

Kedaulatan Pangan: Jalan Pembebasan Kaum Tani dari Kemiskinan dan Kelaparan

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Istilah Kedaulatan Pangan pertama kali dicetuskan oleh kaum tani, keluarga tani dan buruh tani dari berbagai negara di dunia yang bergabung dalam organisasi petani kecil La Via Campesina pada tahun 1996 di Roma, Italia. Kedaulatan pangan sendiri bermakna pemenuhan hak atas pangan yang berkualitas gizi baik dan sesuai secara budaya, diproduksi dengan sistem pertanian yang berkelanjutan dan ramah lingkungan serta pemenuhan hak manusia untuk menentukan sistem pertanian dan pangannya sendiri yang lebih menekankan pada pertanian berbasis keluarga yang berdasarkan pada prinsip solidaritas.

Di tengah FAO mendeklarasikan *Declaration of Rome of Food Security*, para petani dari seluruh dunia mengusung konsep kedaulatan pangan. Karena konsep ketahanan pangan tidak cocok dan tidak bisa menjawab realitas kaum tani di seluruh dunia yang tengah menghadapi kelaparan dan kemiskinan berkepanjangan. Konsep ketahanan pangan yang berasaskan pada 3 prinsip utama yaitu ketersediaan, kecukupan dan keterjangkauan merupakan sebuah konsepsi liberal yang hendak mengakomodasi kepentingan dari globalisasi ekonomi pasar bebas setelah WTO dibentuk 1 tahun sebelumnya (1995).

Di Indonesia sendiri tiga kredo Konsensus Washington, privatisasi, liberalisasi dan deregulasi semakin mendominasi kebijakan di Indonesia—terutama kebijakan terkait pangan dan pertanian. Paket kebijakan ini didorong oleh berbagai lembaga keuangan internasional ini disebut sebagai paket kebijakan neoliberal.

- a. *Privatisasi pangan*; Dengan privatisasi mendorong pemerintah lepas tangan terhadap berbagai tanggung jawabnya. Didorong oleh penandatanganan *Letter of Intent (LoI)* dengan IMF, pemerintah memprivatisasikan berbagai sektor yang seharusnya menjadi State Obligation. Industri hulu hingga hilir produksi pertanian Indonesia dikuasai oleh perusahaan-perusahaan pertanian besar. Salah satu contohnya ialah perubahan Badan Urusan Logistik (Bulog) dari Lembaga

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- Pemerintah Non Departemen menjadi Perusahaan Umum, yang posisinya sama dengan perusahaan swasta.
- b. *Liberalisasi*; mekanisme perdagangan produk pertanian yang ditentukan oleh rezim perdagangan bebas semenjak 1995 lewat *Agreement on Agriculture*, WTO. Indonesia pun turut melakukan upaya liberalisasi terhadap hal yang harusnya merupakan *state obligation* terhadap rakyat. Akses pasar Indonesia dibuka lebar-lebar, bahkan bea masuk untuk pangan impor diturunkan hingga 0 persen seperti pada kedelai (1998, 2008), terigu (2008) dan beras (1998). Hal tersebut menyebabkan berbagai pangan pokok seperti beras, jagung, kedelai, gula, susu dan daging sapi menjadi sangat mengandalkan impor. Pada tahun 2004, 9,13 persen kebutuhan nasional akan jagung masih disupply oleh jagung impor, sementara kedelai, gula, susu dan daging sapi masing-masing 60,98 persen, 19,70 persen, 92 persen dan 4,08 persennya tergantung pada pintu impor². Tahun 2007 Indonesia masih mengimpor beras sebanyak 1 juta ton. Sementara untuk pemenuhan kebutuhan susu dalam negeri, hampir 90 persen dipenuhi dari impor.³ Data hingga tahun 2004 misalnya dapat dilihat rata-rata Indonesia mengalami defisit dari perdagangan pangan sebesar 1, 89 milyar US\$ atau lebih kurang Rp 17 trilyun.
- c. *Deregulasi*; beberapa kebijakan sangat mempermudah perusahaan besar untuk berkembang yang mengalahkan pertanian rakyat. Seperti contoh UU No. 72004 tentang Sumber Daya Air yang merupakan bagian dari program Bank Dunia yang mempromosikan jual-beli air dengan program bernama *Water Structural Adjustment Loan* (WATSAL), Perpres 36 dan 65/2006 tentang Penggunaan Tanah bagi Kepentingan Publik, UU No. 18/2003 Tentang Perkebunan, dan yang terbaru ialah UU No. 25/2007 tentang Penanaman Modal (UUPM). Dengan kemudahan ini, upaya privatisasi menuju monopoli atau kartel di sektor pangan semakin terbuka.

Bukti bahwa konsep ketahanan pangan adalah pro kepada pasar bebas ialah tidak adanya prinsip-prinsip yang memberikan jaminan, perlindungan dan hak-hak yang harus dan mampu dipenuhi oleh kaum tani dan buruh tani dalam persoalan pangan dan pertanian.

Sebagai praktek dari konsep ketahanan pangan pemerintah di berbagai belahan dunia mengadopsi konsep ini termasuk pemerintah Indonesia dengan melakukan pengurangan tarif/pajak impor untuk pangan. Pemerintah pun memberikan berbagai kemudahan pada

² Dr. Tjuk Eko Hari Basuki, Pusat Ketersediaan dan Kerawanan Pangan, 2007

³ BPS. 2003. Analisis Situasi Ekspor dan Impor Komoditi Peternakan.

perusahaan-perusahaan agribisnis di dunia untuk melakukan investasi di sektor pangan dan pertanian. Hal ini bisa dilihat melalui berbagai kebijakan yang dikeluarkan pemerintah yang sangat memudahkan para investor seperti UU No. 7/1996 tentang Pangan, UU No.7/2004 yang mengatur privatisasi air, UU No.18/2003 tentang perkebunan dan UU No. 25/2007 tentang Penanaman Modal.

Akibatnya impor bahan pangan dari berbagai belahan dunia membanjiri pasar-pasar nasional, menurunkan harga jual hasil panen para petani termasuk pada komoditas pangan pokok. Hal ini menyebabkan produk para petani menjadi tidak laku atau jatuhnya harga produk pertanian domestik sehingga tingkat kemiskinan di pedesaan pun meningkat.

Pengaruh dari meningkatnya ekonomi pangan yang diambil oleh perusahaan-perusahaan agribisnis adalah sektor pangan menjadi banyak dikuasai oleh perusahaan-perusahaan tersebut, sehingga pedesaan tidak lagi mampu menikmati “kue” ekonomi pangan. Inilah yang mendorong terjadinya peningkatan kemiskinan terutama di pedesaan. Tiadanya lapangan pekerjaan, meningkatnya jumlah buruh migran dan urbanisasi untuk menjadi pekerja domestik (PRT). Menurut Departemen Tenaga Kerja misalnya pada tahun 2004 terdapat 56.000 buruh migran Indonesia yang terdaftar walaupun sesungguhnya jumlah ini jauh lebih besar, dan sebagian besar menjadi pekerja domestik.

Jumlah produksi dan penyediaan pangan di tingkat nasional sesungguhnya telah mencukupi, tetapi tidak diproduksi, dikuasai oleh kaum tani tetapi oleh pasar dan perusahaan besar sehingga sebenarnya melalui proses penerapan ketahanan pangan telah menyebabkan Indonesian berada dalam ketergantungan pangan.

Kondisi ini telah berlangsung cukup lama sehingga bukan hanya sampai pada ketergantungan tetapi telah sampai pada tingkat jebakan pangan (*food trap*) sebagaimana bisa dilihat pada kasus kedelai (tahun 2008), kasus minyak goreng dan daging sapi (tahun 2007).

Konsep ketahanan pangan inilah yang juga didorong oleh kelompok ekonom penganut liberalisme pasar yang di Indonesia sangat gigih mendorong terjadinya deregulasi, dalam hal ini kelompok ekonom mainstream “Mafia Berkeley”. Lebih lanjut cukup disayangkan juga bahwa berbagai Perguruan Tinggi ternama sektor pertanian di Indonesia juga menjadi tim perumus dari konsep ketahanan pangan ini.

Di tahun 2008 segala janji-janji untuk pengurangan kemiskinan dan kelaparan melalui konsep ketahanan pangan hanya sekedar janji manis karena yang terjadi justru

sebaliknya. Krisis pangan global melanda berbagai negara. FAO sendiri tidak berani untuk menyelenggarakan *World Food Summit 10 Years Later* yang seharusnya diadakan pada tahun 2006 lalu. Karena FAO melihat kenyataan bahwa satu decade setelah diluncurkannya *Declaration of Rome* angka kelaparan dunia bukannya berkurang tetapi semakin bertambah dari 800 juta jiwa menjadi 854 juta jiwa sepuluh tahun kemudian. Demikian pula gerakan global melalui Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) di sektor pangan dan pertanian gagal mencapai target untuk mengurangi separuh jumlah kelaparan di dunia pada tahun 2015.

Krisis iklim akibat perubahan cuaca di dunia juga banyak disebabkan oleh system ketahanan pangan dan agribisnis. Melalui pengembangan pembukaan perkebunan-perkebunan monokultur yang mengkonversi lahan pertanian tumpang sari dan pertanian rakyat termasuk yang dikelola oleh masyarakat adat serta gelombang pembukaan lahan untuk agrofuel telah menyebabkan berkurangnya kemampuan daya serap lahan-lahan pertanian terhadap emisi karbon serta menciptakan kelaparan.

Hal ini karena sifat pertanian monokultur dan perkebunan besar yang menggunakan input kimiawi (pupuk, pestisida) dalam jumlah besar dan selalu berorientasi ekspor. Terkonsentrasinya produksi pangan pada perusahaan agribisnis telah mengubah pertanian rakyat menjadi pertanian industri yang terkonsentrasi dan tidak efisien. Lebih lanjut pertanian industri juga menyerap input minyak bumi yang sangat besar dalam prosesnya (untuk bahan baku pupuk dan pestisida kimiawi, distribusi antar kota, propinsi, negara hingga lintas benua).

Pelaksanaan kedaulatan pangan hanya bisa dilakukan apabila kita memiliki pemahaman menyeluruh atas berbagai persoalan di atas serta adanya keinginan untuk meletakkan pangan dan pertanian di tangan petani kecil. Sehingga keuntungan dari pertanian juga bisa dinikmati oleh petani kecil yang menyusun hampir separuh populasi di Indonesia dan juga di dunia.

Kedaulatan pangan tidak akan pernah tercapai di dalam sistem ekonomi pasar bebas dan kebijakan neoliberal (privatisasi, liberalisasi, dan deregulasi) seperti yang berlangsung saat ini.

