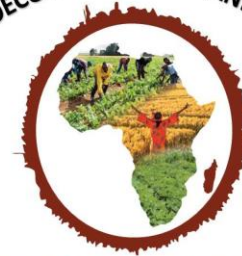


TRANSFORMING AGRICULTURE IN AFRICA  
AGROECOLOGY and ORGANIC TRADE



*Reducing Synthetic Pesticides and Fertilizers*

# COHERENT POLICIES DRIVING SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Dr. Frank Eyhorn  
Vice-President, IFOAM – Organics International  
Senior Advisor, HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation

# Food systems provide a key lever for change

## From problem....

Greenhouse gas emissions

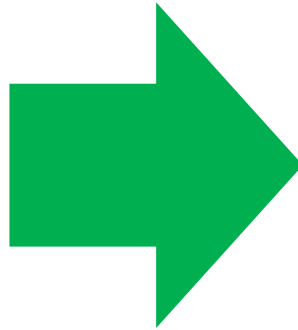
Soil erosion

Biodiversity loss

Water crisis

Rural poverty

Noncommunicable diseases



## .... to solution

Carbon sequestration

Soil fertility

Agri-biodiversity

Water retention

Rural incomes

Healthy nutrition

Contributing to the  
Sustainable Development  
Goals (SDGs)





# What kind of change is needed?



**"The agricultural transformation involves rapid growth in use of purchased inputs and in marketed output."**

(AGRA: Africa Agriculture Status Report 2018)

Or:

**"... build a new global food system, based on equity, participation, democracy, and justice, that is not only sustainable but helps restore and protects earth's life support systems upon which we all depend."**

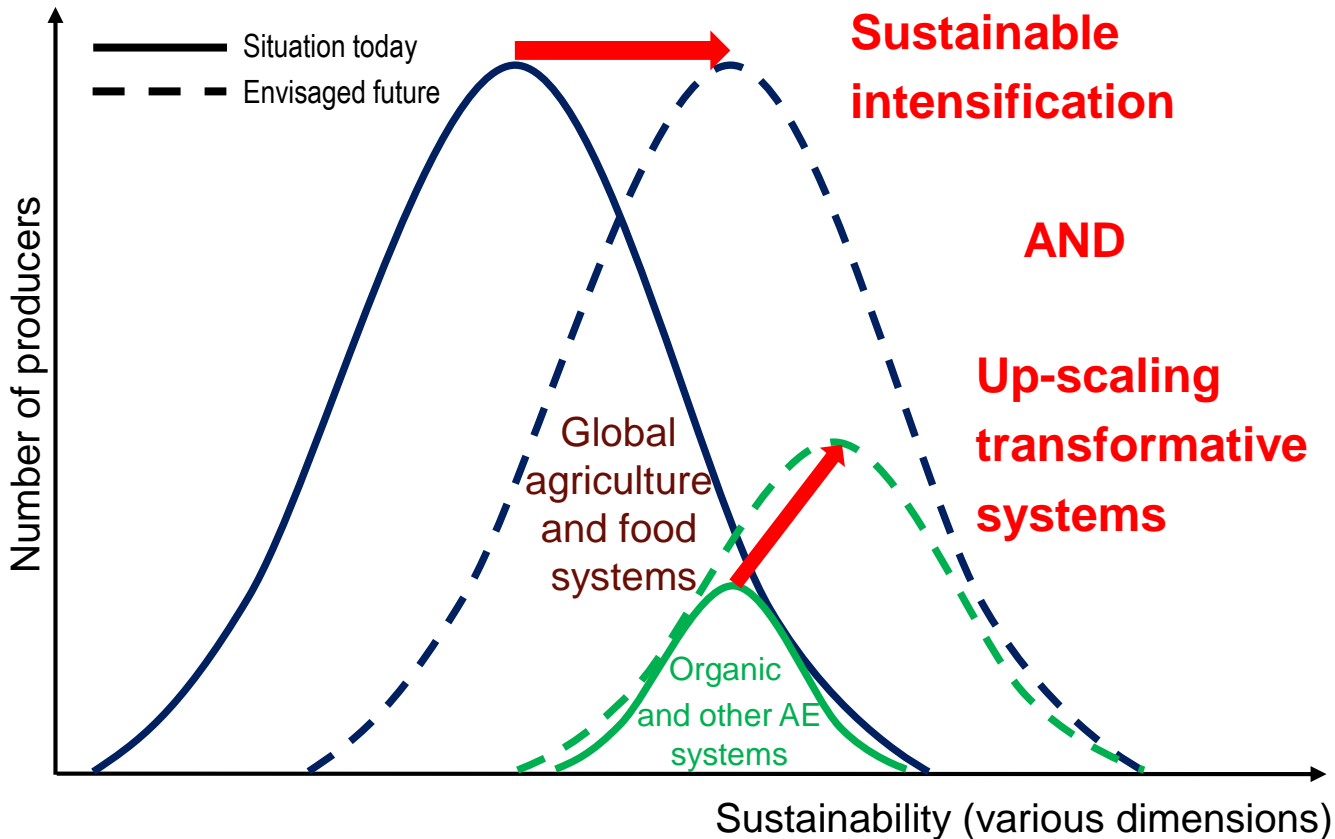
(Gliessmann 2016: Transforming food systems with agroecology)

# What kind of change is needed?



Sustainability (various dimensions)

# Reconciling competing narratives



- Defines “the rules of the game”
- Steers through taxes, subsidies, and support programs
- Influences business practices and prices
- Triggers research and innovation
- Influences public awareness and consumer behaviour

**→ Perpetuating unsustainable practices and behaviours**

**OR**

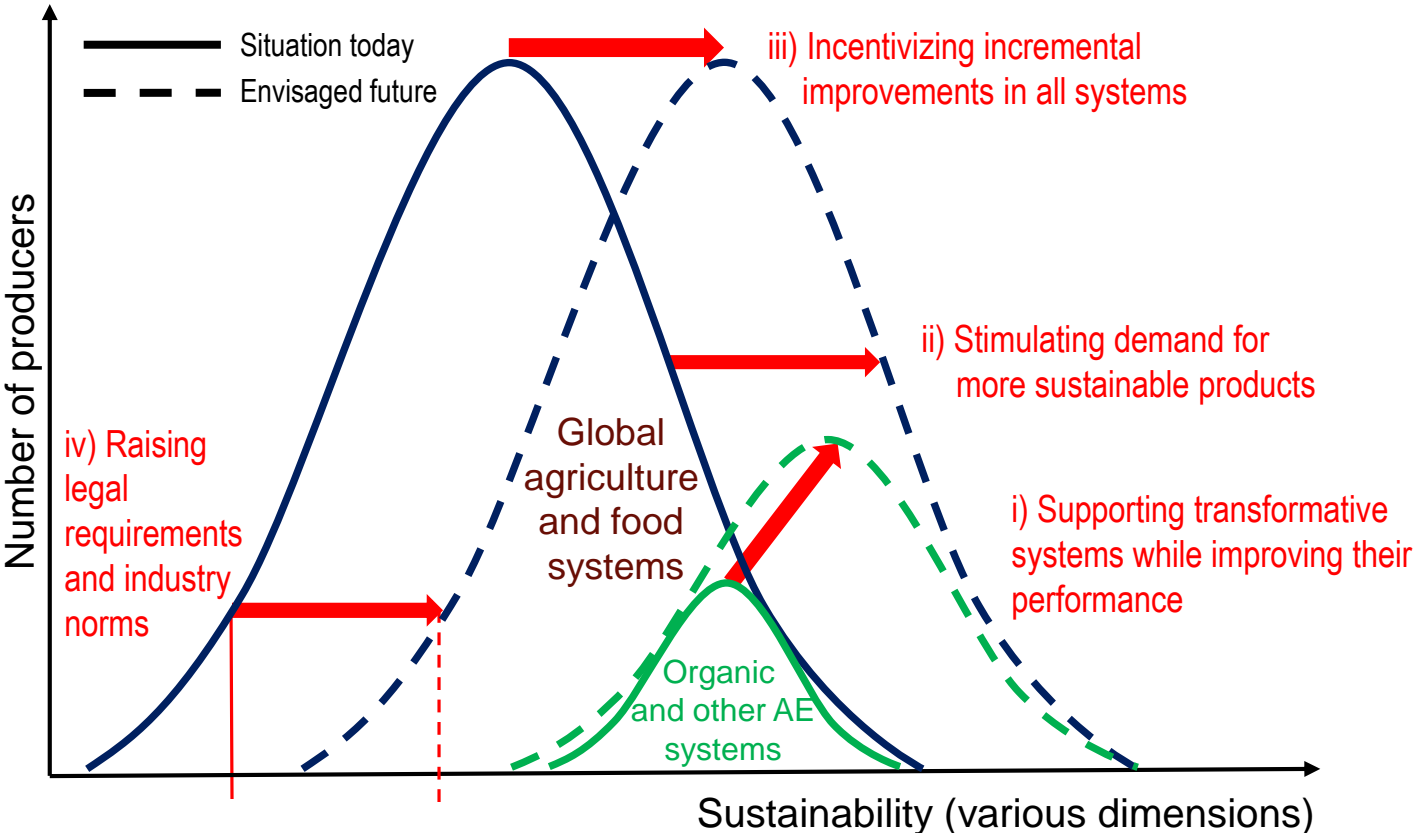
**→ Triggering more sustainable ones?**

- Subsidies for fertilizers and seeds (60% of agricultural budget)
- Subsidies for machinery and irrigation (30%) and services (10%)
- Support for export commodities
- Temporary restrictions on food exports
- Declining support for agricultural research and knowledge dissemination

(Source: FAO 2018: Agricultural policy incentives in Sub-Saharan Africa)



# Policy levers to drive sustainability



Eyhorn, F., Muller, A., Reganold, J.P., Frison, E., Herren, H.R., Luttikholt, L., Mueller, A., Sanders, J., Scialabba, N., ... Sustainability of global agriculture driven by organic farming. *Nature Sustainability* 2 (2019) 253–255.

# Ways forward – What governments should do

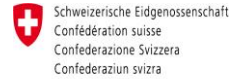
- 1. Coherently align policies with the SDGs**
- 2. Only support systems that deliver to the SDGs  
«Public funds for public goods!»**
- 3. Invest in research and technical assistance that enhances the required transformation**
- 4. Prohibit harmful practices (e.g. highly hazardous pesticides)**
- 5. Overcome vested interests that unduly influence policies**
- 6. Provide adequate resources to make the change happen**

# Thanks!

ANY QUESTIONS?

You can find me at

[frank.eyhorn@helvetas.org](mailto:frank.eyhorn@helvetas.org)



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and Cooperation SDC



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