

General Policy Document

Environmental committee

Topic: An eco-farming revolution

Auteur: The Republic of Mali

In this day and age, the type of agriculture that is most commonly used is monoculture, which relies heavily on pesticides and chemical inputs, needed because repeatedly growing the same plant on the same fields exhausts the supply of nutrients in the soil. The use of these pesticides has threatened and continues to have a negative impact on wildlife; in the U.S., 20,000 people are estimated to suffer from some form of pesticide poisoning and the World Health Organisation estimates that 1-5 million people worldwide are poisoned and die each year. Most chemical pesticides are nonspecific, meaning they affect a large number of species, both pest and non-pest. This contributes to the process of genetic resistance, which every year results in an increase in the number of resistant species. Today, nearly 275 weeds and more than 500 insects are resistant to at least one pesticide, which is more than five times that of 1950. Farmers are losing more crops to pests today than they did in the 1940s. With aerial application, only 10% of the sprayed pesticide reaches the crop and only 0.1%-5% the targeted pest. Monoculture fields are also highly attractive to weeds and insects. We can see clearly that this technique cannot go on, we mustn't allow it to continue for the well-being of our planet.

Luckily, eco-farming is developing. Techniques such as permaculture can be practised globally in varying ways based on the climate and resources which are particular to any geographical area, and their use has been extremely important in third-world countries due to the corresponding economic and social value, such as Mali. By making low-cost improvements to family farms, third-world families can increase their overall household food supply. There are many environmentally-friendly benefits that come with this agricultural system, waste, for example, is recycled and put back in to the soil in the form of compost and the use of Permaculture does not pollute the surrounding area.

The Republic of Mali is one of the poorest countries in the world, and the key to our economy is agriculture, and for that reason this particular topic is very important to us. Cotton is our most exported crop, but we also produce rice, corn, tobacco, vegetables and miso. 80% of Malian workers are employed in agriculture and the industry makes up 40% of the country's BIP. We are thankful to the Integrated Production and Pest Management Programme in Africa, organised by

the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, which the FAO has been carrying out in Mali since 2001, supporting government programmes and policies on agricultural development, food security and natural resource management. We hope these sort of programmes will continue, and to achieve a satisfying conclusion that helps all the countries involved, and, over all, helps us create a better, a more eco-friendly world.