Kedaulatan pangan bukanlah konsep yang meletakkan pangan dalam koridor kompetisi pasar dimana satu negara dengan negara lain berusaha saling membunuh dan menjatuhkan satu sama lain seperti yang terjadi melalui WTO, FTA dan pakta-pakta

perdagangan bebas lainnya. Kedaulatan pangan adalah konsep yang justru hendak mendemoralisasi dan mendelegitimasi konsep perdagangan bebas dengan sebuah konsepsi baru yang meletakkan system pangan berdasarkan keadilan sosial dan solidaritas (gotong royong kekeluargaan).

Krisis finansial global saat ini adalah suatu bukti bahwa sistem ekonomi kapitalisme yang membiarkan pasar mengatur dirinya sendiri hanya dipakai oleh kelompok pemodal untuk terus memperkaya dirinya sendiri melalui kegiatan-kegiatan spekulasi. Dalam hal pangan kondisi serupa juga terjadi karena itu meletakkan/membiarkan perusahaan agribisnis terlebih agribisnis transnasional menjadi pemain utama di sektor pangan dan pertanian merupakan sebuah kesalahan yang sangat fatal yang tidak akan mampu mengatasi kelaparan di dunia.

Kedaulatan pangan membawa sebuah pesan yang sangat jelas bahwa yang hendak dicapai oleh konsep ini ialah ekonomi rakyat/kaum tani yang berdaulat agar kaum tani dapat hidup bermartabat. Konsep kedaulatan pangan yang diusung La Via Campesina sangat jelas mengatur:

- a. Adanya hak akses rakyat terhadap pangan
- b. Penggunaan sumber daya alam secara berkelanjutan
- c. Pangan untuk pangan dan tidak sekadar komoditas yang diperdagangkan
- d. Pembatasan penguasaan pangan oleh korporasi
- e. Melarang penggunaan pangan sebagai senjata
- f. Pemberian akses ke petani kecil untuk perumusan kebijakan pertanian.

Di Indonesia, walaupun banyak dilupakan oleh akademisi, tema pembaruan agraria tetap menjadi tema utama perjuangan organisasi tani. Dan secara nyata dilaksanakan dalam praktek-praktek perjuangan kaum tani untuk mendapatkan tanah pertanian. Di beberapa daerah perjuangan kaum tunakisma ini telah berhasil mendapatkan kembali lahan-lahan pertanian seperti di Sumatra Utara, Jambi atau di Wonosobo.

Sebagai bangsa dengan kebudayaan pertanian yang tinggi petani telah dan masih mempertahankan pengetahuan pertanian lokal. Praktek agro ekologi, mempraktekkan pertanian tumpang sari, melestarikan benih-benih lokal, mempertahankan sistem irigasi yang berbasis budaya lokal merupakan perwujudan dari praktek kedaulatan pangan. Praktek-praktek seperti ini sangat banyak dan beragam di Indonesia dan menjadi tugas pemerintah bersama petani dan organisasi tani untuk mempertahankannya.

Perjuangan melaksanakan kedaulatan pangan untuk menjadi tema besar di dunia bukanlah hal yang mudah dilakukan oleh organisasi tani. Dalam setiap pertemuan besar dunia yang berkaitan dengan sektor pertanian seperti WTO kaum tani selalu berada di garis depan dalam menentang komersialisasi pertanian dengan membawa alternatif yaitu kedaulatan pangan, demikian juga dalam setiap pertemuan FAO.

Perjuangan Via Campesina dalam membawa konsep kedaulatan pangan bahkan telah mampu menembus lembaga FAO yang sangat gigih memegang prinsip ketahanan pangan karena kian hari justru konsep ketahanan pangan semakin melemah dan konsep kedaulatan pangan semakin menguat. Pada konferensi ICARRD (*International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development*) yang diadakan FAO tahun 2006 di Porto Alegre, Brazil kedaulatan pangan menjadi salah satu point penting dalam deklarasinya.

Kehadiran organisasi tani seperti La Via Campesina yang konsisten mengusung 2 tema besar yaitu Pembaruan Agraria dan Kedaulatan Pangan juga telah mendapatkan tempat yang besar dalam lembaga-lembaga internasional yang berkaitan dengan pertanian seperti FAO dan IFAD. Hal ini bisa dilihat dengan semakin menguatnya suara kaum tani dalam di setiap forum FAO. IFAD sendiri bahkan telah 2 kali menggelar *Farmer Forum* untuk mengakomodasi suara kaum tani dunia.

Kehadiran konsep kedaulatan pangan ini juga mendapat sambutan yang begitu antusias dari kelompok gerakan sosial dunia lainnya seperti organisasi perempuan, konsumen, masyarakat adat, lingkungan hidup. Dari sinilah berhasil terselenggaranya Nyeleni Forum yaitu Konferensi Kedaulatan Pangan Internasional yang diadakan di Selingue, Mali pada Februari 2007 (www.viacampesina.org atau www.nyeleni2007.org).

Beberapa pemerintahan progresif di sejumlah negara dunia telah menempatkan kedaulatan pangan sebagai konsep kebijakan nasional seperti di Mali, Bolivia dan Venezuela. Upaya dunia intelektual yang mengangkat tema kedaulatan pangan patut untuk dihargai karena perjuangan kedaulatan pangan yang diusung kelompok tani-dari mana konsep ini berasal- sangat memerlukan adanya dukungan kelompok intelektual agar pelaksanaan kedaulatan pangan semakin cepat terwujud.

Akan tetapi jangan sampai akomodasi yang dilakukan oleh kelompok intelektual; justru kemabli mengeliminir dan mereduksi prinsip-prinsip dasar kedaulatan pangan dalam wadah kebijakan neoliberal.

Kedaulatan pangan tidak mungkin bersanding dengan ketahanan pangan. Kedaulatan pangan tidak mungkin terwujud melalui sistem agribisnis, melalui perdagangan bebas seperti FTA dan EPA. Kehadiran dunia akademik yang diharapkan justru harus mampu memberikan bobot urgensi pentingnya orientasi pembangunan nasional pada pertanian pertanian rakyat dan bukan pada pertanian besar. Karena itulah dukungan dari kelompok intelektual hanya bisa diperoleh melalui kelompok intelektual yang progresif.

Praktek-praktek Kedaulatan Pangan

Industri pertanian yang dibangun secara monokultur sesungguhnya telah menyebabkan berbagai permasalahan seperti yang telah kita lihat bersama di atas. Salah satunya dapat lebih kita cermati bersama ialah kasus di wilayah NTT yang banyak dikenal sebagai penghasil berbagai komoditas ekspor yang cukup penting, khususnya untuk hasil pertaniannya. NTT disebut-sebut sebagai penghasil komoditas penting seperti coklat, kopi, mete dan kelapa. Dimana umumnya komoditas ini dikembangkan secara monokultur di sejumlah wilayah. Namun fakta menunjukkan bahwa kehidupan penduduk atau tepatnya petani penghasil komoditas tersebut banyak yang jauh dari kesejahteraan.

Sesungguhnya wilayah ini tidak dari dulu menjadi penghasil berbagai komoditas “*cash crops*”. Dari penuturan petani-petani tua di wilayah ini misalnya mereka menjelaskan betapa hingga akhir tahun 40an mereka umumnya berladang jagung (makanan pokok di sebagian besar wilayah ini), ubi kayu, dan jiwawut/sorgum (sejenis jagung yang bijinya sangat kecil) untuk makanan mereka. Akibat meluasnya perkebunan monokultur dapat kita lihat betapa dampaknya kelaparan kerap menjadi peristiwa rutin di wilayah ini.

Contoh menarik dari strategi mengatasi kekurangan pangan dan gagal panen dapat dilihat dari upaya yang dirintis oleh sekelompok petani di Kabupaten Sikka, Maumere, NTT. Memang jika dibandingkan dengan desa-desa lainnya areal ini memiliki sedikit keuntungan dimana desa ini bisa dikatakan terlambat mengalami masuknya ekspansi tanaman komoditi. Hanya ada sedikit hamparan perkebunan kemiri yang dapat ditemui di lereng gunung yang curam ini. Tanaman kemiri ini pun hanya ditanam di lahan kritis sehingga tanaman ini sesungguhnya juga berfungsi untuk mencegah terjadinya longsor.

Secara umum petani di Nilo memang lebih banyak menanam tanaman pangan seperti jagung, padi ladang, talas dan sayur-sayuran seperti sawi dan pare. Para petani ini seperti begitu banyak petani lainnya yang setelah masa Revolusi Hijau juga mengalami masa

dimana mereka harus menggunakan bibit, pupuk dan pestisida yang disediakan oleh Dinas Pertanian. Namun dalam perjalanannya para petani merasa betapa bibit yang diperoleh dari Dinas Pertanian jika ditanam banyak yang tidak memberikan hasil, atau jika ada hasilnya jauh lebih sedikit.

Lambat-laun para petani ini mulai kembali menggunakan bibit-bibit lokal mereka sendiri. Karena dengan kondisi alam yang tandus dan tidak ada irigasi teknis sama sekali di Kabupaten ini, memang panen hanya bisa dilakukan satu kali dalam setahun. Sehingga jika hasil produksi sedikit, memang sulit untuk bisa bertahan dari hasil panen. Para petani pun akhirnya mulai menyiapkan sendiri bibit yang akan ditanam. Satu kebiasaan lama yang sangat baik yang masih terus dilestarikan oleh penduduk di Nilo ialah hampir setiap rumah tangga masih memiliki lumbung untuk menyalin benih yang akan ditanam untuk musim tanam berikutnya. Lewat lumbung keluarga ini semangat gotong royong dan solidaritas juga terus dijaga, jika ada yang kekurangan benih untuk ditanam di ladangnya maka tetangga yang memiliki benih lebih akan saling membantu.

Contoh-contoh lain juga telah banyak dipraktekkan di berbagai daerah. Petani-petani anggota SPI saling berbagi pengetahuan dan ketrampilan pertanian organik di sejumlah Pusdiklat yang telah dikembangkan. Di Bogor misalnya tak jauh dari Kampus IPB Dramaga pengembangan pertanian organik ternyata mampu memenuhi kebutuhan hidup 4 keluarga tani di lahan seluas lebih kurang 1 hektar, di Sumatra Barat para petani juga telah mengelola pertanian organik sebagai bagian dari perjuangan mewujudkan kedaulatan pangan. Perlahan-lahan para petani di berbagai wilayah telah sadar bahwa hanya dengan membangun konsep kedaulatan pangan lewat pertanian berkelanjutan berbasis keluarga dan terlepas dari pertanian industri lah maka kaum tani dan masyarakat secara luas dapat lepas dari kemiskinan dan kelaparan.

Annex 1.

An Answer To The Global Food Crisis: Peasants And Small Farmers Can Feed The World!

Via Campesina Position Paper

Prices on the world market for cereals are rising. Wheat prices increased by 130% in the period between March 2007- March 2008. Rice prices increased by almost 80% in the period up to 2008. Maize prices increased by 35% between March 2007 and March 2008 (1). In countries that depend heavily on food imports some prices have gone up dramatically. Poor families see their food bills go up and can no longer afford to buy the minimum needed. In many countries cereal prices have doubled or tripled over the last year. Governments in these countries are under high pressure to make food available at reasonable prices. In Haiti the government already fell because of this issue and strong protests have taken place in other countries such as Cameroun, Egypt, and the Philippines...

The current crisis: a result of agricultural liberalization

Some analyst have been exclusively blaming agrofuels, the increasing world demand and global warming for the current food crisis. But actually, this crisis is also the result of many years of destructive policies that have undermined domestic food production. Trade liberalization has waged a virtual war against small producers. Farmers have been forced to produce cash crops for transnational corporations (TNCs) and buy their food on the world market.

Over the last 20-30 years the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and more recently the WTO have forced countries to decrease investment in food production and to reduce support for peasant and small farmers. However, small farmers are the key food producers in the world.

Major international donors have also shown a lack of interest in food production. Development cooperation from industrialized countries to developing countries went up from 20 billion USD in 1980 to 100 billion USD in 2007. However, support for agriculture went down from 17 billion dollar to 3 billion USD during the same time. And most of these funds probably did not go to peasant-based food production.

Under neo-liberal policies, state managed food reserves have been considered too expensive and governments have been forced to reduce and privatize them under structural adjustment regimes. For example, Bulog, the Indonesian state company founded to regulate buffer stocks was privatized in 1998 under the policy package of the

International Monetary Fund. Under pressure from the WTO, state marketing boards have been dismantled because they go against the principle of “free” trade. Under WTO agreements, countries have also been forced to “liberalize” their agricultural markets: reduce import duties (which is an important income loss for the importing governments!) and accept imports for at least 5% of their internal consumption even if they did not need it. At the same time TNCs have kept on dumping surpluses into their markets, using all forms of direct and indirect export subsidies.. At the same time, national governments have failed to stabilize their markets and protect farmers and consumers against sudden price fluctuations.

Neo-liberal policies have destroyed the capacities of countries to feed themselves. After 14 years of NAFTA (North America Free Trade Agreements) Mexico went through a major crisis often dubbed as the “tortilla crisis”. From an exporting country Mexico has become dependent on US maize imports and current imports 30 percent of its maize. Nowadays, while increased amounts of US maize have suddenly been diverted to agro-fuels production, quantities available for the Mexican markets have dropped, provoking price surges.

In 1992, Indonesian farmers produced enough soya to supply the domestic market. Soya-based tofu and 'tempeh' are an important part of the daily diet throughout the archipelago. Following the neo-liberal doctrine, the country opened its borders to food imports, allowing cheap US soy to flood the market. This destroyed national production. Today, 60% of the soy consumed in Indonesia is imported. Record prices for US soy last January led to a national crisis when the price of 'tempeh' and tofu (the « meat of the poor ») doubled in a few weeks.

According to the FAO the food deficit in West Africa increased by 81% between 1995 and 2004. During the same period cereal imports increased by 102%, sugar imports by 83%, dairy products by 152% and poultry by 500%. However, according to IFAD (2007) the region has the potential to produce sufficient amounts of food.

All around the world, even though it is increasing nation’s vulnerability, liberalization goes on: the European Union is forcing the ACP countries into so-called Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) to liberalize the agricultural sector with foreseeable adverse effects on food production.

The agrofuel boom: a sudden shock on the world markets

The emergence of agrofuels is another cause of food price rises. Over the past few years, TNCs and world economic powers such as the US and the EU have rapidly developed agrofuel production. Massive subsidies and investments are flowing into this “booming” sector. As a result, land is rapidly being converted from food into fuel production and an important part of the US maize suddenly “disappeared” as it was bought up for ethanol production. This uncontrolled explosion of the agrofuel sector created a shock in the already unstable international agricultural markets. Egypt, one of the largest cereal importers, has called upon the US and the EU to stop encouraging the growth of maize and other crops for agrofuels. In Egypt food prices, including subsidized bread, went up

by nearly 30% last year (2). In the Philippines, the government is now looking at some 1.2 million hectares for jatropha production in the southern island of Mindanao operated by the Philippine National Oil Co.-Alternative Fuels Corporation, It is also identifying more than 400,000 hectares of land for private sector investments. (Jatropha curcas is a drought-tolerant non-edible shrub. It produces fruits the size of golf balls which contain oil that can be converted into agrofuels. Impacts on local food security are expected (5).

Speculators: Betting on expected scarcity

Often eclipsed in the public debate, speculation is one of the main causes of the current food crisis. Production remains high, but speculators are betting on expected scarcity and artificially increasing prices.

World grain production in 2007/2008 is estimated at 2108 million tones (an increase by 4,7% compared to 2006/2007). This is well over the average growth in the last decade of 2%. Average consumption of cereals for food increased around 1% per year and will reach 1009 million tones in 2007/2008. The use for feed purposes increased by 2% to 756 million tones. And the use for other purposes will be around 364 million tones. An important part of it is maize (95 million tones), much of which is going into agrofuels. The USA is expected to use 81 million tons of maize for ethanol, 37% more than in 2006/2007.

The world cereal stocks are estimated to decrease by 21 million (5%) tons to 405 million tons at the end of the season in 2008. Stocks have been going down for several years, they are now at the lowest levels in 25 years.

Although it is true that over the last years demand has increased slightly more compared to production, a balanced international and national policy regarding domestic food production could easily address the situation and would secure stable prices for farmers and consumers.

TNCs and mainstream analysts expect that land will be increasingly used for agrofuels (maize but also palm oil, rape seed, sugarcane...). They predict that the growing Asian middle class will start buying meat which will increase cereal demand and they expect negative climate effects on food production such as severe droughts and floods. Meanwhile, TNCs aggressively obtain large areas of agricultural land around cities for speculative purposes, expelling small food producers. In India more than 700 so called "New Economic Zones" are being established, kicking farmers out of their land.

