



**Green Economy and Sustainable Development:  
Bringing Back the Social Dimension  
CONFERENCE**

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**How Does Localized Social Economy Sustain in  
a Globalizing World? A Critical Analysis of Post-  
Developmentalist Initiatives in Andhra Pradesh,  
India**

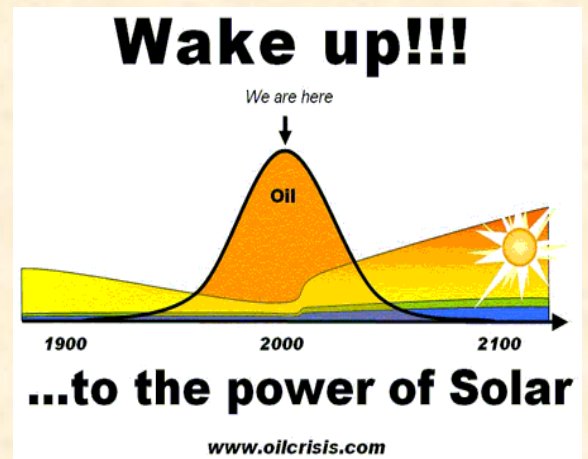
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# Global Agriculture at a Critical Conjunction

## A Triple Crisis:

- ✚ Food crisis
- ✚ Energy crisis
- ✚ Climate crisis



# The Technological Fix



**“Biotechnology is the science of changing the genetic makeup of seeds that grow our food to add new benefits. Healthier, more abundant yields. Reduced reliance on pesticides and fossil fuels. A cleaner environment.”**

[“Let the Harvest Begins” campaign started by Monsanto on the World Food Day (October 16<sup>th</sup>) in 1998. Emphasis added.]

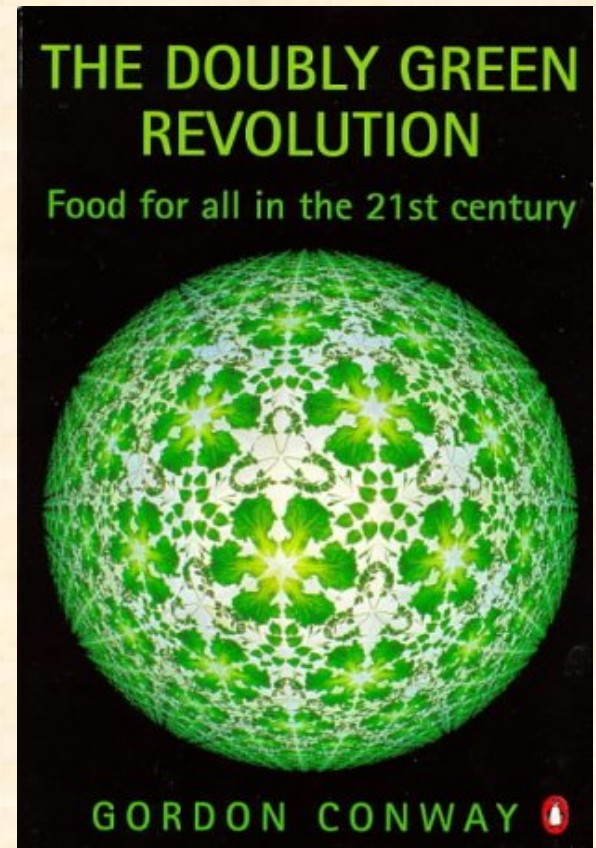
**Ecological modernization: A neoliberal modernist and technocratic approach to the environment**



# The “Gene Revolution” as a Solution

With Gene Revolution technologies, genes from an organism can be mapped, isolated, altered and transferred to:

- ✚ another organism of the same species or
- ✚ an organism of a different species or
- ✚ an organism belonging to a different kingdom  
(Eg. Bt Cotton)



# Global GM Crop Adoption

✚ GM crops first commercially released in 1995

✚ By 2010, 15.4 million farmers in 29 countries cultivated 148 Million hectares (i.e., about 10 % of the world's total cropland area)

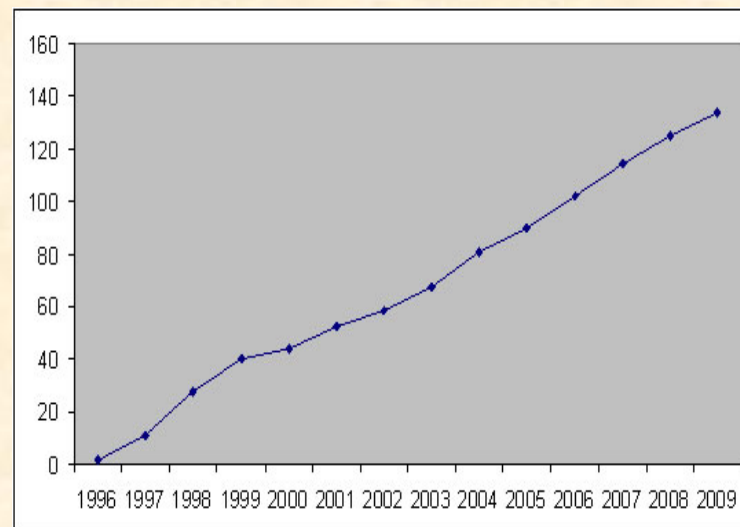
✚ By 2010, percentage of GM crops of global crop area:

✚ 81% of soybean

✚ 64% of cotton

✚ 29% of maize

✚ 23% of Canola



Source: The International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (*ISAAA*)

