



The Economy we need

Declaration of the Social and Solidarity Economy movement at Rio +20

This declaration was written by the Board of the Intercontinental Network for the Promotion of Social and Solidarity Economy (RIPESS), based on the discussions on Rio +20 of the 5th Latin American and Caribbean Conference on Solidarity Economy and fair trade and inputs from the delegates from the other continents.

If you support the contents of this declaration, we would appreciate your signature before 19th of June. Thank you! Here is the link for signatures: <http://www.riposs.org/declaration-riposs-rio20>

The People's Summit and the United Nations Conference for Sustainable Development of Rio+20 are being held at a time of crisis of our civilisation that takes multiple forms: food, ecology, energy, financial, social and of political representation. And it is not the same mindset or social model that created this crisis that will or can solve it!

The so-called green economy as presented by governments and multinational corporations is merely the extension of this model, through the commodification of the Commons; it is a new form of expansion of capitalism in crisis. Solidarity economy however is a means to free society of these constraints.

There are already many economic and social initiatives that exist on all continents, at community, regional and country level. They cover many sectors of activity and are the living proof of the concrete, vibrant possibility to build different development models, forms of organisation and society where life, plurality, self-management, environmental and social justice define solidarity economy, an economy that is different from that of capital. Solidarity economy is a social movement that together with others is contributing to the consolidation of a genuine economic and political democracy.

The creation of the United Nations Agency for the Environment proposed by UNEP will not provide the answer to the issue of global governance. It is essential that the tools and institutions of governance be transformed to become structurally grounded in on-going consultation and participation of all sectors of society at local, regional and international levels, and that they are not dominated by those whose financial contributions are the greatest, or managed by "experts". People's sovereignty must be respected, as well as that of communities who are the only ones to have the legitimate right and the capacity to implement the solidarity development that can guarantee the preservation of the Commons.

Solidarity economy is building production models and services with and for the people. These initiatives cannot be considered as simple "programmes for repairing damage and combating poverty". On the contrary, they provide the intrinsic guarantee of justice at all levels of society, by developing economic activities that are neither generate the concentration of material or financial wealth, nor the creation of poverty. Solidarity economy establishes systems of fair trade, ethical finance and complementary currencies that genuinely serve the real economy, as well as short distribution circuits between producers and consumers, food sovereignty and other concrete alternatives.

The solidarity economy movement along with other movements that are changing society are the living proof of a genuine democratic project that respects human rights, labour rights, civil rights and cultural diversity as well as the rights of nature for the *bien vivir* of populations.

Rio+20 will only rise to the challenges that need to be addressed, if the governments that are taking part sign up to what is being built by the people as a genuine alternative for the future of humankind on Earth.

Rio de Janeiro, June 2012