

Presentation of our project results: FORESEE (4Cs) Report Series on Food Systems Transformation, July 2021 – Dec. 2024

TMG Research gGmbH

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ThinkTankforSustainability

Töpfer Müller Gaßner GmbH

**IMPACTS
OF
FOOD**

based on a decision of
the German Bundestag



Understanding the transformation context

FROM

WHAT

What are the challenges or problems?

WHY

Why do we need to change?

TO

HOW

How can the transformation be achieved?

WHO

Who bears most responsibility & who will provide the funding?

The FORESEE Report Series

Problem analysis

- No consensus on transformation pathways
- Weak governance structure
- Lack of understanding on the HOW

Approach

- Literature review
- Framework analysis
- 3 Workshops with Expert Advisory Group
- Online expert consultations

Results

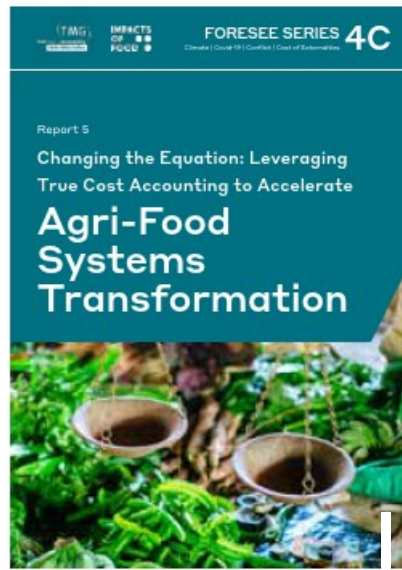
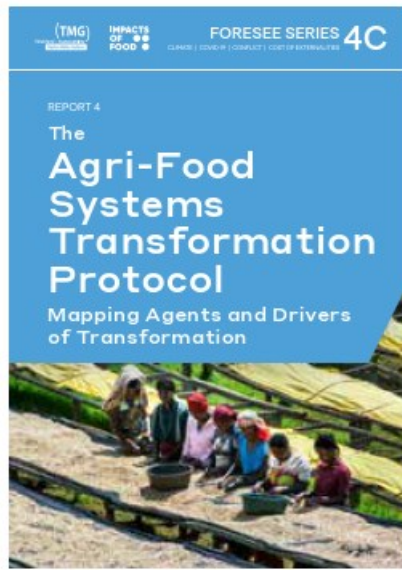
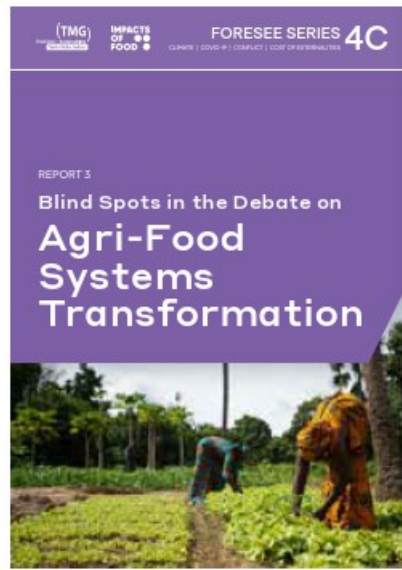
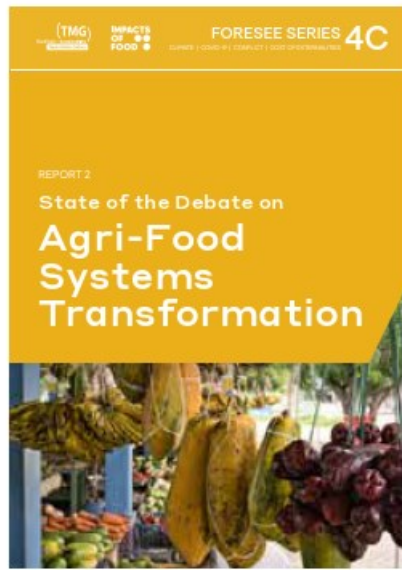
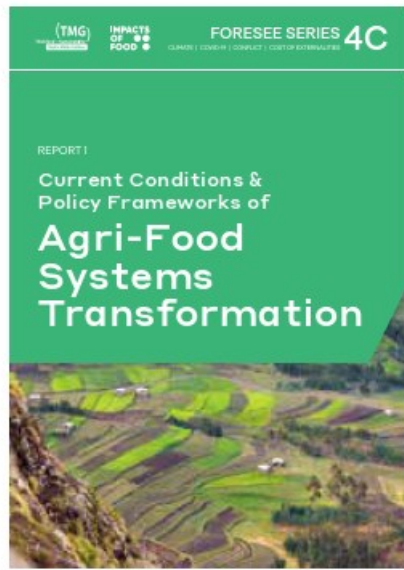
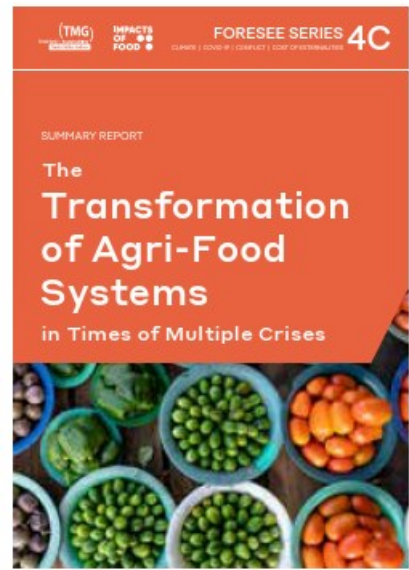
- 2 Scoping studies
- 5 Strategic Reports for food systems transformation
- Blog series

