



ECVC launches new publication on how to implement UNDROP across Europe

Today, ECVC launches a [new set of policy recommendations](#) for international and regional organisations, European policy-makers, and national and local authorities, in order to push for the implementation of UN Declaration of the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) and promote peasants' rights. As the European Parliament holds its first plenary sessions of the new mandate in Strasbourg, ECVC presents new MEPs with concrete recommendations to put UNDROP and farmers' rights at the centre of the political agenda for the future of EU agriculture.

Small-scale farmers, artisanal food producers, pastoralists, fisher peoples, food and agricultural workers, landless workers, Indigenous Peoples and other people working in rural areas play a key role in our societies. Not only do they provide us with good quality food, but also help to protect the landscape and biodiversity of our territories, preserve the cultural identity of rural areas, and promote the local economy. However, peasants and other people working in rural areas all around the world suffer from systemic and structural discrimination and severe human rights violationsⁱ. Moreover, 80% of the world's extreme poor live in rural areasⁱⁱ. In Europe, small-scale farmers are disappearing mainly due to the lack of generational renewal, market pressures, low incomes, unfair prices, an unfair distribution of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) subsidies, and climate changeⁱⁱⁱ.

Against this background, two major steps to advance the protection and promotion of the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas were made, with the adoption of UNDROP in December 2018 by the UN Human Rights Council and the UN General Assembly and the creation of a Working Group of independent experts within the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in October 2023 with a mandate to push for the implementation of UNDROP.

Furthermore, implementing UNDROP as a cornerstone of EU agricultural policy is necessary part of respecting "established environmental, economic and social regulations applying to agriculture and the food system" including "the rights of peasants and the established rights of workers", as outlined by the European Commission in the recently published final report of the Strategic Dialogue.^{iv}

Therefore, ECVC addresses policy makers at the European and national level with clear policy demands and suggestions to concretely implement the obligations outlined in UNDROP.

Our key demands are:

- States and international and regional organisations should provide means (including financial means) to support the UN Working Group on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas, to ensure that the group can operate effectively during its mandate.
- The EU should ensure all EU laws and policies related to and affecting agricultural matters on which it has competence are consistent with UNDROP. In this regard, ECVC has developed specific policy proposals on how to ensure said consistency within laws and policies relating to: EU seed law, a proposal for a land directive, agricultural market policy, and CAP social conditionality^v. Special attention must also be paid to protect the rights and participation of migrant workers, women peasants and farm workers, and youth.
- While implementing international food and agriculture related policies, the EU should respect and be consistent with the international provisions of UNDROP together with other relevant treaties related to agriculture.

- In accordance with Article 10 UNDROP, ECVC, as a major European peasant farmer organisation, should be consistently consulted by all EU institutions dealing with agriculture. In particular, the Agriculture and Fisheries Council (AGRIFISH Council) should stop excluding ECVC from formal and informal meetings. Moreover, within many European Commission (EC) consultation processes or political dialogue spaces, the EU uses a multistakeholder approach that is highly problematic. Such an approach makes the debate non-democratic and unequal and is an obstacle for a just transition.
- The Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development of the EC (DG AGRI) should establish a specific sub-unit responsible for Peasants' Rights and Human Rights in agriculture.
- In the next two years, the EU should conduct an independent study to assess the level of coherence of EU laws and policies with UNDROP.
- When implementing the EU Directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence (CSDDD), EU Member States should include the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas as outlined in UNDROP among the human rights provisions that private actors should respect in their due diligence.
- States should develop National Action Plans and National Committees for Family Farming as requested within the UN Decade for Family Farming. Those plans should put the implementation of UNDROP at the national level at the centre and promote a wider concept of family farming that goes beyond cis-hetero-patriarchy, embraces chosen families, a diversity of people and ways of living and working together, as well as all kind of small and artisanal food producers.

ECVC remains available to collaborate closely with national, EU and International organisations in order to meet this aim. Read the full publication and recommendations [here](#).

Contacts

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ⁱ Human Rights Council Advisory Committee (2011), *Preliminary study on the advancement of the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas*, pp.7-8. Retrieved at: https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/AdvisoryCom/Session6/A.HRC.AC.6.CRP.2_en.pdf

ⁱⁱ UN (2023), *Extreme Poverty in Developing Countries Inextricably Linked to Global Food Insecurity Crisis, Senior Officials Tell Second Committee*, UN Meetings Coverage and Press Releases. Retrieved at: <https://press.un.org/en/2023/gaef3590.doc.htm>

ⁱⁱⁱ European Parliament (2022), *Briefing - Small farms' role in the EU food system*, pp. 1-5. Retrieved at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/733630/EPRS_BRI\(2022\)733630_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/733630/EPRS_BRI(2022)733630_EN.pdf)
European Parliament (2023), *European Parliament resolution of 19 October 2023 on generational renewal in the EU farms of the future (2022/2182(INI))*. Retrieved at: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2023-0376_EN.html#def_1_12

^{iv} https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/document/download/171329ff-0f50-4fa5-946f-aea11032172e_en?filename=strategic-dialogue-report-2024_en.pdf

^v ECVC (19 October 2021), *Incorporating Peasants' Rights to Seeds in European Law*. Retrieved at: <https://www.eurovia.org/publications/publication-incorporating-peasants-rights-to-seeds-in-european-law/>
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