

# **Building the land & water pillar of food sovereignty**

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# Plenty of reasons to reject the current global agrifood system

- ♦ Current food regime is characterized by ‘unprecedented market power and profits of monopoly agrifood corporations, globalized animal protein chains, growing links between food and fuel economies, a ‘supermarket revolution’, liberalized global trade in food, increasingly concentrated land ownership, shrinking natural resource base, growing opposition from food movements worldwide’
- ♦ See Eric Holt Gimenez & Annie Shattuck, ‘Food crises, food regimes and food movements: rumblings of reform or tides of transformation?’, *Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol.38, No.1, January 2011.





## I. Case Summary

### 1. Introduction to Archer Daniels Midland (ADM) Company

- ❖ An American global food-processing and commodities-trading corporation
- One of the largest agricultural processors in the world (27,600 employees globally)
- ❖ Was named the world's-most-admired food-production company by *Fortune* magazine for three consecutive years: 2009, 2010 and 2011.
- Ranked 59<sup>th</sup> on the 2007 Fortune 500 list.



 **LouisDreyfus**  
Commodities



Each year our 32,000 employees move millions of tons of oilseeds, oilseed oils, grains, and other foods through our network of facilities in over 30 countries on six continents, turning much of these commodities into food products, and helping feed people worldwide.

### BUNGE GLOBAL FOOTPRINT



shaded areas of map reflect countries of operation with assets and/or commercial offices. Includes joint-venture and tolling facilities.



Bunge helps people everywhere make oilseeds and grains part of a healthy diet.

- ♦ Also, climate change is driven in (large) part by expansion of industrial agriculture in multiple ways: agriculture and land use are responsible for a big portion of GHG emissions –
  - ♦ deforestation (clearing and burning);
  - ♦ industrial monoculture expansion (tree plantations and flex crops and commodities);
  - ♦ methane & N<sub>2</sub>O (industrial livestock production);
  - ♦ and the growing impact of more land required for rising meat consumption on the carbon cycle (release of carbon + loss of carbon sequestration)
  - ♦ See Tony Weis, *The Ecological Hoofprint: The global burden of industrial livestock*, Zed, 2013.







**2008:**

**Record harvests,  
record profits,  
record hunger!**

- ♦ Current wave of resource grabbing – partly justified as a solution to the global food crisis -- is further entrenching the wrong kind of agriculture – wrong because high profit/ carbon/ waste/ water + low nutrition/ employment generation, while missing the mark on fighting hunger/ malnourishment (focus on food supply/ production/ ‘yield gap’ in avoidance of the need for redistribution of wealth and power)
- ♦ Note: The dominant food system relies on industrial, mechanized, large-scale monocultures *as well as* on non-industrial, small-scale farms for its consolidation and expansion, and continues to need loads of land and water resources to sustain the accumulation process.



## Global Crises & Global Movements

[http://foodfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Global-Movements\\_Final1.pdf](http://foodfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Global-Movements_Final1.pdf)

The global food crisis is more than the tragic increase in the number of hungry people and the pandemic of diet-related diseases. It is more than global climate change and the "dead zones" in our oceans. It is more than the violence of land and resource grabs, the loss of rural livelihoods, and the abuse of food and farmworkers...The food crisis is a political crisis in which the wrong decisions are being made regarding our local and global food systems. Ending the crisis requires more than simply producing more food or making healthier choices. It is a political project requiring social, economic, and political organization for transformative social change. Historically, social transformation comes about through a combination of crises and the growing power of social movements.



# Spotlight: Flex crops & commodities

## BREAKTHROUGH BIOTECHNOLOGY PLATFORM

### FLEXIBLE INPUT



### HIGHLY PRODUCTIVE MICROALGAE



**> 80% oil\***

*\*The average wild algae only has a 5-10% oil content*



### MULTIPLE HIGH-VALUE MARKETS



**FUELS**



**CHEMICALS**

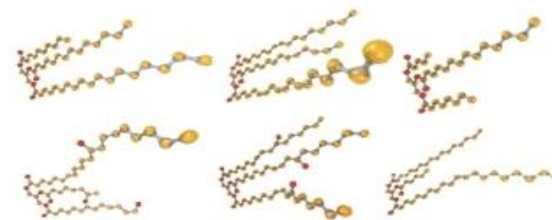


**NUTRITIONALS**



**SKIN & PERSONAL CARE**

### OIL DESIGNED TO SPECIFICATION





- ♦ **Crops and commodities that have multiple uses (food, feed, fuel, industrial material) that can be flexibly inter-changeable**
  - ♦ Examples: soya, sugarcane, oil palm, corn, trees (+ fish, cassava, coconut, beets, rape seeds, sunflower)
  - ♦ See TNI Think Piece Series – No.1 June 2014 + 3 more in 2014 + 1-2 forthcoming
- ♦ **Underlying logic: address increasing price volatility in world markets by reducing uncertainty in a single crop sector through diversification of the product portfolio, thereby enabling investors to better anticipate or more nimbly react to changing prices in either direction**
- ♦ **Rise of flex crops/ commodities is part of a reconceptualisation of agriculture as a source of biomass for a future 'bio-economy' → agenda of promoting extra flexibilities of biomass feedstocks (sources, types, conversion processes and end products)**
  - Central means: 'integrated, diversified biorefinery—and integrated cluster of industries, using a variety of different technologies to produce chemicals, materials, biofuels and power from biomass raw materials' (Europabio 2007).
- ♦ **Major R&D agenda of European Commission (€60 million under FP7, also H2020), serving to mobilize investment and policy support behind an 'economic imaginary portraying private interests as a common societal interest'**
  - ♦ See Les Levidow et al, 2013, 'Divergent paradigms of European agro-food innovation: The Knowledge-Based Bio-Economy (KBBE) as an R&D agenda', *Science, Technology and Human Values*, 38(1), 94-125.





## Our Commitment

Green Future Innovations, Inc. is a private sector in response to the renewable energy challenge of the Philippine Government. Green Future Innovations, Inc. is protected and supported by the Biofuels Act of 2006 and the Renewable Energy Act of...

**Green Future Innovations, Inc. (GFII)** is a corporation fully committed towards a green and sustainable development. It is a joint Venture corporation by and among Filipino, Japanese and Taiwanese partners and is a domestic corporation duly-registered under Philippine Laws. Taking from its cue from the Philippine Renewable Energy Program, GFII built and operated a large-scale bioethanol and cogeneration plant in San Mariano, Isabela Ecofuel Agro-Industrial Ecozone.

The bioethanol plant utilizes sugarcane sources that are wholly owned by Filipinos. The plant has a capacity to produce 200, 000 liters per day or 54 million liters of anhydrous alcohol annually, thereby displacing the country's reliance on imported fossil fuels

The cogeneration plant, after converting excess bagasse to energy, generates approximately 19 megawatts of renewable power, 13 megawatts of which will be exported to the National Grid in support of the Philippine Government's Energy Development Program

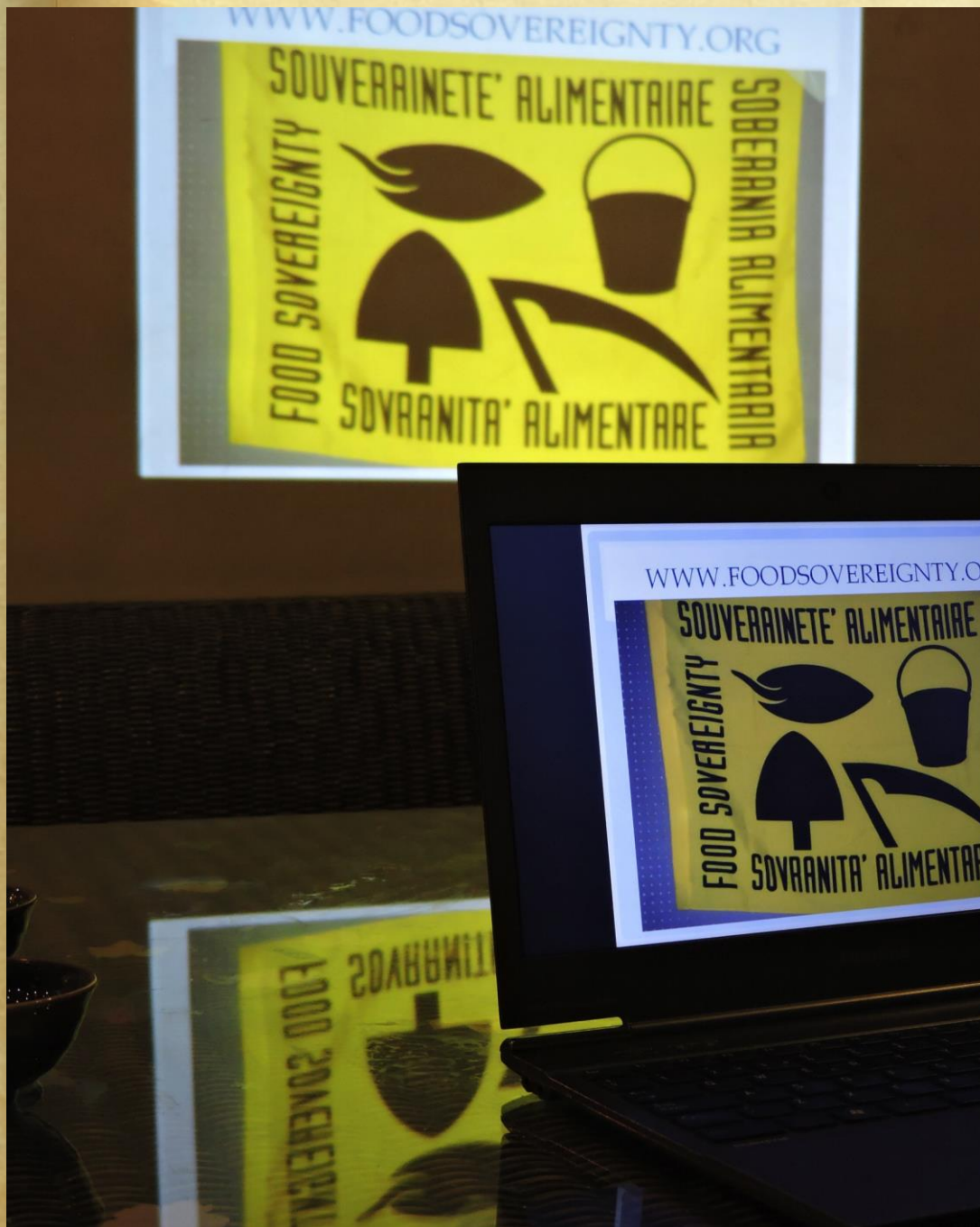
GFII maintains sugarcane growership contracts with 4, 000 farmer families in Isabela Province thus affecting 20, 000 Filipinos. The plant operations provide employment for 15, 000 workers having a tremendous positive impact to the local community





- ♦ **How to stop and rollback** these trends in a way that can **radically transform** the current agri-food system – *and not just make them seem less damaging and therefore more acceptable* – is an urgent task for all of us (Note: 3 broad political tendencies: facilitate; mitigate; stop and rollback)
- Urgent need to build the food sovereignty node within the radical pole from multiple starting points (environmental justice, food justice, agrarian justice, water justice) and various locations





**La Via Campesina defines food sovereignty as:**  
“the right of peoples to produce and consume safe and healthy food in sustainable ways in and near one’s territory” –  
note: not everyone must self-provision in food nor must farmers produce only food crops by this definition, because it accepts a food (trading) system based on diverse agronomic conditions across and within societies

