSTER, Alberto ARROYO SCHNELL, Stephen SACKER, Heske VERBURG (on the screen)

SESSION 2

Unlocking greater collaboration between the EU and Member States to deliver food system transformation

Opening session 2 at the Annual Conference, Geneviève PONS, Director General of Europe – Jacques DELORS in Brussels, considered the national strategy plans to be “a laudable intention to give more responsibility to Member states” in implementing the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). However, she pointed to the absence of a direct link between the European Green Deal and the CAP and the inability of the Commission to reject a strategic plan if it does not comply with the EU’s wider environmental targets.

She highlighted that the Farm to Fork strategy is a step in the right direction, but fails to provide “the solid legal and political framework for the sustainable food system we need”. Calling for a clear compass to guide the transformation, she set out four ways a food policy could bridge EU and national activity. Policies need to be aligned under common objectives and principles, a long-term vision for transformation is required, the many separate initiatives should be brought together in a more coherent framework and responsibility for the transition must be fairly distributed along the food value chain.



During his remote intervention, Maciej GOLUBIEWSKI, Head of Cabinet of Commissioner for Agriculture, Janusz WOJCIECHOWSKI, emphasised the importance of the EU and member states working “hand in hand” to deliver an ambitious food system transformation. He stressed that the new policy transfers significant responsibility to member states for its implementation through national strategic plans. When the Commission approves the plans, it will ensure the necessary “connection between the agri-relevant parts of the Farm to Fork strategy and the new CAP”, while taking account of specific national circumstances.

Mr GOLUBIEWSKI, pointed out that the strategy is sufficiently flexible to take account of short to medium-term needs caused by the war in Ukraine and will be carefully monitored for its impact on food, incomes and security.

In the panel discussion, Achim IRIMESCU, Minister Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representation of Romania to the EU, supported the move towards green food, but reminded

the audience “we also have to bear in mind that agriculture should deliver sustainable food and food security”. He indicated most national strategic plans could be adopted before the summer and operate from January 2023. Legislation is also necessary to ensure proper implementation. He stressed the need for support to farmers in the challenges ahead. “It is very complicated for farmers to meet all these high standards without support from the entire food chain,” he said.

Zeno PIATTI, Austrian Farmer, Vice-President of the Austrian Land&Forst Betriebe, maintained that the debate was “a little bit naïve”. “Farmers are not going green simply because it doesn’t pay us. So, we are not acting accordingly,” he explained. That extra income should come either from higher prices for farmers or from public payments. He called for a redesign of supply chains to strengthen the position of farmers and payments for eco-system services that protect biodiversity and provide a stable climate.

Mr PIATTI criticised the national strategic plans, saying they were going in totally different directions. “We have distortions of the market where neighbouring farms with a border in between just compete on totally different levels.”

During the dialogue, Professor Peter PICKEL, John Deere Fellow and Manager External Relations, explained the vision behind the transition to agriculture 4.0. “We treat each plant as an individual.” Providing exact plant protection measures, fertilisers and water minimises inputs, maximises outputs and increases farmers’ incomes.

He called on governments to ensure that farmers have access to the finance needed to invest in the new technologies that will help them be more sustainable than in the past. Behind those technologies, he stressed, is the conviction “that they are giving the customer a value”.



Peter PICKEL, Zeno PIATTI, Achim IRIMESCU, Rose O'DONOVAN

SESSION 3

Food price mechanisms: How does the food system pay for its true cost transformation?

Máximo TORERO CULLEN, Chief Economist, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in the first keynote address of the session described the real price of food as a fair price that reflects all assets used in food production. *“It is a social price that exposes the harmful effects of child labour and prevents heritage being lost and it is a price that can help a consumer to choose more healthy options,”* he explained. Today, however, no unified standard or method exists, while measuring values across different dimensions requires much information and many assumptions.

Adopting a true cost approach will improve understanding of how to use inputs more efficiently and minimise externalities. It is of benefit to governments, investors, producers and consumers, identifying the real cost of inputs on the environment and the impact of the policies needed to create transformation of the agri-food system – a concept wider than food production alone.

