



**EATING CITY**

EUROPEAN SUMMER CAMPUS



LA BERGERIE DE VILLARCEAUX  
FRANCE - 3-9 SEPTEMBER 2024



*A Needed Shift of Paradigm*

*A Narrative of Three Bulls*

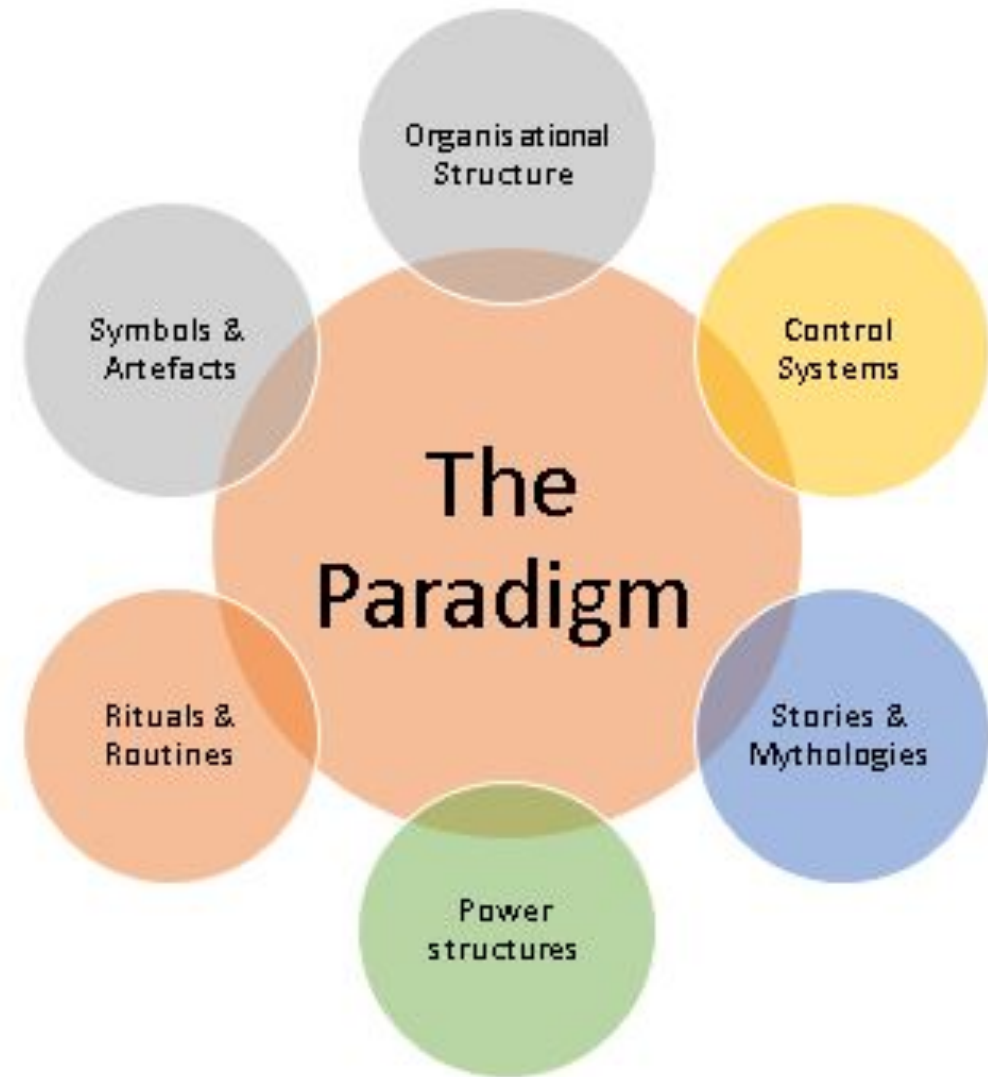


*Giuseppe Mastruzzo*

# *What is a paradigm?*

- In science and philosophy, a distinct set of concepts – including theories, research methods, and standards – for what constitutes legitimate contributions to a field
- Paradigm shifts appear in response to an accumulation of anomalies and the proposal of a new theory with the power to explain them (Kuhn)
- Paradigm is also used in the broader sense of “worldview” – the set of experiences, beliefs and values that affect the way an individual perceives reality and responds to that perception
- Here “paradigm shift” denotes a change in how a given society goes about organizing and understanding reality

