



**INSTITUTE FOR
AGRICULTURE AND TRADE POLICY**

PRESS RELEASE

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About IATP

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy works locally and globally at the intersection of policy and practice to ensure fair and sustainable food, farm and trade systems. IATP is headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota with an office in Washington D.C.

More than 350 organizations from around the world oppose greenwashing and false solutions of 'Climate Smart Agriculture'

Groups call for increased support for agroecology to address climate change

MINNEAPOLIS—One year after the launch of the Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture (GACSA), more than 350 civil society organizations from around the world, including the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP), rejected the ill-defined agenda of the Alliance as an empty marketing slogan, distracting governments from the transformational changes that are needed in agriculture to address climate change.

The civil society statement, published today, comes prior to the UN General Assembly meeting in New York at the end of this month, as the world's governments prepare for the Paris global climate talks in December. The statement called for greater recognition of "agroecology within a food and seed sovereignty framework" to both help the world adapt to a changing climate, while contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

"The term 'Climate Smart Agriculture' is really a marketing campaign for multinational agribusinesses and some governments that want to maintain the status quo," said IATP's climate director Ben Lilliston. "Without definitions or criteria, corporations such as Monsanto, Walmart, Syngenta, and the world's largest fertilizer company Yara, brand themselves as 'Climate Smart,' without making significant shifts in the climate-damaging industrial system from which they profit."

The organizations criticized GACSA for advancing a definition of climate-smart agriculture that is too broad and vague to be beneficial; leaving room for the inclusion of damaging practices. There are currently no criteria defining what is and is not "climate smart." Agribusiness corporations that promote synthetic fertilizers,

factory meat production and chemical-intensive industrial agriculture, all of which contribute to climate change and undermining the resilience of farming systems, can and do call themselves “Climate Smart.” The murky governance structure of GACSA also raises serious questions about how the alliance functions and who it is accountable to.

“CSA claims to include all models of agriculture,” the groups stated. “However it lacks any social or environmental safeguards and fails to prioritize farmers’ voices, knowledge and rights as key to facing and mitigating our climate challenges. It therefore actually threatens to undermine agroecological approaches...”

CSA was first introduced by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in 2010 and GACSA was officially launched during the Climate Summit in September 2014. Since GACSA’s formation, it has been widely criticized. Last year a letter signed by 70 scholars, openly opposed the CSA model, instead promoting the scientific and social legitimacy of agroecology.

Today’s statement is the third published by a growing alliance of civil society organizations opposing GACSA. The world’s largest peasant farmers’ movement, La Via Campesina, is among the signatories. CIDSE—which coordinated the development of this new statement—Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, the Center for Food Safety, the Organic Consumers Association, the Asia Pacific Farmers Forum, Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers’ Forum, The African Food Sovereignty Alliance, ActionAid, Slow Food, and many others signed the statement.

Leading up to the global climate talks in Paris, the groups expressed concerns that governments would include the Global Alliance or Climate-Smart Agriculture initiatives in the so-called “Agenda of Solutions,” launched by UN Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon. The groups urged governments not to endorse Climate Smart Agriculture as a solution for climate change and not to direct any climate finance towards projects and programs labelled as “climate-smart agriculture.”

You can read the full civil society letter [here](#). You can read past civil society letters opposing CSA [here](#).