Pavan SUKHDEV, Founder and CEO, GIST Impact, in the second keynote address, joining from Mumbai, maintained that existing food systems are broken in many ways. He

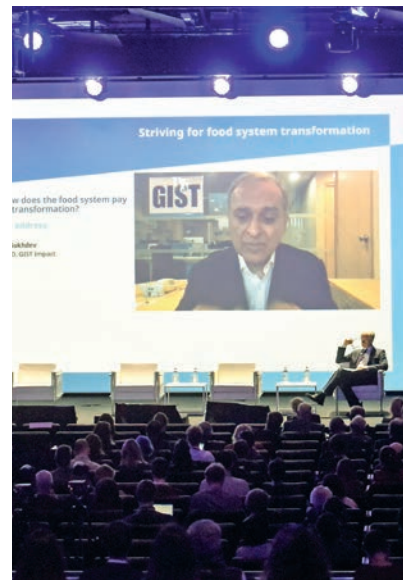


Maximo TORERO CULLEN

cited analysis showing that *“our diets have become the number one risk factor for global disease”* and the human food system accounts for around half of all greenhouse gas emissions. He forecast change is coming as food systems are revaluated and *“the huge externalities along the food chain have to be acknowledged, measured, valued and managed”*. In pressing for change, emphasis must be placed on the benefits for people and health.

Mr SUKHDEV said it is possible to comprehensively measure food systems. This holistic approach covers not just profit per hectare, but uses a template to assess entire food systems, measuring flows, and valuing outcomes and impacts, such as changes in natural, human and social capital.

During the panel session, Julia RISS, Head of Brussels Office, Rewe Group, described how her company had applied true cost accounting in a one-off experiment to the price



Paven SUKHDEV

of some of its staple products. It displayed these alongside the actual price charged, prompting considerable public and media interest. *“Our message was to create transparency and show our consumption has an impact,”* she said. She highlighted how the company is working with NGOs to improve biodiversity performance and reduce true costs. It supports farmers by paying them a premium for products on the way to being fully organic. This benefits consumers (more choice), the company (secure future organic produce) and farmers (rewards for their efforts).

Poppy EYRE, Innovation Support Officer at SusMetro for FoodSHIFT 2030, explained the manifesto ten young people had created in the FutureFoodMakers programme 2021. Their six-point Menu for Change included true cost accounting. This may not be reality today, but she predicted: *“My generation will definitely be seeing this.”* The 23-year old urged young people to think systemically and challenge the status quo and appealed to those in senior positions to help them. A radical shift in our economic systems is necessary and this will involve risk. *“Diving into the unknown is a scary thing to do, but I think it is our only option.”*

Cliona HOWIE DEL RÍO, CEO, Foundation Earth, stressed that true cost accounting must be science-based with data that are credible, transparent and drive change. Her organisation is developing an independent food and drink label. This brings *“asset and value to the whole value chain all the way down to farmers, giving merit where merit is due”*. An environmental scientist with 25 years' experience, she emphasised: *“We need to change the way we produce and cultivate food to give people better options.”* This requires a holistic and systemic approach, involves education and awareness and requires all the levers of change to be triggered simultaneously.



Cliona HOWIE DEL RÍO, Poppy EYRE, Julia RISS, Stephen SACKER

SESSION 4

Making healthy food the easier choice

During her keynote address, Stella KYRIAKIDES, Commissioner, Health and Food Safety, European Commission, emphasised the accountability of each generation to its successors. *"It is exactly for this reason that Europe simply cannot afford to make the mistake of scaling back our ambition to make our food systems, our agriculture, our food consumption more respectful to our planet,"* she said in a recorded keynote address.

She set out the goals of a future EU food eco-system: making food systems more resilient, exploring new ways of involving citizens and stakeholders and introducing a sustainable food labelling framework. *"Healthy people make for healthy economies and healthy societies."* The pathway ahead is clear, but for the much-needed transition to work, *"we look to all stakeholders in the food chain as well as our global partners for strong involvement and engagement,"* she told the Forum.

Silviu POPOVICI, CEO, PepsiCo Europe, speaking by remote connection, stated he was optimistic about the move towards healthier, more sustainable food because consumers, retailers, farmers and industry are all going in the same direction. He noted the company is drastically reducing

the sugar content of soft drinks, working towards artificial-free products and using portion controls to nudge customers to eat less. *"We are looking to transform the products we are selling to make healthier products a bigger part of our portfolio. We think that this transformation will make a massive difference in the way people eat and what they eat,"* he predicted.

