

Setting up a Territorialized Food System (TFS) in Morocco: Comparative study of Territorialized Food Systems in France, Spain and Turkey

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Abstract:

Morocco offers several potentials for the development of territorialized food systems, on the one hand, the Moroccan diet, of the Mediterranean type, is based on quality and diversified local products, and on the other hand, the decentralization of public policies and the will to develop local products. The success of the initiatives depends largely on the mobilization of stakeholders from the sectors, consumers and citizens around this project.

Keywords: “Foods Systems, “Territorialized Food Systems”, “Local products”, “Food security”

JEL Classification : M31, E22, F21, E22, M31, L83

Paper type: Empirical research

1. Introduction

Today, we live in a world where consumer pressure is strong and society encourages fast food, processed products that are mainly of animal origin and international products that are available in traditional grocery stores, inexpensively and in large quantities. Consumers at the table have no idea about the Food System (FS). It is rarely where they can link their food to a place, a territory, or even a person.

On the one hand, societies are organizing themselves in a way that is impoverishing biodiversity and water and soil quality, while on the other; food choices are having an impact on ecosystems. Indeed, industrialization and the green revolution have transformed our mode of production in a way that yields have increased, and this would have consequences, Mariani, Lacourt & Krausz (2013).

The model that currently predominates almost everywhere in the world is called by productivist model. Since, it uses an intensive method using mechanization and agrochemicals including fertilizers and pesticides to produce, which generates risks for the health of consumers. As well as farmers where a combination of a variety of chemical pollutants at very low doses, will have more or less adverse effects on their health in the long term according to Polge M. (2012).

Yet this is recognized as the second cause of the risk of global extinction of biodiversity, just after the exploitation of natural resources by Euzen, Laville & Thiébault (2017).

The increase in the world's population and the accelerated evolution of technology are making the economy more interconnected and globalized. This in turn increases conflicts and instability, making them more difficult to resolve and leading to greater displacement of populations. Climate change and the accentuation of climate variability and extremes are affecting agricultural productivity, food production and natural resources, with repercussions on food systems and the livelihoods of rural populations, including a decline in the number of farmers. All this has led to multiple in-depth changes in food production, distribution and consumption patterns around the world by UN (2017) & Nonjon (2012).

Through a comparative study of three Mediterranean countries with different strengths and even weaknesses, this paper examines the potential for developing Territorialized Food Systems (TFS) in Morocco, a country where eating habits, under the impact of urbanization and globalization, are tending towards the mass consumption model. Can such Territorialized Food Systems (TFS) be foreseen? In addition, what about the experiences of other countries around the world?

To address this issue, we have looked at the experiences of other countries, in particular the Territorialized Food System in France, Spain and Turkey, countries that we in Morocco hope to learn from their experiences in the field. Through a literature review, we will attempt to give a definition of the food system and food security, and the characteristics of the Moroccan Food System, followed by a comparative study of territorialized food systems in France, Spain and Turkey, and finally a discussion of the results obtained.

2. Literature review

2.1. Definition

Several definitions of the concept territorialized food system (TFS) were presented, as well as several segmentations of Food System (FS) in particular: alternative commercial and civic food subsystems, evaluated by James et al. (2015) were considered territorialized food systems. These subsystems are associated with local or regional scales compared with industrial food systems, which operate on a global and/or national scale. More specifically, alternative commercial food systems include producer cooperatives and community-supported agricultural and artisanal farms. The use of short food supply chains by farmers was also considered to

represent a territorialized food system. Short chains meet the definition of a territorialized food system because they enable relational and geographic proximity between producer and consumer.

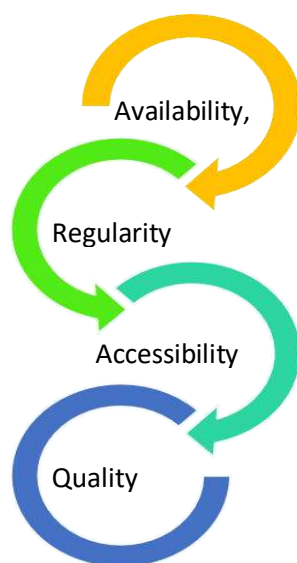
A territorialized food system, defined as a set of agri-food chains meeting sustainable development objectives by J. L. Rastoin (2015) and Garcia et al. (2016), theoretically targets food security as well as sustainable population and environmental health. This rapid analysis identified very few publications dealing with the simultaneous associations between territorialized food systems, human health, food security and the environment, illustrating the compartmentalized nature of current scientific research on food systems, as reported elsewhere by James et al. (2015). Indeed, research on food systems, and in particular on alternative food systems over the past decade, has traditionally focused on a single issue of sustainability by Michel- Villarreal, R. (2019). This has contributed to a significant lack of knowledge about the interrelationships between human health, food safety and environmental health across food systems by Fanzo J. (2021). A more interdisciplinary, holistic and systemic approach to the study of food systems is urgently needed to ensure the transition to sustainable food systems that are optimized and adapted to all dimensions of human and environmental health Whitmee, S. (2015) & FAO (2021).

