



AGROECOLOGY:

CHARTING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR EASTERN AFRICAN FOOD SYSTEMS

Documented by Mr. Bwambale Bernard | FoSCU Coordinator

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The 2nd Eastern African Agroecology Conference (EAAC), held from March 25-27, 2025, in Nairobi, Kenya, marked a significant milestone in the pursuit of sustainable agriculture. With 800 delegates from 42 countries spanning Africa, Europe, Asia, and the Americas, the event underscored the growing global interest in agroecological approaches.

Key Insights and Developments

The conference served as a nexus for knowledge exchange, featuring cutting-edge research and real-world applications of agroecology. Experts and farmers alike presented compelling evidence demonstrating agroecology's potential to revolutionize food

systems through sustainable and resilient agricultural practices.

A central theme emerged: the critical need for increased government and stakeholder investment in agroecology. Speakers emphasized the importance of viewing agroecology holistically as a science, a set of practices, and a social movement to fully leverage its benefits for sustainable food systems.

FoSCU's Contribution and Recommendations

The Food Safety Coalition of Uganda (FoSCU) played a crucial role in the conference, highlighting the concerning trend of highly hazardous pesticide (HHP) importation

and usage in Africa, including substances banned in their countries of origin. FoSCU underscored the detrimental effects of HHPs on health and environmental sustainability, with a particular focus on women's health, given their majority stake in food production.

FoSCU advocated for a shift towards sustainable food production methods, including agroecology and Integrated Pest Management (IPM). They also recommended increased awareness, capacity building, advocacy, and localized research on pesticides and healthier alternatives.

Challenges and Strategic Recommendations

The conference identified several key obstacles to the widespread adoption of agroecological practices, including policy gaps, limited funding, insufficient research investment, fragmented coordination, and lack of information-sharing platforms.

To address these challenges, the conference proposed strategic recommendations:

1. Increase investment in agroecological research and innovation
2. Create enabling policy, legal, and institutional frameworks
3. Strengthen institutional coordination
4. Empower consumers regarding agroecological products
5. Build capacity and empower farmers in agroecological practices
6. Establish knowledge-exchange platforms for farmers
7. Strengthen partnerships in the agroecology sector
8. Allocate 20% of agricultural budgets to agroecology
9. Enhance domestic and international markets for agroecological products
10. Promote sustainable, farmer-managed seed systems

A Commitment to Progress

The conference concluded with a significant call to action, endorsed by governments, development partners, donor agencies, and other stakeholders. This commitment will be monitored and evaluated in preparation for the next EAAC, proposed for 2027.

The 2nd EAAC has set a clear trajectory for the future of agriculture in Eastern Africa and beyond, emphasizing agroecology's critical role in transforming food systems for enhanced sustainability and resilience. As we move forward, the insights and commitments from this conference will undoubtedly shape the agricultural landscape of the region for years to come.

