



YOUR LAND, MY LAND, OUR LAND:

GRASSROOTS STRATEGIES TO
PRESERVE FARMLAND AND ACCESS
TO LAND FOR PEASANT FARMING AND
AGROECOLOGY



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About Eco Ruralis

- Established in 2009 and currently bringing together 14 thousand peasant farmers and agroecological food producers from Romania
- Promoting the vision of peasant agroecology and food sovereignty and advocating for the rights of peasants
- Developing political and grassroots activities with our members through various programs: Rights to Seeds, Land, Markets, Agroecology, Migrations but also transversal topics like rural feminism and empowering young rural youth
- The Right to Land program: creating transparency, connecting grassroots struggles, national and EU political advocacy and lobby, policy analysis
- involving in international networks: member of the European Coordination Via Campesina, European Access to Land Network, Nyeleni Europe – Central Asia.



Creating transparency

Land concentration, land grabbing and people's struggles in Europe



HANDS OFF THE LAND
TAKE ACTION AGAINST LAND GRABBING



LAND GRABBING IN ROMANIA

Fact finding mission report

grabbing farmland | speculation | forests | rural social impact

April • 2015



Attila Szocs
Maria Rodriguez
Alzbeta Srovnalova



TORNATOR Case
Over 12.000 hectares

Land grabbing Fact Sheet No. 5, Romania - April 2015

Schweighofer Case
Over 14.000 hectares

Land grabbing Fact Sheet No. 6, Romania - April 2015

GENERALI Case
4.640 hectares

Land grabbing Fact Sheet No. 2, Romania - March 2015

RISO SCOTTI Case
11.000 hectares

Land grabbing Fact Sheet No. 3, Romania - March 2015

LAUGHABER Case
1.000 hectares

Land grabbing Fact Sheet No. 4, Romania - March 2015

Hands Off the Land

Facts about Riso Scotti:	
Year or arrival	2005
Parent company	Riso Scotti S.P.A. (IT)
Intendant size	11.000 hectares and even double this amount
Land under control	15.000 hectares. Full food chain control.
Previous owners	Ex-communist farm
Crops	Rice
Market	Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, Hungary and Italy
Investment	40 million €
Outcomes	Increase of the land prices. Romanians not familiar with the Italian model of farming. 42 employees in 2013.

By Eco Ruralis association, Romania

Foreign grabbing around the world. The new "Tornator" model for large acquisition or long term lease of land, from public or private entities, transferring large portions of land from local communities to investors. Foreign firms are not only grabbing land, but also the land itself. However, foreign firms are not only grabbing land, but also the land itself. However, foreign firms are not only grabbing land, but also the land itself.

Land grabbing around the world. The term "land grabbing" describes large acquisition or long term lease of land from public or private entities. Transferring large portions of agricultural land from local communities to investors interests, therefore food sovereignty and the very existence of the present generation. Biodiversity and the environment is greatly endangered by land grabbing, through the replacing of massive agriculture, monoculture field and pastures. Today, global land grabbing involves millions of hectares. The process of land grabbing has many faces – agricultural, mining, energy, tourism, water resources, speculation – and the process is transferring land ownership and the process of development of a dynamic rural sector.

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Land issues in Romania

- Communist criminalisation of peasants and post-communist land privatisation and failing national land management
 - land redistribution veiled in corruption violating land rights of peasants
 - dual agricultural system: industrial vs. peasant, concentration vs. fragmentation (2020: out of 13.8 million ha of agri land, 6,5 million in peasant farming)
 - land concentration and land grabbing: via land consolidation political agendas, outright purchases, lack of transparency, institutional corruption, investments from non-farming entities for land speculation, industrial mega-projects (more than 4 million hectares of agri land grabbed)
 - effects of EU policies: funds grabbing of the EU CAP SAPS, lack of an overarching EU vision over farmland tenure.
 - 2014 opening of the Romanian land market towards the EU opened the door for more capital investment in land







Handbook: Your land, my land, our land

- Published by the **Nyéléni Europe and Central Asia platform for Food Sovereignty;**

- **Result of a European Erasmus+ partnership*** project on innovative land strategies and access to land for agroecology in Europe (E+LandStrat) and collective working process that has involved many different organisations;

* *Eco Ruralis, the European Coordination of Via Campesina (ECVC), the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM-EU), the Real Farming Trust, Terre de Liens (TDL), the Transnational Institute (TNI), URGENCI*

- **witnessing the transformation of European rural areas:** the extreme reduction of the number of farmers; the concentration of land in the hands of the few; the ageing population in farming; volatile prices which prevent farmers from earning a dignified living; the loss of farmland; the rapid degradation of soils and ecosystems, and land being used as a pawn in the free movement of capital;

- **land is not a commodity:** Land is a natural resource and the basis of all food production, upon which many fundamental human and peasant rights depend, such as the right to food, the right to work, and the right to a decent income and livelihood;

- Despite the fact that a great number of European and national policies promote the industrialisation of agriculture and the commodification of land, **resistance is fertile.** In Europe, an enormous constellation of land struggles and experiences have been born and developed to protect farmland, and grant access to land for peasant and agroecological farming, in many cases collectively and communally;



Handbook: Your land, my land, our land

CHAPTER 1

Land matters!
Claiming land as
political

Approach 1

First steps - putting land on the political agenda

Approach 2

Defending public interest - using research and public consultation

CHAPTER 2

Land laws - legal
frameworks and
policies

Approach 3

Using national legal tools and policies

Approach 4

Using international legal tools

CHAPTER 3

Land, people, action!
The struggle for land
from the ground up

Approach 5

Campaigning against land loss: Fighting infrastructure, urbanization and agribusiness projects

Approach 6

Direct action - using land occupation to defend peasant agroecology in Europe



Handbook: Your land, my land, our land

CHAPTER 4

Our land - public lands for the common good

Approach 7

Struggling for the best use of public land

Approach 8

Engaging with local authorities

CHAPTER 5

Reinventing community solidarity around land

Approach 9

Ensuring land continuity for agroecology

Approach 10

Mobilising broader communities to support land for agroecology

CHAPTER 6

Increasing the resiliency of movements

Approach 11

Increasing the capacity and resiliency of land movements

Approach 12

Building our movements' capacity through popular education



Handbook: Your land, my land, our land

Creating transparency on land grabbing: peasants and journalists working together



Using the tenure guidelines as a tool to strengthen land struggles



Roşia Montană vs RM Gold Corporation: David vs Goliath in Romania

In 2015, a series of articles were published in publications in the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium and Romania, **exposing how the Dutch bank Rabobank allegedly was profiting off the back of fraud, forgery and the systematic abuse of hundreds of Romania's poorest citizens**, in a huge and aggressive land grab in Eastern Europe

The Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (Tenure Guidelines) is the first international instrument that deals with the governance of land and natural resources from a human rights perspective. Eco Ruralis used them to hold to account those responsible for increasing land concentration and land grabs and also put them forward in national policy debates.

This is the story of how the local community of a picturesque village in the heart of the Romanian Carpathian mountains **confronted a huge mining company - creating an international movement which was able to block a project to develop Europe's largest open cast gold mine.**

Get the handbook here: <https://www.accesstoland.eu/Handbook-Your-Land-My-Land-Our-Land>

