



Reboot Consortium Just Agroecological Policy Roadmap

Background: What is agroecology?

In 2015, delegates representing diverse organisations and international movements of small-scale food producers and consumers, including peasants, Indigenous Peoples communities, environmental groups, hunters and gatherers, family farmers, rural workers, herders and pastoralists, fisherfolk and urban people gathered at the Nyéléni Centre in Sélingué, Mali to come to a [common understanding of agroecology](#) as a key element in the construction of Food Sovereignty, and to develop joint strategies to promote agroecology and prevent the term being co-opted by other actors.

This forum took place only few months after the first ever [FAO International Symposium on Agroecology for Food Security and Nutrition](#) which, after many years of agroecological practices in the fields and grassroots advocacy by rightsholders in support of them, marked the institutional recognition of agroecology as major factor of change in food systems.

Rooted in local, just food systems, agroecology is the essential alternative to the global industrial food system, which is a key driver of multiple climate, food, environmental, and public health crises, among others.

Agroecology has been defined [by food producers' organisations](#), civil society, and United Nations institutions ([FAO](#) and the [High Level Panel of Expert](#) of the UN Committee for World Food Security), and it is not merely a set of technologies or production practices. It cannot be implemented uniformly across all territories. Rather, agroecology is a living practice, a science, and a socio-political movement, built and fostered by people, reflecting the diverse agricultural, soil, climate, and cultural characteristics of each region.

“It is based on bottom-up and territorial processes, helping to deliver contextualised solutions to local problems. Agroecological innovations are based on the co-creation of knowledge, combining science with the traditional, practical and local knowledge of producers. By enhancing their autonomy and adaptive capacity, agroecology empowers producers and communities as key agents of change”. – FAO, [The 10 Elements of Agroecology](#)

Youth and women are both key actors and leaders of agroecology, in particular through their role in challenging and transforming structures of power in society.

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As an example, below are the 11 principles of agroecology according to European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC), based on the Nyéléni Declaration:

1. Fluid in application across territories
2. Ecological and low-input
3. Political, social, and determined by communities
4. Collective rights and access to the commons
5. Horizontality and diversity of learning
6. Spiritual and non-commodified connection to the land
7. Solidarity and collective action
8. Autonomous and fair, based upon a solidarity economy
9. Challenging and transforming global power structures
10. Equal power and remuneration across genders
11. Opportunities for rural youth

Resources/Reference Documents

Nyéleni Declaration, 2015:

<https://www.eurovia.org/publications/51763/>

FAO, The 10 Elements of Agroecology:

<https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/3d7778b3-8fba-4a32-8d13-f21dd5ef31cf/content>

ECVC, Agroecology according to ECVC:

<https://www.eurovia.org/publications/peasant-agroecology-according-to-ecvc/>

Scaling up agroecology

In recent years, the global political situation and European public policies have been shaken by war, climate disasters and social, health, and economic crises, characterised by an increasingly simplistic, populist, and polarised political discourse, leading to the rise of the extreme right in many countries. In addition, instead of focusing on implementing much-needed, genuine paradigm changes institutions have often focused on techno-fixes and false solutions such as carbon farming and new genetic modified organisms which, if implemented, will only further exacerbate current issues.

The good news is that agroecology is already in our fields, and communities are engaging everywhere in Europe to build sustainable food systems. However, it is unrealistic to think this change can be achieved solely through EU citizens and local communities changing their behaviour. We see that today, in the midst of the economic crisis that is impacting large sectors of EU society, the quest for ever cheaper goods is even more pronounced, compromising the transition to a better system.

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To scale up agroecology, there is a need to act holistically at the policy level in order to remove the obstacles that prevent agroecology spreading and to ensure the human right to food for all. This transition toward agroecology, [showed to be realistic and feasible by a number of studies](#)¹, needs to be inclusive. One key outcome should be to double the number of farmers in Europe by 2040, by supporting existing farmers in the agroecological transition and setting up 10 million new small- and medium-scale farms.

Scaling up agroecology also requires substantial investment and systemic changes in agricultural policies. Shifting subsidies towards agroecological practices and away from harmful industrial agriculture is vital. All public policies should promote and foster agroecology and fair incomes for food producers, in order to facilitate sustainable management of production-based resources, particularly in the context of climate change. Additionally, there should be efforts to improve awareness among different actors in the food system, including farmers, policymakers, researchers, and civil society actors.

The Farm to Fork Strategy adopted by the EC in 2020 was an attempt to ensure that EU food systems can transition toward a more sustainable model, but the instruments proposed to reach the objectives of the strategy were in certain cases insufficient, and in other cases contradictory or even counterproductive. In general, as some of our organisations stated at the time of its publication, the F2F Strategy was not capable of identifying the key policy changes needed in order to revert the current situation and allow a paradigm change in line with the expectations of EU citizens.

For instance, despite the changes proposed, the free trade political agenda of the EU has remained in clear contradiction with the objective of the strategy. In addition, sustainable access to land and other natural resources, in line with nature protection goals, and the guarantee of fair prices for production has been excluded from the action plan. Those aspects should be instead the starting point for building a transition strategy and for ensuring generational renewal in agriculture.

A new ambitious plan to reboot food systems in Europe and elsewhere is needed, putting the most vulnerable groups of society at the centre, ensuring the human right to food is implemented while respecting the rights of food producers to a fair income.

