

ETC Group - Monitoring Power, Tracking Technology, Strengthening Diversity.

FAO



The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO). The ETC Group relates primarily to the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and the negotiations for a multilateral system of conservation and exchange of genetic resources for food and agriculture, known as the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. Aside from responsibility for the International Treaty, the FAO Commission oversees the FAO-CGIAR Trust Agreement and provides policy oversight for the germplasm collections included in that agreement. ETC Group is also involved with follow-through on the 1996 Food Summit and negotiations related to the Right to Food.

Latest Publications

[FAO's Biotech Meeting Dubbed "Biased for Business" as Steering Committee Member Resigns in Protest](#)

Type: News Item
Date: 02/26/2010
Language: English

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ETC Group News release Friday, February 26, 2010 www.etcgroup.org

FAO's Biotech Meeting Dubbed "Biased for Business" as Steering Committee Member Resigns in Protest

On the eve of a major intergovernmental conference on Agricultural Biotechnologies in Developing Countries (ABDC) in Guadalajara, Mexico, a civil society member of the international steering committee has resigned, calling the preparations for the gathering of governments and scientists "hopelessly biased" and "foolishly sidestepping key socioeconomic and scientific issues."

Pat Mooney, Executive Director of ETC Group, a Canada-based international civil society organization with a long history of work with FAO and biotechnology issues, resigned from the steering committee on Tuesday, February 23. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization conference, hosted by Mexico, runs from March 1- 4 in Guadalajara.

"The overwhelming thrust of the guiding documents for the meeting are hopelessly... [Read more](#)

Categories:

[Who Will Feed Us? Questions for the Food and Climate Crises](#)

Type: Communiqué
Date: 12/14/2009
Language: English

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4.5MB

2009's most important intergovernmental meeting on the climate and food crises has already happened. In October, as climate negotiators were fighting in Bangkok and as the UN food agencies were jousting over a restructured response to the food crisis and plans for the World Food Summit, the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) Commission on Genetic Resources met quietly in Rome to review the preparedness of the international community to adapt and develop crops, livestock, aquatic and microbial genetic resources used in food and agriculture to address climate change. The meeting also considered the political and corporate constraints that could prevent a major strategic shift to achieve our food security. The Rome Food Summit in November and the Copenhagen Climate Summit in December should pay attention. At stake is the answer to the most important question not being asked in... [Read more](#)

Categories:

[Who Will Govern? Rome's Food Summit may determine who decides who will eat](#)

Type: Communiqué Date: 11/16/2009 Language: English
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 4.9MB

The declaration coming out of the World Food Summit for Food Security in Rome is even worse than the "shameful" document adopted by world leaders in 1996, so famously criticized by Cuba's Fidel Castro. Governments won't promise anything to anybody. The only issue really being debated in Rome is whether control of the UN's "Department of Agriculture" will be wrested from the UN's Rome-based agencies and surrendered to an amorphous, G8 conjured, public-private compact called the Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition. If the Partnership prevails, national sovereignty fails, and civil society's hopes for Food Sovereignty will suffer.

Issue: The World Summit on Food Security (Rome, Nov. 16-18) is agriculture's bid for the attention of climate change negotiators en route to Copenhagen. To carbon traders, agriculture is a money-maker.... [Read more](#)

Categories:

[Report Card from Reform School - The Committee on World Food Security Passes a Test, but...](#)

Type: Other Date: 10/22/2009 Language: English

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 133.7KB

Report Card from Reform School

The Committee on World Food Security Passes a Test, but...

Rome, October 14-17, 2009

The food and fuel crisis that only became apparent to OECD governments in early 2008 arrived as the Rome-based UN agencies (FAO, WFP, IFAD) were responding to external and internal evaluations that found all three organizations wanting. Most severely criticized was FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization). In April 2008, the UN Secretary-General took advantage of the crises and the institutional weaknesses of the Rome agencies to establish a High-Level Taskforce involving 22 UN and Bretton Woods institutions to develop a Comprehensive Framework for Action to address the crises. Almost simultaneously, President Sarkozy of France called for a Global Partnership of intergovernmental institutions, the private sector, mega-foundations, and civil society... [Read more](#)

[Enola Patent Ruled Invalid: Haven't we Bean here before? \(Yes, yes, yes, yes and yes.\)](#)

Type: News Item
Date: 07/14/2009
Language: English

Download PDF:

 104.5KB

ETC Group News Release 14 July 2009 www.etcgroup.org

Enola Patent Ruled Invalid: Haven't we Bean here before? (Yes, yes, yes, yes and yes.) On July 10, 2009, the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit ruled that U.S. patent 5,894,079 (the "Enola" bean patent), which claims a yellow bean of Mexican origin, is invalid because none of the patent claims meet the criterion of non-obviousness. The case has been closely watched by civil society groups concerned about biopiracy, the patenting of life and the corporate control of food production. The Court's clear 7-page decision argues that anyone interested in reproducing or improving Mexican yellow beans would have done exactly what the "inventor" Larry Proctor did: "plant the beans, harvest the resulting plants for their seeds, planting the latter seeds, and repeat the process two more times." [1] The decision concludes... [Read more](#)

Categories:

[A Sizable Step Towards a Real Commitment to Farmers' Rights at the FAO?](#)

Type: News Item
Date: 06/05/2009
Language: English

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 87.4KB

ETC Group News Release June 5, 2009 www.etcgroup.org

A Sizable Step Towards a Real Commitment to Farmers' Rights at the FAO?

TUNIS, June 5, 2009 – After four days of difficult negotiations among 121 governments at a UN Food and Agricultural Organization Treaty meeting on the use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture held in Tunisia, a Canadian effort to block progress was overturned. At midnight on Thursday, Brazil read an amended resolution on farmers' rights to a tired plenary, shifting the prevailing tension amongst delegates into relief and enthusiasm. Following corridor negotiations, in which Europe, Latin America and Africa confronted Canada's effort to derail the implementation of farmers' rights, governments agreed to:

- o encourage member countries to review all measures affecting farmers' rights and remove any barriers... [Read more](#)

Categories:

[H\(a\)LF a Loaf: Finally, in Madrid, a High-Level Forum considers Governance](#)

Type: Communiqué
Date: 01/22/2009
Language: English

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 13.9MB

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To Download the full report, click on Download PDF for Print-Quality version. Download PDF2 for Screen-Quality version. ETC Group Communiqué 23 January 2009 www.etcgroup.org

Issue: The main (and much-needed) goal of the Madrid High-Level meeting is to reorganize the intergovernmental management of food and agriculture. At the last food crisis in 1974, OECD states savaged the UN's unified system and carved it into four warring factions. In the midst of today's food crisis, the four remain underfunded, weakly governed and dismayingly competitive. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the biggest "loner" in the crowd, the World Food Program (WFP), are all either suffering from harsh external reviews or major program reorganization. Complicating the problem, UN... [Read more](#)

Categories:

["Failure as Usual" Food Summit](#)

Type: Other Date: 06/26/2008 Language: English

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 457.3KB

June 2008 ETC Group Translator Ciao FAO: Another "Failure-as-Usual" Food Summit Contrary to the opinion of many, June's Food Summit actually did something. It signaled the beginning of the end for the multilateral system as we know it. Over the next six months the food emergency - and the international institutions designed to address it - could get worse. The full text offers a line-by-line interpretation of the Food Summit's final declaration. Issue: During the 3-5 June 2008 World Food Summit, governments patched together sufficient funds to keep the lid on food rebellions for a few months but all the fundamental and long-term institutional and financial problems remain. In Rome, governments opted for a mythical "techno-fix" led by agribusiness in collaboration with the Gates Foundation and other philanthro-capitalists. These "klepto-mandates" are usurping the multilateral system. There is also a clear power shift away from the... [Read more](#)

Categories:

[Call to Action on World Food Emergency](#)

Type: Other Date: 05/26/2008 Language: English

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 68.7KB

[26 May 2008 ETC Group ANNOUNCEMENT www.etcgroup.org](#)

Call to Action on World Food Emergency

On 22 May, International Biodiversity Day, ETC Group joined with civil society and social movements from around the world to launch a "Call to Action on the World Food Emergency." ETC Group is attending the 9th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Bonn, 19-30 May 2008.

ETC Group invites you to sign on to the international Call to Action by social movements and civil society on the World Food Emergency and the underlying loss of biodiversity. To read the full statement in English, French and Spanish, go [here](#) .

Governments will meet at the U.N.... [Read more](#)

Categories:

[Patenting the "Climate Genes" ...and Capturing the Climate Agenda](#)

Type: Communiqué
Date: 05/13/2008
Language: English

Download PDF:

 766.4KB

Communiqué May/June 2008 Issue # 99

Patenting the "Climate Genes"... And Capturing the Climate Agenda

Issue: The world's largest seed and agrochemical corporations are stockpiling hundreds of monopoly patents on genes in plants that the companies will market as crops genetically engineered to withstand environmental stresses such as drought, heat, cold, floods, saline soils, and more. BASF, Monsanto, Bayer, Syngenta, Dupont and biotech partners have filed 532 patent documents (a total of 55 patent families) on so-called "climate ready" genes at patent offices around the world. In the face of climate chaos and a deepening world food crisis, the Gene Giants are gearing up for a PR offensive to re-brand themselves as climate saviours. The focus on so-called climate-ready genes is a golden opportunity to push genetically engineered crops as a silver bullet solution to climate change. But patented techno-fix seeds... [Read more](#)

Categories:

[News Release: Gene Giants Grab "Climate Genes"](#)

Type: News Item
Date: 05/12/2008
Language: English

Download PDF:

 115.0KB

ETC Group News Release Tuesday, May 13, 2008 www.etcgroup.org

Gene Giants Grab "Climate Genes"

Amid Global Food Crisis, Biotech Companies are Exposed as Climate Change Profiteers A [report](#) released today by Canadian-based civil society organization, ETC Group, reveals that the world's largest seed and agrochemical corporations are stockpiling hundreds of monopoly patents on genes in plants that the companies will market as crops genetically engineered to withstand environmental stresses associated with climate change - including drought, heat, cold, floods, saline soils, and more. ETC Group's report warns that - rather than a solution for confronting climate change - the promise of so-called "climate-ready" crops will be used to drive farmers and governments onto a proprietary biotech platform. "In the face of climate chaos and a... [Read more](#)

Categories:

[Svalbard's Doomsday Vault: The Global Seed Vault Raises Political/Conservation Debate](#)

Type: Communiqué
Date: 02/26/2008
Language: English

 231.5KB **Svalbard's Doomsday Vault: The Global Seed Vault Raises Political/Conservation Debate** The swarm of media attention focusing on today's opening of the Global Seed Vault in Norway's high Arctic may overshadow an even bigger news story. Yesterday, 26 February, the Norwegian government pledged to give 0.1% of money spent on commercial seed sales to support Farmers' Rights, and challenged other governments to do the same. The critical message is that even the most secure gene bank storage is not the ultimate solution. Governments must provide support to farmers to improve local conservation and breeding, and help them obtain access to far away seed accessions. Global food security depends upon a coherent in situ (on-farm) and ex situ (gene bank) strategy. The need to support farmers' on-farm conservation and breeding work is urgent. On the occasion of the opening of the Global Seed Vault in Svalbard, Norway, ETC Group releases a new Communique, "Svalbard's Doomsday Vault: The... [Read more](#)

Categories:

[Les appareils défaillants de l'alimentation = cuisine branchée de Paris Souveraineté alimentaire – à la cartel?](#)

Type: Communiqué
Date: 02/12/2008
Language: French

Download PDF:

 894.9KB

Communiqué Janvier 2008 Numéro 97

Les appareils défaillants de l'alimentation = cuisine branchée de Paris

Souveraineté alimentaire – à la cartel? Parce que les États n'ont pas su gouverner, les grandes institutions multilatérales de l'alimentation et l'agriculture sont dans le pétrin. Si les États et les secrétariats internationaux ne coopèrent pas, ces institutions subiront des torts irréparables : les multinationales de l'agroalimentaire et les nouveaux philanthro-capitalistes vont continuer de combler le vide du pouvoir créé par les États membres de l'OCDE depuis quelques décennies.

Le contexte : La souveraineté alimentaire, une doctrine politique issue de Via Campesina, est devenue un problème géopolitique branché. Pour la première fois depuis des... [Read more](#)

Categories:

[Farmers Call for Suspension of Seed Treaty](#)

Type: News Item
Date: 11/01/2007
Language: English

Download PDF:

 115.7KB

For immediate release – endorsed by the civil society and farmers' organizations present at FAO Thursday, 1 November 2007

Farmers Call for Suspension of Seed Treaty

Governments fail to meet minimal Treaty obligations UN conference told

Farmers' organizations who were invited to attend a United Nations meeting on the Treaty that governs the exchange of

suspended. Speaking on behalf of 30 farmers' and other civil society organizations, Ibrahima Coulibaly of ROPPA (regional farmers' organization of West Africa) said that, "the Treaty, hosted in Rome by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), must halt the exchange of crop germplasm – the critical material for plant breeding. The suspension should remain in effect until governments meet the minimal obligations of the... [Read more](#)

Categories:

[Suicide-Seed Sequel: EU's "Transcontainer" Turns Terminator into Zombie](#)

Type: News Item
Date: 06/13/2007
Language: English

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 142.0KB

** also available in french** ETC Group today releases "Terminator: The Sequel," a Communiqué reporting on new research related to "suicide seeds" and other genetically modified (GM) seed technologies that pose unacceptable threats to farmers, biodiversity and food sovereignty.

Today ETC Group reports on a new crop of genetic engineering technologies that are being promoted as a biosafety solution to the unwanted spread of transgenes from GM crops, trees and pharmaceutical-producing plants. In practice, these technologies, if commercialized, will allow the multinational seed industry to tighten its grasp on proprietary seeds and to restrict the rights of farmers.

The 28-page Communiqué begins with an examination of [the European Union's...](#) [Read more](#)

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[ETC Group Warns that US Government's Push for Geoengineering is Unacceptable](#)

Type: News Item
Date: 02/01/2007
Language: English

Download PDF:

 139.2KB

ETC Group News Release February 1, 2007 www.etcgroup.org

Gambling with Gaia

On the Eve of the Release of UN Climate Change Report ETC Group Warns that US Government's Push for Geoengineering is Unacceptable

On the day before the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) sounds its loudest alarm yet, ETC Group warns that some OECD states, led by the United States, are betting on a pie-in-the-sky techno-fix to address climate change. "Geoengineering" refers to the intentional, large-scale manipulation of the environment to bring about environmental change. With no hope for Kyoto, little political will to ask industry or voters to change lifestyles and a growing recognition that carbon trading is a farce, some governments are concluding that massive earth restructuring is the only way out. The Guardian reported earlier this week that the US government is lobbying... [Read more](#)

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Terminator

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Monsanto Acquires Delta & Pine Land and Terminator

Type: News Item
Date: 08/16/2006
Language: English

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 416.2KB

News Release ETC Group 16 August 2006 www.etcgroup.org www.banterminator.org

Monsanto Announces Takeover of Delta & Pine Land and Terminator Seed Technology (again)

In a quest to expand its corporate seed empire - Monsanto, the world's largest seed enterprise - announced yesterday that it will buy the world's leading cotton seed company, Mississippi-based (USA) Delta & Pine Land, for US\$1.5 billion. Monsanto and Delta & Pine Land (D&PL) together account for over 57% of the US cotton seed market. With D&PL subsidiaries in 13 countries - including major markets such as China, India, Brazil, Mexico, Turkey and Pakistan - the takeover means that Monsanto will command a dominant position in one of the world's most important agricultural trade commodities and that millions of cotton farmers will be under increased pressure to accept genetically... [Read more](#)

Categories:

News Release: Call for rejection of World Bank-GEF biosafety projects

Type: News Item
Date: 06/27/2006
Language: English

Download PDF:

 423.5KB

Groups in Latin America and Africa call for rejection of World Bank-GEF biosafety projects

News Release / June 27th 2006

Released by: African Centre for Biosafety - <http://www.biosafetyafrica.net> ETC Group - <http://www.etcgroup.org> GRAIN - <http://www.grain.org> Red por una América Latina Libre de Transgénicos - <http://www.rallt.org>

Two World Bank projects, with funding from the GEF (Global Environmental Facility), propose to introduce genetically modified crops such as maize, potatoes, cassava, rice and cotton into five Latin American and four African countries that are centers of origin or diversity for these and other major food crops. Civil society organizations warn... [Read more](#)

Categories:

[Groups in Africa, Latin America condemn
World Bank biosafety projects](#)

Type: Other
Date: 06/26/2006
Language: English

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 89.5KB

The World Bank is set to secure funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for two projects that will undermine public debate and aggressively drive GM crops into the heart of peasant agriculture. The two projects, one in West Africa and the other in Latin America, will hasten the spread of GM crops into farmer seed systems and even into certain centres of origin.

[Read more](#)

Categories:
