

JRT Newsletter

November 2022



Just
Rural
Transition



Dear JRT,

COP27 put food systems higher up the agenda than ever before. The Just Rural Transition was a proud sponsor of the first ever [Food Systems Pavilion](#), which, fittingly, was next to the Just Transition pavilion. It featured many well-attended sessions on topics ranging from soil health to intergenerational climate justice. Together with the first Food and Agriculture Pavilion and the Food4Climate Pavilion, they provided much-needed spaces for energetic discussions and coalition-building.

The Adaptation & Agriculture Day – at which the Egyptian COP Presidency launched its Food and Agriculture for Sustainable Transformation (FAST) initiative – ensured food systems were more prominent than ever. The Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture received a new four-year mandate and the FAO [announced plans](#) to develop a road map to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from food systems.

It is inspiring to see the momentum building, but to ensure that action is timely, effective and lasting, governments must work closely with those who are at the heart of our planet's food systems and on the frontlines of the climate crisis.

In Sharm El Sheikh, the most inspiring interventions by far came from representatives of smallholder farmers, Indigenous peoples, youth and women. Their passion, their insights and knowledge of the challenges facing food producers right now, and their hopes and aspirations for the future changed the dynamic of the discussions. I hope that future COPs will create more opportunities for front-line community representatives to attend, and that for all similar dialogues – at regional, national and local level – we take heed of what they have to say.

All the best,

Melissa Pinfield,
Executive Director,
Just Rural Transition

Policy

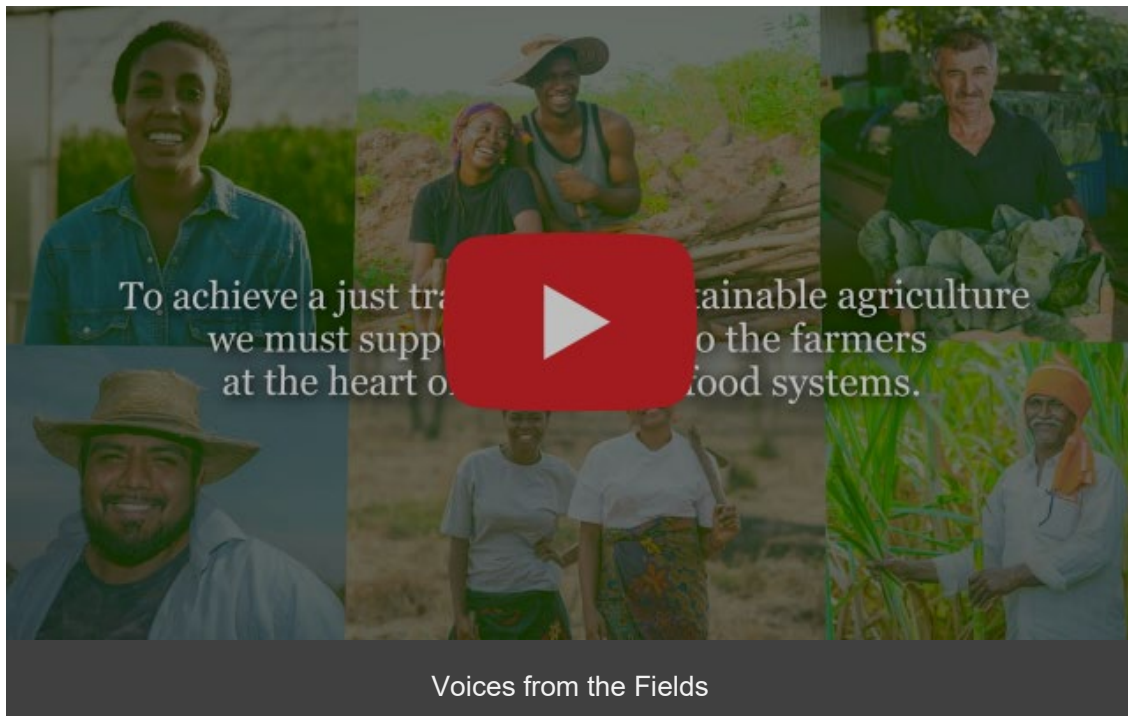
COP27: Making public funding for agriculture work for people, climate and nature



It is vital that governments make the best use of public funding to drive forward a **transition to sustainable food systems**. That's why, at COP27, we held a joint event with the **Food System Economics Commission** and the **International Food Policy Research Institute**, [Repurposing Public Support to Food and Agriculture to Enable a Just Rural Transition](#). We heard from policymakers, researchers, business leaders and farmers at the heart of food systems. Ishmael Sunga, CEO of the **Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions**, who represents farmers from across that region, pointed out that: "Farmers have not been part of the conversation around repurposing government support, yet this conversation is about them."

