

ANNUAL  
REPORT  
- 2008 -

**A SEED Europe**

Action for Solidarity, Equality, Environment and Diversity

# contents

|                                   |   |    |
|-----------------------------------|---|----|
| <b>Introduction A SEED 2008</b>   | - | 3  |
| <b>A SEED Campaigns</b>           |   |    |
| SOY CAMPAIGN - introduction       | - | 7  |
| Events, activities and projects   | - | 8  |
| Soy campaign publications         | - | 10 |
| GMO CAMPAIGN - introduction       | - | 11 |
| Events, activities and projects   | - | 12 |
| GMO campaign Publications         | - | 14 |
| WORLD BANK DISINVESTMENT CAMPAIGN | - | 16 |
| Events, activities and projects   | - | 17 |
| World Bank campaign Publications  | - | 18 |
| <b>A SEED Office</b>              |   |    |
| activities and projects           | - | 19 |
| Local networking                  | - | 20 |
| A SEED office publications        | - | 21 |
| <b>Endorsements</b>               | - | 23 |
| <b>Thanks</b>                     | - | 24 |
| <b>Colophon</b>                   | - | 25 |

# Introduction A SEED Europe 2008

In our sixteenth year of operating, A SEED Europe continued its three major campaigns: on soy production, on genetically manipulated crops in Dutch agriculture and on World Bank investments.

This year featured a new addition to our campaign strategies: the production of our own documentary film, creating a much needed entry into the complex matter of genetically engineered crops in agriculture. The film proved a useful starting point for debate amongst farmers, other professionals and the general public.

In the past year the emphasis of public debate shifted from regular Broeinest cafe discussion nights in Amsterdam towards informative tours around The Netherlands (GMO campaign) and around Europe in the case of the soy campaign.

On grassroots level we have maintained and intensified our cooperation with community organisations in regions where climate change, soy expansion and the introduction of GMO's have the most immediate and urgent impact. We extended our links with peasant organisations in the Paraguayan soy deserts, expanded the network in Dutch farm communities where GM crops are introduced, while for our research and report on climate change and World Bank investments we cooperated with community groups in Bangladesh ...

In 2008 the amount of time our campaigners have had to spend on fund raising has gradually increased, in spite of working in a basic environment with costs cut to the absolute minimum. A SEED's function as international youth network is gradually changing, as the emphasis of some of our campaign work shifted to local grassroots activities. This implied spending more time looking for other funds than the ones that applied in the past. Apart from that we are now dealing with many small funds and applications instead of a few major environmental funds.

Concerning campaign areas we share with groups such as Friends of the Earth International, Milieudefensie, Greenpeace, Biologica and the Latin American Centre, we maintain our own independent position as a radical and watchful eye for corporate greenwash exercises, in a market where terms as green and sustainable are becoming trendy and profitable. A clear example of this was the hype around agro-fuels. A SEED was the first in Europe to question the local implications of growing crops for fuel, long before the downsides of this corporate green miracle were picked up by the media and larger NGO's.

In good tradition A SEED made its voice heard in street protests and activities. During the international protests around the G8 and Climate of 2008 we emphasised the immense and unnecessary global carbon footprint of Western meat consumption.







# A SEED Campaigns

A SEED's soy campaign questions large scale soy production in South America and supports sustainable and local food production in Europe.

The campaign has the following goals:

**To inform** the general public about the social and ecological effects of the massive soy production in Latin America; land conflicts, violence, rising pesticide use, GMO's, deforestation, erosion and loss of food sovereignty.

**To link** the issue with meat production and consumption in Europe; Most of the soy is used as animal feed in Europe (and China). This meat industry creates animal cruelty and pollution by over-fertilisation.

**To stop** the current certification processes; nature conservation organisations and some NGOs, together with companies, are creating criteria for so called 'responsible soy' that are unacceptable for local peasants and don't question the current export-volume neither the use of genetically manipulated seeds.

**To give direct support** to local initiatives that fight the soy expansion by giving international attention to their struggle, doing solidarity actions in Europe and raising money.

# A SEED SOY CAMPAIGN 2008

## *Introduction*

*In the past period we have seen almost all the major NGO's catching up on biofuels and their dangerous claim on water and land resources needed for food security across the globe. A SEED and our friends were the first to organise protest actions in Europe on this relatively new issue. To what extent we have influenced the process is unknown, but by the end of 2008 the subject had become a hot issue and large scale production of agrofuels is widely criticised.*

*Having made this point, the A SEED soy campaign returned to calling attention to the insanely wasteful and catastrophic soy food chain, in which mass produced, genetically manipulated soy is exported from Latin America to feed the European meat industry.*

*Throughout the year relations between the international Via Campesina network and A SEED intensified. The network welcomes the cooperation with European activist organisations, in addition to their contacts with sometimes bureaucratic or more conventional European farmer organisations.*

*In cooperation with the Paraguayan Movimiento Agrario Y Popular (MAP), A SEED organised an extensive tour of Europe in 2008. Central issues of the information and debate evenings were agro-fuels, soy monocultures and the soy certification process. Across Europe we introduced the critical views of the MAP, represented by Gilda Roas, to activists and NGO's.*

*New is the video letters project, in which Latin American farmers address European viewers with their own message, often simply reporting of the struggle to survive in a GM soy region. A SEED is actively taking part in the Sojamata project: a collective media project centred around local communities suffering from soy monoculture, their organisation and struggle. The Sojamata website functions as a portal for journalists and film makers.*

- \* 80% tot 95% genetisch gemanipuleerde 'RoundUp Ready' soja
- \* 66.000 sojaproductenten
- \* 500.000 landloze boeren



*From the travelling soy photo exhibition*

## Chronology of soy campaign activities and public events 2008

### Jan 31: European biofuel protest

Protest action at the 'European Biofuels Technology Platform' in Brussels. It was one of the first visible acts of resistance against agrofuels at the time, which also served to establish stronger ties with the Brussels scene and the Via Campesina office.

### March 13: World Biofuels Market

Blockade of the 'World Biofuels Market' in Brussels. Although the blockade did not completely succeed, it was clearly noticed by all journalists and others attending the conference. The blockade caught the attention of the activist scene, bringing several international activists groups together around this issue.

