EUROPE NEEDS MORE FARMERS

CLIMATE CHANGE IS THE ISSUE, MORE FARMERS ARE THE SOLUTION

THE PROBLEM

CLIMATE CHANGE AND INDUSTRIAL FARMING

European agricultural policies like the CAP favour industrial farming practices which are harmful for biodiversity because they use pesticides and impoverish long-lasting soil quality through monocultures. For the climate, these industrial practices are devastating as they emit large amounts of the greenhouse gases mainly responsible for climate change (especially carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide). Industrial practices also lower the capacity of the ecosystem to act as a sink and absorb emissions, which is crucial to tackling climate change. These industrial models rely heavily on import-export of agricultural products, fuelled by free trade agreements negotiated by the EU. The agreements themselves further contribute to climate change, among other things because of transport emissions and because they incentivise countries to exploit natural resources and destroy ecosystems to produce agricultural products for export.

COMPENSATION MECHANISMS = FAKE SOLUTION

Instead of reducing CO_2 emissions, the European Union policies support compensation mechanisms: large-scale polluters can offset emissions by buying carbon sinks, such as trees being planted. This is not working. After years of existence, global carbon market initiatives have not provided significant results in the reduction of emissions. Instead, they have led mainly to the impoverishment, displacement, or disruption of the lives of indigenous people and local communities on their land.

We simply do not have the means to store greenhouse gas emissions in a time frame that is relevant to the climate crisis. Although this is now common knowledge, many large corporations continue to pledge 'net-zero strategies' and 'nature-based solutions' which largely consist of carbon offsetting mechanisms. This is active greenwashing and part of their continuous attempt to pursue increased profit... and to be able to continue emitting greenhouse gases instead of stopping them.

ECHOING CHALLENGES Droughts, floods, hail, disruption of biological cycles, increased health risks, crop losses and new pests are just some of the consequences of climate change. Farmers are the ones facing climate change daily. However, they also have the experience and the best local and territorial knowledge to adapt, often transmitted over generations, as proven during the coronavirus pandemic. They have the capacity to reverse the climate trend!

WHO IS CAUSING CLIMATE CHANGE?

ONE-THIRD OF GLOBAL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS CAUSED BY HUMAN ACTIVITY

CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO THE WAY WE PRODUCE, PROCESS AND PACKAGE FOOD. TRANSPORT, PROCESSING, AND PACKAGING ARE ALL ARE REDUCED BY LOCAL, SHORT FOOD CHAINS.

30 = 75 ?
30 = 80 ?
30 = 90 ?

THE AGRO-INDUSTRIAL FOOD CHAIN ONLY PROVIDES FOR 30% OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION BUT USES 75-80% OF THE LAND, 75-80% OF AGRICULTURAL WATER, 90% OF FOSSIL FUELS IN AGRICULTURE.

EUROPE NEEDS MORE FARMERS

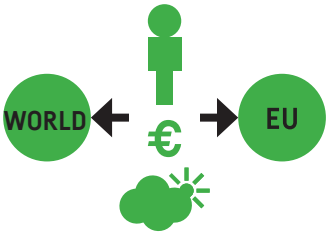
CLIMATE CHANGE IS THE ISSUE, MORE FARMERS ARE THE SOLUTION

THE SOLUTION

MORE FARMERS AND RELOCALISED PRODUCTION

Many people are not aware of the nuances of different agricultural models and systems, and don't realise that peasant agroecology and small-scale farming is a ready-made solution to climate issues. This kind of agriculture innovates to work with nature, instead of trying to outsmart it. Compared to the industrial model, it relies much more on human labour and much less on fossil fuels. It combines growing crops, livestock farming and other types of agriculture. This mixed approach supports biodiversity, provides natural fertilisers for nutrient-rich, chemical-free soil, and protects water sources and pollinators, and significantly reduces CO_2 emissions in agricultural production.

OUR DEMANDS



An urgent reduction in GHG emissions, rather than finding and implementing mechanisms to offset them. This must start by banning mega farms, responsible for large GHG emissions.

Support to multiply peasant farming and agroecology initiatives. Climate support measures should be geared towards small- and medium-scale solutions and mechanisms should be established to block any unfair support to large-scale farming.

The EU must get out of global trade agreements and regulate its regional production. Until then, any products coming from outside of EU must comply with EU social and environmental norms, and products must not be exported at a price below the average cost of production in Europe, which has a distorting effect on the international market and can harm third country producers.

! **EVERYTHING IS INTERCONNECTED!** Citizens' rights to access affordable, fresh, local, nutritious, healthy food must be a priority – but this can only happen by tackling climate change and supporting sustainable small and medium-scale farming. Find out more at https://www.eurovia.org !

! **ARTICLE 18** of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and other people working in rural areas (**UNDROP**) stands for the Right to a Clean, Safe, and Healthy Environment to use and manage.
'Peasants and other people working in rural areas have the right to contribute to the design and implementation of national and local climate change adaptation and mitigation policies, including through the use of practices and traditional knowledge.'

TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE THROUGH FARMING

ACCORDING TO STUDY HYPOTHESES, ABANDONING SYNTHETIC PESTICIDES AND FERTILIZERS, TRANSITIONING AGROECOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURES AND ADOPTION OF HEALTHY DIETS COULD REDUCE GHG EMISSIONS BY 40% BETWEEN 2010-2050

SOURCES:

Crippa, M., Solazzo, E., Guizzardi, D. et al. , 'Food systems are responsible for a third of global anthropogenic GHG emissions', Nat Food 2, 198–209, 2021 / ETC Group, 'Who will feed us?', 2017 / IDDRI, 'Agroecology and carbon neutrality in Europe by 2050: what are the issues?', 2019