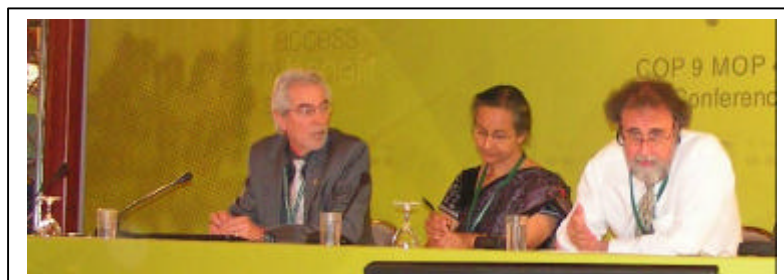




CBD / COP 9, Maritim
**REPORT OF
SIDE EVENT**
International Assessment of Agricultural Science and
Technology for Development (IAASTD)



IAASTD calls for agricultural knowledge, science and technology to be reoriented towards more agroecological sciences

IAASTD, a unique multistakeholder assessment co-sponsored by the World Bank and UN agencies, created a **common vision of the future of agriculture** and was approved by 57 countries.

In introducing the IAASTD, Director, Bob Watson said that of all the aspects of biodiversity, the interface with agriculture has perhaps the greatest potential for practical, sustainable solutions that are implemented because they benefit both people and natural ecosystems. But the way agriculture is practiced has to change if these benefits are to be realized and if it does not change there will be increased hunger, inequity and environmental degradation.

When Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology is developed and used creatively with active participation among various stakeholders across multiple scales, the misuse of natural capital can be reversed... A powerful tool for meeting development and sustainability goals resides in empowering farmers to innovatively manage soils, water, biological resources, pests, disease vectors, genetic diversity, and conserve natural resources in a culturally appropriate manner.
IAASTD Report, April 2008



Robert Watson, Director
"Business as usual is not an option... Agriculture must be part of the Solution to Biodiversity."



Rajeswari Raina, Author
"Perception of farmers as more than commodity producers - policy makers must learn to see them as managers of ecosystem services too."



Hans R. Herren, Co-Chair
"There is significant synergy between the CBD goals and approaches and the IAASTD goals and findings"

In relation to the negotiations of the CBD, it was pointed out that Protected Areas comprise only 13% of the land area, and employ at best one person for every 5 square kilometers, as caretakers and guards ...while farmers make up half of the world's total labor force, 1.8 billion people, caring for 38% of the Earth's land surface; farmers have to be included in biodiversity conservation through sustainable use, using more agroecological methods.

More information: see agassessment.org, agassessment-watch.org, panna.org/jt/agAssessment

Global launch of an international Call to Action by social movements and civil society on the World Food Emergency and the underlying loss of biodiversity on 22 May, International Biodiversity Day: celebrating agricultural biodiversity - the basis of life and livelihoods on Earth

No More "Failures-as-Usual"!

Historic, systemic failures of governments and international institutions are responsible

Governments will meet in June at the FAO Food Summit in Rome and they must begin by accepting their responsibility for today's food emergency and the loss of biodiversity

The emergency today has its roots in governments' and intergovernmental organisations' failures, among others, to respect, protect and fulfil the right to food and to produce food, especially for domestic markets.

Henry Saragih, international co-ordinator of La Via Campesina said: "*this food crisis is the result of the ongoing market liberalisation and the neglect of food production by international institutions and national governments*". Saragih added "*This has to change! Peasant and family farmers need policies that protect and stabilize domestic markets and support food production for local and national markets*".

In the midst of collapsing farm, livestock and fish stocks and skyrocketing food and fuel prices, new policies, practices and structures are required to resolve the current food emergency and to prevent future - and greater - tragedies. Governments' and intergovernmental organisations' policies have undermined agricultural productivity and destroyed national food security. This has had a dramatic impact on agricultural biodiversity and its resilient ecosystems that underpin the sustainable production of food from crops and livestock in all regions of the world.

Mana Diakite, USC West Africa declares: "*the push for agrofuels and the so-called new green revolution is threatening our local seeds and livestock breeds and undermining our food sovereignty in the Sahel, as elsewhere*." Diakite adds "*We need a new approach that protects us from misguided technologies and invasive markets that are forced on our farmers and livestock keepers and erode our precious agricultural biodiversity*."

Social movements and civil society organisations have joined together to develop a global plan of action for food and agriculture and are willing to discuss this plan with governments and intergovernmental organisations that will be attending the Rome Food Summit.

We call for:

1. **A State of Emergency:** In this crisis peoples and states can call for a State of Emergency and suspend agreements and regulate citizens and corporate activities. They must do so immediately allowing people to take back control of their food systems;
2. **UN Commission on Food Production, Consumption and Trade:** A new inclusive mechanism is needed to replace the UN Task Force. This Commission should have a significant and substantive representation of small-scale food producers and marginalized consumers;
3. **No quick fixes:** This is a generational emergency which is likely to continue for another generation – long term solutions are required. Governments must not be allowed to repeat the same institutional mistakes and short-term technofix solutions of the past. No more Green Revolutions – long term food sovereignty solutions are needed.

For more information, see www.ukabc.org/foodemergency/calltoaction.htm

To sign up to the Call to Action statement, please submit your signatures at www.nyeleni.eu/foodemergency

To find out more about the Civil Society forum 'Terra Preta' go to www.foodsovereignty.org. It will be held in parallel to the UN Food Summit in June - the "High-Level Conference on World Food Security: the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy", 3 to 5 June 2008