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Agroecology: Way to Reduce Social and Environmental Inequalities and to Realize the Right to Food

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Abstract

Agroecology, a term first used in the 1930s, can be considered a transdisciplinary science that combines the three dimensions of sustainability: economic, social and environmental, combining ecology and agriculture. During the following decades, this concept gained an idea of environmental awareness, becoming a project of social and environmental development differentiated from the agricultural models that predominate in some developing countries, such as Brazil. Such models involve environmentally unsustainable agricultural techniques in violation of constitutionally established rights or rights provided for in international treaties. They cause environmental impacts such as soil degradation, air and water contamination, damage to human health through the indiscriminate use of pesticides, among others, which mainly affect the most vulnerable social groups. In this way, they increase the rural exodus and favour the concentration of income and lands in the hands of large producers, aggravating social inequalities and environmental injustice. Within this framework, Agroecology and food production in the 21st century are emerging in the midst of a global conjuncture of social and environmental inequalities and serious climate changes, as issues of the decision-making agenda around the world, especially in developing countries. The negative effects of climate changes mainly affect agriculture, reducing land use, affecting food production yields and consequently limiting food availability. In addition, population growth, pollution and degradation of natural resources make up this state of crisis, making it difficult to realise the social right to food, provided for in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and constitutions of almost all countries in the world. Thus, agroecological public policies are essential to ensure access to food and nutrition security for the entire world population, in a cooperative effort among nations. Based on an exploratory, documental and legislative research, this study therefore proposes to seek convergent points between Agroecology, from the perspective of an instrument for reducing social and environmental inequalities, and the guarantee of access to food for the entire population, in order to promote environmental justice.

Keywords: Agroecology, environmental justice, public policies, right to food, social and environmental inequalities