

Countryside

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**FFA2020: Food Systems
in a time of Crisis**

Accelerating the Change to Sustainable Food While Protecting Biodiversity

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Facing massive changes to our planet and food systems from climate change and deforestation, the evidence is clear that only by returning to regenerative farming can we support 10 billion people by 2050 and conserve the natural ecosystem services that Nature provides us. I recommend the resources at *Kiss the Ground* <https://kisstheground.com> for more information.

Beyond that, we should also focus on three strategies for maximizing efficiency and co-existing with Nature:

1. End food waste by improving supply chain infrastructure (so more food makes it to markets before spoiling); and by converting post-consumer food waste to fuel, fertilizers and animal feed. SGA is working on these projects in Gujarat India, with 18 local municipalities converting 300 tons of organic waste/day (each) to valuable materials in cost-efficient ways.
2. Make use of degraded lands. In the US, ending the ban on cultivation of hemp, for example, allows growing drought-tolerant crops that can thrive in poor soil. In another example, SGA worked with farmers in Acre, Brazil to use degraded land for fish farms, creating a processing/marketing co-op so farmers could produce value without clearing more rainforests.
3. Combine conventional farming with indoor vertical farms (with grow lights) where practical to relieve pressure on land.

Finally, a word about protecting lands from unsustainable practices. In California, to ensure co-existence of farms with Nature, SGA helps NGOs to use citizen lawsuits to ensure agri-toxins don't drift to neighboring communities and that chemical fertilizer loads don't wash into nearby streams and water supplies. We also support regulatory action to keep forest agriculture sustainable - tree plantations for paper/wood often destroy adjacent habitats, when they could instead create new habitat and harvest sequentially as required by law.

I also want to recommend the documentary "The Game Changers" <https://gamechangersmovie.com> which describes how we can eat less meat. Much deforestation is the result of growing soy to feed cattle, rather than cutting out the "middleman" and eating vegetables directly!

