

Communications and Media Report

March – August 2022

Programme One

GM AND BIOSAFETY

GMOs/Biosafety in South Africa
GMOs/Biosafety in the rest of Africa
Second generation GM technologies

The battle over regulation of new breeding techniques in south Africa

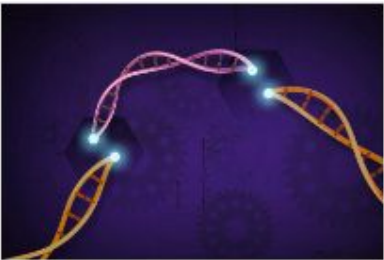
Publications

View Edit Delete Revisions

A blog by ACB Director Mariam Mayet

Snapshot

- In October 2021, the South African (SA) government determined that the regulatory and risk assessment framework that exists for genetically modified organisms (GMOs) will also apply to new breeding techniques (NBTs), which make up a host of new genetic engineering technologies.
- This decision appears to follow a European Court of Justice ruling that since NBTs entail genetic modifications that do not occur naturally, which is thus similar to the definition of a GMO, these new



Blog



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News and comment on genetically modified foods and their associated pesticides



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The battle over regulation of new breeding techniques in South Africa

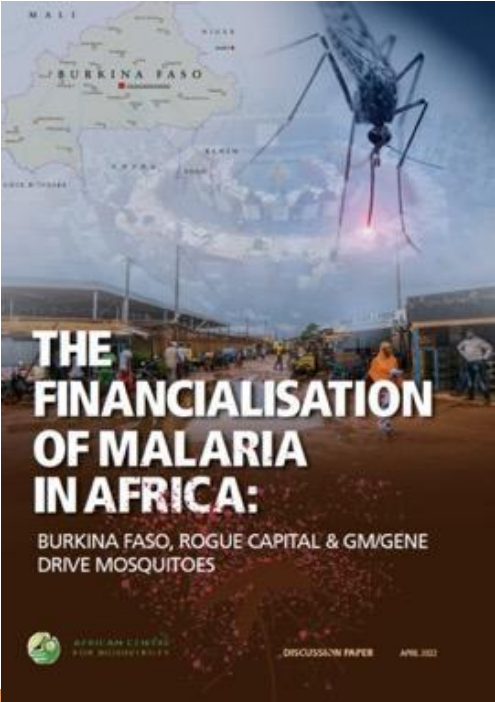
Published: 25 July 2022

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A blog by African Centre for Biodiversity director Mariam Mayet

Publications



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6	Belgium (BE)	3
7	Canada (CA)	3
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9	Taiwan (TW)	2
10	India (IN)	1



Clicks by Country

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5	Germany (DE)	2
6	Finland (FI)	1
7	United Kingdom (GB)	1
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9	Australia (AU)	1
10	Belgium (BE)	1

Clicks by Country


#	Country	Total Clicks
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2	Germany (DE)	4
3	South Africa (ZA)	3
4	France (FR)	3
5	Canada (CA)	2
6	Tanzania, United Republic of (TZ)	1
7	Burkina Faso (BF)	1
8	Finland (FI)	1
9	India (IN)	1
10	Netherlands (NL)	1

Media mentions – August



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Ms Seipati Mokhosi (11th from left) at the Network of African Scientists for Biosafety, Biodiversity and Health meeting in Kenya.

BIOCHEMISTRY LECTURER CONTRIBUTES TO AFRICAN SCIENTISTS NETWORK EVENT

Aug 16, 2022



Following on from online meetings and with support from Professor Marion Mutugi, Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, the ACB hosted another meeting in May in Kenya, which led to the founding of the Network of African Scientists for Biosafety, Biodiversity, and Health (NASBIOH) – Réseau des Scientifiques Africains pour la Sécurité Biologique, la Biodiversité et la Santé (ReSABS) in French. Seipati Mokhosi, an Accelerated Academic Development Programme lecturer in the School of Life Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, who attended the event, was quoted in a university article, as saying: “One of the main issues related to the growing and emerging trends has been the use of genetic editing tools and techniques on the continent, and how responsive corporate science and scientists are to the current issues of Africa.”

Media mentions – July



This article referenced 9 of ACB’s publications in arguing that a paradigm shift is needed away from the Gates funded industrial agricultural models and towards agroecological approaches. It uses ACB’s publications as evidence to document the numerous problems with the Gates-led “green revolution” for Africa, and why agroecology is encouraged. These publications included the following:

The expansion of the commercial seed sector in sub-Saharan Africa: Major players, key issues and trends. 2015

Wandile Sihlobo’s technocratic support for GM and related technology misses the mark. 2021


Harmonisation of seed laws in Africa. 2021

Bayer breathing life into Gates’ failed GM drought tolerant maize. 2021

ACB Reaction to the Regional Dialogue on African Food Systems, which took place at the Seventh Session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development. 2021

Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA): Laying the groundwork for the commercialisation of African Agriculture. 2012

Media mentions – March



oxitec's failed GM mosquito releases worldwide: Forewarnings for Africa and the Target Malaria project

30 APRIL 2019 | Briefing paper | GM & Biosafety | GMOs/Biosafety in Africa | Second generation GM technologies

A decade ago, genetically modified (GM) mosquitoes were first released globally, in the Cayman Islands, by UK-based company Oxitec. Further releases followed in Malaysia, Panama and Brazil.

