



Webinar : Incorporating Peasants' Rights to Seeds in European Law

Presentation of the new publication of the European Coordination Via Campesina

Wednesday 3rd November 2021 – 10 AM (Brussels time)

On the occasion of the release of its new publication, [*Incorporating Peasants' Rights to Seeds in European law*](#), the European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC) is pleased to organize an online event on the implementation of peasants' fundamental rights to seeds in Europe.

These rights, legally recognized in articles 5, 6 and 9 of the *International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Agriculture and Food (ITPGRFA)*, are also enshrined since December 2018 in article 19 of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP)*, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. These two instruments formalize at the international level the collective rights of peasants to seeds, which include not only the rights to use, save, exchange, develop and sell their own seeds as part of their peasant activity, but also the rights to protect their knowledge, prior informed consent for any access to their seeds, and participate in decision making, access to plant genetic resources for agriculture and food. Besides, they also include the rights to perpetuate, control, protect and develop their seeds, their knowledge and their traditional seed systems, including their innovations, as well as the right to have access to sufficient and affordable diversified seeds adapted to the diversity of agrarian systems and territories.

Almost three years after the adoption of UNDROP, this event is an opportunity for the European peasants' movement **to take stock of the implementation of these rights in the European Union (EU), and to denounce the regulatory frameworks that hinder the respect of these rights**. Indeed, although the EU is a signatory of the ITPGRFA and therefore bound to respect farmers' rights to seeds, ECVC can only underline the primacy within the EU of intellectual property rights over peasants' fundamental rights to seeds, notably through the application of the UPOV 91 Convention system which criminalizes peasants' seed systems, as well as through the economic model of seed patents which poses a serious threat to peasants' rights to seeds.

In line with the recommendations made in the publication, this event aims to express **ECVC's demands for a coherent European regulatory framework implementing peasants' rights to seeds**, including concrete proposals for the establishment of a separate regulatory framework for peasants' seed systems. On this occasion, different representatives of ECVC member organizations will present testimonies about their practical experiences with peasants' seed systems in their respective countries, and the legislative obstacles encountered in national legislation.

The current revision of the EU seed marketing legislation is an opportunity for the EU to implement peasants' rights to seeds and finally provide a formal framework for peasants' seed systems, which are absolutely essential for the maintenance of seed diversity. In the context of the **European Commission's study on "new genomic techniques"**, it is crucial that peasants' rights to seeds are not forgotten in favor of the biotech industries. The Commission's proposals to deregulate European GMO legislation, which are highly beneficial to the seed patent business model, go against peasants' collective rights to seeds.

In this context, peasants' rights to seeds must be placed at the forefront of this debate. The implementation of these rights is even more necessary , and urgent, as **only peasant agroecology, supported by peasant seed systems, can help the EU to meet the objectives of its "European Green Deal"** and to face the unprecedented upheavals for the agricultural world, such as climate change and the loss of biodiversity, including seed biodiversity.

Programme:

Introduction- Alessandra Turco, ECVC Coordinating Committee

Presentation of the publication Incorporating Peasants' Rights to Seeds in EU Law

- Guy Kastler, member of ECVC Seeds Working Group

Testimonies: practical experiences of peasants' seed systems in different European countries

- The experience of peasant seed systems in Spain - Victorio Domínguez, member of SOC-SAT (Spain) and ECVC
- The experience of peasant seed systems in Romania – Ramona Duminicioiu, member of Eco Ruralis (Romania) and ECVC

Questions and answers

Conclusion – Antonio Onorati, member of ECVC Seeds Working Group

Interpretation will be provided in English, French and Spanish.

Registration is mandatory, [using this link.](#)

For any questions or information, please write to cloe@eurovia.org.