The Reboot Consortium is therefore building a policy roadmap that identifies the key policy changes at different levels to be implemented in the coming years in order to scale up agroecology.

¹ https://www.iddri.org/sites/default/files/PDF/Publications/Catalogue%20iddri/Etude/202107-ST0821_TYFA%20World_1.pdf and <https://www.iddri.org/sites/default/files/PDF/Publications/Catalogue%20iddri/Etude/201809-ST0918EN-tyfa.pdf>

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This roadmap has been built with the EU Green Deal objectives in mind, as well as international obligations outlined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP), the Paris Agreement Climate Objectives, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and other internal law and human rights law more generally.

Policy Roadmap

The demands in this roadmap are organised by macro-topic and must not be implemented in isolation but rather taken as a holistic roadmap to systemic change, in collaboration with other like-minded approaches. The interdependence and interrelatedness of the demands reflects the interdependence and interrelatedness of the ecosystems, social systems, labour systems and economic systems that are key to be able to feed the world sustainably.

This roadmap also represents the Consortium contribution to the debate that will take place after the EU elections, with the hope that the measures present in this text can be integrated as a follow up to the European Strategic Dialogue on the Future of Agriculture in the future action plan of the new European Commission and of the EU more in general.

This roadmap is also a political tool to empower young citizens to act as change-agents in reforming the current global food system.

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Food systems and human rights

Our Demands

At international level

While implementing international food and agriculture related policies – such as trade policies, financial investments and cooperation projects – the EU should respect the commitment to Policy Coherence for Development as enshrined in EU treaties and promote respect for human rights in accordance with the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020–2024. In particular, the EU should respect and being consistent with the international provisions of UNDROP together with other relevant treaties related to agriculture such as ITPGRFA, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food, the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (CFS VGGT), the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (FAO VGSSF), United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

All states, including the EU Member States (MS), should ensure the consistency of their national laws and policies with the UNDROP provisions, based on the principle that human rights norms take legal hierarchical precedence (UN Charter, art. 1.3, 55.c, 56, and 103).

States and international and regional organisations must disseminate and implement the UNDROP and promote understanding of and respect for its provisions. They must provide or support technical training for government officials, members of the legislative branch, judicial authorities, national human rights institutions, and international and regional organisations, organisations of peasants and other people working in rural areas, non-governmental organisations, local authorities, schools and universities and all other relevant actors.

At European level

The EU and Member States should respect, protect and fulfil the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas, who have too often been marginalised within international, regional and national laws and policies.

The EU should ensure the full and meaningful participation of representative organisations of peasants and other people working in rural areas in all its decision-making processes on agriculture, as recognised in Article 10 of UNDROP. ECVC, as the only European peasant farmer organisation, should be consistently consulted by all EU institutions dealing with agriculture. In particular, the AGRIFISH Council should stop excluding ECVC from formal and informal

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meetings. Moreover, organisations representing small food producers, fisher peoples, pastoralists, artisans and other relevant constituencies should be listened to and consulted by EU institutions.

In the next two years, the EU should conduct an independent study to assess the level of coherence of EU laws and policies with UNDROP, also in line with the PCSD framework and mechanism.

The EU must also ensure the extensive implementation of the social conditionality principle in the CAP: Farms that violate human and labour rights must stop receiving support from the EU and Member States. We particularly want to see the role of young women and young migrants in agriculture clearly recognised and supported by institutions at the local, national, and EU level, and we expect coherence with other policy fields, such as migration policies.

The EU must specifically ensure the rights of rural and migrant agricultural workers are respected in Europe and beyond.

In general, when developing consultation and legislation the EU should prioritise public interests over private interests. Within many of the EC Consultation processes or political dialogue spaces, the EU uses a problematic multi-stakeholder approach which fails to recognise that not all businesses, civil society organisations and rightsholders can be treated as equal actors, particularly given that some sectors are more vulnerable than others, and some may have very strong capital and resources to support their vested private interests and agenda. Such approach disrupts and unbalances any kind of democratic debate, excluding certain actors undemocratically and therefore massively hindering systematic change.

At national and local level

States and local authorities must respect and support the establishment and growth of strong and independent organisations of peasants and other people working in rural areas (which is also based on the ILO Convention Freedom of Association and the Protection of the Right to Organise). States should promptly take legislative, administrative and other appropriate steps to ensure continuous progress towards the protection of those rights set out in UNDROP that cannot be immediately guaranteed (art. 2.1).

States and local authorities must strengthen the role of national human rights institutions in promoting and protecting the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas and the right to food for all.

States and local authorities must take all necessary measures to ensure that non-state actors, such as private individuals and organisations, and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, are in a position to regulate, respect and strengthen the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas.

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Domestic courts should protect the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas, by directly applying the UNDROP, and by using it to interpret rights recognised in domestic law or other international instruments.

Specific plans to ensure the right to healthy, fresh and nutritious food to all should be established via food policy councils, Food Social Security schemes based on local, agroecological productions, green public procurements and other similar mechanisms.

Countries should develop National Action Plans and National Committees for Family Farming as requested within the UN Decade for Family Farming ([UNDFE](#)).

