

Speakers List



Ableman, Michael

[Source: Fields of Plenty](#)

Fairview Gardens, USA

Website: www.fieldsofplenty.com

Speech: Fields of plenty - a farmers' journey to gardens of hope around the globe

Michael Ableman is founder and executive director emeritus of the Center for Urban Agriculture at Fairview Gardens, where he farmed from 1981 to 2001. The Center is a non-profit organization based on the one of the oldest and most diverse organic farms in southern California. An important community and education center, it has become a national model for small-scale and urban agriculture as well. It has hosted 5000 people per year for tours, classes, festivals, and apprenticeships.

Ableman is the author and photographer of 'From the Good Earth' (Abrams, 1993), 'On Good Land' (Chronicle Books, 1998), and 'Fields of Plenty: A farmer's journey in search of real food and the people who grow it.' (Chronicle Books, 2005). His photographs have appeared in publications throughout the world and exhibitions at the Oakland Museum, the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, and the Field Museum in Chicago.

He has lectured throughout the U.S. and in Europe. His work has been covered in National Geographic, on National Public Radio's All Things Considered, in the Utne Reader, Gourmet Magazine, and The L.A. Times. An award-winning film about Ableman's work, 'Beyond Organic,' narrated by Meryl Streep, aired nationally on PBS in 2001.

Michael Ableman has received numerous awards including the 2001 "Sustie" Award for his work in sustainable agriculture, Eating Well magazine's 1995 Food Hero Award, and the 1997 Environmental Leadership Award from the governor of the state of California.

Now he farms with his wife and two sons on Salt Spring Island in British Columbia at Foxglove Farm.

For information on Michael's publications see: www.fieldsofplenty.com/writings/index.php



Abouleish, Ibrahim

SEKEM, Egypt

Website: www.sekem.com

Speech: Greening the desert - an organic success story from Egypt

Dr. Ibrahim Abouleish studied chemistry and medicine in Austria. He did his PhD in 1969 in the field of pharmacology, and then worked on pharmaceutical research. During this time he was granted patents for a number of new medicines, especially for osteoporosis and arteriosclerosis. In 1977 he returned to Egypt and founded the initiative SEKEM.

In 2003 Dr. Ibrahim Abouleish and SEKEM received the RIGHT LIVELIHOOD AWARD known as the "ALTERNATIVE NOBEL PRIZE" for "establishing a business model for the 21st century in which commercial success is integrated with and promotes the social and cultural development of society through economics of love." He was chosen as an "Outstanding Social Entrepreneur" by the Schwab Foundation in 2004. He is the author of the book entitled 'Sekem: A Sustainable Community in the Egyptian Desert' (Floris Books, 2005). In 2006 he was appointed as a councilor at the World Future Council.

SEKEM was established on 70 hectares of desert sand where the biodynamic cultivation of the land was started. The name SEKEM is the transliteration of a hieroglyph, meaning "vitality". The initiative works for sustainable development locally and regionally through institutions in economics, organic agriculture, research and development, education and health care. SEKEM's companies support social and cultural enterprises such as institutions of education, research centers, and hospitals. SEKEM produces an extensive variety of high quality consumer products such as natural pharmaceuticals, organic food and textiles, information technology and ecological services, made of ingredients derived from biodynamic farming.

'We are hoping for strong public support, especially for the developing countries for GMO-free food production and regions. The European countries play a key role in shaping the future of the (movement to) save organic agriculture! Source: The Right Livelihood Award

For information on Ibrahim's publications see: www.dreigliederung.de/ibrahimabouleish



Akhter, Farida

UBINIG, Bangladesh

Website: <http://membres.lycos.fr/ubinig/about2.htm>

Speech: Village to village, step by step, seed exchange in Bangladesh

Farida Akhter is the executive director of UBINIG and the publisher of Narigrantha Prabartana, the first and the only feminist publishing house in Bangladesh. UBINIG is the

abbreviation of its Bengali name Unnayan Bikalper Nitinirdharoni Gobeshona, in English, Policy Research for Development Alternatives. “We are essentially a policy advocacy and research organisation. At the same time, we do implement the ideas which come out of our research works in the form of various programmes and projects. The implementations are elements of our living interaction with the community. As a result they strengthen the empirical foundation of our investigation and analysis...”

Source: WLOE

For information on Farida's publications see:

<http://www.spinifexpress.com.au/fasiapub/bangladesh/ngp.htm>



Altieri, Miguel

University of California, Berkeley

Websites: www.agroeco.org; www.cnr.berkeley.edu

Speech: Latin American biodiverse farms: an ecological planetary asset

Miguel A. Altieri received his BS in Agronomy from the University of Chile and a PhD in Entomology from the University of Florida. He has been a Professor of Agroecology at UC Berkeley since 1981 in the Department of Environmental Science, Policy and Management.