This concept was formulated at the World Food Summit in 1996 and has been universally adopted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO): "As long as all people at all times have adequate economic, social and physical access to food, food security can be assured. Their nutritional needs and food preferences are adequate, safe and nutritious to enable them to lead active and healthy lives." FAO (1996), the definition of this concept generates several components.

2.2. The components of food security

The definition of food security distinguishes four components (Figure N° 1) according to FAO (2006), which can be manifested in the availability of food in appropriate quantity and quality, supplied by domestic production or imports. Access to this food must be for all, and adequate resources must be available to have adequate food. The use of this food in an appropriate context to achieve a state of nutritional well-being that satisfies all physiological needs. Stability, to achieve food security. This access to food must not be threatened by sudden shocks such as economic or climatic crises, or by cyclical events such as seasonal food insecurity.

Figure 1: The components of food security



Source: Designed by ourselves based on FAO (1996)

2.3. The food system

According to (J. L. Malassis, 1994): The food system (FS) is: "*the way in which humans organize themselves, in space and time, to obtain and consume their food*". This system has gone through different stages in the history of human societies, and over the last few decades, food systems have undergone major changes as a result of the green revolution and the growing investment of the private sector in food production.

This has had major repercussions for the environment and the socio-economic conditions of local populations. Indeed, citizens are disconnected from the workings of FS and no longer know where their products come from, how they were produced or under what conditions.

As the concept of Territorialized Food System (TFS) emerged by The scientific community, Non- Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and international organizations that made a cross between the concepts of territory and agri-food chain by RESOLIS (2015).

A FST can thus be defined as a coherent set of sustainable agri-food chains located in a regional geographical area, with participative territorial governance.

This concept focuses on maximizing the local integration of supply chains, as opposed to the long supply chains of agri-food globalization. From a historical perspective, it can be seen that globalization is fragmenting supply chains through an increasing division of labor and the lengthening of distances between agricultural production sites, on the one hand, and the place where food is purchased and consumed, on the other.

A FST is an emerging alternative form of the dominant agro-industrial model, with the aim of reducing negative external influences and enhancing positive social, environmental and economic impacts approved by Rastoin (2015).

An FS is an interdependent network of actors located in a specific area, which may be the state, a region or another territorial form, who participate in the flow of goods and services intended to satisfy the food needs of consumers located in - or outside - this given area" Rastoin (2010). As such, it encompasses the entire food pathway "from farm to fork" Rastoin (2010). A number of players are involved.

A TFS is considered national, while at the same time responding to the issue of food sovereignty. A national TSS can be adapted to the regional level to encourage the development of new agronomic practices that protect natural resources, particularly soil fertility, by diversifying production systems.

2.4. The objectives of Territorialized Food Systems

Taking sustainable development criteria into account, FST could represent a new stage based on a local network of agriculture, agri-food businesses and services pooling local resources. Moreover, FST could be a good resilience factor in the face of crises and the risk of relocation, as it is based on a natural, technical and cultural heritage, in a logic of "sustainable development".

Proximity and territorially-based governance. A strategy of territorial differentiation can also be a source of competitiveness in a mass-market context, Rastoin (2015).

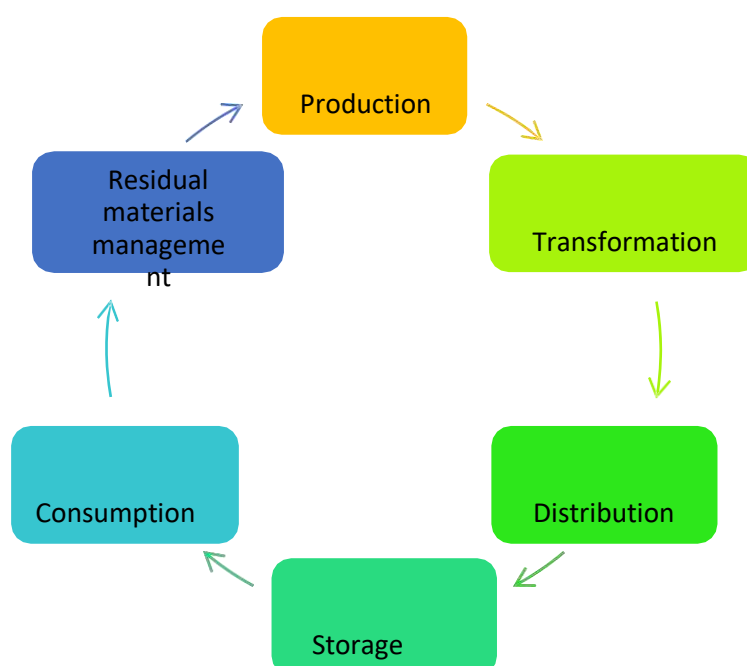
The (TFS) context is paramount, while the biophysical context includes agronomic potential, climatic characteristics and product accessibility. The socio-economic context also includes factors such as income, the population and its needs, and people's eating habits. The level of technology also influences FS since, where refrigeration allows food to be preserved more efficiently, something that is not available in all countries approved by Laval University (2017).

2.5. The stages of a Food System

Moreover, there are different types of AS: agro-industrial, domestic, territorial, local or sustainable. However, for each type, the operating stages remain the same, as shown in **figure**

2, it's the objectives, the size of the equipment, the number of operators or the scale that change. Some aim for alternative operation or certification, such as fair trade or organic. Each type has its own advantages: the industrial ones focus on stability, control and sanitary quality, while the more alternative ones emphasize the craftsman's knowledge and ability to adapt. The latter are often innovative, fairer and more collective. They often operate in parallel with industrial SAs, to experiment with their possibilities and to develop new products. To quietly bank on a shift towards sustainability. These alternative models also tend to ally themselves and share common concerns, such as fair trade, which sometimes allies itself with environmental or organic certifications according to Colonna, Fournier & Touzard (2013).

Figure 2: Operating stages of (TFS)



Source: Designed by ourselves based on a report by (Université Laval, 2017)

3. Characteristics of the Moroccan Food System

To properly describe the characteristics of the Moroccan Food System, we need to talk about Moroccan agriculture, which is an important pillar in the development of the Moroccan economy approved by Hervieu et al. (2006), as well as the diversity of its biosphere. Its economic and social weight, its structuring association with the rural world, and the multiplicity of its functions - notably food, economic, social and environmental - make it a natural driver of development.

The importance of the agricultural sector is reflected in its significant contribution to national GDP and job creation, particularly in rural areas where agriculture remains the main employer and source of income for 1.5 million farmers.

In fact, the rural workforce accounts for 46% of the country's total active population. What's more, this sector contributes 14% of GDP. However, due to the industry's dependence on weather conditions, this contribution is highly volatile. Similarly, productivity in this sector is also very low, and there is a lack of value and valuable products.

3.1. Traditional consumption vs. new consumer practices

The country's Mediterranean-style food system is characterized by the predominance of cereals, mainly wheat, barley and corn, which still account for 60% of dietary energy intake, as

well as fruit and vegetables. All households are gradually diversifying their diets to include more nutrient-rich foods.

According to the FAO's 2011 report on the nutritional status of Morocco, traditional eating habits are still dominant in consumer choices, often favoring the consumption of cereals: bread is still present in household baskets.

In recent years, a large proportion of the population has turned to ready-to-eat foods and out-of-home catering, which are becoming more common in urban than in rural areas, while at the same time promoting the consumption of foods rich in sugar and fat. This change in nutritional habits is due to urbanization, economic development and globalization. These ready-to-eat food products, either locally produced or imported, offer easy access.

Despite nutritional information and a growing public awareness, which is encouraging a return to traditional foodstuffs such as olive and argan oils, and wholegrain cereals, barley, cactus fruit, etc., in the rural environment, farmers tend, voluntarily or involuntarily, to sell locally produced foodstuffs in order to buy others, which may be cheaper.

But of lesser nutritional quality. As a result, they sell durum wheat to buy soft wheat, olive oil to replace it with seed oils, and substitute tea for traditional milk and dairy products at breakfast.

