

OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENT CORREA ON THE AGROFORESTRY PLAN

The indigenous people, peasant and afrodescendent organizations which met in Quito-Ecuador on 24th May 2007, to analyse the Agronomic and Forestry Plan of the Government of Rafael Correa, express:

We know that it is a priority of your government to work for the benefit of the populations that traditionally they have been excluded, like we are the native people, afro- descendents and peasants of this country, and we have put our hope in you, because until now, the State has traditionally benefited only to the large landlords, to the big producers, to the agrobusiness sector, in detriment of the rural economy.

However, we have seen that the program of the present Minister of Agriculture continues in the same line, "the country is still in the hands of few". The Plan do privileges the agrobusiness sector, promotes the monocultures and intends to deepen a technological package that causes damages to the natural resources, to the soil, al water, to the biodiversity and deepens the rural inequalities and the processes of impoverishment of the peasantry. The production of monocultures is promoted for agrofuels without taking into account the demands of food sovereignty and defence of the collective rights of the Indigenous peoples and afro descendent communities.

Furthermore, the Plan promotes an anti ecological reforestation based on monocultures, without prior studies on the impact that the plan will have on the rural life. The Plan focus, as the only strategy, on a type of forest plantations directed to the big industry and the external market.

The peasant, rural, afrodescendents and indigenous people organizations of Ecuador who attended the above mentioned meeting, demand President Rafael Correa to ask the Minister of Agriculture to act in accordance with your proposal of refund the country in benefit of the poorest population.

Our demands are:

1. An Integral Agrarian Reform that eliminate the land concentration and guaranties access to the productive resources with justice, to the small farmers
2. The protection and promotion of the national food and agriculture production, with sustainable productive programs in the hands of the rural communities
3. The defence of biodiversity, genetic resources, traditional knowledge, in contrast with the promotion of forest and agricultural monocultures specially for agrofuels and other cash products, the introduction of GM seeds and the technological packages.
4. The development of rural policies that respect the diversity of the indigenous peoples, the peasants and rural communities that promotes interculturality; and that recognises the contribution of women in the sovereign productive processes
5. To work in a participatory agrarian and forestry policy, with the inclusion of indigenous peoples, the peasants and rural communities, afrodescendent and rural women, using a methodology that respect our traditional practices and that ensure the local control of our resources
6. Prioritise local and national food sovereignty, in which the land and the water are used to satisfy the food needs of the population, an not any extractive activity (mining, oil and timber). The water have to be used for the human consumption and not for

hydroelectric dams.

7. The resources of the State should be use to meet the previous demands and not for the promotion of agrobusiness, and agrofuels, We reject any mechanisms that promotes the land market.

Signatures:

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