



International Planning Committee (IPC) for Food Sovereignty

Working Group on Agricultural Biodiversity



25th February 2021

International Planning Committee (IPC) for Food Sovereignty

Informal session of the Twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-24)

IPC Declaration

Agenda Item 7: Biodiversity and Agriculture

The International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC) is a global platform which brings together indigenous peoples and small-scale food producers involved in the conservation, sustainable use, development and governance of agricultural biodiversity, which is the basis for food sovereignty.

A major focus of the SBSTTA agenda item 7 on Biodiversity and Agriculture is quite rightly on soil biodiversity, which has long been and still is best preserved by peasants, pastoralists, forest dwellers, indigenous peoples and other small-scale food producers who feed the majority of the world.

There thus appear to be two serious omissions from the Draft of the Action Plan 2020-2030 (ref: [CBD/SBSTTA/24/7/Rev.1](https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/b3f9/b52e/2343a8aef4958e19649521dd/sbstta-24-07-rev1-en.pdf)¹, annex II). First, there is no mention of agroecology in the entire Action Plan, and second, there is a continued lack of recognition of small-scale food producers as identified by UNDROP.

The Action Plan should place emphasis on the fundamental role of agroecology in restoring, maintaining and developing soil biodiversity. In Element 2, "Encouraging the use of sustainable soil management practices", neither agroecological practices of peasant and indigenous communities nor related traditional knowledge are directly mentioned among activities that preserve soil biodiversity.

As stated in point 45 of the background document and as recognised in [Decision XIII/3](#),² paragraph 27, "the Conference of the Parties recognised the important contribution of indigenous and local communities, in particular as managers of centres of origin of agricultural diversity, and their role in the management and restoration of critical ecosystems, ecological rotation and agro-forestry". It is

¹ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/b3f9/b52e/2343a8aef4958e19649521dd/sbstta-24-07-rev1-en.pdf>

² <https://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/sbstta/sbstta-13/official/sbstta-13-02-en.pdf>



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therefore an even more glaring omission that our role in the maintenance of biodiversity is not given explicit recognition in the Action Plan.

We cannot help but question what vested interests make it so difficult to include agroecology from the world's strategy to preserve biodiversity. Rather than the repeated use of the ill-defined 'sustainable agriculture', the Action Plan must call for an agroecological transition if we are to genuinely protect and preserve biodiversity below and above ground.

We recommend the addition of a fifth objective to the Action Plan: 5) Recognising, supporting and securing the role and rights of indigenous peoples and small-scale food producers in maintaining biodiversity through agroecology.

Finally, we join others in warning against the inclusion of language not defined under the CBD, such as 'nature-based solutions' that can potentially open doors for 'mitigation pathways' such as large-scale afforestation that are neither 'natural', nor 'solutions' and distract from genuinely transformative actions. The CBD has its own well-defined terminology in 'ecosystem-based approaches' (decision V/6), and should continue to use these rather than adopting new, vague, and undefined terminology.

Industrial agriculture, especially deforestation and monocultures for livestock feed, the over-use of antimicrobials in intensive livestock production, and the attendant loss of distinctive breeds of plants and animals have severe consequences for soil fertility and biodiversity. Action must be directed towards agroecological solutions which support biodiversity in all its forms and at all levels (genetic, species, and agroecosystem). This must be addressed in the currently proposed targets 1, 6, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 in the GBF.