



Input Document of the “Expo dei Popoli Milano 2015”, 7 May 2015

## «Food Sovereignty through Agroecology: solutions to broken food systems»

*“The eradication of hunger and malnutrition is an achievable goal. However, it will not be enough to refine the logic of our food systems – it must instead be reversed”*  
Olivier De Schutter

*“Agroecology is the answer to how to transform and repair our material reality in a food system and rural world that has been devastated by industrial food production and its so-called Green and Blue Revolutions. We see agroecology as a key form of resistance to an economic system that puts profit before life”*  
Declaration of the International Forum for Agroecology (24-27 February 2015, Mali)

### Contents

Contents .....	1
<b>OUR COMMON VISION</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>OUR STRATEGIES FOR CHANGING FOOD SYSTEMS</b> .....	<b>4</b>
1) Denounce and resist Land and Water Grabbing .....	4
2) Promote agroecology and reject its co-optation by the industrial food system .....	4
3) Build stable and solidarity-based Markets, prioritizing local economies and local trade.....	5
4) Create Alternative Food Networks and Food Policy Councils .....	6
5) Support Sustainable consumption (promote healthy diets, reduce demand for meat, limit biofuels, reduce food losses and waste throughout the food chains).....	6
6) Protecting Biodiversity and farmer’s and peoples’ rights to genetic resources .....	7
7) Fight Climate Change and promote fossil fuel phase out and an accelerated transition to (100%) renewable energy.....	8
8) Denounce the real obstacles to change: free trade agreements, financial speculation and corporate driven development .....	8
9) Address international institutions, States and local authorities to support the governance of food and agriculture with the full participation of civil society and social movements as the only way of taking decisions and making real progress .....	9
10) Develop public policies built on the framework of food sovereignty, solidarity economy and accessible finance as the ways forward .....	10
Sources .....	12

## OUR COMMON VISION

**OUR VISION** of a just and sustainable global food system is grounded in **human rights** and in the **respect of planetary boundaries** and the obligation to work together to progressively achieve a world where everyone's livelihood is protected, everyone is food secure, malnutrition is eliminated and people live in harmony with nature. The human rights approach compels us to pay special attention to those most vulnerable to hunger and assess policies by the impact they have on them. It leads us to ask questions along the entire food chain from producer to consumer, including how food is produced, by whom, for whom, at what price and of what nutritional quality.

We as social movements of small scale food producers, citizen's organizations and NGOs have defined a political approach for achieving all four objectives, that is **food sovereignty**:

*"Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations"*

We recognise that **small-scale food producers**, including peasants, indigenous peoples and communities (including hunters and gatherers), family farmers, rural workers, herders and pastoralists, fisherfolks, urban and peri-urban growers produce 70% of the food consumed by humanity. They are the **primary global investors** in agriculture, as well as the **primary providers of jobs and livelihoods** in the world and must be the **starting point** and the focus for building and strengthening peoples' right to food and nutrition.

We recognise that much processing of food is done by women, whether for sale or use within the household, and across the world women still do most of the cooking. Women however often have lesser access to productive resources and are more likely than men to be malnourished. Strengthening **women's ability to claim their rights** on the ground is a core part of building a fairer food system.

**Youth plays a central role.** Together with women, they represent one of the two principal social bases for the evolution of our food systems. We have to provide the space for young people to contribute to the social and ecological transformation that is underway. Youth bear the responsibility for carrying the collective knowledge learned from their parents, elders and ancestors forward into the future. They are the stewards of future generations.

The need for our food systems **to be participatory, sustainable and democratic** is fundamental to our vision. It must be defined by the people and respond to their needs and aspirations at all levels from local to global. Family farmers, especially women, need to have control of productive resources that determine their livelihood, including land, water, seeds and livestock breeds. People living without **access to electricity** and **sustainable energy sources**, have little chance to achieve food security and few opportunities for securing productive livelihoods that can lift them out of poverty.