**Many examples around the world; visibility is growing but still limited**



- ♦ Principles: entitlement + redistribution → takes the 'right to food' beyond simple access by invoking 'the right to democratic control over food and food-producing resources'
  - ♦ See Holt Gimenez & Shattuck 2011
- ♦ Model: agroecology, traditional knowledge and community-based food systems + dismantling of corporate agri-food monopolies, redistributive land reform, protection from dumping and overproduction and community rights to water and seed
- ♦ Key actors: Small food producers movements, e.g. LVC, WFFP, WFF and others, for example; States (but need to push them to exercise sovereign power to implement (re)distributive reforms, social protections and safety nets); International organisations/ spaces for advocacy (UN, FAO, UNFCCC etc)
- ♦ Approach: regulation of international markets and support to states to strengthen their food production; stabilization of prices for farmers and consumers; make agriculture (and aquaculture) sustainable; guarantee right to healthy food by supporting/building local and regional food systems anchored in agroecology

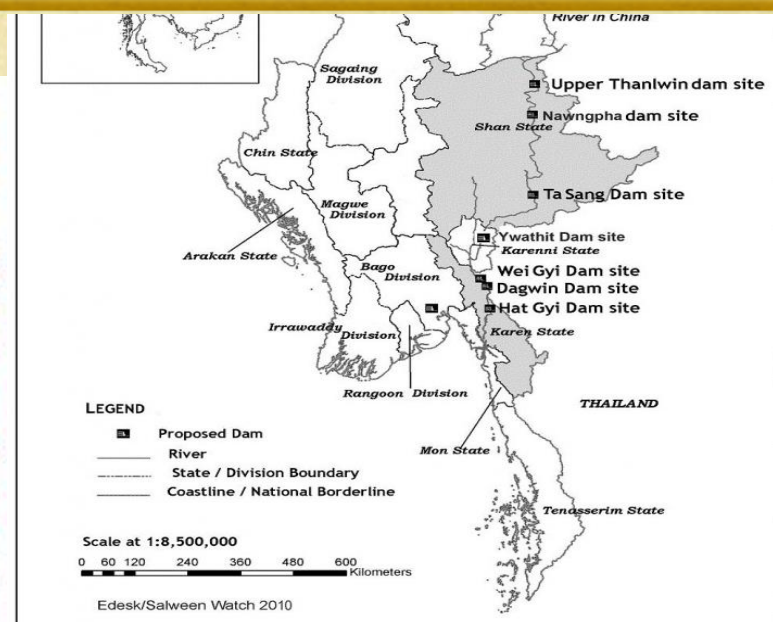




## Problematizing food sovereignty: land & water







<http://chinawaterrisk.org/resources/analysis-reviews/geopolitical-risks-transboundary-rivers/>

- ♦ Who is the sovereign in food sovereignty? Are there not competing sovereignties?
- ♦ What about competing claims over resources? How much of which natural resources can/should the state assert its authority over?
- ♦ Who ought to have what rights to which resources for how land and for what purposes?
- ♦ Who gets to decide?



- ♦ The 2007 Nyeleni meeting brought forward the critical issues of land and land-based social relations in stating that food sovereignty “ensures that the rights to use and manage our lands, territories, waters, seeds, livestock and biodiversity are in the hands of those of us who produce food. Food sovereignty implies new social relations free of oppression and inequality between men and women, peoples, racial groups, social classes and generations”



## The land-water pillar of food sovereignty

- ♦ The construction of food sovereignty is inconceivable without its necessary material and political pre-condition: democratic land & water control
- ♦ At the same time, although democratic land & water control may be effected in a society, without a strategic rebooting of the broader agricultural and food system such occasional democratization of land & water control can easily fizzle out and revert back to older or trigger newer forms of monopolies
- ♦ While reaffirming the relevance of redistributive land reform, must also recognize its inability to capture the wide array of land & water questions confronting those implicated in the political project of food sovereignty
  - ♦ Numerous social classes and groups urgently need land, but not necessarily via conventional land reform
  - ♦ Many also need water and/or fisheries/aquatic resources, but cannot get this via conventional land reform



# The case of Myanmar

- ♦ Ongoing armed conflict with numerous ethnic armed groups
- ♦ Multiple ethnic minorities with historical claims on territory in Myanmar's border areas, with hundreds of thousands of IDPs/refugees due to 60 years of war
- ♦ Ongoing land confiscations by the military that often end up going to private companies for logging and agribusiness (many of them Asian companies)
- ♦ Raft of laws and policies (new since a few years ago + series being drafted now) that aim at making huge areas of the country 'available' and 'secure' for new big business investments in oil, mining, agribusiness, hydropower, while also developing an industrial agriculture sector
- ♦ Since began the political-economic transition in 2010, seeing the emergence of a 'mitigationist' current aimed at making resource grabs more transparent, more in line with 'international standards'
- ♦ Very deep-seated and widening anger and outright resistance to land & water grabs, but largely still 'invisible'





- ♦ <http://www.gettyimages.nl/detail/nieuwsfoto%27s/group-of-land-owners-who-lost-their-land-wait-to-meet-nieuwsfotos/48293595>





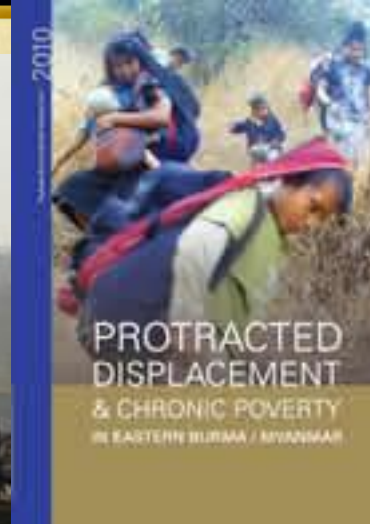
- ♦ <http://www.irrawaddy.org/burma/eight-detained-opposition-burmas-letpadaung-copper-mine-continues.htm>



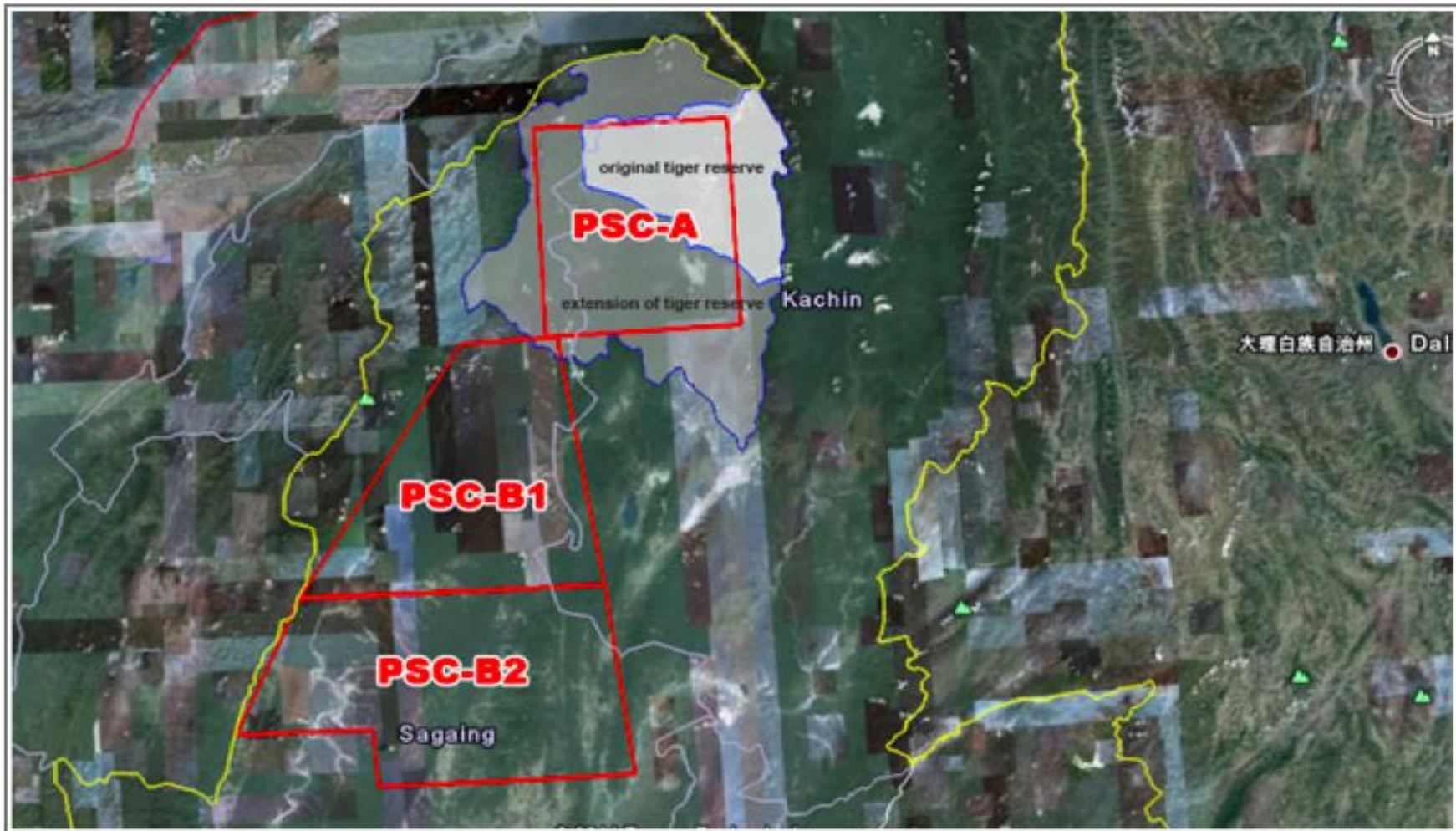


- ♦ <https://www.dvb.no/news/mandalay-farmers-begin-plough-protest-on-3000-acres-burma-myanmar/4148>









A map of the Hugawng Tiger Reserve showing the location of the oil and gas blocks. The exploration rights to Block A are owned by Russian Nobel Energy and its Burmese partner Htoo Trading. Silver Wave Exploration has the rights to B-2 farther south in Sagaing Division. Map: Courtesy KDNG

- ♦ <http://archive-2.mizzima.com/edop/analysis/5253-silver-wave-says-it-will-not-drill-in-hukaung-valley.html>



# Resistance

- ♦ Ground level in specific landholdings (confiscated and otherwise grabbed), waterways and regions (where dams are planned), project sites (like oil pipelines that traverse the country or mining concessions) etc.
- ♦ Critical reports and exposes; workshops and seminars to build common perspective and agenda → birth of Land In Our Hands last year
- ♦ Policy engagement, esp. draft laws/ policies on land, investment, energy, legal aid, in an effort to overturn the new bad laws and pressure for new laws/policies that reflect the aspirations of rural working peoples → ongoing National Land Use Policy drafting process
- ♦ ‘Inside-outside’ strategy that goes beyond demanding simply legal recognition and formalization customary and informal tenure rights (latter alone is likely to formalize numerous inequalities)



# **‘Land in Our Hands’: strategic agenda**

- ♦ *Across-the-board recognition, respect and fulfillment of the “right to land”*
- ♦ *Stop and reverse “land grabbing” system-wide*
- ♦ *Across-the-board land size ceiling with land redistribution and land restitution system-wide*
- ♦ *Plural tenure system and respect for customary practices within a federalist system*
- ♦ *Genuine environmental protection (no to ‘green grabbing’ in the name of conservation: forests & fisheries, for example)*
- ♦ *Respect for basic civil and political rights and freedoms of all rural working people/ ethnic peoples / rural women*