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British-based Company Set to Release Billions of GM Mosquitoes in Two US States

BY RHODA WILSON ON MARCH 24, 2022 • (14 COMMENTS)

Top Posts



Oxitec's aim:

Kill the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito species

Stop spread of tropical diseases

Suppress wild populations



1:13 / 5:50

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Oxitec's failed GM mosquito releases: Forewarnings for Africa and the Target Malaria Project

5,224 views • Apr 29, 2019

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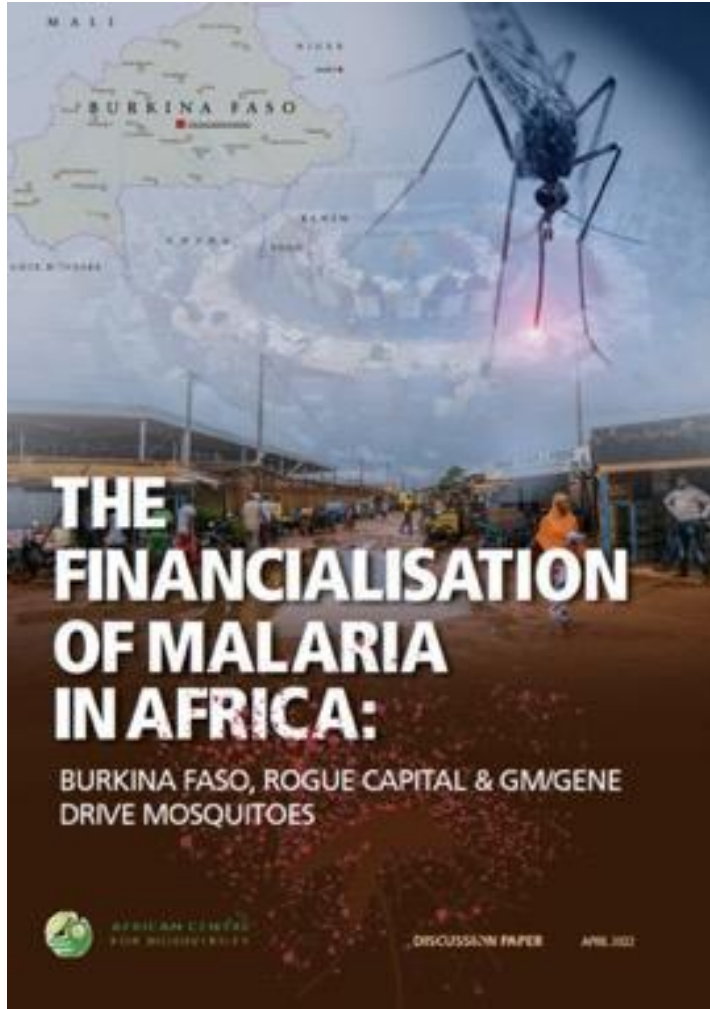
SAVE

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Following approval to release 750 million genetically modified mosquitoes in Florida during 2021/2022, Oxitec plans to release 2 billion of them in California and Florida Keys. This article mentions ACB's paper and vlog. In pointing out the threats and effects Oxitec's plans will have on our ecosystem, this article references ACB's research arguing against Oxitec, which details the serious concerns raised by the release of GM mosquitoes in the world.

Media mentions – July



The Committee for the Abolition of Illegitimate Debt (CADTM) published a commentary by Jean Nanga on the notion of rogue capital based on ACB's publication 'The financialisation of malaria in Africa: Burkina Faso, rogue capital & GM /gene drive mosquitoes.' The commentary explores how capital is not only rogue, but structurally cynical and criminal.

[Accueil](#) / [Actualités](#)

Nouveaux OGM : ces décisions qui déplaisent à l'industrie

par [Charlotte KRINKE](#)

Date de rédaction / mise à jour : 25 mai 2022

ARTICLE TRADUIT : [English](#)

VERSION PDF

In South Africa, GMOs resulting from new genetic modification techniques come under GMO regulations and must therefore be subject to the same obligations as any other GMO. Industry has appealed this decision and warn that the policy will have harmful consequences on food safety. The article mentions the ACB together with CSOs having submitted an appeal commission to rule on the industry's appeal, and are confident that if the commission's decision does not go along with the industry, the latter will go to the High Court.



Webinars hosted by ACB on monitoring GM and biosafety – May



The ACB with the support of Professor Marion Mutugi (Kenya National Commission on Human Rights) hosted a two-day meeting meeting, from the 30th to the 31st of May at Kilaguni Safari Lodge in Kenya, for the Network of Independent African Scientists (NIAS). The face-to-face meeting was held after a series of online meetings that were held in 2020 with the aim of creating a platform of sharing, exchanges, and learning for independent-minded scientists in the region. The meeting was attended by scientists from various disciplines and backgrounds from South Africa, Tanzania, Kenya, Mali, Benin, Nigeria, Zambia, and Ethiopia. It was also supported by key CSO partners, farmers' organizations from Kenya and Mali, and a representative from Thousand Currents, a funder that has also supported this work.

Meetings hosted by ACB on monitoring GM and biosafety – May



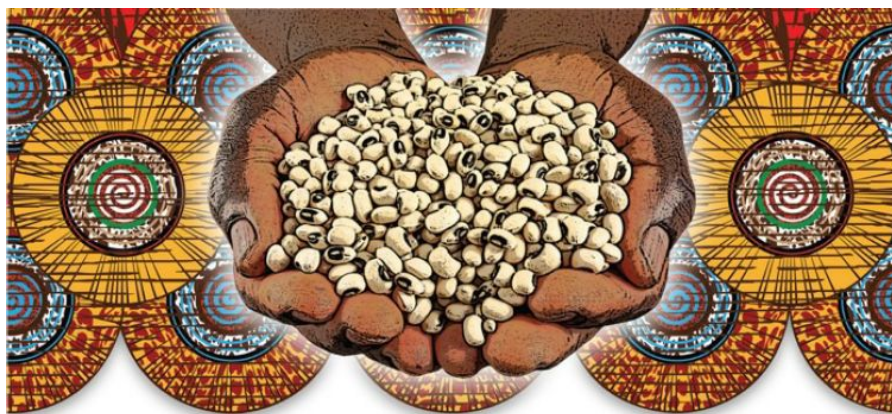
The ACB in collaboration with BIBA-K hosted a three-day meeting, from the 25th to 27th of May in Nairobi, Kenya. The aim of the meeting was to bring together CSOs from East and West Africa where the GMO push has been strongly situated on the continent due to a number of reasons and discuss on strategies to push back against this onslaught.

Meetings hosted by ACB on monitoring GM and biosafety – April



National face to face meeting on agrochemicals in SA, 6 – 7 April 2022 hosted by the ACB and supported by Unpoison, TCOE, SACCAWU and UCT. The aim of the meeting was to bring together CSOs and scientific exporters on agrochemicals across South Africa and the Africa region to discuss the political climate of agrochemicals in SA, and to create a space to strategise challenges, solutions in tackling the agrochemical crisis.

Webinars hosted by ACB on monitoring GM and biosafety – March



Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEf) and the African Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) warmly invite you to an online

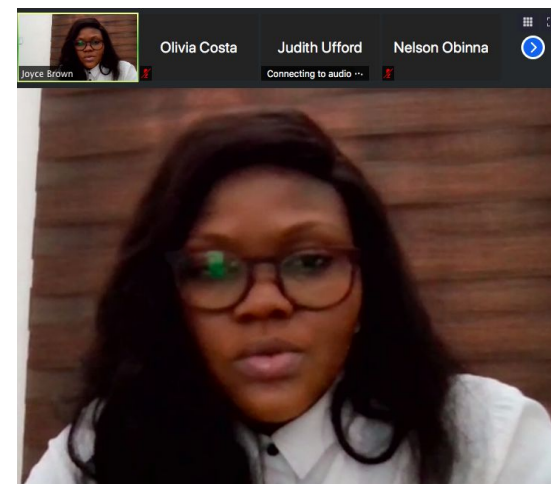
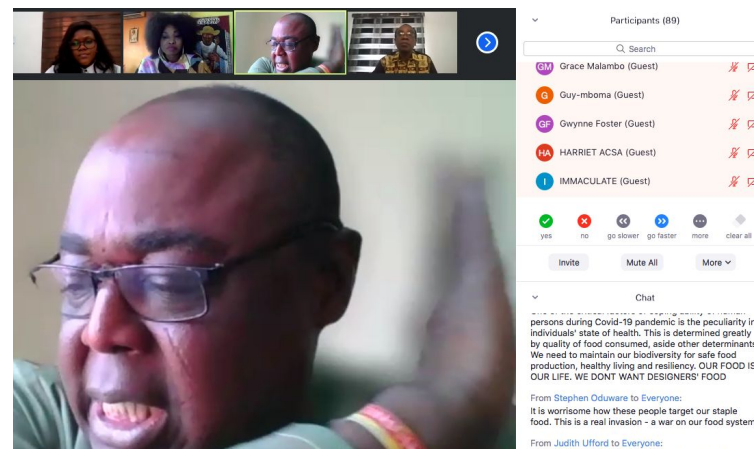
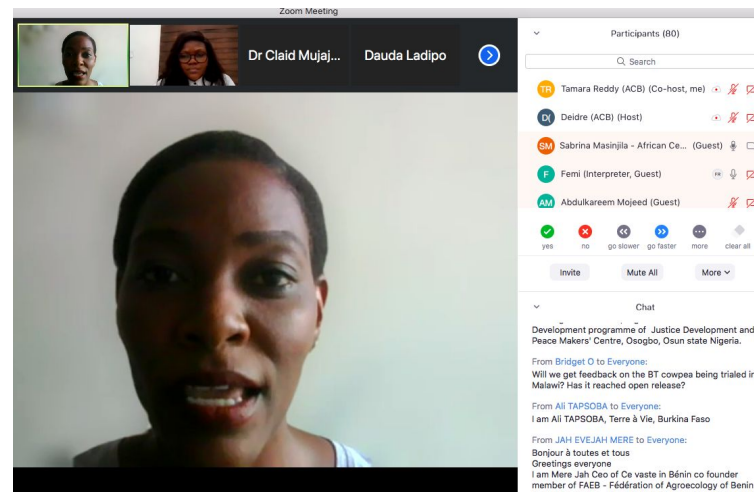
La Fondation Santé de la Terre Mère (HOMEf) et le Centre Africain pour la Biodiversité (ACB) vous invitent chaleureusement

**INTERNATIONAL
PRESS
CONFERENCE:
Pushing Back Bt
Cowpea in Africa**

**CONFÉRENCE
DE PRESSE
INTERNATIONALE :
Repousser le niébé
Bt en Afrique**

Monday, 7 March
11h00 AM – 12h30 PM (WAT, UTC+1),
12h00 PM – 13h30 PM (SAST, UTC+2)
13h00 PM – 14h30 PM (EAT, UTC+3)

Lundi, 7 March
11h00 AM – 12h30 PM (WAT, UTC+1),
12h00 PM – 13h30 PM (SAST, UTC+2)
13h00 PM – 14h30 PM (EAT, UTC+3)

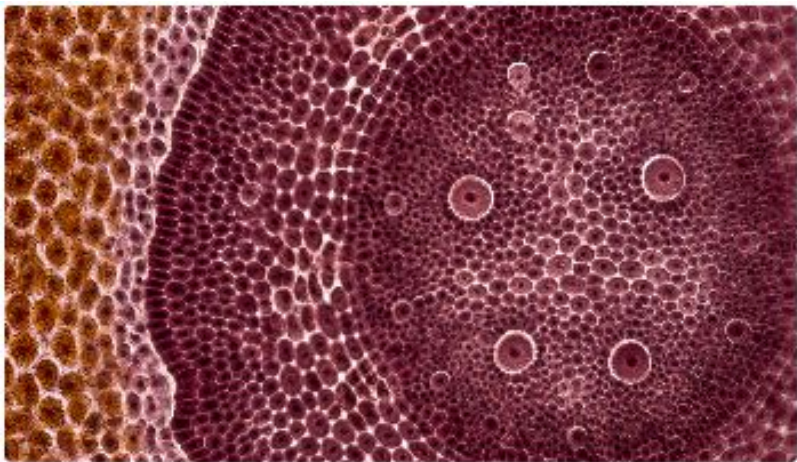


‘International Press Conference: Pushing Back Bt Cowpea in Africa,’ hosted by the ACB and Health of Mother Earth foundation (HOMEf) on the 7 March where the African coalition came together to publicise their call for a ban on Bt Cowpea in Nigeria and West African countries.

Programme Two
SEED SOVEREIGNTY

Seed laws & policies
Farmer seed systems

Submission



30 Aug 2022

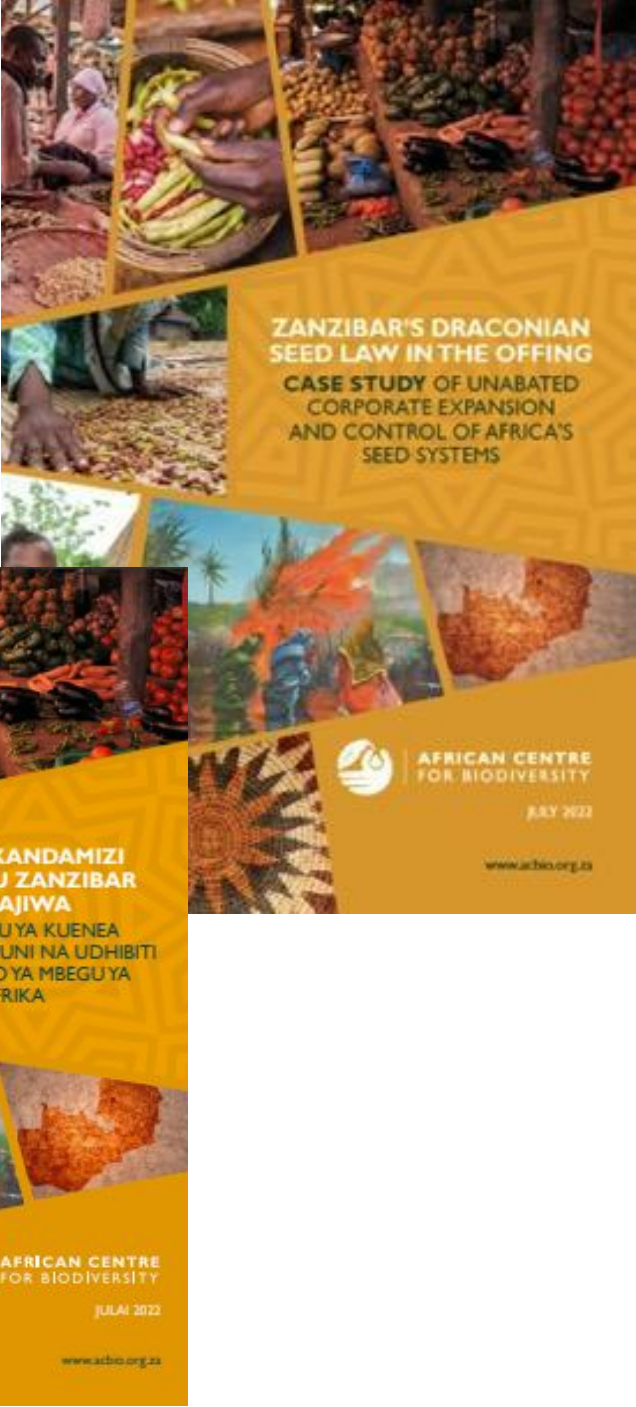
Regulations of Plant Improvement Act and Plant Breeders' Rights Act, 2018

Please find here ACB's comments to the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development regarding the recently published Regulations to implement the Plant Improvement Act 2018, and the Plant Breeders' Rights Act, 2018. The Department has taken important steps in these Regulations to ensure that certain groups of farmers are exempt from these corporate [...]

Clicks by Country

#	Country	Total Clicks
1	Canada (CA)	9
2	United States (US)	9
3	South Africa (ZA)	6
4	France (FR)	4
5	Germany (DE)	3
6	Brazil (BR)	1
7	United Kingdom (GB)	1
8	Indonesia (ID)	1
9	Uganda (UG)	1
10	Zambia (ZM)	1

Publications



Clicks by Country

#	Country	Total Clicks
1	United States (US)	17
2	Germany (DE)	11
3	France (FR)	4
4	Belgium (BE)	2
5	Canada (CA)	2
6	Indonesia (ID)	2
7	Ireland (IE)	2
8	Jordan (JO)	1
9	Tanzania, United Republic of (TZ)	1
10	South Africa (ZA)	1

Media mentions

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BOOK A TEST DRIVE

AFRICA

How governments across Africa defend troubling seeds regulations

Governments in African countries justify rush to formalise the seed sector citing acute food scarcity in the continer

By Richard Mahapatra, Kiran Pandey

Published: Monday 23 May 2022

1-15 MAY, 2022

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SEED MONEY

Corporations attempting a takeover of Africa's seed economy

+

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Constructions in Himalayas erasing clues to our past, future

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SOLAR PANEL WASTE

Scientists explore potential of discarded photovoltaic cells as building material

₹29

Battle for seed sovereignty

Africa's overdependence on global trade has given seed companies huge impetus to claim ownership over seed cultivated and sustained for millennia by smallholder farmers

MARIAM MAYET

SINCE THE 1990s, the World Trade Organisation's market access rules have resulted in the displacement of local and regional food systems, undermining Africa's self-sufficiency. This has increased the continent's vulnerability to supply disruptions and the vagaries of international trade and markets, which are in turn linked to global circuits of capital.