Our vision is also shaped by the need for humankind **to live within the limits of what our planet can provide** and the need **to have food systems that are resilient** and that can cope with the shocks and changes that will inevitably face us.

We should engage in the advancement of **indicators** that shift the emphasis away from growth and **towards "buen vivir"** (the living well paradigm, which draws heavily on indigenous visions of humans living with respect for and in harmony with Mother Earth as opposed to having simply a utilitarian relationship). We need measures that can highlight the value of not only physical resources but also non tangible assets such as happiness, mental, workplace and social wellness, indigenous knowledge, non-monetized work, and so forth.

Truly sustainable development must prioritize the environment and the redistribution of power and wealth between rich and poor. We seek to create economic development that is equitable in its own right, as opposed to economic development that generates great inequality even if it is subsequently lessened through re-distribution.

The current industrial model of agriculture, transport and consumption has profound negative impacts on our Earth's system and climate, in terms of **greenhouse gas emissions, change in land use, freshwater consumption, phosphorus and nitrogen cycles**. It also causes great **loss of biodiversity, soil degradation and chemical pollution**. All of these are among nine planetary systems that have been identified as having boundaries that if crossed could lead to irreversible and abrupt environmental change that would threaten human survival. In the cases of climate change, land-system change, altered biogeochemical cycles (phosphorous and nitrogen) and loss of biosphere integrity, latest research shows that those boundaries have already been exceeded.

**Natural and man-made disasters** are increasing in frequency and severity and we need a food system that is resilient and that can guarantee long term sustainability. This is closely linked to the other aspects of our vision, because we can best build resilience by addressing the underlying environmental, social and economic causes of shocks, conflicts and disasters.

Agriculture can be an important part of the solution and our vision includes the deliberate choice of supporting **agroecology**, as a model for all food production and consumption for all, as it has the intrinsic potential to help restore the environment.

This is our vision of how to feed a growing world population without increasing unsustainable production and overwhelming the planet. A food system that enables everyone to eat a healthy, nutritious (and hopefully delicious) diet, that is based on the right to food, shaped by planetary boundaries, resilient and defined by people.

The basis for **this vision already exists in the local food systems** that feed the majority of the world's people. However its potential is thwarted by the dominance of a corporate and industrial food model and weakened by an intense price volatility caused by financial speculation on agricultural commodities.

A model that despite its proven inefficiency and unsustainability continues to be funded by most governments and international institutions, undermining support for a just and sustainable food system, and the realization of the right to food and nutrition for all.

## OUR STRATEGIES FOR CHANGING FOOD SYSTEMS

### 1) Denounce and resist Land and Water Grabbing

To date, an estimated over **40 million hectares** of land have been grabbed globally by private firms, governments, elites and speculators, often with the support of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the G8 and other institutions and consortiums. The minority's appropriation of our Commons leads to **concentration, forced evictions and the oppression of peoples**. This is implemented in the name of environmental protection, the prevention of climate change, the production of "clean" energy, mega-infrastructure projects and/or so-called development, often promoted by **Public-Private partnerships**, such as the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition in Africa. Entire areas and territories are thus dispossessed and local populations evicted, while the loss of identity and ecosystems makes life impossible!

Land grabbing always goes hand-in-hand with water grabbing, and takes different forms: cases of **unsustainable water-consuming farming**, through the **privatization** and management **of water utilities** (stealing this vital resource from those who are unable to pay for it), **contamination of aquifers** caused by unregulated mining, the **change of river courses and waterways** through the construction of dams and the resulting eviction of communities, the militarization of access to water points, the dispossession of pastoralists and fisher communities of their livelihoods through practices such as coastal sand mining.

A special threat to food security is made up of **real estate speculation**. Many of the most fertile soils are lost to housing construction or shopping centers. In many countries, the laws of land use are not used to protect natural and agricultural spaces but to facilitate speculative business.