States should put regulations in place that encourage balanced diets and/or prohibit the presentation of snacks as replacements for meals, as well as all unhealthy food advertising as this significantly influences food preferences and consumption. This is already applied in some countries and is in line with the recommendations of the World Health Organisation (WHO), as mentioned in its Global Action Plan (2013-2020)². While implementing the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence directive (CSDD) at the national level, States should ensure that the rights outlined in the UNDROP are fully respected and integrated into the process. National transposition of the CSDD should be carried out with mindful consultation and inclusion of concerns of small-scale farmers' networks, including ECVC and its partners at national level. National law should be more ambitious in due diligence on human and environmental rights, particularly in agricultural systems, by ensuring more complete application of UN principles on business and human rights, OECD guidelines and FAO guidelines for the agrifood system.

A meaningful system of consultation and participation in the design of risk assessment and transitional plans and the evaluation of their implementation must be established by the companies to which the CSDD will apply, involving rights holders such as peasants, communities, CSOs, trade unions, representatives of women, migrant workers and others.

Due diligence obligations should be ongoing and dynamic and not just a box-ticking exercise, covering all actual or potential adverse impacts on human rights, the environment, or governance, with consultation from representatives of rights holders.³

² https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/94384/9789241506236_eng.pdf?sequence=1

³ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-9-2021-0018_EN.html

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Trade: Reform Agricultural trade policies in order to prioritise the re-territorialisation of food systems in line with the climate objectives and in respect of human rights

There are different production costs across the world. Putting EU and third country farmers in competition with each other on products that could be cultivated at the local or territorial level will only impede agroecological transition, exacerbate dumping, and drive down prices and therefore wages.

The negative impacts of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) are not only felt in Europe but also in the rest of the world. They are damaging to the rights of farmers recognised in UNDROP, to food systems, to gender equality, to the climate and to biological diversity. With the increase in crises, it becomes evident that this paradigm linked to agricultural trade is outdated and World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules are not capable of ensuring food security and overcoming the ecological and social problems of food systems.

As recognised by the European Food Security Crisis preparedness and response Mechanism ([EFSCM](#)) in 2023, the diversification of supply sources is crucial to further strengthen the resilience and sustainability of our food systems. This can be done by radically reforming the way we trade food and agricultural products by prioritising short food supply chains and the right to quality food for all.

Our Demands

At international level

Promote radical international trade reform creating a new trade framework based on food sovereignty and social and environmental justice. This framework should be organised under the auspices of the United Nations (for instance through the FAO or the UN Agency on Trade and Development, UNCTAD)

The EU should stop promoting WTO reform at the expense of developing countries' policies to develop internal market regulation tools.

At European level

Bring an end to the model of bilateral free trade agreements and negotiate food and agriculture trade in specific agreements that do not include other sectors.

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Ban food speculation starting with a decision from the European Commission to ban European stock exchanges from trading futures markets⁴ on agricultural commodities.

An investigation by European authorities into who is responsible for the lack of control over the agricultural financial market and the profits made by speculators in the period 2020–2024.

Strengthen the use of public stocks by the EU and its Member States to prepare for times of crisis and regulating internal markets.

At national and local level

Promote and support institutional procurement programmes for public institutions, food assistance and food in school, applying human and environmental rights, Due Diligence, the UN principles on business and human rights, OECD guidelines and sectoral FAO guidelines.

Strengthen social and solidarity economies for local food systems and provide access to public local markets for agroecological local producers in line with the recently approved [UN Resolution on Social and Solidarity Economy](#)

Promote policies to enable more and diversified small-scale farming, prioritising the most disadvantaged territories and those regions where industrial agriculture is more common by also enabling effective participation of pastoralist communities in nature preservation areas and facilitate the introduction and implementation of national laws for the protection of cattle and transhumance practices which act as bio-corridors.

Fair prices: without fair prices it is not possible to produce agroecologically and ensure generational renewal

Our Demands

At European level

The EU must ensure the European Commission services recover their technical capacity to study and collect production costs, product prices and margin, in the context of the price observatory.

⁴ A future contract is an agreement to sell/buy a certain quantity of a product at a predetermined price, quality and place and date of delivery. It reflects the expectations of future market prices. A futures contract is traded on exchanges as opposed to a forward contract which is bilateral contract designed to fit individual needs of market participants. Contrary to forward contracts, on the futures markets the physical delivery of goods is an exception (less than 5 percent of futures contracts are actually delivered).

https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2019-06/amt-paper-futures-20160412_en_0.pdf

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The EU must urgently strengthen the Unfair Trading Practices Directive to ensure that all EU product prices cover production costs, including decent incomes and social security for farmers and farm workers. In case of non-compliance, farmers can make anonymous complaints.

Ensure fair prices are paid to farmers while food poverty is eradicated in Europe. Local, seasonal, healthy food must be affordable to everyone, including the poorest members of society, starting with adapted public procurement. A food system approach is needed instead of a purely production approach.

The CAP should recover its original role to implement market regulation instruments, including redirecting subsidies towards agroecological practices.

