

Focus on the Global South







**Images from:**

Thai Working Group on Climate Justice  
 EU-ASEAN/Free Trade Agreement Watch  
 Save Agrarian Reform Alliance  
 Philippine Movement for Climate Justice  
 ASEAN Grassroots People's Assembly

# Focus on the Global South 2012 Annual Report

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# 2012 Activities

Focus on the Global South was able to complete a major organizational restructuring in 2012, a process which began in the last quarter of 2011. Despite the considerable administrative and programmatic limitations posed by the transition, we were able to continue making significant headway in our research and campaigning during the year, through our main thematic work areas of Defending the Commons (Land, Water & Forests); Trade & Investment; and Climate & Environmental Justice under a redefined program framework now called Whose New Asia. In this transition period, we were fortunate to have received support from our Board, donors, allies and former staff.



Through the Whose New Asia frame, Focus on the Global South reiterates that positive societal change is (and must be) driven by society in all its diversity and in different ways. Focus continues to support and mobilize the capacities of progressive social actors by (i) working with these groups to co-generate contextual research, analysis, policy and action; (ii) building awareness and capacities through the exchange of knowledge and experiences; (iii) convening different actors – from communities to governments – around ideas, proposals and actions; (iv) identifying and creating spaces for discussion and participation; and (v) enabling progressive social actors, particularly movements representing the poor and socially-politically marginalized, to fill these spaces and make them dynamic.

Continuing our emphasis on the social movements of Southeast and South Asia, Focus remains an activist think tank to connect local, national, regional and international movements fighting against neoliberal globalization. Under the current Whose New Asia? program (2012-2014), this work is now concentrated on promoting and strengthening alternatives to address how the so-called New Asia, with the emerging economies of China and India and ASEAN moving towards an economic community, is dealing with the global financial and environmental crises.

While continuing our ground-level work with movements, NGOs and other allies in India, the Philippines, Thailand, and the Mekong region, Focus has also remained active in international and regional initiatives, with Focus staff playing significant roles at civil society mobilizations, specifically in the Asia Europe Meeting in Vientiane (the Asia Europe People's Forum), the ASEAN Summit in Phnom Penh (ASEAN Grassroots Peoples Assembly), the UNFCCC Intercessional in Bangkok, and the Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development in Brazil.

# Defending the Commons (Land, Water, Forests)



Land, water and forests are the central assets - the last frontiers of life - that global capitalism seeks to capture in order to continue to consolidate its power. Focus has identified a number of key trends or practices that consolidate forms of access, claims, use, inclusion/exclusion and control of land, water, forests and common pool resources. These trends are resource extraction, financialization of resources, enclosures and privatization, criminalization of struggles, and territorialization, e.g. is Burma's "ceasefire capitalism". Increasingly, "development" is being defined by governments and international policy institutions in terms of investment projects (domestic and foreign) that lay claim on land, water, forests, biodiversity and state support, but at the cost of local-national food and economic security, employment, environmental quality, democracy and citizenship.

The so-called continuing "growth" in Asia, in which promotion of investments is the key, however, does not trickle down to the poor and marginalized sectors. On the contrary, this growth model is enabling new forms of concentration of ownership and control over land, water and other natural resources, entrenching poverty and inequality. This context amid growth remains an important political and economic context for Focus as we advocate for the rights of peasants, landless and

rural women to land and its resources and against land grabbing and as we join social movements in these struggles.

## Regional and International Platforms

As a member of the Municipal Services Project and the Reclaiming Public Water network, Focus participated in the international mobilizations of the Alternative World Water Forum in France in March, co-organizing a workshop on water, food and climate and presenting at various other sessions. Focus was also a visible presence in the Blue Pavilion, considered the most impressive component of the Peoples' Summit in Rio in May 2012, where we led the drafting of the official declaration.

At the international and regional levels, much of our land-related work was conducted under the Land Research Action Network and the Global Campaign for Agrarian Reform, where Focus collaborated and continues to collaborate with partners across the world to address these issues through research and action. We helped organize the First International Seminar on Agrarian Reform and the Defense of Land and Territory in the 21st Century in Indonesia in July, and played an important support role in the First Global Agroecology Encounter of La Via Campesina in Thailand in Novem-



ber. Focus also helped organize and acted as a key resource at an ICCO regional workshop on Promoting People's Rights to Land and Natural Resources in Bali, Indonesia, and our thematic team coordinator Shalmali Guttal was a keynote speaker at the Global Land Grabbing Conference II at Cornell University, USA. We organized discussions on land and water issues at regional events such as the AEPF in Laos and the ASEAN Grassroots Peoples Forum in Cambodia. At the international policy level, we continued our participation in the FAO Committee for World Food Security (CFS). Focus was part of the CSO core team that drafted the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure, which were issued in May; Focus was also one of the technical coordinators of the working group tasked to develop principles of responsible agricultural investment, in which we collaborated on the Terms of Reference and background materials to start this two-year process.

### Mekong

Besides events around the international meetings of the AEPF in Laos and ASEAN Summit in Cambodia, Focus also organized specialized workshops in response to needs expressed by local groups. Focus' active ongoing collaboration in the region is centered on an action research project with communities in northwestern Cambodia, supporting knowledge generation

among community led networks. Based on a 2011 evaluation of the project, a new team of 28 researchers was trained in Oddar Meanchey province in 2012, while workshops on investment and ASEAN were conducted with the original two teams. Team members have already begun documenting how land and other resources are being seized in their areas. Some of the workshops conducted in Cambodia on ASEAN, investment and trade agreements were attended by members of these teams, as well as unions, farmer, fisher and indigenous peoples' networks, housing / land coalitions and local NGOs.

In Laos, Focus organized workshops on land grabbing in May and August as a core member of the Land Issues Working Group and helped organize local civil society for participation in land and forestry policy reviews. As part of Focus' ongoing critical monitoring and awareness raising on REDD developments in the sub-region, Focus organized two teach-ins on REDD/ REDD+ for Lao NGOs and produced a discussion paper on the Oddar Meanchey REDD project in Cambodia (in collaboration with Pacific Environment and FERN). In Thailand, Focus conducted a training workshop on agrarian reform and food sovereignty for the Northern Peasant Federation in Chiangmai. As a steering committee member of the Save the Mekong campaign, which creates awareness about destructive impacts of

large scale dams in the Mekong basin, Focus co-organized and facilitated two regional strategy meetings to broaden the campaign agenda and analysis.

### India

In India, Focus' 2012 activities tackled water privatization and agroecology. As part of the Water Privatization – Commercialization Resistance Committee in New Delhi, Focus participated in campaign discussions and sent letters to relevant authorities to draw attention to problems arising from proposed Public-Private Partnerships for Delhi-area water services. Focus also met with leaders of neighborhood associations (Resi-





dent Welfare Associates) to raise awareness about how the proposed water projects could affect their communities. Focus worked with the Citizen Front for Water Democracy and the Water Workers Alliance to mobilize public opinion against the PPP model and to confront the myth of Non-Revenue Water used by the government to hand over water projects to private companies. On agroecology, Focus worked mainly with our allies in La Via Campesina India and South Asia to help raise awareness among farmers about the benefits of agroecology as a solution to both financial and environmental problems. As part of this effort to promote and strengthen alternatives, Focus participated in a



survey of Zero Budget Natural Farming in Karnataka, as several thousand farmers in southern India have adopted these methods, shunning agrichemicals and using technology based on inputs from farm waste. Focus was also a key participant in the struggle to defend farmer leader and activist Dr. Sunilam, criminalized for opposing a land grab in Chindwara.

### Philippines

As the co-convener and secretariat of the Save Agrarian Reform Alliance in the Philippines, a broad network of national federations of farmers, rural women, indigenous peoples and NGOs, Focus provided analysis, facilitation, writing and media work in the campaign to advance the full implementation of agrarian reform in the country. Focus, with SARA, led intensive consultations with farmers and agrarian reform advocacy groups in Luzon, Visayas and Minanao, consequently sharing the results with the media and the government's National Anti-Poverty Commission while engaging the Department of Agrarian Reform to address the huge backlog in land distribution in these areas. The Alliance also led a public education campaign, using traditional media, online social networking and rallies/mobilizations to gain wide media coverage. The campaign was successful in getting President Aquino and the Agrarian Reform Secretary to make public pronouncements favorable to the campaign's demands and helping farmers get their lands in

Negros Oriental. The Alliance also claimed victory in a landmark Supreme Court decision to distribute Hacienda Luisita after a decade-long struggle over the land controlled by the President's family. Continuing work begun under the Development Roundtable Series and the Municipal Services Project, Focus co-convened the Water Watch, a network of civil society and basic sector organizations, to monitor government policies and legislation related to water service and access. Focus co-produced and released a video promoting the roles of communities in water service provision in the Philippines (Patak-Patak), which was broadcast on national TV.









