

ASIA-EUROPE PEOPLE'S FORUM (AEPF)

Towards a Just Transition: Struggles for Food Sovereignty, Post-Extractivism and Climate Justice



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CONFERENCE REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

The conference “Towards a Just Transition: Struggles for Food Sovereignty, Post-Extractivism, and Climate Justice” organised by the Food Sovereignty and Natural Resource Justice cluster of the AEPF brought together 62 participants from 13 different countries across Asia and Europe including from Bosnia Herzegovina, France, Germany, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Netherlands, Nepal, Norway, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

The aim was to consider in light of converging food, resource and climate crises what kind of social, ecological, economic and material transition is needed in different contexts and what would constitute a just transition as opposed to simply a technocratic response. A cornerstone of the clusters’ engagement with this question is the argument that food sovereignty, agroecology and post-extractivism play a central role in bringing about this transition. These principles entail centering democratic approaches to decision-making regarding land, food, seeds and community resources, alongside acting in alignment with the scientific necessity to mitigate the climate and wider ecological crises. While the corporate-controlled food system is one of the main drivers of global warming, peasant agroecology and food sovereignty offer massive potential for reducing emissions, by keeping fossil fuels underground, adapting to climatic changes and realizing social justice. Therefore, **peasant agroecology and food sovereignty are social, political, and ecological visions** that unite multiple sectors within a single movement to challenge business-as-usual and create systems of shared control over the requirements of life.

The following points sum up some of the challenges our cluster is taking on:

- Given the bottom-up approach that agroecology implies, there is currently a disconnected structure for using, sharing and building upon resources already available. The spread of agroecology requires inclusive, community-oriented methods for peasant-to-peasant networks, horizontal training and pedagogies.
- There is an aggressive promotion of big data and other technological approaches by agribusiness, supported to some extent also by various parts of the media and by public policies. The challenge is to change the discourse and prove the validity and innovations of peasant-led agroecology, while debunking the myth that agribusiness is innovative, efficient and successful for sustainable and fair food systems.
- Industrialized agriculture and the corporate food system are at the center of the climate crisis. Yet, rather than taking immediate and far-reaching action to make fundamental change, governments and corporations promote carbon markets, geoengineering and technological fixes they say are “triple wins” for sustainability, development and equity

- There is a lack of political action to address the non-sustainability of industrial farming models and a lack of policies allowing peasants' and other small-scale food producers' access to natural resources and commons. There is a need to enhance the recognition among key decision makers of agroecology and its benefits, and to establish supportive policies.

1. TOWARDS A JUST TRANSITION

The conference began with a roundtable discussion exploring what a just transition should look like in our disparate contexts, the obstacles and challenges we face, the strategic opportunities we are presented with, and prospects for transnational solidarity through this process.

A brief introduction was given of the Just Transition framework. This concept has a 50 year history that continues to evolve. The notion of a just transition emerged in the 1970s with environmentalists pushing for the closure of dirty energy plants in the US. Questions emerged which included how to ensure that workers didn't pay the price of transitioning to more sustainable energy systems, and how they, organised in progressive trade unions, could instead be key drivers of this transformation. Today, the question remains how to ensure that the cost of that transition is not born by those most vulnerable, and how to ensure that those people instead have a central role in shaping the new system.

Over the past few decades, more and more struggles for justice have been coalescing around the idea of a just transition that works to overturn inequalities along the lines of race, class, gender, generation, imperialism, indigenous rights, and ethnicity. Yet at the same time, corporations and governments push their narrower, more conservative visions of a 'just' transition. Usually they see corporations at the center who want to do things like switch from fossil fuels to biofuels. They see it as just a transition from one energy source to another but don't want to ask questions about other kinds of environmental harms or addressing any of the structural inequalities regarding who is benefitting from the energy produced, who is doing the work to produce it, and who is bearing the health and other costs of its production. These interests want to greenwash their operations, keeping extractivism, imperialism, and capitalism off the table to merely talk about changing the energy source. This leaves global questions of power, inequality, and distribution embedded within the current energy and economic system untouched.