Factory farms must be banned. First, public subsidies to these companies must be stopped promptly. Secondly, caps on farmland and animal numbers must be imposed to limit agricultural concentration and ensure the carriage capacity of the land is respected (not too much manure to avoid pollution and ensure all fodder comes from the same territory). A sound and inclusive transition supported by subsidies and training programmes must be planned and developed in conjunction with farmers and workers. It must ensure that farmers and breeders are able to make a living from mixed farming without being forced to have more animals than the land capacity allows and that workers have adequate and dignified work options, including alternatives to factory farms such as work in more sustainable and agroecological farming.

At national and local level

Support and increase the creation of local policies to support short-food chains and direct sales outlets, such as CSAs and local food-cooperatives, linking farmers and farmer cooperatives directly with consumers rather than traditional wholesalers or longer food-chains.

Develop smallholder-targeted infrastructure for processing and packaging and infrastructure that links rural areas with urban markets, such as marketplaces for direct sales.

Invest in public collective processing and storage equipment and facilities and ensure their availability and accessibility across rural and urban areas.

Support the creation of local cooperatives of collective interest or similar logistical platforms which combine or facilitate operations among different actors of local food chains such as food producers, food processors and final consumers. Such cooperatives must be based on a genuine and democratic governance producing a large and spread social benefit for all their members.

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Promote collective and public ownership of machineries via social cooperatives or local authorities purchasing.

Promote agroecological models of production and innovation

Most EU funds are designed for large structures and massively prioritise so-called innovative high technologies. Small organisations cannot access any of these funds and are forced to disappear in the face of this unfair competition. This current trajectory is geared towards maximising short-term profit for corporations, whilst minimising social and environmental responsibility. Building on the false “feed-the-world” narrative, those promoting digitalisation, automation, synthetic biology, and molecular technologies pose potentially significant threats to the vitality and even existence of peasant food systems. High-tech agriculture, so-called precision farming, highly processed “food” produced in laboratories also claim to be solutions to climate change. However, all of them continuously use fossil fuels, emitting large amounts of CO₂, and none of them has shown significant results so far. On the contrary, they are developing technologies that are dangerous to health, the environment and/or our social fabric, such as Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), so-called cellular “agriculture”, geoengineering, synthetic pesticides, mega basins and others. Their upstream promoters are a handful of financial investors making empty promises in order to increase their capitalisation endlessly. At the farm level, the push for expensive technological practices often forces farmers into debt, making them vulnerable to market fluctuations and technological obsolescence. Many small farms, unable to afford or unwilling to adopt these practices, face the threat of disappearance. The droughts of 2022 underscore the urgency of shifting towards local and citizen-based innovations that respect natural resource limits and promote resilience. Young farmers and agricultural workers are open to adopting new technologies if they are produced for small-scale food production with affordable costs. However, they are determined to preserve their autonomy, their relationship with the environment and their production, their traditional farming knowledge.

Our Demands

At international level

Ensure that the agroecological program within FAO and other food related UN agencies are mainstreamed and adequately supported in line with the FAO’s 10 Elements of Agroecology⁵

⁵ <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/i9037en/>

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and 13 agroecological principles of the High-Level Panel of Experts for Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE)⁶.

Stop the corporate capture of the UN agencies, in particular those responsible for agriculture and health. The voice of the most vulnerable rights holder groups should be at the centre of the UN system and not the voice of agribusiness.

The EU should prioritise participation and support to UN food and agricultural legitimate and inclusive agencies such as the Committee for World Food Security (CFS) and FAO and avoid the multiplication of institutional spaces, such as G7 and UNFSS, that ends up in reducing the capacity of social movements to impact in the policy debate.

At European level

The public policies must ensure that all farmers receive training and support in agroecological practices. This support is crucial for building resilient food systems that prioritise food sovereignty, ecological balance, and social equity. By fostering local innovations and empowering smallholders, we can create a sustainable agricultural future that challenges the dominance of TNCs and restores control to communities. Regulations must also be strengthened to protect farmers' rights to their data and to restrict the monopolisation of agricultural information by large technology firms.

The CAP first pillar subsidies must be oriented to prioritise the agroecological and sustainable transition of farms producing for territorial markets. Support should be aiming to fund a systemic change including prioritising production for intra-EU consumption over export-oriented production

The CAP should be re-oriented towards ensuring market regulation thus enabling fair prices which are the condition to make an agroecological transition viable.

Improve access to inclusive financial systems, adapted to the needs of smallholders.

Through the CAP and a potential law on sustainable food systems, the EU should establish and increase mechanisms to train farmers on using agroecological approaches and more sustainable, resilient and autonomous practices. It must also prepare advisory services to continue supporting them through the transition. Farmer-to-farmer, intergenerational, and experiential learning processes adapted to local conditions must be particularly supported. This kind of training is also affordable and offers greater efficiency and increased possibilities of solidarity and collaboration.

The EU should ensure free organic farming certification for small-scale farmers.

⁶ <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/ff385e60-0693-40fe-9a6b-79bbef05202c/content>

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The EU should promote Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) in different forms based on the characteristic and the needs of the communities as alternatives to traditional third-party certification systems and as a way to strengthen local food systems.

The EU should ban unproven and dangerous technologies, such as cellular meat and GMOs, and stop public subsidies for harmful products and practices.

The EU should promote research and innovation that is embedded within agroecological systems and away from corporate control.

