



RESOLUTION

FIMARC Executive committee – Assesse - Belgium

April 2016

We the executive committee members of FIMARC (International Federation of Adult Catholic Rural Movements) from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe representing rural movements and communities gathered in Assesse, Belgium from 9-15th of April 2016 for the FIMARC FORMATION SESSION ON “AGROECOLOGY”, to deepen our common understanding about Agro ecology , and to share our own experiences from different continents .

The corporate model of Agriculture mostly produces food that poisons us, destroys soil fertility, and is responsible for the deforestation of rural areas, the contamination of water and the acidification of oceans and destruction of fisheries sector and creates pest- and disease-ravaged mono cultural plantations and increasingly negative consequences of greenhouse gas emissions, and the health crisis of malnutrition, obesity, diabetes, and cancer etc. This type of production system commodified the essential natural resources, and rising production costs are driving us from our own land.

Our traditional seed varieties are either destroyed or patented and millions of farmers are forced to depend on hybrid varieties which are costly, contaminated with agro chemicals and not adapted to the consumption habits of the local communities .It is a fact that 90 % of the world's 1.5 billion hectors of land is dominated by the industrial mono culture promoting only on 12 types of grains and 23 species of vegetables. These mono cultures are extremely vulnerable to pests, diseases and climate change. Increasing corporation agribusiness involvement has diverted the goal from that of providing food for people as a basic human right to that of producing commodities for profit.

FIMARC consider Agroecology as a way life and a set of practices, more than a science. It is a tool and approach to attain food sovereignty and family farming system is key to develop agro ecological practices. Agro ecology represents a real alternative to existing production systems which is destructive of natural balances and peasant life. It integrates the dimension of water management, reforestation, combating erosion, biodiversity, climate change, the economic social systems and the relationship of humans with their environment.

As a science, agroecology consists of the ‘application of ecological science which respects and protects soil, water, biodiversity, living organisms and help to design and manage the sustainable agroecosystems’. It implies the diversification of farms for the regeneration of soil fertility, and maintains productivity and crop protection. The core principles of agroecology include recycling nutrients and energy on the farm, rather than introducing external inputs; enhancing soil organic matter and soil biological activity; diversifying plant species and genetic resources; It will integrate crops and livestock and optimizing interactions and productivity of the total farming system, rather than the yields of individual species. It advocate a holistic approach and recognition of knowledge and farmers know-how,

We affirm that through agro ecological practices such as polycultures, diversification and rotation of crops ,agroforestry, use of native seeds and local breeds of livestock, encouraging natural enemies of pests, and using composts and green manure can enhance biodiversity, fertility and water retention capacity of the soil and enable Sustainability and resilience of the farming systems.

Agroecology can lead to the progressive realization of Food Sovereignty through family farming systems and provide Safe and diverse food for all. The key idea of agro ecology is to go beyond alternative farming practices and to develop agro ecosystems without the dependence on agrochemical and energy inputs. Agroecology cannot be implemented the same way in all territories. It can be practiced in many different ways, based on the local reality and culture. The use of agrottoxins, artificial hormones, GMOs or other dangerous new technologies is totally against the basic principles of Agroecology. Diverse forms of smallholder food production based on Agroecology generate local knowledge, promote social justice, nurture culture, and strengthen the economic viability of rural areas

FIMARC want to strengthen the linkages between food sovereignty, agroecology and family faming. Family farmers are the first and foremost actors for promoting agro ecology. FIMARC have been defending and promoting Food Sovereignty in all our engagements and most of our rural communities are practicing AGROECOLOGY in different names but it has been there since from the origin of traditional farming systems and it is the way forward. Only food self-sufficiency, food sovereignty of peoples can resolve the issue of hunger in the world.

As the present education system favors the interest of the transnational corporations and dictates the food habits of the populations aiming to make more and more profit. FIMARC wanted to revive and promote the traditional knowledge sharing practices and food baskets through local analysis

FIMARC believe that Agroecolgy is an alternative way to be developed and a solution to feed the world of today and in the future without destroying nature. For FIMARC, agroecology, is without doubt a model to counter the neo liberal capitalist system booming around the world. FIMARC want to promote Pope Francis' Encyclical on the environment « Laudato Si'' is quite relevant as it call for an 'ecological conversion', by a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet and also urge for the implementation of IAASTD (International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development) report which reflects a growing consensus among scientists and many governments that the old paradigm of industrial energy-intensive and toxic agriculture is an outdated concept, while small-scale farmers and agro-ecological methods provide the way forward.

Policy Areas to be addressed for the realisation of Agroecology

Reorienting markets, by increasing control of small-scale food producers over markets and to build local economies.
Public procurement of agro ecological products and its distribution.

Regulating agribusinesses, corporations and commercial fishing

Local, national and regional policies to support agro ecology etc.

Implement government financed community/ farmer lead research on Agroecology

The Executive Committee of the FIMARC.

Assesse, April 14th, 2016.