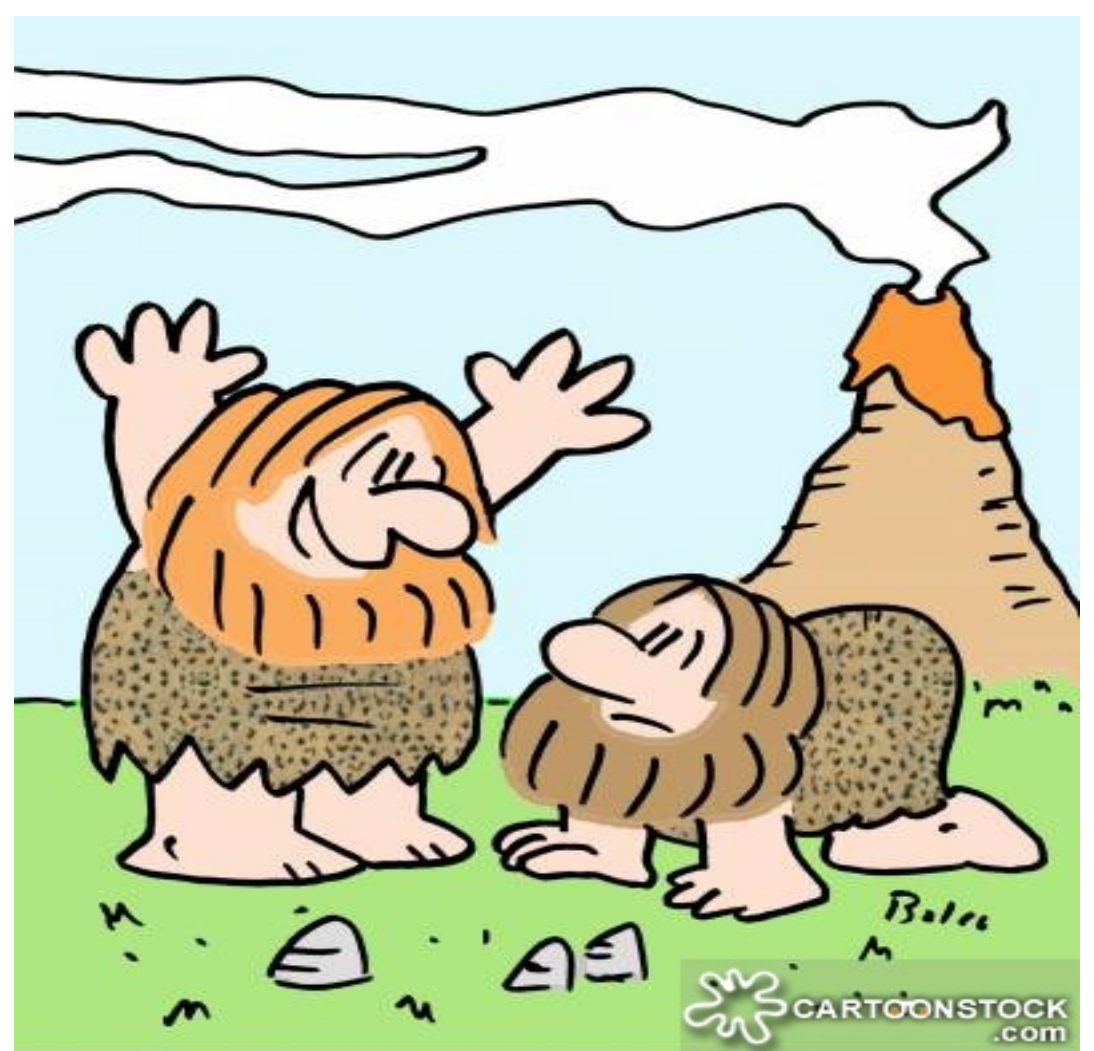
***What are paradigms?***  
***Who needs them?***



*A needed paradigm shift....*



foodsecurity



"Man, you've got to try this 'walking upright' stuff! — it's like a total paradigm shift!"

# *The common good is dying out*

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the notion of the environment as a raw resource that can be plundered for one's own advantage

the idea that schools should not educate citizens to think but should impart knowledge aimed at making them productive

the tendency for health to become a profitable business rather than a service owed to people

the dismantling of the public sector in favour of lucrative privatisation

i.e.: the primacy of private profit over the general interest



# *Ambassadors: Take up a side!*

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today, two incompatible notions are on a violent collision course

on the one hand, the right of all individuals or corporations to place their own gains above all else, in the name of their full and absolute ownership of the property they have inherited or purchased

on the other hand, the need that individual wishes must be tempered and limited by concern for the public interest



# *Ambassadors: Cultivate the future!*

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on one side the short-sighted outlook of those who believe it legitimate to use and abuse the world in any way they see fit

on the other the far-sighted viewpoint of those who are aware that they have received a legacy which they must pass on, and indeed enhance



# *Earth Ambassadors & Earth overshoot day*

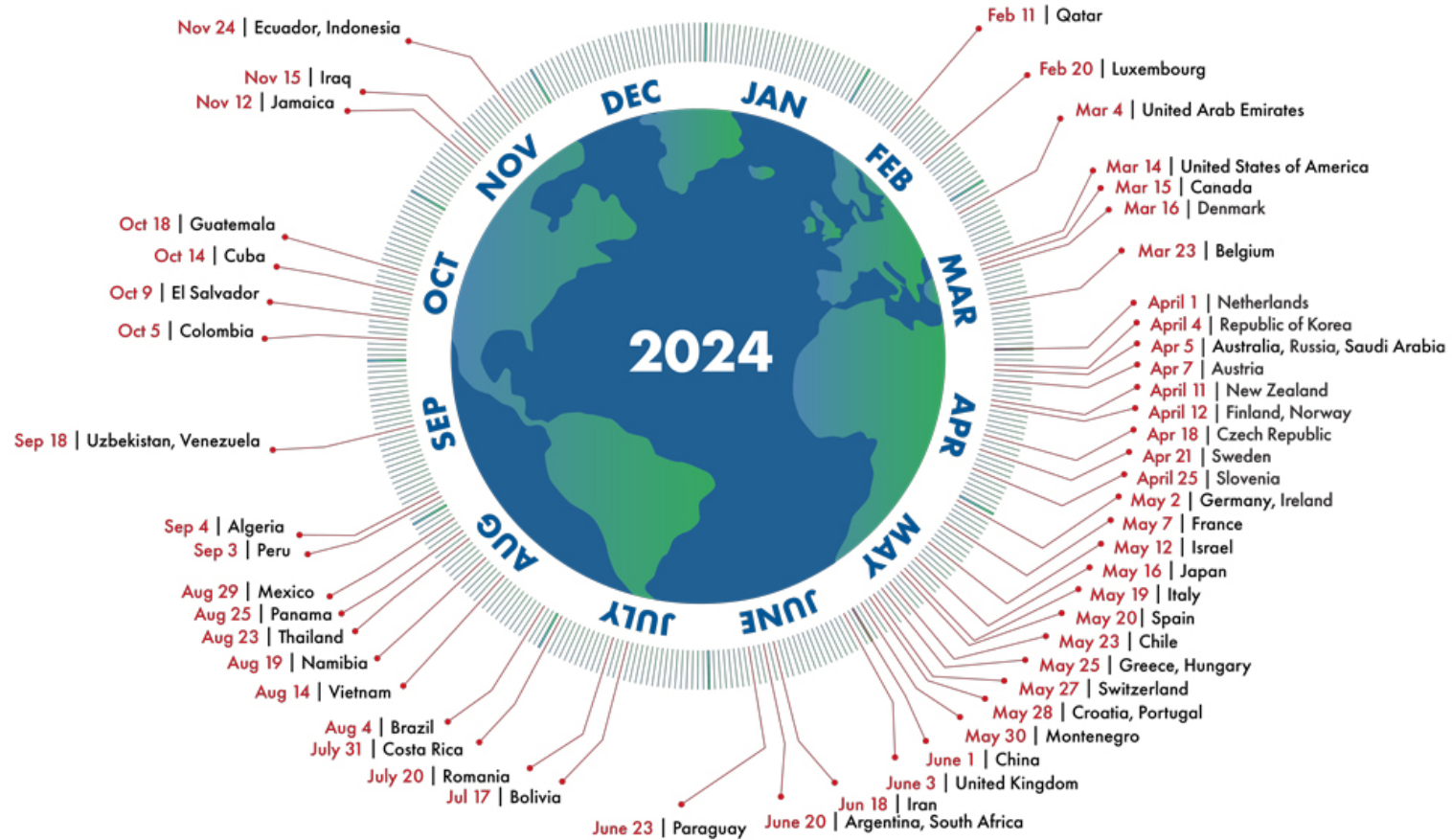
- August 1 will mark the 2024 Earth Overshoot Day, the day that humanity's demand for ecological resources exceeds the resources Earth can regenerate within that year
- Over the decades, the ecological and carbon footprint of humans has gradually increased, all while Earth's biocapacity, i.e. its ability to regenerate resources has diminished significantly. That has led to Earth Overshoot Day arriving earlier and earlier, moving from as late as December 30 in 1970