The banning of dangerous pesticide such as glyphosate, the progressive reduction in the use of synthetic pesticides must go hand in hand with strong trade regulations that prevent unfair competition from products that do not respect the EU's internal rules. It is also high time for the EU to ban the production and exportation of pesticides which cannot legally be used on EU land. Finally, the EU must also put in place stringent control mechanisms and ensure that these standards are enforced.

At national and local level

Local authorities should promote co-creation of knowledge between local and scientific innovation and farmer-to-farmer learning processes

Local authorities should promote Participatory Guarantee Systems as alternatives to traditional third-party certification systems and as a way to strengthen local food systems.

Local authorities should promote participatory plant breeding led by farmer communities.

Instead of pesticides, national authorities should promote natural preparations of plant-, animal- or mineral-based products. Contrary to what is happening today in the majority of cases, Member States, who are responsible for regulating these preparation methods, should develop specific legislation outside of pesticide legislation to classify these products. Today in most cases, if farmers want to use these alternative products, they must submit an application for market authorisation, which is a complicated and often prohibitively expensive procedure.

Access to land: Promote fair and effective land policies

Europe's farming population is ageing: half of all farmers will reach retirement age within the next 10 years. They will then have to pass on their land, but to whom? Only 7% of farmers are under 35, and younger generations face many difficulties in setting up as farmers. This is due to the highly coveted nature of land, which leads to speculation, land grabbing, concentration of land and subsidies, and soil grabbing for construction. The situation in the global south is not better and often international investment projects end up promoting land grabbing and industrial agricultural projects. This common good is becoming increasingly scarce and

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financially inaccessible. Ensuring that land is actually affordable but also accessible and therefore can be passed on to younger farmers, new entrants and farm workers is key to ensuring a sustainable future for agriculture and food.

Our Demands

At international level

Countries and international institutions should support the organisation of a second FAO Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD+20) in 2026, two decades after the first ICARRD was held in Porto Alegre, in 2006.

International institutions and the European investment bank should promote land development projects and investment in line with the provisions present in the Committee on World Food Security's (CFS) Voluntary Guidelines for Responsible Governance of Land Tenure (VGGT) and Article 17, on peasants' rights to land, of the UNDROP. Land investments should focus on agroecological projects for local consumption.

At European level

The EU should adopt a European Directive on Agricultural Land to set standards to ban and combat land concentration and land grabbing, to promote agroecological land use and to favour generational renewal, with a particular focus on support for youth and women. CFS VGGT and Article 17 of the UNDROP must be the basis of such land policy. See [ECVC proposal for a land tenure directive at EU level](#).

The establishment of a Land Observatory to monitor land transactions, in particular recording land prices and market behaviour, changes in land use and loss of farmland and trends in soil fertility and land erosion

Setting up of a high-level task force to examine the impact of EU policies on land concentration monitor all relevant policy areas, such as agriculture, energy, environment, regional development, mobility, finance and investment and to see whether they encourage or counteract the concentration of agricultural land in the EU

Ban the offset emissions model in agricultural projects such as carbon farming and REDD+. These initiatives are shown by different [studies](#) not only to be ineffective but also to favour land grabbing and land concentration, allowing polluters to maintain the status quo and greenwash.

Redefine the active farmer in the CAP to ensure that those receiving EU subsidies are those who work the land.

At national and local level

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Spatial planning policies should protect agriculture use of land and promote land redistribution schemes including via genuine agrarian reform.

Promote long-term lease contracts for farmers to ensure long-term access to land and provide more stability to young farmers.

Stop the privatisation of common land⁷ and promote collective rights models based on commons, as for instance the public forests and seashore common model in France.

Regulate land sales through pre-emption rights by prioritising agroecological farming projects, in particular for youth and women.

Impose a transparency obligation on companies to ensure it is possible to ascertain which natural person owns agricultural land or production units.

Enforce ceilings for the number of hectares owned or farmed by the same farmer or landowner.

Support, and establish where not present, a participative decision-making process via local land agencies involving the State, local authorities, agricultural trade unions, and civil society (environmental organisations, local users, consumers) to manage the authorisation and refusal of proposed transfers of property or company shares.

Promote community land trusts and local land banks^{8,9,10}.

Protect and implement farmers' rights to seeds and ensure the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity

To practise agroecological agriculture, farmers need seeds adapted to their local growing conditions and must therefore be able to select their own peasant seeds. To support these practices, we need a European regulatory framework that enforces farmers' rights over seeds.

However, two draft European regulations currently being negotiated seriously threaten these rights. The first, concerning the deregulation of new GMOs ("new genomic techniques", shortened to NGTs), aims to remove all traceability and labelling for GMOs obtained with NGTs, and therefore to suppress the right to cultivate GMO-free crops. Furthermore, all GMOs, including NGTs, are patented, and their deregulation would lead to an abusive extension of the scope of patents to conventional seeds, and therefore an unprecedented privatisation of seeds by the few seed multinationals that hold these patents. If traceability of NGTs (i.e. the

⁷ <https://www.accesstoland.eu/-Managing-land-as-commons->

⁸ https://orfc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Case-Study_Terre-de-Liens.pdf

⁹ <https://terredeliens.org/>

¹⁰ <https://terre-en-vue.be/>

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publication of detection and identification processes) is not guaranteed anymore, farmers will have no protection against these patent abuses. The second draft regulation concerns the marketing of plant reproductive material (PRM) and directly threatens the right of farmers to exchange the seeds of their crops, by assimilating these farmers to seed companies and treating exchanges of seeds between farmers as marketing. Furthermore, in connection with the proposal on new GMOs, the creation of new commercial categories (non-organic heterogeneous material, new conservation varieties) in this regulation could open the way to the marketing of patented and untraced GMOs, and remove the right of farmers to reuse the seeds of their harvest.