Based on those predictions, TNCs have been manipulating the markets. Traders have kept stocks away from the market in order to stimulate price increases and generate huge profits afterwards. In Indonesia, in the midst of the soya price hike in January 2008, the company PT Cargill Indonesia was still keeping 13,000 tons of soybeans in its warehouse in Surabaya, waiting for prices to reach record highs.

In many countries large supermarkets have gained a near monopoly power and they are increasing prices far more than is justified by the price increase of the agricultural product. For example in France the price of certain yoghurts increased by 40% although

the cost of the milk accounts for only a third of the total price. A substantial increase of the milk price for farmers could never cause such a price increase. (3) In Germany, farmers have seen the farm-gate price of milk dropping by 20-30%, pushing them into bankruptcy because supermarkets use cheap dairy products as a marketing tool to attract consumers.

International financial speculation is playing a major role in food price increases since the summer of 2007. Due to the financial crisis in the USA, speculators started to move from financial products to raw materials, including agricultural products. This directly affects prices in the domestic markets as many countries are increasingly dependent on food imports.

This is happening while there is still enough food in the world to feed the global population. According to the FAO the world could even feed up to 12 billion people in the future.

Lessons learned from the crisis: the market will not solve the problem

Instability on the international food markets is one of the characteristics of agricultural markets: as production is seasonal and variable, and an increase of production cannot be realized very quickly as crops need time to grow. At the same time consumption does not increase very much if more food is available. So small differences in supply and demand, uncertainties regarding future harvests and speculation on international markets can create huge price effects. The volatility in the food markets is mainly due to deregulation, the lack of control on the big players and the lack of necessary state intervention at the international and the national level to stabilize markets. De-regulated markets are key part of the problem!

Peasants and small farmers do not benefit from higher prices

While speculators and large traders do benefit from the current crises, most peasants and farmers do not benefit from the higher prices. They grow food, but the benefits of the harvest often get out of their hands : it is already sold out to the money lender, to the agricultural inputs company, or directly to the trader or the processing unit. Although prices for farmers have gone up for some cereals, this is modest compared with increases on the world market and increases imposed upon consumers. If food on the market comes from domestic producers, usually benefits of higher prices are reaped by companies and other intermediaries that buy the products from the farmers and sell them at a high price. If the products come from the international market, this is even clearer: transnational companies control that market. They define at what prices products are bought in the original country and at what prices they are sold in the importing country. Although in certain cases prices did go up for producers, the biggest part of the increase is cashed in by others. In the dairy and meat sector, because of the increased production costs, farmers even see their prices going down while consumers prices are shooting up.

Despite some moderate price increases at the farm level, stock breeders are in a crisis due to the rise in feed prices and cereal producers are facing sharp rises in oil based fertilizer prices. Farmers sell their produce at an extremely low price compared to what consumers pay. In Europe the Spanish Coordination of Farmer Unions (COAG) calculated that consumers in Spain pay up to 600% more than what the food producer gets for his/her

production. Similar figures also exist for other countries where the consumer price is mainly defined by costs for processing, transport and retailing.

Among the victims: Agricultural workers, landless farmers and cash crop producers

Agricultural workers as well as many people in the rural areas also have to buy food as they do not have access to land to produce. Therefore, they are severely hit by the current crisis. Some peasants and small farmers may have land but they are forced to produce cash crops instead of food. The increase of the price of edible oil in Indonesia since 2007 has not benefited the Indonesian palm oil farmers at all. They received only a minor price increase from the large buyers and they do not understand why ordinary people and consumers have to suffer such high prices for edible oil. Many of them are working under contract farming with big agribusiness companies which process, refine and sell the product. A small number of big agribusiness companies increased domestic prices, following the international price hike. The contract farming model creates a situation in which farmers cannot produce food for their families as they have to produce cash crops as monocultures such as sugar cane, palm oil, coffee, tea and cacao. This means that even if the farmer receives a minor increase for his cash crop, she has to buy much more expensive food on the market. Therefore increasing food prices also cause more poverty in their families.

Urban consumers hit hard

The international policies of the last decades have expelled hundreds of millions of people to the urban areas where most of them landed in slums, having a very precarious life, forced to work for very low wages and buy food and other goods at a high price. They are the first victims of the current crisis as they have no way to produce their own food. Their number has increased dramatically and they spend a big part of their income on food. According to the FAO, food represents up to 60-80 percent of consumer's spending in developing countries (including landless farmers and agricultural workers). Companies ruthlessly exploit the current situation, accepting that increasing numbers of people go hungry as they do not have the money to buy the available food. Governments are forced to import expensive food to meet consumer demand and do not have the means to support the poorest consumers.

More free trade will not solve the crisis

Institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF as well as some governments are now advocating more investment in agriculture, increased food aid for the low income food importing countries and further liberalization of markets so that countries can improve their income through export. Many argue that we need more intensive production patterns, which means for them more industrial high input agriculture. This includes the introduction of GMOs and the use of more fossil energy!

At the same time they promote a second TNC-led “green” revolution in Africa, they keep on pushing for more market access for their TNCs in the Doha round and tie up the extra financial support to political criteria to increase the dependency of these countries. Nothing is said about the need for increased market regulation and stabilization or whether the support that is called for will go to peasant-based food production. Such

investments will go to the importing countries by offering their financial “help”, bring more investment in corporate-led food production and continue to impose the same recipe of deregulation and privatization.

In the WTO negotiations high prices are used to make governments accept further tariff cuts and more de-regulation of the agricultural markets. This will create the next crisis when price fluctuations go in the other direction.

A way out of the crisis: Rebuilding national food economies

To address the current crisis, La Via Campesina believes that countries should give priority in their budget to support the poorest consumers so that they have access to sufficient food. Meanwhile, they should give priority to their domestic food production in order to become less dependent on the world market. This means increased investment in peasant and farmer-based food production for the domestic market.

We do need more intensive food production, but intensive in the use of labor and in the sustainable use of natural resources. Diverse production systems have to be developed, systems that are not exclusively focusing on the main crops such as corn, soya, rice and wheat but that integrate local foods that have been neglected since the onset of the “green” revolution.. Small-scale family farms can produce a large diversity of food that guarantees a balanced diet and some surpluses for the markets. Small-scale family farming is a protection against hunger!

Internal market prices have to be stabilized at a reasonable level for farmers and consumers: for farmers so that they can receive prices that cover the cost of production and secure a decent income and for consumers so that they are protected against high food prices. Direct sales from peasants and small farmers to consumers has to be encouraged. Mr. Jacques Diouf, secretary General of FAO has stated that developing countries should be enabled to achieve food self sufficiency(6).

In every country an intervention system has to be put in place that can stabilize market prices. In order to achieve this, import controls with taxes and quotas are needed to regulate imports and avoid dumping or low price imports that undermine domestic production. National buffer stocks managed by the state have to be built up in order to stabilize domestic markets: in times of surplus, cereals can be taken from the market to build up the stock and in case of shortage, cereals can be released.

Therefore land should be distributed equally to the landless and peasant family through genuine agrarian reform and land reform. This should include the control over and access to water, seed, credits and appropriate technology. People should be enabled again to produce their own food and feed their own communities. Any land grabbing, land evictions and expansion of land allocation for the expansion of agribusiness-led agriculture has to be stopped. Immediate measures are needed to support small farmers and peasants to increase agro-ecological food production.

National governments should not repeat the mistake of promoting agribusiness

corporations to invest in large food production units. According to the FAO, ex-Soviet countries plan to open their land to agribusiness companies to produce food on land that is currently not cultivated. This could turn out to be another mistake if this is presented as a solution for the food crisis.

Regulating international markets and implementing basic rights

At the international level stabilization measures have to be implemented. International buffer stocks have to be built up as well as an intervention mechanism to stabilize prices on the international markets at a reasonable level. Exporting countries have to accept international rules that control the quantities they can bring to the market.

Countries should have the freedom to control imports in order to protect domestic food production.

Production of cereals for agrofuels is unacceptable and has to be stopped as this competes with food production. As a first step we ask for an immediate moratorium on agrofuels as proposed by Jean Ziegler former UN rapporteur on the Right to Food.

The influence of transnational corporations has to be limited and the international trade in staple foods has to be brought to a necessary minimum level. As much as possible domestic production should fulfill internal demand. This is the only way to protect farmers and consumers against sudden price fluctuations from the international market. A possible agreement in the Doha Round will mean another blow for peasant-based food production; therefore any agreement has to be rejected.

Peasants and small farmers are the main food producers

La Via Campesina is convinced that peasants and small farmers can feed the world. They therefore have to be considered as the key part of the solution. With sufficient political will and the implementation of adequate policies more peasants and small farmers will easily produce sufficient food to feed everyone at a reasonable price. The current situation shows that changes are needed!

The time for food sovereignty has come!

Annex 2.

Small farmers feed the world Industrial agrofuels fuel hunger and poverty

Via Campesina Position Paper

The current massive wave of investment in energy production based on cultivating and industrial processing of vegetal materials like corn, soy, palm oil, sugar cane, canola, etc, will neither solve the climate crisis nor the energy crisis. It will also bring disastrous social and environmental consequences. It creates a new and very serious threat to food production by small farmers and to the attainment of food sovereignty for the world population.

Over the last twenty years the neoliberal policies adopted globally have failed to answer people's basic needs. The FAO promises at the 1996 World Food Summit and the UN Millenium Development Goals to lift people out of poverty have not been kept. Many more people are suffering form hunger.

It is claimed that agrofuels will help fight climate change. In reality, the opposite is true. The new extensive monoculture plantations for the production of agrofuels are increasing greenhouse gases through deforestation, drainage of wetlands, and dismantling communal lands. If we take into account the whole cycle of production, transformation, distribution of agrofuels, they do not produce less greenhouse gases than fossil fuels, except in some cases. Moreover, agrofuels will never be able to replace fossil fuels. According to the latest estimates, they will only cover the future rise in consumption from now until 2020. There is simply not enough land in the world to generate all the fuel necessary for an industrial society whose needs for transport of people and goods are continually increasing. The promise of agrofuels creates the illusion that we can continue to consume energy at an ever growing rate. The only answer to the threat of climate change is to reduce energy use worldwide, and to redirect international trade towards local markets.

Meanwhile, the social and ecological impacts of agrofuel development will be devastating. Monoculture and industrial agriculture, whether for agrofuel or any other production, are destroying land, forests, water and biodiversity. They drive family farmers, men and women, off their land. It is estimated that five million farmers have been expelled from their land to create space for monocultures in Indonesia; five million in Brazil, four million in Colombia... Industrial agriculture generates much less employment than sustainable family farming; this is agriculture without farmers.

The current expansion of agrofuel production contributes to the massive concentration of capital by landowners, large companies and TNCs, provoking a real counter land reform throughout the world. Moreover it contributes to increased speculation on food products and land prices.

Agrofuel production has already started to replace food production. Its ongoing extension will drive even more small scale farmers and indigenous peoples off their lands. Instead of dedicating land and water to food production, these resources are being diverted to produce energy in the form of diesel and ethanol. Today peasants and small farmers, indigenous people, women and men, produce the huge majority of the food consumed worldwide. If not prevented now, agrofuels will occupy our lands and food will become even more scarce and expensive.

Who would eat agrofuels?

A new alliance of some governments with automotive and chemical companies, oil and agro-industry is promoting agrofuels with the sole objective of making money. The fear of climate change and energy crisis is used to develop agrofuel production in a manner that maintains and strengthens an agro-industrial model. Knowing that this model is, in itself, a major cause of climate change and an intensive energy consumer, is no obstacle.

Technology and market control of the TNCs strengthen and increase their hold over the agrarian sector. The family farmers whose food production has been based on traditional seeds, are displaced, their coexistence with biodiversity, their way of producing energy by human and animal force are disrupted. Their way of life uses much less energy per unit of food produced, and specially, fewer fossil fuels.

Agribusiness companies are aware that agrofuels produced on a large scale are not economically viable. The race towards agrofuels is made possible by the huge direct and indirect subsidies from supporting governments and by speculation on the financial markets, which is also causing food prices to rise.

The figures cited are alarming. Millions of hectares and billions of dollars are mentioned: the government of India is contemplating planting 14 million hectares with "jatrofa", the Inter-American Bank of Development says that Brazil has 120 million hectares ready for agrofuel production and a business lobby suggests that there are 397 million hectares available in 15 African countries. This means a level of expropriations without precedent.

While TNCs and investment funds increase their profits, a large part of the world population does not have enough money to buy food. Agrofuels are estimated to be responsible for 30% of the current food price crisis.

When the TNCs are unable to find farmland for agrofuel production, deforestation is forced on areas that are necessary for the preservation of life on earth.

Thousands of farmers have no alternative but to accept to grow agrofuels as they need an income to support themselves till the next season. National and international agricultural policies imposed by international financial institutions and TNCs have exacerbated the dependence of developing countries, leading to food crisis, extreme poverty, and hunger throughout the world. Therefore, those small farmers are not guilty of making the wrong choice they are the victims of the current system imposed on them.

Small farmers and agricultural workers, working in extremely harsh conditions with damaging effects on their health, with very poor income have no say in the way their production is used. Many are working under contract farming with large agribusiness companies that process, refine and sell the product. Therefore it is the companies who decide to channel the produce to the fuel rather than to the food market. The high food prices paid by the consumers are not reflected in the small farmers' income.

In response to energy crisis: small scale production and local consumption

Small scale sustainable farming is essential to feed the world. Sustainable family farming and food sovereignty consume up to 80 times less energy than industrial agriculture.

Food sovereignty primarily involves the use of local resources for food production, minimizing imports of raw materials as well as transport. Likewise, the food produced is consumed locally so that the end product does not travel far. It is not logical to eat, in Europe, asparagus coming all the way from the Altiplano or fresh green beans coming from Kenya.

Throughout the history of farming, villagers have obtained energy from their farmland to meet their daily needs. Peasant families are using coconut or sunflower oil, biogas, firewood, wind and water to generate electricity for local use. Such methods are sustainable and integrated into the food production cycle on the farmland.

It is imperative to design and adopt responsible attitudes to food consumption and to adjust our way of eating, in the knowledge that the industrial model of production and consumption is destructive, while the peasant-based model of production uses responsible energy practices.

Therefore, Via Campesina continues its struggle against the power of large corporations and supporting political systems. The energy crisis should not be seen as an isolated problem but as part of the whole crisis of the current model of development where profit has priority over people.

Instead, we support a people centered, small-scale diversified agriculture with local markets and healthy livelihoods using less energy and less dependent on external sources. Sustainable family farmers fulfill the fundamental mission of agriculture: to feed people.

Via Campesina denounces:

The neoliberal model, international financial institutions and transnational capital, directly responsible for the food and the climate crisis.

- The irresponsible presentation of agrofuels as an answer to the climate and energy crisis
- The scandal of producing agrofuels in a world ravaged by hunger.
- The passive attitude of many institutions faced with the serious risk posed by the advent of agrofuels which implies that rural and urban populations can neither produce nor consume food.
- That these same institutions are in fact placing the economic interests of TNCs above the food and nutritional needs of the very people they are entrusted to represent and defend.
- The insult of continuing to promote agrofuels in spite of the negative energy balance in their production, processing, and transport.
- The neoliberal model, international financial institutions and transnational capital, directly responsible for the food and the climate crisis.

Via Campesina demands:

The end of corporate driven, monoculture- based production of agrofuels. As a first step, a five year international moratorium on the production, trade and consumption of industrial agrofuels has to be immediately declared.

An in-depth evaluation of social and environment cost of the agrofuel boom and of profits made by TNCs in the processing and trade of the raw materials.

The promotion and development of small scale production and local consumption models and the rejection of consumerism

Explicit support from governments and institutions to the sustainable peasant-based model of food production and distribution, with its minimal use of energy, its capacity to create jobs, to respect cultural and biological diversity and its positive effect on global warming (fertile soils are the best way to capture CO₂).

The reorientation of agricultural policies towards sustainable rural communities and livelihoods based on food sovereignty and genuine agrarian reform.

The promotion and development of responsible consumption models.

Let's put out the fire of agrofuels and carry the flame of food sovereignty!