

**To: Dr. Cao Duc Phat, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Vietnam
Mr. Maxime Verhagen, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economic Affairs,
Agriculture and Innovation, The Netherlands
Dr. Jim Yong Kim, President, World Bank
Mr. Jose Graziano da Silva, Director-General, Food & Agriculture Organization of the
United Nations (FAO)**

Civil Society Statement of Concern on the 2nd Global Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change in Hanoi, Viet Nam, 3-7 September 2012:

We, the undersigned civil society organizations from around the world, are concerned that the objectives of this Conference reflect the same flawed approach as the first Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change, held in the Hague in October 2010. The approach also regrettably continues to marginalize peasants and small-scale food producers, yet they are the ones whose livelihoods are most at risk and who most urgently need to be heard.

The central themes of the 2nd Global Conference, including “climate-smart agriculture,” “green growth” and the “landscape approach”, are heavily contested. Many civil society organizations believe these approaches have not been sufficiently considered from the perspective of peasants, small-scale producers and indigenous peoples, who are suffering the worst impacts of climate change. We remain concerned about the continued lack of transparency, participation and consultation with many governments, farmers and civil society in preparing for the Conference. We note that the “Roadmap” from the first Conference was neither endorsed by attending governments nor accepted as a binding outcome.

Address the impacts of the climate crisis on food production

The most important agenda for a conference on food security, agriculture and climate change should focus on the protection of agriculture from climate change. Climate change is already threatening the livelihoods and food security of the poor and vulnerable. The industrial model of agricultural production threatens the viability of ecosystems and contributes massively to climate change. Nothing less than a system change – towards ecological agriculture, based on principles that create healthy soils and cultivate biological diversity, and which prioritize farmers’ and traditional knowledge – is needed in the face of climate change. There is also a critical need to reverse the economic concentration of global markets – particularly for grains, livestock and food processing – that has led to unsustainable forms of industrial agriculture worldwide and the bulk of the emissions from the agriculture sector. Unfortunately, the program fails to address these necessary system changes. Instead, it appears to endorse a greater role for the private sector to invest in schemes that will commodify natural resources and disenfranchise local and indigenous communities.

A focus on adaptation

Resources must be urgently directed to adaptation, given the serious current threats posed by climate change to agriculture. Agroecology is the most important, reliable set of practices to protect yields in the face of climate change and should be supported significantly with public finance. The Conference should emphasize identified adaptation priorities of developing countries and the provision of steady and reliable public finance to developing countries that will have to cope with the worst consequences of climate change. In addition, adaptation financing should be in the form of grants, not loans.

Key policy developments should be to work with local food providers and help them to conserve, store and further develop their own varieties and breeds. It is clear that the best hedge against the increasing instability of local climates in the future is a diversity of varieties and breeds to address the threat of increasing floods, drought and storms. Industrial agriculture has reduced the number of farmers’ varieties and breeds drastically and thereby dangerously reduced the

basis of food security for the future. This must end now; we need **new policies centered on the real needs of peasants, small-scale producers and indigenous peoples.**

Critical review of market-based approaches needed

The framing of the Conference agenda appears to endorse market-based approaches. Yet evidence from the last two years suggests that carbon markets and market-based approaches linked to them are not appropriate for peasants and small-scale producers. These approaches need open and critical review. Carbon markets have repeatedly failed to deliver real funds to projects on the ground. Moreover, carbon market mechanisms actually finance the emissions reduction commitments of developed countries through “offsetting” projects in developing countries. This not only increases the threat of climate change by allowing developed countries to continue rather than change their unsustainable production and consumption patterns, but also forces emissions reduction responsibilities onto peasants and small producers in developing countries. Developed country mitigation and “offsetting” priorities should not and cannot drive discussions on the nexus between climate change, food security and agriculture.