Our Demands

At international level

Recognition of peasants as an official constituency within the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

The recognition within the CBD that digital sequence information (DSI) follows the same limitations and rules of the access and benefit sharing as per the physical material in order to avoid biopiracy¹¹.

Effective indicators in the CBD to monitor the new global biodiversity Framework, especially for the targets on food production.

Development of a South-South cooperation among global South countries in the International Treaty of Phytogenetic resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) on the implementation of article 9 on farmers rights of the same treaty.

Develop ITPGRFA international guidelines to implement farmers rights to seeds at national level.

The UNDRF should push FAO member States to include in their national action plan specific measures to implement article 9 of ITPGRFA.

At European level

New genomic techniques are GMOs and must be regulated as such. The current GMO regulations (Directive 2001/18/EC) guarantee the right of farmers to grow GMO-free crops and protect them against patent abuse made possible by European patent law (Directive 98/44/EC). The EU should reject the unacceptable deregulation proposal.

The EU should ensure the non-patentability of essentially biological processes, but also on the non-patentability of living organisms in general

¹¹ <https://www.foodsovereignty.org/rome-seed-industry-biopiracy/>

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The EU should adopt fair seed marketing legislation: concerning the EU reform on plant reproduction material (PRM), this legislation needs to include a clear framework allowing farmers to exchange seeds and exclude them from the scope of the regulation. All PRM exchanges between farmers should be considered as mutual aid in the framework of agricultural production, and not as marketing. Moreover, the commercial categories introduced in the proposal should not be covered by patents or be derived from genetic modification techniques. If these important modifications are not adopted, the proposal should be then rejected entirely.

At national and local level

Promote the development of local peasant seeds networks.

Promote the creation of local seed houses.

Facilitate the in-vivo genetic resources conservation both for animals and plants by strengthening farmers organisations and community conservation projects.

Climate and Environmental Justice: shift the paradigm of climate policies towards direct emissions reductions and farming transition and avoid any land-linked carbon credit mechanism

Offsetting carbon emissions is a popular rhetoric among polluters and an unfortunately common greenwashing technique that gives companies the option to continue polluting. Despite its reputation and the fact that it is the first objective of the Green Deal, the principle of emission compensation has no biological validity: sequestration is a natural phenomenon which cannot be accelerated and even more so with regard to fossil carbon emissions which cannot all be absorbed into natural sinks. Carbon farming, currently presented as the spearhead of EU climate action on agriculture, is a technical abuse. Carbon retention in soils cannot be calculated precisely, starting with the fact that it changes during the day.

Additionally, the proposed contracts are too short to sequester carbon in soils long enough to have minimal impact on climate change mitigation. To have an impact, this sequestration would need to be guaranteed for at least 200 years because this is the minimum duration during which CO₂ remains in the atmosphere. Finally, carbon farming proposals pose a considerable threat to European land tenure, as capital seeking quick returns from carbon farming will accelerate land concentration, as was the case with forestry carbon credits worldwide with the REDD+ program. Countries must refrain from reinforcing the financialization of nature and should rather focus on undertaking a viable and timely transition of the farm sector.

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Another important aspect and threat to climate and environment is the factory farms. Factory farms are hyper-specialised agricultural enterprises. They do not produce food with the objective of feeding the local population, but rather with the aim of producing goods for the long-distance markets. The high concentration of polluting inputs often leads to the localised pollution of ecosystems. This model poses risks to the health of local populations, such as the uncontrolled use of synthetic pesticides, antibiotic resistance and risks of zoonoses.

Our Demands

At international level

Countries and international institutions should abandon the offset approach that accelerates climate change by allowing polluters to continue their damage.

At European level

The EU institutions must adapt all their climate measures towards direct emissions reductions.

Abandon the proposed Carbon Removal Certification Framework (CRCF)

Stop the creation of an agricultural Emission Trading scheme (AGRI ETS)

The EU must base its climate policy on climate justice. This requires policies that guarantee people's social and economic rights (access to drinking water, food, heating, health, education, etc.), while drastically reducing consumption and pollution (linked to over-consumption by the wealthiest), and also recognising the historical role and responsibilities of the EU in this crisis. Taxation must play a central role in climate justice.

EU climate policies related to agriculture must be linked to fair prices and decent income which are fundamental for the agroecological transition to take place. Indeed, farmers need prices that are guaranteed to cover their production costs to be able to re-orient their production methods.

Fossil fuel subsidies must be stopped. Incentives and adequate policies supporting agroecological transition must facilitate the transition to renewable energy in agriculture for small farmers.

Factory farms must be banned. First, public subsidies to these companies must be stopped immediately. Secondly, caps on farmland and animal numbers must be imposed to limit agricultural concentration (see point 6). The largest structures must be dismantled.