3.2. National agricultural and agri-food production

The agricultural and food industries, whose essential function is to transform agricultural, livestock and fishery products into food and beverages for humans and animals, contribute an average of 20% to GDP, almost 10% to global exports and 44% to employment.

It is an essential industry in the food system, with a production value of 110 billion MAD. It is the leading sector of national industry and one of the country's best assets for development (30% of added value, 5% of GDP and 12% of permanent employment excluding canned fish). It produces products for final consumption by households, and is made up of the agricultural raw materials processing and packaging industries (IAA).

At different stages of economic growth, this sector plays an important role in the final value of foodstuffs and in the composition of the shopping basket, bringing about major changes throughout the FS by Rastoin & Tozanli (2008).

According to a 2018 report by Morocco's agricultural development agency, this sector contributes 13% to 20% of GDP and employs 40% of active jobs. It is a source of income for 74.5% of the rural population.

Through exports, it imports 1.8 billion euros, or 11% of the total value of foreign currency.

This sector covers balanced food requirements: 100% for milk and meats, 100% for market garden produce, 60% for cereals, 43% for sugar, etc.

- A usable agricultural area of 8.7 million ha, including 1.6 million ha under irrigation.
- A hydro-agricultural infrastructure of 139 large dams enabling the mobilization of 15.2 billion M³ of water, of which 13.3 billion M³ is for agricultural use.
- Diversified agricultural production: 1 million hectares of olive trees, over 250,000 hectares of vegetables, 125,000 hectares of citrus fruits, 28 million head of cattle, 66% of which are sheep.

Morocco has adopted a progressive strategy to maintain partial protection depending on the nature and importance of the product. At the same time, it has formulated diversified agricultural policies adapted to different regions. This strategy is defined within the framework of the 2008 Green Morocco Plan, which focuses on four main areas: ensuring food security, increasing incomes and improving the quality of life of the population.

Farmers protect and conserve natural resources and integrate agriculture into national and international markets.

3.3. Two pillars form the main lines of intervention

The first concerns modern, high value-added agriculture practiced by farms located in irrigated areas and areas with favorable rainfall.

The second is to support small farmers, particularly in landlocked areas, where solidarity-based agriculture is developing, characterized by the originality of these products, and to enhance their value through the use of geographical indications. In this respect, Law 25-06, adopted in 2008, forms the basis for the creation of a system for recognizing Distinctive Signs of Origin and Quality.

Achieving the plan's objective relies on promoting products with strong typical characteristics, closely linked to the Mediterranean diet by Keys (1975) and local entrepreneurship. Indeed, the second pillar will revive consumption patterns linked to local products (appealing to memory rather than imitation) and strengthen the local economy (shortening production chains), rather than based on economies of scale (agro-industrial models) according to Rastoin & Tozanli (2008).

The second pillar of the Green Morocco Plan aims to develop "local value chains" and family farming, "networks of SMEs and VSEs", and cooperative structures to comply with the definition of the territorial food system by Rastoin (2015).

4. Comparative study

4.1. The localized food system in France

A territorialized food system is considered national, while responding to the issue of food sovereignty. It can be extended to the regional level, while encouraging the development of new agronomic practices that protect natural resources, and soil fertility in particular, by diversifying production systems.

The diversification of production in France would enable the fabric of family farms to be extended to SMEs and VSEs in the agri-food sector, including manufacturing and wholesale activities.

In 2012, this sector comprised over 80,000 units with sales of 372 billion euros and 774,000 employees.

In the European Union, TSS are protected by the European Geographical Indication (GI) system, which means legal protection on a European market that recognizes the reputation of labels sought after by consumers. These GIs benefit from prices and margins that are 20% (fruit and vegetables) to 200% (pasta) higher than those of products without GIs (Cherver et al., 2013).

FSTs in France are encouraged by the State through the national food policy (PNA), declined in Regions (PRA). The Association des Régions de France (ARF) supports such a project through its "Rennes Declaration" of July 4, 2014.

The analysis of the 100 initiatives presented by RESOLIS, which is a non-profit association and seeks to achieve with its observatory, which has enabled it to track these forward-looking local initiatives since 2012. These initiatives demonstrate the inventiveness shown by certain local players in producing food and creating economic circuits to reach a growing proportion of consumers, while at the same time contributing to the social, environmental and cultural development of territories. These initiatives contribute to the construction of a TSS with social, environmental and cultural value. The comparative analysis of food initiatives is in line with the Rennes Declaration issued by the Association des Régions de France (ARF). Local authorities are keen to relocalize food, i.e. to bring food consumers closer to agricultural producers and promote local economic development.

