Lume: Tools for the economic-ecological analysis of agroecosystems

Only a few tools are available to study the economic basis of agroecosystems. This publication introduces the Lume method developed by AS-PTA in Brazil, which gives visibility to the economic, ecological and political relations that lie at the heart of agroecological farming. The participatory method particularly emphasises the work done by women, which is often hidden or disfigured by conventional economic theory. It has proven to be an invaluable resource to formulate technical advice to local farmers’ organisations and academic research projects. The method has also been applied to the design, monitoring and evaluation of public policies for rural and agricultural development.

Without feminism there is no agroecology: Towards healthy sustainable and just food systems
Teresa Maisano (ed.), 2019. Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples’ Mechanism for relations with the UN Committee on World Food Security (CSM)

“From a feminist perspective, agroecology is and must be a political proposal that recognizes and promotes the historical and social practices of women, from the domestication of agriculture and the production of healthy food to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.” This is one of the starting points of this 2019 statement from the CSM Women Working Group. The group counts 190 participating organisations, bringing together fisher folks, peasants, pastoralists, indigenous peoples, consumers, agricultural workers, activists and landless women from all across the world. The publication highlights the importance of taking a feminist approach to the promotion of agroecology and the realisation of the human right to adequate food and nutrition. It argues that patriarchal, feudal and capitalist relations of power, along with the current sexual division of labour and ‘gender blind’ agricultural policies, are among the root causes of gender inequalities, discrimination and marginalisation of women, especially in the rural areas. It emphasises the potential of agroecology to challenge these power dynamics and realise women’s rights in the agricultural sector, to enrich feminist perspectives, and further strengthen political will to reframe gender roles and responsibilities.

Film: Gather
Sanjay Rawal (director), 2020. First Nations Development Institute, 74 minutes.

In traditional times forests, plains, deserts, the sea or village gardens were important places for Indigenous North American communities to source their food. Modern developments have taken these food sources away or barred Indigenous peoples from them. However, Indigenous peoples continue to return to their places of origin, including their food. Gather is an intimate portrait of the growing movement amongst Native Americans to reclaim their spiritual, political and cultural identities through food sovereignty, while battling the trauma of centuries of genocide. The film follows Nephi Craig, a chef from the White Mountain Apache Nation (Arizona), opening an indigenous café as a nutritional recovery clinic; Elsie Dubray, a young scientist from the Cheyenne River Sioux Nation (South Dakota), conducting landmark studies on bison; and the Ancestral Guard, a group of environmental activists from the Yurok Nation (Northern California), trying to save the Klamath river. Gather aims to further build international awareness, understanding, and appreciation of women in the Native American food movement, which will ultimately bolster support for an improved policy environment for long-term sustainability.
Right to food and nutrition watch: Women’s Power in Food Struggles
Alejandra Morena (ed.), 2019. Brot fur die Welt & FIAN International
In today’s context of rising hunger and ecological collapse, women and all those who seek to reimagine food, environment and economies, face ever-increasing attacks. This edition of the Right to Food and Nutrition Watch addresses key issues of power, and exposes the structural violence that degrades both women and the environment. This edition is the result of a collective reflection process driven by women around the world. It highlights the power of individual and collective women’s resistance to lead the way towards better social and ecological relations. The five articles reflect an array of women’s struggles, activism and analysis with regard to the right to food and nutrition. Together they delve into the right-wing political climate in which activism takes place, how patriarchy and the neo-liberal food system negatively impacts both women’s autonomy and nature, and the growth of the struggles being waged for a just food system. These insights show how both women and nature are exploited, ‘othered’, and made invisible, while also demonstrating new ways of being with each other and nature.

Nourishing Life: Territories of life & food sovereignty
Michel Pimbert and Grazia Borrini-Feyerabend, 2019. Coventry University and CENESTA.
This Policy Brief focuses on the contributions that the territories governed, managed and conserved by custodian indigenous peoples and local communities make to the food sovereignty of the peoples and communities themselves. Drawing from eight inspiring cases, it shows how community custodians are well organised, knowledgeable, self-aware, and possess a strong sense of identity and pride. They hold the capacity to develop ‘localised’ and culture-rich food systems that sustain the health of both their custodian communities and territories. To add visibility, strength and recognition to these “territories of life” the document argues for more participatory knowledge sharing processes and discusses specific options to advance cooperation. It offers recommendations for civil society organisations and networks, and for legislators, policymakers and government officials willing to halt the drivers of planetary disaster and enhance the positive forces that foster more just and sustainable food systems, better conserved biological and cultural diversity, and more empowered and healthier communities.