

## Concepts to Understand and Research Transformative Change for Biodiversity & Equity (TC4BE)

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The complexity of agro-food systems which characterised by globalisation processes, large geographical scales, opaque value chains, flows of resources, power and values in contexts of highly inequitable power relations which displace decision making far from communities and nation states where food systems originate and externalise negative socio-environmental impacts, with global calls to action on food security/environmental public goods suggests that deep, systemic changes are necessary with alternative transformation pathways which push back on globalised narratives of scarcity and crisis and which involve more autonomous and regenerative trajectories. Thus concepts embrace production to consumption, finance and investment, governance arrangements and power relations. However, understanding and consensus on how to achieve agro-food system transformations is lacking. Given this concept, the new EU H2020 funded Transformative Change For Biodiversity & Equity (TC4BE) project aims to generate evidence and tools to advance understanding on how to achieve transformative change in agro-food system to enhance biodiversity and equity outcomes and strengthen stakeholder transformative change capacity. TC4BE targets telecoupled agrofood systems which drive land use change and create negative biodiversity and equity impacts, including in biodiversity-rich production locations in the Global South. In this paper we propose using socio-ecological / socio-technical systems as a lens to understand agrofood systems using telecoupling and relational theory, This critical interrogation will be conducted from different perspectives (disciplines, global north and south, indigenous...). As with critiques of globalisation theory, we will reflect on the ontology of societal and environmental change that underpins transformative change and which alternatives exist. Relationality theory calls for co-production of situated knowledge and recognizing different world views and relational values – but there are tensions (how to engage in an equitable, transdisciplinary way, without imposing categories; how to produce situated knowledges drawing on/generating plural forms of knowledge – while recognizing the nesting of living socio-natural systems, hegemonies (over ideas, land uses, purpose of economic exchange etc) and the role of distance / connection to place. This conceptualisation aims to pave the way for empirical work on leverage points for sustainable transformative change pathways, expanding the boundaries of current thinking about future agrofood systems, especially those with far-reaching values and economic rules shifts.