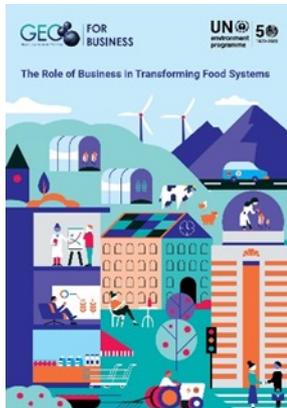


GEO for Business Brief 3: The Role of Business in Transforming Food Systems



The third Business Brief entitled *The Role of Business in Transforming Food Systems* was launched virtually through a [LinkedIn live event and zoom webinar](#) on 16 September 2021 with the support of UNEP-WCMC and the UNEP Communication Team. The Brief's launch took place in a high-level interactive panel discussion moderated by Deputy Director of UNEP-WCMC, Corli Pretorius that included opening remarks from UNEP's Deputy Executive Director Joyce Msuya. The panelists included Andrew Griffiths (Nestlé), Assan Ng'ombe (Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa) and Ruth Thomas (World Business Council for Sustainable Development).

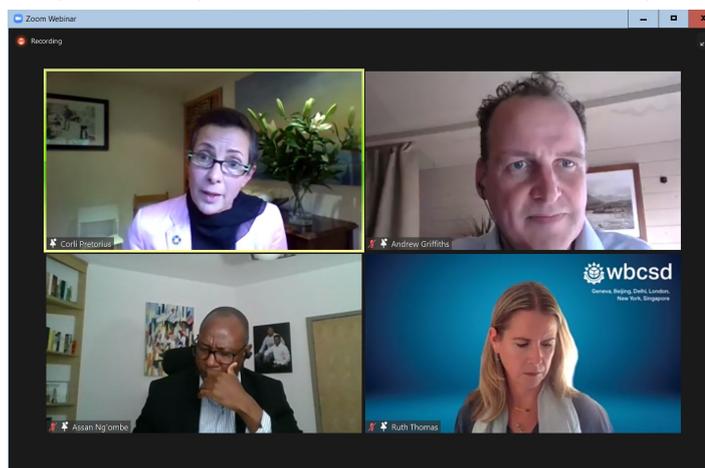
In her remarks, UNEP's Deputy Director set the scene with a keynote statement that emphasized that food production is propelling climate change, driving pollution and it is pushing thousands of species towards extinction. She added that, "we have managed to create a global food system in which, perversely, both hunger and obesity are rampant. Worldwide, 690 million people do not have enough to eat while [2 billion](#) are overweight."

In her conclusion, UNEP'S Deputy Director gave some pointers on what businesses can do.

- Firstly, they can encourage partners across their supply chains to use farming techniques that restore biodiversity and the health of agricultural land.
- Secondly, they can rebalance their product portfolios, introducing plant-rich foods, which are much less destructive to the environment than meat.
- Thirdly, food producers can develop company-wide targets to limit food waste.
- Fourthly, they can align their business with the Sustainable development goals, humanity's blueprint for a better future.
- Finally, firms can quantify the benefits that the natural world brings to their business, whether that's the pollinating power of bees or the value of nutrient-rich soil."

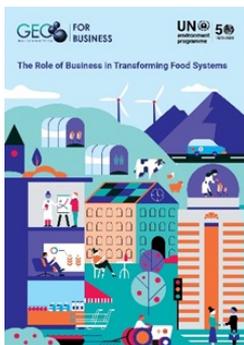
In the transformation of food systems, equity, equitable livelihoods and social justice are important, opined panelist Ruth Thomas, Director of Equitable Livelihoods at WBCSD. She noted that the [WBCSD's Vision 2050](#) puts inequality alongside nature loss and climate change as the one three most pressing global agendas. "2 out of three adults living in poverty are food producers and a food system that is not equitable isn't sustainable."

