

CHALLENGES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SDG 2

- » The global agricultural system needs to turn 180 degrees when hunger is to be stopped worldwide. Industrial agriculture based on monocultures and the use of pesticides and fertilizers has to step aside for agro-ecological methods.¹² In this, indigenous peoples and local communities are important partners.
- » Indigenous communities as central actors and bearers of rights and knowledge on questions of sustainable lifestyles and subsistence strategies must be included in a participatory approach in the implementation process of the SDGs at all levels.
- » A consistent human rights approach in the implementation of SDG2 is necessary to prevent the subordination of human rights and sustainable development to unsustainable economic and political interests. Without a human rights approach there is a risk that actors such as business groups and agribusinesses push forward developments such as a new edition of the Green Revolution in Africa that threatens the independence of small peasants¹³ or increased land grabbing where large areas of land in fragile regions are bought or rented out of commercial interests.¹⁴ The observance of human rights obligations may thus not only be claimed for development policies, but also for all other political sectors, such as agriculture, business and energy policies.

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Für den Inhalt dieser Publikation ist allein das Institut für Ökologie und Aktions-Ethnologie verantwortlich; die hier dargestellten Positionen geben nicht den Standpunkt von Engagement Global gGmbH und dem Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit sowie den weiteren Förderinstitutionen wieder.

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Joint steps towards Sustainable Development: Indigenous communities as partners in forest, climate and land protection



End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture



Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

In 2015, the international community adopted „The Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development“, comprising 17 global *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs) which unite the three dimensions of sustainable development – the economic, social and environmental. All countries are called upon to implement these goals. Human beings are at the core of sustainable development processes and their implementation.¹

Indigenous peoples - with about 370 million people worldwide who identify themselves as such – are important partners in the realization of sustainable development because of their knowledge, traditional practices, technologies, strategies and innovations. They make valuable contributions to the sustainable use of natural resources, to the protection of biodiversity, forests and climate and therefore to the fulfillment of the SDGs.

In order to be able to make these contributions, indigenous peoples' rights have to be guaranteed, in particular as they pertain to land, resources and self-determined development. As a precondition for the self-determined improvement of the living conditions of indigenous peoples and other disadvantaged population groups, the implementation of Agenda 2030 must follow a human rights based approach – also in and by Germany.

With the present series of fact sheets INFOE would like to

- make indigenous peoples' contributions to sustainable development more visible and understandable
- promote the recognition of indigenous rights in the implementation of the SDGs
- promote a human rights based approach to the implementation of the SDGs by Germany

SDG 2 End hunger,

The right to food is a basic human right that, even though it was already defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, to this date, has not been implemented for every human being on earth.² Although global agriculture today obtains higher per capita harvests than ever before, around 800 million people worldwide suffer from hunger. The majority of the affected people lives in the rural areas of the countries of the Global South, among them small and subsistence farmers, pastoralists, fishermen and indigenous peoples whose livelihood is sustained by the use of local lands. Although they produce 80 % of the foodstuffs worldwide, often they have scarcely enough for themselves to survive. To fulfill the right to sufficient and healthy food, they must have secure access to soil, water and means of production.³



Global Call to Action on Indigenous and Community Land Rights

„Up to 2.5 billion human beings, among them 370 million belonging to indigenous peoples, depend on land and natural resources that are owned, used and managed collectively. Their rights to these resources are threatened and only 10% are officially recognized as owned by indigenous peoples and local communities. Thus, one third of the world's population is exposed to the pressure by more powerful actors. On the whole, communities with insecure land rights have reduced chances to enjoy well-being and achieve sustainable development.“⁴

UN SDG 2, which strives for the end of hunger worldwide by 2030, departs from this central demand and elaborates the link between secure access to fertile lands and food security. In the Global South, but also in the Global North, the issue of a just distribution of agricultural lands is essential. Since the financial crisis in 2008, arable lands have globally become popular investment assets.⁵ Prices for arable lands in Eastern Germany have tripled since, making it thus impossible for young farmers to establish their own agricultural enterprises. Agricultural structures move from peasant agriculture to agribusinesses, large-scale cultivation of agricultural commodities in monoculture and under use of mineral fertilizers and pesticides. This leads to the impoverishment, degradation and ultimately to the loss of valuable arable lands. To achieve

the demands of SDG 2 and long-term food security, just distribution of lands and small peasant structures have to be promoted as precondition for sustainable development, both in Germany and Europe and particularly, in the Global South. This also applies to the use of areas and resources in countries of the Global South by countries such as Germany to meet their own needs for agricultural raw materials, such as soy or palm oil.

... achieve food security on the basis of guaranteed land rights and ...

Since the colonization of their territories by modern states, indigenous communities have been fighting for the guarantee of their rights to land and to their natural resources because their physical and cultural survival directly depends on this. SDG 2.3 explicitly mentions indigenous communities as a group whose secure and equal access to lands has to be particularly ensured. This access forms the basis of their food security as well as the food sovereignty of indigenous people(s). This means the opportunity to produce sufficient healthy and culturally adequate food and to exercise and preserve traditional agricultural practices.⁶ Ultimately, these do not only serve local indigenous communities, but are also groundbreaking for a sustainable land use globally.