At national and local level

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Sound transition plans need to be developed in conjunction with workers to ensure that they have adequate and dignified alternative work options, including transitioning towards more sustainable and agroecological farming. As part of the transition, States must set up rules to protect the rights of workers that face deteriorating working conditions as a direct result of climate issues, such as unsafe high temperatures.

Request and implement climate plans in large companies according to the CSDD and ensure these are meaningfully implemented.

Young farmers and generational renewal

Farming and food systems are facing mounting challenges across Europe: half of the farming population will reach retirement age within the next ten years, land is increasingly controlled by non-agricultural players, the health of European soils is deteriorating, rural areas are being emptied, and the effects of the climate and biodiversity crises are set to increase in intensity. We need measures outlined to ensure more new entrants are able to start farming across Europe. For small- and medium-scale farmers, it is clear that generational renewal is key to guaranteeing food sovereignty, maintaining lively rural areas and achieving climate justice.

At European level

We need stronger European policies for the integration of youth in rural areas by the democratisation of land, and the creation of direct employment, access to local and territorial markets, housing and food production which offers full rights over lands, which recognises the legal rights of, peasants, and other people working in rural areas, which includes the right to life and adequate standards, the right to land and territory, seeds, productive resources, markets, information, justice and equality between women and men.

Ensure an intersectional and holistic approach is taken to prioritise support for youth across all EU agricultural policies.

EU should facilitate access to land, fish stock and other productive means, as well as information, knowledge and finances for young people; guarantee access to and development of local markets and facilitate direct sales mechanisms.

EU should evaluate, in conjunction with the Member States and their regions, the possibility of action at EU level, including through legislative instruments and the promotion of sharing good practices, to improve the functioning of national farmland markets, enhance young farmers' access to land and contribute to addressing land concentration and land grabbing issues”

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Whilst we need market regulation to be put in place to prioritise agroecological local production for local consumption, in the meantime CAP income aid should be provided in combination with settling-in grants and the amount received should progressively decrease as the farmer's income increases. In addition, the relevance and resources allocated to Pillar II (Rural Development) of the CAP dedicated to young farmers should be increased

Enhance and diversify the participation of young farmers in decision-making spaces and processes, ensuring dialogue between them and EU institutions. The EU should establish an EC-DG AGRI Civil Dialogue Group dedicated to young farmers and ensure effective participation of youth in all EU policies with particular focus on the most vulnerable groups.

The CAP should facilitate the creation of support services for young farmers at the local, regional, and national level. These initiatives should be free and accessible and give advice on different aspects including access to land, finance and other resources. The CAP should also support initiatives aimed at skills and knowledge-sharing among young farmers. Such initiatives already exist in Europe and should be considered examples of best practices.

Promote full participation of youth in political and decision-making processes in order to ensure development of their leadership skills and at the same time, ensure territorial and integrated community development and sound transformation of the food systems, by developing and implementing of the National Action Plans for the UN Decade of Family Farming (UNDF) with participation of youth.

At national and local level

Make farming more attractive by changing public image on farming, providing free agroecological training, including agroecology in formal agricultural schools and universities., Provide financial and fiscal support e and public aid for small-scale agroecological farms.

Policies and schemes to encourage youth with no family farming background hence with no or limited access to natural and financial capital to take a leading role in farming, especially small-scale and agroecological farming.

Rural services such as health, education, culture, etc., are key for youth and in that sense, they need to be supported at all levels.

Promote agroecology and community-based local food systems, especially youth initiatives across the region, including more financial and public support - including in education and research

Specific land scheme projects should be created to facilitate youth access to land and to stop land speculation.

States should support community owned and controlled technology as well as traditional knowledge - as an important aspect where youth can contribute. Nevertheless, not only

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technological innovation should be promoted but also social innovations that are based on values that strengthen local communities, with specific attention to youth, women and the most vulnerable.

Rights of the women, gender equality and equity

Women have been confronting the patriarchy and destructive political, social and economic systems through their collective struggle for food sovereignty and feminism and building resilient agricultural systems based on agroecological farming practices that not only improve food production but also work in harmony with nature. They are the backbone of sustainable food systems, through seed saving and preservation of agro-biodiversity, and other practices. They provide solutions; they invest in agroecology, and in the circular, solidarity and feminist economy. They affirm that this is essential to rebuild and shape our future and reclaim our rights. They generate and transfer local knowledge, build and shape social justice, promote our respective and varied identities and cultures, and strengthen the vision of a new society founded on gender relations based on dignity, justice, equality and equity. Their rights of access to land, support services, financial and economic resources and legal recognition are minimal. In spite of this, they represent the majority of food producers and continue to do unpaid essential food-related care work such as processing, preparing, storing and seed saving. They are the ones who often do unpaid care work and they are the ones who often have not been included or recognised in most of the planning and decision-making. We must ensure that everywhere in society women are able to develop leadership skills and included actively in decision-making processes.

In the EU the objectives related to gender and women's participation are not adequately prioritised in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Member States are not required to include equality as a specific objective in their National Strategic Plans. This oversight, coupled with the absence of targeted provisions to attract and support women in farming, risks widening the existing gender gap. The subsidy programs fail to address structural inequalities, such as access to land, financing, and education, thereby perpetuating existing disparities. While social conditionality is an important component of the CAP, it does not yet focus on key sectors where migrant workers, particularly women, are most prevalent.