Indeed, Africa's overdependence on global trade has given multinational seed companies huge impetus to weaponise and claim ownership over seed cultivated and sustained over millennia by smallholder/peasant farmers on the continent. They do this through inter alia intellectual property rights based on UPOV 1991 (International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants, 1991 version) and draconian commercial seed laws. These not only serve corporate interests and those of the Global North but criminalise the very foundation of Africa's agriculture—farmers' ability to freely and autonomously save, exchange, breed and sell seed, including and especially from their farmer-managed seed systems (FMSS).

African smallholder farmers produce and reproduce the majority of their own seed needs from season to season. Over 90 per cent of seed on the continent is sourced through FMSS. However, numerous processes are underway that provide the essential scaffolding for stimulating trade within and beyond the African continent, linked to a bigger industrialising agenda forged by inter alia, the African Union's African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA).

Launched in 2006, funded by the philanthro-capitalist Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, AGRA continues to play a significant role in the development of and scaling up of commercial seed systems in Africa. The Foundation aggressively supports the transformation of African seed systems, having played a key role in fundamentally restructuring the seed laws of numerous countries, to require seed certification systems that protect certified varieties while criminalising all non-certified seed. This is being done at national, regional,



and continental levels.

In various African countries, Farm Input Subsidy Programmes (FISPs), which favour a limited range of standardised commercial seed and crops varieties, are a further means to hook small farmers onto the industrial agricultural input treadmill. These varieties are produced for sale into large-scale commodity markets, often underpinned by corporate-controlled closed value chains and government price floors. Agribusiness, in

conjunction with seed, synthetic fertiliser and pesticide companies and importers, is the main beneficiary of this scheme. Small-scale farmers are required to integrate into a capitalist "modernisation" agenda and sacrifice their biodiversity, land fertility and age-old seed autonomy, while using their scarce financial resources.

Regional seed and plant variety protection (PVP) frameworks are principally aimed at ensuring regionally seamless and expedited trade and seed production of commercially-bred seed varieties. The Arusha Protocol for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants is one such key mechanism, designed to coerce African countries into joining UPOV 1991. Seventeen Francophone African countries that comprise the African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI) are members of UPOV 1991.

At the continental level, and during the latter part of 2021, the African Union, whose various organs are funded by the Gates Foundation, developed a set of continental guidelines linked to the AfCFTA for the harmonisation of seed and biotechnology regulatory frame-works for food and agriculture in Africa, despite fierce resistance from African civil society. These Guidelines dangerously situate FMSS and farmers' rights within the context of a commercial seed sector agenda and overtly support commercial seed sector value chains, enabling the monopolisation of seed by the private sector. The AU shamelessly promotes continent-wide adoption of UPOV 1991 as a means for harmonising PVP.

(Mariam Mayet is Executive Director, African Centre for Biodiversity)

ACB's ED Mariam Mayet features in Down to Earth's three-part series, "The battle for seeds in Africa," which investigates how the surge to harmonise seed laws serves corporate interests while criminalising farmer managed seed systems, with African CSOs strongly opposing the commercialisation of local seed and entrenchment of the corporate capture of our food systems.

Media mentions



25th Meeting, 49th Regular Session of Human Rights Council - Presentation of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Michael Fakhri on seeds, right to life and farmers' rights

18 MARCH 2022 | Summary of report | Corporate Expansion | Farmer Seed Systems | Seed Laws & Policies | Seed Sovereignty

“The type of seed system you decide to support will determine your ability to tackle hunger, famine and nutrition.”



In his presentation at the 49th Regular Session, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Michael Fakhri explains the current reality of farmer seed systems and commodity seed system. He warns the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to be vigilant of agrichemical giants putting pressure of the continent to implement seed laws based on the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) as a means to control and privatise seed, negate farmers' seed systems and farmers rights – at the cost of destroying communities, livelihoods and biodiversity. This article uses a photograph provided by ACB from the dialogue on farmer managed seed systems and agroecology, held in Acornhoek, Limpopo on 20-22 January 2020 in providing a summary of Michael Fakhri presentation. ACB also provided a short blurb on Farmer Managed Seed Systems of Africa to contribute to the social media activity supporting the presentation.

International, Regional and National meetings attended by ACB, on Seed Sovereignty. 12 – 19 July 2022

LVC Regional Youth Training



The ACB participated in the LVC Regional Youth Training in Harare Zimbabwe this week. The regional Youth training on political economy and agroecology is meant to build the capacity of young women and men within LVC SEAF to understand the historical context that has informed existing agriculture and food systems and the practical implementation of agriculture practices. ACB presented on the Global food Systems, Corporate control in relation to African food systems, seed laws, and policies building on our work and collaboration with many partners and social movements in the region and in the international space. The meeting is being attended by youths from Zimbabwe, South Africa, Mozambique, Ghana, DRC, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania



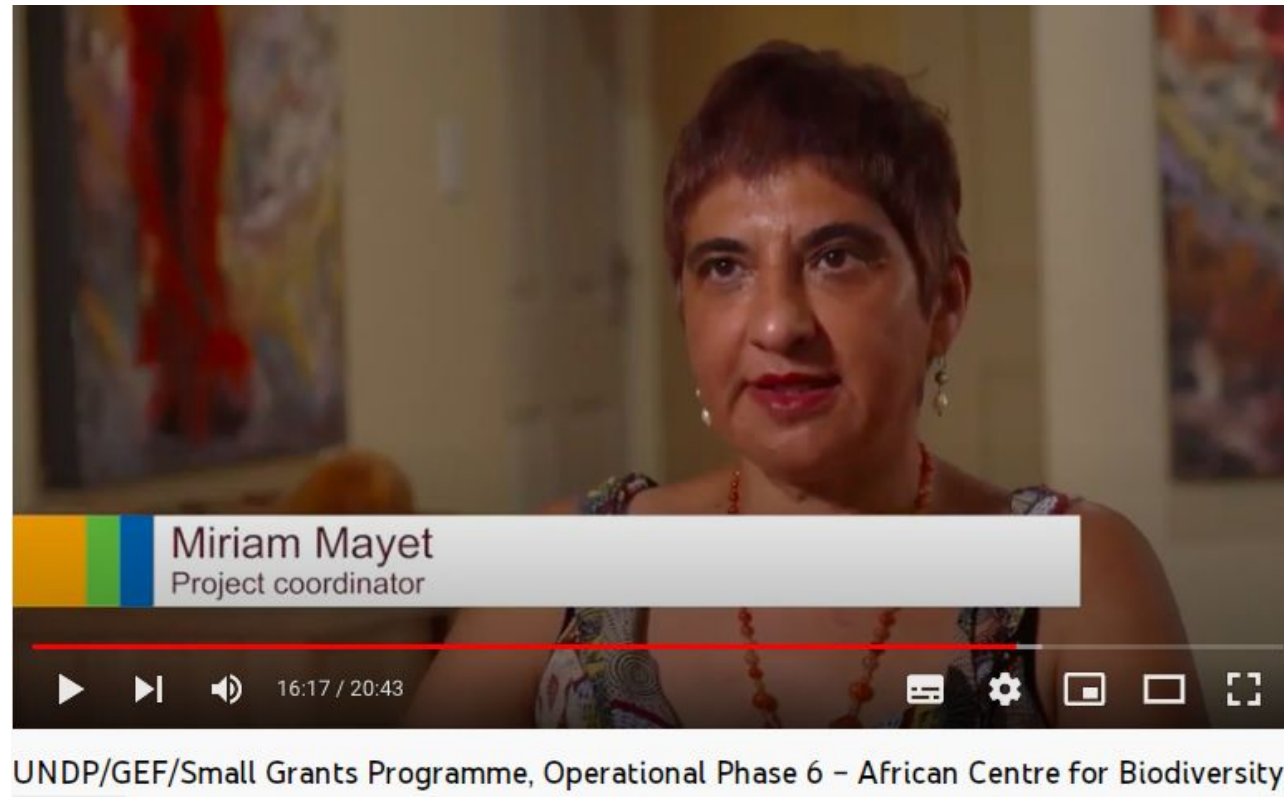
[#LaViaCampesina](#)

La Via Campesina Southern and Eastern Africa (LVC SEAF) Regional Youth Training in Zimbabwe

12 views 15 Jul 2022 In July 2022, the ACB participated in the [#LaViaCampesina](#) Southern and Eastern Africa (LVC SEAF) Regional Youth Training in Harare, Zimbabwe. The fo ...more

Online broadcasting coverage/webinars/meetings/ interviews of ACB works on Seed Sovereignty, March 2022

UNDP/GEF/Small Grants Programme: Interview with Grounded Media



Grounded Media approached ACB's Mariam Mayet for an interview about the organisation's work under the UNDP/GEF/Small Grants Programme, Operational Phase 6 project – which featured in a documentary about the beneficiaries of the grants programme. This grant was used to support ACB's work on seed sovereignty. It assisted the ACB to address key environmental problems of the narrowing of seed availability and agricultural biodiversity, and the ecological damage caused by government and private sector orientation focusing exclusively on agricultural modernisation in the form of delivery and adoption of Green Revolution technologies. Through UNDP/GEF/Small Grants Programme ACB achieved building civil society and farmer capacity to engage with policy, and to develop and deepen relationships with farmers, CSOs, governments and donors to develop and implement policy solutions that protect, support and strengthen FMSS and agro-ecology.

Programme Three
CORPORATE EXPANSION

Agroecology
Agribusiness
Green revolution
Farm input subsidy programme
Multiple Shocks



27 Jul 2022

Playing chess with the world’s biodiversity. The post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and Afri...

A blog by ACB’s Sabrina Masinjila, Linzi Lewis and Mariam Mayet The crafting of a new global biodiversity framework In 2018, Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) embarked on multilateral intergovernmental talks toward crafting a new global deal to curb global biodiversity loss (the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)).1 The CBD, adopted in [...]

#	Country	Total Clicks
1	United States (US)	27
2	South Africa (ZA)	13
3	Canada (CA)	7
4	Germany (DE)	4
5	France (FR)	4
6	Belgium (BE)	3
7	United Kingdom (GB)	3
8	Finland (FI)	2
9	Uruguay (UY)	1

Publications

ECO 2022

OEWG 4

ABOUT US · JUNE 26 · JUNE 25 · JUNE 24 · JUNE 23 · JUNE 22 · JUNE 21 · MORE...

June 23, 2022

WHO WILL FUND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION, AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR AFRICA?



By African Centre for Biodiversity

Where adequate funds will come from to reduce rampant biodiversity loss is crucial to ensuring the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework. African countries are demanding that developed countries pay for their ecological debt and implementation of the GBF, in accordance with Article 20 of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

But how will these resources be mobilized?