These initiatives bring added social, environmental and cultural value, and provide consumers with information about their evolving food demands, which in turn will influence the entire food system. In this system, the players in the food chain are private economic actors, and

foodstuffs are private goods traded on one or more markets.

4.2. The food system in Spain

Spain is considered one of Europe's great agricultural countries, but although it is economically, socially and humanely developed, it lags behind the founding countries of the Union in terms of statistics that limit sufficient quantitative analysis. Whereas, 0.14% of farms declared that direct sales represented more than 50% of their turnover and 1.25% carried out some processing of products on the farm approved by Tragsatec (2013).

However, there are analyses, case studies and reports on the subject Fernandez-Casadevante and Moran (2015) Lopez Garcia (2015) & Sevilla Guzman (2012) & Tragsatec (2013).

The development of innovative trade channels is lagging behind. On the one hand, numerous initiatives by local authorities to promote farmers' markets, and on the other, the development of a powerful export-oriented organic farming industry in northern Europe.

There is also a lack of organization and coordination among local or traditional producers.

Today, Spain is Europe's leading producer of organic produce and its leading exporter, due to weak domestic demand caused by the global economic crisis which has hit consumers in the northern Mediterranean in general, and Spain in particular, particularly hard. This is also due to the continued existence of specialized distribution channels for fresh produce, particularly fruit and vegetables, giving consumers access to quality products at reasonable prices.

The Ministry of Agriculture promotes initiatives in favor of short marketing circuits, and Law 12/2013 includes measures to improve the functioning of the food chain.

Lopez Garcia (2015) sells these organic products on the Spanish market almost equally through supermarkets, specialty stores and alternative channels. Market risk management begins at farm level, and territorialized food systems are part of the arsenal of instruments needed to innovate. The number of consumer groups and cooperatives has increased by Lopez Garcia (2015). The same is true of other initiatives such as local shops, sometimes with "crowdfunding"; farm sales; public purchases by school canteens, hospitals or geriatric residences. With the unemployment rate among young Spaniards approaching 50%, there is a certain return to the village after higher education, with personal projects that mobilize their urban connections through short circuits by Garcia Vega (2012). There are more glaring statistical gaps concerning initiatives arising from the farming world.

European health and hygiene standards, the "Hygiene Package", are the main obstacle to the development of territorialized food systems in Spain, and this generates discrepancies between the different regional legislative frameworks and their interpretations by Tragsatec (2013) and applications by Trigueros (2012). For Lopez Garcia (2015), several regions have recently begun work on a comprehensive approach to the issue of short circuits.

4.3. Turkey's food system

Turkey is a major Mediterranean agricultural and food-processing country, and a major exporter. It is characterized by the dominance of a powerful agro-industrial model and a localized food system emanating from Turquoise culinary traditions.

With a total population of nearly 76 million, a GDP of almost 700 billion euros and an average annual growth rate of almost 4% since 2000, Turkey ranks sixth in the world, according to World Bank calculations. Turkey has been able to restructure its GDP to give pride of place to the tertiary sector. While the agricultural and agri-food sectors play an important role in Turkey's economy despite its declined from 40% in the 1970s to around 7% in 2015, and now accounts for less than a quarter of Turkey's working population. However, the country's agriculture boasts a wide range of diversified agricultural products, traditional know-how in many areas of production, available water resources and a dynamic agri-food industry by Chevassus et al. (2006).

Turkey has almost 24 million hectares of usable agricultural land, of which field crops occupy 65.9%; arboriculture 13.5%; horticulture 3.4% and s 17.2% according to official figures for 2014. In the 2013/2014 marketing year, the total supply of cereals was over 40 million tonnes, making up 37% of total agricultural production by volume. Sugar beet with almost 17 million tonnes (15%), oilseeds and protein crops with 7.7 million tonnes (7%), fresh vegetables with around 16.5 million tonnes (24%) and fruit with almost 13 million tonnes (12%), including 4 million tonnes of citrus fruit and 1 million tonnes of nuts. These productions place Turkey among the world's top ten producers and exporters by FAO (2019).

It is the leading producer of hazelnuts, apricots, cherries, morello cherries, figs and quinces, second for sheep's milk, honey, cucumbers and leeks and third for pistachios, chestnuts, apples, strawberries, peppers, melons and watermelons and chickpeas by FAO (2019).

