

IFOAM Advocacy Update – November 2011

With agriculture expected to be a hot topic at the forthcoming (Nov 28 to Dec 9) [Climate Change Conference in Durban, South Africa \(CoP17\)](#) and with the next [Earth Summit \(Rio+20\)](#) in June next year (20 to 22) it is an important period for IFOAM to get its messages out and influence outcomes. International policy discussions on Food Security are also in an important phase with IFOAM represented on the [FAO's Committee on Food Security \(CFS\)](#) that met in Rome in October (15 to 22).

Food Security - CFS

IFOAM President Andre Leu and Chief Food Security Campaigner Cristina Grandi were in Rome in October (15th to 22nd) at [FAO's 37th meeting of the CFS](#). A key outcome of the meeting was the acknowledgement that smallholder farmers produce much of the world's food and a call for CFS members states to ensure public investment, services and policies for supporting smallholders – something IFOAM has been advocating strongly for in recent years:

'Smallholder farmers, many of whom are women, play a central role in producing most of the food consumed locally in many developing regions and are the primary investors in agriculture in many developing countries'. Paragraph 26 of the 37th Meeting's [Final Report](#)

Of concern however was the gross misuse of the principles of agro-ecology and attack on organic agriculture in Annex 1 of the '[Land tenure and International Investments in Agriculture](#)' report' prepared for the CFS by their High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE). IFOAM spotted this 'under-the-radar' inclusion and rigorously raised it at the meeting. While the report's recommendations on addressing 'land-grabbing' are a step-forward it appears that FAO wants to weaken the definition of agro-ecology to include synthetic inputs – especially for smallholders. FAO probably recognizes that it can no longer ignore the increasing calls for the scaling-up of agro-ecological approaches but at the same time is under pressure to maintain support for synthetic inputs and 'business as usual'.

IFOAM will work with partners to address this adverse development and will keep pushing for greater recognition and support of the world's smallholder farmers as outlined in IFOAM's [Smallholder Position Paper](#).

The HLPE's report on '[Price Volatility and Food Security](#)' criticized the green revolution, called for the incorporation of externalities in the cost of food production and quoted the UN report on "[Agro-ecology and Right to Food](#)". However this report was not supported by the CFS due to pressure from members of the G20 who wish to gain control over food security policies.

Finally the CFS presented its first draft of the Global Strategic Framework (GSF), which was drafted without the consultation of the CFS civil society mechanism (CSM). The draft was unacceptable to the civil society organizations as in particular it failed to explain the real reasons behind hunger. IFOAM supported

an [alternative document](#) written by the CFS's Civil Society Mechanism (CSM). During the CFS plenary some countries supported the need for FAO to consult with the CSM in the drafting of the next version.

Climate Change - UNFCCC

IFOAM will have a strong delegation at [CoP17 in Durban](#) and a full program of activities headed-up by new IFOAM President Andre Leu. IFOAM will share an exhibition booth with Fairtrade International and will have two side events inside the UNFCCC negotiation area.

On Dec 2nd IFOAM will have a side event in conjunction with the Government of Malawi; 'Overcoming Food Insecurity with Adaptation Actions: Building on Lessons from Sub-Saharan Africa'.

On Dec 3rd in the African Pavilion IFOAM has a follow-up to its event at the UNFCCC meeting in Bonn earlier this year with the African Union Commission and the World Food Program, which will be hosted by one of our South African members Professor Raymond Auerbach of the Rainman Landcare Foundation. The event; '[Addressing Hunger & Climate: Putting Vulnerable Rural People at Centre of Agenda - Ecosystem & Community Based Approaches to Resilient Rural Livelihoods in Africa](#)'.

Sue Edwards of the Institute for Sustainable Development in Ethiopia will present the [award winning 'Tigray Project'](#) at both of these African focused events as livelihoods based model for replicating throughout Africa. The hot off the press '[Nairobi Declaration for an Ecological Organic Alternative for Africa](#)' which was a major outcome of the [IFOAM lead conference held in Kenya in November \(15 & 16\)](#) will be a major advocacy tool used in Durban by IFOAM to encourage the uptake of OA practices across the continent.

The Dec 3rd meeting will be [webcast live by IFOAM](#) and will also include a dialogue session with panelists after the event.

In terms of the negotiations some of the big issues to be negotiated in Durban are the establishment of the Green Climate Fund and how to impose emissions reduction targets once the Kyoto Protocol expires at the end of 2012. Two hot topics relating to agriculture are the proposed Agriculture Working Group and Soil Carbon Trading. The Agriculture Working Group is of significance as it could get the green light in Durban.

IFOAM will be lobbying for ecosystem-based and people centered approaches to agriculture that put the needs of local people, the rural poor, smallholders and pastoralists ahead of those of commodity traders - including carbon. Such advocacy will be targeted broadly at Parties and Observers and will be informed by the member's motion on the 'Exclusion of Agriculture From Carbon Trading Mechanisms in Speculative Markets' that was adopted at the IFOAM General Assembly in Korea in October.

Rio+20 and the Green Economy - UNCSD

The [Rio+20 Earth Summit](#) is a once in a generation opportunity to holistically address the development path that planet earth is currently on. The UNCSD Secretariat has received over 600 submissions from organizations and individuals from around the world – [including from IFOAM](#). The submissions will be reviewed and used in the preparation of a ‘Zero-Draft’ negotiating document for the Summit. The drafting of the submission was an opportunity to bring together in one document many of the key issues that IFOAM is currently advocating for. IFOAM is working closely with Biovision including co-hosting and presenting at several Rio+20 side events at UNCSD meetings in [Geneva](#), Switzerland and in [New York City](#), USA in December as part of the [Rio+20 preparatory process](#) and is helping them broadly promote their [Time To Act](#) submission to UNCSD.

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