# Country Overshoot Days 2024

When would Earth Overshoot Day land if the world's population lived like...



For a full list of countries, visit [overshootday.org/country-overshoot-days](https://overshootday.org/country-overshoot-days).



**EARTH  
OVERSHOOT  
DAY**

Source: National Footprint and Biocapacity Accounts, 2023 Edition  
[data.footprintnetwork.org](https://data.footprintnetwork.org)



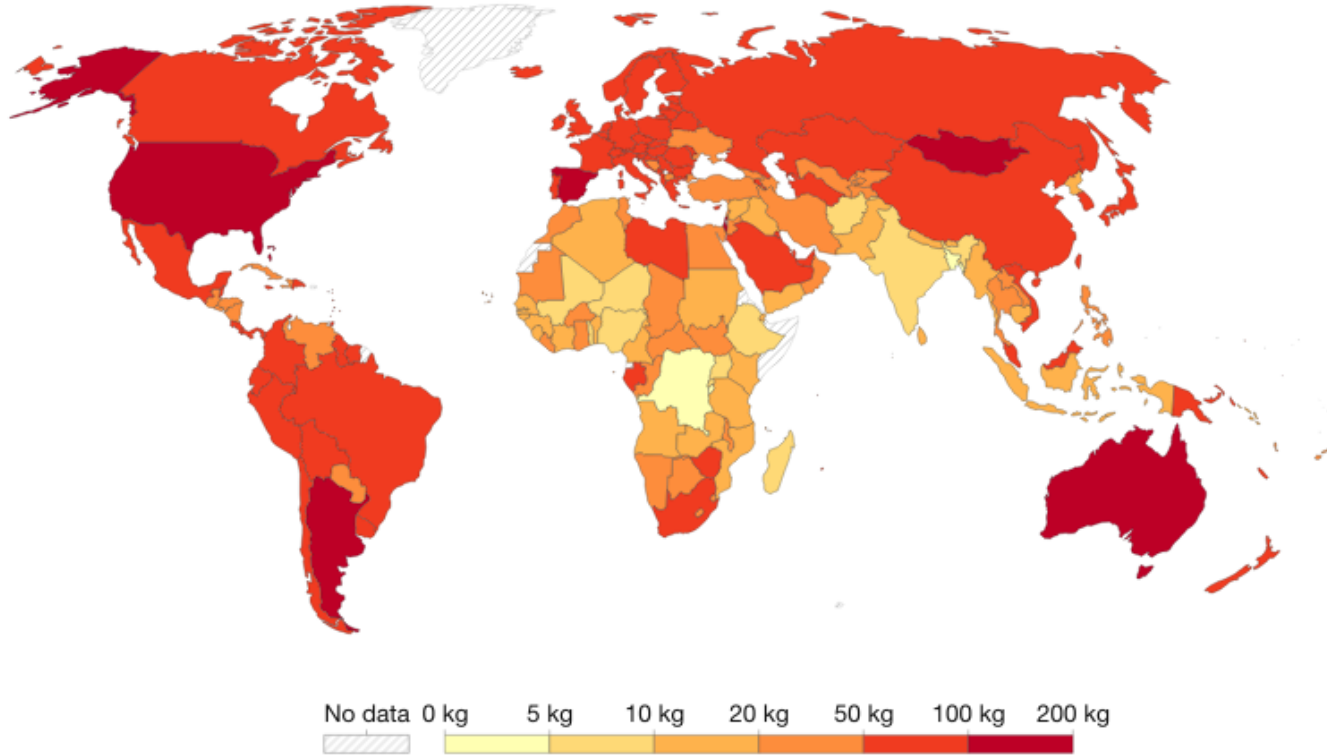
**Global Footprint Network**  
Advancing the Science of Sustainability

# NEW FIGURES OF A NEW WORLD

## Meat supply per person, 2021

Average total meat supply per person measured in kilograms per year.