Dr Altieri served as a scientific advisor to the Latin American Consortium on Agroecology and Development (CLADES) in Chile, an NGO network promoting agroecology as a strategy for small farm sustainable development in the region. He also served for 4 years as the General Coordinator for the United Nations Development Programmes, Sustainable Agriculture Networking and Extension Programme which aimed at capacity building on agroecology among NGOs and the scaling-up of successful local sustainable agricultural initiatives in Africa, Latin America and Asia. In addition, he was Chairman of the NGO Committee of the Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research whose mission was to make sure that the research agenda of the

15 International Agricultural Research Centers benefited the poor farmers. Currently he is an advisor in the FAO-GIAHS program (Globally Ingenious Agricultural Heritage Systems), which is devoted to identifying and dynamically conserving traditional farming systems in the developing world. He is also a Director of the US-Brasil Consortium on Agroecology and Sustainable Rural Development (CASRD), which is an academic-research exchange program involving students and faculty of UC Berkeley, University of Nebraska, UNICAMP and Universidad Federal de Santa Catarina. He is also the President of the Latin American Scientific Society of Agroecology (SOCLA). He is the author of more than 200 publications, and numerous books including *Agroecology: The Science of Sustainable Agriculture*, *Biodiversity*, *Pest Management in Agroecosystems* and *Agroecology and the Search for a Truly Sustainable Agriculture*.

For information on Miguel's publications see: www.agroeco.org



Altner, Günter

Institut Mensch, Ethik und Wissenschaft, Germany

Website: www.imew.de/imew.php/cat/153/aid/337

Speech: The soul of diversity, a trans-religious exercise

Günter Altner is a scientist, biologist and theologian whose areas of research include: environmental and energy policy; genetic engineering; sustainability; and health care policy. He studied Protestant Theology at the universities of Wuppertal and Gottingen (1956-1962) and biology at the universities of Mainz and Giessen (1962-1968). He was a director of theology and natural sciences studies at the Protestant Academy of Mülheim/Ruhr (1968-1971). In 1971-1973 he was professor for human biology at the University of Education Schwäbisch Gmünd (Pädagogische Hochschule/PH). In 1973-1977 he worked as a scientific instructor at the Protestant Institute for Interdisciplinary Research in Heidelberg. He was the co-founder of the internationally known Eco-Institute (Öko-Institut) in Freiburg (1977), and also worked as professor for Protestant Theology with the focus on Systematic Theology/Social Ethics at the Koblenz-Landau University (1977-1999). He has been scientific advisor at the Institut Mensch, Ethik und Wissenschaft (IMEW).

For information on Günter's publications see: www.imew.de/imew.php/cat/153/aid/337



Argumedo, Alejandro

Asociacion ANDES -- Quechua-Aymara, Peru

Website: www.andes.org.pe

Speech: The Andean potato network

Alejandro Argumedo is a founding member and a co-chair of the Call of the Earth steering committee. A Quechuan agronomist from Peru, Alejandro has been actively involved in indigenous initiatives striving for the recognition of indigenous peoples' rights in the United Nations and international environmental, development and human rights fora, including the:

- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)
- World Trade Organization (WTO)
- World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)
- United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations (UNWGIP)

For more than 10 years Alejandro Argumedo has been involved in the international policy debate on indigenous knowledge, intellectual property rights, access to genetic resources, benefit sharing and related biodiversity issues.

He is currently a Director of the Quechua-Aymara Association for Sustainable Livelihoods (ANDES) based in Cusco, Peru, where he works to develop alternative models for the protection of indigenous knowledge and associated genetic resources. He is the founder of the Indigenous Peoples Biodiversity Network and a member of the World Commission on Protected Areas.

For information on Alejandro's publications see: www.iied.org/pubs/search.php



Asada, Shinji

Former vice-governor of Hokkaido, Japan

Speech: How Hokkaido protects its farmers from GMOs.

Shinji Asada has served as Chairperson of the Board of Directors, Rakuno Gakuen University since 2007 and Chairperson of the Association to Promote Organic Agriculture in Hokkaido.

Shinji Asada was born in Hokkaido in 1947. He graduated from Hokkaido University (agricultural chemistry, Faculty of Agriculture) in 1970. He has been working for Hokkaido Government since 1974. In 2002 he became Director of the Department of Agriculture and in 2004 Vice-Governor of Hokkaido. In 2006 he became an organic farmer at his fruit garden.



Cenni, Susanna

Agriculture Minister of Tuscany, Italy

Website: www.primapagina.regione.toscana.it

Speech: European GMO-free Regions - a considered choice

Susanna Cenni was born in 1963 in Monteroni d'Arbia in Siena Province. Today she lives in Staggia, in Poggibonsi Borough. She loves music and literature. She was engaged in the Communist Youth Association, later in the Italian Communist Party, today in the Democrats of the Left. She worked for Youth Association in Valdelsa, in its secretariat in Siena and for the Union of the Region Toscana. Today she is associated with the Democrats of the Left in the National Council.

Susanna Cenni has always stood for peace and women. She co-founded Women's Culture Club and since the 1980's she has been engaged in the Committee for Peace and Disarmament in Valdelsa. In 1985 she was elected Town Councilor in Poggibonsi and nominated for the Valdelsa Intermunicipal Assembly.

