

# 77. RACE TO SCALE REGENERATIVE FOOD SYSTEMS

ACTION AREA	CLIMATE RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS
SOLUTION CLUSTER	CLIMATE ADAPTATION, MITIGATION & RESILIENCE
THEMATIC AREA	INNOVATION ON CLIMATE MITIGATION
SUBMITTED BY	SYSTEMIQ, WBCSD, IUCN

## WHAT IS THE RISK, SHOCK, STRESS THAT THE SOLUTION IS TRYING TO ADDRESS?

RACE to scale Nature Positive Farming is a system change acceleration platform concept developed jointly by SYSTEMIQ, WBCSD, IUCN, OP2B, Future Stewards and IMAGINE, with the close collaboration of the COP26 Race to Zero Food Sector team.

The platform is focused on addressing the risk of degradation of the world's agricultural land to the point that it threatens national and global food security, drives further deforestation, biodiversity loss, and carbon emissions.

Establishing a scalable model for agriculture that is nature positive, that rebuilds soil health, and that supports resilience of crop yields and rural communities is an urgent global imperative. Whilst there are emergent lighthouses of such a system, they are struggling to scale. RACE is designed to accelerate the scaling process so that tipping points are reached in every region by 2025, with a nature positive system delivered at scale by 2030

We believe this can be achieved within a decade with the right collective will, a series of targeted system interventions, and a pragmatic, farmer-centric nature positive farming framework that underpins multiple levers of system change.

Our aim is to scale a nature positive food system by 2030 that is capable of providing affordable, nutritious food for 9 billion people within planetary boundaries, whilst supporting thriving rural communities everywhere.

## HOW DOES THE SOLUTION IMPROVE OR ENHANCE RESILIENCE OF FOOD SYSTEMS?

RACE to scale Nature Positive Farming is a system change acceleration platform designed to deliver the collective action, and market interventions needed, to ensure that by 2030, over 50% of the world's agricultural land is farmed in a way that drives positive outcomes for people and nature.

The only thing preventing us from achieving this bold ambition is the collective will to make it happen. RACE will be the organizing mechanism that brings together stakeholders from across the system to deliver the breakthrough collective action needed in targeted areas that have exponential impact potential.

Through RACE we will rapidly scale of a model for agriculture that delivers 6 outcomes simultaneously:

- Carbon sequestration in soil.

- Enhanced farm biodiversity.
- Enhanced resilience of crops while reducing synthetic inputs.
- Increased capacity of soil to hold water.
- Enhanced and sustainable farmer livelihoods.
- Enhanced nutritional quality of food.

This outcome based framing of agricultural outcomes will enable multiple variants of 'nature positive' farming to play a role (Regenerative, Agroecology, Organic etc), whilst creating space for innovative new practices to emerge. We are in no place to 'pick winners', but we can establish a set of outcomes around which we can converge and that can provide the focal point for collective action. Over time, as good data emerges we will be able to link specific practices to specific outcomes in specific contexts. RACE will establish the learning system that can inform optimum scaling pathways in each region/commodity.

RACE will take the form of a 'movement', rather than a private sector coalition, with farmer empowerment the primary engine for change,. The private sector will be involved as part of critical mass clusters of pioneering organisations that deliver targeted system interventions that have the potential for exponential impact. These clusters will also include farmers, finance providers, consumer groups, youth networks, government and civil society. The whole system will be represented in designing catalytic interventions to scale a nature positive system by 2030.

By achieving RACE target 2030 outcomes in each region (minimum 50% agricultural land nature positive by 2030, 75% in some regions eg Europe, US), we will build the resilience of soil and therefore its productive capacity, it's resilience to drought through enhanced water retention, and the resilience of farmer livelihoods, underpinning rural prosperity and those most exposed to climate shocks.

#### IS THE SOLUTION RELEVANT TO BUILDING FOOD SYSTEMS RESILIENCE?

Anticipate shocks/risks/stress and/or reduce vulnerability, Manage risks, Prevent (reduce exposure), Absorb, respond/cope, Adapt to shock-affected scenarios and evolving risk scenarios, Transform the Food System when the current Food System is no longer sustainable

#### IN WHAT REALMS OF INTERVENTION IS THE SOLUTION DESIGNED TO ACT ON RESILIENCE?

Community, Land/sea-scape, Institutional

#### WHO ARE THE MAIN ACTORS THAT WOULD PUT THIS ACTION INTO PLACE?

Policymakers (government), Private (businesses, etc.), Civil (NGOs, etc.), Farmers, Scientists, Indigenous groups

#### WHAT IS THE POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR THIS IDEA? DOES THE IDEA HAVE ANY MEMBER STATES OR POLITICAL INTERESTS? ARE THERE ANY STAKEHOLDERS WORKING ON IT?

We are planning to discuss RACE with the EU as a means to enable 75% of agricultural land in Europe to be nature positive by 2030, delivering Green Deal and Farm to Fork strategies even in the absence of CAP reform. We have not yet approached other regional government organisations but will do so as RACE mobilizes

#### IS THE SOLUTION APPLICABLE AT GLOBAL LEVEL, OR SPECIFIC CONTEXTS & PARTICULAR COUNTRIES?

The solution is applicable at global, region, country and landscape level, across multiple commodities, value chains, and agricultural production areas. We will seek to create 2030 transition pathways by region and commodity and establish regional implementation clusters where there is sufficient support from regional system actors, including and especially farming organisations.

Over the last 2 months WBCSD, SYSTEMIQ, IUCN, OP2B, Future Stewards, IMAGINE and the COP26 Race to Zero Food sector team have joined forces to co-develop the RACE platform concept. We have tested it with a range of organisations including farming networks, philanthropic foundations, and global corporates. We have also tested it in a working session at the Forum for the Future of Agriculture Month of March event.

Feedback from these soundings validate that the platform will fill a current market gap by creating a targeted acceleration mechanisms and bold 2030 outcomes that galvanise collective action, that there is interest both in funding the platform and engaging in the intervention streams and that there are clear early priority focus areas. As such we are confident that it is actionable, sustainable and has impact potential to scale.

Based on market soundings we have identified a range of catalytic system interventions that can be delivered in the first 2 years of the RACE acceleration platform, including:

- Establishing an outcome based Nature Positive Farming Framework around which the market can align and that is able to underpin multiple levers of change including policy, finance, corporate sourcing, product differentiation and consumer demand
- 2030 transition pathways by region and commodity that map out costs, risks, value and interventions required to deliver target 2030 outcomes. These will be refined over time as data emerges linking specific practices to specific outcomes in different contexts. An archetype approach for each commodity will provide the underlying logic for developing analytically robust pathways round which the market can align
- Establishing a global network of lighthouse farmers (including smallholder farmers) already proving the value of nature positive farming. This network will inform the Framework, metrics, measurement and data requirements and provide inspiration to other farmers to transition. They will also play a key role in testing new interventions so that the farmer voice is central as the new system scales
- Developing a transition enablement platform for farmers that provides a range of resources and support that facilitate transition, including a peer learning environment, access to offtakers, crop insurance companies, finance, as well as an accreditation scheme that enables them to be certified as part of the nature positive farming movement
- Establishing the indicators, metrics and field level data collection protocols that enable farmers to efficiently measure nature positive outcomes, in turn opening up new income streams related to land stewardship
- Financing mechanisms that incentivize uptake of the NPF Framework and reward farmers for outcomes other than crop yield, such as carbon sequestration, ecosystem services, soil health
- Driving corporate sourcing targets for 2025 and 2030 linked to the NPF Framework to establish a powerful offtake demand signal that triggers a step change in uptake of NPF methods
- End to end traceability mechanisms that enable retailers to promote nature positive products to consumers
- At-scale commodity/landscape projects that prove nature positive in context for specific value chains as the basis for informing 2030 transition pathways by commodity

RACE will be flexible and adaptive in accelerating new intervention opportunities that may arise. Each intervention will be delivered by an ecosystem of actors best equipped to demonstrate the impact of the intervention at scale so that they become lighthouses of the emergent nature positive system. Once established, the platform can serve the needs of the emerging system in multiple ways depending on where there is a need for breakthrough collective action.

Where relevant RACE will develop open access 'public goods' that can be leveraged by a wide range of system actors to accelerate scaling.

The platform will have strong links to Race to Zero and Race to Resilience, essentially representing a sector focused delivery platform to build a system that delivers on the ambition of both Race to Zero and Race to Resilience. We will harness the COP26 'moment' to raise the profile of RACE to NPF and anchor it as a central catalyst enabling transformation of the global food system.

As RACE will not be established as a broad based coalition, central running costs will be lower than other sectoral transition coalitions. We will be more nimble, more targeted, more action oriented, with diversified funding streams based on specific modules. In that sense, the platform will, by design, be more resilient and adaptive as the system changes.

#### WHAT ARE THE KEY ACTIONS REQUIRED TO ADDRESS THIS SOLUTION?

We are currently in an outreach process to a range of farming organisations, corporates and foundations to fund and mobilise the RACE program. We believe it can be mobilized and launched in time for the UN Food Systems Summit as a neutral convening platform, with farmers at its heart, for accelerating progress towards a nature positive food system by 2030. We would welcome the support and active involvement of the UN in establishing RACE as a 'servant' enabler for a nature positive global food system. We would seek to work with the UN to determine how regional and national targets for nature positive outcomes could be established for land in the same way that NDCs have been established for climate. By the end of June we expect to have identified core foundation funders, the first acceleration modules to launch and the ecosystem of actors that will work with the platform to deliver these modules.

#### ARE THERE ANY FINANCIAL SOURCES / FUNDS THAT IS SUPPORTING THIS IDEA?

We are currently engaging philanthropic foundations to provide funding to mobilise the program and support its first phase of interventions

#### HOW DOES THIS SOLUTION CONTRIBUTE TO (A) EMPOWER WOMEN AND COMBAT GENDER INEQUALITIES, AND (B) THE FULFILMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS, ESPECIALLY THE RIGHT TO FOOD AND THE RIGHT TO WATER, (C) MAKE USE OF INNOVATIONS (TECHNOLOGIES, INSTITUTIONS, PROCESSES)?

RACE will bring process innovation to accelerating system interventions by blending pre-committed finance to solve specific challenges, cutting edge system modelling and visualization to align system stakeholders to a 'single version of the truth', a network of pioneer farmers with whom we can test new interventions, and methods for stakeholder dialogue and awareness-based system change that enable radical collaboration and bold collective action.

The core organisations that have developed RACE bring all of these capabilities but, as an open platform, we will engage a range of organisations in delivering specific interventions where they have expertise or knowledge that can make a difference. To our knowledge, these capabilities have not before been combined into an accelerator platform for system change.

RACE could help address human rights, empowerment of women and gender equality by building into the Nature Positive Farming framework outcomes relating to these issues, so that it delivers strong social as well as environmental outcomes. RACE could also launch targeted intervention modules specific to these issues, including the right to food and water.