



WORLD FORUM ON ACCESS TO LAND

**WFAL 2016**

Valencia, Spain  
March 31st- April 2nd

## WORLD FORUM ON ACCESS TO LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES (WFAL 2016)

10 years after the World Forum on Agrarian Reform (WFAR) and the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD)

### Antecedents

It has long been recognized that providing vulnerable rural populations with access to land improves their quality of life and contributes to global food security. This conclusion was reached in 1979, during the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (organized by the FAO), which recommended distributing land to landless rural populations and farmers who do not have enough land to make a decent living from their work. In 1996, the World Food Summit (also convened by the FAO in Rome) noted that the problem of hunger was far from being resolved and committed to cutting world hunger in half by 2015. Six years later, at a 2002 summit, they concluded that this goal was unreachable. A 2004 FAO report on food insecurity demonstrated that global hunger was growing.

It was in this context that the Center for Rural Studies and International Agriculture (CERAI), in collaboration with a large number of civil society organizations, coordinated the World Forum on Agrarian Reform (WFAR) in Valencia, Spain, in 2004. The forum brought together 500 delegates representing more than 200 organizations from 72 countries and five continents. It provided participants with the opportunity to discuss the extent to which limited land access – and, more generally, the marginalization of rural populations – was contributing to poverty, rural exodus, and migration. They reached the conclusion that food sovereignty would not be achieved until rural populations had access to land and natural resources- and that recognizing farmers' rights was a necessary first step towards achieving both of these goals.

Two years later, the FAO and the Government of Brazil organized the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD) in Porto Alegre (Brazil). Governmental representatives from countries participating to ICARRD reaffirmed that food insecurity, hunger, and rural poverty are mainly caused by limited access to productive resources, which affects the majority of the world's farmers. They concluded that family agriculture in general - and traditional rural communities and indigenous groups in particular - can effectively promote global food security and sustainable development if existing development policies are modified to support vulnerable populations by reinforcing their collective and individual rights.

## Ten years after the WFAR (2004) and the ICARRD (2006) Disappointing results

Worldwide trends in land and natural resource access have become increasingly out of step with the recommendations of the WFAR and the ICCARD over the last ten years, even before large scale land acquisitions/leases became as prevalent as they are today. Questions about the social and political consequences of large-scale investment projects, and the impacts that they will have on the environment and on food security, are being raised more and more frequently by a variety of different stakeholders. It is widely recognized that large scale land transactions – in particular the lack of transparency surrounding them, and the fact that they are frequently at odds with local land and water access norms - result in farmer evictions. Furthermore, these projects often export staple agricultural products from countries suffering from food insecurity, in many cases replacing existing food crops with biofuels. Finally, in most cases they promote production systems that favor monoculture and rely heavily on fossil fuels, industrial inputs, and transgenic seeds that may cause soil and water pollution and reduce biodiversity.

The world population has continued to grow in recent years, and many agricultural transformations have taken place. Farmers have become increasingly impoverished, and millions of people are currently being pushed out of agricultural sector. These dynamics reflect a lack of investment in rural areas, which has led many agricultural regions into deep crisis. Current trends are depriving millions of farmers of adequate access to land, irrigation water, and other means of production. The exclusion and marginalization of such a large part of the world population will ultimately lead to major imbalances. Farmers do not have guaranteed access to land and water, fishing areas and forests, and large agro-industrial projects are developing. This means that more and more frequently, entire communities are being evicted from the areas where they live and work. Moreover, the poorest rural areas happen to harbor the largest percentage of malnourished people. In its 2013 report entitled “The State of Food Insecurity in the World,” the FAO counts 842 million malnourished people – two thirds of whom live in rural areas.