Our Demands

At international level

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Implementation of policies respecting rights of women and stopping discrimination, violence and exploitation for profit according to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW Convention¹²).

CEDAW asserts the right of rural women to access and use natural resources, including seeds. It calls on states to protect the traditional knowledge of rural women as well as their right to 'preserve, use and exchange traditional and native seeds'.

Public policies should guarantee women equal social and economic participation, access to land, support services, financial and economic resources, and legal recognition.

Young women are losing their lands, their territories, and natural resources as well as their work. Progressive measures should be introduced to eliminate all forms of discrimination against rural women and promote their right to seeds without discrimination, in accordance with the provisions of CEDAW.

At European level

In future reforms of the CAP, gender equality should be established as a specific objective and be obligatory in all CAP National Strategic Plans.

The CAP should incorporate more indicators that capture gender differences. Indicators measuring the number of farms or farmers benefiting from any type of payment should be supported by gender-disaggregated data, and Member States should be required to monitor these as part of their National Strategic Plans.

The European Commission and Member States need to consider the structural inequalities affecting access to subsidies and work towards a more equitable distribution.

Gender-responsive budgeting, gender audits, gender-responsive evaluations, gender impact assessments, and institutional transformations should be widely adopted to ensure fairness and inclusivity in the CAP.

At national and local level

States and local authorities must take all appropriate measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against peasant women and other women working in rural areas, to promote their empowerment, and to ensure that they enjoy without discrimination all the human rights and fundamental freedoms set out in the UNDROF.

¹² CEDAW, General Recommendation no. 34, par. 63:
ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/cedaw/pages/recommendations.aspx

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Empower smallholders, especially women, by strengthening their access to and control over productive assets and resources, and by increasing agroecological training and public support for starting an agroecological activity.

Local authorities should give priority access to public markets with good prices for women.

Changing the model along the agro-business global value chain.

The current agrifood system is characterised by significant inequalities in access to fresh, local, nutritious food and a lack of food sovereignty, with limited control for people over what they eat and other choices. This system is marked by food scarcity, which is further intensified by climate change, competition from biofuel production, and the cultivation of cash crops for export.

The industrial food system promotes the consumption of junk food and overconsumption, driven by artificially induced needs. Long value chains, heavily influenced by concentrated market interests, result in inefficiencies such as food wastage of up to 40% of production. Exploitation of both nature and humans occurs throughout the entire food system, from production to commercialization, administration, and disposal. A significant and growing number of working poor are employed not only in the production phase but also in processing, large-scale retail, catering, and restaurant industries. Environmentally, an example of inefficient resource allocation is the excessive packaging that contributes to plastic pollution and environmental degradation.

Our Demands

At international level

Reduce the opacity, length and inefficiency, concentration of global value chain to return power to local actors from producers, processors, sellers and consumers and authorities able to take decisions based on the needs and right oriented choice of people and nature. This means incentives local systems, increasing transparency, tax large concentrations, ensure living wage and fight social dumping and apply for mandatory due diligence of human and environmental rights along the global value chains (upstream and downstream) including financial sector.

Together with the Global Campaign to Reclaim Peoples Sovereignty, Dismantle Corporate Power and Stop Impunity¹³ we support the adoption of an international treaty on transnational

¹³ Global Campaign to Reclaim Peoples Sovereignty, Dismantle Corporate Power and Stop Impunity. Retrieved at: <https://www.stopcorporateimpunity.org/list-of-signatories/>

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corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights¹⁴ currently negotiated in the OHCHR. The new treaty shall include specific references to UNDROP.

At European level

Promote fair value chains fighting against unfair practices and reverse attitude towards concentration to promote food local system. Promote a more transparent, complete labelling system.

Ensure efficient implementation of CSDD directive and improve it as promised by extending in the scope that can include financial sector and medium size companies.

Support systems of community certification to encourage meaningful participation and control.

Take more significant actions against food wastage and packaging improving the recent approved directive.

At national and local level

Work efficiently to implement European directives from Nature restoration, to CSDD, packaging, EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), social conditionality of CAP and others, by ensuring a significant role to right-holder decision-making mechanisms at local level.

Stop subsidising unhealthy, socially and environmentally unsustainable agri-food practices alongside the value chain (from production to disposal).

EU Member States shall implement the EU Directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence¹⁵. In doing so, EU Member States should demand private actors to respect, among other human rights, the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas contained in UNDROP.

States shall exercise their duty of due diligence and take all necessary measures to ensure that non-State actors that they are in a position to regulate, such as private individuals and organisations, transnational corporations and other business enterprises, respect and strengthen the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas.

At local level implement a proactive participation in right-based and decision making and evaluation processes concerning food practices. Include the less represented groups and sustain their empowerment.

¹⁴ Open-ended intergovernmental working group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights. Retrieved at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/wg-trans-corp/igwg-on-tnc>

¹⁵ Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence and amending Directive (EU) 2019/1937. Retrieved at: [file:///C:/Users/Admin/Downloads/COM\(2022\)71_0.pdf](file:///C:/Users/Admin/Downloads/COM(2022)71_0.pdf)

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Foster and support the creation and development of local food systems protecting local actors by unfair competition.

Promote cultural shift towards food sovereignty, local food systems. Through campaigns for sustainable and healthy food production, distribution and consumption practices.
