

More and better quality funding for agroecology – major challenges for governments, donors and other actors

Michel Pimbert

Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience

Coventry University

UK

Making Money Move for Agroecology

A collaborative research project between:

- **CIDSE** is an international family of Catholic social justice organisations, working together to promote justice, harness the power of global solidarity and create transformational change to end poverty and inequalities.
- The **Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience** at Coventry University (UK) and its research project *Agroecology Now!* The latter focuses on the societal transformations that are necessary to enable agroecology as a model for sustainable and just food systems

Food and farming is more then ever unsustainable

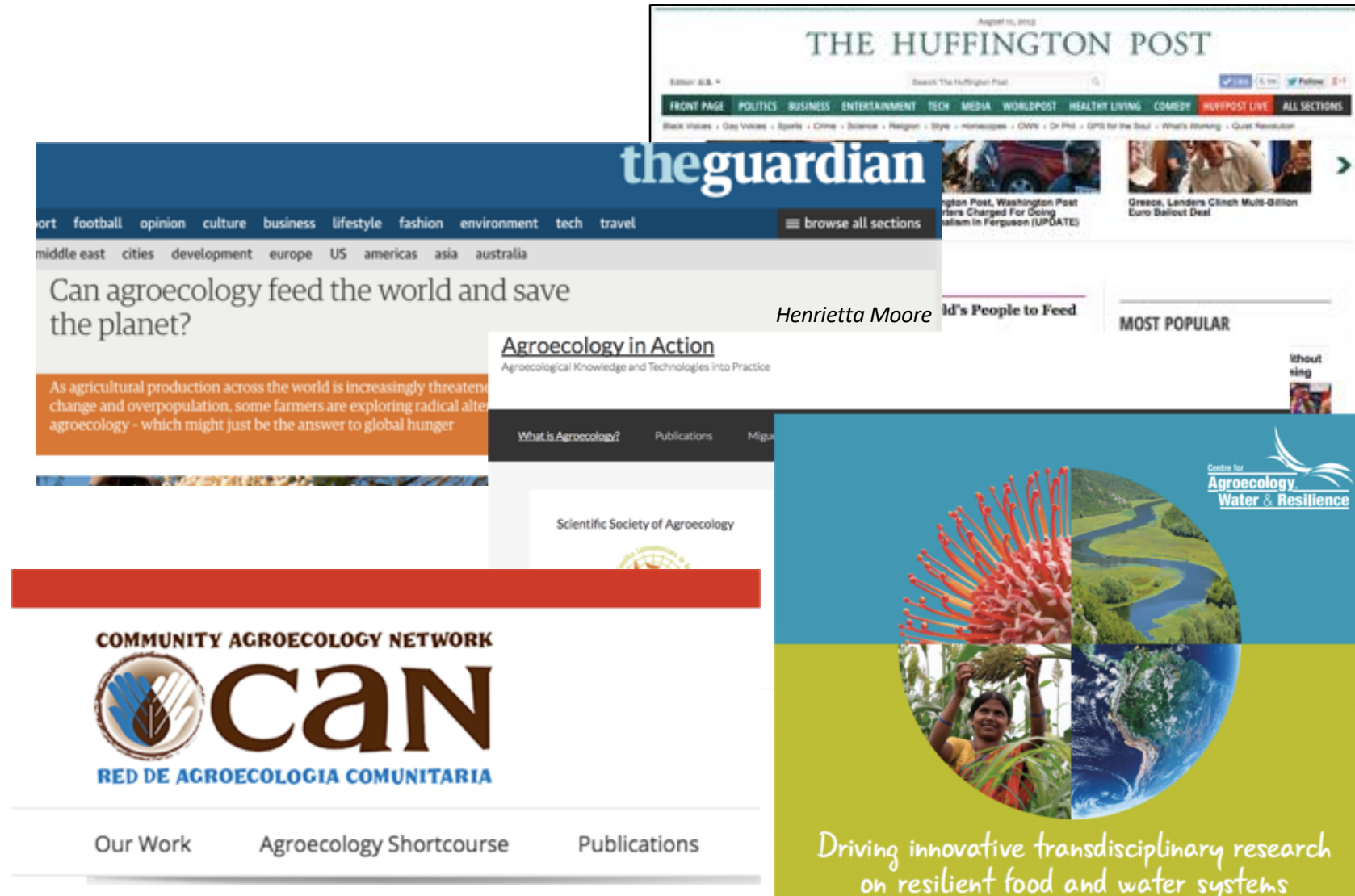
- All relevant biophysical indicators are turning negative, fast, steeply, dangerously
- The emerging context is beyond human experience
- Costs of mitigation, adaptation, remediation are rising sharply