It's for that very reason that we partnered with **World Farmers' Organisation** in 2021 and 2022 to convene a series of virtual and in-person **dialogues with farmers**, farmers' organizations, researchers, civil servants and other key stakeholders in agricultural policy. Our [policy brief](#) distilling their insights and recommendations was launched at COP27 and used to spark discussion at the [Regional Farmers Forum East and Southern Africa](#) last week, during the side event: **Engaging Farmers in Policymaking Processes**.

[Read the brief](#)



Investment

COP27: Financing a sustainable and just food system transition

Public and private financial institutions play a vital role in **raising the ambition in finance** for sustainable and equitable food systems, and that was the topic under discussion at [our COP27 joint event](#) with the **Good Food Finance Network (GFFN)**.

At the event, members of GFFN's **High Ambition Group** – investors who together oversee more than \$113 billion in assets in the agri-sector – presented their specific and time-bound **targets** for sustainability and social justice which include key issues such as **zero deforestation**, **carbon removal** and **gender equality**. This laid the ground for a discussion with farmers and community representatives on **implementation**.



Audience member Khoushou Singh Sewraj, a farmer herself and vice-president of the FALCON Young Farmers in Mauritius, said: “We cannot just rely on the government to take initiatives on financing, we need the private sector to step in. Linkages have to be created on the public and private side [using] co-solution and co-participation as a strategy forward.”

At the same event we were pleased to announce the new report, **Scaling private sector investment in sustainable rice: Needs and opportunities**, co-produced by JRT, the [World Business Council for Sustainable Development](#) and the [Sustainable Rice Platform](#), with technical input from the [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations](#) (FAO). Using the latest research by the [Sustainable Rice Landscape Initiative](#), an international consortium mobilizing finance for sustainable rice cultivation for 260 million smallholder farmers across Asia, the report lays out a road map to helping rice farmers adopt sustainable practices.

Business leadership on redirecting public funding for sustainable food systems

The world is spending **\$1.8 trillion** annually on **environmentally harmful subsidies**, and reform could unlock over **\$700 billion** a year to help reverse nature loss and reach net zero by 2050. For businesses, reforming subsidies could enable them to achieve **sustainability goals**, mitigate supply chain and reputational risks, and transition towards a **net zero, nature-positive** and **equitable future**.

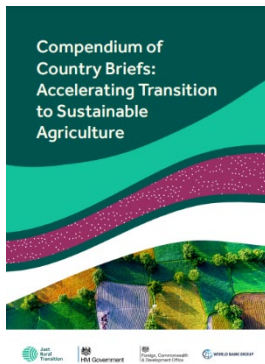
At a [consultation](#) at the start of this month the [World Business Council for Sustainable Development](#) brought business leaders together to update them regarding the global agenda on repurposing agricultural subsidies and explore how businesses can play their part.

Knowledge sharing



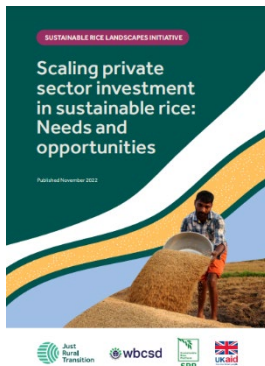
[Agricultural Policy that Delivers for People, Climate and Nature: Practical Perspectives from Farmers](#)

To achieve a just transition to sustainable food systems we must learn from the unique experiences and expertise of farmers. In partnership with the World Farmers' Organisation, JRT convened a series of dialogues with farmers, farmers' organizations, researchers, civil servants and other key stakeholders in agricultural policy. This brief distils their key insights and recommendations.



[Compendium of Country Briefs: Accelerating Transition to Sustainable Agriculture](#)

This new compendium showcases the ways in which governments have enacted policies for sustainable agriculture. Compiled by the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office and the World Bank, the compendium brings together evidence, knowledge and experiences from around the world with the aim of inspiring similar policy efforts in other countries.



[Scaling private sector investment in sustainable rice: Needs and opportunities](#)

Targeted investment partnerships are vital to achieving sustainable rice production and ensuring that farmers are not left behind in the transition, this report concludes. Two new finance tools are already being developed based on the report's findings: a blended finance facility and an accelerator for nature-based rice solutions.

Community and announcements

[Businesses and farmers are ready to transform food systems. Will governments join them?](#)

During COP27, **Ishmael Sunga**, CEO of the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions, teamed up with **Tony Siantonas**, director of the Scaling Positive Agriculture project at the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, to bring some very important messages to light. In an opinion piece in Thompson Reuters Context they urged governments to work with farmers and the private sector to unlock creative, near-term solutions that align incentives, attract investment and spur innovation for nature-positive agriculture.

[Read the piece](#)

Finally, don't forget to take a look at JRT's new YouTube channel! The [Voices from the Fields](#) video is there, along with the recorded [live streams](#) of our COP27 [events](#).

[Take a look](#)

Interested in being part of the just transition?

The JRT Vision Statement is open for endorsement by governments and other key stakeholders and we welcome your support.

[Read our Vision Statement here](#), and click the button below to submit an application.

[Click here to submit an application](#)

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