We need to build together a collective understanding of what we mean by a just transition. Some of the key principles that the Just Transition framework is anchored in and that were shared at the conference are that:

- A just transition will be different in different places – it is **locally embedded**
- A just transition must recognize the centrality of working people and **how to build decent work for all**. It involves a careful consideration of who ought to own and control resources and who does the work

- A just transition needs to recognise the **unpaid work** in our food and energy systems and society as a whole. Therefore we need **gender justice** with the full rights and participation of women and other marginalised genders in planning just transition pathways.
- A just transition is aware of the racist legacy of colonialism, and its role in shaping who owns resources, who benefits from them, who does the work of extracting them, and who bears the cost of extracting them. Distribution of those burdens and benefits is unjust and falls along racialized lines. Therefore a plan towards a truly just transition is also a struggle for the **full rights and participation of indigenous peoples and other historically marginalised groups**.
- As the entire economy is built on extractivism, a just transition cannot be reduced to purely focusing on the carbon budget, energy sources and mitigating the climate crisis. There are many **other types of damages that must be considered and avoided** when planning the transition. Therefore a just transition is about **transforming our relationship with the earth**, by rethinking the entire notion of resources and their management.
- A just transition is about **democracy** so people have a say in how their territories and resources are used. This means that people's freedoms of speech and association must be protected so that they may participate in a meaningful way. At the heart of the struggle for a just transition is the struggle for new, deeper and more radical **community control of resources**.

Following on from a presentation of the fundamental principles, a roundtable discussion was organised in which participants contributed to these points from their own perspectives and contexts – contributing with examples from Pakistan, Nepal, Bosnia Herzegovina and Thailand amongst others.

As a basic starting point, it was voiced by all that **democracy** is essential to a just transition, particularly in contexts where people's movements are brutally repressed by authoritarian regimes when challenging top-down 'development' projects and asserting their rights. An actually existing just transition would ensure that peasants, fishers, workers, women and indigenous people and others do not continue to lose out when it comes to their livelihoods and lands. Rather, no one would be treated as dispensable, and every person would have an influence in shaping the decisions that affect their lives.

More specifically, certain points have to be added or further elaborated to overcome the challenges and obstacles to developing a people-centered just transition program in each particular locale:

- Access to and control over land, water, fisheries, forests and other resources are increasingly being consolidated in the hands of a very few. Our struggle must include categorically **supporting a move toward more democratic forms of use and control over these resources** including through forms of collective and community management.
- **Mafias and powerful vested interests** operate in the fields, waters, factories and forests across our regions. They artificially drive up food prices at a time of already increasing instability resulting from the climate and ecological crises. They are often facilitated by governments in their illegal practices of deforestation and overfishing. Industries are allowed to operate unchecked, despite violations of labor and environmental laws. Mega-dams and other large infrastructure projects are being implemented regardless of the concerns of those affected. We need therefore to intensify our fight for the **implementation of pro-poor labor and environmental laws and policies - locally and internationally**
- **Militarism and authoritarianism**, and in some cases even **monarchy**, pose powerful challenges to people's movements as well as to livelihoods. State or private security details often accompany and facilitate these mafias, with the Indian Navy for example accompanying Indian trawlers into Sri Lankan waters where their might undermines sustainable fisheries policies. In many of our contexts, those who speak critically about the undemocratic nature of projects and effects on their communities can be forcibly disappeared, abducted, tortured, criminalised, sometimes jailed for life, or even killed. Therefore it is imperative that our movement insist on the **fundamental democratic rights of all people and the decriminalisation of dissent**.
- **Space for civil society is shrinking** in many of our countries, where INGOs are being deemed foreign conspirators and workers are finding it more difficult to secure **funding** from international bodies. We will need to **strengthen our unity across scales to ensure such critical spaces and support systems are not closed off**.
- **Aid dependency and heavy debt burdens** already plague many of our countries. Rather than being handed conditional aid or having to move to seek livelihoods elsewhere, impacted **communities need the opportunity to participate in locally-embedded economies that provide decent work and all basic necessities where they are**.
- **Fishers, Dalits and other people of low or unregistered castes, as well as bonded laborers** are particularly vulnerable across many of our regions who to this day continue to be denied fundamental rights. All marginalized **segments of society must be ensured full rights and participation** for a just transition.
- **Health, livelihood, land and housing** issues are all part of gaining transitional justice, and have to be seen as closely connected to struggles for food sovereignty and the Right to Food.

