



AFRICAN CENTRE
FOR BIODIVERSITY

Annual Report 2022



**AFRICAN CENTRE
FOR BIODIVERSITY**

The African Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) is a research and advocacy organisation working towards food sovereignty and agroecology in Africa, with a focus on biosafety, seed systems and agricultural biodiversity. The organisation is committed to dismantling inequalities and resisting corporate industrial expansion in Africa's food and agriculture systems.

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Acknowledgment of support

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to our loyal and generous funding partners – over several years many have become close companions and allies, while others have joined us more recently on this collective journey.

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Introduction

In 2022, as the world continued to emerge from the hiatus resulting from the pandemic and associated lockdowns, the aggressive push towards industrialisation of African agricultural and food, accompanied by ongoing marginalisation of African small-scale food producers at all levels, proceeded unabated, driven by *inter alia* the African Union, through the continent's regional economic blocs, as well as the African Development Bank.

In addition, many African countries are embracing not only older generations of genetically modified (GM) seeds but also new technologies, with some states taking the decision not to regulate these or the technology at all. In terms of identifying the threats on the horizon and providing legal, scientific, and policy support and capacity to network partners on the continent, the ACB has continued to play a pivotal role. Strong linkages to constituencies on the ground provides the basis for collective work on multiple regional processes, and also informs our advocacy in international policy spaces. This has continued to allow us to make effective use of multiple alliances at local, national, regional and global levels to engage in advocacy that benefits marginalised and resource-poor communities, whose livelihoods and rights to food and nutrition security can be enhanced through increased seed diversification and sovereignty, equitable access to seed, and agroecological resources.

We also witnessed rapidly changing seed laws in various countries that criminalise rather than protect the rights of farmers to save, exchange, sell, and reuse seed. Our leadership in strenuously resisting the encroachment of corporate laws and policies into African food and seed systems in particular, and our work towards transforming seed and related

agriculture policies and laws to protect, support and strengthen farmer-managed seed systems (FMSS) and realise transitions to agroecological farming in Africa, has been taken up by a wide range of coalitions, networks and organisations at national, regional, and international level.

We were able to convene and host several strategic national and regional meetings, as well as attend important international multilateral negotiations, face-to-face. Furthermore, our work was cognisant of the converging multiple crises relating to climate change, food, energy, ecology, and increasing inequalities in the world and on the African continent, in particular.

Increasingly, we have integrated corporate capture as integral to our overall analysis, as opposed to undertaking discreet work and campaigns on corporate capture, since it is inextricably linked to the industrialisation of agriculture, food, and seed systems in Africa, embedded too in bilateral, multilateral, and regional agriculture trade arrangements. We are open to further embrace new networks in spaces such as those operating in the climate justice, workers, health, and nutrition sectors, where these interconnect with biodiversity, agroecology, and food systems.

In regard to communities of practice, we will support platforms for practice, learning, and sharing on content areas, and support coalitions and structured joint activities to realise common goals, particularly focused on selected core organisations having agency. In Southern Africa, we will continue to push for the establishment of agricultural policies that meet farmers' rights, diversify farmer seed systems and contribute to sustainable maintenance and use of agricultural biodiversity.

Highlights



At international level, the ACB engaged in extensive participation and mobilisation in and around several Meetings of the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) of three bodies: the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI), and the Open-ended Working Group on the GBF (WG2020), as well as participation in the Fourth meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG4) on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) in Kenya.

Decisions and recommendations adopted under the three bodies were sent to Part II of the Conference of the Parties (COP) 15, and to the Protocols' COP/MOPs, which took place in December, in Montreal, which the ACB attended. In the lead up the ACB published a series of prescient blogs and briefings.

The ACB continued supporting groups on the African continent and working through joint campaigns, to ensure that civil society organisations (CSOs) are speaking with one voice and adopting the correct narratives while pushing back against GMOs. We partnered with various CSOs to push back against the GM onslaught on specific crops, including GM maize, GM cowpea, GM cassava, and new GM technologies including GM mosquitoes/gene drives.

The ACB also co-hosted a meeting for CSOs to strategise on collective struggles in pushing back against the commercial release of GMOs for food, with the Biodiversity and Biosafety Association in Kenya (BIBA-K) which has strengthened an emerging decentralised network.

Also in Kenya, the ACB hosted a meeting that launched the Network of African Scientists for Biosafety, Biodiversity and Health (NASBIOH) – an independent collective of African concerned scientists to support biosafety work on the continent, on issues relating to new GM technologies.



Our work continued to be guided by three programme areas:

- GM, biosafety and new technologies;
- Seed sovereignty, incorporating commercial seed laws and policies, farmer seed systems and agroecology; and
- Corporate expansion in African agriculture

The ACB's theory of change is rooted in our implementation of six integrated and dynamic strategies; namely, horizon scanning and prioritisation; research and analysis; sharing and learning; movement building; communications; and advocacy.



Within a context of increasing criminalisation of FMSS on the continent, South Africa (SA) is an outlier, where relatively good exceptions have been provided in draft Regulations of emerging seed laws, which do not criminalise farmers' practices of saving, exchanging, and reusing farm seed – applicable to certain protected varieties – and do not require the certification of farmers' seed. The ACB's recommendations are reflected in the published Regulations.

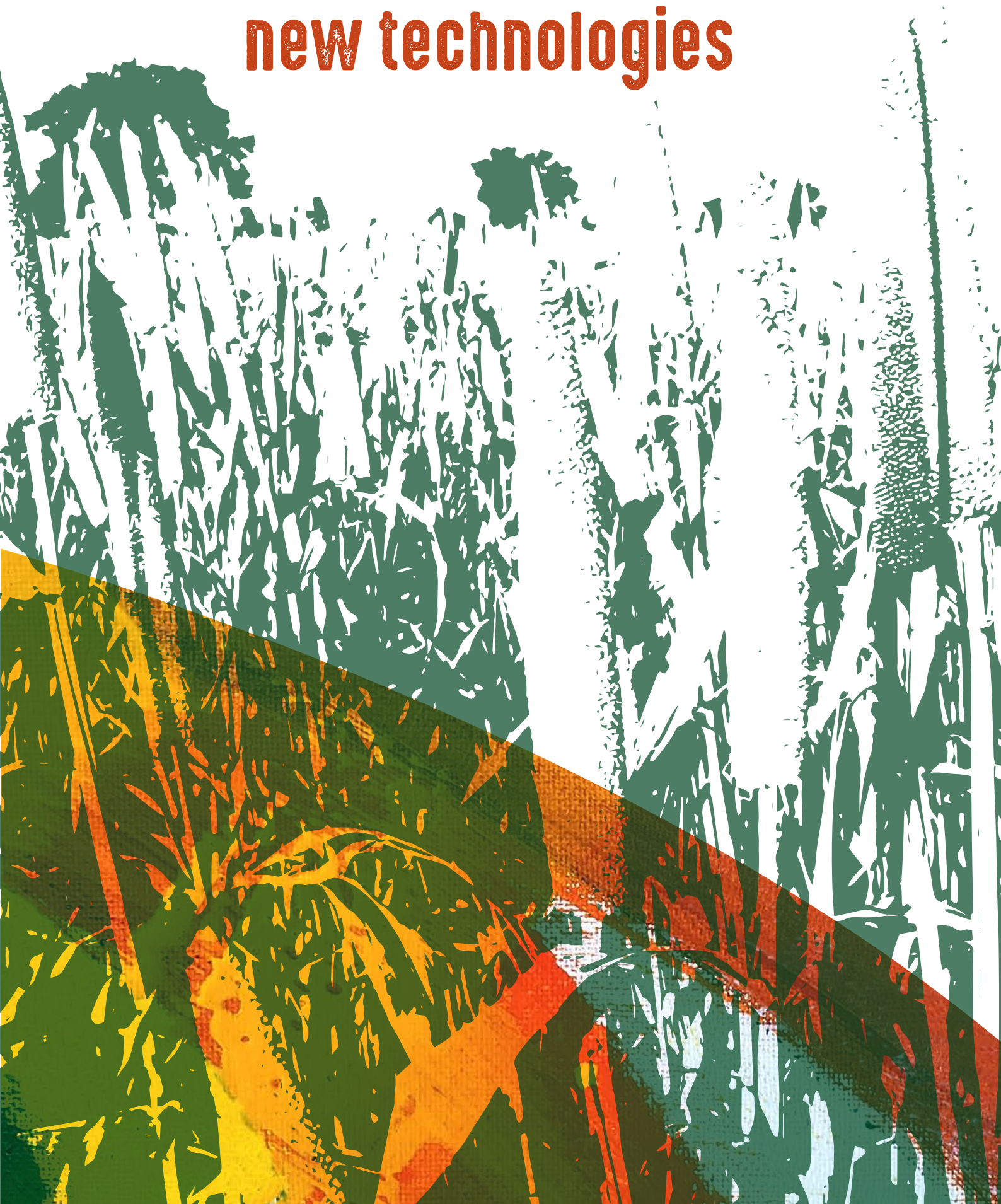
The ACB hosted a national face-to-face Agrochemicals Meeting in SA, attended by CSOs, scientific experts and researchers from SA and key African countries for discussions on the political economy and legislative climate of agrochemicals in SA. Steering committees were set up to work on policy/legislation and a People's Tribunal on Pesticides.

An inflection point was the marking of five years of engagement and attendance of the Ad-hoc Technical Expert Group on Farmers Rights (AHTEG-FR) and the Governing Body (GB) meetings of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA).

We published an alert demanding that the validation of the African Continental Seed Harmonisation guidelines be rejected, and expressed concern over the AU's active promotion of the corporate takeover of our seed, food and agricultural system.

The ACB also co-hosted a farmer-to-farmer training and exchange in Zimbabwe, with a focus on strengthening agroecological practices inherent in FMSS as a coherent alternative to the corporate-industrial capture of African seed systems.

GM, biosafety and new technologies



At international level, our participation and mobilisation in and around several Meetings of the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) overlaps with our work in Corporate Expansion but is reported on in this section.

