



## Group Assembly Process (GAP) - Stirring Paper

### **Stirring Paper: Food for the Future?**

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We live in an era of crises: climate change, environmental degradation and resource scarcity. Our current food system does not only contribute significantly to these crises – it is also impacted by them, as our capacity to produce sufficient food for the world depends directly on the ecosystem capacity of the planet. At the same time, global inequality is increasing and billions of people are suffering from poverty, malnutrition and hunger, while the increasing urbanization and commodification of the food service builds up alienation between city and land, producers and consumers.

It is high time for the transition to a sustainable system. But what could this system look like in practice? What kind of food system will guarantee the “good life” for all – here and globally, today and for future generations? How can we guarantee access to enough healthy food for everyone without overexploiting limited resources, destroying the environment and violating human and labour rights? How do we avoid that consumption habits of one region limit the possibilities of another to feed themselves sustainably? What does a food system look like that is not reliant on continual economic growth and therefore growing resource use?

#### **DIMENSIONS**

##### ***Escaping growth***

Our current economic system is dependent on ever-increasing profit. To achieve this, natural resources and human labor are exploited, while social and ecological questions take the back seat. However, the growth of the material economy depends on fossil energy, other increasingly scarce resources and the capacity of the planet to absorb waste and emissions. Endless economic growth is not possible on a limited planet – the multiple crises show that this model is outdated.

- What is the role of economic growth in the food system? How can we escape this system? Which ideas can we find in the debate on societies not dependent on economic growth?

- Discussion proposals: basic income for food producers, increasing the value of food, eliminating debt and debt-creation mechanisms of farmers
- Which role does the carrying capacity of our planet play in the food system? Where are the limits? What are the links with global environmental justice?
- Discussion proposals: eliminating subsidies on industrial production, building alliances between environmental justice movements in the Global South and agroecology and degrowth movements in the Global North, promoting food sovereignty and autonomy

### ***Re-organising society***

Participation is linked to the (re)distribution of wealth and resources, goods and services, but also to the question of equal access to education and to decision-making. We need to ensure democratic decision-making during and after the economic transformation and develop new forms of participation and citizen interaction.

- Which institutions do we need? How will we organize the future food system, what actors play which role on which level? How do we guarantee democratic decision-making?
- Discussion proposals: food policy councils, communal & regional organization, grassroots, local economy councils, neighbourhood councils...
- Who has the right to land? How can we ensure that the use of space serves the common good and not profit-making? How can we avoid speculation over land, land grabbing and the sell-off of communal and public land, which have been particularly enforced during the economic crisis?
- Discussion proposals: forbidding speculation on land, decommodification of land, bringing land (back) into the commons, occupation of land for alternative projects
- How can we ensure access to healthy food for everyone? Can a commons-based view help to reform our social institutions? How can we guarantee social justice, fairness and inclusion?
- Discussion proposals: access to and organization of the commons, CSAs, share & solidarity economies, minimum incomes, subsistence
- How can we attach more value to work done in the food sector, e.g. to subsistence agriculture, gardening work, cooking etc. through measures like working time reduction, quality of work, socially meaningful activities?
- How can new and old movements around food sovereignty and agroecology join in collective action to survive and confront the hegemony of a vision of ecological

modernization focused on economic growth?

### ***Pushing social-ecological practices***

There are already many projects and initiatives giving living examples of a different kind of economic practice. However, changing the system creates new challenges regarding food security, especially in increasingly urbanized societies, regarding distribution and people's relationships towards their food supply and the responsibility that comes with food consumption. Alternative forms of relating to food with strong socio-ecological values are expanding, however they remain relatively marginal in political, social and economic terms.

- How can we support the development and expansion of this kind of pioneer projects?
- Do cities need to be supplied for food from faraway territories, or can they supply themselves? What are the limits to (sustainable) food production for and within cities? Which role do urban spaces play, which role the peri-urban spaces?
- Discussion proposals: urban agriculture, urban gardening, regional supply structures, city-country partnerships, small-scale farmers as the foundation for feeding cities
- How is food distributed? What kind of infrastructure do we need for a sustainable food system?
- Discussion proposals: short-circuit distribution, small local shops, food cooperatives, direct marketing, etc.
- How do we eat? How does our consumption link with the global south? How much trade do we need?
- Discussion proposals: reducing consumption of luxury items (e.g. meat and tropical products), fair trade, fresh produce
- How do we reduce the amount of wasted food deriving from affluence and wastage on all levels (harvest loss, supply chains, supermarkets, homes, restaurants)?
- Discussion proposals: Food sharing, reconceptualizing best before dates, redistribution of food "waste"