

Monkton Wylde Statement on Agroecology Knowledge Exchange

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The European Agroecology¹ Knowledge Exchange Network aims to link initiatives in Europe which participate in the exchange of peasant agroecological knowledge. This network forms part of an international process led by La Via Campesina (LVC) and coordinated in Europe by the European Coordination of La Via Campesina (ECVC). The network invites the participation of allied organisations that support the principles of agroecology and on agroecology knowledge exchange outlined below. The network focuses on practical skills sharing as well as on political training, considering both as inseparable. In so doing, it strives to strengthen the movement of peasant agroecology and food sovereignty in Europe. The following passages from the existing declarations of the peasant agroecology movement are guiding this network:

1) From the Declaration of the International Forum for Agroecology (Nyéléni, Mali, 2015)²

"The diverse knowledge and ways of knowing of our peoples are fundamental to Agroecology. We develop our ways of knowing through dialogue among them (*diálogo de saberes*). Our learning processes are horizontal and peer-to-peer, based on popular education. They take place in our own training centers and territories (farmers teach farmers, fishers teach fishers, etc.), and are also intergenerational, with exchange of knowledge between youth and elders. Agroecology is developed through our own innovation, research, and crop and livestock selection and breeding."

2) From the Declaration of the European Coordination Via Campesina for Agroecology (Evenstad, Norway, 2014)³

"Agroecology protects, shares and pools traditional peasant knowledge in its various contexts and realities. It enhances intergenerational transmission and exchanges from farmer to farmer. It fosters innovation through observation, creativity and continuous learning and provides means for overcoming new challenges."

Agroecology is more than mere food production. It is at the heart of our relationship with one another, it is a way of life and the language of nature. It is a process of social change. The network supports horizontal and intergenerational exchanges between peasants and peasants' organisations⁴, the importance of which has also been recognized by the Food

¹ The term Agroecology is understood as Peasant Agroecology as referred to in the ECVC Declaration <http://www.eurovia.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/ECVC-declaration-on-Agroecology-08-05-2014.pdf>

² Nyéléni Declaration: <http://www.foodsovereignty.org/forum-agroecology-nyeleni-2015/>

³ ECVC Declaration <http://www.eurovia.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/ECVC-declaration-on-Agroecology-08-05-2014.pdf>

⁴ Based on statements from the work group on Agroecology, second Nyéléni Europe Forum for Food Sovereignty, Romania 2016.

and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations⁵. These knowledge exchanges are able to transcend differences and help us remain open to include new ideas. We prioritize women and youth as well as collaborative work. Our network is autonomous and it is a crucial tool to strengthen our movement and to put the above values into practice.

In summary, we understand agroecology learning as an approach:

1. based on peasant knowledges and cultures;
2. in which political vision of food sovereignty informs the practical aspects of peasant farming;
3. rooted in the territories and their local communities;
4. that focuses on horizontal pedagogical methods;
5. that seeks to create a 'dialogue between ways of knowing' (*diálogo de saberes*);
6. which aims to build international peasant agroecology movement for mutual support and resourcing;
7. which works to protect peasant knowledge and know-how as a commons for all peasants.



⁵ Regional Symposium on Agroecology for Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems in Europe and Central Asia: Recommendations from the participants" (especially recommendations 25-26-32). Available at: <http://www.fao.org/europe/events/detail-events/en/c/429132/>