

## REPORT FAIR FARM DATA WORKSHOP

**MARCH 29 AND 31, 2022 - ONLINE**

This workshop about Fair Farm Data lasted two days and was held on March 29 and 31, 2022. We had 33 participants, representing 27 organizations in the call. A [full list of participants can be found here](#). The workshop consisted of 5 blocks, in 2 meetings of 2 hours, spread over 2 days. The [detailed agenda can be found here](#).

### BLOCK 1: WHAT IS FAIR FARM DATA?

We started with a block on vision and objectives - from the good principle of 'start with why'. We asked a farmer to explain why data is important for his business. Smallholder farmer *Makhala Chagona* from Zambia told us how he already benefits from sharing his data.

- [Video Makhala Chagona](#).

*Jeroen Douglas* - Executive Director at Solidaridad - explained the basic concept and vision behind this initiative. Fair Farm Data promise is to handle smallholder farmer data in a manner that benefits them. Two important principles are that farmers control and own their data and they benefit when sharing it.

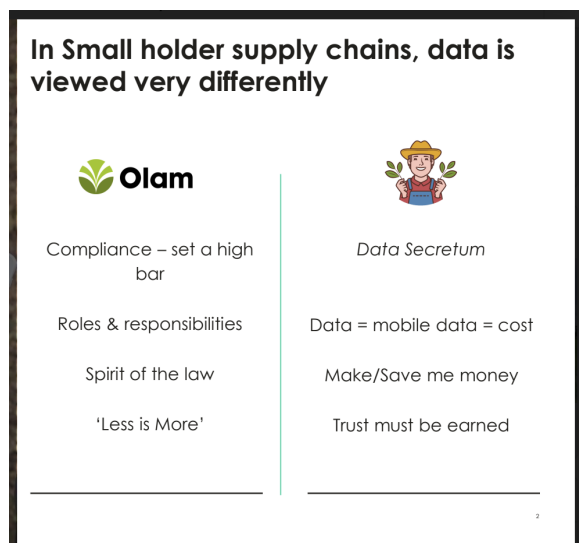
Solidaridad's Digital Advisor *Shungu Kanyemba* explained why Fair Farm Data matters and presented a few applications that are built upon these principles. One of these initiatives is WADI.

- [WADI video](#)
- [Presentation Shungu Kanyemba](#)

### BLOCK 2: HOW CAN IT WORK IN PRACTICE?

*Siddharth Satpute*, Senior Vice President and Head Digital of Olam explained that a fair amount of farmers are connected to their platforms. However, there is a disconnect between vision and reality. Farmers' age is increasing, and the next generation is not getting into the space of smallholder farming. As a consequence, smallholders do not connect automatically to the data ecosystem. Olam has to build digital literacy, create trust by adhering to the highest levels of data privacy, while making it easy for farmers to join asking only relevant data.

*Albert Boogaart*, Head Smallholder Solutions at Rabobank Partnerships, presented the opportunities and challenges of using data to improve access to



finance. He stressed the importance of reusing data to decrease the data collection cost. Fair Data also puts responsibilities in the hand of the farmer in terms of securing data quality. Farmers must be organized to make sure data is being collected properly. Fair Data must balance farmers' interest with the strategic potential of data for actors in the value chain.

Rabobank started a use case to build the case that balancing interests is possible. Conclusions/main questions were:

1. Sharing of data is of interest for all, but what data will we share to create value?
  2. Data is already there, so what is available and how can we re use it?
  3. A unified farmer profile is needed to make sure data can be shared and reused without double counts or mis matches
- [Presentation Albert Boogaart](#)

We worked in 4 **break out sessions** to get an overview on the most important benefits and challenges when working in this domain. During the plenary sessions the teams presented the outcomes. In summary:

Benefits are:

1. We can address and answer more complex questions
2. We can better assess the effectiveness of good agricultural practices
3. We can better reach out to farmers that are located in remote areas
4. We can offer additional services like diagnostic tools, new information

We need to tackle the following challenges:

1. Agreement on taxonomy
2. Alignment of applications, interoperability
3. Data sharing protocols as a central database will not work
4. How to find, access and handle data, who owns data and how is data privacy secured
5. There is no driver or organizing function/body yet
6. Avoid dominant players to hijack the agenda

And there are a couple of pre-conditions:

1. Data is already there, connecting data sources is needed to grasp benefits
2. Benefits will find their way when focusing on the interests and needs of farmers
3. A level of playing field is needed, we must focus on the pre competitive domain
4. Bringing in a neutral and trusted party might help, also tapping into driving forces/trends
5. The issue at hand is complex and needs deconstruction into bite-sized chunks
6. One size fit will not work, we want to avoid a single standard

➤ [Report from the breakout sessions](#)

## **BLOCK 3: WHAT IS THE SWEET SPOT FOR FAIR FARM DATA?**

We started the second day of the workshop discussing the space Fair Farm Data should operate in.

Lars Kahnart, Advisor Digitalisation in Agricultural Supply Chains at GIZ, presented the Diasca initiative that promotes work towards interoperability in order to facilitate global agricultural supply chain due diligence. This is an important topic that currently has the momentum of legislation: National and at EU level. From a content perspective Diasca particularly looks into forest monitoring and farm (living) income. The initiative collects reference implementation projects to perform a reality check on proposed policies.

➤ [Presentation Lars Kahnart](#)

The next speaker is *Kristian Moeller*, he is the Managing Director at GLOBALG.A.P. He explained how data can work for global certificate transparency to achieve assurance beyond the traditional certification schemes. Owners of certification programs (CPO's) play an important role because CPOs have access to a lot of data. The key question is how can they share data and aggregate information.

➤ [Presentation Kristian Moeller](#)

We worked in 4 **breakout sessions** on the following question. *There is a big need, many challenges, let's deconstruct and find the sweet spot for us as a group putting the interest of smallholder farmers first. What is the agenda we should work on?*

The break out groups reported back during a plenary session.

What is the sweet spot for Fair Farm Data?

1. Farm and farmers first, putting the interest as well as the business case for farmers first
2. A multi stakeholder initiative bringing all stakeholders at the table - overarching - agreeing on data principles aligning with the objectives of Fair Farm Data
3. Incentive and reward driven, fair for all of the stakeholders
4. A focus on a specific theme, carbon has been frequently mentioned

Important activities for this initiative to focus on are:

1. Define principles (NOT one standard!) on how to collect, handle, and reuse data
2. Alignment on relevant data and data sets for specific topics
3. Agreement on procedures and protocols to put principles into practice (the railway)
4. Create transparency on the business requirements of different actors
5. Promote and facilitate interoperability of applications (tackle from service perspective)
6. Develop reward concepts and incentive mechanism that work for farmers (monetization of data)

➤ [Report from the breakout sessions](#)

## BLOCK 4: HOW DO WE ORGANIZE OURSELVES?

Now the big question is how to collaborate: who is governing - how to organize the political and ethical layer(s) → a roundtable? Participants made one thing clear, farmers and their farmer organizations must join such an initiative. Farmer Organizations are well informed, and opportunity comes with interaction. In several segments there is already a high level of organization. We need to find a way to connect to them.

Do we feel there is space for a new initiative? *Jan Kees Vis* presented the journey RSPO made. He concluded his presentation by pointing out that Fair Farm Data is a non controversial topic. Therefore stakeholder balance is less critical and it should be easy to mobilize companies, policy makers, donors, civil society organizations and academics. Organizing a fair representation of smallholder farmer groups will be the challenge.

➤ [Presentation Jan Kees Vis](#)

We organized ourselves into four **break out groups** and worked on the question whether a new initiative would make sense. We shared our conclusions in a plenary session. In general participants feel there is space for a new initiative for the following reasons:

- There is so far no initiative that really talks about ethics. It's more about the technical issues. Such an initiative would be helpful
- A global initiative is very critical to guide, converge and connect to existing regional and national initiatives. It will help to shape new data ecosystems
- There is no initiative that is fully farmer centric, also the question how to incentivize and reward farmers for sharing data is not explicitly been touched upon
- When successful such an initiative can lower the cost of collecting data

But it needs a careful consideration of the following:

- When defining the scope (or agenda), the initiative must be demand driven to add value to the farmers as well as the other actors in this data ecosystem
- Especially at farm level we will have to create demand, because not all farmers will immediately see the benefits of connecting to a Fair Farm Data ecosystem
- We have to map existing initiative to make sure we are additional and add value, it will also help us to better connect to existing initiatives
- The initiative must be principle and rule based, we do not want to drive such an initiative to a single standard
- User cases will play an important role to validate as well as shape Fair Data principles and to provide proof of concept farmers can be rewarded for sharing data
- When we agree on the principles, we need a technical framework to start operating from

We concluded we have common ground here, and we need more time to flesh out details. So, we all agreed it would make sense to work towards a seminar where we physically meet together with farmer leadership we will have to mobilize. We also concluded that the farmers-first focus urgently requires involvement of representatives of smallholder farmers in the process and the design of the Fair Farm Data initiative.

➤ [Report from the breakout sessions](#)

## BLOCK 5: CONCLUSIONS

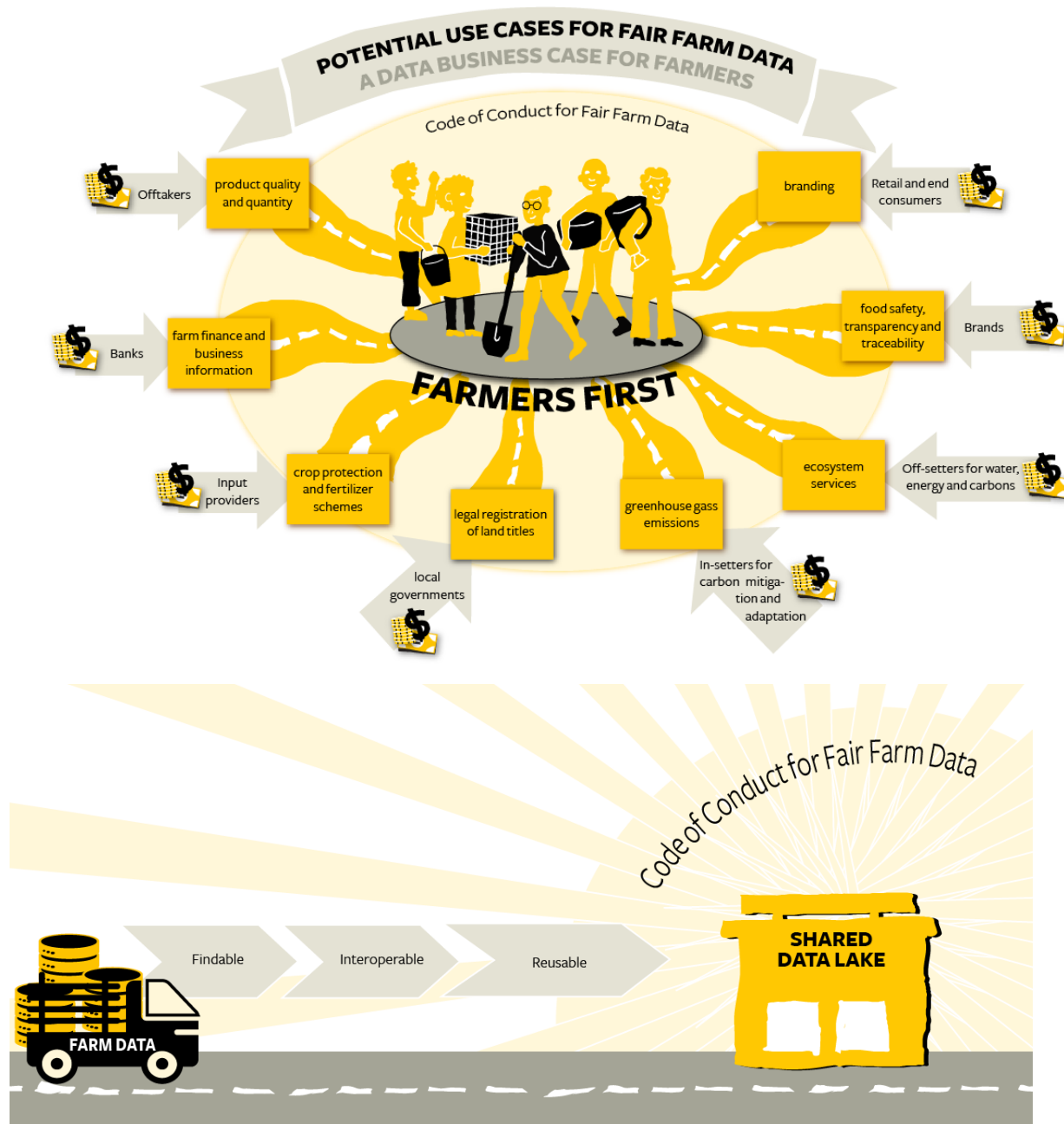
*Jeroen Douglas* summarized the workshop in three main conclusions:

- There is momentum and urgency to create a set of principles for organizing Fair Farm Data from a farmers first perspective. At the center is the question: how can the smallholder farm data supply chain organize a reward model for smallholder farmers, economically and beyond;

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- We see a series of use cases for Fair Farm Data with a high business potential, both for the farmer, as for the concerned data supply chain. Think of data for access to finance, to markets, to tailored farm input, to carbon credits, to scope 3 needs, etcetera.
- We also see the strong potential added value of organizing those farm data at a shared data lake which make those data easy to find, smooth in its interoperability, and reusable as well.

This is a long road, and with clearly defined in-between steps/MVPs, we work towards this. A business case for cost effectiveness looms on the horizon.



Jeroen reconfirmed the need to come together physically and promised the group to come back with a plan.