PepsiCo is experimenting with internalising the price of carbon to make employees aware of its cost when taking decisions. But Mr POPOVICI warned: *"I think if you are factoring in externalities, our costs of doing business will go up and I don't think the consumer will be ready to pay for it."*

Jack BOBO, Director, Global Food and Water Policy, the Nature Conservancy, observed that the food environment has changed considerably in recent decades. The average American now eats 20% more calories than in 1970. He called for a reshaping of that environment, so it works for, not against, healthy choices. *"If we can make food taste good, people will just choose it. And more and more of the plate will become healthier and you won't have to force people to do it. They will do it because they want to."*

He argued that the current debate should not be framed as if agriculture is the problem. Farmers have made major strides in efficiency and output. If the sector was still using 1960 techniques, *"we would need one billion additional hectares of land to feed the world we have today,"* adding: *"I would frame it as agriculture is good and getting better, but not fast enough."*

Katrien VERBEKE, CEO Let Us, helps forge links between small scale initiatives and bigger players to overcome gaps in the



Stella KYRIAKIDES

food system. *"It is a lot about building relationships and thus building respect."* She worked in Belgium's first urban food policy, in Ghent. It established a food council involving different voices in the food system. This was responsible for deciding the direction the city should go and how to use its budget. Cities are taking the lead in this area as they are close to their local ecosystem and the wellbeing of their citizens, not making money, is their priority. She called on companies to be more purpose, rather than dollar, driven, and suggested they too should *"invite your stakeholders to decide where the money goes and how it is being invested in the right way."*

Mrs VERBEKE emphasised the power of food to create jobs and described schemes in Toronto and Ecuador to help people, particularly refugees, gain the necessary qualifications.



Silviu POPOVICI (on the screen), Katrien VERBEKE, Jack BOBO, Rose O'DONOVAN



CLOSING SESSION

Annual Conference closing session

Pascal LAMY, President of the Paris Peace Forum, Vice President of Europe Jacques DELORS, started the closing session by examining the future of agriculture in the context of global trade trends. He mentioned how previously, the debate had focused on the costs and benefits of protecting producers. That era is receding, mainly because prices for agriculture, and to some extent food, are on the medium to long-term rise. *"I think we are now moving in what I call the era of precaution, much more than protection. Producers are not the main issue in agri-food policy."*

He identified three key factors – nature, health and security – as *"the new set of objectives and targets in addressing the model of future farming and food in the European Union and this entails a transformation of the EU agri-food system"*. This involves a move towards more regenerative agriculture, regulation to protect human health and adoption of the necessary precautionary measures to ensure availability and affordability of food. He made a clear distinction between food security, which he supports, and food sovereignty, which he does not. The first *"is about providing food at an affordable price"*. The second *"is about producing what you eat"*.

Mr LAMY maintained that the Green Deal transition will require serious change in the common agricultural policy and that this had so far been *"significantly over-*

looked". The debate must be seen from a wider spectrum and involve a whole range of stakeholders. The former World Trade Organization Director-General said that the impact of the war in Ukraine was a good example of what happens when global food markets are disrupted. He strongly advised against introduction of export restrictions which would simply make matters worse, particularly for countries heavily dependent on Russian and Ukrainian cereals.

In her address to the Forum, Amina MOHAMMED, Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations & Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group, warned that every single Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) is in danger, as finance is channelled into *"short-term profit, rather than long-term resilience"*. This affects SDG 3 which calls for ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all ages. *"We*

must make healthy diets central to the transformation of food systems," she said in a video message to the Forum, identifying ways this could be achieved.

Targeted investment is needed to improve food quality and diversity; the food and agricultural sectors must be supported to increase availability of diverse, safe and nutritious foods; a food systems approach can make healthy foods cheaper and ensure access to affordable, sustainable diets for all; and measures must be in place to withstand shocks such as pandemics and climate change. The UN Food Systems Summit identified over 2,000 solutions. *"Let's use these tools to transform food systems, nourish humanity and build a healthier and more sustainable world for all,"* she said.