In response to these threats to our lives and wellbeing, we are fighting back, asserting our rights and providing real solutions. We believe that **peoples' access to and control of land and water** is essential to peace, to stopping runaway climate change, as well as to fulfilling fundamental human rights and guaranteeing a dignified life for all. Equal distribution of land and water, and gender equality are central to our vision of food sovereignty, based on agroecology (as outlined in the Declaration of the International Forum for Agroecology in the Nyéléni Centre, Selinguè, Mali in February 2015), local food systems, biodiversity, control of our seeds, and respect for natural water cycles. This vision applies to rural, urban and peri-urban populations and includes respectful producer – consumer relationships of mutual solidarity and cooperation. The FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGL) is the fundamental policy document we can use to support these positions. We must push for their full implementation.

### 2) Promote agroecology and reject its co-optation by the industrial food system

**Agroecology is a way of life and the language of Nature**, that we learn as her children. It is not a mere set of technologies or production practices, but rather an inclusive, holistic system that includes food production and processing through direct, fair and short distribution chains and that strengthens local communities for the long-term through self-governance. It implies a transparent relationship between producers and consumers, and is based on the solidarity of shared risks and benefits. It produces local knowledge, promotes social justice, nurtures identity and culture, and strengthens the economic viability of rural areas. It cannot be implemented the same way in all territories. Rather it is based on principles that, while they may be similar across the diversity of our territories, can and are practiced in many different ways, with each sector

contributing their own colors of their local reality and culture, while always respecting Mother Earth and our common, shared values.

**The production practices of agroecology** (such as intercropping, traditional fishing and mobile pastoralism, integrating crops, trees, livestock and fish, manure, compost, local seeds and animal breeds etc.) **are based on ecological principles like building life in the soil, recycling nutrients, the dynamic management of biodiversity and energy conservation at all scales.** Agroecology drastically reduces dependence on external inputs bought from industry. There is no use of agrottoxins, artificial hormones, GMOs or other dangerous new technologies in agroecology.

Among the strategies identified in the Declaration of the International Forum for Agroecology (Nyéléni Centre, Selinguè, Mali) we want to highlight:

- promote **appropriate health and sanitation regulations** that do not discriminate against small-scale food producers and processors who practice agroecology;
- **horizontal exchanges** (peasant-to-peasant, fisher-to-fisher, pastoralist-to-pastoralist, consumer-and-producer, etc.) and **intergenerational exchanges** between generations and across different traditions, including new ideas;
- ensure international **institutions and governments recognize agroecology** as defined in February 2015 in the Declaration of the International Forum for Agroecology as a primary solution for tackling and adapting to climate change, and not “climate smart agriculture” or other fake versions of agroecology;
- **fight corporate and institutional attempts to grab agroecology** as a means to promote GMOs and other false solutions and dangerous new technologies.

### 3) Build stable and solidarity-based Markets, prioritizing local economies and local trade

Agriculture is inherently unpredictable, due to fluctuating harvests and the effects of climate change. Stable and fair prices are essential for small-scale food producers, providing them with reliable income and enabling them to invest in improvements. **Policy tools to stabilize markets** (import controls and public procurement and intervention) and to take **measures against import surges and price spikes** are indispensable. Policy makers should be able to make use of such tools as well as to **regulate** techniques that have strong negative effects such as **the current use of “futures contracts”**. These were originally developed to deal with unpredictability, but deregulation has led to them being taken over by speculators who have no connection with food production.

To reduce hunger and poverty, **livelihoods and jobs must be created** and supported **where people live**, and adequate, nutritious food must be available locally. The priority therefore must be on developing local economies, local markets and local food systems that have vibrant potential.

**Local public procurement policies** must be developed together with groups of small-scale local producers to ensure local, healthy, sustainable food is provided in school canteens, hospitals etc. There are an increasing number of examples of good practice in this area. Trade agreements must not be allowed to interfere with such practice.