- **Students and researchers** have a critical role to play in **challenging education policies** that serve to reproduce a status quo damaging to people and planet. **Education** must be viewed as a critical avenue through which alternative pathways to locally just transitions can be explored and experimented with, and for that adequate **social and economic resources** will have to be generated.

These points require above all the **building of alliances and strengthening relationships of solidarity** across space and sectors if we hope to win a liveable future.

2. BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE (BRI): IMPLICATIONS FOR FOOD SOVEREIGNTY AND RURAL RESISTANCE

Participants took part in a workshop on the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the impacts of Chinese overseas investment on rural areas and peoples. The aim was to understand how struggles for a just transition unfold within the rapidly changing global context and a world economy that is characterized by processes of capital accumulation that facilitate destructive and undemocratic practices. Given the impacts of the BRI in particular on both Asian and European countries, a deeper analysis of its mechanisms, dynamics, and implications is important. **The workshop focussed in particular on three aspects: i) understanding what the BRI is and is not; ii) sharing concrete country experiences of the impacts of the BRI on food systems and natural resources; iii) exchanging on ongoing and potential resistance strategies to the BRI, particularly emanating from rural peoples.**

Chinese investment capital is facilitated by bilateral agreements for the development of transnational economic corridors comprised of infrastructure, energy projects, and special economic zones (SEZs). The types of BRI projects vary according to local context, with decisions about the types of projects that go ahead being mediated by class balances within and between countries. China does not force projects, but promotes a rentier-based form of crony capitalism by garnering buy-in and influence from local bureaucrats, military personnel, and political elites.

This particular moment of globalization is considered the 'age of extreme infrastructure' designed to facilitate the movement of goods and infrastructure quicker and more efficiently. The bilateral agreements and hundreds of Memoranda of Understanding China has signed with other governments for the BRI lacked democratic engagement and transparency, and the deals remain largely shrouded in secrecy. The BRI also promotes extractivism, grabs land from the most marginal segments of society, and develops ecologically devastating projects. The projects are stoking inter-communal tensions, with

disparate groups debating who is getting a fair share or who is being left out of the process. As one participant put it, the BRI is like a reverse transition, a race to the bottom, completely opposite of the just transition our struggles are working together to build.

Participants from Myanmar, Pakistan and Bosnia Herzegovina discussed the way BRI projects have further undermined democracy, are creating huge debt burdens for already bankrupt economies and squeezed populations, and are strengthening repressive institutions while attempting to weaken struggles for labor and community rights.

While war-torn Myanmar already owes the bulk of its foreign debt to China, the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor (CMEC) is a bilateral agreement from 2019-2030 that includes SEZs and an infrastructure corridor. Like elsewhere, few details have been released regarding the projects, many of which were older projects that weren't part of CMEC but which were then rebranded as CMEC with the launching of the BRI. One of the projects is a 'city expansion project', which will convert agricultural land into urban sprawl. Another project is a banana plantation monoculture. Both of these projects entail land grabs and destruction of rural land and communities.

Pakistan has been another country at the forefront of Chinese investment through the BRI. Documents that were recently made public revealed that agribusiness, preserving and packaging constitute a significant part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). It is unclear whether the bulk of the food produced is to be consumed by the Chinese market. Yet roughly half of Pakistan's own population is food insecure, which is further compounded by another wave of austerity imposed by the latest loan of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). At the same time, precious groundwater and fertile soil will be depleted through the expansion of monoculture plantations.

China is reducing its own dependency on coal-fired power in the interest of reducing pollution of the country's already toxic environment, as well as reducing the country's domestically-produced greenhouse gas emissions. Ironically, Chinese banks are investing in coal plants and mines in other countries, often grabbing the land without even providing promised compensation to locals.

Also in Europe, new coal plants are being financed under the banner of the BRI, for example in Bosnia Herzegovina, which already is home to one of the most polluted coal regions of Eastern Europe. Even though the country spends 99 million Euros annually on health expenses, the coal ash pollution of new Chinese investments will be produced and disposed of in nearby valleys and pollute groundwater with heavy metals that cause cancer.