Participation in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework of the CBD process

A significant area of growth has been our work under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in particular the multilateral negotiations to craft a new Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), and in this regard, the ACB contributed substantially to national, regional, and international discourses on intersecting issues situated within the African context, at the convergence of climate change, agriculture, biodiversity, biotechnology, and food systems. The ACB worked on many issues directly with key African government negotiators and through network partners, and also made a number of interventions in the formal negotiations.

March: The ACB attended the resumed sessions of the 24th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI), and the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (WG2020), held in Geneva, Switzerland. The main aim of the meeting was to negotiate on the GBF. In addition, other agenda items under the three bodies included synthetic biology, risk assessment and management of living modified organisms (LMOs), resource mobilisation, and digital sequence information (DSI) on genetic resources. The decisions and recommendations adopted under the three bodies were sent to Part II of the Conference of the Parties (COP) 15, and to the Protocols' COP/MOPs, which took place in December, in Montreal.

The ACB also participated in preparatory meetings with other CSOs hosted by the Convention on Biological Diversity Alliance (CBDA)

and the African Group of Negotiators (AGN), building on already established relationships, in order to understand key positions for CSOs, and different positions of African governments on the GBF and other agenda items under SBSTTA and SBI. Throughout this process the ACB was involved in coordination and sharing of information and analysis with diverse networks, meeting with relevant African CSOs, co-hosting preparatory and capacity-building meetings, and providing critiques of outputs emanating from the processes.

For us the critical issues at the WG2020 and GBF related to: agricultural biodiversity; smallholder producers; human rights-based approaches; DSI for genetic resources and monitoring nature-based solutions (NbS); and 30x30 discussions; for SBSTTA, on synthetic biology; risk assessment and management; and the GBF monitoring framework; and, under SBI, issues around resource mobilisation. We also participated in side events including those dealing with issues noted above as well as relating to the Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) to the GBF.

In the months leading up to COP 15 in Montreal, where a new deal in the form of the GBF was negotiated, we were a catalysing force within the network of African CSOs to call for the transition away from industrial agriculture – the primary driver of biodiversity loss – towards agroecology; namely, socially just and ecologically sustainable seed and food systems.

Open-Ended Working Group on the GBF (OEWG4)

May: The ACB attended a meeting for general preparation for OEWG4 and was invited to the consultation held by the South African Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment (DEFF), which aimed to solicit stakeholder views and input on the biosafety targets of the current draft of the GBF, to inform SA's position. Due to our historical work on biosafety, the Department invited

the ACB to present our views, which was very important, as otherwise there would only have been the industry's position shared. While it is clear that the government's position is aligned with industry, they welcomed our inputs and many of our points were subsequently reflected in the SA position.

The ACB also took part in preparatory meetings with various partners working on the CBD, such as the synbio strategy working group meetings, CBDA coordination meetings, and an NGO open meeting to discuss key elements that should be reflected in the GBF, as well as evaluate where the synergies among different NGOs lie. The synbio strategy working group consisted of Third World Network (TWN), the ETC group, Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEf), Friends of the Earth USA (FOE) and us. The synbio working group was key in influencing negotiations in the OEWG in Nairobi. We also provided input to both the CBDA and ACBA on some of the key targets we follow, and participated in webinars related to the CBD, such as on corporate capture of the CBD, organised by Food First Information and Action Network (FIAN) International.

June: We made a Submission of important elements for SA to consider under Target 17 of the draft GBF.

During the OEWG4 held in Nairobi, Kenya, the ACB raised critical concerns regarding the negotiations. We also attended CSO preparatory meetings daily through the CBDA, which included feedback and strategy sessions, and contributed to the statements and, in particular, the letter on discriminatory practices towards CSOs and some party delegates, throughout the OEWG4.

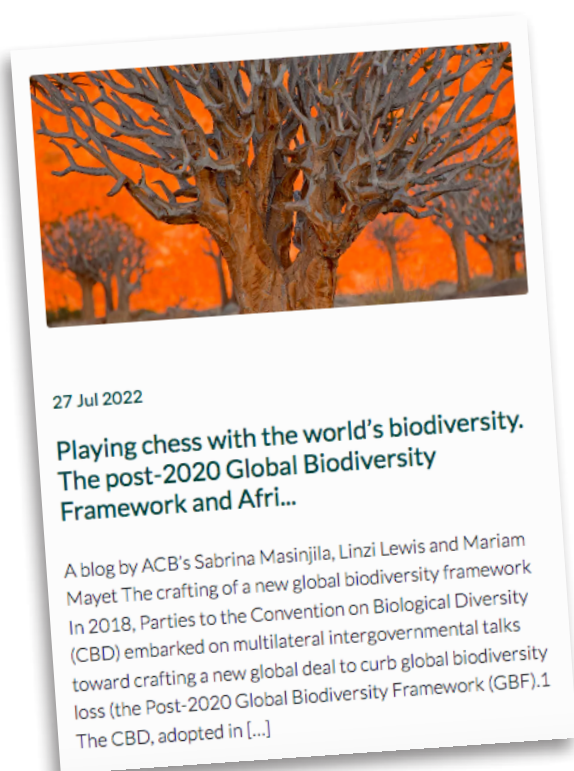
We also had a small working group on issues around synthetic biology, horizon scanning, and technology assessment, where we developed some text proposals on a number of extremely contentious issues. Three blogs were printed in the ECO,¹ a daily publication by

the CBDA on: agricultural biodiversity (related to Target 10); the failure of multilateralism and the rise of corporate capture; financing biodiversity conservation; and horizon scanning, monitoring, and technology assessment for Africa, in collaboration with the Synbio working group, which also largely focused on Africa.



1. <https://eco2022cbdalliance.blogspot.com/2022/06/arti.html>. ECO is a thought-provoking blog organised by the CBDA to capture the voices involved in biodiversity-related work on the ground, and those who participate at CBD sessions.

July: Through a blog, *Playing chess with the world's biodiversity. New gambit needed to avoid a stalemate for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and Africa's future*,² the ACB provided a historical perspective and analysis showing that “the GBF represents heavily bracketed and extremely watered-down goals and targets.”

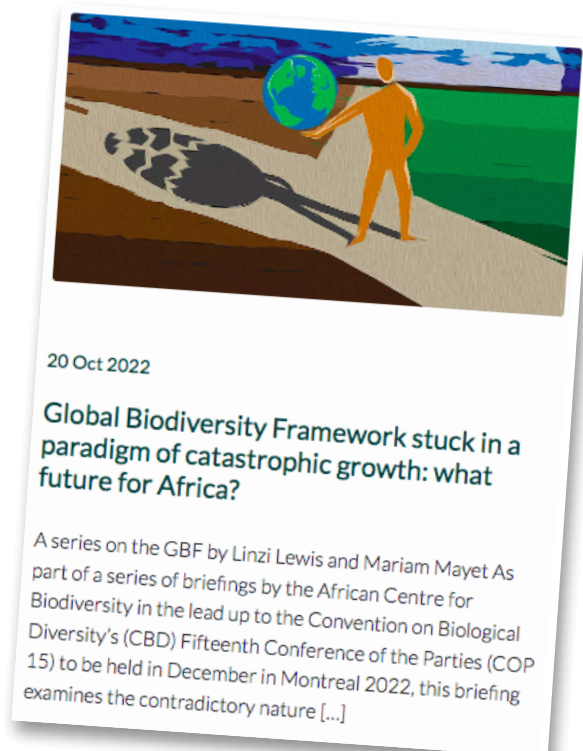


August: We co-hosted a webinar with Third World Network titled: *Global Biodiversity Framework and its implications for Africa*, in English and French. The first session explored biodiversity loss and the GBF, the conservation agenda – the 30x30 target, which calls for protecting 30% of the world's terrestrial and marine habitats by 2030 – the convergence of biodiversity and climate change, agriculture and food systems, and resource mobilisation. The second session on Biosafety, DSI and the GBF unpacked synthetic biology and new genetic engineering techniques and their relationship with Africa;

the rise of DSI and what specifically is being called for by civil society in SBSTTA and the GBF.



October: We published a briefing, *Global Biodiversity Framework stuck in a paradigm of catastrophic growth: what future for Africa?* This paper examines the contradictory nature of the sustainability discourse over the years, in response to multiple and converging social and ecological crises, and discusses how sustainable development, in particular, is being misused to promote un-ecological and unjust outcomes.

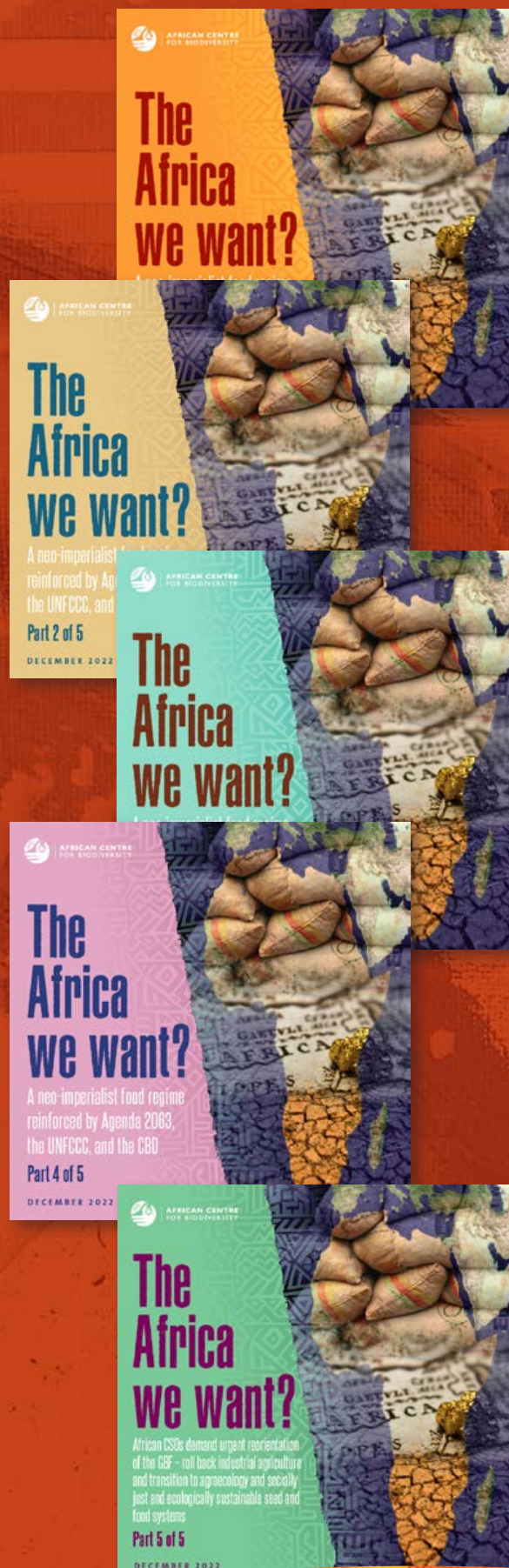


2. <https://acbio.org.za/corporate-expansion/playing-chess-with-the-worlds-biodiversity-new-gambit-needed-to-avoid-a-stalemate-for-the-post-2020-global-biodiversity-framework-and-africas-future/>

