Small farms are becoming larger in high-income countries and smaller in low-income countries. These shifts in farm size have environmental and social implications — smaller farms are highly productive, preserve crop and non-crop biodiversity, and make up 84% of the world’s 570 million farms. Yet smaller farms face growing pressures from global market forces and climate change that exceed their capacity to climb out of poverty. To support farmers on small farms, we need to take stock of their global importance.

**WHAT DEFINES A SMALL FARM?**

Small farms are farms of the world (mostly food) or less (that’s equivalent to 2 soccer fields). What defines a small farm depends on the country and the context. In many low-income countries, small farms are farms of the world (mostly food) or less (that’s equivalent to 2 soccer fields). In high-income countries, small farms are farms of the world (mostly food) or less (that’s equivalent to 2 soccer fields).

**POLICIES MATTER**

Land consolidation and redistribution policies, an upsurge in Large-Scale Land Acquisitions (LSLAs), and different development trajectories have resulted in a wide disparity of farm sizes across and within countries.

**WHAT DIFFERENCES HAVE BEEN FOUND IN:**

- Compared to large farms, small farms have:
  - More crop diversity
  - More biodiversity
  - Higher yields
  - More efficient resource use
  - Higher profit per hectare
  - Lower greenhouse gas emissions

**CHANGING FARM SIZE**

Farms are getting larger and more industrialized in high-income countries and smaller and more fragmented in low-income countries.

**SMALL FARMS MAKE UP:**

- 33% of all food produced globally
- 25% of all global farm area
- 84% of all farms in the world

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*This square represents 100 hectares, which is a common size for the largest farms of the world, but their size can span as big as 9.1 million hectares (Mudanjiang City mega farm in China).**