

Steve Gliessman Named to Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems (IPES-Food)

Agroecology ... holds great promise for the roughly 500 million food-insecure households around the world. By scaling up its practice, we can sustainably improve the livelihoods of the most vulnerable, and thus contribute to feeding a hungry planet.

*- Oliver De Schutter |
United Nations Special
Rapporteur on the
Right to Food &
Gaetan Valoqueren
| Advisor to the UN*

CAN's co-founder and chair of the Board of Directors, Dr. Stephen Gliessman, (Professor Emeritus of Agroecology, University of California, Santa Cruz) has been appointed to an international panel of experts on sustainable food systems. The panel is co-chaired by Dr. Olivia Yambi, nutritionist and former UNICEF representative to Kenya, and Prof. Olivier De Schutter, who recently completed his term as U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food.

The Daniel and Nina Carasso Foundation established the IPES-Food initiative, which addresses one of the three areas of action targeted by the International Scientific Committee of the Foundation: evidence-based advocacy on sustainable food systems and diets. The aim is to provide "...policy makers, the private sector and the public at large with the evidence to guide a transition towards sustainable food systems and diets."

Steve tells us that the plan is for the Panel to be affiliated with the United Nations, probably the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Over a period of three years, the Panel will prepare a vision for the future of food, as well as an agenda for change that will be backed by the latest research, similar to the recent report of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Steve is one of the first 10 experts invited to join the Panel, which will eventually include 20–30 interdisciplinary international experts in all food-system components.

Discussing the work of the panel, Oliver De Schutter stated: "Producing more food will not do. Food systems must be reshaped with a view to ensuring social equity and the reduction of rural poverty, protecting our resource base and delivering better health outcomes. Multidisciplinary research is urgently needed to promote adequate solutions at policy and global levels. And it must include an analysis of consumer behaviour, to encourage sustainable consumption as an integral part of food systems reform."

In mid-September 2014, Steve will be traveling to Rome, Italy, to participate in the FAO-sponsored International Symposium on Agroecology for Food and Nutrition Security. Steve is chairing the first day of the event, where a large group of international researchers will be presenting their projects and results.

At the upcoming XV Annual International Agroecology Shortcourse (July 6–18, 2014) in Estelí, Nicaragua, Steve and CAN-affiliated researchers will be developing ideas for research projects that will involve all of the CAN network and demonstrate how to do Agroecology. Check back for updates later this summer. ♦

Links:

Agroecology: The Ecology of Sustainable Food Systems

Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems