

## **Pledge for food sovereignty and climate justice**

### **- Proposals, background of fast (and hunger strike), and several meetings to cope with the 'forgotten' food-, energy and climate crises**

*In this document you will find first the proposals for a more just trade, agricultural, climate and energy policy, which are supported by many civil society organisations, enterprises and civilians inside and outside the Netherlands. These proposals are directed to the Dutch politics and have been send at 10 October with an accompanying letter to members of Parliament and ministers. Also the CEO's of Solidaridad, World Wildlife Fund and the Initiative for Sustainable Trade (IDH) received these proposals. These demands were enforced by 28 people inside and outside the Netherlands who fasted for 24 hours at World Food Day 16 October 2011. Also at 1, 20 and 24 November and at 14 December a number of people will fast for 24 hours. Moreover from 1 November onwards one individual will continue these actions by starting a forty days fast, urgently requesting to take over as much proposals as possible. During this period he won't eat anything and only drink water and herbal tea, added by salts recommended by a doctor. Depending on the reaction to this request, he will possibly start a hunger strike from 11 December onwards, until some demands are met.*

*The second part of this document contains the letter mentioned before, whit background and inspiration of the fast / hunger strike. Also you will find more information about how you could support these actions. You can download this whole document at: [www.guusgeurts.nl/hungerclimate](http://www.guusgeurts.nl/hungerclimate)*

## **1. Proposals for food sovereignty and climate justice**

### **- Analysis and proposals to cope with the 'forgotten' food-, energy and climate crises**

In this document we give proposals for a more just trade, agricultural, climate and energy policy. We do this at this moment because the coming months crucial decisions will be made for the supply of basic needs and the future of our planet. So the Climate Summit COP17 will be organised in Durban South Africa (28 November – 9 December) and the WTO-summit will be from 15 until 17 December in Geneva. Also the G20 summit will be organised at 3 and 4 November and these months negotiations will start about a new European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for 2014-2020. Besides that protection of the right to food and right to a livelihood, and the prevention of disastrous climate change have everything to do with the political choice for competition on the world market in WTO and other free trade agreements.

We have now the chance to say **no** to:

- Liberalisation of agricultural markets; a political choice which has been made (only) twenty (EU, WTO) to twenty five (World Bank, IMF) years ago. Before that time politicians realised that agriculture and free trade don't go together, because farmers can only produce sustainably when they get remunerative prices.
- Those free trade agreements because they also lead to access to and ongoing depletion of natural resources, especially in developing countries. These resources such as land, water, minerals and energy are used to produce even more luxury products for the happy few who have purchasing power, instead of supplying basic needs for everybody now and in future.
- The EU trade strategy *Trade, Growth and World Affairs*<sup>1</sup>. This strategy – unknown to the general public – seems to have been written to maximize the profits of European multinationals, but is leading to a social and environmental crisis in and outside Europe. This strategy considers access to markets and natural resources in other countries as 'constitutional rights'. This political choice for competition on the world market blocks

effective policies in areas such as agriculture, energy, climate change and biodiversity, because every environmental and social regulation then weakens competitiveness.

- Misleading ‘solutions’ such as self-regulation by the corporate sector (for example by ‘round tables’ on soybeans and palm oil) in stead of market regulation, binding social and environmental regulations, and protection, fulfilment and respect of human rights.
- Unjust and ineffective climate ‘solutions’ such as the Clean Development Mechanism, Carbon Emissions Trade, biofuels and tree plantations, that allow developed countries to avoid taking their responsibility to reduce their energy consumption drastically. Moreover the proposals made in Cancun in 2010 will (possibly) lead to an increase in temperature of 4 – 5 °C<sup>2</sup>, even though an increase of 2 °C can already lead to an irreversible and disastrous situation.

Former attempts such as demonstrations, petitions, advocacy letters to politicians, non violent actions, or opinion articles in newspapers and magazines and other publications, have hardly led to a change of policy. Arguments for a political change towards an ecologically sound and socially just future for all don't seem to count. The influence of big multinational corporations on governments is too big, the courage of politicians to deviate from ‘Business as Usual’ is too small and the belief in the neoliberal ‘world religion’ is ongoing despite the current crises.

Hence this ultimate demand in the decisive months for the climate, regulation of world trade and the European common agricultural policy, to change for the better now when it's still possible.