### March: Round Table statement

A SEED was one of several organisations that drew up an international statement rejecting the greenwashing of GM soy in the Round Table process: " For the third time we reject the fallacy of responsible soy social justice, indigenous and rural organisations and urban movements of Argentina, Latin America and other continents reject the 'Third Round Table on Responsible Soy' to be held on April 23 and 24 at the Hilton Hotel, Buenos Aires, Argentina. "

### April 17: Cargill Blockade

On Via Campesina International Day of Struggle A SEED supported a blockade in Gent (B) of Cargill, the world's most prominent agricultural and trading company in food products. This action of the Agrocrisis group related to the 'Responsible Soy' Round Table talks a week later in Buenos Aires, stressing that large scale GM soy monocultures are completely irresponsible. Trucks were barred from entering the company premises. There were no arrests and good media coverage. Although a company like Cargill is unlikely to change by just this action, it did manage to expose Cargill's PR machinations.



Cargill, Gent

### May: IRResponsible Soy Tour



An extensive tour of Western Europe which A SEED organised with Gilda Roas, representative from peasant movement MAP in Paraguay. The tour featured talks, audiovisual presentations, debates and meetings around the issue of the soy food chain in the global North and South. The events were very well attended with lively discussions, leading to many new international contacts. The tour stimulated a critical view of on agro-fuels, soy monocultures and certification processes such as the Round Table on Responsible Soy, among NGO's, informal groups and networks.

*Gilda Roas, MAP*

#### schedule

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| May 6-8   | Barcelona - <i>information evenings in Autonomous University...</i>           |
| May 9-10  | Genève - <i>meeting and visit to Jardins de Cocagne</i>                       |
| May 11    | Dortmund - <i>workshop during BUKO congress</i>                               |
| May 12-19 | Bonn - <i>workshops, events and actions during Conference on BioDiversity</i> |
| May 20-21 | Berlin - <i>information evenings in Mehringhof and Neukölln</i>               |
| May 22    | London - <i>information evening</i>   |
| May 23    | Gent - <i>information evening in Assez,</i>                                   |
| May 24    | Brussels - <i>visit to farms and information evening in town</i>              |
| May 26-30 | Basque Country - <i>film festival</i>   |
| May 31    | Cantabria - <i>information evening</i>  |
| June 2    | Gijón - <i>information evening</i>  |
| June 3    | Oviedo - <i>information evening</i>   |
| June 4    | Lugo - <i>lecture in University of Lugo</i>                                   |
| June 5    | Santiago de Compostela - <i>information evening</i>                           |
| June 6    | Vijo (Galicia) - <i>information evening</i>                                   |
| June 8-9  | Madrid - <i>meeting with local groups</i>                                     |

Twenty five articles about the tour appeared in the international media:  
<http://www.lasojamata.org/en/node/218>



## May: Bonn Biodiversity Summit

A large delegation of A SEED and friends took part in a variety of actions and information events during the UN Biodiversity Summit in Bonn, inspiring many lively discussions on industrial agriculture. Fruitful cooperation with German activists and delegates from Via Campesina resulted in planning new activities and continued campaign work.

*Bonn: Protest against biofuels*



## September: Malmö ESF

During the European Social Forum (ESF) in Malmö there were several agro-fuel actions - similar to Bonn activities and with the same crew. Agro-fuels became a key issue in many forums, due to the successful campaign earlier in the year, and the input of A SEED and relations in the discussions. Most of the bigger NGOs had at this point started to develop a more critical view of agro-fuels.

## October - December: Paraguay filming

An international team from A SEED/ LaSojaMata filmed and documented various events reflecting the new political conjuncture and conflicts in Paraguay. The video reports include testimony on fumigations, land struggles and other relevant issues. A compilation DVD will be released in Spanish, English, Dutch and German in 2009.

## December 9: Soy conference protest - Amsterdam.

Public action at the entrance to the international 'Creating Common Sense on Genetically Manipulated Soy' conference in Amsterdam, with delegates from the soy industry discussing 'sustainable GM soy' with and NGO's. Land reforms! NO Stakeholder Conferences! was the theme of this banner and flyer action at the entrance of the building. Several of the participants responded in a most positive way to our presence here. We need to show that there are alternatives for the RTRS certification circus, and to expose the dubious role of Solidaridad, WWF and certain other NGO's that still take part in greenwashing.



*Amsterdam soy greenwash protest*

## Soy Campaign Publications in 2008

### online:

[www.aseed.net/soy](http://www.aseed.net/soy)

reporting on A SEED's European campaign and actions against the soy and meat industry. Language: English and Dutch

[www.lasojamata.org](http://www.lasojamata.org)

website featuring online video updates from Paraguay, latest news and background information, written and filmed reports and research from Latin American communities in the soy front line.

The website functions as a portal and mediator for journalists; providing guidance and advice to filmed and written press reports on the situation in Paraguay. Contributing to a BBC Unreported World documentary and a German cinema documentary to be released in 2010. LaSojaMata is a Co-production of A SEED, MAP, CEO and BASE.IS, activix.org, moviments.net and others. Language: English and Spanish.

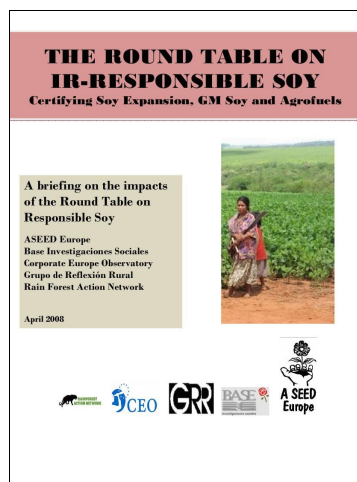
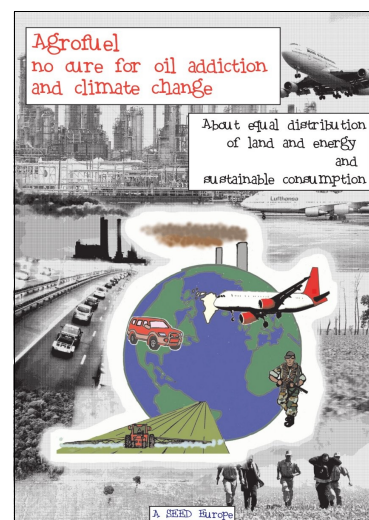
### Youtube La SojaMata Channel

video reports of European and Latin American soy activism

### in print:

#### "Agrofuel, no cure for oil addiction and climate change"

28 Page booklet about equal distribution of land, energy and sustainable consumption, produced by the A SEED Soy campaign. Besides explaining the many problems related to agrofuels, the brochure suggests ways to reduce the emission of greenhouse gasses and living with a radically reduced energy use. Languages: English and German. 4000 copies in total.