Two of the authors of the [brief](#), Andy Griffiths, Head of Value Chain Sustainability Nestlé (UK and Ireland) and Assan Ng'ombe, Resilience officer at AGRA were keen to note that a nature positive food system delivers a number of outcomes from a resilience perspective. Assan noted that systems that encourage nature regeneration need to be built into the food system from the production side and build in efficiencies within the value chain processes. Andy noted that the application of systems thinking is required for all the interconnections in the food system given how the system is complex and interconnected. For instance, many businesses are aware of the adverse implications of



single-use plastics as packaging material and business should take action to look at alternative material. Nestlé is focused on addressing its plastic challenges by 2025.

The panel concluded that they hope that the [Food Summit](#) provides continued momentum around the coalition of action on decent work and have the different actors come together to actually find solutions to bring to the majority of the people that go hungry but actually produce the food by developing frameworks through the food systems summit to support genuine collaborative action.



Coordinating Lead Authors: Shirley Lu, Assan Ng'ombe

Lead Authors: Andrew Griffiths, Felipe Villela

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- [Event Recording](#)
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 - [Members of the Advisory Committee of the GEO for Business](#)
 - [GEO for Business Briefs](#)



About GEO for Business

GEO for Business is a co-creation process meant to be written by business voices in order to speak to a business audience about the types of systemic transformations that are needed between now and 2050 to ensure we have an environmentally, socially and economically sustainable future. It helps identify opportunities for the private sector to collaborate in achieving a nature-positive and circular economy. In this way, it aims to advance Agenda 2030 and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The GEO for Business process provides opportunities for businesses to collaborate in developing plans, business strategies, technology pathways, risk assessments, mechanisms and enablers for building a nature-positive future.

The *GEO for Business* summary products (called 'Business Briefs') are being developed with guidance provided by the GEO for Business Advisory Committee of major business and environment non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs). The Business Briefs are being released throughout 2021, complementing the main Global Environment Outlook assessment and other UNEP business-environment publications by providing brief 'action-oriented guides' for business on how best to address specific environmental issues.

Save the Date: The Role of Business in Moving from Linear to Circular Economies



The second brief, titled *The Role of Business in Moving from Linear to Circular Economies*, is scheduled to launch on Thursday 7th October. This launch will be co-hosted with ILO and IOE as part of a WCEF side-event. Both previously launched GEO for Business Briefs can be found online: <https://www.geo-business-report.org/>

Date: 7th October 2021

Registration Link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_7fzDW3D6T2ysL-tfF5jIPQ

Event Information: <https://www.unep.org/events/online-event/accelerating-circularity-role-business-moving-linear-circular-economies>

Invitation to **THE HIDDEN HERO: How can a Net Zero food system be delivered to the benefit of people and planet?**



As a follow-up to the recently launched GEO for Business brief, *The Role of Business in Transforming Food Systems*. Our very own Mr. Pierre Boileau, Head of the Global Assessments Unit will be speaking at: 'THE HIDDEN HERO: How can a Net Zero food system be delivered to the benefit of people and planet?'

Co-hosted by WRAP, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and World Resources Institute, the event will take place online with a diverse range of international speakers and moderators. Following on from the United Nations Food Systems Summit and ahead of COP26, it will explore how changing the way we grow, process, and consume food can help deliver a Net Zero future.

THE HIDDEN HERO: How can a Net Zero food system be delivered to the benefit of people and planet?
Wednesday 6 October 2021, 0700-1300 EST/1200-1800 BST/1300-1900 CET

You'll find out the key developments from the United Nations Food Systems Summit and its implications for the global food system. You will discover what actions will create a Net Zero food system and hear new research from WRAP setting out the pathway for the UK food and drink sector to make a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, and from UNEP on the role of businesses in transforming food systems.

This event will be of interest to policy makers, NGOs, businesses, and civil society who all have a role to play in driving change.

You can [book your free place here](#).

Please be aware that WRAP is also co-hosting a virtual event on Thursday 7 October 2021, in collaboration with UNEP and P4G – Partnering for Green Growth and the Global Goals 2030: **TACKLING THE FOOD WASTE FUNDING GAP: Financing food waste prevent to combat climate change.**

