

*On this International Day of Biodiversity, which celebrates agricultural biodiversity – the basis of life and livelihoods on Earth – international social movements and civil society are launching a **Call to Action on the World Food Emergency** and the underlying loss of agricultural biodiversity.*

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.

Its roots are 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 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.

Copies of the full Civil Society Statement on the World Food Emergency are available in English, French and Spanish. Social movements and civil society organisations, that are prepared actively to support this Call to Action, are invited to download and sign up to this statement at www.nyeleni.eu/foodemergency.

Jeffrey Sachs’ Shocking History

Economist Jeffrey Sachs will speak today at 6:15 in Salon Bonn. ECO presents some commentary on Sachs’ history as described by best-selling author Naomi Klein in an interview with Oscar Reyes - -- excerpted from Red Pepper Magazine.

In *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* Naomi Klein explodes the myth that the global free market triumphed democratically. Exposing the thinking, the money trail and the puppet strings behind the world-changing crises and wars of the last four decades, *The Shock Doctrine* is the gripping story of how America’s “free market” policies have come to dominate the world—through the exploitation of disaster-shocked people and countries.

(Continued on back page)



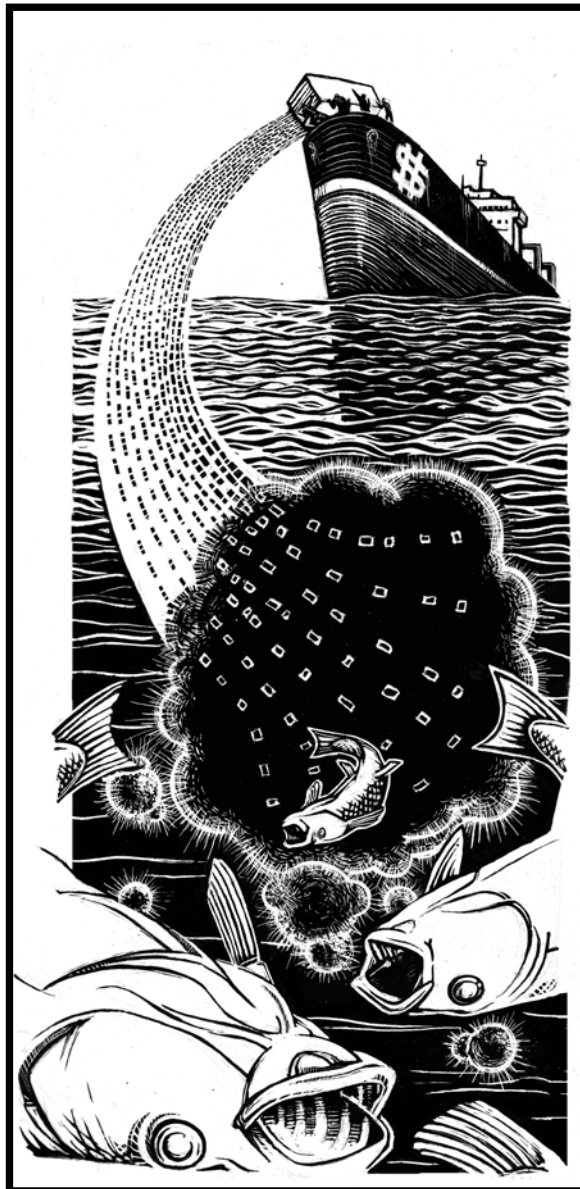
Ocean Fertilization and COP9

etc group

Spurred by new carbon trading markets and concerns about a rapidly warming world, a range of *geo-engineering* options are being proposed that aim to manipulate the Earth's atmosphere, seas and soils. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) regards such geo-engineering as "largely speculative and unproven with the risk of unknown side-effects."¹ Nonetheless, a handful of private companies are recklessly embarking on large-scale geo-engineering projects that could have damaging consequences for life on earth.