A focus on local does not imply that **larger scale trade and markets** have no role to play in achieving an effective, just and sustainable food system. Many local rural economies and food systems are based around urban centers and local food producers customarily sell to urban markets. As the eating habits of city dwellers

change, demanding food that is easier and quicker to cook, with the right policy support this can foster local food processing enterprises on a small and medium scale to meet that changing demand. Food producers and processors also seek the physical and market infrastructure to trade with other parts of their country, as well as cross-border with neighboring countries. These opportunities can be developed so that they are complementary to local trade and not at the expense of it. Also in trade and markets gender inequality has to be addressed.

There is also space for **foods to be traded globally**. However **local communities should be able to decide** democratically where the policy and investment priorities should lie between local, national, regional and global economies. The ideal means of doing this through participatory food policies and Fair Trade practices.

#### 4) Create Alternative Food Networks and Food Policy Councils

We work towards the **decentralization of food chains**, promoting diversified **markets based on solidarity** and fair prices, and **short supply chains** and **intensified relations between producers and consumers** in local food webs to **counter the expansion and power of supermarkets**. We want to provide the building blocks for people to develop their own food distribution systems and allow farmers to produce and process food for their communities. This requires **supportive food safety rules** and local food infrastructure for smallholder farmers. We also work to ensure that the food we produce reaches all people in society, including **people with little or no income**.

**Community Supported Agriculture** by its very definition implies this close relationship. It also by its nature intrinsically reduces food waste and loss at all levels.

**Local Food Policy Councils** are a means of ensuring the involvement and empowerment of all actors in the food chain, from producers to consumers in a given territory in the **decision-making process**. This includes vital aspects such as land zoning allocation for Community Gardens, ensuring green belts are preserved from real-estate development, including access to healthy fresh local food for marginalized populations through various solidarity economy measures. It is important to bear in mind that there is full devolution of power on many issues to local level in many countries. This must include urban and peri-urban agriculture projects.

#### 5) Support Sustainable consumption (promote healthy diets, reduce demand for meat, limit biofuels, reduce food losses and waste throughout the food chains)

We promote sustainable and diverse forms of food culture, in particular the consumption of high quality **local and seasonal foods** and **no highly processed** food. This includes a **lower consumption of meat** and animal products, which should only be locally produced using local non-GM feed. We engage in re-embracing and promoting **knowledge of cooking** and food processing through education and sharing of skills.

We encourage policy development, broader **consumer education** to make sustainable and healthy diets possible. Developing policies on public procurement of food that take into consideration the environmental, health and ethical impacts is one such measure. **Regulation of marketing of foods to children** is another, to prevent the promotion and limit the marketing of high-fat, high-sugar and highly processed food products. Governments should also take action to promote better eating habits, in particular with less meat, dairy products, sugar and high-fat foods and more vegetables and fruits.

With regard to the priorities to **make the global demand of food sustainable** we see the following two: **roll back the use of industrial agrofuels**, in the transport sector of high-income countries, considering that they have represented a major source of price volatility on agricultural markets over the past 10 years, have created serious negative environmental impacts and can hardly be defined as “renewable energy seen the

huge amounts of fossil energy needed to produce them. In the industrial food chains huge amounts (up to 30%) are lost; **reduce inefficiencies that cause losses and waste from the field to the plate.**

These inefficiencies especially of the industrial food system result in exerting a much higher pressure on natural resources than would otherwise occur. Various measures could be taken in response. They include **improving storage and marketing facilities** for farmers, stabilizing markets to avoid overproduction and improving **access to credit** for farmers can help to reduce the need for premature harvesting in order to satisfy food needs or to obtain cash; **avoiding industrial “quality” standards** which lead to fresh produce being rejected from marketing if it does not present the required (industrial) criteria of shape, size or colour; and developing **direct farmer-to-consumer marketing**. The implementation of other, small food producer and consumer oriented quality standards are crucial to maintain and support local, agroecological production.

**Public incentives for the production of crop-based agrofuels must be stopped.** Only those advanced agrofuels that do not compete with food production for land or other resources, that are produced in a sustainable way and contribute effectively to decrease the use of fossil fuels may receive public support.