Meanwhile, in Pakistan CPEC is rapidly exploiting the low-grade coal in the Thar Desert of Sindh province, claiming to provide jobs to the very people who were displaced and have become exposed to the polluted air and water from the mines and power plants. Contrary to claims that this domestic coal is good for the economy and feeds local power projects, the new Sahiwal coal plant not far from Lahore in Punjab province relies on higher grade coal imported from South African and Indonesian mines. These global connections also offer important areas of cooperation amongst impacted workers and communities. The Sahiwal project was also facilitated by a land grab, and is already contributing to the toxic air and water crises.

Even though the same amount of electricity could be produced by renewables for half the price, Pakistan is contractually locked into paying high capacity charges, even if the plant produces no electricity at all for the 40 year lifespan of the project. A signatory to the Paris Climate Agreement and the world's largest producer of solar panels, people's movements argue that instead of financing dirty 'development', China should be investing in renewable energy projects and small grids.

The reaction to the BRI by disparate local capitalists is varied, with some supporting and others rejecting it. Strong public relations teams frame the projects in a positive light that focuses on jobs, development and economic growth. Yet participants raised concerns about censorship of the devastating impacts of many of these projects, from resource-grabbing to forced displacement.

Advocates of the BRI claim that local governments actually asked for the projects they opted for, including dirty projects like coal. Although the public is completely left out of the process, public-private partnerships are central in carrying out such projects. The BRI projects are a win-win for Chinese companies, which secure over 70 percent of the lucrative contracts. Moreover, when the coal and other dirty energy and extractivist projects become stranded assets in the face of health and environmental imperatives, international financiers will be waiting in the wings to provide other funds for supposedly green contracts, all while continuing efforts to extract payments from tax-payers with interest for the initial investments. In this way, these initiatives add to the debt burden for the tax-payers of our countries, who were not consulted when the agreements were signed. Furthermore, conditional loans destroy local markets and squeeze budgetary allocations for public services.

China is using this expansionary approach to gain more power and influence in the midst of a global power struggle between the US and China. The BRI is also promoted by the Asia Development Bank and the EU, while the IMF is actively hostile toward countries indebted to Chinese institutions. In the

case of Pakistan, IMF officials spoke critically of the Chinese debt (while not mentioning IMF debt), forcing the Pakistani government to release documentation about CPEC.

There are significant geopolitical consequences of the BRI. China frames its projects as assisting more peripheral countries in South-Eastern Europe in getting closer to EU standards and strategies. However, the BRI can also be used as a tool for gaining political leverage against the EU and other power blocks. As China positions itself as a creditor to Greece and other European countries, it is able to exert political pressure on the debtor countries to block or vote for decisions that would suit China's interests. Similarly, CPEC risks turning Pakistan into a proxy between super powers, which last happened between the former Soviet Union and the United States. Today if Pakistan chooses to ally with either China or the US against the other, it would have major repercussions for years to come.

Other than kickbacks for a few local politicians acting as local patrons, the BRI has created lose-lose situations for many of our communities. In addition to facilitating harmful projects, the BRI is bad for working people. Despite claims of job creation in countries with vast supplies of surplus or precarious labor, it turns out that in many cases Chinese labor is being used rather than new (often temporary) jobs being provided to local people. The idea that economic progress will bring stability is prevalent in China, yet we often see capitalist expansion brings conflict.

A number of BRI projects are deeply intertwined with militarization rooted in histories of colonialism. For instance, in Pakistan all projects related to CPEC are deemed matters of national security. In many cases projects that were already ongoing were repackaged under the BRI framework in order to stifle and repress possible opposition. When these foreign investments are backed by the armed wing of the state, it becomes even more difficult for labor to organize.

In the case of Myanmar, land has been grabbed from Internally Displaced People (IDPs), dashing the hopes of Rohingya people that they will someday be able to return to their homes. Because of skewed power relations, Myanmar's government officials and public are more reluctant to resist Chinese projects, which are protected by private security firms such as Blackrock. The situation is particularly precious in a country such as Myanmar that has endured over 70 years of occupation and conflict and at a time when the government is currently negotiating with many of the country's very diverse population of ethnic minorities for a ceasefire. There is a real danger that as Chinese companies are investing in Myanmar, particularly in border regions and other conflict zones deemed too risky by other investors, they can end up enflaming local tensions and destabilise peace building efforts.