November/December: In the final weeks leading up to COP 15, the ACB published a prescient series of five interconnected briefing papers, *The Africa we want? A neo-imperialist food regime reinforced by Agenda 2063, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the CBD*. Here, we remember how European imperialism ruptured and reconfigured agricultural production and food consumption, establishing structural problems that continue to this day, exacerbated by neoliberal economic policies. The briefings reflect on the inability of both the UNFCCC and the CBD to address collapsing socio-ecological systems and rather, its complicity in re-embedding geopolitical inequality, debt, and underdevelopment in Africa.

We pointed out that to date, negotiations have mirrored what is transpiring on the continent, where greater efforts are being directed at marginalising African small-scale food producers at all levels, visible in the aggressive push to industrialise African agricultural and food systems, spearheaded by, *inter alia*, the African Union (AU) and the continent's Regional Economic Communities.

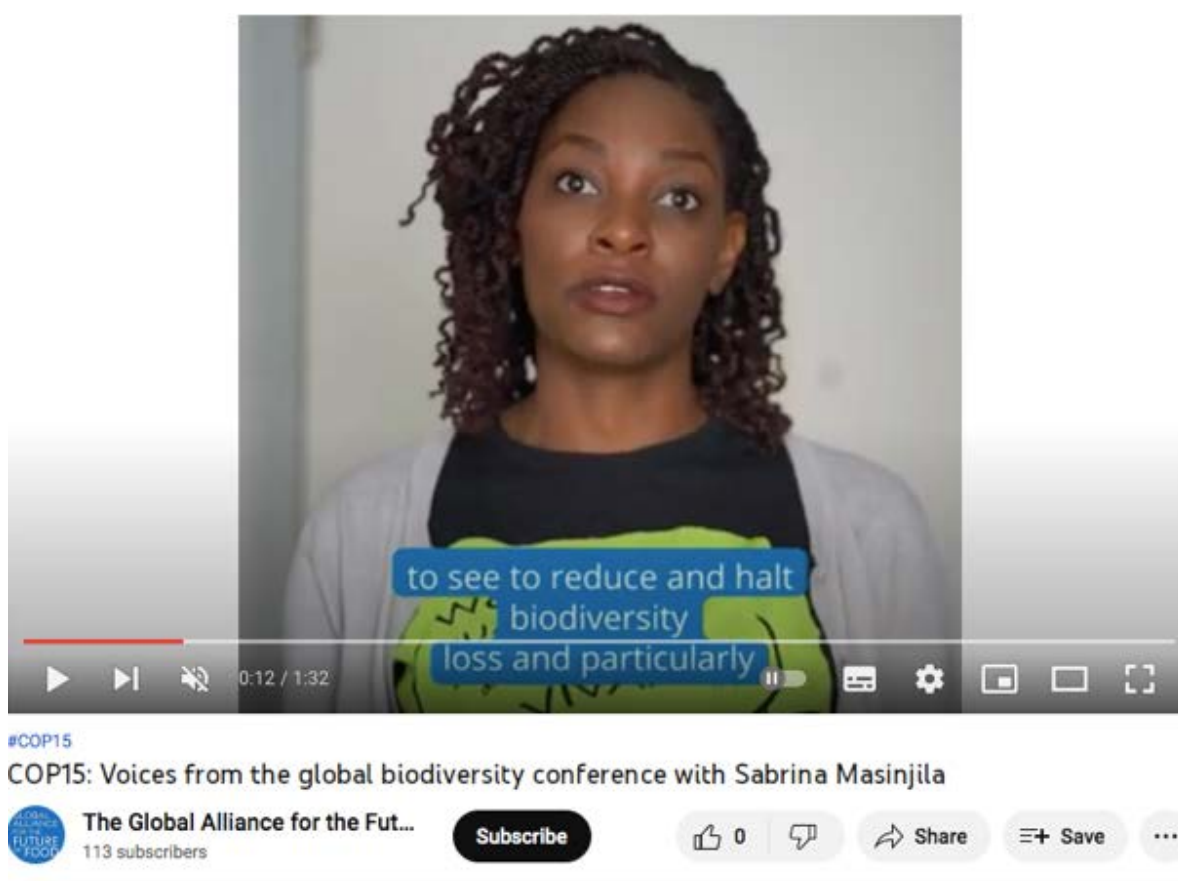
The first paper outlines the history of agricultural extractivism on the continent, rooted in colonialism, which radically altered the agricultural landscape, and persisted during the post-colonial era. The second paper explores the rise of neoliberal globalisation, the emergence of corporate agribusiness, and its role in consolidating an increasingly unequal food system between Africa and the rest of the world. The third looks at the AU's Agenda 2063, and the industrialisation agenda being driven by the AU, while the fourth further explores the trajectory of the African agriculture development model, and points to especially an aggressive agribusiness and agro-industrialisation prioritisation, within the context of biodiversity-climate-debt crises. In the fifth paper, we deal with the interlinkages between extractive tourism, colonial conservation, and gross violation of human rights on the African continent, with particular reference to Tanzania.



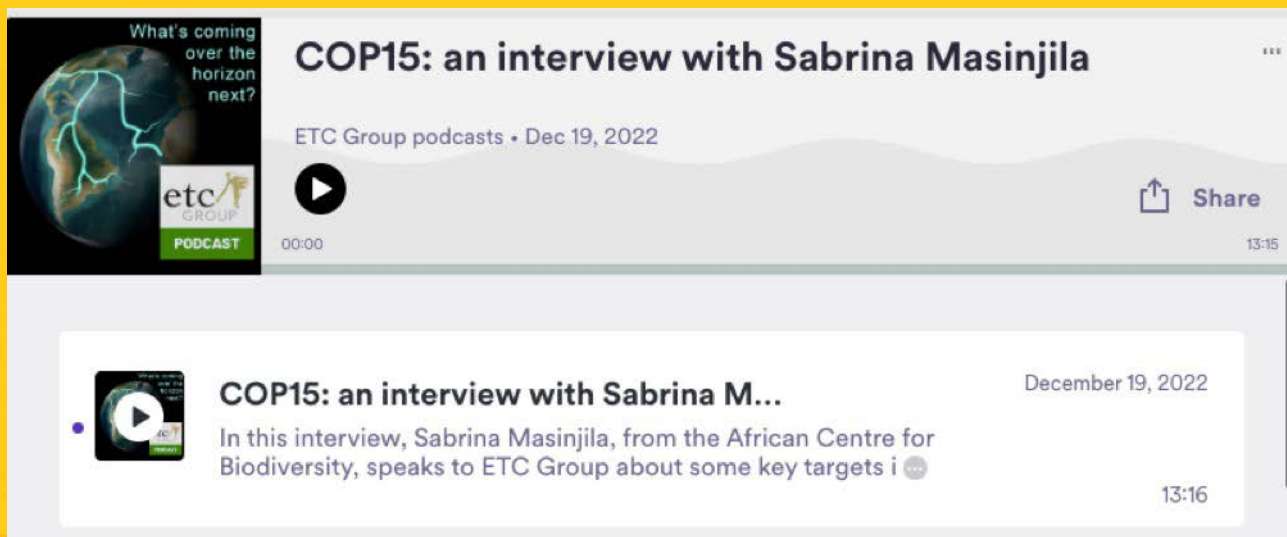
December: ACB research and advocacy officer Sabrina Masinjila attended COP 15 in-person and executive director Mariam Mayet attended online. The negotiations were extremely difficult and contentious. The ACB provided strong inputs into CSO positions from its vantage point on the key issues it has been working on, evident in the briefing and position papers produced in its own right as important advocacy tools. The learnings have also been indispensable in widening the knowledge base of the ACB, especially in regard to the confluence with the climate change discussions. Nevertheless, some of the positions taken by most African countries on important targets were really worrying, especially on target 17 on biotechnology. Their positions relating to agricultural biodiversity and smallholder producers were weak. There were however, strong positions on: some false

solutions such as Nbs; DSI on genetic resources and the link to traditional knowledge and access and benefit sharing mechanisms; support for gender and women and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs); and support for resource mobilisation, especially for developing countries. The GBF and related decisions adopted at COP15 under the aegis of the CBD, in Montreal in December 2022, comprise a mixed bag of proposed measures to address the biodiversity and converging climate and other crises without addressing the systematic drivers for these crises.

The pushback against false solutions and technofixes is imperative, particularly as Parties embark on revising their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) in the ensuing years.