From 1997 to 2000 she was responsible for maintenance of water resources of the Siena and Grosseto Provinces. From 2000 till 2005 she was a member of the Regional Government

where she was responsible for Tourism, Trade, Consumer Policy and Fairs. Source:
Primapagina Regione Toscana



Goita, Mamadou

IRPAD, COPAGEN, Forum Nyeleni, Mali, West Africa

Website: nyeleni2007.org

Speech: The small farmers' agenda

Mamadou Goita is a development socio-economist and specialist in education and training systems from Mali (West Africa). He is currently the Executive Director of the Institute for Research and the Promotion of Alternatives in Development (IRPAD), Bamako, Mali. He is a member of the regional co-ordinating group of the “Coalition pour la Protection du Patrimoine Génétique Africain” (Coalition to Protect the African Genetic Heritage - COPAGEN), which operates in West Africa. He has worked with UNICEF, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Togo and Burkina Faso, and several NGOs, including ACORD (Regional Director for West Africa and Africa Program Manager) and OXFAM-Belgium (regional co-ordinator for West Africa based in Burkina Faso). He is active in social movements e.g. FORAM, West Africa Social Forum, Africa Social Forum, WSF, and works with farmer organizations and their networks in West Africa. He coordinated the Polycentric World Social Forum Bamako 2006 and he jointly coordinated the World Food Sovereignty Forum which took place in Sélingué, Mali, February 23-27, 2007.

He is the Chair of the boards: DES (Diobass Ecologie et Société) or (Diobass, Ecology and Society) an international NGO working on agroecology; AMASSA (Association Malienne pour la Sécurité et la Souveraineté Alimentaire). He is also a member of the scientific boards: SEXAGON (Syndicat des Exploitants Agricoles de l'Office du Niger) of rice producers and Network of African Women Economists (NAWE)

He worked on such issues as cotton, conflict management, governance, decentralisation and local development, and immigration for many years and has been involved in many economic, social or socio-economic studies, researches and evaluation processes in Africa. He participated recently on debates on AGRA (Africa, Canada and USA). He teaches at the University of Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), at the “Applied Economic National School” Dakar (Senegal) and CESAG (African Management Centre), Dakar, Senegal.



Graf, Maya

MP Green Party Switzerland, President SAG (Schweizerische Arbeitsgruppe Gentechnologie)

Websites: www.mayagraf.ch;
www.gentechnologie.ch; www.parlament.ch

Speech: GMO-free by democratic vote

Maya Graf stands up against genetic engineering in agriculture and for Biodiversity on three levels: very directly and practically every day on her organic farm not far from the City of Basel; as a member of Swiss Parliament, where she is one of the representatives of the Green Party; and for the last 7 years as president of the „Schweizerische Arbeitsgruppe Gentechnologie SAG“, an association of all the major Swiss agricultural, environmental and consumer organisations that oppose genetic engineering in agriculture.

'In the country of Syngenta & Co. it's an uphill fight, but we won the popular vote in 2005, when a majority of the Swiss population agreed to a five year moratorium that forbids the commercial production of genetically modified food crops. This is a strong signal to other countries: when the people have a say, they say no! With my participation in Planet Diversity I want to encourage everyone to call for popular hearings in this highly controversial matter'.

'It is my deep conviction that only a gmo-free and sustainable agriculture can prevent fertile land from falling into the hands of global agribusiness. The land belongs to the farmers, not to the industry just like in the immortal song... this land is our land'.



Grassl, Hartmut

Max Planck Institute for Meteorology, Germany

Websites: www.vdw-ev.de; www.foes.de

Speech: How to reduce the impact of agriculture on global warming

Hartmut Grassl is a climatologist who studied physics and meteorology in Munich. In 1984 he became head of the Physics Institute at the GKSS Research Centre near Hamburg. In 1988 he started as a lecturer at the University of Hamburg and a director of the Max Planck Institute for Meteorology (MPI). He held both chairs until his retirement in 2005. Already in the 1980s Dr. Grassl warned against climate change. He conducted the World Climate Research Program for UN in Geneva for several years, contributed to the Kyoto Protocol and is a member of the advisory board of Green Budget Germany.

For information on Hartmut's publications see:
http://de.scientificcommons.org/hartmut_gra



Haerlin, Benedikt

Foundation on Future Farming, Germany

Website: www.zs-l.de

Speech: Welcome to Planet Diversity

Benedikt Haerlin works for the German Foundation on Future Farming in Berlin, Germany, which is the principal organizer of "Planet Diversity". He co-ordinates the European initiative "Save our Seeds" (www.saveourseeds.org) to keep conventional and organic seeds free of GMOs and is also a member of the International Commission on the Future of Food (www.future-food.org).

Haerlin was global co-ordinator of Greenpeace International's Genetic Engineering Campaign from 1996 to 2002. He continues to advise the organization and represents it in the Bureau of the United Nations International Agricultural Assessment of Science and Technology for Development (www.agassessment.org). From 1984 to 1989 Haerlin served as a Member of the European Parliament (Green Group), where he specialised in genetic engineering issues. Before, he worked as a publisher and journalist in Berlin. He studied philosophy and psychology in Tübingen and Berlin. He was born in Stuttgart in 1957.