We note that the landscape approach, promoted by the World Bank, has a high profile in the agenda. We believe that the Bank’s role as both policy advisor and carbon broker for soil carbon and landuse credits makes it an inappropriate institution to guide governments on the pros and cons of landuse offsets. Using a market-based approach to convert large tracts of landscapes that include water, land, agriculture and forests into commodities is unethical when it comes to questions of food security. Land-grabbing in the developing world has become an ever greater concern since the first Conference, particularly as financial assets become unreliable and both State and private actors secure land for financial gain and food security. The impacts of “climate-smart agriculture” and the landscape approach should be examined in this new economic context where land and the food grown on it have become financial assets for financial speculators and institutional investors.

Implement rather than ignore IAASTD findings

The International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD), initiated by the World Bank and FAO, sponsored by UN agencies and approved by 58 governments, contains some of the most complete and authoritative sets of policy options to strengthen the productivity and resilience of the world’s food and agricultural systems, while prioritizing social equity and sustainability. We call on the Hanoi Conference to endorse the recommendations of the IAASTD, and for governments and international organizations, including the World Bank and FAO, to commit to the implementation of the IAASTD findings.

Conclusion

We are frustrated that the peasants, small-scale producers and indigenous peoples who provide 70 percent of the world’s food continue to be left out of the debate. The Hanoi Conference is an opportunity to support fair and effective solutions to the agriculture and climate crises. We call on the conference organizers to champion a global transition to ecological agriculture, focus on enabling peasants, small-scale producers and local and indigenous communities to adapt to climate change, ensure adequate public financing for agriculture, and avoid questionable technological fixes and market mechanisms.

We believe that peasants, small scale farmers, laborers, indigenous peoples, women and civil society organizations engaged on issues of food security, food sovereignty, the right to food, and the preservation and use of traditional knowledge are essential to this debate. They provide practical, just and affordable solutions to the problems of food security and climate change. They need to be heard. No process that ignores their voices can be considered legitimate.

2 September 2012

Signatories (120):

1. 11.11.11- Coalition of Flemish North-South Movement
2. Accion Ecologica, Ecuador
3. Action Group on Erosion, Technology and Concentration (ETC Group)
4. Actions pour le Développement Durable, (ADeD), Benin
5. African Biodiversity Network
6. African Centre for Biosafety, South Africa
7. Agricultural Missions, Inc., USA
8. Aliansi Petani Indonesia (Indonesian Peasants' Alliance)
9. Alternate Forum for Research in Mindanao (AFRIM), Philippines
10. Amigos de la Tierra España/Friends of the Earth Spain
11. Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA)
12. Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC)
13. Asia-Pacific Network for Food Sovereignty (APNFS)
14. Asociación ANDES, Peru
15. Association of Citizens' Solidarity for Campaign Against Famine in Ethiopia (CS-CAFE)
16. Association of Communities of the Potato Park, Peru
17. Association of Voluntary Agencies in Rural Development (AVARD), India
18. Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD), Bangladesh
19. Beyond Copenhagen Collective, India
20. Bharatiya Krishak Samaj, India
21. Bharat Jan Vigyan Jatha, India
22. Bina Desa, Indonesia
23. Biofuelwatch
24. Biowatch, South Africa
25. Both ENDS, Netherlands
26. California Communities Against Toxics, USA
27. Center for Community, Democracy and Ecology, USA
28. Center for Environmental Education and Development (CEED), Nigeria
29. Center for Food Safety, USA
30. Center for Rural Communities Research and Development (CCRD), Vietnam
31. Center for Sustainable Rural Development (SRD), Vietnam
32. Center of Concern, USA
33. CIP Americas Program
34. Coalicion Clima España
35. Coalition for the Protection of African Genetic Heritage (COPAGEN)
36. COECOCEIBA/Friends of the Earth Costa Rica
37. Community Self-Reliance Centre (CSRC), Nepal
38. Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP), Malaysia
39. Cumberland Countians for Peace & Justice, USA
40. Development Fund, Norway
41. Earth in Brackets
42. Earth Peoples
43. Eastern and Southern Africa Farmers' Forum (ESAFF)
44. Ecological Society of the Philippines
45. Ecologistas en Acción, Spain
46. Ecology Ministry Archdiocese of Manila, Philippines
47. EcoNexus, UK
48. Ecoropa
49. Fairwatch, Italy
50. Farmworker Association of Florida, USA
51. FERN, Belgium
52. Focus on the Global South
53. Food & Water Europe