The Global Alliance for the Future of Food: COP15: Voices from the global biodiversity conference with Sabrina Masinjila



Voices from COP15 in Montreal. An interview with Sabrina Masinjila



Four African CSOs on agroecology, biotechnologies and the “free, prior and informed consent organised by the Convention for Biological Diversity Alliance (CBDA), featuring ACB’s Sabrina Masinjila

Fifth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (OEWG5) and Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (Part 2), held in Montreal, Canada)



Africa CSO push back against GMOs in Nairobi, Kenya

The ACB, in collaboration with the Biodiversity and Biosafety Association in Kenya (BIBA-K) network, hosted a three-day meeting in May for 30 participants of CSOs from East and West African to share experiences and jointly strategise on collective struggles in pushing back against the commercial release of GMOs for food and agriculture, as well as GM/ gene drive mosquitoes on the continent. The result has been the emergence of an organic decentralised structure to hold this network.

Launch of an African Independent Scientist Network

Following on from preliminary meetings in 2021, held online, in 2022, with the support of Professor

Marion Mutugi (Kenya National Commission on Human Rights), the ACB hosted a two-day meeting at the end of May, to facilitate and catalyse the launch of an independent network of African concerned scientists to support biosafety work on the continent. The strategy session led to the creation of the Network of African Scientists for Biosafety, Biodiversity and Health (NASBIOH). The network will be hosted by the Centre for Science and Technology Innovations (CSTI), Kenya, in supporting CSOs on issues relating to new GM technologies. Attended by scientists from various disciplines and backgrounds from South Africa, Tanzania, Kenya, Mali, Benin, Nigeria, Zambia, and Ethiopia, and supported by key CSO partners and farmers' organisations from Kenya and Mali, the purpose was to create a platform for sharing, exchange, and learning for independent-minded scientists in the region. The capture of African intellectuals and colonisation of science



by multinationals and philanthropists was at the core of the discussion, as well as the lack of funding and mistrust in scientific research.

A highlight in our role of supporting African CSOs to resist the expansion of GM crops, primarily through online support to discreet campaigns as well as support of resistance on the continent, was our involvement in the pushback against commercial cultivation of GM cowpea in Nigeria and Ghana, as an African centre-of-origin crop.

The ACB also provided a catalytic role in other active CSO resistance, with the aim of initiating legal and administrative justice processes by CSOs, in various countries:

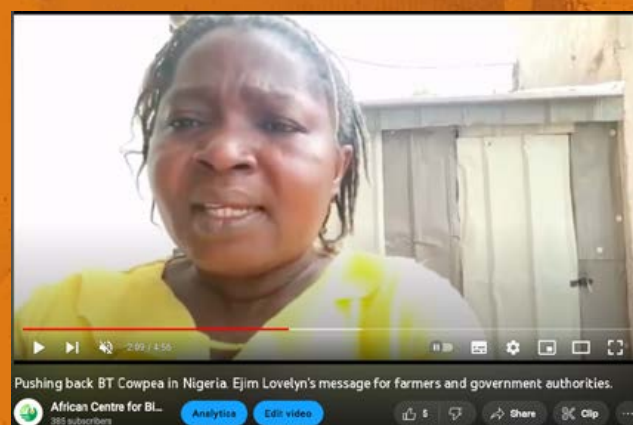
- Kenyan CSOs are mobilising against the commercial release of RNAi GM cassava and GMOs in general, including the recent decision by the Cabinet to lift the more than decade-long ban on the import and cultivation of GMOs.
- Burkina Faso CSOs are opposing the country's biosafety law and GM mosquito trials, and working to block the commercial release of GM cowpea.
- Rwanda and Uganda are against the commercial cultivation of GM potatoes in their countries, with the Ugandan CSOs still lobbying to prevent the sign off by their President of the country's Biosafety law.
- Zambian CSOs are opposing GMOs from being grown in their country, with a great deal of work being devoted to a new biotechnology and biosafety policy.

Pushback against BT Cowpea in Nigeria

The ACB in collaboration with HOMEf hosted an online international press conference in March, and put out a press release calling on the Nigerian government to revoke the permits granted by Nigeria's National Biosafety Management Agency to the Institute for Agricultural Research for the commercial release of genetically modified (Bt) Cowpea.



Moderator Mariann Bassey-Orovwuje, of Friends of the Earth, Africa, and Nnimmo Bassey discuss the Honduran Supreme Court ruling that declared the Law for Protection of Plant Varieties unconstitutional. Watch here.



Watch Ejim Lovelyn's message for farmers and government authorities here

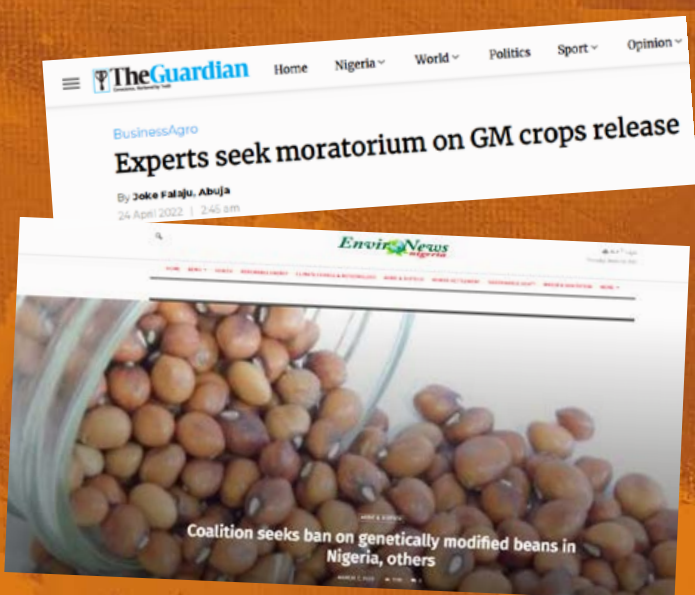


Consequently, due to sustained pressure, the Cabinet in Nigeria took a decision to review the biosafety law, which in particular had come under heavy attack as being extremely permissive.

The ACB also supported HOMEf to host a two-day capacity building workshop with farmer groups and CSOs to sustain engagement around advocacy targeted towards the commercial release of GM Cowpea. Strategically, HOMEf invited judicial officials, including high court judges, the National Agriculture and Seed Council, and the Ministries of Environment and Agriculture.

Food Sovereignty Ghana's battle to stop GE technologies

The BT Cowpea press conference highlighted how Ghana and Burkina Faso are also under pressure to adopt this technology and there is a battle underway in Ghana to retain this indigenous centre-of-origin crop, spearheaded by Food Sovereignty Ghana (FSG). The ACB spoke to FSG's Edwin Baffour about their ongoing court case – Ghana's first legal challenge of genetic engineering in food – seeking the Supreme Court's interpretation of aspects of the law, and declaring that aspects are inconsistent with the country's constitution and international conventions the country is party to.



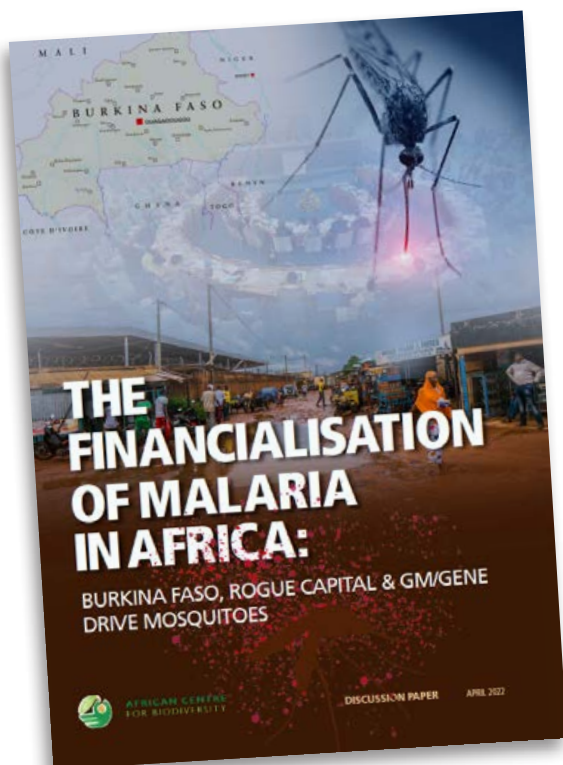
Edwin Baffour, Food Sovereignty Ghana (FSG) talks about Ghana's battle to retain its indigenous centre-of-origin crop

Burkina Faso

Financialisation of Malaria in Africa: Burkina Faso, rogue capital & GM/gene drive mosquitoes

This paper shows how malaria, along with other diseases, is increasingly financialised – whereby financial markets, institutions, actors, and

motives play a pivotal role in disease response. Burkina Faso is used as a real-world example of how rogue capital can enter a country and experiment with patented products with impunity and no fear of accountability. It also illustrates how both historical and modern factors create conducive conditions for philanthro-capitalists, such as the Gates Foundation and the companies they fund, to exploit Africa as a living laboratory, with the outcomes of risky experimental research such as GM and gene drive mosquitoes not yet known. The briefing was published in English and French.



Protecting food sovereignty and biodiversity for health and confronting gene technology

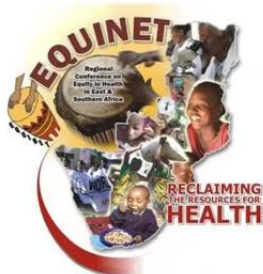
ACB director Mariam Mayet made a presentation in the Reclaiming the Resources for Health conference, hosted by Equinet Africa. The conference challenged the neoliberal mantra that there are no alternatives to policies that create social deficits and injustice, and shared the ideas and creativity of our region. The conference brought to the fore experiences and struggles from local to regional levels, and engagement globally to advance health and well-being in East and Southern Africa.

Regional Network for Equity in Health
in East and Southern Africa (EQUINET)

EQUINET Conference 2022

Catalysing change for health and social justice

Day 1 July 28th 2022
Reclaiming the
Resources for Health



EQUINETConf22 @EQUINETConf22 · 49m
Mariam Mayet, ACbio, Africa presents on "Protecting food sovereignty and biodiversity for health and confronting gene technology" at #EQUINETConf22 day1
[#ReclaimingResources4Health](#) [#CatalysingChange4Health](#)



EQUINETConf22 @EQUINETConf22 · 2h
Day1 presentations at #EQUINETConf22 include "Protecting food sovereignty and biodiversity for health and confronting gene technology" by Mariam Mayet, African Centre for Biodiversity
Join the conversations throughout the day [#ReclaimingResources4Health](#) [#CatalysingChange4Health](#)



South Africa

National Agrochemicals meeting convened in Johannesburg

The ACB hosted an Agrochemicals Meeting in April in Johannesburg, supported by Unpoison SA, a network of CSOs working to ban chemical pesticides in SA, in collaboration with Trust for Community Outreach and Education (TCOE), the South African Catering and Allied Workers Union (SACCAWU), and the University of Cape Town (UCT).