As our economies are increasingly intertwined with a militarized logic, our governments are actively associating dissent with being anti-state or against the interests of national security. Widespread criminalisation of citizens through the use of sedition and terror laws echo their colonial era precedents, with those who peacefully stand to defend their communities being jailed, disappeared, tortured or even killed. **These top-down projects are antithetical to the aims of a just transition.** The only way forward is serious debate at local levels on all proposed projects, including crucially questions of who benefits, who pays, and the costs to communities, labor and the environment.

3. AGROECOLOGY AND CLIMATE JUSTICE: PATHWAYS FOR TRANSFORMING FOOD SYSTEMS

Agroecology is a key pillar in the construction of food sovereignty. It is a model for growing food without poisonous pesticides and fertilizers. Instead, agroecological methods are designed in synchronicity with environmental processes, with the added bonus of cooling the planet through eliminating fossil fuel inputs and sequestering carbon in the soil, while feeding the world democratically and sustainably. The majority of the world's food is produced by small-scale food producers. At the same time, one in seven people is malnourished, even though more than enough food is currently produced to feed the entire world. Agroecology is therefore about the distribution of quality food, as well as of land and community wealth. **It is a social movement for transforming in social, political, ecological and economic terms the present farming system to one that is producer and community-led, reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, protects water and soils, produces healthy food, lowers the production costs and enhances crop yield. It is part of the movement for climate justice and food sovereignty.**

Agroecology stands in opposition to industrial agriculture that has its roots in colonial times, with land theft, occupation and extraction being scaled up to fuel the rise of colonial powers. The hegemony of the neoliberal green revolution over the past 50 years is clear when considering the challenges faced by the food sovereignty and agroecological movement. Current food policies are designed to scale up monocultures while favouring companies and cartels that sell (patented) seeds, chemical inputs and fossil-fuelled machinery. States, companies and financiers perpetuate the myth that the solution to global hunger and poverty is to increase crop yields by applying more chemical fertilizers and using more advanced machinery, all financed through loans that further entrap already disempowered populations of landless tenants, small farmers, and rural workers.

During a parallel workshop, participants engaged in a SWOT analysis, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the agroecology movement in their regions while strategizing how to collectively move forward:

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Localized expert knowledge that allows for experimentation and teaching of adapted agroecological methods • No till farming, natural composting, and other practices that strengthen root systems, improve soil stability, fertility and health, and raise crop yields • Growing network of small peasant and food producer organizations are in good communication and continue to engage in fruitful people-to-people communication for information and seed exchanges, as well as for strengthening our collective struggles • Lower costs of production due to reduced dependency on external inputs • Reduced GHG emissions due to no to minimal use of fossil fuels and big machinery and the favouring of locally embedded territorial markets as opposed to long-distance value chains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many forms of traditional knowledge have been lost with centuries of heavy influence by corporate and other vested interests in the food system, leaving in their wake a lack of knowledge, confidence and risk taking capacity by marginalised segments of society • Lack of local seeds and difficulties accessing markets for much of the food produced through local seed varieties
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La Via Campesina and the European Agroecology Knowledge Exchange Network are holding schools where they study different approaches to agroecology and the struggles for food sovereignty. • Model farms and services centers being developed in order to help communities become self-sufficient in quality food and local farmers' markets and seed banks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The biggest threats our movements face come from the countervailing forces promoting neoliberal globalization, which is facilitated by our governments, big banks, multinational corporations, militaries, educational training and extension centers. These are backed up by unfair trade agreements, laws, advertising and propaganda. • Climate crisis is an existential threat: knowledge of the closing window of possibility to limit global warming to a liveable temperature must serve as the greatest impetus to transform our

	food system as part of the just transition urgently needed.
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4. STRATEGIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF PEASANTS AND OTHER PEOPLE WORKING IN RURAL AREAS (UNDROP)

The history of the UNDROP spans nearly two decades. The Declaration is an assertion of rights and provides **an expansive definition of who is a peasant, going beyond peasants to include others working in rural areas: the rights of pastoralists, fishers, those engaging in forestry, hunting and gathering, indigenous people and nomadic communities, landless workers, migrants, and seasonal labor are also protected under the UNDROP.** The global peasants' movement, La Via Campesina (LVC), championed the effort, with leadership by the Indonesian peasant organisation SPI who lobbied extensively and together with other allies carried work on the Declaration through to its adoption by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in December 2018. The US, Israel, Australia, UK and 4 other member countries voted against, 54 countries abstained, and 121 countries voted for the adoption of UNDROP.

Even though the international legal system seems far removed, this example shows that it is possible to produce a document that can have real impacts should we use it strategically with struggles on the ground. The 28 articles of the Declaration grant formal rights to some of the most marginalised segments of society. It also actively takes on the attempts by vested interests to gain exclusive control over seeds, food and other resources.

Over a year has passed since the adoption of this unprecedented international tool, and the AEPF sees the **development of a mechanism for implementation as an essential and urgent next step. We are requesting a resolution for such an implementation mechanism in September 2020 during the next UN GA.** As UNDROP is only a voluntary document, the major task of all movements is to get governments to align laws and policies with the Declaration in our different countries and to ratify it in our national contexts. **The cases of Indonesia and Nepal are important examples to consider.**

In Indonesia, the 'developmentalist' paradigm of the new order regime (1966-98) wrought havoc on communities and the environment. For instance, the late 1970s were marked by land grabs for the oil and gas sector, with devastating consequences for peasants across the islands. In the 1990s agrarian activists began to assert the 'rights of peasants' as they continued the long struggle against neoliberalism at both national and international levels. The notion of food sovereignty was asserted

by LVC as part of the rights of communities to make decisions about their own food systems and the sustainable use of lands and resources. In March 2001 the 'rights of peasants' initiative began as a bottom-up process by SPI in Indonesia, resulting in conferences with civil society organisations and reports exposing violations of peasant rights. With the 2008 world food price crisis, they gained traction at the international level, and by 2012 the UN GA passed a resolution for the negotiation of UNDROP. For the next 5 years, LVC engaged at the annual UN sessions, with the 17 year struggle finally culminating in the 2018 UN GA adoption of UNDROP.

Nepal started the process for peasant rights 50 years ago. The country's new constitution includes a strong legal framework for the fundamental rights of people, including peasant rights to all productive resources, and is close to becoming the first country to have a peasant rights law in the world. This builds on the previous successful struggle for food sovereignty to be included in the constitution. However, many issues remain. For example, while indigenous people already have their own territory for livestock, cultivation practices, honey, and hunting, land disputes continue and livelihoods dependent on river systems have been illegalized.

Therefore, even in the best-case scenarios there is a need for mass awareness, education and training on the UNDROP. This requires translation into local languages so peasants and others can understand. It also bestows an important role for allies of social movements to continue acting as a bridge between communities and policy makers to make sure legal provisions are implemented in full.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ASIAN AND EUROPEAN PALIAMENTARIANS

Following engaging panel discussions and parallel workshops on prospects and challenges for ensuring a just transition in the context of the BRI, struggles for the rights of peasants, agroecology and food sovereignty, participants broke up into groups divided by region and generated recommendations to Asian and European parliamentarians on these urgent matters (see Annex). These recommendations also build on the AEPF 12 Declaration. These recommendations were presented during a parliamentarians' forum in which a number of members of the Pakistani parliament were present.

6. FIELD TRIP TO A 'PARADOXICAL AGRICULTURE' SYSTEM

The final day of the conference included a scientific and practical overview given by a Pakistani farmer, Mr. Asif Sharif, on his locally-designed '**Paradoxical Agriculture**' system, a form of agroecology practiced in Pakistan. It is characterised by the following principles:

1. No inundation of soil
2. No disturbance of soil
3. Soil permanently covered with organic mulch
4. Bio-diversity

These principles form the basis of 'Paradoxical Agriculture' as practiced on experimental farms in Pakistan, which Sharif describes as a sustainable form of food production he designed to nourish the soil without chemical inputs while irrigating plants sparingly.

Following on from the presentation, participants were bussed to Pindi Bhattian, where they had the opportunity to see Mr' Sharif's 'Paradoxical Agriculture' in practice.

The Lahore meeting of AEPF affirmed that any transition of the economy to one that is truly just and sustainable must be rooted in democracy. Peasants and rural workers have significant roles to play in fighting for and winning sustainable food systems. This process ultimately entails redistribution of land, agroecological cultivation to regenerate soil nutrients and retain carbon in the soil, and producing healthy food and seeds that are accessible to all.