Dissemination

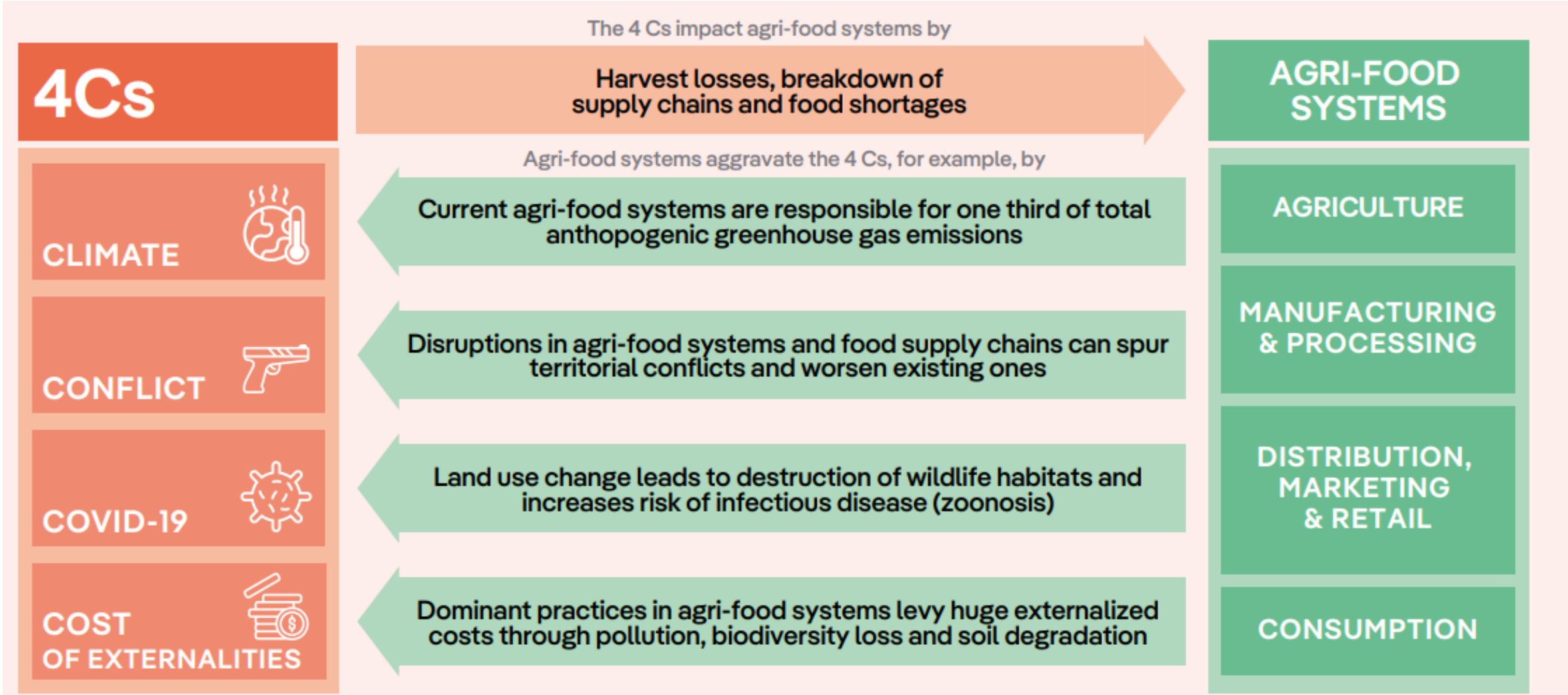
- 17 Webinars
- 4 High level events
- Policy & stakeholder dialogues
- Media outreach