ECO 2022

OEWG 4

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June 21, 2022

WHERE IS AGRICULTURAL BIODIVERSITY IN THE POST-2020 GBF?



By African Centre for Biodiversity

ECO 2022

OEWG 4

ABOUT US · JUNE 26 · JUNE 25 · JUNE 24 · JUNE 23 · JUNE 22 · JUNE 21 · MORE...

June 25, 2022

THE FAILURE OF MULTILATERALISM – AND RISE OF CORPORATE CAPTURE OF THE CBD

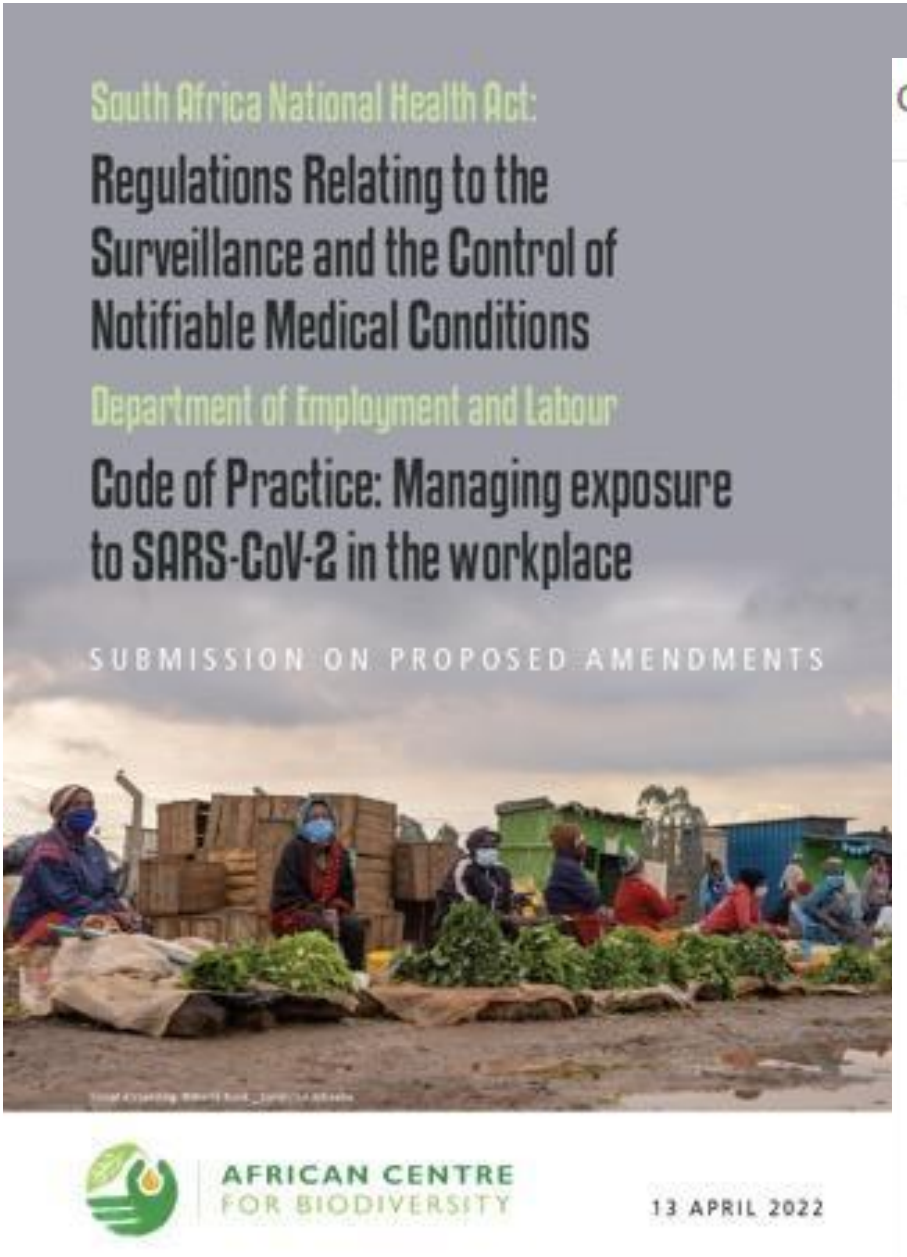


By African Centre for Biodiversity

The current state of the planet, and in particular climate change, biodiversity loss and land degradation, reflect on the legitimacy of environmental multilateralism such as the CBD.