Herbst, Siegrid

Initiative for GE-free Seeds and Breeding, Germany

Website: www.gentechnikfreie-saat.de

Speech: Welcome to Planet Diversity

Siegrid Herbst has been coordinating the Initiative for GE-free Seeds and Breeding (IG Saatgut) since 2005. Together with seed networks of other European countries IG Saatgut is promoting the creation of a European Coordination for peasant seeds. In 2004 Siegrid Herbst got involved in defending GE-free agriculture, at first starting as a co-ordinator in a "Regionen aktiv" project of the AbL (Family Farmers Union) aiming to set up a GE-free region and to bolster GE-free agriculture in the area of Hamm, Unna and Dortmund. In 2003 she worked as a junior gender adviser in a rural development project of GROWTH (Integrated Development Programmes) and DED (German Development Service) in Ghana. Siegrid Herbst studied landscape planning and environmental development at the University of Hanover. Born in 1972 she grew up on a farm near Göttingen.



Herren, Hans

Millennium Institute, USA

Website: www.millenniuminstitute.net/about/hans.html

Speech: Diversity and complexity - Small solutions, global visions, common knowledge

Hans Herren is a scientist and MI's president. He served as Director General of the International Center for Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE) in Nairobi, Kenya and as Director of the Africa Biological Control Center of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in Benin, where he implemented the highly successful biological control program that saved the African cassava crop, and prevented Africa's worst-ever food crisis.

As MI's president, Hans Herren works on internationalizing the Institute, and developing its public sector component with new core and project funding. This funding will enable developing countries to implement MI's Threshold 21 (T21) integrated planning model. MI training centers will promote the institutionalization of T21 at sub-national, country, and regional levels. At the global level, Mr. Herren will encourage the use of T21 for assessments such as Global Environment Outlook, Africa Environment Outlook and International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology. New models will be developed for use in primary and secondary educational institutions to teach environmental and societal issues.

Hans Herren holds numerous awards such as election to the U.S National Academy of Sciences in 1999; election to the Academy of Sciences of the Developing World (TWAS) in 2005, for his contribution to the development and support of sciences in Africa; the 1995 World Food Prize, the highest award given to an individual for advancing human development by improving the quality, quantity, or availability of food in the world; the 1995 Kilby Award, given to individuals who have made significant contributions to society through science, technology, innovation, invention, and education; the 2002 Brandenberger Prize, for improving the living standards of Africa's rural population through the development of agricultural projection methods in harmony with the environment; the 2003 Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement; the 1991 Sir and Lady Rank Prize for Nutrition, awarded by the former Prime Minister of Britain, Lady Margaret Thatcher.

Hans Herren serves on the boards of numerous organizations: as co-chair of the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science & Technology, (IAASTD); chairman of BioVision, a Swiss foundation with a global mandate to alleviate poverty and improve the livelihoods of poor people while maintaining the natural resource base that sustains life; president of the International Association of the Plant Protection Sciences (IAPPS); and member of the US Board of Agriculture and Natural Resources (BANR).



Holt-Giménez, Eric

Food First/Institute for Food and Development Policy, USA

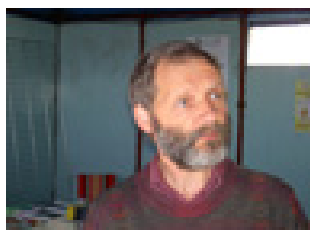
Website: www.foodfirst.org

Speech: Food First - campesinos, agro fuels and sustainability

Eric Holt-Giménez has been the executive director of FoodFirst/Institute for Food and Development Policy since July 2006. He has also worked as a university lecturer, researcher, analyst, consultant, International Agricultural Development Specialist working on Sustainable Agricultural Research and Development (SARD), Natural Resource Management (NRM), Agroecology, Cooperative & Community Development and Community Watershed Management; Program Coordinator/Manager in the farmer-to-farmer program development with farmers' unions and non-governmental organizations in Mexico, Central America, and the United States in support of Movimiento Campesino-a-Campesino; 2 years management of Latin American program (based in Washington DC) for IFI transparency, accountability, advocacy and reform; Development Advocacy/Information Specialist - monitoring of multilateral development banks (MDBs.) for civil society organizations in Latin America; information/data collection & analysis, documentation of MDB development policies & projects; information and institutional access services to affected communities & CSOs; transnational advocacy networking for grassroots, alternative development movements.

Eric Holt-Giménez is the author of the latest Food First Book, *Campesino a Campesino: Voices from Latin America's Farmer to Farmer Movement for Sustainable Agriculture* which chronicles the development of this movement in Mexico and Central America over two and a half decades.