Our World in Data



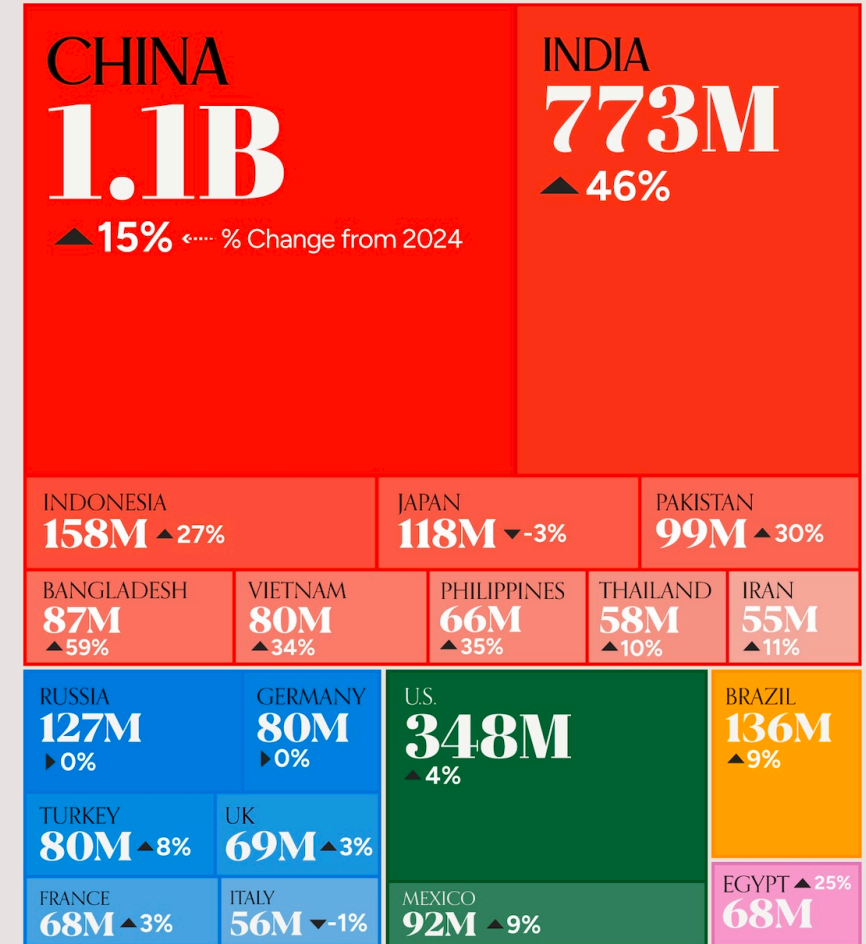
Data source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2023)

OurWorldInData.org/meat-production | CC BY

Note: Data excludes fish and other seafood sources. Figures do not correct for waste at the household/consumption level so may not directly reflect the quantity of food finally consumed by a given individual.

## The 20 Largest Consumer Markets IN 2030

A consumer is classified as someone who spends at least \$12 per day.



Source: World Data Lab (2023)

voronoi Where Data Tells the Story

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# *From China to the Amazons*



- 800 million pigs slaughtered yearly
- 8 million hectares of soy monoculture
- 80 million tons of Amazon soy to produce Chinese pork