ANNEX. LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS TO ASEM PARLIAMENTARIANS

PAKISTAN

- 1) Translate UNDROP into all local languages and disseminate to communities across Pakistan
- 2) Amend all relevant policies across scales to ensure implementation of the rights laid out in UNDROP
- 3) Create a national agricultural policy that:
 - a. Imposes a complete ban on Genetically Modified Seeds
 - b. Encourages local seed development, seed banking and seed exchanges in alignment with principles of seed sovereignty
 - c. Establishes training institutes at extension level to facilitate the adoption of agroecological farming
 - d. Facilitates small farmers in transitioning to agroecological food production of crops for local consumption
- 4) Reform land relations and policies to:
 - a. Ban industrialization and commercialization of agriland and end land grabs
 - b. Give land to peasants for natural food production
 - c. Ensure basic facilities to rural areas according to needs of local communities
- 5) Grant peasants, fishers and rural workers the right to unionize, and ensure full rights to shape policy-making that will impact their communities
- 6) Implement court agreement for policy of no arrests of Indian and Pakistani fishers
- 7) Produce and implement sustainable fisheries and coastal policies that:
 - a. Curbs the dumping of untreated sewage into the Arabian Sea by treating water resources at community level
 - b. Protects the mangroves
 - c. Creates a policy of reforestation that is democratically managed and controlled locally
- 8) Completely ban coal mining and coal fired power plants and promote rapid and just transition to renewable energy production owned and managed by local communities
- 9) End the criminalisation of climate affectees and land/resource defenders:
 - a. Immediately drop terror charges and release land defenders Meher Sattar, Abdul Ghafoor and other peasants of Okara
 - b. Immediately drop terror charges and release Baba Jan and other climate prisoners detained for demanding the promised compensation for victims of Attabad Lake disaster
 - c. Immediately drop sedition charges and release Alamgir Wazir and other resource defenders being detained for raising voice against resource theft and land grabs

ASIA:

- 1) Implement existing agreements, laws and constitutions protecting the rights of people and environment

- 2) Produce national policies in alignment with UNDROP
- 3) Establish a body and mechanism for resolving agrarian conflicts
- 4) Equally distribute quality land and resources
- 5) Reject carbon trading
- 6) Return land rights to displaced people
- 7) National seed laws should refer to ITPGRFA and CBO and reject the adoption of UPOV 1991
- 8) Ensure quality resource sharing to specific groups, including indigenous people, caste and gender minorities and those in the peripheries

EUROPE:

- 1) Ensure all European level policies be in line with UNDROP
 - a. Translate UNDROP into all national levels and disseminate
 - b. Realize the 'Decade of Family Farming' by promoting the rights of small-scale farmers and all rural people
- 2) Rapidly phase out fossil fuels in energy, transport and agricultural sectors
 - a. Consider and address implications of transition for sustainable and just land use and food production
 - b. Recognize essential role of small-scale agroecological food systems in transitioning the agricultural sector
- 3) Guarantee public consultation and participation in accordance with AARHUS Convention

Strategies to strengthen collaboration/movement building and transnational solidarity through AEPF

include:

- 1) Engage European importers and exporters to press them to raise the issue of labour rights.
- 2) Understanding that Pakistan needs **social and economic resources** to transition the agricultural system, asking AEPF to engage with the government to ensure more relevant education to address the needs of the time.

About the AEPF Food Sovereignty and Natural Resource Justice cluster:

The AEPF network is about bringing together existing social movements, activists and progressive social forces and allowing them to strengthen people-to-people exchanges. The Food Sovereignty and Natural Resource Justice cluster draws upon the work of established transnational agrarian movements, indigenous people's movements, civil society organisations and other academic, media and activist networks in order to:

- Widen and deepen the space for people's visions across Asia and Europe for sustainable food systems, rural livelihoods and the right to choose territorially embedded, self-determined ways of living
- Challenge forms of corporate and state capture of resources that have detrimental impacts on rural communities, and undermine people's democratic control over the land, water, seeds, fisheries, and forests upon which they depend

This AEPF thematic cluster overlaps with the objectives of other clusters to completely end the extractivist model of 'development' in order to ensure the transition towards a just and sustainable planet for all.

Towards a Just Transition: Food Sovereignty, Post-extractivism and Climate Justice

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**Food Sovereignty and Resource Justice Cluster
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