For information on Eric's publications see: www.foodfirst.org/ericvita



Kastler, Guy

Réseau Semences Paysannes (Peasants' Seeds Network), France

Website: www.semencespaysannes.org

Speech: The seed agenda

Kastler is a French farmer, chairman of the Réseau Semences Paysannes (Peasants' Seeds Network), a member of the Confédération Paysanne (Farming Confederation) and an official representative of the Nature et Progrès (Nature and Progress) association.

The Réseau Semences Paysannes was established in the spring of 2003. It includes national trade unions and development organizations of professional and amateurs involved in organic and conventional farming who want to develop and conserve biodiversity in their fields. *Source: GRAIN*



Lammerts van Bueren, Edith

Louis Bolk Institute, the Netherlands

Websites: www.louisbolk.nl; www.plantbreeding.wur.nl;
www.eco-pb.org; www.eucarpia.org

Speech: Organic breeding in Europe

For more than 25 years Edith Lammerts van Bueren has been involved in research on organic agriculture, specifically focussed on plant breeding issues. She is the theme leader of Organic Plant Breeding at the Louis Bolk Institute in the Netherlands, a research institute specialised in organic agriculture, health care and nutrition. She is also the first professor of Organic Plant Breeding at the Wageningen University in the Netherlands and is co-founder and president of the European Consortium for Organic Plant Breeding (ECO-PB), and chair of the Organic and Low-input Agriculture section of the European Association for Research for Plant Breeding (EUCARPIA). Through all these networks she supports the development of varieties that are better adapted to low-input agriculture, in close cooperation with European farmers. Organic farmers do not want to mask the diversity in environmental growing conditions by using high levels of nitrogen fertilisers and chemical pesticides. Rather they look for ways to take advantage of biodiversity. Planet Diversity is a beautiful forum to show the power of diversity!

For information on Edith's publications see: www.louisbolk.org/index.php?empl=1642



Lernoud, Pipo

Vice President of International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), Argentina

Website: www.ifoam.org

Speech: Wrap-up poem and take home message

Alberto (Pipo) Lernoud began writing articles in 1980 as an editor of the magazine *Expreso Imaginario* and edited the first book on organic farming in Latin America. He is a co-founder of MAPO, which is the umbrella organization for the organic movement in Argentina. He has served on the IFOAM World Board since 1998, and has been the Vice President since 2002. Together with his wife Maria Calzada, he runs an organic shop, restaurant and catering service *El Rincon Organico*. He has established the foundation *Cocina de la Tierra* to promote indigenous products and knowledge and support biodiversity in Latin America. *Source: Biofach Latin America*

Petersen Paulo Frederico

Assessoria e Serviços a Projetos em Agricultura Alternativa (AS-PTA), Brazil

Website: www.aspta.org.br

Speech: Exchange of practical experiences in alternative agriculture, locally and globally

The Consultancy and Services for Alternative Agriculture Projects (AS-PTA) has been supporting sustainable agriculture and food security in Brazil for 20 years by promoting and strengthening family and ecological farming at local, regional and national levels. It acts as a partner and advisor for small-scale farmers and family agriculture. The organization promotes ecological practices in order to influence policymaking towards sustainable practices. AS-PTA is currently campaigning against GMOs.

For information on Paulo's publications see: www.leisa.info/index.php?url=contact-details.tpl&p



Satheesh, P.V.

Deccan Development Society, India

Website: www.ddsindia.org.in

Speech: The GMO agenda

P.V. Satheesh is one of the founding members of the Deccan Development Society (DDS), and has been working for the society for the last 20 years. Currently he is its General Secretary and the Director of the Zaheerabad Project. He has been a spokesman for the civil society in India on such issues as gender, food security and ecological agriculture. P.V. Satheesh is specialized in participatory methodologies. He has either initiated or been a key member of a number of networks on food security, participation, ecological agriculture and networks fighting against genetic engineering, globalization, WTO, TRIPs and other inequitable international treaties.

The Deccan Development Society (DDS) is a grassroots organization working in about 75 villages with women's Sanghams (voluntary village level associations of the poor) in the Medak District of Andhra Pradesh. The 5000 women members of the Society represent the poorest of the poor in their village communities. Most of them are 'dalits', the lowest group in the Indian social hierarchy. The Society has a vision of consolidating these village groups into vibrant organs of primary local governance and federating them into a strong pressure lobby for women, the poor and 'dalits'.

The programs initiated by the Society have evolved over the years into a strong political support for rural women. What started off with the intention to ensure the basic sustenance needs of the Sangham members has become a tool of empowerment for them to address

issues of food security, natural resource enhancement, education and health needs in the region. The Society intends to retrieve women's natural leadership positions in their communities, and fight for their access and control over their own resources.



Seshan, Suprabha

Gurukula Botanical Sanctuary, India

Websites: www.gbsanctuary.org

Speech: Take a walk on the wild side - reflecting diversity inside and outside

Suprabha Seshan is Executive Director of Gurukula Botanical Sanctuary (GBS) at Mananthavadi in Wayanad district. She focuses on conservation of southwest India's Western Ghats, considered one of the world's most diverse and unique ecosystems. Many species there are rare or endangered, and 40% are endemic. Yet, only 10% of original forest cover remains. Vast numbers of plant species (up to 50% in some areas) are extracted for the global medicinal market. Others are lost through habitat destruction and invasion by exotic species. Twenty percent of all native plant species may become extinct within a few decades.

