

Our Way Forward

Food, Forests, and Farmers *Finding Sustainable Pathways for the Future*



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ABSTRACT

COP26 Outcomes – What They Mean for Food, Forests and Farmers

by Rowena Soriaga

Agriculture and related land use change are the single largest driver of multiple environmental pressures, and large contributors to greenhouse gas emissions. With one-third of global land area already degraded, the climate crisis puts at risk the lives of an estimated one billion people who rely on forests and tree-based agricultural systems directly or indirectly for their food and livelihood. Around 370 million of them belong to indigenous communities who host 80% of the world's biodiversity.

The 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) has just concluded. Seen as humanity's last best chance to keep global warming to 1.5°C, the conference registered almost 40,000 participants and gathered around 100,000 people out on the streets of Glasgow, more than COP21 that led to the Paris Agreement. About 100 climate change demonstrations were held in other parts of the UK while events were also taking place in a further 100 countries including Kenya, Turkey, France, Brazil, Australia and Canada. Ecojesuit, the Global Ignatian Network for Ecology coordinated by the Environmental Science for Social Change (ESSC), formed a delegation of 32 in-person and online participants to track and report on the process and outcomes, while amplifying the voices of those most vulnerable to the climate crisis.

This presentation summarizes the COP26 outcomes that have the most impacts on the future of food, forests and farmers in the Philippines and in Asia-Pacific. Strategies, methods and tools to address sustainable development challenges now and in the future will also be outlined, so that more people and institutions can effectively accompany the big, global, normative shifts urgently needed.

About the Author

Rowena Soriaga accompanies the growth of networks working to jointly address the social and ecological challenges of our time. She helps institutions design, implement and evaluate programs and projects focused on various aspects of sustainable development especially in rural environments. Rowena currently serves as the Director for Programs Development of Environmental Science for Social Change (ESSC) while helping run the secretariats for Ecojesuit and the River Above Asia and Oceania Ecclesial Network (RAOEN).