CSOs, scientific experts and researchers working in the realm of agrochemicals across SA and key African countries (Kenya and Nigeria, particularly) came together to discuss the political economy and legislative climate of agrochemicals in SA, and impacts of agrochemicals on farm workers and dwellers, and other workers, in the chemicals industry, the environment, and human health. Space was created to strategise around joint campaigns to ban the use of agrochemicals in SA. It was agreed to set up steering committees to work on three broad strategies: policy/legislation, a People's Tribunal on Pesticides, and disseminating resource materials.

This undertaking links to our advocacy to highlight corporate capture of our food and agriculture systems and our work on GMOs, as almost all GMOs cultivated in SA are stacked genes – meaning that they are grown with the applications of judicious amounts of toxic herbicides, as well as a cocktail of pesticides.

The ACB is also committed thus to working in collaboration with a range of partners on the process that the South African government has embarked upon to phase out and ban highly hazardous pesticides. Efforts will be made to ensure the Tribunal process is democratic, open and fair, with guidance from the Permanent Peoples Tribunal based in Europe. Preparatory meetings were convened in the latter half of 2022.

Monitoring of 2,4-D

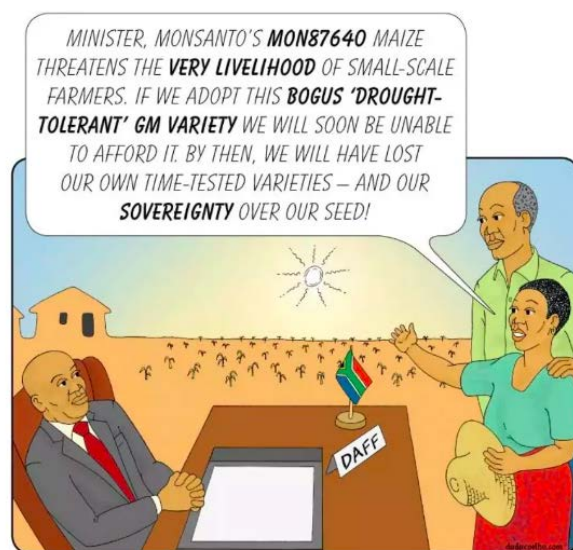
As part of our monitoring, tracking and opposing GMOs, we have continued to monitor 2,4-D (in maize and soya) for commodity clearance and for trial releases. In August, we received the field trial data and have endeavoured to contract a suitable scientist to assist us in analysis. The outcomes of this analysis will be shared in 2023.

Battle of regulation over new GM breeding techniques in SA

When the South African government made a decision in 2021 to regulate new breeding technologies in terms of the GMO Act, a consortium of industrial agriculture players lodged an appeal against the decision. The ACB responded by submitting a letter of appeal in January to the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD). Ongoing follow ups have been done. Then, in an August blog, ACB executive director Mariam Mayet addresses and debunks the industry's claims that these new technologies need not be regulated.

Ongoing court case opposing commercial release of Monsanto's GM DT maize

The legal proceedings in the ACB's appeal against the commercial release of Monsanto's GM drought tolerant (DT) maize variety MON 86470 were ongoing. Following on from Bayer/Monsanto filing further papers, which intended to strike out the expert testimony of our experts, we had solicited further inputs from our experts to assist us with preparation to file further documents, and by the end of the year we were waiting to hear when the date for the hearing would be set in 2023 in the High Court in Pretoria. The cumulative impact of this work forced Bayer-Monsanto to retreat with its GM drought tolerant trait and consequently, the Water Efficient Maize for Africa (WEMA rebranded as TELA) project, under whose auspices this GM maize was promoted in six African countries, has had to shift focus to insect pests.





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Alert on imminent application for GM Sugarcane in SA

The ACB published an alert on GM sugarcane, based on an intended application for field trials of a GM insect-resistant (Bt) and herbicide-

tolerant (Ht) sugarcane variety in SA. The ACB is demanding a moratorium on all environmental releases of GMOs and requesting that the SA government exercise a precautionary approach in assessing applications for the intended field trials.



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Solidarity with the campaign to Stop GE Trees

Working with a global network of CSOs on the issue of GM trees, the ACB submitted a letter to the Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC), in solidarity with the global 'Campaign to Stop GE trees,' where we strongly urged the FSC to keep in place its current prohibition on GE Trees. We noted that the guidance the FSC appears to be seeking on the issue of whether reliable risk assessments of genetically engineered (GE) trees are possible, is in itself highly debated, with no scientific consensus or concrete answer on the way forward.

Comment on the possibility of mandatory vaccines in SA

When the SA government published a draft amendment to the National Health Act that would transfer all the extraordinary powers of the Disaster Management Act to our health legislation, we made a submission indicating our opposition. We also drew attention to the government's back-door approach to possibly mandating vaccinations in the workplace, through the gazetting of an amended labour legislation Code of Practice, calling on our networks and fellow South Africans to oppose this grave threat to our human rights, as enshrined in the constitution.

Seed sovereignty





Our pioneering work on a number of issues, including national and regional seed laws and policies; farmers' rights; and farmer managed seed systems (FMSS), has been picked up by national, regional, and international coalitions, networks and organisations. Thus, we are seeing the culmination of the ACB's work being represented as thought leadership in action.

Ongoing research and analysis on seed laws and policies at national and regional levels has continued to empower CSOs and farmer organisations, including women and youth, to increase their advocacy competencies in seed and plant variety protection (PVP) laws, and enable them to advocate for farmers' rights. The ACB also continued to contribute towards building national and regional CSO/ farmer networks on FMSS linked to agroecology, climate justice, and wider networks.

Engagement at international treaty negotiations

A key milestone has been our continued catalysing role and contributions to the Ad-hoc Technical Expert Group on Farmers Rights (AHTEG-FR), with 2022 marking the fifth year of our engagement and attendance of the AHTEG and the Governing Body (GB) meetings of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA).

The ACB attended and mobilised around the Africa Group Regional Preparatory (AGRP) Meeting for the Ninth Session of the ITPGRFA,

which took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia at the end of August. This is the second time the ACB has been included in the AGRP meeting, and we supported the attendance of two other representatives of CSOs and farmer organisations – Anne Berson Déna from Comités Ouest Africain des Semences paysannes (COASP), Mali, and Ibrahim Diori, a lawyer who specialises in international human rights law, representing Alternative Citizen Spaces, from Niamey, Niger.

The objective of the Regional meeting was to deliberate on the key issues for GB9 and also establish positions and negotiation strategies. The meeting was attended by focal points from the region and it was chaired by Yasmina Bahloul from Morocco, who also sat as the Chair for GB9. The meeting was supported by the United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Secretariat and the African Union Commission (AUC). The ACB's participation in the AHTEG, AGRP meeting, and GB session is linked to our work on the recognition, protection, and implementation of farmers' rights on the continent. The outcomes of the GB session are meant principally for national-level implementation.

The ACB then attended the Ninth Session of the GB, which was held in September in New Delhi, India. The ACB also continued to play a very active and instrumental role in the AHTEG-FR, including the development of an inventory of national measures that can be adopted, best practices, and lessons learned from the implementation of FR, as outlined in Article 9 of the ITPGRFA.



Joint submission to the inventory on implementing farmers' rights

In July, the ACB made a joint submission with Red de Guardianes de Semillas into the Inventory to support Options on implementing Farmer's Rights, titled: *Constitutional Court Ruling that seed law restricting the free use, conservation and circulation of farmers' seed and certification requirements is unconstitutional.*

This was in response to the National Assembly of Ecuador approving the "Organic Law of Biodiversity, Seeds, and Promotion of Sustainable Agriculture", a norm imposing agro-industrial certification requirements and restrictions on the free use, conservation, and circulation of peasant seeds. As a result, several organisations, including the Seed Guardians Network – which aims to protect agrobiodiversity and promote regenerative livelihood systems – filed a lawsuit with the Constitutional Court to reverse this discrimination. The lawsuit argued that seeds have been a common good and property of the people, not of the State or corporations, and that the Law violates the Ecuadorian Constitution. On January 20, the Constitutional Court of Ecuador ruled in favour of the peasant seed systems.

The submission was made in support of the call by the Contracting Parties to the

ITPGRA for examples illustrating seed laws that violate the implementation of farmers' rights, which form part of a much larger body of submissions that the ACB has made into the inventory over the last four years.

Annual international campaign against UPOV 1991

The ACB joins with Alianza Biodiversidad, APBEBES, COPAGEN, ETC, Friends of the Earth International, GRAIN, La Via Campesina, and the Stop Golden Rice Network, as convenors of an annual global alliance of civil society organisations and farmer-led movements mobilising against restrictions imposed on farmers' seeds, which is largely driven by the corporate plant variety protection regime, enshrined in the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) 1991. This enables corporations to capture the world's farmers, funnelling them away from using their own seeds with dignity and for free. Furthermore, governments of developing countries are under strong pressure to internalise UPOV into their legal systems, either through trade agreements or direct pressure from the seed industry lobbies. This coalition spearheads global campaigns and protest actions that culminate in several days of action in December of every year.