Suprabha Seshan works with trained local women on 'ecosystem gardening', propagating, nurturing and reseeding the largest collection of native plants in the region. She also cooperates with local villagers and farmers to reintroduce species to degraded places where they once grew. GBS has grown 2000 species, one-third of the region's flora. Suprabha Seshan founded the initiative 'School in the Forest' which aims to establish the Sanctuary as an important learning centre where guided tours or workshops are given. The Sanctuary is visited by thousands of school children, tribal, rural and urban people every year. Seshan and her team are trying to expand it into a training resource centre for fledgling conservation staff. GBS hopes to nurture a global ethos that is profoundly supportive of plants, wildlife and forests through increased participation of advisory bodies, research and consultation activities with government and non-governmental organizations, educational programmes and publications for the general public.

In 2006 she won the Whitley Award -- the UK's top conservation award -- for her commitment to protecting and propagating some of the India's rarest and the most unique plants. This award is granted for outstanding work by conservation leaders in the fields of scientific research, protection and involvement of local communities. *Source: The Hindu*

For information on Suprabha's publications see: www.gbsanctuary.org/publications



Shiva, Vandana

Navdanya Seed Movement, India

Websites: www.navdanya.org

Speech: Food security, food sovereignty and climate change

Dr. Vandana Shiva is a physicist, ecologist, activist, editor, author of books. She founded the Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology (1982) in Dehra Dun dedicated to high quality and independent research and Navdanya (1991), a national movement to protect the diversity and integrity of living resources, promote organic farming and fair trade. In 2004 she started Bija Vidyapeeth, an international college for sustainable living in collaboration with Schumacher College, U.K.

Dr. Shiva has contributed in fundamental ways to changing the practice and paradigms of agriculture and food. Her books, “The Violence of the Green Revolution” and “Monocultures of the Mind” have become classic challenges to the dominant paradigm of non-sustainable, reductionist Green Revolution Agriculture. Through her books ‘Biopiracy’, ‘Stolen Harvest’, and ‘Water Wars’ she has made visible the social, economic and ecological costs of corporate-led globalisation.

Demystifying GATT and WTO, working with farmers to explain TRIPS and the Agreement of Agriculture are other dimensions of her work on Agriculture and Food Security. Through her leadership and commitments, Dr. Shiva and her team successfully challenged the biopiracy of Neem, Basmati and Wheat. Besides her activism, she also serves in expert government groups on Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) legislation.

She campaigns against biotechnology and genetic engineering on the international level. She has helped movements in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Ireland, Switzerland and Austria with their campaigns against genetic engineering.

Dr. Shiva’s contributions to gender issues are nationally and internationally recognised. Her book, “Staying Alive” dramatically shifted the perception of Third World women. In 1990 she wrote a report for the FAO on Women and Agriculture entitled, “Most Farmers in India are Women”. She founded the gender unit at the International Centre for Mountain Development (ICIMOD) in Kathmandu. More recently, she has initiated an international movement of women working on food, agriculture, patents and biotechnology called Diverse Women for Diversity. The movement was launched formally in Bratislava, Slovakia on 1-2 May 1998.

Dr. Shiva was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize 2005 and received the ‘alternative Nobel prize’, the Right Livelihood Award, in 1993. *Source: Hemp For Victory*

For information on Vandana's publications see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vandana_Shiva



Stebenkova, Liudmilla

Moscow city Duma deputy, Chairman of the Commission on Health Care and Public Health Protection, Russia

Website: www.duma.mos.ru

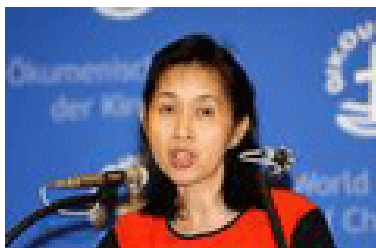
Speech: GMO-free Moscow

Liudmila Stebenkova is a pediatrician by profession. She started her political career in the 1990's. She is currently a deputy of the Moscow city Duma in her fourth term.

As head of the Moscow City Duma Commission on Health Care and Public Health Protection, he initiated political discussion on GMO legislation during round table meetings, hearings, and sessions of the Commission dedicated to this problem. It resulted in the acceptance of an amendment in the Law of Moscow City on "Food Safety in Moscow" that prohibits buying GMO-containing products with budgetary funds. Liudmilla Stebenkova does not consider this achievement to be a major step, but rather as a move toward making Moscow truly a GMO-free zone. Moscow's city government has allocated the means for establishing 16 independent laboratories for GMO-exposure in products that Muscovites are willing to check.

The next step was The Governmental Order of Moscow from February 17th, 2007, in which manufacturers are encouraged to label their products "GMO-free". The system of voluntary labeling started on the 1st of July 2007, and has worked successfully thus far.