#### "The Round Table on IR-responsible soy"

39 Page report, published on the eve of the Round Table on Responsible Soy's third conference in Buenos Aires, warns that rather than promoting more sustainable production methods in the soy industry, the Round Table is in fact legitimising the existing environmentally and socially destructive practices which have drawn widespread concern from around the world. First published in April 2008.

### Promotion flyers and stickers for the IRresponsible Soy Tour

### audiovisual :

#### IRresponsible Soy Tour DVD

Digital video compilation, slide show and photo exhibition. Date of release: April 2008

#### Travelling Soy Photo Exhibition

Pictures with info from A SEED's images from soy growing regions in Latin America.

#### Interview 'Hoe eerlijk is onze soja'

A SEED / CEO on Radio 1 IKON, broadcast on national radio on 2nd November 2008.

Online: <http://www.ikonrtv.nl/daw/uitzending.asp?IntItem=3&IntEntityId=153>

# A SEED GMO campaign 2008

## Introduction

*Since 2003 the A SEED GMO campaign moved focus from the international towards national Dutch level, due to the absence of public campaigning on the subject by other Dutch organisations. Compared to some other EU countries there is generally little awareness among Dutch food producers and the general public about the supposed opportunities and risks involved in growing GM crops. Although the Dutch government did increase its informative activities towards the general public on internet, on their website GM potatoes, which are being developed by the Wageningen University and Research Center (WUR), are presented as a positive example of progress. We think this neglects the risks and downsides of GM agriculture.*

*This year Wageningen University also presented the results of open air experiments with GM maize coexisting with conventional crops. Despite the carefully controlled conditions of the experiments, contamination of one of the non-GM trial fields took place, via insufficiently cleaned machinery. WUR and the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture concluded that GM cultivation would still be possible without contaminating non-GM crops, if training for farmers and employees working with GM crops would be made compulsory. By the end of 2008 there is still no agreement between the organic and mainstream agriculture organisations on important aspects of the coexistence regulations, such as a liability fund.*

*In The Netherlands GM crops have so far only been grown in field trials of sometimes considerable (up to 150 acres) size. There were trial fields of GM maize and GM potatoes. In cooperation with WUR University Monsanto started testing RoundupReady corn on five locations. Starch producers AVEBE and BASF conducted field trials of GM potatoes with modified starch composition, blight resistance and herbicide resistant genes. WUR also conducted field trials with GM potatoes with inserted blight resistance and herbicide resistance genes.*

*Both in Dutch parliament and in Europe, Dutch government is arguing for relaxing regulations for GM applications, to make it easier for agro-business to import bulk food commodities like soy, rice and corn contaminated with unapproved GM varieties - again in 2008 illegal GMO shipments were discovered in the Rotterdam harbour and barred. The promotion of GM agriculture in the Netherlands contrast strongly with the developments in the rest of Europe in 2008: the body of scientific evidence of the adverse effects of GMO's on health and environment continues to grow, France joined several other EU-countries by installing a ban on the cultivation of Monsanto's genetically modified BT-corn, while the European Food Safety Authority received a serious slap on the hand by the EU Commission for not being thorough.*

*The first priority of A SEEDs GMO campaign has been to continue to collect and distribute information about GMO's into Dutch society using public events, internet, printed publications and film. We targeted two groups, with two different objectives:*

*First of all farmers: we aim to encourage them to discuss GMO's among themselves, and to provide them with access to critical information from a variety of sources, rather than just from the industry or government bodies. Secondly we set out to involve independent civil society organisations and activists in this subject, and support their more hands-on approach.*

*A large part of 2008 was spent preparing, producing, distributing and touring with our own professional documentary film 'Gen zoekt Boer' ( The Farmer and the Gene), which proved to be a very helpful tool for the campaign and to stimulate debate.*

*In response to similar European regional and national initiatives and the growing concern about GMO's among rural communities in The Netherlands, we have stepped up our efforts to facilitate the creation of a Dutch GMO-Free Zones Movement. We are steadily expanding our rural, NGO and farmers contact networks, while facilitating and organising meetings and events. Next to this we host the national website and information hub for the Dutch GMO-free zones network: [www.gentechvrijezones.nl](http://www.gentechvrijezones.nl)*



## GMO Campaign Activities 2008 chronology:

### January - March: producing 'Gen Zoekt Boer'

Early 2008 the scenario of the documentary film 'Gen Zoekt Boer' (English title "The Farmer and the Gene") - an A SEED/ Milieudefensie co-production on genetic manipulation in Dutch agriculture was finalised. While the film material was edited, the team was preparing the film premiere and successive tour, as well as producing and distributing film promotion and information materials.

### February - preliminary documentary

Screening of the preliminary version of the film Gen Zoekt Boer for organic farmers in Driehuizen (Noord Holland).

### March 15- Film premiere

The premiere of Gen Zoekt Boer took place in De Balie in Amsterdam, One hundred and forty people gathered to see the film and to discuss the pro's and cons of the introduction of GMO's into the Dutch environment. A panel consisting of MP Krista van Velsen, scientist Michel Haring, Maaik Raaijmakers of the organic food chain association and farmer Lidy Demunter debated with the public about the evidently controversial subject. The debate has only just started! The premiere was followed by a film-and-debate tour of eight Dutch towns in the next weeks. Regrettably throughout the tour representatives from the bio-engineering industry either declined our invitation to take part in the panel or debate, or cancelled later on.