We demand from the Dutch government to change its policy – towards the EU – in the following way:

#### **Food sovereignty within agricultural and trade policy:**

- The WTO-summit in December is a good opportunity to break down the current negotiations in the Doha Development Round. The *Agreement on Agriculture* about free trade in agriculture also needs to be reformed drastically in such a way that food sovereignty and the respect for human rights will be the central focus.<sup>3</sup>
- Europe stops imposing liberalisation in agriculture on the poorest developing countries in bilateral and regional trade agreements, such as the Economic Partnership Agreements with former colonies of the EU, the so called ACP-countries.
- Developing countries should be able to increase their import taxes to protect the food production by their own farmers as soon as possible. The World Bank and the IMF should delete the orders to liberalise trade from their country strategies and adjustment programmes.
- Free trade agreements and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for 2014-2020 should be reformed in such a way that the EU becomes as self sufficient as possible in food, feed and energy. In order to achieve this the following measures should be taken:
  - Import taxes and supply management are established or maintained for all agricultural products so that all farmers can get remunerative prices.
  - All income subsidies and export subsidies are abolished so that dumping in developing countries is prevented.
  - European farmers produce alternatives for products which are now imported from the Global South and are leading to a social and ecological disaster, e.g. soybeans, palm oil and biofuels.
  - Environmental and animal welfare standards should be raised considerably. In combination with European ecotaxes – and the import taxes already mentioned – this will lead to internalising all environmental and animal welfare costs in the price the consumer pays.
  - The 25 billion Euros<sup>4</sup> which are saved by changing the CAP in this way can be used to stimulate ecological, small scale, local agricultural production and

processing, and decentralised sustainable energy production in Europe and in developing countries.

- European companies and investment funds must be prohibited from buying land in developing countries in order to stop the European share in the current landgrab.
- A renewed European trade strategy should lead to fair trade with developing countries, a more self-sufficient Europe in which the mineral cycles are closed, with much lower energy use and more employment. In this way developing countries will get their markets and natural resources back for their own development, in the speed they choose themselves.

#### **Climate justice and energy security:**

- A renewed The EU should take its responsibility and cut the use of fossil fuels and green house gas emissions by 50% before 2017. Those figures are analogous to The People's Agreement drawn up in Bolivia in 2010.<sup>5</sup> In order to achieve this the following measures should be taken:
  - the Clean Development Mechanism and Carbon Trade are abolished;
  - European ecotaxes on fossil fuels are increased drastically (and taxes on labour are decreased);
  - subsidies on fossil fuels are abolished (7,5 billion Euro per year in the Netherlands);
  - no more public money goes to construction of new highways, airports and harbours;
  - drastic expansion of public investment in public transport;
  - also greenhouse gas emissions by ships and by airplanes are decreased drastically;
  - a German style feed-in-tariff system is established European wide, in order to stimulate decentralised sustainable electricity production for remunerative prices;
  - the construction of new Dutch and European coal power plants is cancelled, working coal plants are closed as soon as possible (but 2020 at the latest);
  - a European-wide prohibition of imports of oil(products) from tar sands;
  - 50 to 75% of all global GHG-emissions can be prevented or stored by bringing back organic matter into the soil, re-integrating animal and crop production, putting local markets and fresh food back in the centre of the food system and by halting land clearing and deforestation.<sup>6</sup>
  - cancellation of the European bio fuel directive (10% bio fuels in 2020) and a European prohibition of imports of bio fuels from developing countries;

#### **Stop the Dutch and European violations of human rights and *Green washing*:**

- A parliamentary research (Parlementaire Enquête) will be conducted to investigate the past, current and future human rights abuses, especially in developing countries, that result from free trade policies imposed by WTO, bilateral- and regional Free Trade Agreements and structural adjustment programmes imposed by the World Bank and IMF. Especially violations of the right to food, water and a livelihood should be investigated. The Netherlands and the EU reform these treaties to prevent these human right violations as quickly as possible.
- The same investigations are conducted concerning the climate treaty.
- Trans National Corporations that violate human rights during the exploration of raw materials and the production, processing, import or trade of products in countries outside Europe, are prosecuted in the country of origin and/or in the country where the crime took place;
- *Specific demands to Dutch NGO's*: The World Wildlife Fund and Solidaridad retire from the Round Table of Responsible Soy and the Roundtable on Responsible Palm Oil.