Liudmila Stebenkova is now working on expanding the Moscow initiatives in regions of the Russian Federation and supporting development of GMO-free zones.



Suwanbubbha, Parichart

The Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mahidol University, Thailand

Website: www.mahidol.ac.th

Speech: The Spirit of Diversity - common and divergent ethical approaches

Parichart Suwanbubbha is a Buddhist who studied Systematic Theology at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, and AMRS at the University of Chicago. She did her PhD on 'Grace and Karma: A Case Study of Religio-Cultural Encounters in Protestant and Buddhist Communities in Bangkok and Its Relevant Environs, Thailand' at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago. She is an assistant professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mahidol University, Salaya, Nakornpathom, Thailand. She is also a volunteer teacher for Buddhist Novices and Monks at Nangnong Temple, Bangkok, Thailand and conducts courses at the universities of Hamburg, Mahachulalongkorn Buddhist, and

Mahamongkut Buddhist. She has been teaching Buddhism, Christianity, Dialogue and Ethics for the last 20 years. She is affiliated with the American Academy of Religion, U.S.A., the Asian Conference on Religion and Peace, Thailand Chapter, and the World Fellowship for Buddhists, Thailand.

Parichart Suwanbubbha is also a vice director at the Mahidol Research Center for Peace Building. She is involved in conducting dialogues for groups of military, religious leaders, and Buddhist and Muslims villagers, including women and children, in the 3 provinces of the Deep South of Thailand. She also works in the Juvenile Center at Hatyai, Songkla where she focuses on the growing problem of violence. She tries to connect her dialogue work with the Contemplative Education Center, a new program of the Mahidol University. She incorporates spiritual practices and experience-based learning into the process of dialogue. Through various activities and deep listening, children can develop their inner values by heart, head and hand. She is a trainer, programmer and facilitator on "Dialogue as Peace Reconciliation" for people from the southern provinces of Thailand that have experienced unrest.

For information on Parichart's publications see: [Articles](#)



Tauli-Corpuz ,Victoria

TEBTEBBA (Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education), Philippines

Website: www.tebtebba.org

Speech: Indigenous seed development and sharing

Victoria Tauli-Corpuz is a Development Consultant and Indigenous Activist. She is a founder and Executive Director of Tebtebba Foundation (Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education). The organization aims at enabling indigenous peoples to do their own research, their own advocacy, to promote their rights and to build the capacity of indigenous peoples to fight for their rights.

Tauli-Corpuz is the Chairperson of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, a subsidiary body of the United Nations Economic and Social Council dealing with issues of indigenous peoples. She is also a member of National Selection Committee of the Ford Foundation, International Fellowships Program (IFP) Philippines; World Council of Churches Working Group on Ethics of Genetic Engineering, WCC, Geneva, Switzerland; DTP Advisory Committee, Diplomacy Training Program, Affiliated with the University of New South, New South Wales, (A Training Program for People of the Asia-Pacific Region); United Nations Development Programme (UNDP-CSO) Civil Society Organizations Advisory Committee; International Advisory Council of the Third World Network and Gender and Indigenous Peoples' Expert; the Management Committee of the Crucible Group; Board Member of Edmonds Institute and of the International Forum on Globalization (IFG). Source: [EED](#)

For information on Victoria's publications see:
www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/member_tauli.html



Vijayan, Vadayil

Kerala State Biodiversity Board, India

Speech: Why Kerala is a GMO-free State of India

Vadayil S. Vijayan is an ornithologist, scientist and activist. He did his PhD in ornithology under the supervision of the world renowned ornithologist Dr. Salim Ali. Initially he worked on the ecology of birds in the Western Ghats, and for the next 10 years he led a multidisciplinary integrated study on the ecology of the world famous wetland, the Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary (Keoladeo National Park). He established a national Centre for Excellence called Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History funded by the Government of India with a mission to “Help conserve India’s biodiversity and its sustainable use through research, education and people’s participation.” Within this project he handled a large number of projects on various aspects of biodiversity conservation for about 14 years.

Since becoming the Chairman of the Kerala State Biodiversity Board last year, he has been mainly concentrating on biodiversity conservation in Kerala. They have brought out the: Kerala State Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, Organic Farming Policy for the Kerala State (the draft is being finalised). They have just begun to prepare a people’s Biodiversity Register at the Panchayat level - the smallest administrative unit of the land. They organised a national workshop on GM crops and biodiversity conservation at Trivandrum, which took place on the 10th and 11th of April. One of their major activities is to create awareness among people in various sectors of society such as the judiciary, legislatures, bureaucrats, teachers and students of schools and colleges, of the need for biodiversity conservation and the various threats it faces.

Vadayil S. Vijayan is also a leader of the Salim Ali Foundation, a Charitable Trust established in 2006 at Coimbatore with the mission of Biodiversity Conservation and Food Security.