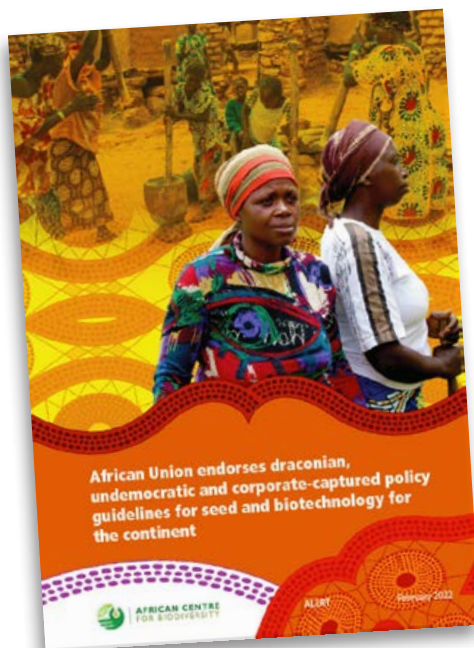
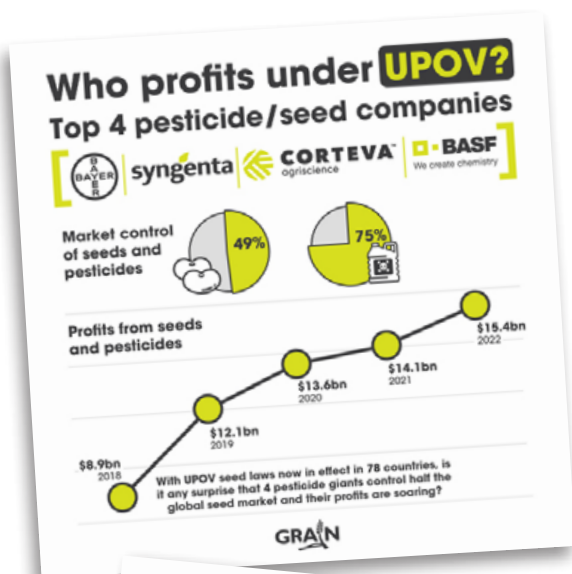
The year under review, the campaign was published in English, French, Spanish and Arabic and shared via the #StopUPOV Facebook group and social media. The ACB's publication, *The changing nature of Kenya's seed sector: lessons from the potato seed industry* was launched during the campaign. Among the many other materials circulated was a blog by GRAIN, *Who benefits from UPOV?* and a new report published by an Indonesian coalition, South Centre, titled: *Farmers, Seeds & the Laws: Importing the Chilling Effect Doctrine*.

Continental level

Outcry against AU's endorsement of corporate-captured policy guidelines for seed in Africa

The ACB has been very active critiquing and resisting the African Continental Seed Harmonisation process by the AU, which is targeted at harmonising seed regulatory frameworks, beginning with the establishment of Guidelines. In 2021, we published several papers critiquing the proposed frameworks and engaged strongly in the consultation processes. However, we were shocked to find out in February 2022 that the guidelines had been endorsed by AU policy organs, despite the fierce resistance from African civil society, and, despite requests in writing for access to this document, it is still not available in the public domain.

We published an alert on why we called for the validation of the guidelines to be rejected, expressing concern that the AU is playing an active role in coordinating and actively promoting the corporate takeover of our seed, food and agricultural systems on the continent. Curiously, the new guidelines have yet to be made available, which could be due to the African CSO outcry against them.



EAC harmonisation processes timeline

In 2018, the ACB embarked on work on the East African seed harmonisation process, publishing a critique³ on the draft EAC Seed and Plant Varieties Bill of 2018, which was widely shared via civil society organisations in partner states in the EAC: Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan and Tanzania, and followed up with letters to the EAC Secretary general, council of Ministers and representatives of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) Agricultural committee.

This led to a meeting with CSOs in the EAC, organised by the ACB in collaboration with Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima Tanzania (MVIWATA) in early 2019, and a press release statement was put out by CSOs denouncing the EAC Seed and Plant Varieties Bill and the process of its development.

Follow-up activities by CSOs from the partner countries were done at the national level, including meeting with representatives of the EALA, to raise concerns. However, the EAC Seed Bill was nonetheless adopted by the Council of Ministers in May 2019, and forwarded to the Sectoral Council of Legal and Judicial Affairs.

Despite this, CSOs advocacy processes did seem to have the effect of stalling the process, as since 2019 there was little development towards the finalisation and adoption of the Seed Bill by the EALA.

3. <https://acbio.org.za/seed-sovereignty/seed-laws-policies/undermining-farmers-rights-seed-systems-why-eac-seed-plant-varieties-bill-must-be-disbanded/>

Regional work

As a result of ACB work on seed harmonisation processes on the continent – not only in the East African Community (EAC) but also the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and most recently the AU – civil society organisations such as the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA) are now taking on this work together with other partners.

EAC seed harmonisation process

At the EAC level, the ACB was invited to an East Africa Seed Webinar in September, organised by the East and Southern African Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) – headquartered in Tanzania – in collaboration with AFSA, to present on experiences of FR and FMSS at the international level and provide recommendations to the EAC. Other speakers including an AUC representative,



EAST AFRICA SEED WEBINAR

 **Friday, 23 Sept 2022**
0900 - 1130 hrs (EAT)



TOPIC
What is the importance of Farmer Managed Seed Systems (FMSS) within the African Union Guideline on Seed Harmonisation?

Speakers

 **Hakim Baliraine** (ESAFF)
 **Beatrice Egulu** (African Union)
 **Fahari Marwa** (EAC)

 **Anne Maina** (BiBA)
 **Sabrina Nafisa** (ACBIO)

Register here **Join meeting ID** **Passcode**
Link: <https://bit.ly/3B4CY3K> **878 1911 4442** **2022**

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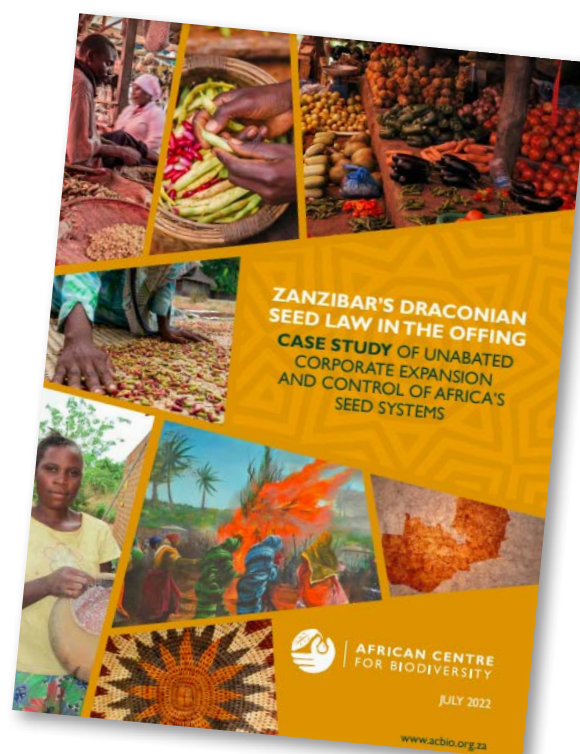
Beatrice Egulu, policy officer at the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Sustainable Environment (DARBE), Fahari Gilbert Marwa, Head of the EAC's Agriculture and Food Security Department, and Anne Maina, Coordinator at BIBA-K.

A Southern African dialogue initiated to interrogate these guidelines was organised by Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM), which also featured the ACB.

With the AU seed harmonisation process underway, the pressure on the EAC to adopt a regional harmonisation seed law is huge. It was anticipated for the Bill to be finalised by legal drafters and approved by the Sectoral Council on Legal and Judicial Affairs and forwarded to the Council of Ministers for consideration in October 2022. Thereafter, the bill would be approved by the Council of Ministers, forwarded to the EALA for consideration. It is anticipated that the enactment of the EAC Seed Act and its regulations by EALA will be done in December 2023.

Analysis of the changing nature of seed laws in Zanzibar, as a case study for the continent

A research report on the draft Zanzibar Seed Law, which was initiated in 2021 as an entry point into working with CSOs in that country on seed and GMOs, was published in mid-2022. The report critiques Zanzibar's draft Seed Bill, which contains provisions set to undermine the rights of smallholder farmers, by marginalising and criminalising their seed systems, while aiding the corporate entry and control of seed and agriculture systems on the Isles. The report was shared widely with Tanzanian civil society organisations and the Zanzibaris. This opens up future discussions on seed laws on the island, in collaboration with Tanzania's mainland CSOs.



Farmer exchange in Zimbabwe

The ACB co-hosted a farmer-to-farmer training and exchange in three locations in Zimbabwe, in October, which is an important milestone toward strengthening the agroecological practices inherent in FMSS, which present existing, viable, and coherent alternatives to the corporate-industrial capture of African seed systems.

It was a great pleasure to be part of an exchange that deepened a shared understanding of the need to support the:

- Revival and use of indigenous/farmer varieties;
- Use of public sector germplasm and farmer varieties for seed enhancement and improvement;
- Participatory methodologies including plant breeding and quality controls;
- *In situ* selection, enhancement and production of seed by farmers;
- Appropriate local storage technologies, including seed banks with diverse



- and locally appropriate seed;
- Local exchange/markets for seed produced by farmers;
- Farmer-to-farmer learning and sharing; and
- Extension methodologies and links to formal sector research and development.

National level

The ACB continues to be involved in supporting political and policy processes at national and regional levels in support of

alternatives in farmer seed systems, farmers' rights, and agricultural biodiversity.

While seed laws in various countries have been changed in ways that criminalise rather than protect the rights of farmers to save, exchange, sell and reuse seed, in other countries we have witnessed a discernible exception in emerging seed laws, such as in SA, where relatively good exceptions have been provided in draft Regulations.



South Africa

Previously, the ACB made comment on the relatively good exceptions provided in draft Regulations of Plant Improvement Act 2018, and the Plant Breeders' Rights Act, 2018, that did not require the certification of farmers' seed and offered some degree of regulatory space for the continued existence of farmer seed systems, and the right to reuse, exchange and sell seed, as set out under Article 9(3) of the ITPGRFA and Article 19(1) (d) of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People working in Rural Areas (UNDROP).

