# Duncan Williamson calls for urgent shift to agricultural biodiversity and net positive business practices



Duncan Williamson stands out as a pivotal figure in the landscape of sustainable agriculture and ethical food systems in the UK. With extensive experience spanning global NGOs, corporate consulting, and grassroots advocacy, he advocates for regenerative practices that promise a fairer and more resilient future. In a recent interview, Williamson elucidated the transformative potential of agricultural biodiversity, the urgent need for businesses to embrace sustainability, and the pressing challenges facing our global food systems.

Williamson asserts that agricultural biodiversity is vital not just for food security but also for enriching local economies. He explains that fostering a mix of crops and livestock tailored to specific climates can significantly enhance resilience against erratic weather patterns. "If you grow the right foods for your climate, they're probably going to be more resilient to changing weather patterns or extreme events," he noted. Such diversity ensures that if one crop fails, others may thrive, providing communities with continuous income and food supplies throughout the year. This is critical, as research from the Food and Agriculture Organization underscores that diverse ecosystems are essential for sustainable agriculture, promoting productivity and bolstering food security.

Turning the conversation towards corporate responsibility, Williamson emphasises that businesses must transition from mere net-zero pledges to becoming net positive in their environmental impact. He urges companies to reassess their operations, asserting that sustainability cannot merely exist in a vacuum; it must extend throughout supply chains. "A business can’t be sustainable if someone two or three rungs down their supply chain can’t have a living wage," he pointed out. Furthermore, he highlights the need to combat food waste, calling it a "low-hanging fruit" in the sustainability effort. He argues that businesses should critically evaluate their marketing and selling practices to reduce food waste significantly across the value chain.

As a sustainability advocate, Williamson seeks to foster a sense of urgency in addressing ecological challenges. He stressed that the time for action is now, as we grapple with a series of looming crises that threaten food systems and the environment. “We have most of the solutions now,” he insisted, positing that we need not wait for revolutionary technology to shift our approach. Instead, by embracing localised agricultural models over global homogeneity, we can build systems that respond effectively to these challenges. His call to action underlines the importance of integrating agricultural biodiversity into our food systems to combat current and future crises.

In discussing systemic change, Williamson's insights reflect a growing recognition of the interdependence between sustainability, social justice, and food systems. This perspective is echoed by various experts in the field, who highlight that effective policy and regulation are vital for promoting equitable access to sustainable food options. Additionally, the promotion of sustainable diets, as explored in various reports, indicates a crucial shift towards adapting consumer behaviours and industry standards to improve our collective environmental footprint.

Through his work and advocacy, Williamson illuminates a clear path toward achieving a resilient and fair food system that is accessible for all and rooted in environmental stewardship. His optimistic stance reinforces the idea that with concerted effort, we can pivot towards a sustainable future—one that values diversity in agriculture and prioritises both community well-being and ecological health.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://brightonjournal.co.uk/the-future-is-diverse-duncan-williamson-on-building-fair-resilient-regenerative-food-systems/), [[4]](https://www.ciwf.org.uk/philip-lymbery/blog/2015/11/why-wwf-cares-about-food)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://brightonjournal.co.uk/the-future-is-diverse-duncan-williamson-on-building-fair-resilient-regenerative-food-systems/), [[2]](https://www.fao.org/4/y4586e/y4586e06.htm)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://brightonjournal.co.uk/the-future-is-diverse-duncan-williamson-on-building-fair-resilient-regenerative-food-systems/), [[3]](https://www.soilcapital.com/news/sustainable-diets-the-environmental-impact-of-our-food-choices-duncan-williamson), [[5]](https://www.agroforestry.org/the-overstory/70-overstory-199-benefits-from-organic-agriculture-in-and-around-protected-areas)
* Paragraph 4 – [[6]](https://www.soilcapital.com/news/sustainable-diets-the-environmental-impact-of-our-food-choices-duncan-williamson), [[7]](https://www.agrobiodiversityconservation.org/abc-of-climate-resilience)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://brightonjournal.co.uk/the-future-is-diverse-duncan-williamson-on-building-fair-resilient-regenerative-food-systems/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.fao.org/4/y4586e/y4586e06.htm> - This FAO report discusses the importance of biodiversity in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries, highlighting how diverse ecosystems contribute to food security and resilience. It emphasizes the need for integrating biodiversity conservation into agricultural practices to enhance sustainability and productivity.
3. <https://www.soilcapital.com/news/sustainable-diets-the-environmental-impact-of-our-food-choices-duncan-williamson> - In this podcast, Duncan Williamson, an expert in food systems and sustainable diets, discusses how government decisions and business lobbying influence food choices and systems. He highlights the need for better regulation and the challenges of accessibility and affordability for consumers.
4. <https://www.ciwf.org.uk/philip-lymbery/blog/2015/11/why-wwf-cares-about-food> - This article explores the collaboration between Compassion in World Farming and WWF UK to build sustainable and healthy food systems. It features insights from Duncan Williamson, WWF UK's Food Policy Manager, on the importance of sustainable diets and the Livewell project.
5. <https://www.agroforestry.org/the-overstory/70-overstory-199-benefits-from-organic-agriculture-in-and-around-protected-areas> - This article discusses the ecological principles behind organic agriculture and its benefits in and around protected areas. It highlights how organic farming practices can enhance biodiversity and contribute to environmental protection and food production.
6. <https://www.soilcapital.com/news/sustainable-diets-the-environmental-impact-of-our-food-choices-duncan-williamson> - In this podcast, Duncan Williamson, an expert in food systems and sustainable diets, discusses how government decisions and business lobbying influence food choices and systems. He highlights the need for better regulation and the challenges of accessibility and affordability for consumers.
7. <https://www.agrobiodiversityconservation.org/abc-of-climate-resilience> - This article discusses the importance of agrobiodiversity conservation for climate resilience. It outlines key action points for decision-makers to integrate agrobiodiversity into climate adaptation strategies, emphasizing the role of diverse agricultural systems in enhancing resilience.