

Greening the economy

The coming Rio+20 conference of June 2012 will focus on the importance of “greening the economy” (see page 32). According to UNEP, a “green economy” describes an economic system “that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. In its simplest expression, a green economy can be thought of as one which is low carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive.” Are these just pretty words to describe an impossible objective? Many civil society groups are sceptical, warning that unless fundamental changes occur, this will be no more than a type of “greenwashing”. Others are more positive, thinking that with courage, will and a clear vision, we can change the economy.

As Rio+20 reflects on the developments of the past 20 years, so do we. What have been the changes since the first Rio conference in 1992? Are we moving in the right direction? Throughout all these years we have been reporting on and sharing many successful cases of sustainable agriculture practices and approaches. How successful have we been in scaling them up and broadening their impact? What have been the *enabling* factors in the larger context?



And what are the *disabling* factors? Share your opinions and ideas about the future (who will be the farmers of the future and how will they contribute to greening the world’s economy?), and share your experiences reflecting the role of small-scale farmers, both men and women, today. Family farmers have a lot to show, and a lot to say. How to make their voices heard? What message will we bring to Rio?

Please visit and leave your comments and opinions on our website, and send your articles for the June issue of *Farming Matters* to Jorge Chavez-Tafur, editor, before March 1st, 2011. E-mail: j.chavez-tafur@ileia.org

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