အမျိုးသား မြေအသုံးချမှု မှတ်တမ်း အောက်ပါစကားလုံးများနှင့် ၎င်းတို့၏ အတွေးအခေါ်များကို ဖော်ကျူးထားသော အကြောင်းအရာများ ပါရှိရမည်။

- (၁) လူမှုရေးဆိုင်ရာ တရားမျှတမှု (Social Justice)
- (၂) လူမှုရေးဆိုင်ရာ အလုပ်တာဝန် (Social Function)
- (၃) ပြန်လည် ဝေငှပေးခြင်း (Redistribution)
- (၄) လျော်ကြေးပေးဆောင်ခြင်း (Restitution)
- (၅) ဒီမိုကရေစီကျကျ ထိန်းချုပ်ခြင်း (Democratic Control)
- (၆) လူ့အခွင့်အရေးများ (Human Rights)

- လူသားများ မြေပိုင်ဆိုင်ခွင့် တရားဝင် လုံခြုံစိတ်ချ ရှိနေစေရန်တွင် လူမှုရေးဆိုင်ရာ တရားမျှတမှုများ သတ်မှတ် ဖော်ဆောင်ပေးရမည်။
- လူသားများ ဂုဏ်သိက္ခာရှိသည့်ဘဝကို ဖြစ်ပေါ်နိုင်စေရန် လူမှုရေးဆိုင်ရာ အလုပ်တာဝန်များ နှင့် အတွေးအခေါ်များ ဦးစားပေး ထည့်သွင်းစဉ်းစားသင့်သည်။
- လူသားများ မြေကို အချို့ပြုနေထိုင်နိုင်ရန်နှင့် ၎င်းတို့ နေ့စဉ်တားဝတ်နေရေးကိစ္စကို ဖြေရှင်းရန် အတွက် မြေကိုအသုံးချရာတွင် လိုအပ်သည့် မြေပမာဏကို စီမံခန့်ခွဲပိုင်ခွင့်ရှိသူများမှ ပြန်လည် ခွဲဝေပေး စေသည့် လုပ်ငန်းစဉ်များ သတ်မှတ်ပေးသင့်သည်။
- မြေကိုအသုံးပြု၍ အကျိုးမြတ်ရစေခြင်းငှာ လုပ်ငန်းများလုပ်ဆောင်ရာတွင် ဒီမိုကရေစီစနစ် ကျကျ ထိန်းချုပ်ခြင်း လုပ်ငန်းတာဝန်များ သတ်မှတ်ပေးရမည်။
- မြေကို အသုံးပြုရာတွင် လူသားတစ်ဦး၏ မူလအခွင့်အရေးနှင့် ပစ္စည်းဥစ္စာပိုင်ဆိုင်ခွင့်ကို အစဉ်တစိုက် ထည့်သွင်းစဉ်းစားပေးရမည်ဖြစ်ပြီး လူသားတို့၏ လူမှုဘဝကို အာမခံချက်ပေး နိုင်ရမည်။



**Land for People, Not Profit!  
No Mapping Us Without Us!  
Not About Us Without Us!**



# Closing reflections

- ♦ Food sovereignty has little fighting chance of surviving/taking root in Myanmar if these struggles to get democratic control of land & water fail
- ♦ Myanmar is not an isolated case; globally there are many 'Myanmars' or many fronts in a pitched global battle against the global agrifood system, a major driver of climate change, for control of land & water
- ♦ The problem is not a legal, technical or financial one ('lack of tenure security', 'lack of info or knowledge', lack of funds); it is a deeply political one, about concentrations of decision making power over how land & water is to be used and for what purposes *everywhere* – and the effects of this spill-over national boundaries and reverberate in our shared climate (not to mention being a profound assault on human rights and the idea of human rights)
- ♦ *What are we going to do about it?*



**Thanks!**