Geo-engineering schemes closest to realization relate to ocean fertilization – proposals to dump iron, nitrogen or other chemicals into seawater in order to grow blooms of phytoplankton (algae) that will act, theoretically, as biological, microscopic carbon sinks. The algae absorb carbon dioxide while they're alive and when they die, the theory goes, they sink and take carbon down with them. Proponents of ocean fertilization argue that this technological fix is necessary to mitigate greenhouse gases.

Close Calls: In 2007, a private company, Planktos, Inc., set sail to dump iron particles in the seas near the Galapagos Islands. An outcry of concerned scientists, civil society organizations and Ecuadorian authorities stopped the proposed dump. In November 2007 an Australian company, Ocean Nourishment Corporation, proposed to dump 500 tonnes of urea (nitrogen) into the Sulu Sea near the Philippines for an ocean fertilization experiment. Due to opposition from over 500 groups in the Philippines, the



experiment was stopped by the Philippines government.

What can Parties do? Despite almost two decades of research into ocean fertilization, scientific evidence in support of it is virtually non-existent. At the same time, there are substantial concerns surrounding possible negative impacts on the integrity of plankton communities and on the ecosystems – and livelihoods – that depend on them. At SBSTTA 13 in Rome (February 2008), several parties recommended that the CBD adopt a moratorium on ocean fertilization. A moratorium prohibiting *in situ* ocean carbon-sequestration experiments (that is, in the open ocean) is warranted. Parties should prohibit the granting of carbon-offset credits for ocean carbon sequestration. While the case of ocean fertilization is

particularly urgent, all geo-engineering activities require effective oversight.

Captain Hook Awards for Biopiracy 2008

Coalition Against Biodiversity (for a full list of winners go to www.captainhookawards.org)

Biopiracy refers to the monopolization (usually through intellectual property) of genetic resources and traditional knowledge or culture taken from peoples or farming communities that developed and nurtured those resources.

Most Egregious Climate Change Profiteering:

The Gene Giants (especially BASF, Monsanto, Syngenta and DuPont) - For stockpiling hundreds of monopoly patents on "climate-ready" genes in plants that the companies claim will genetically fortify crops to withstand changing climatic conditions – including drought, high-heat, cold, floods, saline soils, and more. And for insisting that industry's genetically modified crops are the essential techno-solution to address climate chaos created by the world's richest countries.

Most Hubris:

Synthetic Genomics, Inc. - For racing to create and patent a new species constructed from synthetic DNA. The company intends to insert its man-made bacterial genome – dubbed "Synthia" – into a living cell so that it survives and replicates. When asked if they are playing God, Synthetic Genomics CEO Craig Venter and Co-Chief Scientific Officer Hamilton Smith answered, "We don't play."

Best Smokescreen:

Public Research and Regulation Initiative - For tirelessly advocating and defending corporate biotech interests under the banner of publicly funded researchers. PRRI embraces the benefits of Terminator and GE trees, for example – and how does that benefit the public interest?

¹ IPCC, 2007: Summary for Policymakers. In: Climate Change 2007: Mitigation. Contribution of Working Group III to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [B. Metz, O.R. Davidson, P.R. Bosch, R. Dave, L.A. Meyer (eds.)], United Kingdom and USA: Cambridge University Press.

High Hopes for High Seas

Christian Neumann - WWF

With dwindling fish stocks near shores, the fishing industry is increasingly looking for new grounds in unexplored, ever deeper waters. In up to 2000 meters depth, sensitive habitats such as cold-water corals, seamount communities and sponge reefs are threatened not only by bottom trawls but also increased levels of shipping, bioprospecting, infrastructure development and other activities.

While the international community is investigating measures for protecting sensitive marine areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, scientists

have developed, and the CBD is looking to agree upon criteria for identifying areas in need of protection. In three workshops, some of the most knowledgeable experts in the field, from all regions of the planet developed criteria for the selection of the sites, and also to guide Parties in the creation of MPA networks. Although the process has not taken on board indigenous and local communities' knowledge and experience, the criteria were based on work that can be traced back to 1991 and has already been applied. Parties

have uttered no scientific criticism of the criteria.

Some parties made us believe that the real problem was that they did not have enough time to consider the reports! As such they prefer delaying consideration of them to COP 10. And that would be just in time to identify the sites, designate them, draw up management plans, implement, monitor, enforce them, check for network criteria, fill gaps...all before the 2012 deadline! We sincerely hope Parties will have spent their time wisely in the meantime.

Nature is more than carbon

Roman Paul Czebiniak and Christoph Thies - Greenpeace International

The world's biodiversity and climatic systems are strongly connected. Ongoing climate change already leads to massive losses of life and the ongoing destruction of forests and other biodiverse ecosystems leads to enormous releases of greenhouse gases (GHGs) driving further climate change. Tropical deforestation alone releases about one fifth of global GHG emissions – *more than all the world's cars, planes and ships combined.*

Conversely the conservation of forests and other ecosystems not only helps to reduce biodiversity loss, but also helps to slow down climate change and to reduce its impacts by facilitating the migration of plant and animal species. Reducing overall GHG emissions from the energy and forest sectors reduces threats to biodiversity.

Countries at this conference must thus start negotiating a plan for how the CBD can work with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to reduce emissions from Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) in general and for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) in particular.

The destruction of tropical forests is the most pressing problem, causing biodiversity loss, undermining the rights of their guardians, forest peoples, and driving climate change through massive GHG releases to the

atmosphere. Achieving Zero Deforestation by 2015 is key to stay below a 2 degree increase in global temperature – a projected breaking point for the climatic system and an important goal of the UNFCCC process. It is also key to safeguarding forest biodiversity and threats to the livelihoods of indigenous and other local communities, goals at the heart of the CBD agenda.

Jointly achieving the conservation of tropical forests in particular and of other ecosystems must be key goals of both the UNFCCC and CBD. Together they must ensure GHG emissions are being stopped while at the same time biodiversity losses are prevented and community benefits including food security are achieved. Greenpeace has

developed a proposal called *Forests for Climate* (at: www.greenpeace.org/forestsforclimate) accounting for how forest and climate protection can be integrated.

Greenpeace will hold a side event where *Forests for Climate* will be introduced today May 22nd at 18.15, Stresemann S26.

Timely communication and coordination between the UNFCCC and CBD should be carried out with an aim of ensuring that any future REDD mechanism explicitly advances the objectives of both Conventions and *fully respects the rights of indigenous peoples.*

The 9th Conference of Parties in its High Level Ministerial Segment must make a Call for Interaction between CBD and UNFCCC, call for the immediate establishment of a High Level Task Force serving both Conventions in this respect, particularly on REDD, as well as for a new Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Biodiversity and Climate Change to provide ongoing advice on all related issues into the future.

The Copenhagen UNFCCC COP/MOP deciding on a new global climate deal including forests is a mere 18 months away. This is a test of Parties to this Convention. *The World will be watching to see whether you pass... or fail.*



Notes from the COP

Brazil getting rattled by agrofuel concerns

Camila Moreno - Terra de Direitos, Brazil

Interesting news was released yesterday shedding light on Brazil's virulent opposition against applying the "precautionary approach" to biofuels.

Below are excerpts from the Financial Times May 21, 2008, 'Poor practices taint Brazil's ethanol industry', By John Rumsey and Jonathan Wheatley. [Commentary in brackets].

"The criticism [poor labour and environmental practices] and the €0.19 (\$0.29, £0.15) per litre tariffs which the EU imposes on Brazilian ethanol, is damaging for an industry which Brazil hopes to promote as a green alternative to fossil fuels. Stavros Dimas, EU environmental commissioner, said recently that planned EU biofuel quotas should be subservient to "environmental and social concerns", prompting threats from the Brazilian foreign ministry to appeal on the issue to the World Trade Organisation.

But the [Brazilian] government has signalled a willingness to negotiate with the EU, and partly in response to the criticism São Paulo state – which accounts for close to 80 per cent of national production – is legislating to improve conditions and eliminate manual cutting over the next four years. Mechanisation, however, is not welcomed by most of the 300,000 cane-field workers, for whom it spells limited negotiating power for salary rises now and the prospect of unemployment soon. Salaries for labourers have stagnated in recent years and workers receive just 2.8 reais (75p, \$1.46, 94 cents) per square metre of cane cut, earning typically less than 30 reais per day in this middle-income country.

Higher production targets have transformed the labour force. Twenty years ago, there was a balance between men and women

and young and old. These days, most workers are not fit to continue past the age of 35 and women have all but disappeared....A Brazilian foreign ministry official also warned earlier this month that the government would consider WTO action if the US enacts a farm bill continuing tariffs of \$0.54 (€0.34, £0.27) a gallon on ethanol imports and keeping tax credits to US ethanol blenders at a slightly reduced rate of \$0.45 a gallon. That bill is now almost certain to become law after passing both houses of Congress with overwhelming majorities." [Clearly COP9 is dealing with issues of serious import for current geo-politics, and for generations to come].

Marine Protected Areas + Fishworkers

The International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) has just released a set of information resources on marine protected areas (MPAs) that focus on issues ranging from the link between fisheries-based livelihoods and biodiversity to community participation in the MPA process, the social costs and benefits of MPAs, and the most appropriate way forward for livelihood-sensitive conservation. See www.icsf.net

Klein on Sachs, from p 1.

Q: You mention the shift from shock therapy to shock-and-awe, but there are also attempts to soften the image of neoliberalism. Jeffrey Sachs, the economist who pioneered shock therapy, wrote his latest book on The End of Poverty. Is there any more to this than a rebranding exercise?

Naomi Klein: A lot of people are under the impression Jeffrey Sachs has renounced his past as a shock therapist (radical free market reforms in Poland, Bolivia etc...) and is doing penance now. But if you read *The End of Poverty* more closely he continues to defend these policies, but

simply says there should be a greater cushion for the people at the bottom.

The real legacy of neoliberalism -- a powerful policy paradigm insistent on a minimal role for the state in the economy -- is the story of the income gap. It destroyed the tools that narrowed the gap between rich and poor. The very people who opened up this violent divide might now be saying that we have to do something for the people at the very bottom, but they still have nothing to say for the people in the middle who've lost everything.

This is really just a charity model. Jeffrey Sachs says he defines poverty as those whose lives are at risk, the people living on a dollar a day, the same people discussed in the Millennium Development Goals. Of course that needs to be addressed, but let us be clear that we're talking here about *noblesse oblige*, that's all.

Q: What opportunities for hope do you see in today's world?

Naomi Klein: Looking back...the dream that has come up again and again is this idea of cooperatives. The idea of co-operatives did not fail - it was never tried. Solidarity never got a chance to enact its real economic programme in Poland before those dreams were betrayed with shock therapy (courtesy of economists like Jeffrey Sachs). In Russia there was a very clear choice not to democratically remake the economy, despite the fact that 67 per cent of Russians stated that their preferred means of privatising state companies was to hand them over to the workers as workers' cooperatives.

I find it tremendously hopeful to realise that these ideas that we have been told are impractical did not fail. Pulling these lost worlds out of the narrative of our last 35 years shows that what the vast majority of people wanted in South Africa, Poland, Russia and China did not fail, but was crushed. It was crushed by military tanks and crushed by think tanks.

ECO is published by the civil society community at many International Environmental Convention negotiations. It is currently being published at the ninth Conference of the Parties (COP-9) to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Bonn, Germany coordinated by the CBD Alliance. The opinions, commentaries, and articles printed in ECO are the sole opinion of the individual authors or organisations, unless otherwise expressed. **SUBMISSIONS:** Welcome from all civil society groups. Email to jkrowe@ucsc.edu and jdempsey@interchange.ubc.ca ECO thanks Project "COP 9 preparation" supported by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation with funds of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Swedbio, and Hivos-Oxfam Novib Biodiversity Fund.



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