The United Nations has declared 2014 the “International Year of Family Farming” (IYFF). In doing so, they are hoping to influence agricultural policies and investment practices by drawing attention to a variety of family farming models, and their unique capacity to increase food production while preserving ecosystems, creating employment, and reducing poverty. Given the seriousness of the threats facing family farmers today, the implications and relevance of this initiative cannot be underestimated. Moreover, numerous events addressing similar topics have been planned in recent years. Dialogue about a variety of related topics – in particular, about the right to land and to natural resources – is bringing together a variety of stakeholders including national governments, civil society organizations, and multilateral entities. The Committee on World Food Security planned one of the most significant recent initiatives, involving national governments, international institutions, and civil society organizations. After two years of negotiations, the CFS adopted the “Voluntary Guidelines for Responsible Governance of land tenure regimes applicable to Land, fisheries and forests in the Context of national Food Security” in 2012. These guidelines reflect the widely held belief that promoting responsible land governance is the most effective way to prevent land grabbing. The Farmers’ Forum of 2014 implored national governments to implement the decisions of the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD, 2006) and the CFS.

# CALL

Ten years after the World Forum on Agrarian Reform WFAR (Valencia, 2004) and the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development ICCARD (Porto Alegre, 2006), the signatories of this document are calling for an open discussion – which would build upon discussions begun during the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) - to deepen our understanding of the current context. It is a context in which hunger, demographic growth, exclusion, massive unemployment, environmental crisis, and crumbling food sovereignty are rampant; and in which widespread land acquisitions, leases, and concessions invite us to revisit fundamental questions of land and natural resource access. While large-scale investment projects are often profitable, they are not necessarily economically efficient - nor do they protect the interests of affected communities, or those of future generations. Do large-scale agricultural enterprises that rely on salaried labor to produce a limited number of commodities with large amounts of synthetic and/or fossil fuel inputs significantly increase yields and create wealth? Do they create enough jobs and income for the hundreds of millions of individuals who are entirely excluded from the system, as well as the people (equal or superior in number) who are actively searching for work? Can the coming agricultural revolution successfully feed nine billion people, provide employment for a large portion of the world population, and eradicate world hunger by replacing labor with capital? How can we guarantee that the principles laid out in the “Voluntary Guidelines” become a reality by reinforcing community rights and promoting sustainable development?

We believe that the question of human rights and common goods should be reintroduced into international discussions about land and natural resource access and use. Natural resources are being appropriated at unprecedented rates throughout the world. Whatever forms this appropriation takes, the end goal is the same – to commodify and market them in the name of “growth” and “well being” on a global scale. This approach ignores the historical, ecological, social, cultural, and political dimensions of current trends and minimizes their immediate and long-term impacts. We believe that the current context must be viewed through the lens of human rights – and that these should be expanded to include the right to equitably access land, water and natural resources; as well as the right to employ production systems in accordance with one’s ecological, economical, cultural and technical choices, as long as these do not undermine the common interest.

We are asking civil society organizations and governmental institutions to mobilize in favor of a world forum dedicated to land and natural resource access. Everyone must be given the opportunity to share his or her viewpoints about the problems caused by current evolutions, and to develop solutions for the future. We are calling for the organization of a forum that will allow us to do so.



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# FIRST SIGNATORIES OF THE CALL

## Farmer and civil society organisations

### **ACTION AID INTERNATIONAL**

**ACTUAR**, Association for Cooperation and Development (Associação para a Cooperação e o Desenvolvimento), Portugal

**AFA**, Asian Farmers' Association for sustainable rural development

**AGTER**, Association to contribute to improve the Governance of Land, Water and Natural Resources (Association pour l'Amélioration de la Gouvernance de la Terre, de l'Eau et des Ressources Naturelles), France

**ANEC**, National Association of Rural Commercialization Enterprises (Asociación Nacional de Empresas Comercializadoras de Productores del Campo), Mexico

**APMM**, World Mountain People Association (Association des Populations des Montagnes du Monde)

**CAFS**, Centre for Agroecology and Food Security, United Kingdom

**CED**, Center for Environment and Development (Centre pour l'Environnement et le Développement), Cameroon

**CEPES**, Peruvian Center for Social Studies (Centro Peruano de Estudios Sociales), Peru

**CERAI**, International Agriculture and Rural Studies Center (Centro de Estudios Rurales y de Agricultura Internacional), Spain

