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AGRI-FOOD TRANSITION AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE: IMPLICATIONS FOR A FAMILY FARMING AGENDA

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There is no ecological transition without a food system transition. Globally, agrifood systems account for approximately 30% of total greenhouse gas emissions and constitute a major driver of biodiversity loss. This is largely due to a defining structural feature: the dominance of production monotony, characterized by large-scale cultivation of a limited number of species, intensive use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and the expansion of ultra-processed food consumption. In response to these challenges, technological innovations have been developed, but they remain largely confined to niche contexts. The transition debate has increasingly pointed to the need for a phase-out of this dominant regime. What, then, has been the role of family farming within this agenda? This paper addresses this question by mobilizing an analytical framework that combines elements of economic sociology and institutional economics. It examines how three key United Nations Framework Conventions (Climate Change, Biodiversity, and Combating Desertification) have been

structured in relation to agrifood system transitions. The findings indicate that: (1) there is a growing misalignment between the decarbonization agenda and a broader environmental approach, as suggested by the systemic perspective of planetary boundaries; (2) a similar misalignment exists between decarbonization and social inequalities, as many of the prioritized solutions may have adverse impacts on vulnerable social groups and regions; (3) the family farming agenda remains largely focused on claims for increased resources and recognition of its importance; (4) issues previously considered marginal, such as international trade, technological and patent rules, and specific financial mechanisms, are becoming increasingly central in light of new global requirements; and (5) at the domestic level, policies prioritizing public goods for adaptation and nationally coherent strategies for a just and sustainable agrifood transition should gain prominence relative to the more traditional emphasis on instruments such as credit, technical assistance, and market access.

Palavras-chave: family farming; transition; agrifood system; climate change; global governance.