

# **Asia-Europe People's Forum (Vientiane): AEPF9 Workshop on green economy & climate change - Implications for Asian food sovereignty**

Tuesday 18 December 2012, by [AEPF](#) (Date first published: 19 October 2012).

## **Highlights of the Discussions**

The workshop discussed how the three current global crises i.e. financial crisis, ecological/climate crisis and food security crisis are corresponding and interrelated, and that these ongoing crises are leading to uprising and violence around the world. Green economy was examined since it has been advocated by the UN and many governments as a potential new development approach which brings environmental resources into the current capitalist/market system. Payments for environmental services and "offsets" are two main ideas behind the approach, which would undermine the shift to genuinely sustainable livelihood/self reliance of small-scale farmers. Other solutions proposed under green economy include new technologies which have been unproven and unsafe, including GMOs and synthetic biology, Nano-technology, synthetic biology, biofuels, geo-engineering, etc. which would only benefit large corporations already controlling the food system in many parts of the world.

European agricultural and trade and investment policies are adversely affecting other regions like Africa and Asia as they promote sourcing of raw materials from these continents, leading to problems of land grabbing and conflicts in natural resources and local communities, to name a few. To change the structure of the food system, there is need to change power relationships between countries. The EU policies aim to strengthen the power of global European corporations, and hence are undermining local small-scale farmers in developing regions. Meanwhile, land grabbing is now being seen as the main factor behind the food crisis and hunger in many parts of the world. Land grabbing was discussed in the contexts of national investment/policy, bilateral agreements, FTAs particularly within ASEAN and EU-ASEAN countries. Experiences in community-based initiatives to reclaim/sustain food security and food sovereignty and to protect natural resources such as community forests were also shared by speakers from Cambodia and Thailand. In these two cases, people's initiatives have started on their own without governments' support.

## **Recommendations**

Under the context of the current climate and food crises discussed above, the following are the key recommendations:

1. People should reclaim definition of 'food security' and 'food sovereignty' to reflect their own context.
2. The key element within food sovereignty from the communities' perception is the capacity to be self reliant in food.

3. Control over the food resource base should include the land, forest, water genetic resources and coastal resources.
4. Bilateral/multilateral trade agreements and investment contracts that undermine food sovereignty should be cancelled.
5. The food system which consists of food production, markets, distribution, needs to be reclaimed and brought under the ownership/direction by the communities.
6. Industry's control on food system and land grabbing must be stopped. On the other hand, small-scale sustainable agriculture and schemes that result in food sovereignty should be supported and promoted at both national and regional levels.
7. Fair policies and legal system must be put in place and implemented to ensure farmers' participation and to promote and protect local sustainable food production against chemical agricultural practices.

*Lead Organizers: Thai Working Group for Climate Justice and Focus on the Global South*

---