

**2002 Rome NGO FORUM
for Food Sovereignty**



8 – 13 June 2002

IPC NEWS

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Rome, 31/01/02



A. Call for Action

Foreward

Seven months ago we launched the first call for action for an “*NGO/CSO Forum for Food Sovereignty*” to be held in Rome to which many issues were added later on.

Some progress has been achieved by NGO/CSO action since the 1996 WFS, e.g. only one year ago **food sovereignty** was not yet a widely known approach.

NGO/CSO movement appears overall stronger and better organised, but our main concerns are still there.

We still condemn the WFS:fyf agenda that limits its action to recall the political will of governments to implement the 1996 Plan of Action.

The 1996 WFS Declaration has a “hidden agenda”, as it is implicitly based on market mechanisms. The WTO Ministerial Meeting in Doha in 2001 has confirmed the neoliberal choices dictated **by the illusion** that “*the market is the only frame to guarantee food security for all.*”

WFS results need to be reviewed, especially food insecurity created by trade liberalisation. Why cannot local trade be a priority before global trade?

The political will as well as the necessary funding to implement the WFS Plan of Action are lacking. Neither the right to food is widely accepted, nor the *farmers' rights* or the cultural rights of indigenous peoples that are closely linked to their food systems.

Opportunities for more achievements are now offered by the very broad consensus from farmers to trade unions to indigenous peoples on many agricultural issues, e.g. on “**NO DUMPING**”, on the “**GMO MORATORIUM**”, on agroecological approaches.

The crisis in livestock production has fuelled this consensus. In addition, the “G8” in Genova and the 11 September events have mobilised many.

Time has come for a significant move away from industrial, corporate and globalised agriculture.



1. The IPC and the NGO Forum

The International NGO/CSO Planning Committee (IPC) is composed of representatives of over 20 national, regional, constituency and issue-based organisations (see attached list of members) and started its preparatory work to develop NGO and civil society actions for the WFS:fyl in March 2000. From then onwards a comprehensive process at regional level has been promoted and in late 2001 in each region (Asia, Latin America, Africa, Europe) an NGO/CSO regional conference was held with the support of FAO. This process was summed up at the last IPC meeting in November 2001.

The International Committee meeting reviewed action taken so far regarding both the content of the strategic themes identified by the Committee in May 2001 and the preparatory process in the regions, and subsequently proceeded to update the NGO/CSO strategy and workplan.

The NGOs/CSOs will focus on a **limited number** of issues which are the key to reach WFS goals.

Draft position papers have been prepared on the following strategic issues:

right to food, food sovereignty, alternative models of agriculture, access to productive resources (land and genetic resources)- (see report on IPC meeting, November 2001).

During the November meeting the IPC decided that the authors of these papers will redraft them taking comments received into account. **Additional papers will be prepared on access to water, biotechnology indigenous peoples' rights and workers' rights.**

The revised drafts and new papers will be shared with the regional focal points and discussed at the NGO/CSO Regional Consultations (see below), starting with Africa in early February.

At the same time, a "**condensed political paper**" will be prepared to serve as the basis for NGO/CSO advocacy at the WFS:fyl. This paper will group issues around **three themes**:

- **Right to:** food and resources (including issues of right to land and security of tenure, water, biodiversity), workers' rights, indigenous peoples' rights;
- **Alternative agricultural models** (including a critique of industrial models, presentation of existing alternative models, access to and choice of technology, GMO issues);
- **Food sovereignty** (including issues on democracy and participation, countries'/peoples' rights to decide their agricultural and food policies, trade issues, prices, dumping, food safety).

This document will also be discussed at the Regional Consultations and will be finalized only at the eve of the Summit.

1.1 The preparatory process of the "Rome NGO/CSO Forum for Food Sovereignty"

1.1.1 With the postponement of the WFS:fyl, **the regional processes**, that will be taking place over the coming months, become even more important.

NGO/CSO Consultations will be held in conjunction with the Regional FAO Conferences in 2002. The Regional NGO/CSO Consultations are expected to provide an occasion for NGOs/CSOs to discuss and comment on the draft NGO/CSO political paper; to build a dialogue with members of governments; to feed in their comments regarding the draft declaration to the FAO Regional Conferences and the Committee on Food Security (CFS); to make



recommendations regarding on-going cooperation with FAO. The NGOs/CSOs also plan to reinforce consultations and dialogue at national and sub-regional levels.

The schedule for the FAO regional conferences and the CFS is as follows:

REGIONAL CONFERENCE	Location	Date of the Conference	Date of the NGO/CSO Consultation
Africa	Cairo (Egypt)	04 to 08/02/02	02 to 03/02/02
North Africa and Near East	Teheran (Iran)	09 to 13/03/02	07 to 08/03/02
Latin America	La Havana (Cuba)	22 to 26/04/02	20 to 21/04/02
Europe	Cyprus	27 to 30/05/02	25 to 26/05/02
Asia	Kathmandu (Nepal)	13 to 17/05/02	11 to 12/05/02
CFS.	Rome (Italy)	06 to 08/06/02	-----

1.1.2. The IPC is planning a special international consultation for indigenous people.

1.1.3. Preparatory papers will be translated/adapted into local languages wherever possible.

1.1.4. Efforts will be made to take advantage of other regional processes in course, particularly in the context of preparations for the Johannesburg WSSD.

1.1.5. Existing campaigns on related themes (moratorium on GMOs, no dumping etc.) are part of the NGO/CSO preparatory efforts and need to be supported internationally.

1.1.6 Media and communication strategies will be implemented at national, regional and global levels, including preparation of videos bringing the voices of farmers, women, workers, indigenous peoples' leaders to the NGO Forum and the Summit.

2 IPC Strategy

It has been unanimously stated that agroecology is the best approach to link the sustainable improvement of agricultural production to food sovereignty respecting the peasants and indigenous peoples' culture.

Market mechanisms, however, impose unsustainable production on alternative approaches:

- A trade policy geared to food sovereignty and agroecology is needed instead.
- Resource justice securing the right to land, seed, water, and technologies remains a major issue.



The FAO member states must assume a greater responsibility on:

- The Signature of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources, adopted in November 2001 by the FAO Conference, by 44 member states required to ensure its entry into force and ratification by their parliaments should be a goal for the June WFS:fyl
- The FAO Committee on Agriculture (COAg) should be asked to monitor seed losses, to survey how national laws destroy agricultural biodiversity, how disasters and food aid destroy local diversity.
- The FAO Committee on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) should react to the findings of GM maize in Mexican small farms, the centres of maize diversity, and to the pollution of gene banks with GMOs.

Our strategy for WFS:fyl should relate to:

- World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil, February 2002
- Financing of the Development Conference, Monterrey, Mexico, March 2002
- Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity, The Hague, Netherlands, April 2002
- UNHCR Meeting on Right to Food, end July 2002
- “Rio plus 10 Summit, Johannesburg”, South Africa, September 2002.

We must take these meetings into account, but it must be clear, as established in our meeting in November 2001, that the political agenda of the IPC is not timed on the international conferences which are only one of the instruments to obtain NGO/CSO goals.

CSOs/NGOs should not be pushed by UN processes and should even consider not attending some of these conferences where, for example, no progress is liable to be achieved.

All these meetings should focus on agriculture and food matters:

- Workshops on agriculture and food issues are held at the World Social Forum.
- At this very moment it appears that small farmers and especially women are left aside in the preparations of the Financing of Development summit.

During the preparatory work conducted so far we have unanimously stated that **CSOs/NGOs should not engage in these processes without a series of requests covering food sovereignty, justice of resources, the right to share the benefits of the food systems.**

We have also decided that the CSO/NGO **regional processes are the central strategic place** for preparing WFS:fyl, in particular the FAO Regional Conferences should be used to prepare the WFS:fyl .

Attention will be given to the multistakeholder dialogue, under the responsibility of International NGO/CSO Planning Committee, - even if it is not the only place of debate with the governments -, to take place in meetings in the various regions as well as during events which will be organised in June 2002 in Rome.



B. Basic information on the NGO/CSO Forum for Food Sovereignty

The Forum is entitled "**Rome NGO/CSO Forum for Food Sovereignty**". It will take place in Rome from 8 to 13 June 2002.¹ The Forum will be hosted by the Italian NGO/CSO Committee (see contacts below) which acts also as the secretariat of the IPC. Some 600 participants will be accredited, nominated by the regional and constituency focal points of the Committee, according to a quota system that will ensure balanced representation by regions, types of organizations and gender.