54. Food Security and Poverty Elimination Network (CIFPEN), Vietnam
55. Foundation on Future Farming, Germany
56. Friends of the Bees, UK
57. Friends of the Earth International
58. Friends of the Earth Mauritius
59. Fundación IPADE, Spain
60. Gaia Foundation
61. GRABE, Benin
62. Grassroots International, USA
63. Green Convergence for Safe Food, Healthy Environment and Sustainable Economy, Philippines
64. GREEN Foundation, India
65. Groundswell International
66. Hope Restoration Center (HORECE), Cameroon
67. Inades-Formation (African Institute for Economic and Social Development)
68. Indigenous Environmental Network
69. Indonesia Organic Alliance (IOA)
70. In Loco, Portugal
71. Institut de Recherche et de Promotion des Alternatives en Développement (IRPAD)
72. Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, USA
73. Institute for Policy Studies - Sustainable Energy & Economy Network, USA
74. Institute for Sustainable Development, Ethiopia
75. Intercontinental Network of Organic Farmers Organisations (INOFO)
76. Interface Development Interventions Inc. (IDIS), Philippines
77. Irish Seed Savers Association
78. JINUKUN, Benin
79. Just Forests, Ireland
80. Kenya Debt Relief Network – KENDREN
81. Konsorsium Pelestarian Hutan dan Alam Indonesia (KONPHALINDO)
82. Labour Resource Centre, India
83. Local to Global Advocates for Justice, USA
84. Management and Organizational Development for Empowerment (MODE), Philippines
85. MELCA, Ethiopia
86. MISEREOR, Germany
87. National Alliance Against Hunger and Malnutrition (NAAHM), Nigeria
88. National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE)/Friends of the Earth Uganda
89. Negros Organic Agriculture Movement (NOAM), Inc., Philippines
90. Network for Environmental & Economic Responsibility, USA
91. NGO Federation of Nepal (NFN)
92. North Chickamauga Creek Conservancy (NCCC), USA
93. Oakland Institute, USA
94. Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM), Kenya
95. Partners for the Land & Agricultural Needs of Traditional Peoples (PLANT)
96. Pesticide Action Network Asia and the Pacific (PANAP)
97. Pesticide Action Network North America (PANNA)
98. Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas (PhilDHRRA)
99. Platform ABC (Platform Aarde Boer Consument), Netherlands
100. Plataforma Rural, Spain
101. Pro REGENWALD, Germany
102. Red de Coordinación en Bioiversidad (Coordinating Biodiversity Network), Costa Rica
103. REDES/Friends of the Earth Uruguay
104. ReSCOPE Programme, Malawi

105. Reseau Des Organisations Paysannes Et Des Producteurs Agricoles De L'afrique De L'ouest (ROPPA)
106. Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM)/Friends of the Earth Malaysia
107. SARILAYA, Philippines
108. SEED Trust, South Africa
109. Send a Cow, UK
110. Society for Conservation and Protection of Environment (SCOPE), Pakistan
111. South Asia Rural Reconstruction Association (SARRA), India
112. Southeast Asian Rural Social Leadership Institute (SEARSOLIN), Philippines
113. Southeast Asia Regional Initiatives for Community Empowerment (SEARICE)
114. Sri Lanka Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement
115. Sustainable Development Institute (SDI)/Friends of the Earth Liberia
116. Third World Network (TWN)
117. Transnational Institute, Netherlands
118. WAEDAT, Jordan
119. War on Want
120. WhyHunger, USA