

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

To underpin the security of future generations, in the face of ecological breakdown, the regeneration of Earth's soils should become a foundational priority for all governments, food businesses, individual land managers and citizens.

Seven key recommendations

- 1. Governments should formally recognise healthy soil as a strategic asset, critical for maintaining food and societal security.**
- 2. Multi-outcome land use should be delivered by land managers as standard and holistic solutions and metrics should be widely adopted to inform policy and practice.**
- 3. Government financial support should be rapidly targeted towards agroecological solutions.**
- 4. To ensure accuracy when assessing the global warming impact of farm businesses, GWP* should be adopted as the standard metric.**
- 5. Businesses should step up and deliver soil sustainability in their supply chains.**
- 6. Governments should commission a threat assessment to better understand the security risks associated with soil degradation and ecological breakdown in their nation.**
- 7. Defence departments should work with departments for agriculture and the environment to jointly oversee delivery of increased food sovereignty and the regeneration of soil function.**

All recommendations

1. Governments should formally recognise healthy soil as a strategic asset, critical for maintaining food and societal security.
2. Governments should commission a threat assessment to better understand the security risks associated with soil degradation and ecological breakdown in their nation.
3. Strategic defence departments should work with departments for agriculture and the environment to jointly oversee delivery of increased food sovereignty and the regeneration of soil function and hydrology, in order to ensure food availability in times of need, and better drought resilience and flood protection.
4. Governments of all nations should develop a National Plan for Agricultural Land Use and Food Production.
5. This Plan should be multi-agency and aligned across government: food, agriculture, environment, health and strategic defence.
6. Planning should recognise the interconnected nature of ecological breakdown and seek solutions that restore ecological balance.
7. Governments should take action to boost national food sovereignty and increase national nutritional independence to at least 80%.
8. Multi-outcome land use should be delivered by land managers as standard – for example, a combination of food and fibre production,

global warming mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity regeneration, improved hydrology, better jobs, renewable energy production and improved amenity.

9. To assist a multi-outcome approach, holistic solutions and metrics should be widely adopted to inform policy and practice – the Global Farm Metric is particularly robust.
10. To ensure accuracy when assessing the global warming impact of farm businesses, GWP* should be adopted as the standard metric. As set out in this report, the IPCC has recognised that GWP100 overstates the warming impact of constant methane emissions by a factor of 3-4.
11. Where the State provides financial support for agriculture, carbon footprinting (with GWP*) should be a condition of eligibility.
12. Government financial support should be rapidly targeted towards agroecological solutions and the delivery of other ‘public goods’ that restore ‘natural capital’.
13. Government support for the production and use of fossil fuel-based farm inputs should be rapidly phased out.
14. Governments should ensure that each farmer and every hectare is supported in the transition to agroecological food production.
15. Governments should invest in, or otherwise financially facilitate, the development of infrastructure aimed at shortening supply chains and helping farmers process and retail their own products individually or co-operatively. This infrastructure may include local abattoirs, processing facilities and distribution and marketing capacity.
16. The Agroecology Development Bank, proposed by the Food, Farming & Countryside Commission, should be adopted in the UK and used as a model for other nations.
17. Governments should actively pursue strategies to support markets in fibre from livestock as well as food.
18. Governments, food businesses and civil society should invest in good agroecological knowledge-sharing and round-the-clock advice.
19. Agricultural colleges and universities should rapidly transition their programmes to focus on agroecology and regenerative practice.
20. To reduce the risk of zoonotic disease governments should ensure global protection of all remaining wild spaces, and prioritise the rapid restoration of key habitats and wildlife corridors.
21. Governments should take action to ensure that soil ecology is considered a shared asset of society rather than a profit centre.
22. Businesses should step up and deliver soil sustainability in their supply chains.
23. Natural capital costs that have been externalised, to taxpayers and the public, should be re-integrated with the costs of production.
24. Regeneration of soil health should become a board-level responsibility for all businesses engaged in any land management activity.
25. Dietary change is essential, but not to ultra-processed foods. Governments, food businesses and schools should promote increased food seasonality, whole foods, freshness and greater nutritional diversity.
26. Clear mandatory food labels should provide farm system information for citizens.

27. Food waste should be fundamentally eliminated, and major food businesses should be mandated to take greater responsibility.
28. International mechanisms to ensure the fair distribution of staple and commodity ingredients should be considered.
29. Society should invest in the science of soil, but also value the experience of farmers. Academic knowledge and practical experience are both helpful. We should move past a mindset that allows 'the perfect to be the enemy of the good'.
30. We should be braver – farmers should choose to focus on profitability rather than yield, and the era of simplification should be swiftly replaced by a new paradigm centred on ecological complexity and connectivity.