



## Australian Food Sovereignty Alliance Peoples' Food Plan

### The Solution: Agroecology

Overwhelming evidence shows ‘that a transition to an agriculture based on agroecological principles would not only provide rural families with significant social, economic, and environmental benefits, but would also feed the world, equitably and sustainably’.<sup>1</sup> AFSA members practise agroecological and regenerative farming practices, with most increasingly aligning themselves with agroecology - a scientifically and experientially justified practice of agriculture that is sensitive to the ecosystems in which it is situated **and that fosters the democratic participation of all peoples in the food system**. Its original and still predominant practitioners are Indigenous Peoples and peasant smallholders the world over.

These small-scale food producers produce around 70 percent of the world’s food, with the remaining 30 percent grown by large-scale industrial farms.<sup>2</sup> Agroecology promotes the ‘**radical abundance**’ which ensures sufficiency for all possible through **degrowth, the re-embedding of food systems in local economies, the horizontal sharing of knowledge and greater participation in decision-making by food producers**.

The Plan provides conceptualisations of agroecology, and how it is clearly distinguished from ‘regenerative agriculture’. It explores concerns surrounding false solutions to the issues agroecology addresses, such as the financialisation of nature; the hijacking of regenerative agriculture as an industry rather than a movement; nature-based solutions (such as climate-smart agriculture, sustainable intensification, and precision agriculture); and philanthrocapitalism eroding eroding smallholders’ and civil society’s right to determine their own food system and practise horizontal knowledge sharing.

In order to address these issues, the Plan proposes grassroots and institutional solutions through which farmers, allies, communities, schools, and universities can promote agroecological farming practices, exchange knowledge on Caring for Country, and strengthen democratic food systems. A number of grassroots initiatives to strengthen an agroecological food system are shared in the case studies.

---

<sup>1</sup> Nicholls and Altieri 2018 (pg. 1); FAO 2015; IAASTD 2009; IPES-Food 2016

<sup>2</sup> Shiva, 2017

## Key peoples' policy recommendations\*:

### Local and State Government:

- Provide public facilities to host farmers' markets, food and seed fairs and festivals for agroecological and other diversified sustainable local producers.
- Fund grants to democratically-constituted farmer organisations to collectivise and develop cooperative production, processing, and distribution infrastructure needed (e.g. farming equipment, abattoirs, boning rooms, grain mills, dairy processing, refrigerated transport and storage);
- Develop and fund generously school curricula with a focus on agroecology and food literacy including garden and teaching staff;

### The Federal Government

- Allocate funding to support action research and farmer-led innovation in agroecology through bodies such as CSIRO.
- Develop and support transdisciplinary research conducted through platforms that foster co-learning between practitioners and researchers, and horizontal dissemination of experience among practitioners (e.g. farmer-to-farmer networks, communities of practice and agroecological beacons);
- Address power imbalances and conflicts of interest in relation to the generation, validation and communication of knowledge about food production and processing, by valuing different sources of knowledge and bridging gaps between knowledge generated and transmitted through Indigenous Peoples and social movements on the one hand, and the scientific sector on the other.

*\*Please refer to the Right to Food section of AFSA's Peoples' Food Plan for a full list of policy recommendations for local, state and federal government.*

## Case studies

### **Agroecology Beacon: Tumpinyeri Growers and Jonai Farms**

Jonai Farms and Tumpinyeri Growers have a landsharing agreement on Dja Dja Wurrung Country (djandak) to share land, resources, labour, and community to run their respective and integrated small-scale enterprises raising pastured pigs and cattle, and fruit and vegetables. They share their knowledge on growing ethically and sustainably with the community and other farmers, as a beacon of love and hope in the growing agroecological transition across the world.

### **CET Agroecology Lighthouse - Bio-Bio region, Chile**

Over the past 20 years, el Centro de Educacion y Tecnologia (CET) has engaged no less than 130,000 campesinos, students and technicians in their agroecological demonstration farms. By supporting the sharing of agroecological principles into the broader rural community, CET has helped transform Chile's Bio-Bio region into a community which protects peasant food sovereignty, localises food systems and promotes the sacred and ecologically just production of food