



INTERNATIONAL FEMINIST AGRO-ECOLOGY NETWORK MANIFESTO

The conference in Recife, Brazil, in April 2019 is the third meeting of an arena of discussion (2012 conference in Toulouse, France, 2015 in Lyon, France) that founded a collective intention to build an international feminist agro-ecology network. This network proposes to articulate the knowledge and experiences of social and academic organizations in order to produce data that can be used as a basis for political advocacy and as support for social movements. We jointly defend the aim of building a peasant-oriented, sustainable agri-food model, recognition of place and emancipation of women.

The international feminist agro-ecology network that we defend and are building is a political project of social transformation, knowledge production and practice exchange. It is based on an approach involving actors as feminist researchers and teachers, non-governmental organisations, and social movements, trade unions and peasant organisations.

Feminism is obviously a crosscutting issue: we are not talking about feminist agroecology but about a feminist approach to agroecology because we are working within existing structures to claim the necessary visibility of the struggles.

The feminist agro-ecology network's political ambition is to articulate a responsibility (towards the ecosystems, territories, communities) and a social recognition of the rights of political subjects (especially women) involved in social change around agricultural and food issues, including breeding and fishing. The knowledge we defend is that co-produced by exchanges between the three spheres (academic and training, technical and political support such as NGOs, the farming world) according to a feminist approach. We recognize that this knowledge is embedded in contexts that make it unique and highlight the importance of black and indigenous movements.

We are committed to combating all forms of violence present at various social and spatial scales of the patriarchy (state institutions, communities, families) and colonial model (the liberal development model of agro and fishing industry on different territorial scales).

REGIONAL CENTERS FOR THE CIRCULATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND ACTION STRATEGY

The international network is based on regional poles under construction in Latin America (Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Argentina, Uruguay), (West) Africa), Asia (India) and Europe (France, Spain, Switzerland), which are constructing their own political agendas, building on the particularities of their network of actors and acting on the scale of the originality of their different ecosystems.

The objective is to found collective actions, create solidarity and raise the profile of the issues around the values defended. We wish to create a space for the circulation of the founding concepts of our commitments in order to build a common language between basic and academic training that promotes a dialogue around feminist knowledge at the core of agroecology. The research carried out is committed: researchers share the



ethics of research that serve collectively stated societal issues. The participatory action research we advocate starts from what is important to the people, families and communities we work with.

COMMON ANALYSES, CONCEPTUAL TOOLS FOR THE FEMINIST AGRO-ECOLOGICAL APPROACH

Our work articulates four criticisms of the socio-economic development model of liberal agro and fishing industrial capitalism:

- Criticism of a modern science that has forgotten the relational importance of life: whether it is the relationships between human and non-human beings, or between nature and the material world. We are part of an eco-feminist perspective that criticizes a mechanistic, reductionist and naturalistic vision of ecosystems. We claim an organicist, relational and holistic vision (relational and complex) of the relationship with living beings and a living nature (diverse and adaptive) according to the diversity of the challenges of the territories and the adaptation of people to their environment. This holistic, global perspective, integrating systemic concerns, makes it possible to understand the place of women and men in the preservation of biodiversity at all scales: that of ecological diversity (according to the different biotopes and their evolution in relation to landscape transformation); that of species diversity in ecosystems, including plants in the kitchen gardens often managed by women, as high places of biodiversity and very important for food and medicine; the genetic diversity of plants and animals considering that their selection is also a gender issue according to social roles.
- Criticism of the formal economy, which has forgotten that the economy is based on several principles of economic behaviour. The feminist social and solidarity economy from which we work is part of a critical approach to the crisis of the social reproduction of peasantry throughout the world with a heterodox economic perspective. We deconstruct the dichotomies underlying the invisibility and non-recognition of women's work, including in agro-ecological practices: reproduction/production, non-market/marketing, by showing precisely how these constitute each other.
- Criticism of a vision of politics restricted to the public authorities and of democracy limited to representation, which ignores the importance of public spaces, especially subordinate ones, in the struggles against inequalities and for democratization. We draw attention to the conditions for the political participation of women farmers, through spaces for speaking out that allow for the deliberation and politicization of issues otherwise confined to the private sphere, such as care work. We recognize the importance of collective organization, especially feminist networks that put into practice the principle that "private is political" and that allow personal and collective transformations at different scales.
- Criticism of the division of labour, which has forgotten the articulation of issues between private and public life: the assignment of women to domestic and care tasks reproduces the gender inequalities/asymmetries that structure the economic and political spheres.

We support the rehabilitation of care activities that reveal the dual dependence of societies on their

particular nature and on the care of beings, things and the world. We recognize the fundamental role that women play both in the domestic sphere and in activities related to the maintenance of life: care related to the body, plants, animals, food, ecosystems and the social fabric, everything that makes life possible. We denounce the historical confinement of women to the domestic, the private, to the attention of others (young, old, sick), to food, to emotional closeness (exposing themselves to promoting an essentialist vision of the nurturing mother), to the garden and to nature, which has limited their place in the public sphere, to daily life and to the repetition of care. At the same time, we claim that attention to the needs and expectations of others is also an essential social practice that must be shared with men. We consider that, while the right to privacy is political, the feminist perspective of agroecology also claims to bring to a political level the issues of the garden, fields and kitchen as spaces of articulation between production, processing and consumption. It is in these places that the agroecology that we claim to support exists as the expression and responsibility of new political subjects: agroecological producers.

This agro-ecology that we claim is close to political ecology, which denounces a romantic approach to women's agro-ecological knowledge and a homogenizing reading of the women's social group, and also denounces putting too much responsibility on women for the future of the planet, as well as the rendering invisible of men's knowledge and responsibilities. To think of a feminist (agro)political ecology requires thinking of the intersectionalities of inequalities, the gender division of labour, the rights to "resources" (land, water, seeds, market, etc.) and decision-making power.

An important outcome is also to consider the territory as a space of autonomy and relationships, not only as a space of physical reproduction, but also culturally linked to the history of practices whose analysis must denounce and break with all forms of hierarchy and the construction of inequalities of gender, race and class.

OUR OBJECTIVES ARE TO:

- Promote the integration of educational institutions and social organizations working in the field of gender, agroecology and collective action.

- Facilitate the socialization and exchange of experiences in feminist agro-ecology of farmers, as well as other actors involved in agro-ecological activities (including links with consumers/eaters).

- Know and foster the exchange of experiences around collective actions of women working for food security and food sovereignty and the promotion of agro-ecological transition.

- Deepen cooperation actions between the academic institutions of the different participating countries in order to promote the internationalisation of research centres and undergraduate and postgraduate programmes with an interface in this field- Build political advocacy to accompany changes in public agricultural and food policies

Sharing concrete actions to defend: local and sustainable food systems, the Commons, the rights of traditional communities.