FORESEE (4C) Report Series

The Transformation of Agri-Food Systems in Times of Multiple Crises

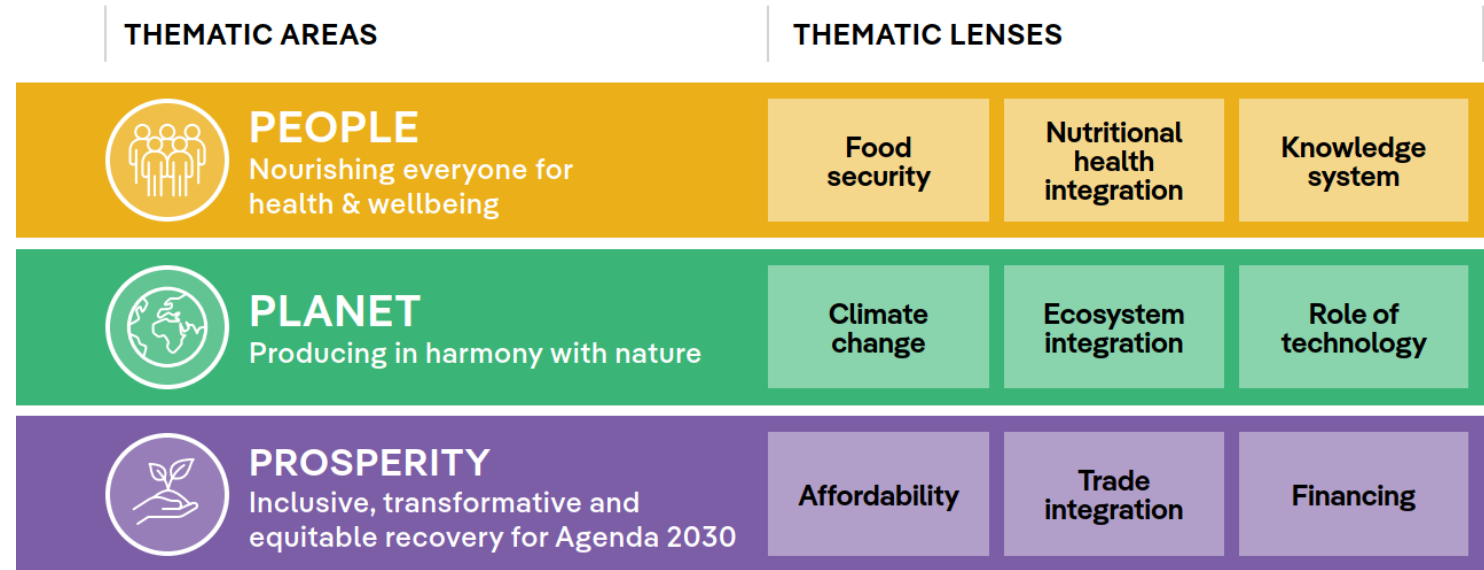


Report 1: Current Conditions and Policy Frameworks



Report 2: State of the Debate

3 Areas of Interest



3 Groups

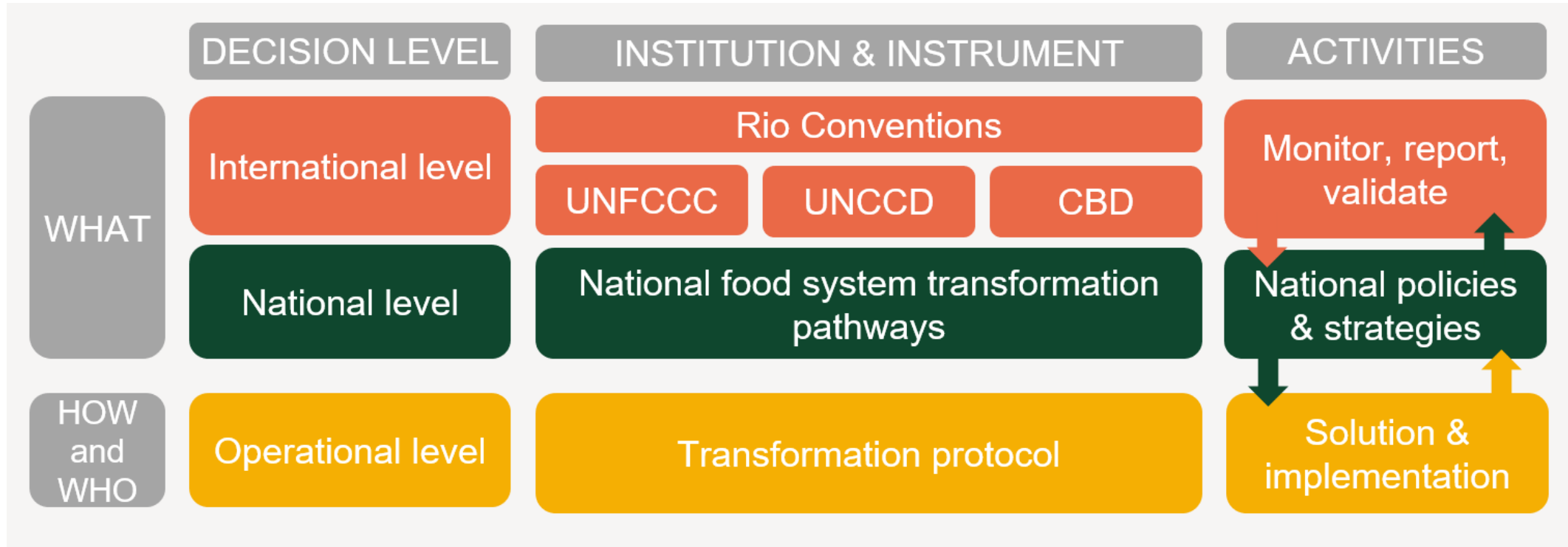
- 1 Those that advance structural change
- 2 Those that advance technical or technological fixes
- 3 Those that combine both approaches

Report 3: Blind Spots in the Debate

IDENTIFIED GAPS & BLINDSPOTS		Relevance to agri-food systems transformation
1	Governance	Empowering people and communities to engage with decisionmaking in agri-food systems
2	Corporate interests	Resolving the power imbalances , particularly, in view of the multistakeholder approach
3	Polarization	Addressing polarization by bringing everyone to the table
4	Human rights-based approach	Approaching agri-food transformation from a human rights perspective
5	Resilience	Building resilience in the agri-food systems to avoid breakdowns in the face of crises and shocks
6	Indigenous & traditional systems	Acknowledging the role of Indigenous and traditional systems in the transformation
7	Accounting for externalities	True Cost Accounting (TCA) of the externalities of the agri-food systems
8	Trade dynamics	Modifying trade regulations to acknowledge food as more than a trade commodity

Report 4: The Agri-Food Systems Transformation Protocol

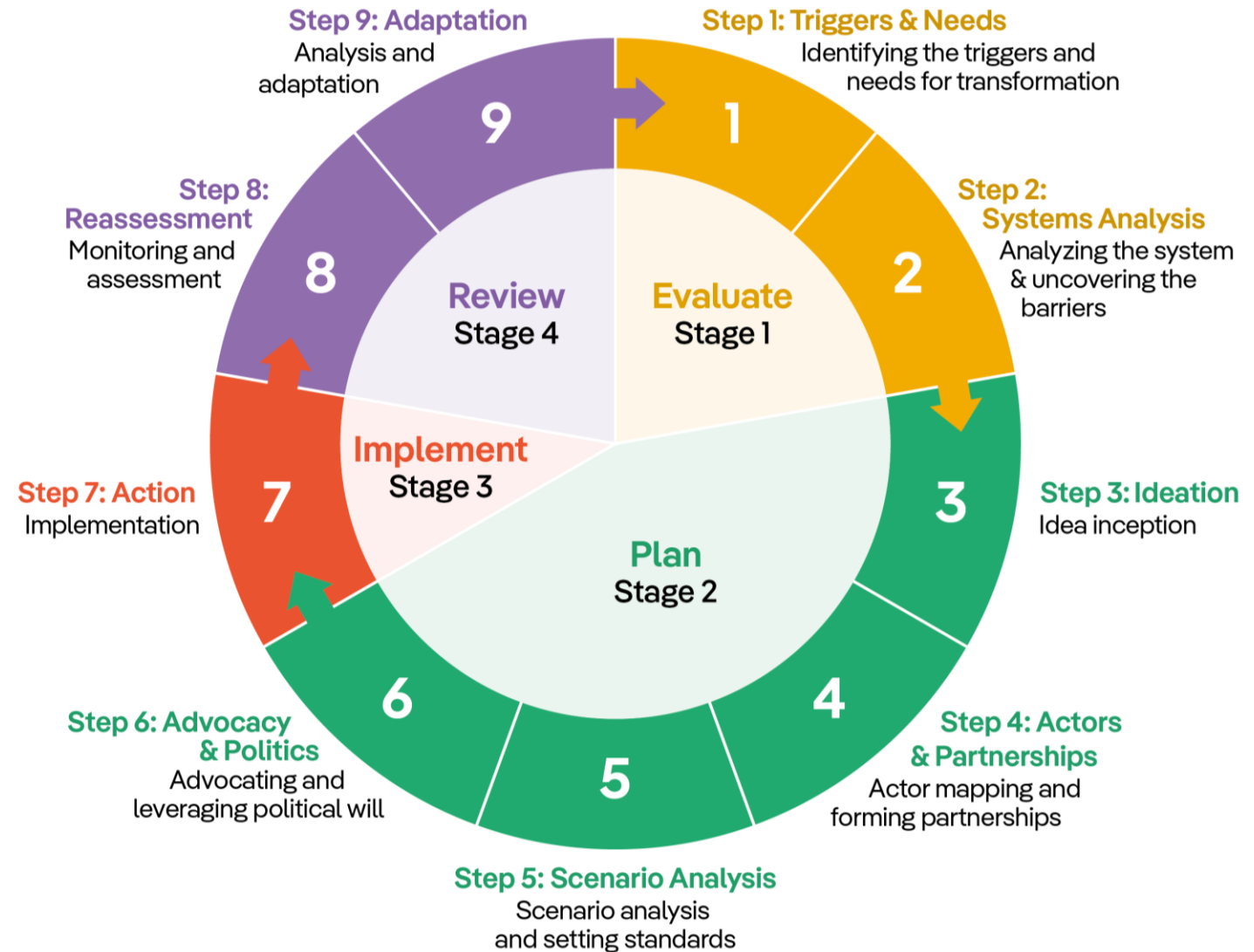
Multi-level Governance Framework



A Rights-based approach is key!

Report 4: The Agri-Food Systems Transformation Protocol

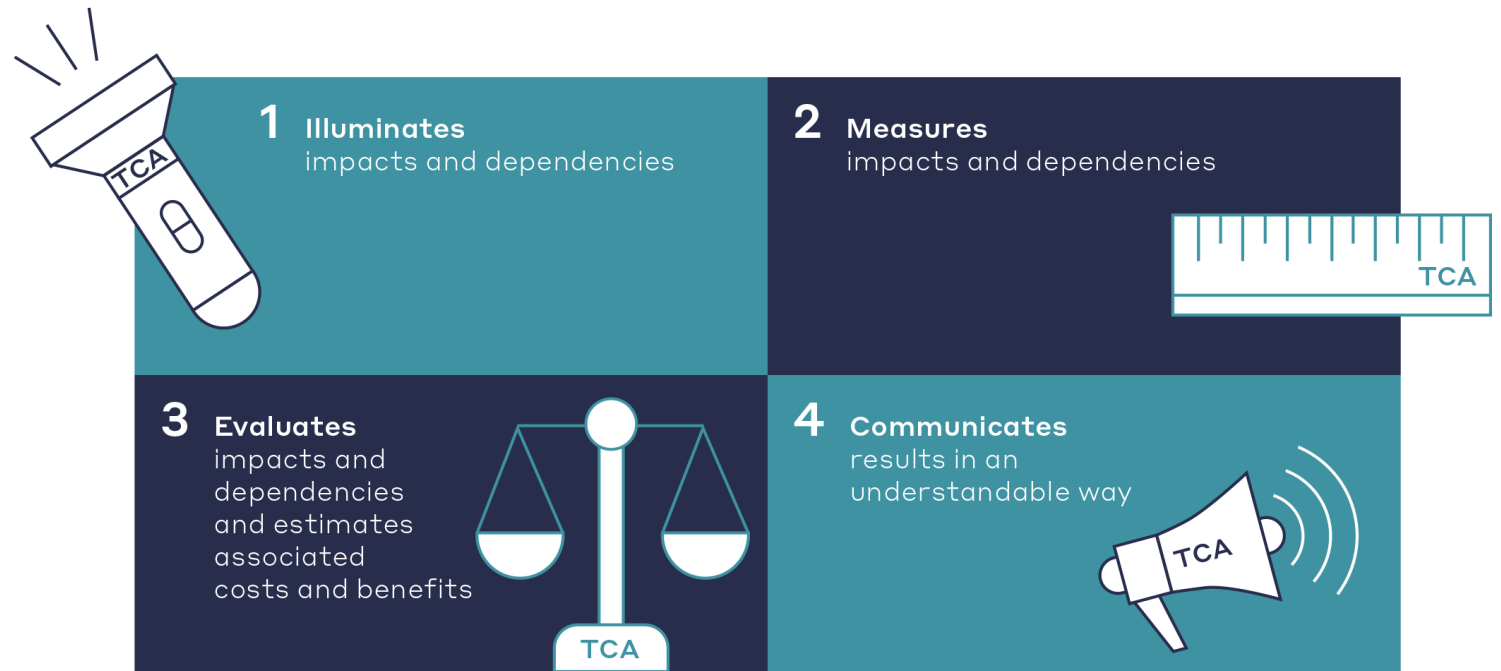
The protocol includes four stages and nine steps



Report 5: Leveraging True Cost Accounting to Accelerate the Transformation

- The TCA approach reveals the hidden impacts of policies, investments and business decisions
- It measures and values the hidden impacts of economic activities on the environment, society and health
- Its application can help creating a new economic framework that promotes sustainability

True Cost Accounting can be imagined as a toolbox



Report 5: Leveraging True Cost Accounting

Local policymaking

- Agricultural practices
- Crises evaluation and prevention
- Policy evaluation
- Procurement

National policymaking

- Agricultural practices
- Crises evaluation and prevention
- Dietary patterns and consumer information
- Policy evaluation



International policymaking

- Crises evaluation and prevention
- International policies (e.g. trade, EU subsidies)

Different Entry Points for TCA

Business

Business performance and risk management and reporting



Consumption / civic engagement

- Dietary patterns and consumer information
- Advocacy



Farm-level decision-making

Agricultural practices and marketing



Macro-economic level (Governments)

Shadow reporting



Micro-economic level (Investments & business)

- Accounting and reporting practices
- 'True pricing'



- Context
Entry points for True Cost Accounting (non-exhaustive)



Engagement & Outreach Activities

National Events

- Invited presentations at 4 German universities
- Invited presentation in the FONEI Forum hosted by the BMEL in 2024
- 2 sessions at the Biofach Congress 2023 and [2024](#)



International Events

- 3 expert workshops on the current conditions of agri-food systems, [food system governance](#) and [the role of hidden costs](#)
- Inputs at the Stockholm +50 Conference and at the "Earth Dialogues" in 2022
- Side-Events at UNFCCC COP 27 and [COP 28](#)
- Part of the German delegation to the HLPF 2024 + keynote at the [German Side Event](#)





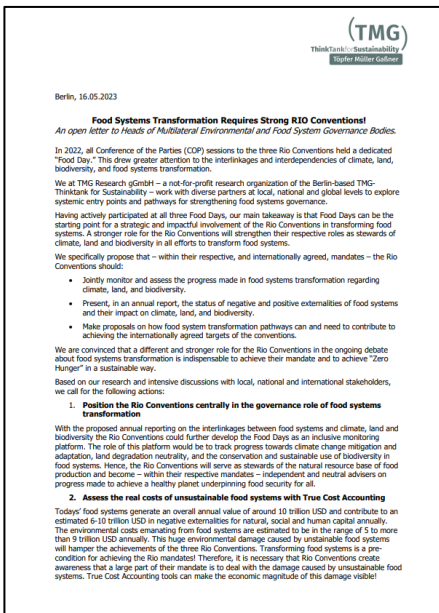
Engagement & Outreach Activities

Engagement in key global platforms

- Speaker at a World Bank/CGIAR Webinar
- Member of the advisory group and panel of external experts of FAO's SOFA reports 2023 and 2024

Outreach to key global platforms

- [Open letter](#) to the heads of the Rio Conventions, response by head of UNFCCC



Extending our impact: opportunities for future collaboration

Broader impact (adoption and integration of project outcomes)

- FAO SOFA reports → health costs focus
- Formation of the TCA Alliance
- Current blog [series](#): Critical reflections on TCA
- Interest by GIZ in the Transformation Protocol
- Conversation with DRSC on business reporting & accounting

Looking ahead (advancing ideas inspired by our work)

- Front end for TCA Database covering 208 products from 81 countries
- EU agri-food benchmarking
- Climate adaptation and diets



Vested interests, such as agribusiness influence over research, skew food system governance and priorities.

Both the financial and societal impacts of this must be fully measured.

True Cost Accounting exposes these hidden costs, fostering transparency and enabling governments to prioritise public needs over private interests.