Its food industry accounted for 14% of total production value in 2014, by Turkstat (2014). The total value of Turkey's AFI production was almost 50 billion euros in 2014, of which processed fruit and vegetables made up 18.5%; milk and dairy products 11.7%; mill products 10.7%; bakery, pastry and pasta products 9.5%; animal feed 8.2%; animal and vegetable fats 7.6%; processed poultry meat 6.8% and chocolate and confectionery products 6.6%.

This structure of agricultural and agro-industrial production is also reflected in the composition of Turkey's exports.

In Turkey, the notion of the cultural and social identity of agri-food products, combined with the "sensory", "nutritional" and "organoleptic" dimensions of food quality, has its roots in Anatolian history. Trademarks have been built around certain products, linked to the knowledge of craftsmen whose entrepreneurial spirit was combined with culinary talent. Thus, linking the distinctive quality of an agricultural and food product to its place of origin has been sought after by Turkish consumers for centuries Tekelioglu & Tozanli (2006). The institutional and legal framework defining indications and providing legal protection for their origin and specific characteristics was set up in 1995 in response to the accelerating pace of globalization.

5. Theoretical discussion

Whatever the interest and nature of these initiatives, we need to analyze the local success factors and the economic, social or cultural limits to the validity of these factors. Not all local initiatives can be scaled up. Simply demonstrating the development potential of an initiative is not enough for it to multiply or develop spontaneously. This potential will only be realized if the conditions of its environment, its market and the existence of information enabling consumers to recognize, beyond the economic value of food, its social and environmental values are met.

In short, FSTs need to meet all the conditions required for their full development, and thus contribute to sustainable development, i.e. the economic, social, environmental and cultural development of the region.

In this context, which helps to create an environment conducive to the development of TSS that are both responsible and sustainable, regional policies are also called upon to play a greater role in promoting the development of TSS in order to take their place in the food system.

In conclusion, Morocco has many strengths that militate in favor of FST's development. Indeed, quality products are available in all regions of Morocco. At the same time, consumers are looking for products that are healthy for them and for the environment. However, the attraction of easy-to-use and easy-to-consume industrial products represents a threat to the traditional consumption model.

It is essential to bear in mind the limitations of this research. Firstly, the concrete analysis of these data may come up against logistical and methodological challenges, particularly in terms of data collection and coordination between the various local players. In addition, the general aspect of this study may require fine-tuning according to the specificities of each territory, which could require considerable resources.

Furthermore, although this study offers a comprehensive view of food dynamics, it can sometimes make it difficult to identify concrete, operational solutions for improving food systems. Appropriate tools and methodologies need to be put in place to translate these global analyses into concrete actions.

However, much remains to be explored in this field. Future research could focus on identifying effective governance models for the implementation of territorialized food systems, as well as developing monitoring and evaluation indicators suited to this study. In addition, the impact of new technologies and innovations in the food sector deserves particular attention, as does the exploration of new forms of collaboration between local players, producers and consumers. Finally, it is essential to deepen our understanding of the cultural and social dynamics that influence food behavior, in order to design better-adapted and more effective interventions. By pursuing these lines of research, we can make a significant contribution to building more resilient and sustainable localized food systems.

6. Summary and conclusion

By examining the underlying mechanisms of eating behavior within territorialized food systems, we have plunged into the heart of a complex dynamic that transcends simple individual choices. These systems, rooted in geographical proximity and sustainability, are essential pillars in the evolution of our eating habits.

We have come to realize that eating behavior is a subtle reflection of our culture, preferences and aspirations, shaped by a multitude of factors. From inherited traditions to economic constraints and environmental concerns, all these elements intertwine to guide our food choices. Through this exploration, it has become clear that understanding food behavior in these systems cannot be limited to a partial vision. This comparative study of food systems in these countries shows that Territorialized Food Systems are a necessity if we are to achieve food security and preserve the resources of each country, and this is imperative if we are to grasp the scale of the issues at stake. By bringing together all the interactions between producers, distributors and consumers, we have sketched out the outlines of a more complete and balanced vision of our food.

Therefore, it is clear that territorialized food systems hold the potential for significant transformations in our modes of consumption and food production. This comparative study of TFS in the countries covered by this study opens the way to better-adapted food policies and more environmentally friendly practices. It is in this perspective that lies the key to shaping a sustainable food future, where food is not only a vital act, but also a vector for social cohesion, individual well-being and the preservation of our planet.

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