✚ Funders: Monsanto, DuPont, Syngenta, Pioneer Hi-Bred, Cargill, Dow, Bayer CropScience and CropLife International

# Corporate Control Over Agriculture

- ✚ **The world's top 10 corporations control 67 percent of the total proprietary seed market.**
  - ✚ **The world's top three companies – Monsanto (US), DuPont (US), and Syngenta (Switzerland) – account for 47 percent of global proprietary seed market.**
- ✚ **The world's top 10 corporations control 89 percent of the global agrochemical market.**
- ✚ **The world's six biggest agrochemicals are also big players in the global seed sector (ETC Group 2008)**

# Introduction of Bt Cotton into India: Neoliberal Economic Policies and Farmer Suicides

- ✚ Removal of import and export restrictions on almost all commodities
- ✚ Decline in state support to agriculture and rural development
- ✚ Privatization of seed research, development, and distribution
- ✚ National seed policy reforms
- ✚ Takeover of local seed companies by multinational corporations
- ✚ Lack of transparency and democratic approach in new technology approval process
- ✚ Lack of efficient monitoring and regulatory mechanism



# Dying Peasantry in “Shining India”

✚ **Across the country, 241,679  
Farmers committed suicide  
between 1995 and 2009**  
(Center for Human Rights and Global Justice 2011)





# Alternatives and Resistance: Different Paths

✚ “Old” left social movements

✚ “New” social movements

New farmers’ movements, environmental movements,  
civil rights movements, and other.

✚ Progressive Non-governmental  
Organizations and Civil Society Groups

Building a coalition of local movements to reclaim  
control over food and agriculture



# Implementing the Post-Developmental Agenda: The Deccan Development Society

- Established by a group of “deprofessionalized intellectuals” in 1983 in Medak district, southern India.
- Working with *dalit* (the so-called untouchables) women
- Expanded to 75 villages
- Primary focus on:
  - Community engagement and democratic participation in decision making
  - Autonomy over resources, the market, and media
  - Biodiversity conservation
  - Sustaining indigenous knowledge and livelihoods
  - Building social economy



# Grassroots Initiatives

- **PLACE-BASED INITIATIVES:**
  - Implementation of alternative development practices.
- **NETWORK-BASED INITIATIVES**
  - Construction of a counter-hegemonic discourse .
  - Solidarity movements.



# **Place-based Initiatives**



# Food Sovereignty

- Local food production, local storage, and local distribution
- Café Ethic  
(Organic Millet Restaurant)
- Revival of local food culture



# Seed sovereignty

- Agro-biodiversity conservation
- Traditional Seed Banks
- Biodiversity festivals



# Sustaining Indigenous Knowledge and Autonomy over Media

- Indigenous knowledge documentation
- Community Media Trust
- Green education: Transcending the current symbols of modernity

*Videos: My Farm – My Classroom*  
*Dhanwarlo O' Avva*





# Sustaining Agriculture and Livelihoods

- Ecological agriculture
- Organic cooperative market





# **Network-based Initiatives**

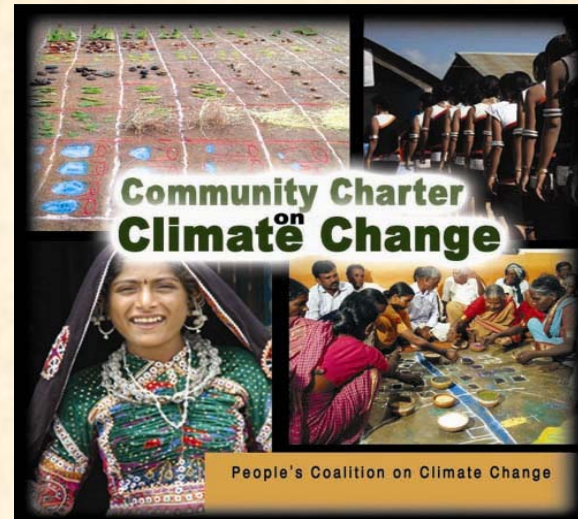
# Construction of a Counter-hegemonic Discourse

- **Research conducted by civil society members and public intellectuals**
- **Video documentation by the Community Media Trust to show the socio-ecological and health implications of GM crops**
- **Organizing citizens' juries**



# Building Solidarity Movements

- Networking
- Policy lobbying
- Struggles against anti-farmer technologies and development



# Achievements of the Deccan Development Society

- **Constructed a farmer suicide-free zone in India**
- **Achieved food security and seed security**
- **Increased and secured livelihood options**
- **Enhanced *dalit* women's empowerment and created new community leaders**
- **Reestablished a sustainable relationship between the farming community and nature**
- **Built a strong coalition of local movements across the country**



# **The Deccan Development Society: A Critique**

- **Dependency on external funding sources (from 'green' international organizations and the Indian government)**
- **Dependency on urban-based intellectuals**
- **Compartmentalization of the aspirations of social movements**
- **Neglect of systemic exploitation and oppression of the state and the capitalist market system**
- **Romanticization of culture, agriculture, and nature**

# Conclusion

- **Technological fixes for politico-economic and socio-ecological crises are undemocratic and unsustainable**
- **A “double movement” in Indian agriculture**
- **“There Are Thousands of Alternatives” : Local solutions to local as well as global problems**
- **Cultivating a hope amidst agrarian distress and farmer suicides**

**Questions & Comments?**

**Thank you!**



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