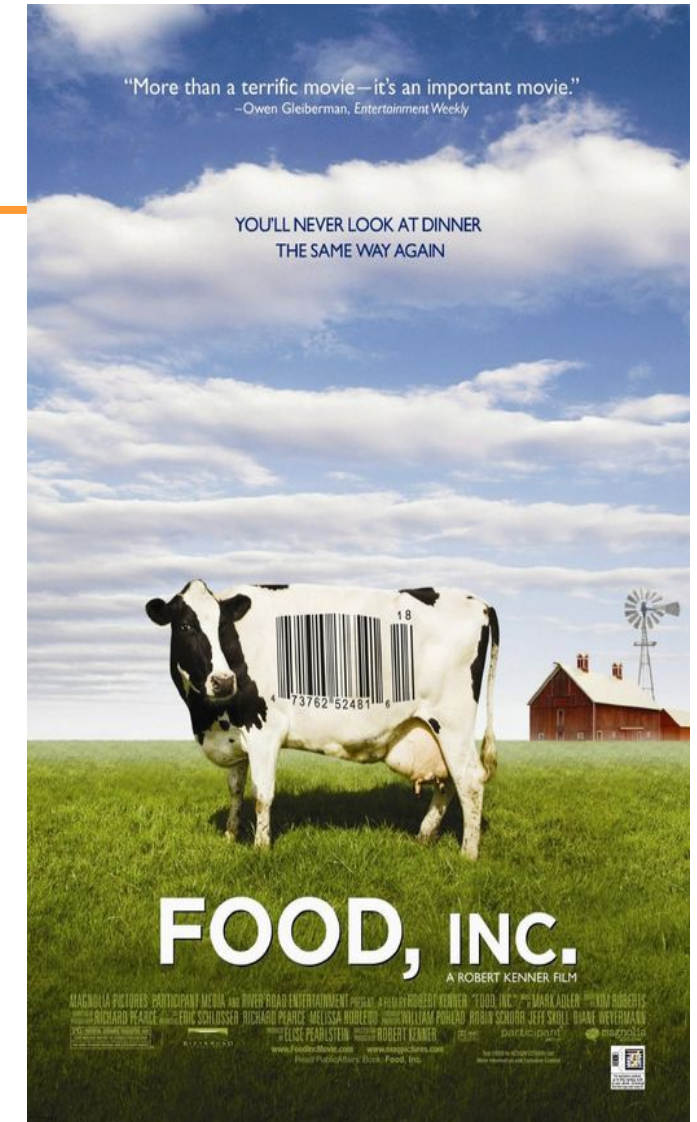
# *The locust corporation*



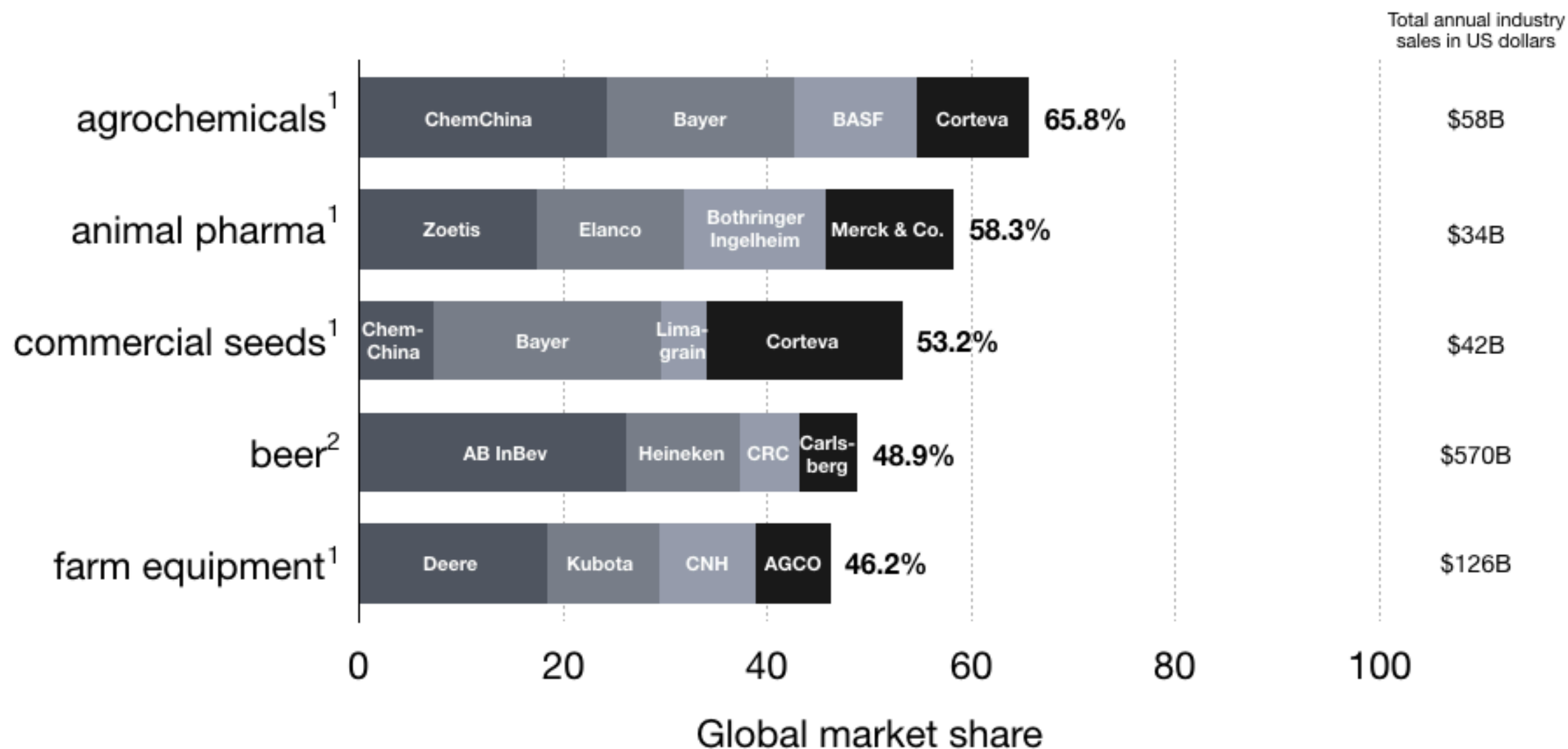
- financial powers jump to follow soy and pigs
- in 2008, Goldman Sachs diverts assets from derivatives to food chains, buying 25% of Shuanghui, which in 2013 buys Smithfield Foods, the world largest pig and pork producer

# *TINA: a single narrative*

Multinational corporations have stripped poor countries of their natural resources and left environmental devastation; banks have burdened poor countries (and now rich countries) with unsustainable debt. No other belief is allowed, and any other belief is understood as “unrealistic”

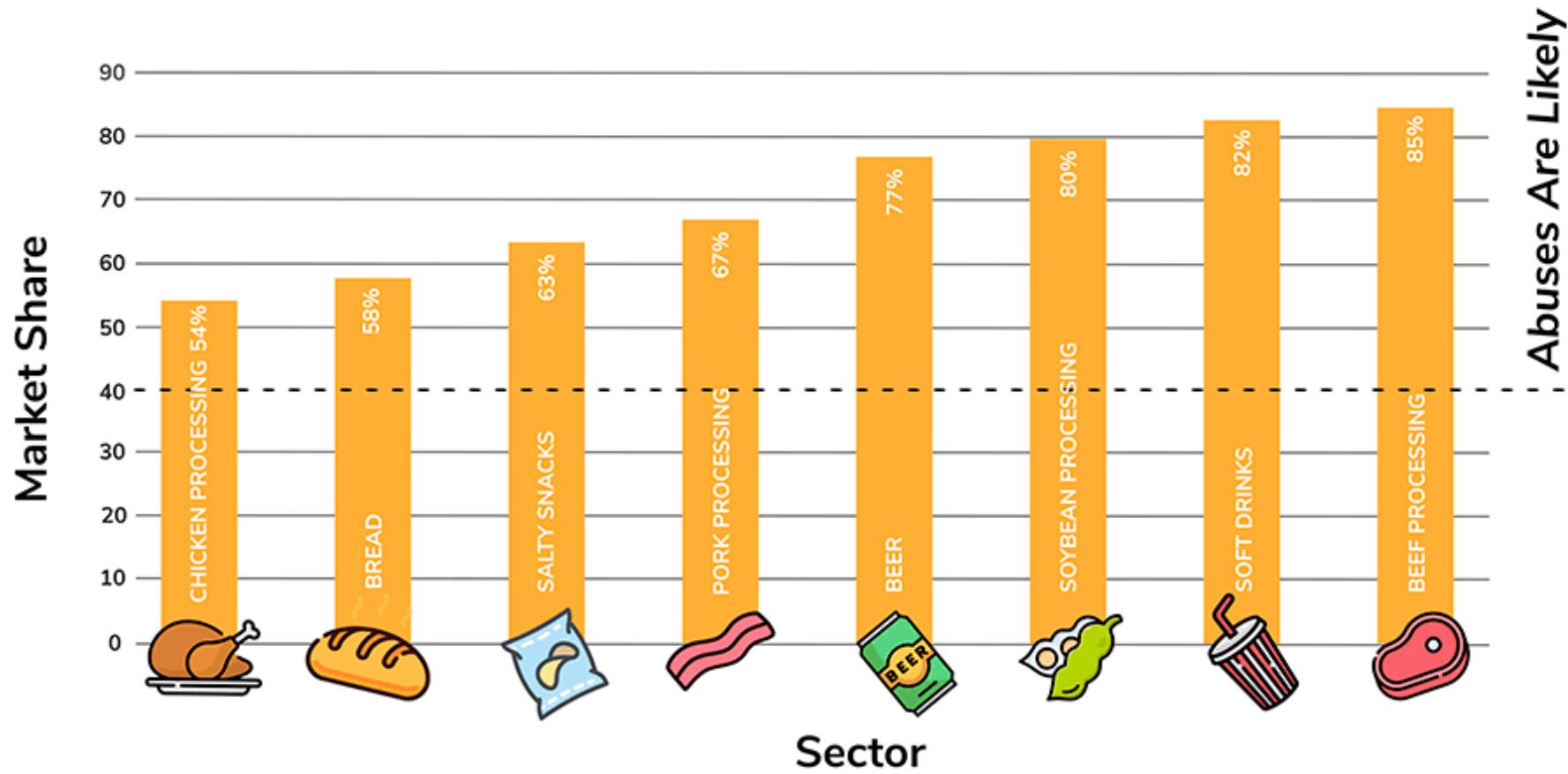


## Concentration in key global food and agricultural industries



Data: <sup>1</sup>Shand & Wetter 2019; <sup>2</sup>Euromonitor 2019

# Percentage of Market Controlled by Top Four Corporations



**2020  
figures**



Farm Action

## *Global market rules that reward corporations*

Structural adjustment and trade agreements have opened markets of the global South to unfair competition from artificially cheap food products from abroad...



...while OECD countries have increased subsidies to agriculture in real terms and protected their markets



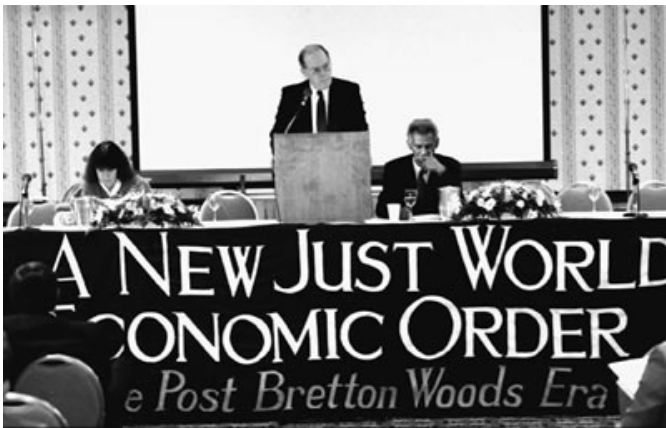
# *The ethos of homo oeconomicus*



economic activity is separate from moral values

individuals naturally and rationally seek to maximise **profit**

this jungle attitude & maximising behaviour eventually increases the welfare of the community





## *Is food a private good only?*

- markets regards food as a mere product, but food as “just a private good” makes hunger still triumph in a world of lavishness
- Eating City Ambassadors know that food is part of a complex balance between culture, agriculture, environmental health and human health

# *Finance and hunger*



- in 2008, the price of all 25 main raw materials increased at the same time; while usually some prices rise and others fall, this increase in unison is unique in history
- no particular natural event took place in 2008: no floods or droughts that triggered that increase in the price of rice or wheat
- the cause was the huge mass of capital fleeing from the subprime mortgage collapse

# *Eating City: the embassy of critique*

- financial crisis as an inherent critique of the ethos of homo oeconomicus
- resounding collapse of the paradigm of profit maximisation
- beyond the failure of economic science, social and moral collapse of an entire model of economy



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## *Figures of financial immorality*

- more money flows in the financial markets in five days than in the “real economy” in a whole year
- over 98% of capital circulation is not linked to the real production or trade in goods and services: it is just money chasing money to make more money

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# *Figures of financial immorality*

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cross-border trade (all the import-export of goods and services in the world) amounts to 32 trillion dollars last year

the currency market exceeds a volume of 7.5 trillion dollars a day

i.e.: more money flows in the financial markets in five days than in the “real economy” in a whole year

i.e.: over 98% of capital circulation is not directly linked to production or trade in goods and services: it is just money chasing money to make more money

# *More figures of immorality*

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the world's GDP (the total wealth produced by mankind in one year of agriculture, industry and services) is 110 trillion dollars

US banks hold derivatives (the most speculative financial instruments) with a notional value of around 180 trillion dollars

today there are no rules on speculating against food prices (and hunger!) or against gambling on the failure of entire nations



**STOP BARCLAYS  
BETTING ON  
HUNGER**

# *Casino-finance & catastrophe*



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instability is the essence of casino finance, not just a side effect: speculators buy just to make prices go up and then sell at a higher price – the greater and quicker the increase, the more they will gain;  
the greater the disaster, the more lucrative the game



# *Paradigms: What is finance?*

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finance is the “market of money”: if you want to buy some apples you’ll go to the market, i.e. the meeting place between apple farmers and consumers

similarly, financial markets should be the meeting place between those who have savings to invest and those (states and companies) that need to raise capital

finance should be a mere instrument at the service of the economy, while banks should only be the intermediaries between savers and borrowers

in this sense, finance and banks should serve the common interest



# *Today finance is an end in itself*

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this essential (and moral) role of finance as serving the economy and society has been lost, and in today's paradigm finance means making money out of money quickly

hence the hypertrophic growth of financial markets: Wall Street was as big as 15% of US GDP in the late 1940s; at the end of the 1980s it was up to 35%; before the subprime bubble burst in 2006 it exceeded 350%

i.e.: today a gigantic mass of purely speculative transactions has been constructed, and the expected profits largely exceed the real growth rates of GDP

***Hunger!***



since there are no rules on speculating against food prices (and hunger!) the food market, naturally subject to price fluctuations, becomes an ideal hunting ground

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# *The Wall Street Bull*

- financial speculation has disastrous effects on the worldwide production of agro-goods
- a rational and fair production of food is a general concern to be protected by international law against private transnational interests



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# *Villarceaux: the Bull Ambassador*

## **Today:**

Roughly half of the world's population currently experiences severe water scarcity for at least part of the year  
*(United Nations World Water Development Report, 2024)*

2.8 billion people can't afford a healthy diet *(World Food Programme, 2024)*



# *Ambassadors of awareness*

# *Ambassadors of responsibility*



- world exploitation led by unlimited profit is no longer sustainable
- there is no such a thing as a “self-regulatory market”: markets are defined by law; laws are informed by values; prohibitions and incentives should be ethically informed
- the unethical short term of speculation is not sustainable

# The ethos of the commons



- the “commons” are spaces, services and goods functional to the protection both of basic individual rights and vital public interests
- they are crucial for the free development of the individual as a human being

# Global commons



- some commons go beyond a local perspective to reach a global dimension:
- natural commons such as great water reserves, a clean environment, climate stability, biodiversity, and the ozone shield
- human-made commons like transnational infrastructures (the internet)
- global policy objectives like peace, security, sustainability, monetary and financial stability



# Pacha Mama: a common world

global commons are essential for a fair and “regenerative” world

they satisfy the need of the present generation without foreclosing options for the future ones

yet, they are under-provided, due to the lack of national and international regulation



# Commons and constitutions



- the notion of “commons” has made its way into the new constitution of Ecuador in protecting nature and its rights
- the right to food is expressly protected in the Bolivian Constitution, while water is defined as a basic human right in the Constitutions of Bolivia and Uruguay

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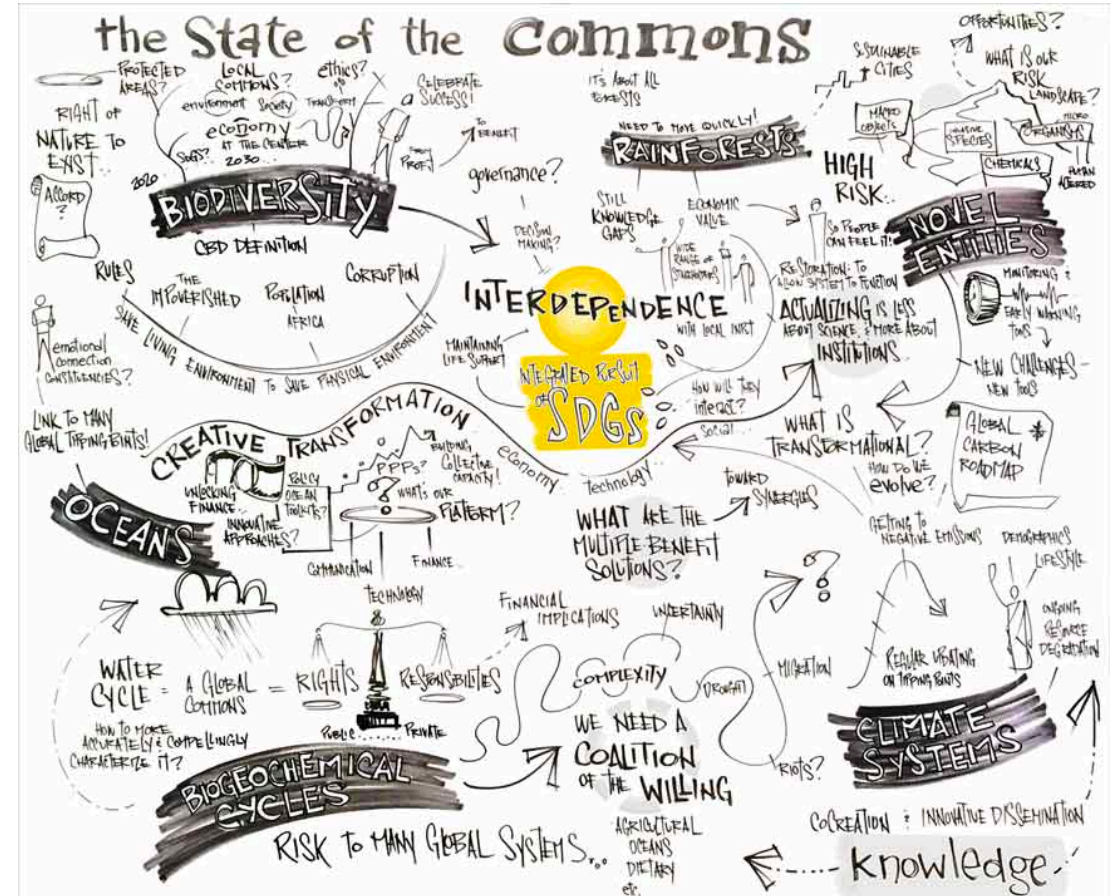
# Agro-ecology: a global common

universal access to healthy food  
concerns global issues

the right to food and the shared  
knowledge about its  
regenerative production are  
commons that go beyond the  
State (and States)

# A world of commons

- great migrations of capital, goods and people challenge the distinction between national and international issues
- issues like labour exploitation, inequality, food scarcity, and climate change enlarge beyond state borders your duties, making you Earth Ambassadors
- global commons should be enjoyed in an inclusive and non-rival way, while their situation is critical for depletion & lack of legal safeguards



# ***The Eating City Ambassadors: Food is a human right***



food is a basic human right crucial for peace and security, humanitarian assistance, innovative sources of financing for development, monetary and financial stability

UN (2003), *Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development, Final text*

UN (2008), *Doha Declaration on Financing for Development*



## *The Eating City Ambassadors: Food is heritage*

- the notion of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) gives international law perspective to the nexus between food and traditional knowledge
- article 2.1 of the 2003 UNESCO Convention defines ICH as the “practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills [...] that communities and, in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage”



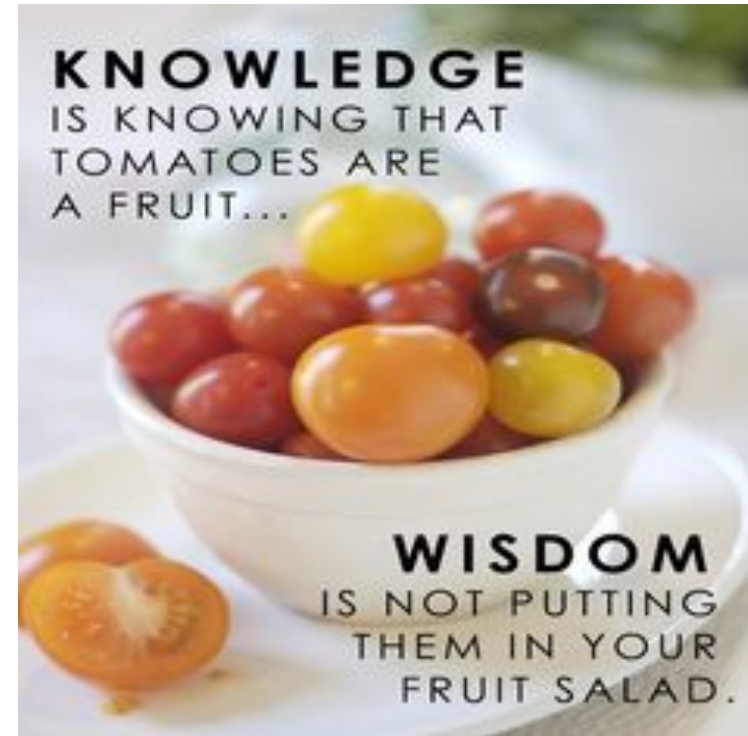
## *Where is the place of future?*

- local diets can be a basis for a regenerative policy on agriculture and food
- they protect local products and labour
- they promote the knowledge of the local environment and the culture of the territory, and provide the basis for their collective protection

# *The Eating City Ambassadors: Food is global knowledge*

food produces various utilities  
both as a cultural good and as a  
material good generated by  
(agri)cultural techniques

a shared knowledge about food  
production and preparation that  
guarantees the ecological cycle  
of life is a global commons





# *Beyond us, the Earth!*

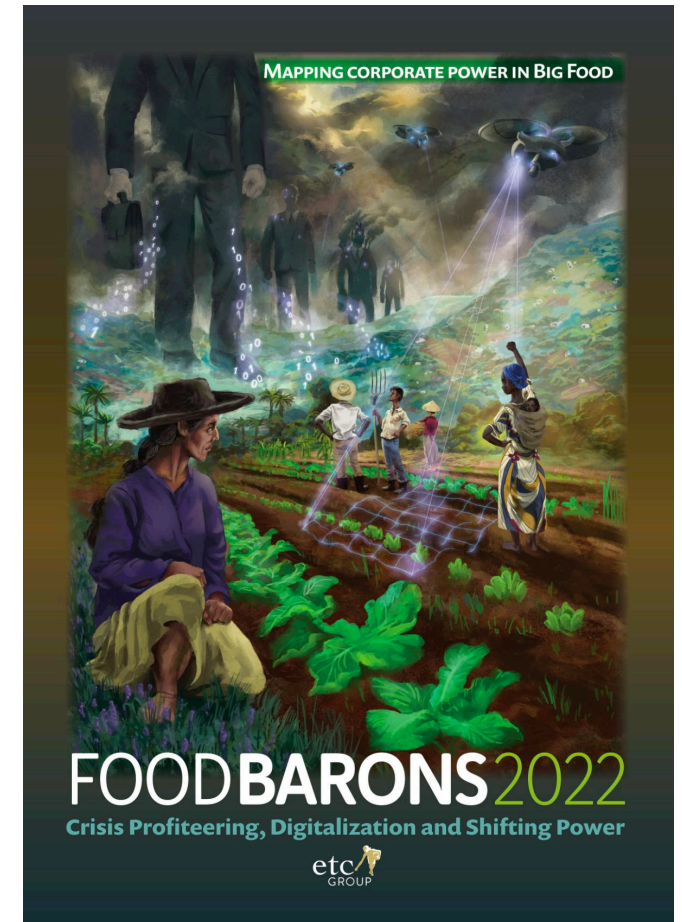


global interdependence with migrations of capital, goods and people challenge the distinction between local and international issues

global issues like poverty, inequality, humanitarian crises and climate change enlarge beyond national and continental borders the legal, political and moral responsibilities of nations and their governments, making them transnational  
the Earth needs Ambassadors to point out these problems

# *Food Barons 2022: Crisis Profiteering, Digitalisation, and Shifting Power*

The report found that digitalisation of the food chain and technology have driven the market towards large corporations, which are investing heavily in the digital ecosystem to expand their base. Several companies are making use of drone technology, the report said. For instance, Bayer, Corteva AgriScience, and BASF are collaborating with manufacturers to promote the use of drone-based agriculture



“Reflection on the term ‘**innovation**’ is useful in understanding how today its meaning hides the capitalist system that seeks to transform food production from a communal, social act respectful of natural cycles into a commercial business for few.”  
**Schola Campesina**



# *A plural future unified by a common ethos of regulation/responsibility*

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a thick ideological apparatus today proclaims its faith in technological innovation as a condition sufficient for survival

technological innovation may be necessary but it is certainly not sufficient

there is no long term future outside of a radical ethical paradigm shift

a future can be gained only harvesting all cultural inputs available out there

