Strategic Re-prioritization for Food, Trade, Climate and Nature: Unlocking Growth

London Climate Week 2025 Executive Roundtable

Participant Report

Amid rising geopolitical tensions, shifting economic pressures, and accelerating climate impacts, the International Fertilizer Association (IFA) convened a high-level roundtable during London Climate Week. Bringing together leaders from the shipping, trade, agri-food, finance, and policy sectors, the session focused on "Strategic Re-prioritization for Food, Trade, Climate, and Nature." With converging crises upending long-held assumptions and rendering past decisions increasingly uncertain, participants explored how they are now determining what truly matters—and how to keep those priorities both relevant and actionable in today's volatile landscape.

The roundtable led to a number of strategic conclusions, including:

The New Operating Context

Participants agreed that the post-war rules-based order no longer offers reliable guardrails; fragmentation is creating policy, trade, and security shocks that reverberate through supply chains. In this volatile setting, companies can no longer treat sustainability, food security, or nature as static programs; they must constantly test which commitments still make economic sense.

Changing Agendas, or Doubling Down

Participants reflected on making decisions to adapt or double down on their priorities in an increasingly unpredictable global environment. A broad consensus emerged around the importance of staying anchored to the company's core mission, vision, and long-term objectives, though this looks different across companies.

Participants also agreed that there is a disconnect between the "mood" and the "facts": while it seems that businesses are reducing or stepping back from their decarbonization narrative, over 90% are still pursuing their sustainability goals.

The Economics Imperative

Several speakers warned that "if the economics don't work, it won't happen." Strategy must, therefore, start with business models that survive inflation, subsidy shifts, and tariffs. Non-competitive areas are at higher risk of being dropped. That lens is pushing companies to hunt for niches or to down-select legacy projects whose margins have evaporated.

Finance: Beyond Concessional Capital

The attendees cautioned that concessional finance is useful only once a real market and a bankable project exist, otherwise it remains wishful thinking. The discussion highlighted a growing demand for outcome guarantees, well-defined project preparation and tracking, and transaction-cost support that can unlock private capital at scale.

A Playbook for Influence

Out of the dialogue emerged a fourteen-point communications and influence playbook. It entails the following:

1. Finish the job on global policy accords – keep pushing for the implementation of the Paris Agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and others.
2. Treat the climate-nature nexus as a "social license to operate", and frame it as a part of the corporate development.
3. Integrate IFC Performance Standards (and similar finance filters) so capital continues to flow to compliant projects.
4. Honor the commitments you have already signed – credibility depends on delivering what's been promised.
5. Welcome scrutiny – NGOs and civil society call companies to account and keep boards focused.
6. Engage policymakers through the food-security lens – link global goals to local import-substitution agendas to win support.
7. Leverage FOMO (fear of missing out) and peer pressure – highlight competitors' first moves to nudge others along.
8. Start with lived experience – taking leaders to the front-line so personal journeys drive conviction about climate impacts.
9. Invest in resilience – showcase client site visits and adaptation spending to prove action, not words.
10. Shine a light on farming demographics and automation costs – ageing growers and tech gaps make the food security story concrete.
11. Amplify voices all along the value-chain – include traders, suppliers and others further up to tell a joint story.

12. Prove what's possible – cite traceability breakthroughs to show solutions that already work.
13. Reframe climate and nature as security and competitiveness – focus on the energy security/food security axis.
14. Keep momentum – "stay on the train" – as the transition is underway: urge stakeholders not to jump off mid-journey.

It reframes climate/nature as a question of competitiveness and security, leverages social licence to operate and value-chain pressure, and insists on storytelling that proves "this is possible" through concrete case studies. The group committed to refining and publishing the playbook as a white paper ahead of New York Climate Week.

Where We Go Next

The roundtable closed with a shared resolve to keep collaborating on access to sustainable finance simplification, policy stability and credible narratives that turn disruption into durable opportunity. A full white paper- capturing the playbook, policy asks, and investment pathways -will be circulated to participants in the coming weeks, with follow-up sessions planned for New York and other 2025 climate fora.

Stay Involved

If you would like to contribute additional case studies, or join future roundtables, please contact the IFA Public Affairs team led by Yvonne Harz-Pitre (yharzpitre@fertilizer.org). Your insights will help transform this moment of uncertainty into strategic clarity for food, climate and nature alike.