

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about the 'Long Food Movement' report:

What does a 'Long Food Movement' mean? Aren't food movements already working together?

A 'Long Food Movement' is the highly collaborative force that we hope will emerge over the coming years as those already working together for sustainable and equitable food systems do so ever more closely. It refers to the collective activities and umbrella strategies of civil society and social movements – from grassroots organizations to international NGOs, from farmers' and fishers' groups to cooperatives and unions.

Does a 'Long Food Movement' mean organizations giving up their autonomy?

The idea is not to get everyone on the exact same page, but to help them to assemble their separate pages into a powerful plan of action toward 2045. Organizations would remain diverse and independent, even as their strategies are – we hope – increasingly aligned.

Why pin our hopes on civil society?

Without food movements playing a leading role, we find it hard to envisage anything like the scale of food system change that is required. But civil society and social movements cannot do it alone. They will need to apply constant pressure on governments to act in the public interest, as well as working with political parties, scientists, businesses, foundations, and many others.

Why should CSOs dedicate more time to working together when it takes resources away from immediate struggles?

Collaboration does require time and energy, and that's why developing low-cost, high-impacts modes of collaboration is one of the four key transformation pathways of a Long Food Movement. The idea of a Long Food Movement is to enhance connections and information flows between different struggles, not to replace one with another. Foresight around the planned expansion of an agribusiness commodity chain, or the rise of new biodigital players, could be what helps rights defenders stop a resource grab in its tracks.

The future is very unpredictable – what is the point of trying to plan 5, 10 or 20 years ahead?

The biggest shocks of recent years (e.g. mass extinctions of species, wildfires) were predictable and predicted – not in date and detail, but in parameters and probability. We know that hurricanes, floods, and droughts are followed by epidemics and famines. Every large-scale natural disaster can reasonably be assumed to entail economic shocks and political upheaval. We can't predict the future, but we can and must be ready to act when largely foreseeable events (what we call 'Grey Swans') occur.

Is this report against technologies? Don't we need new ag innovations to address climate change and other threats?

Technological innovations are central to the civil society-led transformation described in this report, from small-scale drones for field monitoring to consumer apps for true cost accounting and new tools for instantaneously decoding negotiating texts. But we also sound a warning about agribusiness-led technological trajectories. Instead of addressing the urgent problems we face, corporate innovation pathways are based on finding new growth markets for the latest breakthroughs in data science and molecular biology. They will reduce people's autonomy, drive people off the land, remove workers from supply chains, and put food security at the mercy of high-risk data-driven systems.

If 'agribusiness-as-usual' will lead to a dystopian future, does that mean that all private companies are part of the problem?

The agribusiness-led strategies we warn about in this report are driven by new corporate giants (from data platforms to private equity firms) who are teaming up with multinational agribusinesses to disrupt and extract value from every node of the food system, as well as shutting down democratic governance. But many businesses will neither benefit from nor subscribe to this vision. Sustainable businesses – from living-wage-paying supply chain operators to cooperative-owned grocery stores – are a key part of the sustainable food systems of the future, and key participants in a 'Long Food Movement'.

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