- The Dutch government stops putting public money into these greenwash platforms. Also the 100 million Euros in subsidies to the Initiative for Fair Trade (IDH) will be cut drastically. Their programmes on soy, palm oil, sugar, tropical timber and aquaculture are abolished. Sustainable imports and production of these products on a massive scale is impossible, and the IDH gives importing companies undeservedly a green image paid for with public money.
- To prevent the misuse of the term ‘sustainable’ by companies a society-wide discussion is organised in order to determine which criteria should be met. These criteria are binding for all purchases by national, provincial en local governments.  
Some suggestions: no (indirect) violations of human rights, closed cycles of nutrients and fresh water, no destruction of nature and no eviction of farmers, pastoralists and indigenous people from their land - including by indirect land use changes, as little use of fossil fuels as possible, no genetically modified organisms, respect the species-specific behaviour of animals on farms and the smallest possible ecological footprint.

These proposals are supported the following 28 civil society organisations and enterprises (as per 1-11-11, more organisations are asked to join):

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| - Amsterdams Vredescafé   | - Radio Siwa Lima   |
| - ASEED Europe - Action for Solidarity, Equality, Environment, and Diversity Europe | - Society "Sustainable development", Azerbeidzjan                             |
| - Atlantis Handelshuis BV/ St. Helderse Hallen                                      | - SP - Werkgroep Land- en Tuinbouw Noord-Limburg                              |
| - Bangsa Adat Alifuru   | - stichting Samenwerkingsverband Hoogland Indianen (SHI)                      |
| - Behoud de Parel (Noord-Limburg)   | - Stichting Leven met de Aarde  |
| - Climate Justice Action Nederland  | - Stichting Nusa AlifURU  |
| - Corporate Europe Observatory  | - Vasten voor Vrede, België   |
| - EVS - EcoVrede  | - Wij stoppen steenkool   |
| - Free West Papua Campaign (NL)   | - Werkgroep Openheid naar de wereld, van de Zusters Franciscanessen van Etten |
| - Front Siwa Lima   | - WILPF Nederland - Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom        |
| - Fund Rescue Maluku Sekarang   | - Young & Fair  |
| - Gifsoja.nl  | - Zonnehoeve Ing. P.M.A. van IJzendoorn MEd                                   |
| - Leef op Safe Horst aan de Maas  |   |
| - Museum Maluka (MuMa), Utrecht   |   |
| - Nieuw Nederland   |   |
| - NVLV – Netwerk Vitale Landbouw en Voeding   |   |

The proposals are supported by the following 170 individuals (as per 1-11-2011). The people from the support team and the fasters on 16 October are mentioned first:

Alowieke van Beusekom	Riky Schut-Hakvoort	Paul Hendriksen
seMUel Sahureka	Lies Visscher	Francine Thielen
Co van Melle, <i>doctor</i>	Conny Bergé	Jan Juffermans, <i>Voor Mondiale Duurzaamheid</i>
Thomas Reineke	Wilbrord Braakman	Marianne Juffermans
Biju Negi, India	Linda Coenen	

Tracy Worcester, England, documentary maker <i>Pig Business</i>	Jayakumar Chelaton, India	Liza Hirschegger
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Kirsten Smallenberg	Rashmi Painuly, India	Paul Geurts
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<u>Other supporters:</u>	Pieter Jansen	Michael van Rengs
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Lin Tabak	Jaap Simonis	Fenna Bastiaansen
Rozi Konjo, Ethiopia	Nellie Werner	Rosan Stuijt
Eddy Lerou	Taru Salmenkari en Mussu, Finland	Peter Huber
Ammy Langenbach	Mike Venekamp	Monic van Houdt-Geurts
Monique Veenstra	Martijn Stekelenburg	Harry van Houdt
Theo Weenink	Linda van IJzendoorn	Ger Vankoolwijk
Alec Boswijk	Patricia Bergink	Luc Vankrunkelsven, <i>Wervel</i> , Belgium
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Irmi Salzer, Austria	Sibe Jan Kramer	Lucas Buur
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1 November 2011

## **2. Fast (and hunger strike) for food sovereignty and climate justice**

**- Background and inspiration to cope with the ‘forgotten’ food-, energy and climate crises**

Amsterdam, 31 October 2011,

To:

- Minister-President Rutte, the Minister of Economic Affairs, Innovation and Agriculture (ELI), the Assistant Secretary of International Trade and Agriculture, the Minister of Infrastructure and Environment, the Assistant Secretary of Environment, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Assistant Secretary of Development Cooperation
- The member of Parliament of the following Commissions: Economic Affairs, Innovation and Agriculture, Infrastructure and Environment, Foreign Affairs and European Affairs
- The CEO's of Solidaridad, World Wildlife Fund the Netherlands, Initiative Sustainable Trade (IDH)

Dear Mrs, Mr,

In the attached document you will find an analysis and several proposals in the area of:

- **Food sovereignty within agricultural and trade policy;**
- **Climate justice and energy security;**
- **Stopping the Dutch and European violations of human rights and *Green washing*.**

These proposals are supported by 27 development, environmental, farmers, human rights, indigenous people and women's' organisations, and by 161 individuals (31 October).

In this letter you will find the background and the inspiration for the choice of several people in the Netherlands and in other countries, to enforce these proposals by means of fast for 24 hours at World Food Day 16 October, 1 November, 20 November, 24 November and 14 December.

Moreover from 1 November one individuals will continue this action by going on a forty day fast out of solidarity with the people and nature mentioned below, by not eating anything. During this period he won't eat anything and only drink water and herbal tea, added by salts recommended by a doctor. Depending on your reaction to this request, he will possibly start a hunger strike from 11 December onwards, until some demands are met.

Besides that you will find in this letter information about other activities within this action, and how to support this action.

We wish you courage and wisdom.

In solidarity with:

- all (unnecessary) hungry and malnourished people now and in the future;
- all climate refugees now and in the future;
- all murdered, threatened and (with violence) evicted farmers, pastoralists, indigenous people and environmental activists, who want(ed) to protect nature, their living areas and/or way of living, against destruction to make way for plantations of soybeans, palm oil, bio fuels and timber, for cattle ranches, or for drilling or mining for fossil fuels and raw materials – especially when these products are exported to Europe;
- all farmers in the global North and the global South who are driven from their local, national and regional (e.g. the EU) markets by free trade agreements;
- all indigenous people whose livelihoods and culture are threatened by the current western development model based on growth, over-consumption and competition;
- all animal and plant species which are threatened with extinction because of human activities;
- our children and grand children, who will surely ask “why didn't you do anything when you still could?”,

- **28 Dutch and foreign citizens** force the mentioned proposals by fasting for 24 hours on World Food Day 16 October 2011 1 November, 20 November, 24 November and 14 December;
- starts **Guus Geurts** <sup>7</sup> **on 1 November a forty day fast**, in which he will eat nothing and drink only water and herbal tea. Out of solidarity with the mentioned living beings he makes an urgent request to you to take over these proposals as much as possible;
- depending on your reaction to this urgent request he will possibly continue this action by going on hunger strike from 11 December onwards, until an amount of these proposals are taken over by you.

### Why now?

During the G20-summit in France at 3 and 4 November, the Climate Summit COP17 in Durban South Africa (28 November – 9 December), the WTO-summit (15 – 17 December), and the upcoming negotiations about a new European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), crucial decisions will be made about the supply of basic needs and the future of the planet. Protection of the right to food and right to a livelihood, and the prevention of disastrous climate change have everything to do with the political choice for competition on the world market in WTO and other free trade agreements.

Until now former attempts such as demonstrations, petitions, advocacy letters to politicians, non violent actions, or opinion articles in newspapers and magazines and other publications, have hardly led to a change of policy. Arguments for a political change towards an ecologically sound and socially just future for all don't seem to count. The influence of big multinational corporations on governments is too big, the courage of politicians to deviate from 'Business as Usual' is too small and the belief in the neoliberal 'world religion' is ongoing despite the current crises.

Hence this ultimate demand in the decisive months for the climate, regulation of world trade and the European common agricultural policy, to change for the better now when it's still possible.

### This fast / hunger strike is inspired by:

- Gandhi, because of his non-violent actions (such as several fasts / hunger strikes) and his pleas for inter-religious dialogue. He also said: 'The world has enough for everybody's needs but not for everybody's greed'. Finally he invented concepts which are still very inspiring for a just and ecological future, such as *Swadeshi* (self sufficiency, localization), *Swaraja* (local autonomy, self rule) and his principles of *Satyagraha* (the ultimate truth, soul power). <sup>8</sup>
- Three climate justice fasters who fasted for 43 days before and during the climate summit in Copenhagen in 2009. <sup>9</sup>
- Trust and self-confidence; with spiritual help we will hopefully bring this action to a desirable end. Hopefully the ones who are able to decide about meeting these demands will also get this spiritual help and be courageous enough to take their responsibility. Depending on the specific person the source of this spiritual help could be Allah, Yahweh, God, Brahma, Mother Earth, ancestors, soul groups or the divine in oneself.

### Public manifestations at World Food Day and 1 November, and support for this fast actions

During World Food Day 16 October a public meeting was organised about food sovereignty and climate justice, with speakers from human rights, development, environmental and farmers' organisations. See: [www.guusgeurts.nl/wereldvoedseldag](http://www.guusgeurts.nl/wereldvoedseldag)

At 1 November – the first day of the forty day fast – a petition with all demands will be personally handed over to the Parliament Commission on Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation. From 12.30 pm and 2.30 pm a manifestation will organised on the square Plein in front of the Parliament in The Hague.

See: <http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=274304525933171>

Every Tuesday 8, 15, 22, 29 November and 6 December the forty day faster will sit in front of the parliament from 9 am until 6 pm. People can join him there. At those days from 1.30 pm until 3 pm a silent action will be held with candles.

In the Netherlands as well in other countries this fast and hunger strike is supported by other people, see for this: <http://www.causes.com/causes/635070-support-for-hunger-strike-for-food-sovereignty-and-climate-justice> and <http://www.causes.com/causes/634694-steun-voor-hongerstaking-voor-voedselsoevereiniteit-en-klimaatrechtvaardigheid> This list of people will be used during contacts with politicians and the media.

The current Dutch campaigns on food sovereignty and/or climate justice are organised by volunteers and without government subsidies. If you would like to support this specific campaign on both issues financially, you can contribute into bank account 8119.93.124 of Stichting Platform Aarde Boer Consument, while mentioning Campaign Food and Climate.

Thank you very much in advance!

Guus Geurts, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, on behalf of the other fasters for food sovereignty and climate justice and many others who support this proposals and action

Environmentalist, owner Swadeshi – Bureau for Alternative globalization  
Involved as campaigner agriculture and globalization with X min Y Solidariteitsfonds, Vóór de Verandering and Platform Aarde Boer Consument  
Author of *Wereldvoedsel – pleidooi voor een rechtvaardige en ecologische voedselvoorziening*

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<sup>1</sup> *Trade, Growth and World Affairs – Trade policy as a core component of the EU's 2020 strategy*, European Commission DG Trade, November 2010, see:

[http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2010/november/tradoc\\_146955.pdf](http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2010/november/tradoc_146955.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> *The Cancún Agreement: Not Worth Cheering*, Friends of the Earth Europe, 20 December 2010, page 2, see:

[http://www.foeeurope.org/climate/download/Cancun\\_20\\_12\\_2010.pdf](http://www.foeeurope.org/climate/download/Cancun_20_12_2010.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> *Rebuilding the WTO Agreement on Agriculture on food sovereignty*, Jacques Berthelot, Solidarité, 30 May 2011,

see: <http://solidarite.asso.fr/IMG/pdf/Rebuilding-the-Agreement-on-Agriculture-on-food-sovereignty.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> *Assessment of the budgetary effects of the 'New Policy'*, JM Boussard and others, Dec. 2010, p. 8, see:

<http://www.europeanfooddeclaration.org/sites/default/files/10%2012%2013%20budget%2021%20dec.doc>

<sup>5</sup> The People's Agreement was drawn up during the *World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth* in Bolivia in 2010. See: <http://pwccc.wordpress.com/support/>

<sup>6</sup> See: *Small farmers can cool the planet* [http://www.grain.org/o\\_files/climatecrisis-presentation-11-2009.pdf](http://www.grain.org/o_files/climatecrisis-presentation-11-2009.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> At this moment one person (Guus Geurts) will go on hunger strike starting on 1 November for the whole period, but several other people will join the action for one day or longer. He considers this hunger strike also as a spiritual quest and would like to combine this fast with periods of meditation. He will attend a ten day course Vipassana-meditation from 19 until 28 October. During this meditation he will eat a meal at 6.30 am and 11 am. After 12 noon no meals are allowed (see for more information: [www.dhamma.org](http://www.dhamma.org)). So this would mean that he fasts for 24 hours at 16 October, partly fasts from 19 until 28 October, and start his long term fast from 1 November onwards...

<sup>8</sup> - A recommendation on Swadeshi: *Gandhi's Swadeshi – The Economics of permanence*, Satish Kumar, see: <http://caravan.squat.net/ICC-en/Krrs-en/ghandi-econ-en.htm>,

- More information about Swadeshi: <http://www.transitiontownrotterdam.nl/wiki/Swadeshi>

- More information about Satyagraha: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satyagraha>

<sup>9</sup> See for goals, background information, the participants and short time fasters: [www.climatejusticefast.com](http://www.climatejusticefast.com)