Then, in August 2022, following the DALRRD's publishing of the Regulations to implement the two Acts, the ACB submitted comments noting that the Department had taken important steps to allow for FMSS to operate and, to some degree and indirectly, recognise and protect some elements of farmers' rights, by taking a step towards allowing the practices of homestead, traditional, and small-scale farmers to continue.

These shifts in SA would arguably not have come about had the ACB not been heavily engaged in the issues, within a well-supported and coordinated civil society network, which readily took guidance from the ACB over a timespan of around eight years.

We hope to mobilise partners to participate in the national consultation on the Regulations, but at present, the date has not been confirmed. Prior to the national consultation, there are plans to meet with partners and provide information ahead of time, to be able to effectively participate in the consultation.

In contrast to SA, the current trend of criminalising farmer seed systems is on the rise in African countries, as a result of the adoption of draconian seed legislation.

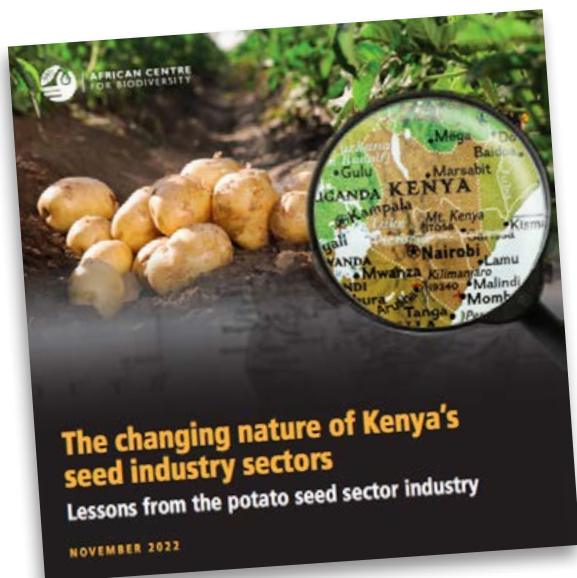
Kenya

In Kenya, a 2022 article that went viral highlighted the plight of smallholder farmers in the country due to the restriction of the sale of unindexed seed by the Seed and Plant Varieties Act of 2012, which clearly threatens rural seed trade and food and seed sovereignty, undermining the livelihoods of smallholder farmers and human rights. Kenya is already a member of UPOV 1991 and has one of the most restrictive seed laws in Africa. Furthermore, the Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) debacle due to a shortage of potatoes revealed that Kenya is a hub for seed production, where seed is exported and then grown elsewhere to be imported back into the country for multinational fast-food outlets. Given this context, the ACB embarked upon research into the seed sector in Kenya, with a focus on potatoes as a case study,



to unpack the multiple and intricate ways in which the seed sector is changing in Kenya.

At the end of November, we released a paper, *The changing nature of Kenya's seed sector: lessons from the potato seed industry*, which discusses the changes taking place.



Uganda

In Uganda, the ACB is supporting FIAN and other CSOs on policy, advocacy, and capacity-building activities on the Right to Food, which aims to contribute towards the utilisation and conservation of indigenous and traditional seeds, as opposed to GMOs, through conducting research, policy advocacy, and capacity building.

In 2021, FIAN, in partnership with other CSOs, drafted a position paper on the Fisheries and Aquaculture Bill, which included key concerns and demands to improve the bill, which was submitted to the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. Continuing into the first half of 2022, a total of 41 human rights capacity building sessions with women smallholder farmers and fisher communities were held, to empower communities with knowledge and information on policy, human rights and where

to seek redress for any violations, bringing together more than 820 participants.

Malawi

In Malawi, in April, the updated draft Seed Bill of 2022 was passed in haste by the Malawian Parliament, facilitated by the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), with no further public engagement and lack of compliance with the constitution. The Bill now awaits assent by the President. The ACB undertook analysis of the Bill and offered additional support to Malawian partners. The seed law in Malawi deals with restricting the sale of uncertified seed – where seed is sold as certified when in fact it is not. However, the law is largely silent regarding the recognition of FMSS. The law further places a provision in the Seed Bill that signifies the promotion and marketing of certified GMO seed and the importation of GMO seed into the country.

Malawian CSOs wrote a press release demanding that the legislative process be revisited to allow for an inclusive process in the development of seed regulation – one that follows procedures in the constitution – and that the law recognises, protects, and supports FMSS. The network in Malawi continues to work towards the recognition and implementation of farmers' rights and support for FMSS.



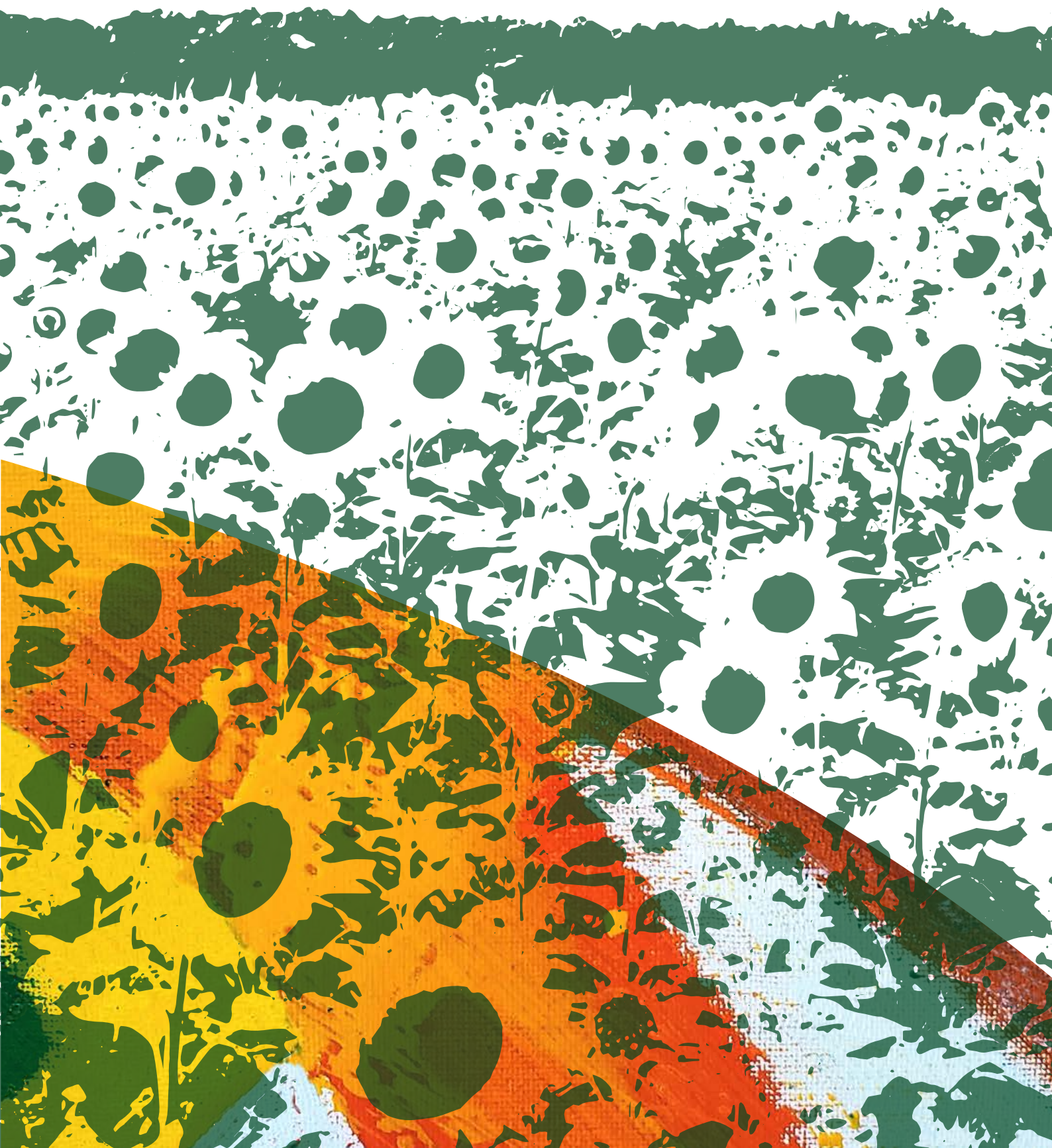


Seed film: pre-production and filming

We produced a concept note for a film on seed in Southern Africa and embarked on the pre-production phase, followed by a filming trip to Limpopo Province, where

we documented the activities of a range of farmers and communities in several locations, reflecting a diverse range of activities in diverse conditions, which also seeks to raise the profile of women in food and seed systems.

Corporate expansion in African agriculture



The ACB's critical voice against corporate expansion, capture, and control of African seed and food systems, and for the transition towards agroecology, received increased support from CSOs and governments. We have continued to provide research and analysis on corporate expansion in African seed and agriculture sectors that empowers CSOs and farmers' organisations.

At international level, our extensive participation and mobilisation in and around several Meetings of the CBD, and the publishing of several briefing papers and blogs, is reported on under the overlapping programme, GM, biosafety and new technologies.

CSO critique the African Union – European Union Summit

Following on from our coordination role in mobilising against the United Nations Food Systems Summit in 2021,⁴ we joined other CSOs in these networks to submit a declaration that was critical of the African Union – European Union Summit, held in February. We also continued to be active in the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism for Relations under the Committee on World Food Security of the FAO of the United Nations (CSIPM)⁵ processes.

Analysis of White Paper on Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biodiversity

In September, we submitted commentary of the Draft White Paper on Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biodiversity,⁶ noting that the draft policy provides an opportunity to shift the current paradigm of biodiversity conservation nationally, and fashion new thinking and approaches on the three

objectives of the CBD, with its emphasis on the African eco-social philosophy of Ubuntu, and human rights-based approaches founded on our Constitution, to guide new steps to achieve conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. That said, we emphasised that this would require a radical departure from market-based solutions and clear articulation around what needs to be downscaled and what needs to be upscaled to bring about systemic change.

