

Statement by the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC) on the occasion of the SBSTTA 24 and SBI 3 Virtual Special Session on Biodiversity, One Health and COVID-19

The International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC) is an autonomous, self-organized global platform of more than 6000 organizations and 300 million small-scale food producers and rural workers, indigenous peoples and grassroots or community social movements whose goal is to advance the food sovereignty agenda at the global and regional levels.

The post 2020 Global Framework for Biodiversity is the key response to the global pandemic resulting from the decline in global biodiversity and invasive human activities that continue, unabated, to damage increasingly compromised ecosystems. The urgency of a unique approach to health is evident, recognizing that human well-being is inextricably linked to the health of animals and nature.

The proposed GBF targets will not be effective in increasing global biological diversity unless the real causes of the destruction and loss of the world's biological diversity, including the industrial agricultural system and extractive industries, are addressed. A transition to more diversified and sustainable agricultural systems is therefore urgent and cannot be postponed. As ecosystems are being destroyed, fragmented, homogenized, and increasingly stressed by industrial impacts, scientists have documented an increase in the incidence of disease outbreaks. As forest areas are destroyed by criminal fires or are divided and transformed into small and large cities, industrial areas or large plantations, interactions between animals and humans undergo fundamental changes that bring, among other effects, also pandemics.

If the worst conditions persist and deepen in the coming months, years and decades, small farmers will continue to be on the front lines of both food supply and disease control. As they have done for centuries, those with the autonomy to exercise community control will continue to aim to maintain the biodiverse ecosystems that provide livelihoods outside of the pathological logics of commodities. **It will be clear that our goal is not 2030, the goal is today, it was yesterday.**

During the second Open-ended Working Group, held in Rome last February, many Parties recognized the role of agro-ecology as the most sustainable means of providing biodiverse, nutritious and culturally-determined food to millions of people and communities around the world. In this pandemic situation, this has become clear as small-scale food producers have provided food locally when long food production and supply chains could not.

Therefore, the GBF must shed light on the role of agro-ecology and recognize small-scale food producers as major actors in the management and sustainable use of biodiverse ecosystems, including wild biodiversity.