

The European Union and its Responsibility in the World

CONCORD Manifesto for the 2009 European Parliament Elections

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Responsible Food and Agricultural Policy

The recent food crisis should be a wake up call for Europe as regards the importance of adopting a responsible food and agricultural policy, rather than current policies, which adversely impact on the development efforts of their partners and undermine their right to food.

- the EU needs to improve the management of its agricultural market and reassert the primacy of agricultural and food policies over trade policies. EU policies need to enable states and regional groupings of states to regulate and protect their own agricultural markets in order to promote local sustainable farming, the basis of food sovereignty.
- the reform of the CAP needs to tackle the global food crisis by putting an end to the dumping of agricultural goods and export-led agricultural models in Europe and elsewhere that have caused the diversion of fertile land, prevented populations from accessing water or seeds and led to the domination of many small farmers by large agribusiness conglomerates.
- market management should support family farming, the development of decentralised production systems, the reinforcement of the agro-ecological nature of production systems and less dependence on imports.
- EU aid policy needs to invest in improving farmers' production capacities through a plurality of farming methods, in farmers' access to land and local markets and in the optimisation of farmers' knowledge of biodiversity. This includes the exclusion of all patents on life and genetically modified plants and animals.
- food justice can only be attained through investment in and empowerment of women, who continue to be marginalised within the agricultural sector despite the fact that they produce more than 50% of the food in the world.
- biofuel targets, which lead to the overuse of scarce land resources for agricultural production, must be dropped.