Premiere of 'Gen Zoekt Boer'

### Gen Zoekt Boer Film + Debate Tour dates

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| March 25 | Maastricht - <i>organised in cooperation with local farmers.</i>  |
| March 31 | Leek (Groningen) - <i>Speakers Ineke van Gent (Dutch MP) and Isabel Duiniveld (organic farmer). Evening for local farmers.</i>  |
| April 2  | Ysselstein (Limburg)) <i>speakers from agrarian and organic sectors.</i>  |
| April 4  | Deinum (Friesland) <i>(potato-) farmers community discussion</i>  |
| April 7  | Wageningen - <i>Speakers: scientists from Wageningen UR and University of Amsterdam' Dr.ir. H.J. van Eck (moleculair geneticus, Plant Science Group - WUR), Dr L.A.P. Lotz (Teamleider toegepaste ecologie, Plant Science Group PRI - WUR), Diederick Sprangers (biochemicus, Stichting Genethic) Cooperation with Boerengroep, VOER! en MovieW</i> |
| April 9  | Dronten (Flevoland) - <i>with Inge Schwagerman (organic entrepreneur), Linda Coenen</i>   |
| April 11 | Amsterdam - <i>with Kartika Liotard (SP-Europarliament), Herman van Bakkem (Greenpeace), Linda Coenen (A SEED) en Jan de Veer (organic farmer Noord-Holland). Part of a two day film program 'Farmers and Genetic Engineering' also featuring the films The Future of Food en TranXgenia.</i>   |
| April 14 | Heino (Overijssel) - <i>with Chris Hayes (journalist) and others. Piet Schenkelaars (biotech-consultant) cancelled.</i>   |
| April 16 | Nijmegen - <i>political cafe in De Klinker</i>  |
| April 19 | Gemert (Noord-Brabant) - <i>with Bert Lotz (Teamleider toegepaste ecologie, Plant Science Group PRI - WUR), Kartika Liotard (SP-Europarlement), (Monsanto cancelled.)</i>   |



## May: Bonn - Diversity

A SEED campaigners visited Planet Diversity in Bonn, the extended version of the yearly GMO-Free Europe conference. "Gen zoekt Boer" was promoted and shown, along with the film TranXenia (on genetic engineering) to conference audience.

## May - December:

'Gen zoekt Boer' continues to be screened by numerous organisations on at least nineteen different occasions - from sustainable dinner evenings to farmer information evenings - where it has been shown to an estimated 500 viewers. These include members of Dutch Parliament, in a viewing specially organised in preparation of a parliamentary discussion about co-existence of GM- and conventional crops. The film, other info materials and the screening+discussion evenings got a very good response. For most of these events A SEED provided promotional support and advice on programme and speakers.

More than once the film was used by local political parties of municipalities where a GM field trial is planned, as a means to introduce the idea of a GM-free zone in the community. It provided a starting point for local debate about the desirability of GMO's in the environment and agriculture.



## June 11: Info night - Amsterdam

GMO information event and action discussion on GMO free zones - Amsterdam, Molli Chaoot cafe.

## September 27: Info stand - Amsterdam

Information stall at neighbourhood Klimaat cafe and panel/public discussion organised by 'Eten met muziek / VEKologisch', Amsterdam.

## December 1: Letter - EU Council

Addressed to EU Ministers regarding GMO policies on the agenda of the next EU environment council meeting on December 4th. The letter asks for GMO risk assessment to be strengthened, as required under EU law, and for reforms by giving the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) the necessary scientific expertise to carry out complex environmental and health risk assessments. Until the EU risk assessment procedures are revised, no GMO's should be granted an authorisation.

## December 1 Letter - Dutch Government

Petition to the Dutch minister of the Environment, Mrs. Cramer, MP's and government officials, calling for a ten year moratorium on GMO's - based on health effects on mice and other animals. Included are the links to a German/Belgian TV reportage and other relevant articles researching health effects and power issues related to GMO's and the request to take these into account while discussing the GMO safety procedures at the next meeting of EU Minister Council on December 4/5th.

## Dec 20: Info stand - Utrecht

Information stall at Anarchist book fair in Utrecht

## Ongoing Activities

A SEED and Dutch NGO's like Greenpeace and Biologica that are active around GMO's have started regular meetings in 2008. More groups like Milieu Defensie, ICCO and WECF joined in through the year.

## GMO campaign publications 2008:

### online:

[www.gentech.nl](http://www.gentech.nl)

Being part of the editorial team of [gentech.nl](http://www.gentech.nl) our campaigners regularly contribute news articles for this Dutch site on genetic technology in agriculture.

[www.gentechvrijezones.nl](http://www.gentechvrijezones.nl)

The Dutch GMO free zones site, with information on why and how to create GMO- free zones.

[www.aseed.net/GMO](http://www.aseed.net/GMO)

News and articles about direct actions against GMO field trials in Europe, and locations of field trials in Holland.

gentech mailing list

additional information is spread regularly through this interactive email-list.



### in print:

#### Gentechvrijezone reader

In June A SEED's 'GMO free zones in the Netherlands' campaign published this 31 page Dutch reader .....(NAME) containing background information, to GMO free consumption, campaigning to get local politicians to declare your municipality a GMO free zone, or the benefits for farmers of creating a voluntary gm-free region with their neighbours. Includes information from the GMO free Europe project. Still obtainable from [www.gentechvrijezones.nl](http://www.gentechvrijezones.nl) .

#### Gen zoekt Boer reader

November 2008 - In connection to the circulation of the Gen zoekt Boer film and debates we published an 89 page reader with all the relevant up to date information, Dutch regulation and policy concerning GMOs;

- coexistence and contamination;
- experiences with growing GM-potatoes and maize;
- reports of previous public debates;
- technical background about genetic manipulation;
- expectations and possible risks;
- consequences of GMO's for the rest of the world;
- GMO free!. What needs to be done to start a GM free zone.

#### Promotional material for Gen zoekt Boer film and tour

Flyers, posters, web pages.

