

Food Systems for the Future @ COP28 Recap

COP28 was a watershed moment for putting food systems on the climate agenda. Food Systems for the Future was pleased to play an active role in building the global, political, financial, and business momentum around food systems transformation, with a range of interventions throughout the 12 days of COP28.



FSF Team at COP28 (L to R): Meghan O'Hearn, Ertharin Cousin, Shanoo Saran

A SNAPSHOT OF FSF'S COP28 FOOTPRINT:

- **4 FSF representatives** present between Nov 30 – Dec 11
- **7 co-hosted events** and dinners
- **5 podcasts** recorded with various food system thought leaders
- **4 interviews** conducted with media and other leaders
- **16 speaking engagements** including panels, roundtable discussions, and fireside chats

Below we share some more detailed highlights from our journey at COP28, and the agenda we are pushing forward for healthier, more sustainable and more equitable food systems of and for the future.

MOBILIZING GREATER PRIVATE FINANCE FOR FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

FSF drove a strategic agenda around the need for diverse capital deployment for food systems transformation, particularly from the private sector, and the actions required moving forward. This included the following speaking engagements, and co-hosted dinners:

FINANCING THE TRANSITION TO REGENERATIVE FOOD SYSTEMS

Solutions Dialogue Series co-hosted by OP2B, WBCSD, Future Economy Forum, Danone, Food Systems for the Future, Soma Mater, and SEKEM

During this Solutions Dialogue Series, FSF CEO and Founder, Ambassador Ertharin Cousin, discussed systemic barriers and solutions to finance the transition towards a regenerative food system.

COP28 BUSINESS & PHILANTHROPY CLIMATE FORUM DINNER

A CEO-level forum hosted by the COP28 Presidency
Ambassador Cousin joined other business and philanthropy leaders, alongside policymakers, to foster co-creation and collaboration and accelerate cross-sectoral progress around net zero and nature-positive goals.



Food Systems for the Future @ COP28 Recap

UNLOCKING PRIVATE FINANCE: SHAPING AND CATALYZING A JUST AGRIFOOD SYSTEM TRANSITION Dinner hosted by FSF, Annenberg Foundation Trust at Sunnylands, and Boston Consulting Group

The dinner convened a small, curated group of leaders in investment and business – alongside experts and policymakers in food systems and agriculture – to discuss how to unlock private finance at scale in shaping and catalyzing a just food system transition. Two big ideas emerging from the conversation were the importance of cost-effective MRV (monitoring, reporting, and verification) systems and the regulatory sandbox environment for fostering policy innovation to unlock and accelerate private finance into food systems.



NEW FINANCIAL MECHANISMS, PRICING AND SUBSIDY STRATEGIES TO TRANSFORM FOOD SYSTEMS AND MEET CLIMATE GOALS

Panel Discussion hosted by Food Tank and FAIRR

Ambassador Cousin, discussed the need to unlock private sector capital for food systems transformation as well as humanitarian response. She calls for a more cost-effective, open-source MRV (measuring, reporting and verification) system to help more capital to flow into agriculture and food system based on the risk profiles of different businesses. Watch full event [here](#).

SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS INVESTMENT: ACCELERATING PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Hosted by UK Government, WRI, and WBCSD

FSF Senior Advisor, Hamid Hamirani, provided insights into the ICFM (Innovative Collaborative Funding Model), emphasizing its ability to spread costs and engage stakeholders across the entire food system. The multi-faceted approach of ICFM aims to benefit various stakeholders while addressing critical issues in agriculture, nutrition, and sustainability.

The session included opening remarks by the Honourable Minister Steve Barclay, UK, Secretary of State for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs. The Innovative Collaborative Funding Model has recently been adopted by the Agaciro Development Fund of Rwanda and Hinga Wunguke CNFA USAID for investing in Sustainable Agriculture.

Watch full conversation [here](#).



FSF'S BLACK SOLDIER FLY FACILITY

FSF showcased its ground-breaking efforts in Rwanda to scale up the first automated Black Soldier Fly insect protein facility in Africa. This ready-to-invest business is addressing food waste, providing an animal feed alternative, and improving soil health – with the aim of lowering greenhouse gas emissions while increasing access to nutrition foods. The facility's presence at COP27 included:

INTERVIEW WITH BBC TELEVISION

Ambassador Cousin highlighted FSF's Rwanda Insect Protein project, which has been chosen by Aim for Climate as an innovation sprint.

Food Systems for the Future @ COP28 Recap



BLENDED FINANCE IN DE-RISKING GREEN PRIVATE INVESTMENT: CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE CASE STUDY Panel Discussion hosted by Rwanda Green Fund, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) & CGIAR

This event introduced an unprecedented collaboration between the Government of Rwanda, CGIAR, and the BMGF to rally finance for businesses dedicated to building resilient, net-zero food systems based on scientific insights and extensive stakeholder involvement. Shanoo Saran, Managing Director Africa, presented the Rwanda Insect Protein Facility as one such ready-to-invest business addressing food waste, animal feed alternative, and soil health resulting in lowering greenhouse gas emissions while increasing access to nutrition foods.

SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS IN JUST TRANSITION

Panel Discussion hosted by Climate Impact Female Founders Council and Ernest & Young (EY)

Shanoo Saran, Managing Director Africa, joined over 70 female founders as part of the global dialogue surrounding the Just Transition. She shared her experience of building partnerships engaging with investors to set up Africa's largest automated Black Soldier Fly Facility in Kigali, Rwanda.

REVOLUTIONIZING INNOVATION AT NEXUS OF FOOD SECURITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Dynamic event hosted by the Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate (AIM4C) Initiative

This event celebrated the progress of the AIM4C, a joint initiative launched by the US and the UAE that has mobilized new investments in climate-smart agriculture and food systems innovation to enable solutions at the intersection of food security and climate change. Ambassador Cousin, was a featured speaker, highlighting FSF's AIM4C innovation sprint in Rwanda to scale black soldier fly larvae production.



TAPPING INTO THE HIDDEN POTENTIAL OF FOOD WASTE

Panel Discussion hosted by FoodTank and the Nordic Council of Ministers

Ambassador Cousin, discussed how food loss and waste solutions are highly contextualized, and provided FSF's work with black soldier fly larvae production as an innovative solution to Rwanda's growing food waste problem. She also expressed the need for greater consumer awareness: "Unless we can build the urgency with consumers, we won't move forward." Watch full conversation [here](#).



CULTIVATING CHANGE FOR A FOOD SECURE WORLD Panel Discussion hosted by Food Tank and Global Cellular Agriculture Alliance

Managing Director Africa, Shanoo Saran, explained how the Rwanda Insect Protein Facility will drive the importance of protein diversification in food systems reform. She also shared how the facility will build resilience in supply chains and give consumers and farmers more options in the face of climate change. Watch full event [here](#).

Food Systems for the Future @ COP28 Recap

CREATING THE FARMERS OF TOMORROW, GROWING THE FARMERS OF TODAY

Showcase event hosted by the UAE & US joint AIM for Climate Initiative

Managing Director Africa, Shanoo Saran, presented the Rwanda Insect Protein Facility as one of the AIM for Climate Innovation Sprints announced at the COP28.

SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS IN THE GCC: THINK GLOBAL, ACT LOCAL

Panel Discussion hosted at GCC Pavilion by UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, HealthyPath and Thought for Food

The session aimed to highlight success stories and impactful agri-food-tech initiatives as well as the collaborative approach with global research institutes, companies and funders to accelerate food system transformation. Shanoo Saran, Managing Director Africa, shared perspectives from her current and previous work to discuss the how and what is required to unleash the future potential of GCC as an innovation and investment hub given the recent announcements at COP28.



A DIVERSITY OF SOLUTION FOR FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

FSF continued to advocate for a diverse solution set in our food system to deliver the impacts required for People, Planet, and Prosperity. This included conversations around food systems diversification, tackling climate change while ensuring nutrition security, and the path forward as we look to COP30. Some highlight events include:



SECURING THE GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN

Panel Discussion hosted by Global Foodbanking Network

Impact Director, Meghan O'Hearn, discussed actions to support progress in driving greater integration of nutrition and climate action across the supply chain, including through greater knowledge and awareness raising; impact measurement and management; and innovating to reduce food loss and waste as an untapped opportunity to drive access to nutritious foods while saving the Planet. See the full video [here](#).

MOVING FOOD SYSTEMS FORWARD WITH CLIMATE ACTION

BCG Interview with Ambassador Ertharin Cousin and USDA Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack

BCG's Global Chair Rich Lesser hosted Ambassador Cousin, and USDA Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack for a stimulating conversation including the vision for climate-smart-agriculture in the US, the financing gaps in food systems transformation, and how a diversity of solutions will be required to deliver for planetary health, human health and livelihoods in the food system. Watch the interview [here](#).



Food Systems for the Future @ COP28 Recap

The Road to COP30 - Developing Tools and Pathways to Support Global Adoption and Implementation of the COP28 Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems, and Climate Action

Dinner co-hosted by FSF and EDF

Alongside our partners at EDF, we hosted a small dinner with other food systems thought leaders to discuss the pathway forward for strategic and aligned action for food systems transformation. We had a dynamic conversation about the decision-support tools already developed (or in development) by stakeholders present, and how these can be leveraged to have a united front as we look forward to COP30.



FSF Live @ COP28 Podcasts

FSF, in partnership with Tyson Foods and Bayer, put together an insightful podcast series featuring the most pressing food systems topics at the intersection of human and planetary health. Ambassador Cousin, discussed the intersection of methane reduction and diet diversification, the need to accelerate private financing for diverse food system's needs, and the importance of embracing a diversity of actions for food systems transformation to drive impact for People, Planet and Prosperity. This includes interviews with: Matthias Beringer, SVP of Public Affairs, Science, & Sustainability at Bayer AG; David Nabarro, Strategic Director and Co-Founder at 4SD Foundation; Darci Vetter, SVP Head of Global Public Policy at Pepsico; Lawrence Haddad, Executive Director of GAIN; and Joshua Zinzombe, small scale farmer and youth leader in Zimbabwe. Check out all the podcasts [here](#).

FORGOTTEN FOODS AND FUTURE HARVESTS—ENABLING FOOD PRODUCERS TO THRIVE IN A CLIMATE-IMPACTED WORLD

Two-part Panel Discussion hosted by Environmental Defense Fund (EDF)

Ambassador Cousin, discusses the need to acknowledge the value of Indigenous knowledge and practices, and provide the necessary capital to fund research to go beyond the staple crops prioritized around the world. She also impressed the critical role science, technology, and innovation must play alongside Indigenous knowledge to meet the long-term changes and uncertainty that climate presents. Watch full conversation [here](#).



DELIVERING SOLUTIONS TO AGRICULTURE METHANE WHILE SUPPORTING GLOBAL NUTRITION

Panel Discussion hosted by Environmental Defense Fund (EDF)

Ambassador Cousin, provided opening remarks about the need to tackle methane pollution in the food system while also ensuring access to affordable, nutritious diets for all.

FINANCING NUTRITION FOR A HEALTHIER CLIMATE: THE POWER OF SUSTAINABLE DIETS

Panel Discussion hosted by the World Health Organization (WHO)

Ambassador Cousin provided opening remarks for the event, reflecting on her optimism for the progress food systems made at COP28. She also discussed that ahead of COP30, we need to invest in the interconnected challenges of nutrition and climate simultaneously, including repurposing subsidies and driving private sector capital for more nutritious, diverse foods. Watch full conversation [here](#).

Food Systems for the Future @ COP28 Recap



Reflecting on our experiences at COP28, we are optimistic about the progress made for food systems transformation – the finance mobilized, conversations had, alliances formed, and actions aligned – and look forward to driving a robust and strategic agenda over the next two years to COP30.

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