**CES**, Centre for Social Studies (Centro de Estudos Sociais), Portugal

**CNCPRT**, National Council for the Concertation of Rural Producers of Chad (Conseil National de Concertation des Producteurs Ruraux du Tchad)

**CONTAG**, National Federation of Agricultural Workers (Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores na Agricultura), Brazil

**COPROFAM**, Coordination of Family Farms of Mercosur (Coordinadora de Organizaciones de productores Familiares del Mercosur)

**CSA**, Coalition for Food Sovereignty, (Coalition pour la Souveraineté Alimentaire), Quebec, Canada

**EKTA PARISHAD**, India

**FNCA**, New Water Culture Foundation (Fundacion Nueva Cultura del Agua), Spain

**FPP**, Forest Peoples Programme, United Kingdom

### **GLOBAL WITNESS**

**IFOAM**, International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements

**MVIWATA**, The Network of Farmers Groups in Tanzania (Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima)

### **OXFAM**

**PENHA**, the Pastoral and Environmental Network in the Horn of Africa

**PHANO**, Vietnam Association of Rural Development Science

**OPSA**, Political and Social Observatory of Angola (Observatório Político e Social de Angola)

**PROPAC**, Sub-Regional Platform of Peasant Organizations of Central Africa (Plateforme Régionale des Organisations Paysannes d'Afrique Centrale)

**ROPPA**, The Network of Farmers and Agricultural Producers Organisations of West Africa (Réseau des organisations paysannes et de producteurs agricoles de l'Afrique de l'Ouest)

### **SLOW FOOD**

**SOCLA**, Latin American Scientific Society for Agroecology (Sociedad Científica Latinoamericana de Agroecología)

**WFF**, World Forum of Fish harvesters and Fish workers

## Governemental and international organisations

**FAO**, Food and Agriculture Organisation

**Ministry of Agrarian Development** (Ministério do Desenvolvimento Agrário, MDA), Federative Republic of Brazil

**Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Equipment** (Ministère de l'Agriculture et de l'équipement rural), Republic of Senegal

**Department of Agrarian Reform**, Republic of the Philippines

## People

**ABIS Sébastien** (Administrator of the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies, CIHEAM, France)

**ADAMS Martin** (Mokoro, United Kingdom)

**AGUILERA KLINK Federico** (Professor, University of San Fernando de La Laguna, Spain)

**AKESBI Najib** (Professor, Agronomics and Veterinary Institute of Rabat, Morocco)

**ALTIERI Miguel** (Professor, University of Berkeley, California, United States of America)

**AMIN Samir** (World Forum for Alternatives, Egypt-France)

**ARBENZ Markus** (Director of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements, IFOAM, Switzerland)

**ARNALTE Eladio** (Professor, Polytechnic University of Valencia, Spain)

**ARROJO Pedro** (Professor Emeritus, Economical Analysis Department, University of Zaragoza, Spain)

**BOVÉ José** (Member of the European Parliament, France)

**CHONCHOL Jacques** (Former Chile's Minister of Agriculture, Salvador Allende's Government, Chile)

**CISSOKHO Mamadou** (Honorary President of the Network of Farmers and Agricultural Producers Organisations of West Africa, ROPPA, Senegal)

**COCHET Hubert** (Professor, AgrosParisTech, France)

**COULIBALY Ibrahima** (President of the National Coordination of Peasant Organizations of Mali, CNOP, and FAO Special Ambassador for the International Year of Family Farming 2014)

**DAO The Anh** (Research Director, Vietnam Academy of Agricultural Sciences)

**DE ALBUQUERQUE Catarina** (United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to safe drinking Water and Sanitation, Portugal)