Recent policy support for agroecology

- **IAASTD** advocates reducing vulnerability of global food system through *locally based innovations* and *agro-ecological approaches* (IAASTD, 2008).
- **SCAR = EU Standing Committee on Agricultural Research.** Highest priority should be given to 'low-input high-output systems - integrating historical knowledge and *agroecological principles* that use nature's capacity and models nature's system flows (SCAR FEG, 2011).
- **UN FAO** – after over four years of international dialogue, two international symposia and six major regional consultations, the FAO announced its *Scaling Up Agroecology Initiative* in April 2018.

The Globalization of Agroecology



11/26/13

WEB OF KNOWLEDGE

FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

FAO in the region | Regional perspectives | News

Multi-Stakeholder Consultation on Agroecology for Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems in Asia and the Pacific

24/11/2015-26/11/2015 **Bangkok, Thailand**



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

About FAO | In Action | Countries | Themes | Media | Publications | Statistics | Partnerships

Home > About FAO > Meetings > International Symposium on Agroecology for Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems in China

f t c+ in Send Print

International Symposium on Agroecology for Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems in China, 29-31 August 2016



Dakar, Senegal, 5-6 November 2015

to achieve food security

- Multi-Stakeholder Consultation on Agroecology for Asia and the Pacific
- Regional Seminar on Agroecology in Latin America and the Caribbean

Media Coverage

- Press Release
- Video message by FAO Director General José Graziano Da Silva
- <http://www.slideshare.net/FAOoftheUN/tag/agroecology> (documents and presentations)



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

Google Custom Search

About FAO | In Action | Countries | Themes | Media | Publications | Statistics | Partnerships

English Русский

FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia

FAO in Europe and Central Asia | Regional perspectives | News | Events | Resources | Programmes and projects | Partners

Regional Symposium on Agroecology for Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems in Europe and Central Asia

Budapest, Hungary, 23/11/2016 - 25/11/2016



Background

In September 2014 the International symposium on agroecology for food security and nutrition was held in FAO HQ, Rome. This has been followed in 2015 by three regional meetings in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa and Asia and the Pacific.

In order to continue to develop this regional approach, from 23-25 November 2016 the regional symposium on 'agroecology for sustainable agriculture and food systems in Europe and Central Asia' was held. It started

Webcast videos

- Part 1
- Part 2
- Part 3
- Part 4

Participant Handbook

Links

- FAO-led symposium on agroecology opens in Budapest
- Photos from the event
- International Symposium on

sh Français Русский Español

Statistics

Partnerships

f t c+ in Send Print

FAO International

om Search

Statistics | Partnerships

English Français

Google Custom Search

Themes | Media | Publications | Statistics | Partnerships

English Français Português Español

Caribbean

o Programmes and projects | Partners



Final Document

Final Document

- Final Recommendations of the Regional Seminar on Agroecology in Latin America

Funding for agroecology research and development (R&D) – a paradox

- Despite shifts in policy discourse, overwhelming evidence that agroecology R&D receives very little or no funding
 - USA - projects with an emphasis of agroecology based on agroecosystem diversification represent **only 0.6 to 1.5% of the entire USDA Research, Extension and Economics budget**
 - cf. CIDSE and CAWR as well as Biovision and IPES-Food studies of funding for agroecology
- Growing calls for governments and donor community to reallocate funds and increase financial support for agroecology in national programs as well as in overseas aid