The work of the FORUM will involve strategic discussions in morning sessions open only to accredited delegates; thematic workshops on strategic issues, to be organized in the afternoons both at the Forum, in the outskirts of Rome as well as on FAO premises; debate with government delegations, also in the context of the Multistakeholder Dialogue (MSD) which figures in the WFS:fyl programme.

The International NGO/CSO Planning Committee of the WFS:fyl is FAO's civil society interface for the planning and implementation of the MSD. The International Planning Committee intends to prepare for the MSD already in the context of the Regional Conferences, so that dialogue can be built up progressively; **information/education activities** are open to the public at large.

The first two days (8-9 June) will be devoted to **finalize the first NGO/CSO declaration** to be presented to the press and the public. A **final declaration** will be presented at the end of strategic discussions **on concrete goals** and follow-up proposals, including monitoring of the WFS:fyl decisions.

¹ Funding is being provided by the Italian Government through a contract between FAO and the Associazione ONG Italiane signed on 16 November 2001, and by other donors.
Rome, 31/01/02



C. Updated information note of the Secretariat of the NGO/CSO Forum for Food Sovereignty

We would like to draw your attention to the following initiatives which should be undertaken as soon as possible:

1. **Now is the time to prepare a detailed programme of the Forum including its interaction with the Summit.**
2. It is necessary to provide the Forum with a specific motto which will substitute the former "*Let the hunger debate be the human bridge between Rome and Qatar*". We would propose "No Dumping" or "This Land is my Land" or "No patents on life", or any other proposals you may make as urgently as possible.
3. The discussions on the themes related to the WFS:fyl which will be held at the Social Forum in Porto Alegre will sustain – we hope - those stressed by the IPC for the Forum for Food Sovereignty (June 2002).
4. It is necessary to prepare a synthesis of the regional processes and the results of these processes, in addition to the papers already foreseen.
5. Close consultation must be maintained between the IPC members and the Italian Committee to enable better information sharing. If possible, prepare from now onwards lists of participants (according to the established quota) in consideration of the time-consuming mechanism of accreditation and obtention of entry visas into Italy (**deadline for the list 28/02/02**).
6. Identify, at international and national level, further sources to finance travel and lodging costs of participants.

What are we doing here in Rome:

1. Obtain space for the organisation of the Forum and parallel events in collaboration with the Municipality of Rome
2. Identify, in collaboration with FAO, available space for NGO/CSO activities to be held in FAO
3. Set up the contracts for the services necessary for the organisation of the activities of the Forum
4. Set up the structure of the Secretariat.

Organizational structure of the Secretariat:

Human Resources:

International Focal Point: Mr. Antonio Onorati

Focal point for IPC relations with international organisations in Rome and in specific for relations with the Municipality of Rome .



NGO FORUM FOR FOOD SOVEREIGNTY, Rome 8-13 June 2002

President of the Italian Committee: Mr. Sergio Marelli

Responsible for the correct organisation of the NGO Forum within the terms of the contract signed with FAO; Responsible of the Italian Committee.

Technical Coordinator: Mr. Andrea Ferrante

Responsible for the logistics of the NGO Forum and in charge of the functioning of the IPC Secretariat in Rome.

Secretary of the Secretariat: Mrs. Alessandra Viana

Responsible of the overall Secretariat work, updating of website.

Responsible persons of the following areas:

Asia/ Middle East/Central Asia:

Mrs. Alessandra Covre

Research of pertinent material for updating the website; in charge of the tickets and logistics of participants; in charge of the relations with NGOs/CSOs of the regions.

Latin America/North America/Oceania

Mr. Andrea Tronchin

Research of pertinent material for updating the website; in charge of the tickets and logistics of participants; in charge of the relations with NGOs/CSOs of the regions.

Africa/Europe

Mrs. Lara Paoletti

Research of pertinent material for updating the website; in charge of the tickets and logistics of participants; in charge of the relations with NGOs/CSOs of the regions

NGO/CSO – FAO

Mrs. G.M.Isabel Sperl

Responsible of the IPC office in FAO headquarters.

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