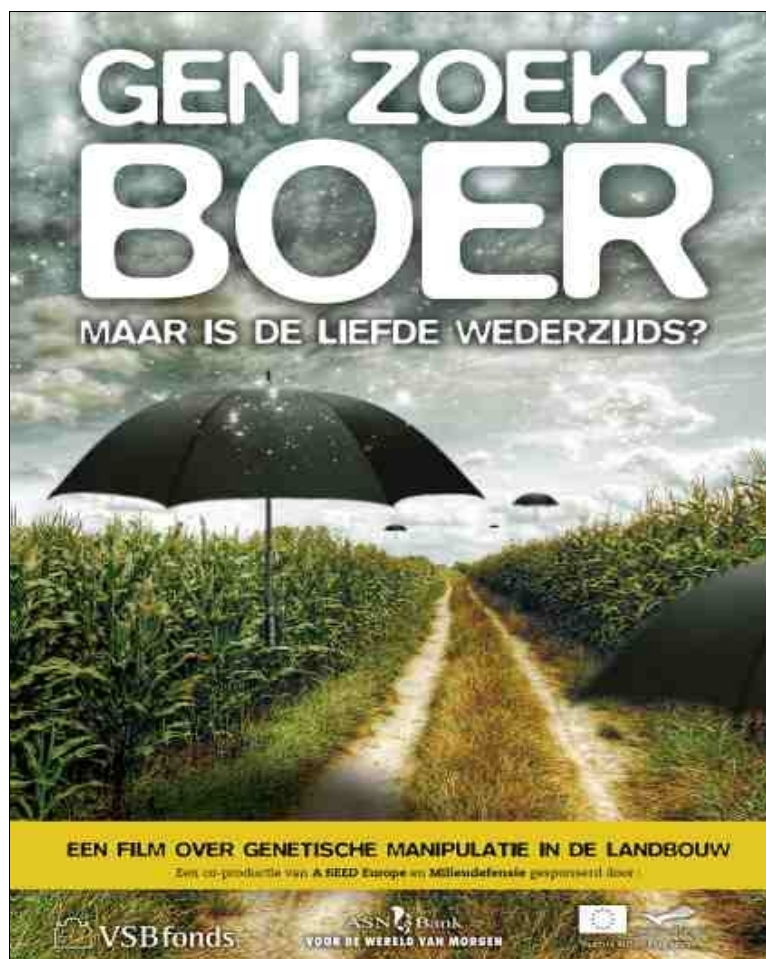
## Audiovisual

### Film/Documentary: 'Gen zoekt Boer' / 'The Farmer and the Gene'

To stimulate the interest and debate on the introduction of GM crops in the Netherlands A Seed produced this 40 minute film document on the current state of affairs and the different points of view of policy makers and farmers.

### Distribution:

Through the site we distribute printed and audiovisual information materials from selected sources. A SEED screens and distributes relevant material about the latest developments in agriculture and food industry such as 'The Future of Food', 'TranXgenia', 'Monsanto's Pig patents', 'Eternal Mash', 'Mother Earth', 'a Future for Small Farmers' and 'The world according to Monsanto'. Apart from the proactive distribution of our own publications - about 1000 'Gentechvrije zone' (gmo free zone folders), a few hundred gmo free zone posters, 175 DVD's of Gen Zoekt Boer and more than 70 background readers were handed out during events.



# WORLD BANK DISINVESTMENT CAMPAIGN 2008

## *introduction*

*The last year and a half the World Bank campaign at A SEED Europe focused entirely on getting the Dutch government out of giving conditionality dependent development aid. The campaign concluded with a report, making a critical assessment of the World Bank's use and definition of 'economic conditionalities'.*

*Apart from this the World Bank Campaign in 2008 aimed to expose the major and dubious role the World Bank is playing in climate change debates and carbon emissions trading, while pouring billions into oil multinationals. In response to growing concerns about climate and ecological crises the World Bank has made several cosmetic innovations in 2008:*

*An important Bank innovation in 2008 is the so-called green and climate bond, like the "certified emission reduction (CER) linked bond" which came on the market in 2008, enjoying a huge demand among investors.*

*The "green bond", issued by the Bank in November 2008 in response to the increasing investor demand, was released with the aim of gathering funds for climate change mitigation and adaptation in poor countries. It has been already purchased by the UN and Swedish pension funds. The Bank's new Climate Investment Funds will provide mostly loans - not grants - to developing countries, for their 'adaptation to climate change'. These countries, already struggling with the negative effects of climate change, will have to pay back these loans. This implies that the internationally agreed climate principal of the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), which states that the polluter should always pay for the damages, was abandoned.*

*These climate funds of the World Bank will increase the already high level of indebtedness of developing countries as well as their economic dependence on international donors, and won't help cut CO2 emissions sufficiently.*

*Relying exclusively on the World Bank's own figures, a 2008 analysis shows World Bank Group lending to coal, oil and gas is up 94% from 2007, reaching over \$3 billion. Coal lending alone has increased an astonishing 256% in the last year.*

*Most importantly in 2008, while many would say that the world financial crisis was a surprise, it must be made clear that the Bank pushed HARD for the deregulation of the financial sector worldwide, making the potential gaps in the financial regulation of one country contagious for all emerging markets.*



## Chronology of World Bank events, activities and projects 2008

### February 24: Protest Action against exploitation Bolivia - Amsterdam

A memorable day for people working in the World Trade Centre in Amsterdam. During lunch they were surprised by a group of protesters entering the building with a loud message. The Bolivian government wants to use some of the huge profits from the privatised phone company to finance social services for the Bolivian people. Telecom Italia wants to prevent this. Using the letterbox company (or ghost company) in the Netherlands, they have pressed charges against Bolivia in the ICSID.

### April 9: protest and petition – Den Haag

Three days before the spring annual meeting of the World Bank and prior to a WB discussion in the Dutch Parliament, A SEED staged a colourful protest outside the house of Parliament in The Hague. The IDA 15 petition, questioning the conditions that the World Bank sets for lending countries, was handed to the members of the parliamentary commission for Financial and Foreign affairs and to Koenders, Secretary for Development Aid. The petition was signed by approximately 250 organisations and individuals.

### 12 July World Bank meeting protest - Amsterdam

Spoof newspaper handed out during the World Bank conference in Hilton Amsterdam, featuring scoops like "World Bank Turns Green" and "This time we mean it" breaking news that the World Bank is radically changing its policy, " This time for real". The news came just before the World Bank meeting of July 12-13 in the Hilton Hotel in Amsterdam where Dutch government officials and the World Bank would discuss the position of the World Bank on climate change, fragile states, the private sector and sustainable growth. Outside, in front of the hotel Bert Koenders, the Dutch Minister for Development Cooperation, met with A SEED Europe and Friends of the Earth International (FOEI) representatives. He was officially handed a copy of the brand new A SEED report, "World Bank & Conditionalities - Poor Deal for Poor Countries" and a declaration, spread by FOEI, about World Bank Climate Funds and fossil fuel project financing.

*Minister Koenders with a copy of our report*



### October 12 World Bank and Climate floating protest - Amsterdam

A SEED and friends were protesting in the Amsterdam canals against the way the World Bank is dealing with climate change. The World Bank wants to give conditional loans to the poor countries in the South to get prepared for climate change and to reduce CO2 emissions. These countries are even told to start trading on the carbon market... But it is the western countries, the main polluters so far, that ought to pay the poor countries for the damages and (future) protection instead! With interest of course. It's clear: all banks, including the World Bank, want to make money using any resource. If we let them, they'll even use hot air to do so...This action was part of the Week of Global Action Against Debt and International Financial Institutions.



# World Bank Campaign Publications: online

[www.aseed.net/worldbank](http://www.aseed.net/worldbank)

[www.wbbeurope](http://www.wbbeurope)

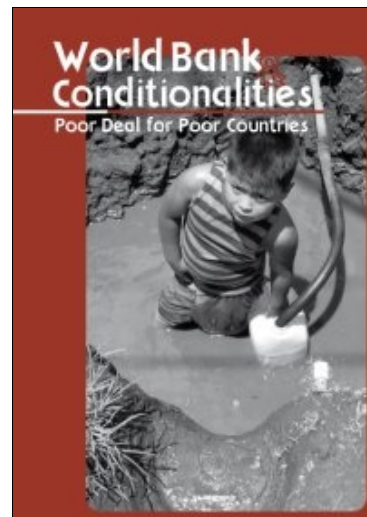
A SEED hosts this website of the world bank disinvestment campaign, presenting the critical views of networks and coalitions of hundreds of international groups and ngo's on World Bank policies.

## in print:

**World Bank & Conditionalties - Poor Deal for Poor Countries.**  
A SEED booklet explaining the full story of economic 'conditionalities' imposed on poor countries by the World Bank. 36 pages - July 2008

## The Parole

Spoof newspaper announcing the World Bank has radically changed its policies and turned green. July 2008



The Newspaper of A SEED Europe Free, Radical

# The PAROLE

€0.20 SATURDAY 12 JULY 2008

**Hilton drives Electric**  
Does it impress the visitors? **5**

**What to protest on now? Activists move to IMF** **9**

**ps** Zoellinck Loves Animals And Nature worldbank

**Green your ride**  
AMSTERDAM - The World Bank has unveiled far-reaching plans in support of the bicycle industry in developing countries. A Bank spokesperson commenting on the number of bicycles in Amsterdam: "Yes, bicycle transport looks like a very good idea. We definitely prefer it to fossil fuel driven agendas."

**WB: Votes for all**  
WASHINGTON - The WB reports that its Board of Executive Directors has voted to modify the unpopular 'weighted' voting scheme. A Bank insider commented, "we like the new one country-one vote system very much. Countries most affected by the Bank's decisions now have a stronger influence on the decision making process."

**Hot air Budget**  
WASHINGTON - A new scheme, consisting of a 50% reduction in talks and a massive increase in real action towards reducing World poverty, has been proposed by the WB as its answer to securing CO2 levels within the organisation. Internal emission levels are to be monitored with sophisticated instrumentation to ensure compliance.

**Exclusive Interview**

## 'This time we mean it'

Staff reporter

AMSTERDAM - In a surprise announcement in the lead-up to this weekend's high-level World Bank Conference to be held at the Hilton Hotel in Amsterdam, a World Bank press-release has indicated that the Bank is no longer in favour of its long-standing policy of 'adjustment lending' to the World's poorest nations, and has resolved to remove, with immediate effect, all conditional policy reforms from current and future loan contracts.

"Frankly, we are very surprised by our own decision but believe it to be ultimately in the best interests of recipient nations" a World Bank spokesperson commented.

Responding to criticism that previous World Bank claims, following their 2005 Conditionality Review, had misrepresented the extent to which conditionality had been confined to history, another Bank spokesperson remained "Yes, frankly, we were premature in those announcements, but this time we mean it. We are more than 90% certain that almost 100% of the conditions in 'sensitive policy areas' will be removed. We are particularly unhappy that underprivileged multi-nationals might have benefited unreasonably from privatisation-related conditions in the past."

The mood inside the World Bank is reported as being "very determined" to proceed with the proposed changes. Reaction so far from 'critical' commentators has been positive. A conference insider observed that the announcement will "really set the cat amongst the pigeons."

page 2

## World Bank turns green

End to oil subsidies; 'It was a failure'

Bankysbanghurat

Head of World Bank Energy Department, Iwama Drilmooon, explained in a press conference "Well, we've always been saying that we want to give poor people energy access, jobs, growth and development... But in practice we were giving public subsidies to private companies, like Shell, Exxon, and making sure oil keeps flowing from South to North. I have to admit that we now feel bad about this. We actually asked ourselves why don't we really try to help the poor, and give them something other than pollution and debt?"

The Bank now agrees with civil society groups and researchers that their oil extraction projects have played a role in exacerbating conflict and poverty on a local level. Indeed, Bank-funded fossil fuel projects between 1992 and 2004 alone account for 43 billion tons of carbon dioxide emissions. All this is history, the Bank claims, while now looking into real renewables. "We would not label large-scale dams as renewables, it simply makes carbon trading is not able to live up to expectations of a habitat to reduce CO2 emissions. According to Drilmooon, "Quitting the trade in CO2 emissions was a pretty important decision for us. During recent years, we made a lot of cash with our carbon trading facilities. We were the largest public holder of carbon and got a 10% commission for each transaction. I would like to emphasise that weakening the rules of the Clean Development Mechanism (carbon trading scheme under the Kyoto Protocol), and making it more investor-friendly, was a major fault on our side. By doing that we could buy carbon credits even from eucalyptus plantations and other locally harmful, or inefficient projects."

Now the Bank aims to tackle climate change by actually trying to prevent pollution. "Our new mission is to keep the oil and coal underground. But frankly, we would not like to tell the world how to save the climate as we do not have the right expertise at this point. We feel relieved to step out of large-scale projects."

The Bank also recognises that

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# A SEED OFFICE

## Office Projects and activities:

### Active Balkans

A SEED was involved in two projects in Eastern Europe:

#### -Go Bike! Bulgaria

Velo-Evolution is a new organisation by and for cyclists in Bulgaria that has developed a bicycle plan to improve the situation for cyclists in the hectic Sofia traffic. Active campaign and lobby work resulted in the council reserving 2,5 million Euro for bicycle infrastructure. Although this is not nearly sufficient, it is a good start. Velo-Evolution now has 110 members, but is still too small to cover all expenses. A SEED arranged Dutch subsidies from NCDOs MatraKPA-fonds and the Fred Foundation and gave organisational and technical advice. [www.bikeevolution-bg.org](http://www.bikeevolution-bg.org)

#### -Earth from Below Youth Photo Competition – Bulgaria, Macedonia and Romania.

Final Round Selection April 23rd 2008 - Amsterdam. The winners of the Earth from Below Photo competition, launched in the Balkans, are announced. The release of the competition results was part of the massive Earth Day celebration in the centres of Sofia (Bulgaria), Skopje (Macedonia) and Calaras (Romania) on April 22. The thirty selected photographs on the topics of waste, wilderness, tourism, traffic, climate change and urbanization were exhibited in the centres of the Bulgarian and Macedonian capitals and in Calaras. The competition, calling for submissions from all Balkan countries, makes a visual representation of the most austere environmental problems and their solutions, as seen through the eyes of young people. In a period of six months more than 500 submissions have been received and uploaded. In Sofia the exhibition was visited by more than 3000 people, who passed through the Eagles Bridge as part of the Earth Day's march. In Macedonia the exhibition walked through popular restaurants, shops and public spaces in the centre of Skopje. In Calaras the exhibition was adjoined by an Earth Day contest and march, attended by 300 young people. The Earth from Below competition is a joint project of A SEED Europe (The Netherlands), Eco-Sense (Macedonia), Terra Mileniul (Romania) and Za Zemaita (Bulgaria).



### Climate information for Young people: How To Cook a Planet

Back in the nineties A SEED started campaigning on climate change, long before it was recognized as a major issue by the main stream media and NGO's. But in spite of all the promises of governments and international institutions, problems are only getting worse. A SEED facilitated the Future Capital project of one of our EVS volunteers, which links agriculture and climate. The project "How To Cook A Planet" aims to spread information to young people through website, theatrical street events, printed materials and humor. On June 3d, during the International Day of Action on Food and Climate Change, A SEED's climate pigs were serving vegan snacks in the center of town, followed by evening of film, vegan food and debate in Amsterdam.

**June 4: Day of action on  
FOOD AND CLIMATE CHANGE**  
Films, vegan food from 19.00 →  
Dokhuis Galerie, Plantage Doklaan 12, Amsterdam

Climate change is gaining speed. Scientists are warning us of famines, floods and flaming forests, should we not change our ways. Producing one calorie of animal protein requires more than 10 times as much fossil fuel input as a calorie of plant protein. Vegetarian, organic food is a great way to reduce our carbon footprint. But consumer choices alone can't tackle climate change and Peak Oil. What else can we do?

**19.30 WHAT A WAY TO GO - LIFE AT THE END OF EMPIRE, 2007.** A middle class white guy comes to grips with Peak Oil, Climate Change, Mass Extinction, Population Overshoot and the demise of the American Lifestyle.

**21.30 POWER OF COMMUNITY - HOW CUBA SURVIVED PEAK OIL, 2006 (53 min)** Cubans share how they transitioned from a highly mechanized, industrial agricultural system to one using organic methods of farming and local, urban gardens after they lost global support in the early 1990s.

+ THE DARK SIDE OF DAIRY (5 min)  
+ THE MOUTH REVOLUTION (5 min)  
+ THE GROCERY STORE WARS (5 min)

Reserving food is not strictly necessary, but it makes us happy: [climate@aseed.net](mailto:climate@aseed.net) or 06 46266561

Info: [climate@aseed.net](mailto:climate@aseed.net) [www.howtocookaplanet.net](http://www.howtocookaplanet.net)  
[www.daysoffclimateaction.org.uk](http://www.daysoffclimateaction.org.uk)

*Save Planet Earth - it's the only place where you can buy chocolate*



# AUGUST

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## “The red smoke”

Valentin Mirea, Romania

**EN:** “The picture was taken in September 2007 in a Romanian factory. It's a very big one and is placed in Bucharest. A lot of people are working there, some of them in this condition every day. And also there is another problem, the factory is just across the street, less than 100 meters from a very big neighbourhood where there are a lot of houses and a lot of people are living. All the smoke that you can see in the picture is going up in the sky through the hundreds of holes in the ceiling.”

**BG:** “Снимката е направена през Септември 2007, в голяма фабрика в Букурещ. Тук работят много хора, в подобни условия всеки ден. Освен това фабриката се намира само на 100 метра от голям жилищен квартал. Димът, който виждате се прокрадва нагоре и излиза през хилядите дупки в покрива”

**МК:** “Фотографијата е направена во септември 2007, во голема фабрика во Букурешт, Романија. Многумина работат тука, некои од нив секојдневно во вакви услови. Покрај тоа проблем е што фабриката се наоѓа на помалку од 100 метри од голема стамбена населба каде живеат многу домаќинства.”

**RO:** “Fotografia a fost făcută într-o fabrică din România, una foarte mare din București. Foarte multe persoane muncesc zilnic în această fabrică, în aceste condiții. O altă problemă a acestei fabrici este că e situată la mai puțin de 100 de metri de un cartier de locuințe. Tot acest fum roșu părăsește fabrica prin găurile din tavan .”



## June: Statutory meeting - Amsterdam

A SEED is a foundation with a board and a council. The council has an advisory function and monitors A SEED's functioning. Office staff and members of the A SEED advisory council and board gather face-to-face at least once per year to evaluate and approve of past year's activities and discuss and set the strategy and budget for coming year. In 2008 we had a two day meeting in Amsterdam on the 14th and 15th of June.

## Benefit party - Amsterdam

To celebrate our 15th birthday A SEED held a reunion and birthday party in a packed OCCII venue. It was a memorable night, which - thanks to all the volunteer workers, musicians and DJ's - raised a nice sum for farmers' organisation MAP in Paraguay.