Agroecology SA calls government out regarding under spending

In December, the ACB and other civil society and farmer network organisations called on the DALRRD to initiate an agroecology strategy and programme, via an open letter,⁷ intending to push the Department to engage systematically and meaningfully to expand and support agroecological initiatives. This followed on from the disclosure in October that the DALRRD had underspent by R1.3 billion for 2021/22, while CSOs that could provide significant support to realising stated government objectives received no support.

Since 2019, when organisations including the ACB came together to develop an initial national process, this has led to the formation of the Agroecology South Africa platform and the number of participants has grown to over 270.

This nascent agroecology movement has since continued to link up with organisations working on intersectional issues of land, climate and environment. Speaking out to the government was a key moment of assembling, on a strong basis to call for systematic and meaningful engagement between government and agroecology networks, to

4. <https://www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit>

5. <https://www.csm4cfs.org/>

6. https://acbio.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/acb-submission-draft-white-paper-on-the-conservation-and-sustainable-use-of-biodiversity_september-2022.pdf

7. <https://tzm.io/open-letter-to-minister-didiza-agroecology>



advance agroecology as a key response to the multiple environmental, social, economic and justice challenges facing the country.

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

In July, the ACB participated in the LaViaCampesina Southern and Eastern Africa (LVC SEAF) Regional Youth Training in Harare, Zimbabwe. The focus was on political economy and agroecology, with the aim of building the capacity of youth members, based on an understanding of the historical conditions that have shaped the current agriculture and food systems and the practical implementation of agriculture practices.

ACB's Advocacy and Research Officer Rutendo Zendah presented on, *The global food system and corporate control in relation to African food systems, seed laws, and policies*, which builds on collaborative work within social movements in the region and in the international space.



Stakeholders and partnerships



Stakeholders include farmers; CSOs, especially smallholder farmer associations; non-governmental organisations (NGOs); social movements working in the fields of smallholder agriculture, agroecology, seed and biodiversity; governments; experts and researchers from public sector institutions; and donors.

Increasingly, we are forming closer relationships with CSOs engaged in climate change discourses. We continue to strengthen new relationships that assist in advancing our advocacy work, including solidifying relationships with the

AGN, under the CBD's negotiations towards the GBF discussions, the ACBA, and our increased partner base through the African UNFSS counter-mobilisation campaigning and events the ACB continued to support in 2022, particularly the coordination of activity via the CSIPM.

We built new partnerships with groups working on the issues of trade and climate change in Africa and internationally, linked also to discussions regarding carbon markets, financialisation, deforestation and debt.



Partnerships

Primarily, our network partners are CSOs and farmer organisations. We have a large number of partners in the SADC region, the rest of the continent, and internationally. Strong linkages to constituencies on the ground provides the basis for collective work on multiple regional processes, and also informs our advocacy in international policy spaces.

South Africa

Association for Water and Rural Development (AWARD)
Biowatch South Africa
Co-operative and Policy Alternative Centre (COPAC)
Dzomo la Mupo
Earthlore Foundation
Eastern Cape Agroecology Farmers Association (ECAFA)
Friends of the Earth
Greenhouse Project (The)
Gumbu Community Seed Bank
GroundWork
Ilimi Lamafama
Izindaba Zokudla
Masifundise
Rainbow Maize Farmers
Seed And Knowledge Initiative (SKI)
South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI)
Southern African Catholic Bishops Association (SACBC) Justice and Peace
Southern African Faith Communities Environment Institute (SAFCEI)
South African Food Sovereignty Campaign (SAFSC)
Trust for Community Outreach and Education (TCOE)
Ukuvuna
Women on Farms Project

Africa

Burkina Faso

Fédération Nationale des Groupements de Naam (FNGN)

Fédération Nationale des Organisations Paysannes (FENOP)
Terre A Vie

Cameroon

Plateforme Sous Régionale des Organisations Paysannes d'Afrique Centrale (PROPAC)

Côte d'Ivoire

Copagen

Democratic Republic of Congo

Common Front for the Protection of the Environment and Protected Spaces of the DRC (FCPEEP)

Ghana

Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organizational Development (CIKOD)
Food Sovereignty Ghana (FSG)

Guinea

Agency for Cooperation in Research and Development (ACORD)

Kenya

African Wildlife Foundation (AWF)
Biodiversity and Biosafety Association Kenya (BIBA-K)
Kenyan Peasants League (KPL)
Kenya Small Scale Farmers Forum
Mazingira Institute
World Forum of Fisher Peoples/ The Elmolo Forum

Mali

Biodiversité Echange et diffusion d'expériences (BEDE-asso)
Coalition des Femmes pour la souveraineté alimentaire (COFERSA)
Comité Ouest Africaine des semences paysanne (COASP)

Malawi

Commons for Ecojustice (CEJ)



Mozambique

Acção Acadêmica para o Desenvolvimento das Comunidades Rurais (ADECRU)
Associação Rural de Ajuda Mútua (ORAM)
Justiça Ambiental (JA)
Kaleididoscopio
Livaningo
Uniao Nacional de Camponeses (UNAC)

Niger

Alternative Citizen Spaces

Nigeria

Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF)

Rwanda

Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (Pelum)

Senegal

Environnement Développement Action pour la Protection Naturelle des Terroirs (ENDA PRONAT)

Tanzania

Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima (MVIWATA)
Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima
Mkoa wa Kilimanjaro (MVIWAKI)
Sustainable Agriculture (SAT)
Tanzanian Alliance for Biodiversity (TABIO)
Tanzania Organic Agriculture Movement (TOAM)

Togo

Action Réelle sur l'Environnement
l'Enfance et la Jeunesse (AREJ)

Uganda

Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE)
Caritas
Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers Forum (ESAFF)
Southern and Eastern Africa Trade Information (SEATINI)

Zambia

Kasisi Agricultural Training Centre
Zambian Alliance for Agroecology
and Biodiversity (ZAAB)

Zimbabwe

Community Technology Development
Organisation (CTDO)
Participatory Ecological Land Use
Management Zimbabwe (PELUM)
Participatory Organic Research &
Extension Training (PORET)
Towards Sustainable Use of Resources
Organisation (TSURO Trust)
Zimbabwe Seed Sovereignty Programme (ZSSP)
Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic
Farmers' Forum (Zimsoff)

Beyond the continent

Belgium

International Panel of Experts on
Sustainable Food Systems (IPES-Food)

Brazil

Centro de Tecnologias Alternativas
da Zona da Mata CTA-ZM

Canada

Erosion, Technology and
Concentration (ETC) Group

Ecuador

Acción Ecológica

Germany

Testbiotech

Italy

Schola Campesina APS

Netherlands

Both ENDS

Peru

Asociación ANDES

Spain

GRAIN

Switzerland

Association for Plant Breeding for the
Benefit of Society (APBREBES)

United Kingdom

AgroecologyNow! – Centre for
Agroecology, Water and Resilience
Gaia Foundation

United States

AgroEcology Fund
Community Alliance for Global Justice (CAGJ)
US Right to Know

Regional

African CSOs Biodiversity Alliance (ACBA)
Alliance for Food Sovereignty in
Africa (AFSA) (Pan-Africa)
Rural Women's Assembly (RWA) –
Southern African
Southeast Asia Regional Initiatives for
Community Empowerment (SEARICE)
Southern and Eastern Africa Trade Information
and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI)

International

Food First Information and Action (FIAN)
Friends of the Earth (FoE)
Groundswell International
International Planning Committee
for Food Sovereignty (IPC)
Network of Farmers' and Agricultural Producers'
Organisations of West Africa (ROPPA)
Nia Terro
La Via Campesina Africa (LVC)
Pesticide Action Network (PANInt)
Third World Network (TWN)
World Rainforest Movement (WRM)
CBD Alliance
Navdanya International

ACB staff and board members



As of December 2022, the ACB had a staff complement of 10 (all full-time, 80% women, 80% black), consisting of:

- Four research and advocacy (four women, three black)
- Three communications and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) (three women, two black)
- One human resources (one woman, one black)
- Two administration and finance (two black)
- Total operational staff: 10 (8 women, 8 black)

Programme team

Mariam Mayet	Executive Director
Sabrina Masiinjila	Research and Advocacy Officer (based in Tanzania)
Linzi Lewis	Research and Advocacy Officer
Rutendo Zendah	Research and Advocacy Officer

Human Resources

Fatima Karodia	Human Resources Officer
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Monitoring and Evaluation

Rifqah Tifloen	M&E Officer
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Communications

Deidre May	Communications Coordinator
Tamara Reddy	Communications Officer

Admin and Finance team

Vinern Naidoo	Administration Officer
Naeemullah Mohammed	Accounting Officer

Staff changes

Research and Advocacy Officer Andrew Bennie left at the end of February and Rifqah Tifloen shifted from being a Research and Advocacy Officer to taking on the role of M&E Officer, when Juliet Mwale left at the end of June. Rosanne van der Merwe, our long-time Administrative Assistant, also left the ACB at the end of July.

Governance and administration of resources

We continue to strive for overall efficiency and adaptability in terms of the management of our time, staff, and other resources.

ACB Board Members

John Wilson, chairperson, based in Zimbabwe
Famara Diedhiou, based in Senegal
Mariann Bassey Orovwuje, based in Nigeria
Ray Patridge, based in South Africa
Mariam Mayet, non-executive board member, based in South Africa

Acronyms

ACB	African Centre for Biodiversity
ACBA	African CSOs Biodiversity Alliance
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AFSA	Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa
AGN	African Group of Negotiators
AHTEG	Ad Hoc Technical Experts Group
CBD	UN Convention on Biological Diversity
CSO	Civil society organisation
DEFF	Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries
DSI	Digital sequence information
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FIAN	Food First Information and Action Network
FR	Farmers' Rights
GB	Governing Body
GBF	Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework
GM	Genetically modified
GMO	Genetically modified organism
IP	Intellectual property
ITPGRFA	International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
NGO	Non-government organisation
PVP	Plant Variety Protection
SA	South Africa
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SBI	Subsidiary Body on Implementation
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body of Scientific and Technological Advice
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation
TWN	Third World Network
UNDROP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas
UPOV	International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants