



# Agroecology Land Trust

## Colleague Membership Agreement

This is an agreement between the Agroecology Land Trust Limited (the Co-operative)

and \_\_\_\_\_ (the Member).

The Co-operative agrees to uphold the Member's rights:

- to share in the benefits that the Co-operative provides.
- to participate in and benefit from the activities of the Co-operative.
- to be provided with educational and training opportunities in the skills and techniques that further the purpose of the Co-operative.
- to have full access to all information and records regarding the activities of the Co-operative, and its constituent working groups and elected roles.

The Member agrees:

- to uphold the values and principles of the Membership Agreement
- to further the purpose of the Co-operative.
- to follow the rules of the Co-operative as proscribed by the Society's Rules, the secondary rules, and all other relevant policies and governance structures.

### Values and Principles

#### Home

We collaborate to design and build our Homes using integrated and regenerative economic systems based upon the principles of Agroecology and Food Sovereignty.

The Sovereignty of the Home is the foundation of a free and just society.

We have the right to choose the economic systems that our Home depends on.

Our Homes are free from economic systems that are exploitative, degenerative or oppressive.

Our Homes actively contribute to the regeneration of the surrounding ecology.

#### Community

We create a vibrant and dynamic community through a co-sufficient mutually supportive economy.

The co-sufficient interdependence of living in a community is the most resilient way to build a Home.

Open and honest communication is the basis for trust.

We have respect for each other and the environment we create together.

We will not tolerate any behaviour, either physical or verbal, that demeans, marginalises or dominates others.

We are aware of the plurality of ethnic and cultural identities that people may identify with, and avoid making generalisations or assumptions about people.

We appreciate that conflict may arise but through resolution we grow stronger as a community. In light of this we are committed to a Conflict Resolution Process.

#### Land

Land is not merely a commodity. The land is a resource to be shared equitably between all communities that depend on it economically and ecologically.

We practice methods of land stewardship based on the principles of Agroecology and apply these principles when making decisions about developing and managing the land we use.

The principles of agroecology we adhere to are as follows:

1. **Recycle Nutrients:** Enhance recycling of biomass and optimising nutrient availability and balancing nutrient flow.
2. **Build Soil:** Securing favourable soil conditions for plant growth, particularly by managing organic matter and enhancing soil biotic activity.
3. **Minimise Losses from a System:** Minimising losses due to flows of solar radiation, air and water by way of microclimate management, water harvesting and soil management through increased soil cover.
4. **Optimise Genetic Diversity:** Optimise species and genetic diversification of the agroecosystem in time and space.
5. **Enhance Biological Interactions:** Enhance beneficial biological interactions and synergisms among agrobiodiversity components thus resulting in the promotion of key ecological processes and services.

## Food

All people have a right to healthy nutritious culturally and regionally appropriate food. We will endeavour to produce as much of our own food through our own efforts as possible. When making decisions and choices about the food we produce, eat and share we will consider the following Principles of Food Sovereignty:

1. Focuses on food for people: The right to food which is healthy, culturally and regionally appropriate is the basic legal demand underpinning food sovereignty. Guaranteeing it requires policies which support diversified local food production in every region and respects the fact that access to healthy food is necessary for our sense of security. Food is not simply another commodity to be traded or speculated on for profit it is a basic human need and equal access to the means to meet this need is fundamental for a healthy community.
2. Values food providers: Many smallholder farmers are marginalised and people are often discouraged from the possibility of land based livelihoods by central government and agribusiness. Agricultural workers can face severe exploitation. Food sovereignty asserts food providers' right to live and work in dignity.
3. Localises food systems: Food must be seen primarily as sustenance for the community and only secondarily as something to be traded. Under food sovereignty, local and regional provision takes precedence over supplying distant markets, and export-orientated agriculture is rejected. The 'free trade' policies which prevent sovereign countries from protecting their own agriculture, for example through subsidies and tariffs, are detrimental to local economic resilience and therefore also inimical to food sovereignty.
4. Puts control locally: Food sovereignty places control over local resources in the hands of those that use them to be used and shared in socially and environmentally sustainable ways which conserve diversity. Such resources should not be privatised but model of shared use and ownership should be developed from the ground up.
5. Builds knowledge and skills: Technologies that undermine food providers' ability to develop and pass on knowledge and skills needed for localised food systems are rejected. Instead, food sovereignty calls for appropriate technology, education and research systems to support the development of agricultural knowledge and skills.
6. Works with nature: Food sovereignty requires production and distribution systems that protect natural resources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, avoiding energy-intensive industrial methods that damage the environment and the health of those that inhabit it.

## Health

Our understanding of the meaning of sovereignty is grounded in our relationship to our body. We share a desire to achieve a healthy and fulfilling life dwelling in harmony with our surrounding ecology with reverence and gratitude.

Our individual health is reflective of the health of the community we are a part of, whilst the health of the community is in turn dependent upon both the health of the soil, and the strength of the relationships within it.

Living in accordance with the principles of Food Sovereignty and Agroecology will restore and maintain our health and the health of the communities to which we belong.

### **Technology**

We are committed to designing, using, promoting and stewarding appropriate technology.

We understand appropriate technology as a tool or technique that is conducive to freedom and conviviality, its acquisition and implementation also being in accordance with the values and principles of this agreement.

### **Energy**

We endeavour to preserve, capture and store sources of energy where ever possible.

We are working towards the reduction, over time, of our dependence on non-renewable energy sources to a practical minimum. To this end, any use of fossil fuels will be monitored, quantified and evaluated.

We apply a criteria for determining the embodied energy (Emergy) of any economic input. We understand Emergy as a concept that extends qualitatively as well as quantitatively and will seek to elucidate this understanding through our evaluative processes.

### **Materials**

We produce no waste by minimising waste and ensuring that we recycle and re-use waste materials in other productive systems.

We value all our resources and seek to apply regenerative practices in our resource use.

We work towards the reduction of our dependence on goods and materials that are produced through exploitative, degenerative or oppressive economic systems.

**I hereby agree to uphold the Values and Principles of the Agroecology Land Trust and honour my duties, commitments and accountabilities as a member of the Co-operative.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

*On behalf of the Agroecology Land Trust Ltd by the undersigned officers:*

Director: \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_