In practice, indigenous peoples' rights to land and resources use are often ignored and illegal evictions and compulsory relocations take place. A large part of the territories that are collectively used and managed

SDG 2.3

„By 2030 double the agricultural productivity and the incomes of small-scale food producers, particularly women, **indigenous peoples**, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through **secure and equal access to land**, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets, and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment“

by indigenous peoples is not officially documented and is thus often declared 'no man's land'. Legal remedies to defend themselves against the loss and threat of their

territories are missing. Secure rights to land and resource use are fundamental to a self-determined development and to overcome poverty and hunger.

International agreements such as the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, ILO-Convention No. 169 as well as the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security adopted in 2012 place indigenous peoples' land and resource rights under state protection.⁷ These legal documents have to be the foundation of all measures to

UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples § 26

„1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.
2. Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired.
3. States shall give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories and resources. Such recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions and land tenure systems of the indigenous peoples concerned.“

achieve SDG2. They specify the Universal Human Rights as to their application on the specific situation of indigenous peoples and thereby take into account in particular their collective aspects.⁸

... promote the sustainable agriculture of indigenous communities and other small peasant economic practices

The areas with the highest biological diversity worldwide are located in the areas traditionally inhabited and used by indigenous peoples. Through their agricultural production and food systems and the use and preservation of a variety of wild and cultivated plants, they have decisively contributed to the protection of species and species diversity. Where indigenous and local communities

have secure land rights over their territories and have the means to protect them effectively from outside threats, such as resource exploitation and large-scale infrastructure projects, the expansion of agribusinesses among others, considerably less deforestation and an increase in biodiversity takes place.⁹ Agricultural systems which are adapted to natural conditions and cycles and induce positive biological interactions between the individual components of an agricultural ecosystem are assigned to the methods and principles of *agroecology*. This is based upon local, traditional knowledge on cultivation meth-



In the *Milpa* system, a mixed cultivation system of the indigenous peoples of Central America, corn, pumpkin and beans are grown together in a field in order to achieve positive interactions between the different components.¹⁰

ods and crop plants. Its aim is to increase biological and genetic diversity of agricultural landscapes and thereby reduce vulnerability with regard to environmental and climate related changes. Numerous agro-ecological methods such as the cultivation of mixed crops, agroforestry and water harvesting are traditional components of indigenous agricultural methods.¹¹ It is important to recognize and promote the valuable expertise of indigenous peoples in the field of agro-ecology.

SDG 2.4

„By 2030 ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters, and that progressively improve land and soil quality“



Ölpalmpflanzung in Polochic, Guatemala

¹ UN GA: Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development A/RES/70/1

² UN (1948), Universal Declaration of Human Rights, A/RES/217/ A (III) §25

³ Zukunftsstiftung Landwirtschaft (2013), Wege aus der Hungerkrise. Die Erkenntnisse und Folgen des Weltagrarberichts: Vorschläge für eine Landwirtschaft von morgen. Hamm: AbL Verlag

⁴ Global Call to Action on Indigenous and Community Land Rights <http://www.landrightsnow.org/en/why/>

⁵ Forum Umwelt und Entwicklung (2016), Kampf um Land. Lebensgrundlage, Ökosystem, Kapitalanlage, Rundbrief 1/2016.

⁶ See: Declaration of Nyéléni, Nyéléni, Gemeinde Sélingué, Mali, 27.2. 2007, www.nyeleni.org.

⁷ UN (2007), United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), A/RES/61/295, §25, §26, §27; International Labour Organization, Convention 169, on indigenous and tribal peoples living in independent countries, 1989. §13, §14, §17, §18, §19; FAO (2012), Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

⁸ Feiring, Birgitte (2013), Indigenous Peoples' Rights to Lands, Territories and Resources. Rome: International Land Coalition.

⁹ Victoria Tauli-Corpuz (2016), Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, A/71/229

¹⁰ BUND 2014 Flyer zu Milpa http://region-hannover.bund.net/themen_und_projekte/nutzpflanzenvielfalt/mischkultur_milpa/

¹¹ Silici, Laura (2014). Agroecology. What it is and what it has to offer. IIED Issue Paper. IIED, London.

¹² De Schutter, Olivier (2011), "Agroecology and the Right to Food", Report for the 16th session of the UN-HR Council, A/HRC/16/49

¹³ See Clausing, Peter (2013), Was Bill Gates in Afrika treibt. Die Wochenzeitung, Nr. 46, 14.11.2013, <https://www.woz.ch/-47f89>

¹⁴ Forschungs- und Dokumentationszentrum Chile-Lateinamerika e.V. (FDCL e.V.) "Deutschland als Landgrabber".