The devastating impacts of climate change on global food systems are mostly ignored by governments worldwide. Despite mounting evidence, many leaders continue to overlook the profound consequences of the changing climate on food systems, agriculture, food availability and access, and largely ignore the exacerbating impacts of the climate crisis on hunger and malnutrition.

This global failure to address the issue is a grave injustice, as the most vulnerable communities are disproportionately affected. With each passing day, the twin crises worsen, resulting in decreased agricultural fisheries yields, loss of biodiversity, and reduced food availability and access.

“It is imperative that governments listen to the demands of the most vulnerable communities and cooperate to address the twin crises of food and climate.”
The IPCC’s Sixth Assessment Report states that climate change is already impacting every inhabited region globally and is causing significant reductions in crop yields, with smallholder and subsistence farmers, pastoralists, and fishers being the most affected. In the Global South, extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and severe, causing devastating crop failures and food shortages. In South Asia, floods and landslides have destroyed crops and infrastructure during the recent monsoon season. Other impacts include rainfall regime change, diseases, and insect damage, while fishery production is impacted by seawater warming, ocean acidification, typhoon intensity, and sea level rise. IPCC warns that these impacts will only get worse. At 1.5°C warming, agriculture will suffer the most significant impact and least developed countries (LDCs) will bear the brunt.

Although the world produces enough food, nearly one billion people suffer from hunger and malnutrition, with Asia housing more than 60% of those affected. In 2021, 31.9% of women worldwide were unable to access sufficient, affordable food, compared to 27.6% of men. In Southeast Asia and South Asia, prices of staple foods such as rice, wheat, and corn have soared, with 396 million people undernourished and 1.05 billion people unable to access food reliably. Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh are among the top countries experiencing severe food shortages.

During the pandemic, inequality increased, with billionaires’ wealth and corporate profits reaching record levels, including in the food sector where the rich earned a billion dollars every two days. As the climate and food crises worsen, it becomes increasingly evident that a select few reap benefits, while the vast majority suffer the devastating consequences.
It is no secret that the global food system is dominated by a small number of corporations, including Cargill, Tyson Foods, Nestle, PepsiCo, Bayer, ChemChina, and Corteva Agriscience who exercise control over every aspect of the food supply chain. These corporations use their market power to manipulate prices, influence food policies and regulations, and promote unhealthy diets, leading to a lack of crop diversity, reduced resilience to climate change, and limited access to affordable, nutritious food. As such, there is an urgent need for action to break up the monopolistic control of food corporations, promote agro-ecology, and support small farmers and local food systems.

Amid all these, the mainstream response to the crisis, advanced by the same institutions and corporations behind huge agribusinesses that excessively extracted our land and water resources, and gained wealth at the expense of the displaced people and communities in the Global South, includes "climate smart" technologies and neoliberal programs.

As a legacy of colonization, perpetuated and reinforced by neoliberal policies, many Global South countries’ agricultural production currently prioritize farming and fisheries for export instead of domestic consumption. Over the past two decades, there has been an increase in large-scale commercial plantations geared to produce high-value export commodities like rice, rubber, bananas, and palm oil. Devastating land conversion initiatives displace local communities, and impact the agricultural viability of wide swaths of land.

Food is the subject of price speculation in commodities markets which result in high food prices that solely benefit parasitic corporate producers and traders in food value chains. They have profited from high food prices, with little to no trickling effect to primary producers such as smallholder farmers and fisherfolk, and impacting millions of households who have to pay higher for their daily consumption.

These programs, which claim to increase productivity and resilience to climate impacts, actually further harm the depleting land and water resources essential for our people’s survival. These programs are designed under the premise that they will solve the climate crisis but in reality, they further undermine the rights of small food producers, farmers, fishers, indigenous peoples, and women. These programs are false solutions heavily promoted to continue business-as-usual by the same culprits to the food and climate crises and are widely adopted by governments of the Global South.
Real Solutions to the Twin Crises... before it’s too late.

The latest UN Special Rapporteur on Food itself had blamed the crisis on governments and international institutions that prioritize carbon-intensive agri-food businesses over vulnerable communities. It is imperative that governments listen to the demands of the most vulnerable communities and cooperate to address the twin crises of food and climate.

We of the peoples and communities of the Global South believe that it is vital for our world leaders to take urgent action to address the food crisis, particularly in light of the escalating climate crisis. The current responses to the food and climate crises rely heavily on technologies that promise to increase agricultural yields and improve crop resilience, but at the expense of our land, oceans, and forests, further threatening the livelihoods of small food producers, rural communities, and indigenous peoples. These corporate-led and profit-driven responses are not real solutions to the problem.

Instead, we need to move away from the carbon-intensive corporate-dominated industrial agricultural systems and shift rapidly towards sustainable, climate-resilient agro-ecological systems aimed at producing adequate, healthy, and affordable food for all. These include:

• Urgent action from policymakers and civil society organizations to prioritize building robust and climate-resilient food systems that prioritize citizens over the global market - Unsustainable industrial agricultural production systems contribute significantly to climate change, with high greenhouse gas emissions from concentrated livestock facilities and excessive use of synthetic nitrogen fertilizer.

It is crucial to strengthen food systems aimed at producing for domestic needs, ensure equitable access and distribution to sufficient and nutritious food, and protect the rights of food producers, especially women who make up 60% of agriculture workers. We need to rapidly shift
from carbon-intensive corporate-dominated industrial agricultural systems to sustainable, climate-resilient agroecological systems aimed at producing adequate, healthy, and affordable food for all. This also includes stronger regulation and breaking up of the monopolistic control of large agri-food businesses in the global food systems.

- International financial institutions and the United Nations (UN) have prescribed False Solutions that violate the rights of smallholder farmers. Such false solutions are embedded and reflected in programs such as Climate SMART Agriculture, Nature-based Solutions (NbS), and BioEnergy with Carbon Capture and Storage (BECCS). **We counter-propose agroecology as the alternative solution that genuinely addresses the food and climate crisis while protecting the rights of smallholder farmers, fishers, and women in the food production chain.**

- **Governments of the Global North must meet their fair share of climate actions by providing adequate climate finance for adaptation, as well as for losses and damages, in the food and agriculture sector.** Recognizing the historical and present contributions to the climate crisis, rich country governments should provide finance and appropriate sustainable technology to transform the current food and agricultural systems into agroecology, and help the farmers, food producers and vulnerable groups in the sector adapt to the worsening impacts and avert the losses and damages brought by climate change.