Volling, Annemarie

Family Farmers Union, AbL, Germany
GMO-Free Regions Network in Germany

Websites: www.abl-ev.de; www.gentechnikfreie-regionen.de

Speech: Welcome to Planet Diversity

Annemarie Volling is a researcher in environmental sciences. She works for the Family Farmers Union (Arbeitsgemeinschaft bäuerliche Landwirtschaft - AbL) and is co-ordinator of the GMO-Free Regions Network in Germany. AbL, Federation for Environment and Nature Conservation (Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland - BUND), and the Institute for Work and Economy in Bremen (Institut für Arbeit und Wirtschaft) are also involved in this project. The aim of the project is to support the farmers, establish GMO-free regions, and spread the information about the initiative. She became interested in the issue of genetic engineering in agriculture through her work in organic farming.



von Uexkull, Jacob

World Future Council, Germany

Website: www.worldfuturecouncil.org

Speech: Diversity and the right livelihood of future generations

Jakob von Uexkull is a journalist, writer, lecturer, and professional philatelist. As a Member of the European Parliament (1987-89), he served on the Political Affairs Committee and the Science and Technology Committee. He was also a member of the Delegation for Relations with the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Baltic Intergroup (1987-89).

In 1980 he founded the Right Livelihood Awards, which is often called the Alternative Nobel Prize. He is also a co-founder (1984) of The Other Economic Summit (TOES) and a founder of The Estonian Renaissance Award (1993). He served on the Board of Greenpeace, Germany; the New Economics Foundation (London); and the Council of Governance of Transparency International. He was also a member of the UNESCO Commission on Human Duties and Responsibilities. He is a patron of Friends of the Earth International.

Jakob von Uexkull was honored by Time Magazine as a European Hero (2005). In 2006 he was awarded the Binding-Prize (Liechtenstein) for the protection of nature and the environment. And in 2008 he won the Erich Fromm Prize in Stuttgart, Germany, for his future-orientated commitment, dedicated for lives with human dignity for our children and grandchildren in a globalised world.

Uexkull is currently working on the creation of the World Future Council of planetary elders, pioneers and youth leaders. The Council will address important issues such as protection of the environment, peace, justice, human development, human rights and health by encouraging the implementation and enforcement of treaties and laws. *Source: [Wikimedia](#)*



von Weizsäcker, Christine

Ecoropa, Germany

Websites: www.ecoropa.de; <http://www.vdw-ev.de>

Speech: Welcome to Planet Diversity

Christine von Weizsäcker comes from Bonn and is affiliated with Ecoropa and the Federation of German Scientists (VDW). She has been a civil society observer of the preparatory negotiations of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Convention on Biological Diversity. She will witness and influence discussions and decisions in the conference rooms on: the international liability regime, the Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) regime, agrofuels, a moratorium on genetically engineered trees, protected areas respecting the rights and livelihoods of local communities, agricultural biodiversity, and public

participation. *"I hope that the decisions at MOP and COP will indeed be good for cultural and biological diversity. Diversity needs justice."* The biggest challenges of her work are: *"not to despair and to stay wide awake and fully focused in negotiations at 3 o'clock in the morning."*

She is participating in "Planet Diversity" because she believes that success needs good work inside the conference rooms but also a lot of pressure from outside. *"I am looking forward to being encouraged by the good work of many people."* Source: VAI



Worede, Melaku

Seeds of Survival, Ethiopia

Website: <http://usc-canada.org/what-we-do/seeds-of-survival>

Speech: Seeds of Life and the Wisdom of Farmers, in Ethiopia and throughout the World

Melaku Worede was born in Ethiopia in 1936. After obtaining a PhD in Agronomy (Genetics and Breeding) from the University of Nebraska, USA, he returned to Ethiopia and became involved in planning the Plant Genetic Resources Centre in Addis Ababa. He became the Centre's Director in 1979 and held this post until his retirement in 1993. He then joined the Seeds of Survival Programme of Ethiopia, which he founded with the support of a consortium of Canadian NGOs led by the Unitarian Service Committee (USC/Canada).

The Plant Genetic Resources Centre (PGRC) set out to establish 'Strategic Seed Reserves' of traditional varieties that could be released to farmers for planting in times of drought when no other seeds were likely to thrive. In only a few years Worede and his staff collected and safely stored a considerable amount of Ethiopia's genetic wealth. In the process he established not only Africa's finest facility of its kind but one of the world's premier genetic conservation systems. Worede built this institution exclusively with Ethiopian staff, training a whole new generation of plant breeders and geneticists in his home country.

In addition to Ethiopia, Worede is now promoting this idea in other developing regions of Africa and Asia as key promoter and scientific adviser of the Seeds of Survival programme. In this connection, he has been active in the training of several gene bank curators and many other young scientists. Several initiatives to support biodiversity conservation and utilization in Africa take the Ethiopian experience as their model and are thus attributable to Worede's path-breaking work.

Worede was also the first Chair of the African Committee for Plant and Genetic Resources and has been instrumental in the setting up of the African Biodiversity Network. He has served as Chair of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization's Commission on Plant Genetic Resources and is currently a Board member of (among others) the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI) and the Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI).

Melaku Worede received the Right Livelihood Award in 1989. Source: *The Right Livelihood Award*