

**The Hidden Costs of the Indian Food Systems –  
Assessment and Policy Solutions**  
Session Partners: Food System Economics Commission  
The Food, Agriculture, Biodiversity, Land-Use and Energy  
Consortium

**Background:**

The Food System Economics Commission (FSEC) is an independent economic commission tasked to assess the economics of transforming food systems. Part of its mandate has been to produce a robust methodology for assessing the true costs of food systems – this involves bringing to light the so called “hidden costs” of food systems, that is the impacts of food systems which are not reflected in standard economic valuations. This methodology has been adopted by FSEC’s forthcoming Global Policy Report and by the FAO in its flagship 2023 State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA) report. Beyond revealing the true costs of food systems, this methodology helps frame the quest for concrete solutions capable of transforming food systems. How the insights of this analysis might lead to new strategies is however very much dependent on the local political and institutional context, on the characteristics of local food systems and the potential windows of opportunities.

This session will aim to draw on the richness of insights of the work that FSEC in partnership with FABLE has conducted in India in identifying pathways for food system transformation, illustrate how the hidden costs of food systems would be affected by the transformation, and explore through a very interactive session how the insights offered by this body of work can be translated in concrete strategic priorities for transforming food systems in India.