## 6) Protecting Biodiversity and farmer’s and peoples’ rights to genetic resources

Biodiversity is declining sharply, while our demands on Nature are unsustainable and increasing. **Species populations** worldwide have **declined 52 per cent since 1970**. We need **1.5 earths to meet the demands we currently make** on nature. This means we are eating into our natural capital, making it more difficult to sustain the needs of future generations.

For our well-being and food production we depend on natural resources such as water, arable land, fishery ground and forests; and specific functions of the ecosystem such as pollination, nutrient cycling and avoiding erosion. The dual effect of a growing human population and higher ecological footprint per person will increase the **pressure on these resources and ecosystems** if we do not change dramatically our way of production.

Biodiversity and especially **peasant seeds are the pillar of food production and these are under attack** everywhere. Under corporate pressure, laws in many countries increasingly limit what farmers can do with their seeds. **Seed saving**, which has been the basis of farming for thousands of years, **is quickly being criminalised**. So-called free trade agreements, bilateral investment treaties and regional integration initiatives are hardening ‘soft’ forms of ownership rights over seeds. And laws strengthening intellectual property rights over seeds are being reinforced by other regulations that are supposed to ensure seed quality, market transparency, prevention of counterfeits, and the like.

What is at stake is the very basis of peasant farmers' existence. Social movements worldwide, especially peasant farmers organizations, have resisted and mobilised to prevent such laws being passed because control over seeds and other genetic resources must remain in peasants' and peoples' hands. It is one of the principles of agroecological production that guarantees food sovereignty of rural communities and urban populations against multinationals and their enormous profits.

We need **public policies** and adequate initiatives at international, national and local level to:

- **protect, respect and ensure** the stewardship of **biodiversity**;
- guarantee **the rights of peasants to** conserve, use, exchange, sell their **seeds and animal breeds** and protect them from biopiracy;
- ensure that **fishing communities** play the most central role in controlling **marine and inland waterways**.

## 7) Fight Climate Change and promote fossil fuel phase out and an accelerated transition to (100%) renewable energy

The existing global food sector accounts for around 30 percent of the world's total energy consumption and accounts for around 22 percent of total greenhouse gas emissions. Industrial agriculture produces 18% of all greenhouse gases, more than the entire global transport sector. Moving to a system of local agroecological food production combined with the complete phase out fossils fuels and transitioning to renewable energy is the only way to protect us from the effects of catastrophic global warming.

**Climate change will threaten food sovereignty for everyone.** Carbon emissions cause rising temperatures globally, causing desertification and low rain fall in many African and Asian countries, meaning crop yields are declining. Additionally extreme weather events are on the rise everywhere, meaning unpredictable growing seasons and sudden losses causing food price spikes that will affect the global food market. Local food producers can and are already adapting themselves to climatic changes contrary to large scale, industrial agriculture. Small food producers use local, indigenous techniques to build resilience and prepare within their communities for shocks in a way the global food system cannot hope to. The strategies of these communities and small food producers are diverse and adapted to local contexts. They need the right frame, policies and support and protection to continue and strengthen agroecological production.

**Climate smart agriculture or the 'Green Economy's false solutions are not the answer.** They continue a relationship between agriculture and fossil fuels, promote increased use of toxic chemicals and continue corporate control and exploitation of agricultural workers. They continue to centralise agriculture, making it more vulnerable to climatic shocks. Therefore we have to reject Climate Smart Agriculture and other false solutions.

**Agro-ecological small-scale food production powered by renewable energy is already proving to be the fairest, most resilient and lowest carbon option** to feed our people and protect our planet, according to many examples around the world.

## 8) Denounce the real obstacles to change: free trade agreements, financial speculation and corporate driven development

The promotion of competition through the **suppression of tariffs and standards** is strengthening an agricultural and food system increasingly controlled by multinationals. The neoliberal trade paradigm blinds people to social, environmental, and human rights standards benefiting only the profits and control of a few transnational corporations. The **increased commodification of food** does not respect or support the right to food. It is the contrary to what we are fighting for in food sovereignty and indeed removes much of our sovereignty in other ways.

