

AGROECOLOGY CONGRESS IN MEXICO FOR ECOLOGICAL AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS

By Kim Assaël

Between 12 and 17 of May 2019, the *Colegio de la Frontera Sur* ECOSUR (State of Chiapas, Mexico) has host the [Firts Mexican Agroecology Congress](#) *Agroecology, food sovereignty, knowledge, cosmovision and biocultural heritage. Knowledge, Practice and Movement.*

The Congress has been organized by the Unidad San Cristóbal del Colegio de la Frontera Sur (ECOSUR), the Universidad Intercultural de Chiapas (UNICH) and the Mexican Society of Agroecology.

Main purposes of the Congress were to recover the country's agricultural systems, organizing alternative value chains, in order to protect food sovereignty and to establish a common vision and present proposals to the national government in order to implement plans and public policies having a real and direct impact on the people of Mexico.

After the inauguration and the [Lectio Magistralis given by Steve Gliessman Birth and Development of Agroecology in Mexico](#), the Congress was held in the scenario of the Santo Domingo Museum, with exhibits by Universidad Intercultural de Chiapas (UNICH), Colegio de la Frontera Sur (ECOSUR), Teatro de la Ciudad Hermanos Domínguez y Daniel Zebadua, and with the conclusive Conference *The Challenges of Agroecology in the Fourth Transformation of Mexico*, by Francisco Rosado May, from the Intercultural University of Quintana Roo.

Delegations coming from 20 countries and from agroecology experiences of Mexico, including representatives from the academy, the civil society, farmers, the private sector, practitioners of agro-ecology participated to the Congress. All the participants showed the existing huge potential of knowledge and practical experiences to strengthen agreements, ideas, proposals and actions that could be translated into public policies in order to promote agro-ecology as a new form of food procurement respectful of the natural environment, socially and economically sustainable.



The section *Dialogue of farmers, peasants, organic producers, and organizations, on their experiences in the practice of Agroecology* saw the participation of Reyna Villatoro Hernández de Teopisca, Chiapas, Grupo Mujeres y Maíz; Enrique Noé Gálvez García of Biodiversity for Rural Development; Gisella Illesca of Connexions and Agroecological Development in Coffee; Alberto Gómez Flores of UNORCA and Representative of Via Campesina for North America.

The debates among scientists and farmers have recognized the farmers as guardians of agro-biodiversity, responsible for the subsistence of many of the seeds and plants that have existed since pre-Hispanic times and that persist to this day. The empirical information and knowledge obtained by farmers who have been cultivating their land with methods of soil's regeneration and without agrochemicals, with production techniques that do not generate erosion, showed that it is necessary to adopt this approach to support a sustainable food production, not only as a correct management of soils but also for the overall agro-food system. It was mentioned that it is imperative to have practices that are nature friendly, rescuing all components of the country's agro-food, ecological systems.

During the Congress, an exhibition of Agricultural Instruments was inaugurated by Ramón Mariaca Méndez at the Textile Museum in Santo Domingo.

Among the conclusions of the First Mexican Agroecology Congress, the following elements have been underlined: Agro-ecology is a way to reduce the vulnerability in Mexico (marginalization, food dependence and effects of climate change), especially within the social strata that have fewer economic resources; It is a way to revalue the indigenous territories of Mexico and their peasants, strengthening and revalorizing the traditional production systems which have proven their potential to secure the lives of millions of Mexicans by building knowledge and carrying out the management of species that generated the agro-biodiversity existing today.

In the conclusion of the Congress, the City of San Cristobal de Las Casas [asked the Federal Government to create a national program promoting agro-ecology](#), to support scientific research projects, rescue and disseminate traditional knowledge in order to meet the demand for the production and marketing of food with agro-ecological bases and principles.

To know more

[Congress website](#)

[ECOSUR website](#)

[Sociedad Mexica de Agroecologia](#)



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