

F5 Conference on Future Food, Fisheries, Farming and Forestry - Rebekah Hill

The F5 Conference on Future Food, Fisheries, Farming and Forestry was a privilege to attend as a young delegate. It was particularly invaluable to learn from experts during their presentations, as well as having the opportunity to speak to them individually and ask questions during intermissions.

Another aspect of the event that stood out was the way industry speakers embraced environmentalism as an opportunity and something to take ownership of, rather than viewing it as a cause for isolation, or a shift that they could not partake in. It was also gratifying to hear the pervasive theme of cooperation shared by many speakers, involving a triple helix approach to policy development informed by academics, government and industry alike.

Another common theme was the discussion of “wicked” problems, namely how they require integrated, polycentric solutions. Thus, an instructive element to the day was the discussion surrounding current issues in regulation, where perhaps the triple helix approach was not employed, creating gaps, overlaps, or even conflicts at different levels of implementation. The attendance of parties involved in all three elements of the triple helix meant that as such issues arose, they were able to be workshopped, combining real-world information with potential solutions.

An example of this could be seen in the discussion of just transitions. Oftentimes, this subject can regress to a “jobs vs environment” or “rural vs urban” standoff, resulting in a further polarisation of perspectives. However, the receptivity and dedication of experts in their respective fields meant the conversation continuously moved forward, striking a balance between appreciating industry challenges (and the livelihoods that may be threatened by them), as well as the environmental challenges posed by climate change and biodiversity loss.

Overall, it was an excellent opportunity to learn and soundboard ideas as attendees. As young delegates, we thank the Moredun Institute, RSA and SEFARI for welcoming us to participate in such a constructive day.

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