## August: Estelle visits Amsterdam

A SEED facilitated the Amsterdam section of the awareness raising tour 'Make Fair Trade Greener', by the Finnish sailing cargo ship Estelle, visiting Northern and Western European countries in 2008. In each harbour local NGOs working on development, Fair Trade and environmental issues were invited to organise public events, with Estelle as the focal point and the main attraction. In August the Estelle moored on the ADM pier during the ADM festival in August. There was a film and exhibition program on indigenous rights and products, guided tours of the ship, live music, and throughout the festival the crew ran a popular fair trade shop and café. In town there were promotional activities on the organic markets. The favourable weather conditions enabled the Estelle to hoist the sails, visually connecting the festival theme of 'Air' to freedom and wind power. At night the sails were used as an immense projection screen.



*The Estelle hoisting sail*

## European Volunteers host and job training

Since September 2007 A SEED is an official European Voluntary Service(EVS) host organisation, attending meetings at the National Agency. Throughout the years A SEED has been working with EVS volunteers, offering training and support in every area of settling in Amsterdam. A SEED employs several people on job / reintegration schemes and also offers positions for students on an internship.



## Participating in Plantage Dok

A SEED's premises are part of the Plantage Dok project: a former school building which was transformed into a creative and cultural centre in the centre of Amsterdam. It is a collective project with several functions, involving forty artists, actors, designers, media projects and public

spaces. The activities of A SEED differ from the more art-oriented collectives but the A SEED office is well integrated in the project. We participate in the bi-weekly house meetings and the necessary organisational and maintenance jobs that are part of running this big project. The building is also the location for a community food coop. We now permanently share our offices with All Included, a small organisation that offers support to refugees, and De Uitvalsbasis, an organisation that provides technical assistance to non-profit public events. The A SEED downstairs office serves as an information point providing magazines and books on various issues, while our upstairs office provides space for the work on our campaigns.

## Meeting facilitator

A SEED facilitates meetings of local affiliated groups and campaigns: offering skills, meeting space and equipment.

## Open Source Software development

A SEED works with open source software and upgraded hardware, creating a digital environment in continuous progress; benefiting from and contributing to open source software development.

## A SEED Office publications 2008:

### online:

[www.aseed.net](http://www.aseed.net)

The A SEED website covering all the relevant information and updates.  
In 2008 an average 845 visitors looked at 4 pages each daily.

### SEEDmail

Digital Newsletter with A SEED news and call out to 200 subscribers.

### Earth from Below Calendar 2009

Download from the A SEED website

### in print:

General A SEED promotion flyer  
reprint

### Climate Sticker

'Grandma, what were you doing...'

### Climate and Meat Flyer

'Vegetarians put the Brakes on Climate Change' May 2008,  
full colour 2 pages - 2.500 copies

### Benefit Poster and flyers

A SEED anniversary party and live event, January 2008.



# Endorsements 2008

Among many others A SEED supported:

Enlazandos Alternativas : Declaration demanding the EU and the Governments of Peru and Colombia to stop bilateral trade agreements, which affect the Andean Community (CAN).

Green Net.org + Corporate Europe Org.: call to drop the EU Agrofuel Targets!

Choike.org / Third World Institute - Statement on the November G20 Summit in Washington DC

FOE - Declaration 'World Bank out of climate financing!?' preceding UN Conference in Poznan

Movimento Verde Euremia - supporting Portuguese anti GMO activist

No Patents on Seeds - protest letter to European Patent Office relating to patenting tomatoes.

Free software free society - concerning environmental and social impact Microsoft Windows

Statement on Food Sovereignty in Europe - issued on Malmo European Social Forum 2008

Petition to NL government - protest against brute paramilitary violence against Bolivian peasants

Essential Action - Stop secret Treaty Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA).

Pesticide Watch - on pesticide regulation

[www.steundeschoonmakers.nl](http://www.steundeschoonmakers.nl) - supporting the rights of Centre Parks workers

Oakland Institute - protest against WTO pushing for liberalisation in Doha conclusion round

[www.foodsovereignty.org](http://www.foodsovereignty.org) - concerning FAO Food Crisis Summit in Rome by IPC

[www.outrageousdirective.org](http://www.outrageousdirective.org) - on immigrant rights

FOEI and Greenpeace - call to support EU commissioner Dimas proposing to ban two GM crops

World Rainforest Movement - Solidarity with Via Campesina Women repressed in Brazil

Fossil Fools Day - Worldwide day of action against fossil fuel and for climate justice on April 1st

[www.amazonwatch.org](http://www.amazonwatch.org) - statement against World Bank investing in gas project in rainforest

# Thanks:

In 2008, A SEED's projects and campaigns, activities and actions, publications and office space have been made possible thanks to the financial support of the following funds and programs:

European Community - Youth in Action  
European Community - DG Youth

Fondation Terre Humaine

Amsterdam City Council - ID-regeling

XminY Solidarity Fund

Patagonia

VSB fonds

ASN Bank

NCDO - MATRA KPA Program

Fred Foundation

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# About A SEED Europe

A SEED Europe (Action for Solidarity, Equality, Environment, and Diversity Europe) is an international campaigning organisation, giving importance to involving youth in direct democracy activities. A SEED Europe targets the structural causes of environmental destruction and social injustice.

We do this by campaigning on multinational corporations and their national and international influence spheres and control tools. At the same time we promote sustainable alternatives.

A SEED was established by young engaged people in 1991, in response to the UNCED Earth Summit proceedings in Rio de Janeiro, with the aim to forge alliances among young people committed to social and environmental justice. Since 1992, the A SEED decentralised network grew and regional “hubs” were created in Europe, Asia, North America, Africa, Latin America and Japan. Each hub had its own level of activity, linking youth groups and individuals in their region. By now each hub has developed in its own way, working independently from each other.

A SEED Europe works from the interactive office in Amsterdam together with many contacts in the rest of Europe and abroad on the following objectives:

- Initiating and coordinating actions and campaigns on environmental, development and social justice issues;
- Promoting discussion and disseminating information about critical emerging issues;
- Empowering local youth groups and grassroots organisations via trainings, joint projects, and knowledge sharing;
- Establishing partnerships between various organisations and groups worldwide and facilitating international cooperation and networking;
- Preparing projects from the A SEED Europe office and working with local grassroots organisations.

|                        |   |
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