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“Women from Planet Diversity” film now available in English

Women and Life on Earth e.V. and Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF) are pleased to announce the arrival of a unique, 'home-grown' film documentary that can be appreciated by those interested in food and agriculture issues – what we eat, how it is grown, and how this affects our lives and communities.

The film features men and women, tractors and large puppets, an array of 'actors' who have come together to demand safe food production: good for our health, the land, the climate and future generations.

Background to this documentation project:

In May 2008 a new planet was spotted for a few days in Bonn, Germany. This event was a 'critical mass' of people and projects from around the world that focused their energy, experience and enthusiasm on ways to meet the current crises of hunger, rising food prices, loss of biological and cultural diversity, and climate change. The occasion, the opening of the 9th UN Convention on Biological Diversity and its Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The place, the “Planet Diversity” demonstration and festival of diversity, May 12th, 2008, followed by a three day international conference of 700+ people from 100 countries.

Such a large event can be seen and experienced in many ways. Berlin film makers Kirsten Wagenschein and Michael Zimmer agreed to document the women's program of Planet Diversity, working with its organizers, Anna Gyorgy of “Women and Life on Earth e.V.” and Sabine Brückmann, of the international network “Women in Europe for a Common Future. Happily, the German “filia foundation” for women and girls was able to support the project.

It was clear that the two 'women's workshops' at the conference would be filmed, and key participants interviewed. But while the organisers were off and busy, the two film makers videoed events around Planet Diversity with an eye for different stories and voices and a deep interest in north-south and globalisation themes.

in Lucerne. The first product of their 20 hours of taping is “Women from Planet Diversity”, a 45 minute collection of sights, sounds and expertise from some of those who made Planet Diversity possible. We hear from students, environmental and farm group members and well-known activists like Vandana Shiva from India and Farida Akhter from Bangladesh.

The challenges

The dramatic loss of biodiversity and seemingly unstoppable climate change are the greatest ecological challenges of our time. Food and agriculture are central to these global problems. Increasing industrialisation, corporate control and globalisation of agriculture and food production are not the answer, but make the things worse. Meanwhile almost one billion people on our planet go hungry.

Women are key to both the present and future of sustainable agriculture. They are the collectors of seeds, the keepers of traditional knowledge of plants for food and health. Despite this, they are often prevented from owning or using land effectively, and can lack legal rights, appropriate technology and knowledge. Other problems include the industrialisation of agriculture, which destroys both biological and cultural diversity, and genetically modified (GMO) seeds, which – along with their health, safety and ecological risks -- cannot be saved, and lock producers into expensive contracts for seed, fertilizers and pesticides. These are some of the issues addressed in the film, along with solutions.

Shortly before Planet Diversity took place, the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) issued its initial report, based on four years of work by some 400 experts. A main conclusion was that diversified small farming and regional markets are key to fulfilling future food needs. The current model of industrial agriculture with its high oil and water use cannot guarantee food security and sovereignty. The report is important to “Women from Planet Diversity” activists, and is mentioned as the film opens.

The DVD of “Women from Planet Diversity” is available in German and English subtitled version for 12,00 Euros (plus postage). For US orders contact us at pdfilm@wloe.org. Subtitled versions in Spanish, French and Polish are planned.

For more information: Women and Life on Earth e.V.: www.wloe.org
* Women in international cooperation for peace, ecology and social justice (German assoc.)

Women in Europe for a Common Future: <http://www.wecf.eu/>;

For extensive documentation of Planet Diversity: www.planet-diversity.org

International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development or IAASTD <http://www.agassessment.org>

Download the 34 page Executive Summary of the Synthesis Report at:

http://www.agassessment.org/docs/IAASTD_EXEC_SUMMARY_JAN_2008.pdf