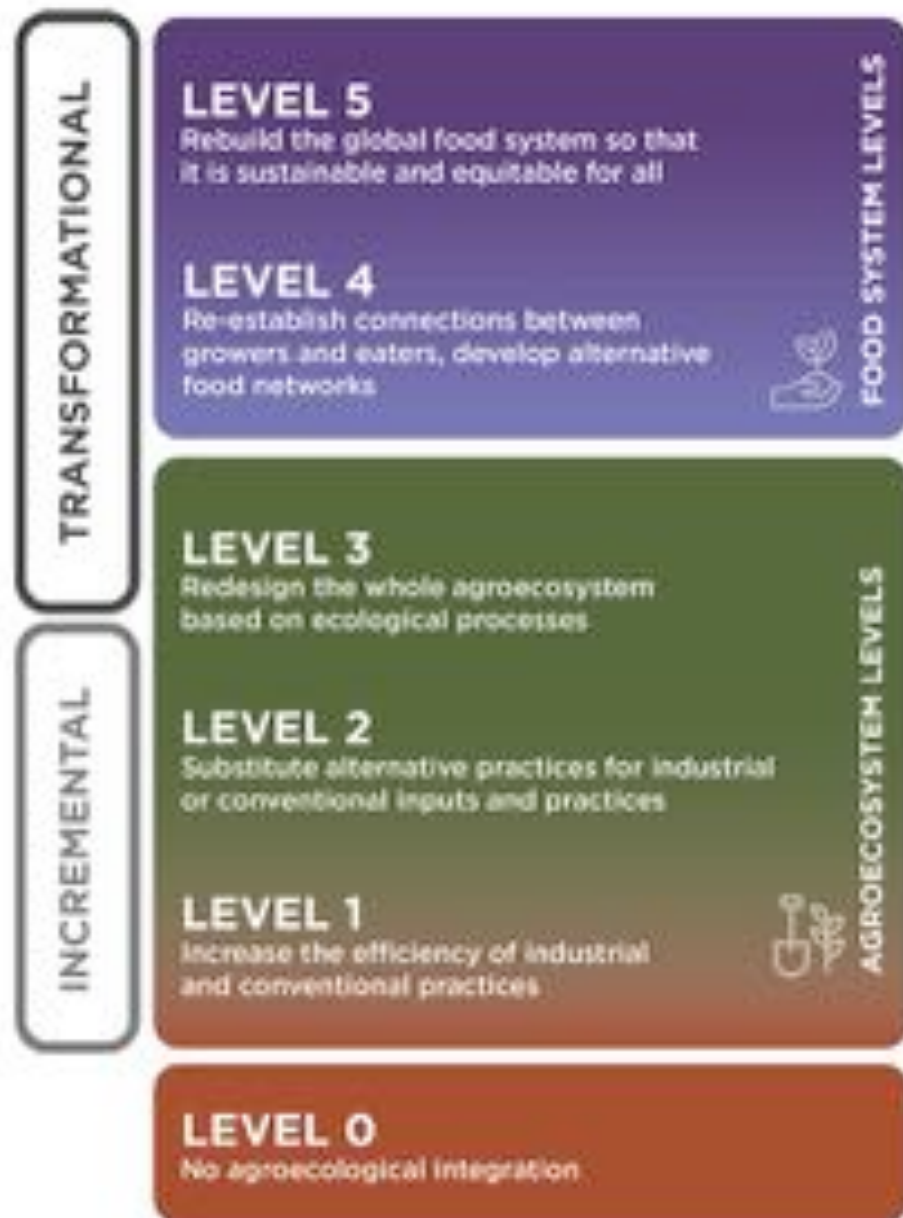
More funds for *what kind* of Agroecology?