Janez POTOČNIK, Chair ForumforAg 2022 and Chairman RISE Foundation, bringing proceedings to a close, pointed out that the latest International Panel on Climate Change report made grim reading. *"Climate-related impacts are heating the world at the high end of what most of us predicted and at an accelerated rate."* The choice ahead is either to use the small window of opportunity that exists to manage *"the transition needed in an organised way or to wait till the consequences will force us to change. I do not need to explain to you what that will mean in real life."* He called for an intergenerational impact assessment to be mandatory for all policy proposals.

After thanking all involved in the day's events, he repeated his earlier plea for an end to *"the insane war"* and suffering in Ukraine. But finished on an upbeat note: *"Despite everything, stay optimistic. One should never forget optimists live longer and better."*





Mark TITTERINGTON, Martin GERZABEK (on the screen), Janez POTOČNIK

Forum for the Future of Agriculture 2022 wrap-up session

Janez POTOČNIK, Chair ForumforAg 2022 and Chairman RISE, opened the final session of the Forum's month-long series of events including the Annual Conference and various webinars to debate the future of food systems. He welcomed the fact all speakers had embraced the need for reform. To achieve that transformation, the whole food chain must be involved, not just farmers, and consumption, as well as production, must change, with both encouraged by proper market incentives.

Mr POTOČNIK agreed on the need to develop short-term strategies to address global food security concerns sparked by the war in Ukraine, but not at the cost of a long-term strategy. "Unless we take urgent action now, our resilience to buttress inevitable future shocks will diminish and the effects will be worse and more widespread," he warned. (You can read the full conclusions on pages 3 to 6 of this issue.)

Maciej GOLUBIEWSKI, Head of Cabinet of Commissioner for Agriculture, Janusz

WOJCIECHOWSKI, explained how the Commission is helping Ukrainian agriculture by facilitating land routes for its exports and providing diesel for its farmers. He was confident the EU would continue on the transformation path, while targeting short-term measures to help producers. He stressed that the EU was "ready to help those parts of the world that are really looking with fear at the possible consequences" of the war in Ukraine.

In a special interview, Robert BONNIE, United States Under Secretary of Agriculture, shared details of the administration's climate smart commodities programme to boost livestock and grain production, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and sequestering carbon. He emphasised the measurement, monitoring and verification features in the programme. "We are in essence asking the US taxpayer to come help our farmers, ranchers, forest owners put these practices in place," he said, adding: "Our best argument is to have data and to demonstrate that this can actually work."

Following on from the launch last November of the transatlantic platform for collaboration on agriculture, Under Secretary BONNIE described as "critically important" the exchange of information between EU and US scientists and farmers. "We are all in this together. I think there is a lot to learn."

During an online discussion, Galina PEYCHEVA-MITEVA, a Bulgarian farmer successfully practising regenerative agriculture, pointed

to the need for role models. "Farmers need practical evidence that the nature-positive approach will work economically before they try it on a large scale." With agriculture being increasingly considered in the context of climate change, unlike ten years ago, she was optimistic about the future. However, she urged decision-makers "to help farmers bear the costs associated with transitioning to sustainable farming".

Marie BRUESER, Entrepreneurship Leader at Thought For Food, explained her organisation helps start-ups throughout the food system. While finance is essential, the ex-

Telemak[®]
webcast
streaming
video services
www.telemak.com



Mark TITTERINGTON, Thierry de l'ESCAILLE, Jon PARR (on the screen)

perience of large companies and their support for new ideas is also needed. She too was optimistic about the way ahead. *"We have the people, the capital, the technologies, the knowledge. All of that combined creates a really good set-up and really good solutions that will create what we need."* But the real question is: *"Will be courageous enough to drive those forward?"*

Jon PARR, President of Syngenta Crop Protection, and Thierry de L'ESCAILLE, Secretary General, European Landowners' Organization, co-founders of the Forum almost 15 years ago, reflected on the success it has had in creating a space for an open and constructive exchange on agriculture and the environment – once seen as mutually exclusive. Both pointed to its ability to bring together prominent practitioners from different disciplines.

Mr PARR underlined the key contribution science can make, the need to *"make sure we continue to talk about nurturing innovation to solve the equations that are currently not working for us"* and the importance of discussion being followed by action.

Mr de l'ESCAILLE noted how the Forum tries to build a bridge between the covid, climate and conflict crises to develop better understanding, and solutions, of their impact on society and food systems. This year's Forum had aimed to give hope to farmers to ensure they *"can find a way, not only to be accepted by society, to be useful to society, but also to be sufficiently profitable in their businesses"*.

The presentation of the prestigious Land and Soil Management Award, brought the

ForumforAg 2022's month-long events to a close.

The Land and Soil Management Award was launched in 2008 by the European Landowners' Organization, under the auspices of the European Commission (DG Environment and the Joint Research Centre) and in association with the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU) of Vienna, Syngenta, as well as the Centre for Soil and Environmental Sciences of the Ljubljana University. Since then, the award jury has selected outstanding achievements throughout the EU in the field of sustainable soil and land management.

Prof Martin GERZABEK, Institute of Soil Research, Vienna, as president of the jury, announced that, from a field of 12, the *Geographical Institute Research Centre for Astronomy and Earth Sciences in Budapest* was this year's winner for its long-term agricultural trials. *"The jury was especially impressed by the long duration of the experiments of 19 years, which is not easy to achieve for a research institute,"* he said.

Andrea VETTORI, Member of Cabinet of Environment, Oceans and Fisheries Commissioner Virginijus SINKEVIČIUS, explained that 60-70% of soil ecosystems in Europe are downgrading. *"This is why many years ago, the European Commission, DG Environment, decided to partner with Syngenta and the European Landowners Organization to create the award."*

He announced diplomas of recognition to two further projects: French farm *Lo Biais al Maset*, Albi, which has been applying agri-

ecological measures for almost two decades and *GUT&BÖSEL Keyline agroforestry*, Germany, a regenerative organic farm that minimises soil erosion while enhancing biodiversity and careful use of water.

AGRILAND

Exploitant et/ou coordinateur d'exploitations agricoles

Belgique
support@agriland.be
☎ +32 (0)10 23 29 00

France
damien.deriberolles@agrilandfrance.fr
☎ +33 (0)6 50 98 17 13

www.agriland.be

The ForumforAg 2022 Month of March consisted also of moderated panel discussions and dialogues

You can watch the sessions on demand at replay of all the events at www.forumforagriculture.com/2022-videos

Pre-Forum Event
#ForumforAg 2022

If EU supply chains were free of deforestation, would it help reduce deforestation globally?

Monday, March 14
09:00-10:30 CET

More information at forumforagriculture.com



Event hosted by  

Pre-Forum Event
#ForumforAg 2022

Less talk, more action: turning the soil story around

Monday, March 14
14:00-15:30 CET

More information at forumforagriculture.com

Event hosted by  

Pre-Forum Event
#ForumforAg 2022

Carbon farming: how will it impact land use?

Monday, March 14
16:00-17:30 CET

More information at forumforagriculture.com

Event hosted by  

Pre-Forum Event
#ForumforAg 2022

Unlocking innovation: Start-ups voice

Monday, March 14
18:00-19:00 CET

More information at forumforagriculture.com

With the participation of:
    

Solutions Event
#ForumforAg 2022

Transatlantic dialogue on agri-food system resilience and sustainability

Wednesday, March 16
Available on demand

More information at forumforagriculture.com

Event hosted by  

Solutions Event
#ForumforAg 2022

Resource-oriented solutions for industrial wastewater treatment

Monday, March 21
10:00-13:00 CET

More information at forumforagriculture.com

Water2Return project
Final Conference

Event hosted by   

Solutions Event
#ForumforAg 2022

Reducing methane emissions in the agricultural sector

Monday, March 21
15:00-16:30 CET

This event is by invitation only

More information at forumforagriculture.com

Event hosted by  

Solutions Event
#ForumforAg 2022

Raising animal welfare and ethics in EU egg production - the example of ending chick culling

Tuesday, March 22
10:00-11:15 CET

More information at forumforagriculture.com

Event hosted by  

Solutions Event
#ForumforAg 2022

Unleashing the potential of innovation

Explore how Syngenta innovations are establishing a new paradigm for sustainable agriculture

Tuesday, March 22
14:00-15:30 CET

More information at forumforagriculture.com

Event hosted by  

Solutions Event
#ForumforAg 2022

The true cost of food – from shifting markets to informing policy

Thursday, March 24
10:30-12:00 CET

More information at forumforagriculture.com

Event hosted by  

Solutions Event
#ForumforAg 2022

Developing and scaling regenerative agriculture

Thursday, March 24
15:30-16:45 CET

More information at forumforagriculture.com



Event hosted by  

Solutions Event
#ForumforAg 2022

Improving water resiliency through nature-based solutions and regenerative agriculture

Thursday, March 24
17:15-18:30 CET

More information at forumforagriculture.com

Event hosted by  

Policy Event
#ForumforAg 2022

Converging views towards a sustainable EU food system

Monday, March 28
10:30-12:00 CET

More information at forumforagriculture.com



Policy Event
#ForumforAg 2022

Global biodiversity targets: which role for agriculture?

Monday, March 28
15:00-16:30 CET

More information at forumforagriculture.com

Event hosted by    

Visit www.forumforagriculture.com to watch videos and read summaries from Czech Republic Regional Edition

**Prague, Czech Republic
Wednesday, May 18, 2022**

 **Forum for the Future of Agriculture™**



The Editorial team would like to convey special thanks to Annabelle WILLIAMS, Rory WATSON and Ian COLLINS for their contribution to this special "CountrySide Magazine" edition.

The annual Forum for the Future of Agriculture was founded by the European Landowners' Organization (ELO) and Syngenta; they were joined by Cargill, IUCN, The Nature Conservancy, Thought for Food, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, WWF Europe as strategic partners.

The ForumforAg 2022 brings together a wide and diverse range of stakeholders to inspire new thinking on how European and global agriculture needs to respond to the major challenges of delivering both food and environmental security.

Created in 2008 in response to the belief that many of Europe's agricultural and environmental policies focused on solving yesterday's problems such as overproduction, the Forum instead deals with the challenges and market opportunities of the future.

These include: feeding a growing world population, demands for a higher quality diet, developing renewable sources of energy and changing weather patterns. With limited arable land available globally, there is a need to maximize production on existing cultivated land, but to do so in a sustainable manner while protecting and expanding biodiversity and the climate.

The theme of the Forum for the Future of Agriculture's Month of March events was 'Striving for food system transformation' and included open discussions on topics ranging like 'Integrating climate mitigation and biodiversity regeneration in food system transformation', 'Unlocking greater collaboration between the EU and Member States to deliver food system transformation', 'Food price mechanisms: How does the food system pay for its true cost transformation?', 'Making healthy food the easier choice' and many others.

The discussions in Brussels will continue during the ForumforAg 2022 regional events, taking place in Czech Republic on May 18 and in Sweden on December 1.

The ForumforAg 2022 Team

Sustainability at ForumforAg 2022

ForumforAg 2022 has chosen to work with "CO2logic" to ensure our event is sustainable. The CO2-Neutral Label guarantees that labelled organisations are actively calculating, reducing and compensating their local and global climate impact.

For more information on CO2logic visit www.co2-neutral-label.org

Let's increase our food supply
without
reducing theirs

the good growth plan

Syngenta Brussels Office
Avenue Louise, 489,
B-1050 Brussels
Tel: +32.2.642 27 27
www.syngenta.com
www.goodgrowthplan.com

syngenta



The ForumforAg 2022 Team would like to thank the Founding and Strategic partners of the Forum for the Future of Agriculture for their strong commitment. It enables the Forum to remain the premier meeting place for an open dialogue on global food systems.

Welcoming Estates Website

**Spring is in the air at the Welcoming Estates!
Discover one near you or make it your holiday destination!**

Follow us on Instagram and Facebook
for the latest developments.

More information on :
www.welcomingestateswebsite.com



CountrySide
is a publication of the ELO
in English and French

5 Euros

Publisher :
Thierry de l'Escaille
Chief editor :
Emmanuelle Mikosz
Text editor :
The ForumforAg 2022 Team

Design & proof readers
Jehanne de Dorlodot - Verhaegen
José Mª Gomez-Acebo Rosas

Back office:
Adriana Escudero

Rue de Trèves, 67
B - 1040 Bruxelles
Tel. : 00 32 (0)2 234 30 00
Fax : 00 32 (0)2 234 30 09
countryside@elo.org
Internet Site : www.elo.org