

## A framework to characterize the diversity of food systems and their transition pathways

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**Abstract:** Dominant food systems are configured from the productionist paradigm, which focuses in producing large amounts of inexpensive and standardized foods. These food systems are argued to no longer fit-for-purpose and have been proven unsustainable in environmental and social terms. However, these systems continued to be supported worldwide. In line with the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals, a sustainable transition from the dominant food systems to alternative ones around the wider principles of sustainable production and rural development is an urgent need. Promoting such a sustainable transition requires of a diagnostic of food system types and transition states to see patterns of more and less sustainable characteristics in food systems.

This paper presents a framework based on the Multi-Level Perspective on Socio-Technical Transitions to characterize the diversity of food systems and formulate scenarios on potential future transition pathways. Implementation of the framework can provide information to support redesign of current unsustainable mainstream food systems and facilitate a long-term sustainable transition.

**Keywords:** food system, sustainability transition, innovation, niche, regime