Dominant agri-food model

- Agroecology as part of Sustainable Intensification and Climate Smart Agriculture (e.g. co-existence with GMOs)
- Emphasis on science
- Conforms to productivist model and 'business as usual' – incremental change

Food sovereignty and other possible worlds

- Agroecology as a science, practice and social movement
- Emphasis on peasant agroecology as part of food sovereignty
- Transformation of dominant agri-food regime

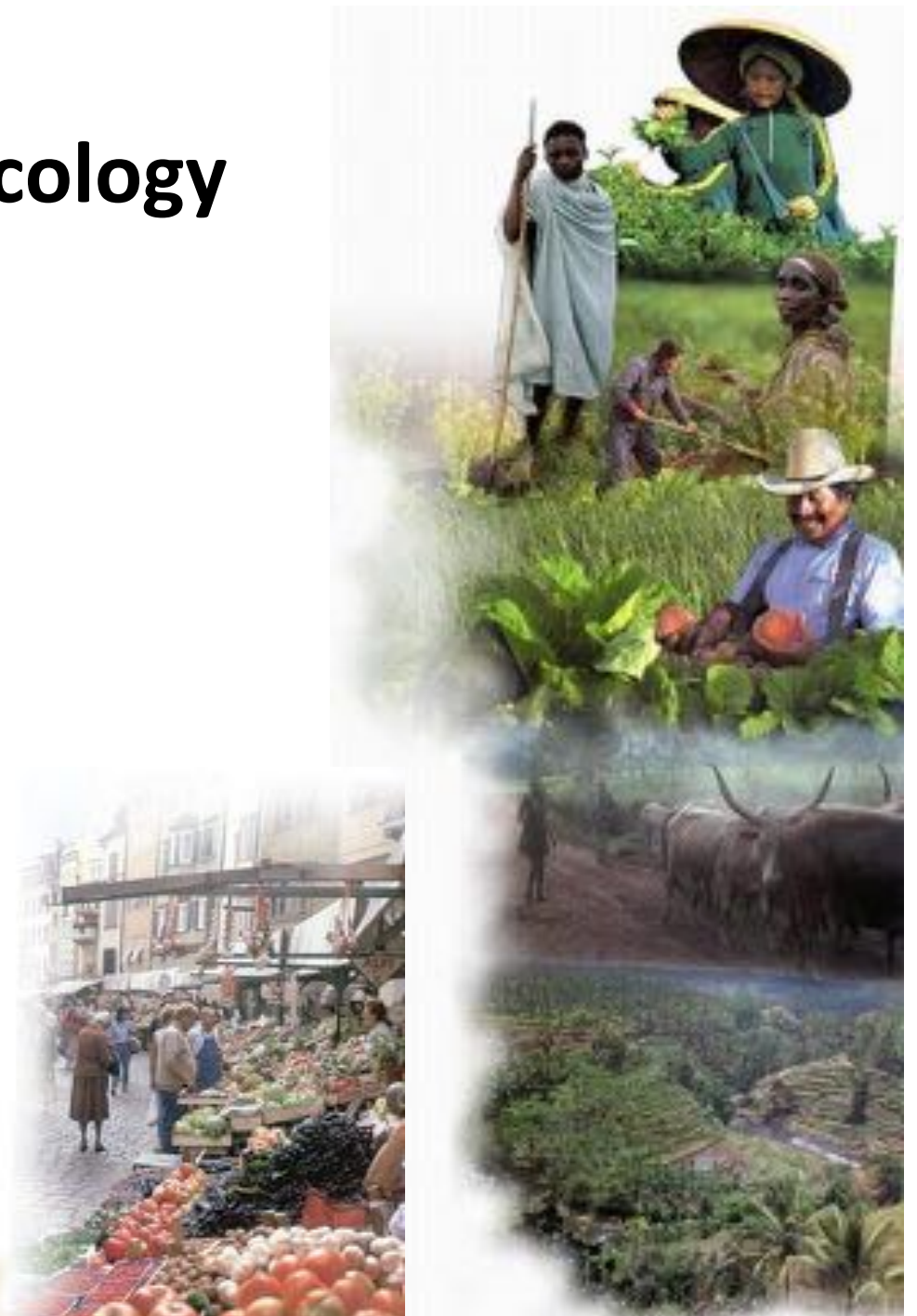


Infographic by Biovision



Making Money Move for Agroecology

- Some hard questions and big challenges for public funding agencies and other donors who seek to support agroecological transformations



1. How to fund a radically different research paradigm for agroecological ways of knowing?

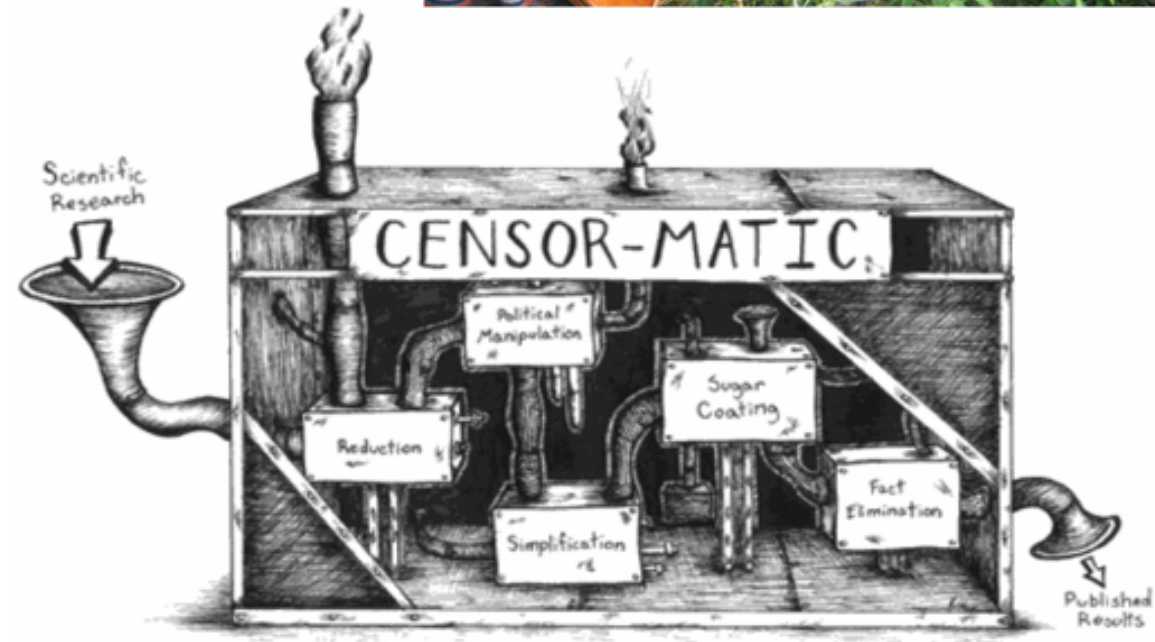
- Agroecological solutions are not delivered top down. They are **developed through respectful intercultural dialogue** between scientists and farmers/citizens, - building on peoples' local priorities, knowledge, and capacity to innovate
- Shift from a transfer of technology model of R&D to a decentralised, bottom up, and **participatory process of knowledge creation tailored to unique local contexts** in rural and urban areas
- **Knowledge intensive, transdisciplinary** and based on principles of **cognitive justice**

Cognitive justice and participatory research for agroecology transitions depend on two complementary approaches:

- **democratizing science and technology research**, with increased funding for public research and transdisciplinary approaches that include peoples' knowledge
- **de-institutionalizing research for autonomous learning and action**, with an emphasis on strengthening horizontal networks of grassroots research and innovation as well as citizen oversight over the production of knowledge.

