

Historic Agroecology Motion for East Africa

Advancing Sustainable, Climate-Resilient Food Systems through Regional Action

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Introduction

East Africa stands at a defining crossroads. The region faces escalating climate shocks, land degradation, biodiversity loss, and persistent food and nutrition insecurity. At the same time, millions of smallholder farmers—particularly women—continue to produce food under increasingly fragile conditions.

In response to these challenges, the **adoption of a historic Agroecology Motion at the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA)** marks a decisive shift toward sustainable, people-centered, and climate-resilient food systems for the region.

This motion is not symbolic. It is a **policy turning point**—one that places agroecology at the heart of East Africa’s agricultural transformation agenda.

Why Agroecology Matters for East Africa

Agroecology is more than a farming method. It is a **science, a practice, and a social movement** that integrates ecological principles into food systems while strengthening livelihoods, resilience, and social equity.

For East Africa, agroecology offers practical solutions to pressing challenges:

- Climate variability and extreme weather events
- Soil degradation and declining productivity
- Dependence on costly external inputs
- Loss of indigenous knowledge and biodiversity
- Rising rural poverty and food insecurity

Agroecology empowers farmers to work with nature rather than against it—restoring soils, conserving water, enhancing biodiversity, and improving nutrition outcomes.

A Landmark Parliamentary Commitment

The Agroecology Motion adopted by EALA represents the **first region-wide parliamentary recognition** of agroecology as a strategic pathway for sustainable development within the East African Community.

Through this motion, EALA calls upon Partner States to:

- **Integrate agroecology into national and regional agricultural policies**
- Support farmer-led, knowledge-based food systems
- Invest in research, extension services, and education on agroecological practices
- Promote seed sovereignty, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable land use
- Align agroecology with climate adaptation, nutrition, and rural development strategies

This historic decision elevates agroecology from grassroots practice to **regional policy priority**.

Putting Farmers and Women at the Center

Smallholder farmers—especially women—are the backbone of East Africa's food systems. Yet they remain under-supported, under-resourced, and under-represented in decision-making.

Agroecology directly responds to these inequalities by:

- Valuing **local knowledge and traditional farming systems**
- Reducing dependency on expensive chemical inputs
- Strengthening community resilience and food sovereignty
- Enhancing women's access to sustainable livelihoods and leadership

The motion recognizes that food systems transformation must be **inclusive, gender-responsive, and socially just**.

From Motion to Action

Passing a motion is only the beginning. The real impact lies in **implementation**.

To translate this historic commitment into tangible outcomes, the following actions are critical:

- **National governments** must domesticate the motion through policy reforms and budgetary allocations
- **Regional institutions** must coordinate knowledge-sharing and implementation frameworks

- **Research institutions and extension services** must prioritize agroecological innovation
- **Civil society and farmer organizations** must remain engaged as key partners and watchdogs

Parliamentary oversight will be essential to ensure that commitments move beyond paper into practice.

Agroecology and the Future of Regional Integration

Agroecology aligns strongly with the East African Community's vision of a **people-centered integration**, environmental sustainability, and shared prosperity.

By embracing agroecology, the region advances:

- Climate resilience and adaptation
- Food and nutrition security
- Environmental conservation
- Rural employment and youth engagement
- Long-term economic sustainability

This motion therefore contributes not only to agriculture, but to the broader goals of **peace, stability, and inclusive development**.

Conclusion: A Pathway Worth Defending

The Historic Agroecology Motion for East Africa sends a powerful message: the region is ready to rethink its food systems and invest in solutions that are sustainable, equitable, and resilient.

Agroecology is not a return to the past—it is a **forward-looking pathway** grounded in science, innovation, and social justice. The responsibility now lies with all stakeholders to protect, implement, and scale this vision.

East Africa has taken a bold step. The task ahead is to ensure that this historic commitment delivers real change for farmers, communities, and future generations.