

Action Framework on Food and Population

A declaration of basic principles by participants in the Food and Population Roundtable
November 21, 2009. Held at Ryerson University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Full Spectrum Global Justice

Justice is the guiding principle for developing food and population policies; it implies that all people at all times must be able to acquire, in a dignified manner, adequate quantity and quality of culturally and personally acceptable food.

***A sustainable humankind needs more justice, a fairer distribution of wealth and adequate reproductive rights for women, including access to family planning information and services and maternal health care.**

Secure Food Supply

A resilient food system is necessary for a just and sustainable world. For that purpose it is imperative to diversify food production. Achieving food security requires local sovereignty in choice of seeds and method of agriculture; stopping urban sprawl, by narrowing the rural-urban divide and implementing land reform, and job creation by offering sustainable livelihoods on the farm. Large scale mono-crop agriculture is environmentally damaging, depends on a diminishing fuel supply, and is vulnerable to disease and climate change. Small scale, high diversity local food production is more resilient.

***Seed diversity and an appropriate mix of methods of agriculture is needed for achieving the optimum of quality, quantity and resilience for the world food supply.**

Sustainability in the Long Term

Integrity of the world's ecosystems is primary, and global food production is limited by the ecological capacity of the planet. The minimum food consumption per person is given by the metabolism of the human body: typically 100 Watt or 2000 Calories/day. Global minimal food consumption follows by multiplying this amount by the global population. Together with the limits to global food production, this calorie need determines the maximum sustainable world population due to food constraints. The limits of population that might be sustained can be increased by reducing consumption of the rich, through emphasis on vegetarian diet, and elimination of agrofuels, and by reducing reliance on the unsustainable western industrial model of agricultural production and promoting the local, small farm based on self-reliant agro-ecology.

***Keeping lifestyles and population adjusted to the global and regional carrying capacity is necessary to sustain peace and human life on Earth.**

Implementation of the Food and Population Action Framework

Decisive action is urgently needed to: secure a sustainable food system and equitable access to food; empower women, educating them and providing them economic opportunity as a way to ensure more resilience to communities; rebuild the relationship between people and the land, and between those who grow and harvest food and those who eat it. These actions must respect traditional knowledge, cultural differences, and the integrity of the ecosystem. Increasing population and the need for reduced consumption by the rich and increased consumption by the poor, for the sake of global justice and equity, make action urgent, as do the threats to food production from climate change, loss of agricultural land, water scarcity, wars, and military occupations.

***Politicians, journalists, educators, religious and business leaders, and activists are called upon to use this Food and Population Action Framework for implementing change towards greater sustainability, and global justice and equity. We invite further comments and suggestions.**

Global Issues Project, Science for Peace & Canadian Pugwash

GIP: <http://www.scienceforpeace.ca/global-issues-project> & <http://www.pugwashgroup.ca/>

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