Nadia El Hage
Scialabba

Swette Center for
Sustainable Food
Systems



Find out more about our work



Selection of links related to our work on Food Systems and True Cost Accounting



Bibliography

- **Slide 5:** Graphic; Riemer, O., Shah, T.M. and Zitterbarth, S. (2023). Current Conditions and Policy Frameworks of Agri Food Systems Transformation. In FORESEE (4C) – The Transformation of Agri-Food Systems in Times of Multiple Crises (4 Cs: Climate, Covid-19, Conflict, Cost of Externalities). Berlin: TMG – Think Tank for Sustainability. Report 1: FIGURE 5 The relationship of negative impacts between agri-food systems and the 4 Cs. ([Report 1 - Current Conditions & Policy Frameworks of Agri-Food Systems Transformation - March 2023](#))
- **Slide 6:** Graphic; El-Hage Scialabba, N., Zitterbarth, S. and Shah, T.M. (2023). State of the Debate on Agri-Food Systems Transformation. In FORESEE (4C) –The Transformation of Agri-Food Systems in Times of Multiple Crises (4 Cs: Climate, Covid-19, Conflict, Cost of externalities). Berlin: TMG – Think Tank for Sustainability. Report 2: FIGURE 2 The three major thematic areas of interest and associated thematic lenses. ([Report 2 - State of the Debate on Agri-Food Systems Transformation - March 2023](#))
- **Slide 7:** Graphic; Caron, P., Gitagia, M., Hamm, M., Hoffmann, U., Kimani-Murage, E., Martinez-Cruz, T., Merrigan, K., Mooney, P., Riemer, O., Scialabba, N.E.H., and Shah, T.M. (2023). Blind Spots in the Debate on Agri-Food System Transformation. In FORESEE (4C) – The Transformation of Agri-Food Systems in Times of Multiple Crises (4 Cs: Climate, Covid-19, Conflict, Cost of externalities). Berlin: TMG – Think Tank for Sustainability. Report 3: FIGURE 1 Addressing the current gaps in the transformation discourse will help advance the transformation and make agri-food systems more inclusive, sustainable and resilient. ([Report 3 - Blind Spots in the Debate on Agri-Food Systems Transformation - March 2023](#))
- **Slide 8:** own illustration; based on Shah, T.M., Riemer, O., El-Hage Scialabba, N., and Müller, A. (2023). The Agrifood Systems Transformation Protocol – Mapping the Agents and Drivers of Transformation. In FORESEE (4C) – The Transformation of Agri-Food Systems in Times of Multiple Crises (4 Cs: Climate, Covid-19, Conflict, Cost of externalities). Berlin: TMG – Think Tank for Sustainability. Report 4: FIGURE 7 The proposed multilevel governance of agri-food systems transformation. ([Report 4 - Agri-Food Systems Transformation Protocol - December 2023 Policy Frameworks of Agri-Food Systems Transformation - March 2023](#))
- **Slide 9:** Graphic; Shah, T.M., Riemer, O., El-Hage Scialabba, N., and Müller, A. (2023). The Agrifood Systems Transformation Protocol – Mapping the Agents and Drivers of Transformation. In FORESEE (4C) – The Transformation of Agri-Food Systems in Times of Multiple Crises (4 Cs: Climate, Covid-19, Conflict, Cost of externalities). Berlin: TMG – Think Tank for Sustainability. Report 4: FIGURE 10 The four-stage transformation process as presented by the Transformation Protocol and its nine steps. ([Report 4 - Agri-Food Systems Transformation Protocol - December 2023 Policy Frameworks of Agri-Food Systems Transformation - March 2023](#))
- **Slide 10:** Graphic; Klaus, L. M., Riemer, O. & Müller, A. (2024). Changing the Equation: Leveraging True Cost Accounting to Accelerate Agri-Food Systems Transformation. In FORESEE (4C) – The Transformation of Agri-Food Systems in Times of Multiple Crises (4 Cs: Climate, Covid-19, Conflict, Cost of externalities). Berlin: TMG – Think Tank for Sustainability. Report 5: Figure 5: The tools of True Cost Accounting. ([TMG_FORESEE_series_Report5_TCAforAgri-foodSystemsTransformaiton.pdf](#))
- **Slide 11:** Graphic; Klaus, L. M., Riemer, O. & Müller, A. (2024). Changing the Equation: Leveraging True Cost Accounting to Accelerate Agri-Food Systems Transformation. In FORESEE (4C) – The Transformation of Agri-Food Systems in Times of Multiple Crises (4 Cs: Climate, Covid-19, Conflict, Cost of externalities). Berlin: TMG – Think Tank for Sustainability. Report 5: Figure 7: True Cost Accounting Entry Points (own illustration). ([TMG_FORESEE_series_Report5_TCAforAgri-foodSystemsTransformaiton.pdf](#))
- **Slide 12:** Photographs (from top to bottom); HLPF 2024, CLIF Expert Group in Montpellier 2024, Alexander Müller at COP28 2023; Sources: Sources: own photos
- **Slide 13:** Screenshots (from top to bottom); FAO. 2023. The State of Food and Agriculture 2023 – Revealing the true cost of food to transform agrifood systems. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc7724enSlide>; FAO. 2024. The State of Food and Agriculture 2024 – Value-driven transformation of agrifood systems. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd2616en>; Open letter to the heads of the three Rio Convention secretariats by TMG from May 2023, available under [Microsoft Word - TMG Research_Open Letter_Rio Conventions_GEN.docx\[14\].pdf](#)
- **Slide 14:** Screenshot; Post on LinkedIn by TMG Research on a think piece written by Nadia El Hage Scialabba from 27.11.2024, available under https://www.linkedin.com/posts/tmg-think-tank-for-sustainability_tca-thinkpiece-sustainability-activity-7265384636426473472-A3Ft?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop

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