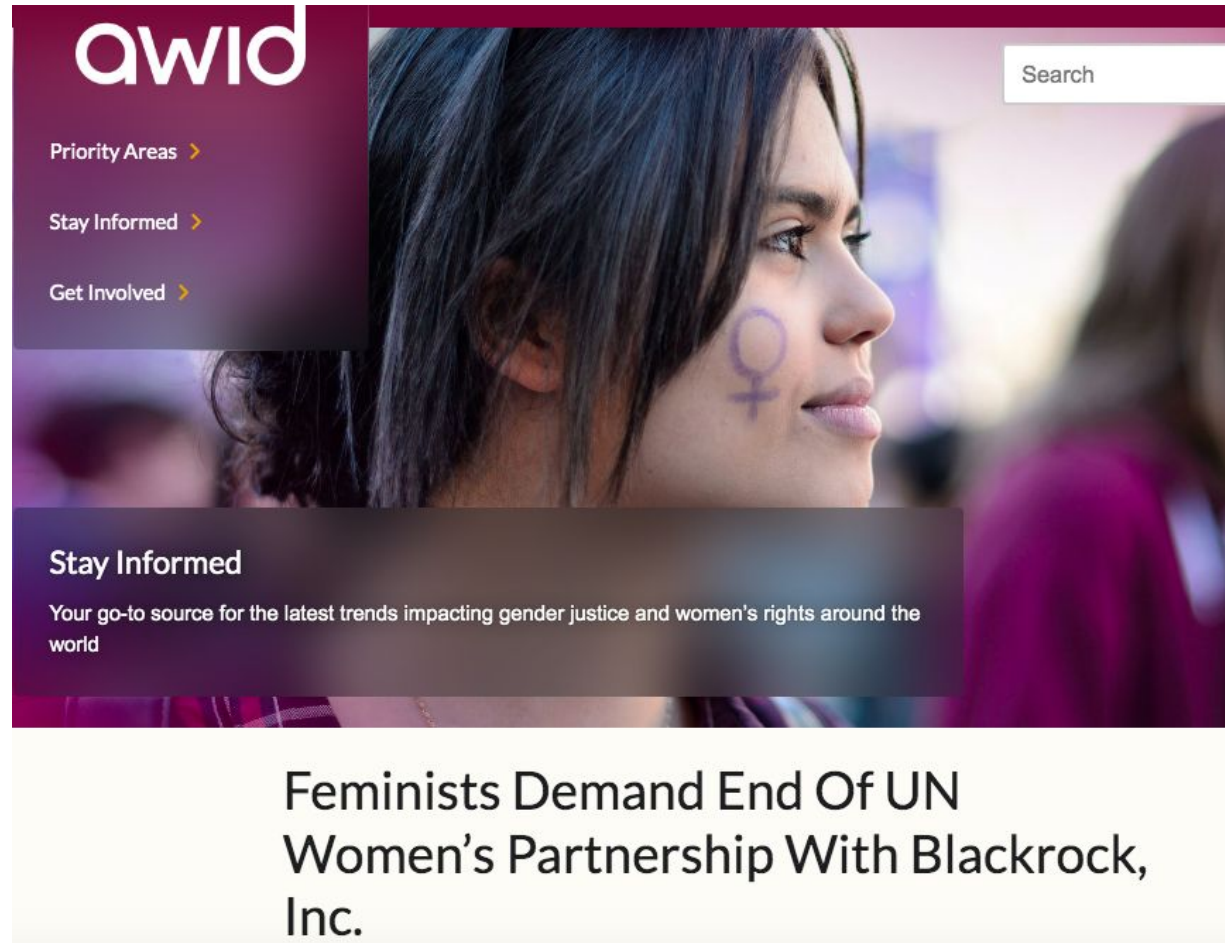
ACB’s research and advocacy officers Sabrina Masinjila and Linzi Lewis attended the fourth meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group on the #Post2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) is underway in Nairobi, Kenya, where parties to the @UNBiodiversity (CBD) are considering how to develop a new blueprint for #ForNature. In addition to ACB publishing one blog drawing concern to the failure of the negotiations to date highlighting global inequalities, and touches on some of the key issues under discussion, and the implications especially for Africa and its food and agriculture systems – three op-eds where submitted to ECO 2022 CBD Alliance.



Clicks by Country

#	Country	Total Clicks
1	South Africa (ZA)	10
2	France (FR)	4
3	United Kingdom (GB)	3
4	Germany (DE)	3
5	United States (US)	2
6	Sweden (SE)	1
7	Canada (CA)	1

Feminists Demand End of UN Women's Partnership With Blackrock, Inc



ACB, together with over 100 women's organisations and CSOs, signed on to the AWID letter urging UN Women's, which is responsible for promoting gender equality, to end its partnership with the largest investor in fossil fuels and deforestation-linked agricultural commodities, BlackRock.

Rich Appetites



THIRD WORLD RESURGENCE

Philanthrocapitalism: The Gates Foundation's African programmes are not charity

The activities of the Gates Foundation are a major example of what has come to be called 'philanthrocapitalism'. Philip L Bereano argues that philanthrocapitalism is an attempt to use market processes to do good, and therefore problematic as markets are ill-suited to producing socially constructive ends.



Community Alliance for
GLOBAL JUSTICE

**“This is
a new wave
of neocolonialism
of our food system”**

– Mariam Mayet, Director of the African Center
for Biodiversity.

**Watch Episode 3 of #RichAppetites
to learn how philanthropists are underwriting the
corporate control of African agriculture.**

EN

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Defender
CHILDREN'S HEALTH DEFENSE NEWS & VIEWS

CHD COVID BIG PHARMA BIG ENERGY BIG FOOD BIG TECH BIG CHEM

Million Copies Sold — 'The Real Anthony Fauci' — The book that launched the movement

05/06/22 • BIG FOOD • VIEWS

**Under Guise of 'Charity,' Gates Foundation
Pushes Pesticides, GMOs on Small Farmers**

ACTIVIST POST

HOME ECONOMY LIBERTY WAR ACTIVISM HEALTH TECHNOLOGY ENVIRONMENT VIDEO

HOT TOPICS JUNE 12, 2022 | PATRICK WOOD, DR. JOSEPH MERCOLA: IT'S CRUCIAL TO UNDERSTAND WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST

HOME ECONOMY

**Video: Gates Foundation Spent Billions Pushing
Commercial Fertilizers and Pesticides, GMO Seeds on
Small African Farmers**

For the third installment of the video series 'Rich Appetites,' a short film series on how big philanthropy is shaping the future of food in Africa, co-produced by AGRAWatch and AFSA, ACB's Mariam Mayet was interviewed about how the empire of influence between AGRA, Cornell Alliance for Science, AATF, OFAB, ABNE, CFS have worked together to create draconian laws facilitating the corporate capture of African agriculture and food systems. Further, Mayet discusses the new wave of neo-colonialism