Democratising public research and transforming knowledge for agroecology

- Increase funding for R&D
- A shift to transdisciplinary and participatory research that respects and includes farmer & peoples' knowledge
- New roles and ways of working for researchers
- Organisational transformation
- Protecting public research from corporate control and censorship



Expanding farmer/citizen-led agroecological research

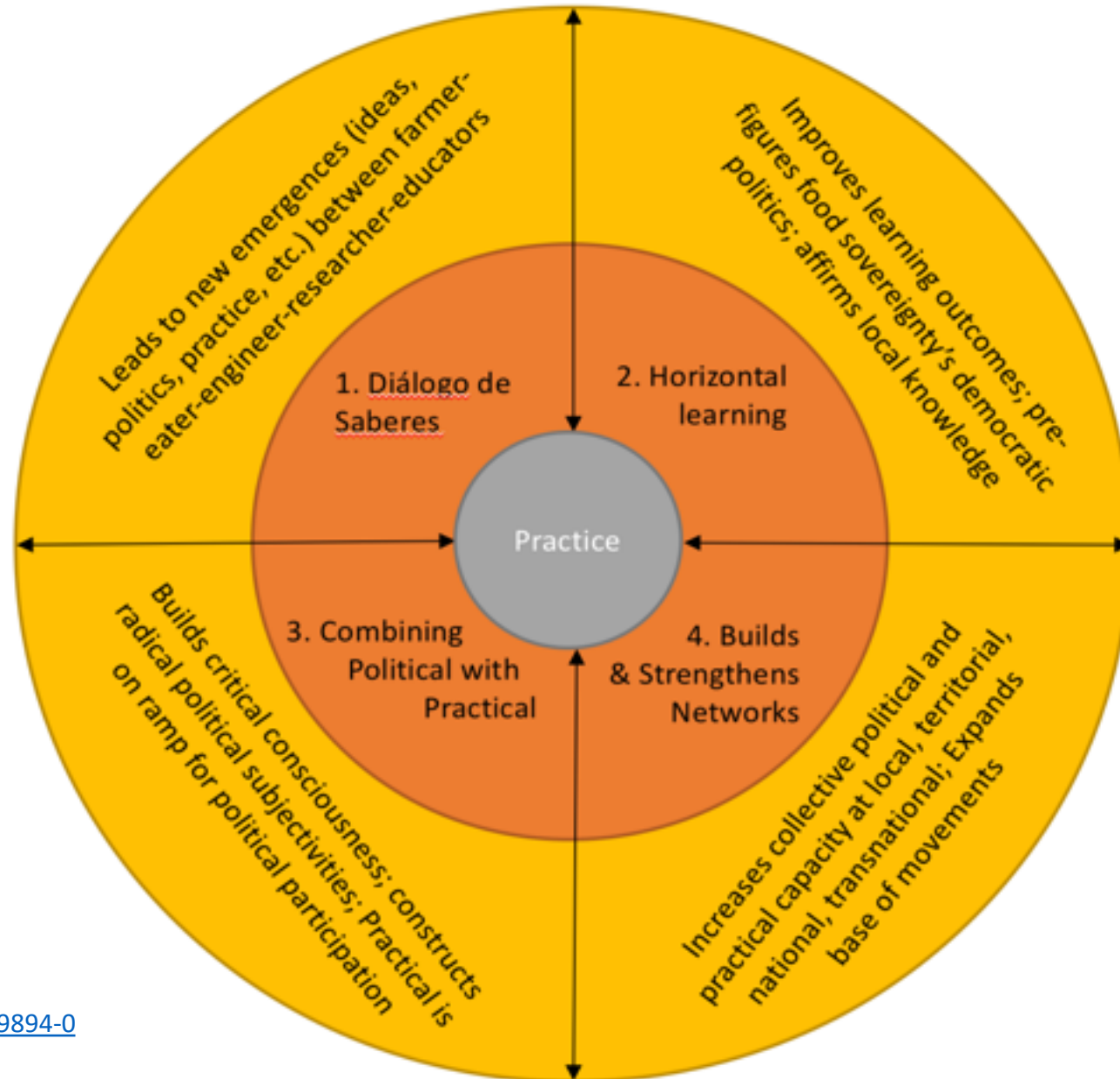


- **Strengthening self-managed research and grassroots innovation in horizontal farmer-citizen networks**

Horizontal grassroots networks producing agroecological knowledge

- *Campeño a campeño* movements in Central America and Cuba
- Community-based Farmer Field Schools (FFS) in Indonesia
- MST agroecology schools in Brazil
- *Réseau Semences Paysannes* (Italy, France...)
- *Millet Network of India*
- *Farm Hack* (USA, UK) et *L'Atelier Paysan* (France)
- URGENCI the international network for Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

Strengthening grassroots R&D system for agroecology



Anderson C.A, C. Maughan and
M.P. Pimbert, 2018.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10460-018-9894-0>

More and better funding for agroecology R&D requires changes in donor priorities, culture and practice:

- Donors who fund agroecological R&D need to shift from blueprint and logical framework model to a more open-ended, learning process approach
- Funding initial exploratory phase during which indigenous and peasant communities can more sharply define and re-shape the agenda for agroecological research on the basis of their local priorities, analysis, cosmovision, and discussions
- Fund training of scientists and donor employees in the use of participatory research methods and intercultural dialogues with farmers – professional re-orientation & re-skilling
- Support horizontal farmer networks and strengthen local organisations set up by farmers for self-managed R&D and collective action
- More examples from CIDSE-CAWR study..... later

2. What can donors do to democratise the governance of R&D to enable peoples' participation in:

- the choice of upstream strategic priorities for R&D, including decisions on budget allocations by funding bodies
- scientific and technological research – the production and validation of transdisciplinary knowledge for agroecology
- evaluating research results and impacts, including risk and sustainability assessments
- the framing of national policies for science and development – the bigger context that influences R&D funding and scaling out of agroecology to more people and places

Bigger societal challenges: time and material security are prerequisites for amplifying agroecology in food system transformations

- Without farmers on the land there is no participation and co-inquiry possible to create locally appropriate agroecological knowledge and solutions
- Deep policy changes needed to reverse economic genocide of farmers and give **more material security** to farmers
- Wo/men need **free time** for democratic deliberations, co-create agroecological solutions, and practice of the art of participatory democracy

3. How can donors help level the economic playing field for agroecological transformation of agri-food systems? What role can donor funding play in supporting:

- the re-localisation of plural economies that combine both market oriented activities with non monetary forms of economic exchange based on barter, reciprocity, gift relations, and solidarity within and between territories
- a guaranteed and unconditional minimum income for all
- a significant drop in time spent in wage-work and a fairer sharing of jobs between men and women

Leveling the economic playing field for agroecology...

What can funders do to:

- facilitate redistribution of wealth, including through taxes on the hyper-rich and on financial speculations, - to fund the regeneration of diverse agro-ecologies and local economies
- support a radical shift from globalised, centralised and linear systems to re-localized circular models that mimic natural cycles and link food and energy production with water and waste management— as part of a controlled process of **de-growth in production and consumption that reduces GHG emissions, ecological footprints, and poverty within and between territories.**

Agroecology for Food Sovereignty – a major challenge for government funding agencies and other donors

- Transformative process that seeks to recreate **the democratic political realm** and regenerate a diversity of **autonomous local food systems within territories** - based on equity, social justice and ecological sustainability
- Emphasis **on power-reversals** based on the self-organizing capacities of **people/ citizens** and their collective power to reclaim spaces controlled by **disabling governments and corporations**



Gracias
Merci
Thank you