

13.07.2007

DECLARATION FROM THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES POTENTIALLY AFFECTED BY AGROFUELS

The organizations present at the International Agro Fuel and Food Sovereignty Meeting, held in Quito from the 27th to the 29th of June 2007, want to express our concern over the political agrarian proposals made by the current government, that prioritizes the use of territory for the production of monoculture crops to generate fuel.

The mass expansion of energy crops constitutes a threat to our traditional agricultural way of living. It means the taking over of the land we use to produce our food crops and foods consumed by the rest of Ecuadorians. It also means the disappearance of the last remaining tropical forests, those that apart from being important for the conservation of life, is the place where we develop our culture and guarantee our survival as peoples.

Rural development based on agro fuels, will benefit those of the agro industry represented by the big sugar engineers, the palm grower sector who are responsible for the mass deforestation of the forests in Esmeraldas and the Amazon region, and by companies such as PRONACA, representative of Monsanto transnational, who would introduce corn seeds for the production of ethanol.

Agro fuels could provide a doorway for the entry of transgenic crops with all the impacts that this entails. It is important to highlight that until now and due to civil pressure, Ecuador is a country free of transgenic crops.

With their economic power, the agro industry businessmen would establish relationships of dependency with local farmers, indigenous groups and afro-descendants that live in the areas that have been chosen for the development of fuel crops. We would lose our food sovereignty, and become company workers. This threatens our traditional way of life.

With the aim of generating fuel crops our best lands would be used as well as our water and labour, which will mean that we will stop producing food crops that we need for self consumption and we will instead feed the vehicles of the rich. On the other hand our sources of water will be contaminated by the use of agro toxins, which will affect our health and quality of life.

The current government has in front of it two alternatives: that of backing a model of diversification and sustainable production, that will guarantee food sovereignty, and the continuity of our traditional ways of life as indigenous groups, afro-descendants and local farmers and the conservation of biodiversity or that of backing the agro industry.

We hope that the governments decision be one in favour of the people.

ANY FORM OF ENERGY PRODUCTION MAKES SENSE IF IT IS NOT AT THE SERVICE OF THE POPULATION THAT HAVE GUARANTEED THE CONTINUITY OF LIFE IN THIS COUNTRY

Quito, 29th of June 2007

Note: This declaration was read to the Minister of Energy of Ecuador