**DE SCHUTTER Olivier** (United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food 2008 – 2014, Belgium)

**EGUREN Fernando** (Chairman of the Peruvian Centre for Social Studies, Cepes)

**ELLOUMI Mohamed** (Researcher, National Agricultural Research Institute of Tunisia, INRAT)

**GARCÉS Vicent** (Member of the European Parliament, CERAI, Spain)

**GÓMEZ Sergio** (Rural sociologist, Chili)

**GONZÁLEZ DE MOLINA Manuel** (Professor, Pablo de Olavide University, Seville, Spain)

**HERREN Hans** (President and CEO of the Millennium Institute, President of the Biovision Foundation, United States of America)

**HOUTART François** (Professor Emeritus, Catholic University of Louvain la Neuve, Founder of the Centre Tri-continental, CETRI, Belgique)

**JAIZME María del Carmen** (Canarian Institute for Agrarian Investigations, ICIA, Spain)

**KAIMOWITZ David** (Former Chief executive of the Center for International Forestry Research, CIFOR, United States of America)

**KOOHAFKAN Parviz** (President of the World Agricultural Heritage Foundation, Iran)

**LAZOS CHAVERO Elena** (Professor, National Autonomous University of Mexico)

**LEITE Sergio Pereira** (Professor, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)

**LEIVA MONTENEGRO Cecilia** (Former Chile's Vice Minister of Agriculture)

**LOYAT Jacques** (Agronomist, associated researcher at CIRAD, France)

**MAMALO Abdoul Karim** (Former Permanent Secretary of the Rural Code of Niger)

**MAZOYER Marcel** (Emeritus Professor, AgroParisTech, France)

**MERINO Leticia** (Chair person of the International Association for the Study of the Commons, IASC)

**MERLET Michel** (General Director of AGTER, France)

**MUSSE AHMED Sadia** (Pastoral and Environmental Network in the Horn of Africa, PENHA, Somaliland/Somalia)

**NGUIFFO Samuel** (General Secretary of the Center for the Environment and for Development, Cameroon)

**NICHOLLS Clara** (Professor, University of Antioquia, Colombia)

**OH Hyunseok** (President of Terrami Rural Development Institute, South Korea)

**OLIVEIRA BAPTISTA Fernando** (Former Portugal's Minister of Agriculture)

**PACHECO Fernando** (Political and Social Observatory of Angola)

**PALEBELE Kolyang** (President of the National Council for the Concertation of Rural Producers of Chad, CNCPR, Vice-President of the Sub-Regional Platform of Peasant Organizations of Central Africa, PROPAC, Chad)

**PARÉ Frédéric** (Coordinator of the Food Sovereignty Coalition, Quebec, Canada)

**PIMBERT Michel** (Director of the Centre for Agroecology and Food Security, CAFS, Coventry University ; High Level Panel of Expert of the Committee for Food Security at the Food and Agriculture Organisation, United Kingdom)

**QUINTANA Victor** (Advisor to the Peasant Farmers' Democratic Front of Chihuahua, and Professor, Autonomous University of Juarez City, Mexico)

**ROUILLÉ D'ORFEUIL Henri** (Agriculture Academy of France, French coordinator of the International Year for Family Farming, France)

**SARMENTO Francisco Bendrao** (Centre for Social Studies – University of Coimbra, Portugal)

**SERRA Carlos** (Professor, Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo, Mozambique)

**SUAREZ CARRERA Victor** (Director of the National Association of Rural Commercialization Enterprises, ANEC, Mexico)

**TORREMOCHA Eva** (Member of Board, International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements, IFOAM)

**VUARIN Pierre** (Program officer, The Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation for the Progress of Humankind, France)



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## PERMANENT SECRETARIAT OF THE WFAL 2016



Association to contribute to improve the Governance of  
Land, Water and Natural Resources (AGTER)

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### TO JOIN THE CALL

Please send an e-mail to: [secretariat@landaccessforum.org](mailto:secretariat@landaccessforum.org)



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