



Nature, Power and Food Systems

Wednesday 21 July | 12:00-14:00 BST | Online Workshop

Our food systems continue to be inequitable, unsustainable and exploitative, and most of those suffering from hunger, malnutrition and climate impacts are from the Global South or marginalised groups in high-income countries. Power dynamics influence everyday realities from the micro-level to the macro-level. Without addressing the role of power relationships in entrenching an unsustainable and inequitable food system, we cannot achieve the change needed.

This workshop will bring together stakeholders, or rather 'rightsholders', who represent different parts of power structures within food systems; from farmers and indigenous peoples to governments and civil society. We aim to develop an analytical and critical dialogue on the role of power (and its increasing consolidation) in influencing people's lived realities, and how it may constrain the realisation of each person's full capacity for example through limiting access to nutrition, or income.

Through a keynote address, commentaries and breakout groups, we will explore global trade liberalisation and its governance; consolidation of power in food value chains; power and equity in setting national and international research agendas; national food and agricultural policy; and gender, equity, diversity and inclusion.

Indicative agenda

12:00 – 12:05 | Welcome and Introduction

- Professor Tim Benton, Research Director, Energy, Environment and Resources Programme, Chatham House

12:05 – 12:25 | Keynote Address

- Ajay Vir Jakhar, Chairman, Bharat Krishak Samaj (Farmers' Forum India)
- Professor Hannah Wittman, Faculty of Land and Food Systems and Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability, University of British Columbia

12:25 – 12:45 | Commentaries: Views from diverse positions

- Moderator: Thiago Uehara, Research Fellow, Energy, Environment and Resources Programme, Chatham House

12:45 – 13:35 | Breakout discussions

Room 1: **Agency**. When can one make a difference in food systems [at the local and global level]? How have violence and coercion, authority, and economic resources affected food

systems being mobilized? What change is required in order to enable those struggling for autonomy to make a difference in food systems and enjoy life in harmony with nature?

Room 2: **Social structures.** What is included and excluded from [international] agendas? What are the conflicts over social structures like government structures and the global governance of food systems, including the power of the United Nations, the G7, the Majority World, peasants and farmers? How have these systems dealt with nature's contribution (or ecosystems goods and services)? What has been the role of community self-determination, nationalism and internationalism affecting food systems?

Room 3: **Interests and practical knowledge.** What are the interests of peasants, farmers and marginalized groups vis-à-vis nature's provisions such as food? When does income, productivity and exports get prominence over self-sufficiency and wellbeing? How have religions and secular social systems related to food systems? Is there a tendency for the endorsement of the status quo, leading to undesirable exclusions? If so, how to overcome it?

Room 4: **Socialization and cultures:** What are the different etiquettes/cultures in the relationship between humans, earth's systems, land and food? How has the idea of 'modernity' and 'civilization' influenced different social groups? What forms of education, surveillance, and competition for status would enable strong equity and sustainability in food systems?

13:35 – 13:45 | Plenary

- Moderator: Helen Harwatt, Senior Research Fellow, Energy, Environment and Resources Programme, Chatham House

13:45 – 14:00 | Closing and next steps

- Christopher Hegadorn, Secretary, Committee on World Food Security