The **anti-democratic and secretive nature of the negotiations** like those ones involving free trade agreements such as TTIP, TPP and TISA confirms the analysis that people will not benefit from these agreements that undermine the capacities of farmers to produce for local communities and of citizens to decide on the food they eat. They will uphold and not allow the urgent shift we need to put a stop to climate change.

**The ISDS mechanism** - Investor State Dispute Settlement – included in these agreements would enable corporations to sue States and even Local Authorities on the basis of “unfair competition”, and would inhibit or even prevent local public procurement, seed saving and many other aspects mentioned in this document as essential to the solution. This in our eyes is totally unacceptable and must be stopped.

Another relevant element is **the perverse role played by financial markets and derivatives bonds**. These instruments had been created to protect agricultural market from volatility and speculations, but today, after financial deregulation, they are negotiated by any kind of financial operator. With the dimension reached by international financial market food prices are not made by real factors anymore, but by the trends of the negotiations of derivatives and futures on financial markets.

There is a **strong need for a new system of rules** in the global financial markets to avoid this kind of speculations and degeneration.

**Corporate driven development**, large scale investment, also promoted by the World Bank and other International Finance Institutions, and financial speculation with natural resources and food have severely negative impacts on the environment, creating huge biodiversity losses, destroying millions of livelihoods in the rural areas often through militarized conflicts, repression, eviction of peasants from their lands and other violations of Human Rights.

### 9) Address international institutions, States and local authorities to support the governance of food and agriculture with the full participation of civil society and social movements as the only way of taking decisions and making real progress

Hunger is an issue of injustice and **the reason that hunger exists is political**, it is not a lack of production of food. Therefore a solution of this problem needs political will and adequate political decisions. For this a **change in the balance of power and genuine participatory democratic governance** of our food systems. It is vital that the organized social movements of family farmers, agricultural workers and consumers, especially women and youth, have a meaningful voice in determining decisions, at local, national and global levels, that affect us all on such a fundamental level as the right to food.

The people directly affected by these policies have the right to be **fully recognized by governments and institutions** to participate in the formulation of policies and initiatives in this area. We cannot allow that these processes are dominated by a corporate private sector whose only objective is to increase profit at the expense of people and the environment. Therefore their grip on national and international policy processes has to be removed and their influence in international and national policies spaces has to be rolled back.

**The UN Committee on World Food Security and Nutrition**, reformed in 2009 following the food price shock in 2008, is now building up towards the central intergovernmental platform in the UN and broader system of global governance and should allow adequate coordination and governance of the global food system. It is inclusive, with formal participation by civil society through the Civil Society Mechanism, representing all constituencies, particularly of the organizations of those most affected by hunger. Governments must strengthen and respect the role of the CFS in order to enable it to live up to its promise. Some key policy documents that are the outcome of this process are: The Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the context of national food security. CFS 41 also passed a good policy document on Food Waste and Loss.

**FAO** has gone through an important reform, and now recognizes the autonomy of the Civil society organizations, is taking up agroecology and support for small food producers as a central concept may start to upscale concrete collaborations in the near future. We call upon the **World Food Program** and the **International Fund for Agricultural Development** to take these processes seriously and engage in constructive processes to achieve a similar participation of Civil Society and re-orientating their efforts toward the support of small holder, agroecological food production and local food systems as described in this and other documents.

We demand a full reform of the **International research system** to assure that these efforts contribute to strengthen and develop further agroecological food systems in an adequate way and with full participation of those affected.

We call upon national governments to set up similar spaces with Civil Society organizations, especially small food producers and organizations representing consumers to develop adequate national policies and initiatives and implement the decisions taken on these issues at international level.

Last but not least, **environmental and development education** should be organized for the purpose of teaching the structure and organization of the natural environment and, in particular, educate humans to manage their behavior in relation to ecosystems in order to live sustainably, without altering the balance of nature, aiming at satisfying the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. From the beginning the environmental and development issues should be intertwined with that of economic development. Governments should provide schools and various educational institutions of new structured programs, inserting as study subjects (like mathematics and history) the main themes of environmental and development education.

## 10) Develop public policies built on the framework of food sovereignty, solidarity economy and accessible finance as the ways forward

**A radical change of direction** from a world governed by and for the few, who have built their power on financial speculation, deregulation and privatization, **is urgently needed**. As food sovereignty and solidarity economy movements, we seek to re-orient and harness the State, policies, trade, production, distribution, consumption, investment, money and finance, and ownership structures towards **servicing the welfare of people and the environment**. Ours is a pluralist approach - eschewing rigid blueprints and the belief in a single, correct path. The **solidarity economy** also values and builds on concrete practices, many of which have a long history. It is rooted in the practices of participatory democracy and promotes a new vision of the economy, an economy that puts people at the center of the system and values the relationships rather than the goods.

Adequate public policies initiatives have to be set up at all levels. In this logic national policies have to support and allow adequate local policies and international policies have to do the same regarding national policies. **We cannot allow international spaces and institutions to be used by the corporate sector** and other interests to destroy national policies and impose additional policies that further destroy and undermine our food systems.

At local level, the key to transition is to **rebuild local food systems**, thus decentralizing food systems and making them more flexible, but also **creating links between the cities and their rural hinterland**, for the benefit of both local producers and of consumers. We need very **concrete policies to protect and guarantee the use and control over water, land, seeds and other natural resources** and to **stabilize and strengthen local markets**, give small producers **access to adequate credit** facilities and strengthen local processing. Local consumers need to be guaranteed access to local products in terms of both suitably situated outlets and distribution points and in a way that guarantees social inclusion.

In addition to support for locally-led innovations, multisectoral strategies should be deployed. Such strategies should trigger a process in which progress is made towards supporting a reinvestment in local food production, focused in particular on small-scale food producers in the countries where they represent a large proportion of the poor; towards the diversification of the economy, to create opportunities for income-generating activities; and towards the establishment of **standing social protection schemes**, to ensure that all individuals have access to nutritious food at all times, even if they have access neither to productive resources nor to employment.

For this, access to credit and cooperative forms of microcredit and finance – locally owned and controlled by the communities - are more and more necessary, in order to respond to their real needs, be more and more self-reliant and not dependant on unaccountable, profit-driven economic powers. **Financial sovereignty** is also an important goal, if we want our communities to thrive based on their own priorities. There are many examples of solidarity and ethical finance practices that can be encouraged and adapted to different contexts and which can help small-scale food producers to mutually support each other as well as be supported by their consumers and communities in a sustainable way.

At international level, greater coordination should be achieved between actions launched at the multilateral, regional and national levels, with a view to creating an enabling international environment. International policies should contribute to strengthening national adequate policies and initiatives and protect these against interests of the elites and the corporate sector. **International policies should at the same time reward and support domestic efforts towards the realization of food sovereignty, agroecological systems and the right to food rather than obstructing them.** At each level the participation of those affected by hunger and malnutrition must be ensured and **appropriate accountability mechanisms** established.

## Sources

- Declaration of the International Forum for Agroecology (Nyeleni, 27 February 2015)
- Declaration of the Global Convergence of Land and Water Struggles (Tunisi, 28 March 2015)
- Final report: the transformative potential of the right to food (Olivier De Schutter, 24 January 2014)
- Justice, democracy and diversity in our food system (Concord position paper, April 2014)
- Food Sovereignty Now! – final declaration of Nyeleni Europe 2011
- Objectives for the 2013-2015 period (Urgenci)
- Global vision for a social solidarity Economy (Ripess)
- The central role of food (Slow Food International, Congress paper 2012-2016)
- The Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (FA, Committee on World Food Security , 11 May 2012)