# Trade & Investment

A key challenge in 2012 was the intensification of Free Trade Agreement talks in the region. There were a number of significant developments around the negotiations for the US-led Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA), the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership encompassing ASEAN and six other countries (ASEAN +6), and the EU FTAs in India and Southeast Asia. With developments on the multilateral trade front as well as around the agenda towards the 9th Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization in 2013 in Bali, Indonesia, global trade policy appeared to be headed towards increasing the standards of liberalization in both coverage and depth of commitments.

In response, campaign efforts at national and regional levels around the EU Free Trade Agreements also

intensified over the period. In Southeast Asia, another bilateral negotiation under the broader EU-ASEAN FTA mandate started in July 2012 with the launch of formal talks towards an EU-Vietnam FTA. Preparatory processes were undertaken by governments in Thailand, Philippines and Indonesia for similar trade talks with the EU. In South Asia, the EU-India talks continued to be a subject of intense campaigning in India, especially the issue of access to medicines.

## EU-India

Focus campaigned actively against the EU-India FTA as member of the Indian Forum Against FTAs, a national platform that has spearheaded the campaign against a bilateral agreement with the EU. In the lead-up to the February India-EU Summit in 2012, Focus and other members of the Forum had intensified lobbying and

advocacy with the members of political parties, members of parliament as well as members of the national campaign on right to food to oppose the India EU-FTA. Still part of this effort, Focus India co-organized a two-day workshop on “India-EU Free Trade Agreement: For Whom?” in New Delhi in February. Because of these efforts of campaigners in raising critical issues about the talks, the negotiations have been stalled.


## ASEAN

As the convenor of the EU-ASEAN FTA Network, Focus played a leading role in awareness-raising and strategy-building meetings organized with and for national and local networks in seven ASEAN countries. Focus’ most active roles in national campaigns were in Thailand and the Philippines, working with allies inside and outside of governments to build pressure for more democratic processes in the on-going negotiations for bilateral FTAs with the EU.

The year started with a network campaign planning workshop in Malaysia from February 2-4, coinciding with the Malaysia Network on FTAs’ submission of formal complaint to the Malaysian Human Rights Commission against the EU-Malaysia FTA and TPPA. As part of the AEPF process leading up to the October meeting in Laos, Focus co-organized two sub-regional conferences in Hanoi (for the Mekong region) and







Jakarta (for insular Southeast Asia) which helped expand Focus' alliances in the sub-regions and build consensus around the regional campaign plan targeting access to medicines and investments, plus particular concerns around agriculture and fisheries. The issue of health and access to medicines has emerged as one of the most critical issues in the struggle against these economic agreements, and patients groups and health advocacy networks across the region are now at the forefront of the campaigns to stop these unjust agreements.

The network coordinated with the Southeast Asia Fishers Network (SEAFISH) to include a one-day strategy meeting on trade and fisheries in the agenda during their regional meeting, held in Manila 24-26 September. Focus' Trade and Investments team also produced a state of play of EU-ASEAN and EU-Philippines negotiations and presented this in the strategy meeting together with proposals for a regional campaign on fisheries and trade, which was seen to open more possibilities for the two networks to highlight the "invisibility" of the small fishers, fish workers and small aquaculture holders sector in ASEAN fisheries policy and to develop the small fishers' agenda on trade and investments.

As the preparatory processes leading to formal negotiations got underway in Thailand and the Philippines, the official processes at the national level emerged as important arenas for engagement.

### Thailand

Though formal talks had yet to begin, campaign efforts around the proposed EU-Thai FTA likewise intensified. In June 2012, the Thai government made an eager attempt to push-start the free trade negotiation with the EU, falsely claiming that the rigorous IPR regime sought by the EU would be insignificant, and conceding to the EU's TRIPS+ demand would have no impact on future FTAs for Thailand. FTA Watch, a national coalition which includes Focus on the Global South, countered these claims with a public information campaign that went viral through social media, eventually slowing down the preparation process and forcing the government to organize consultations with various stakeholders.

The coalition also directly engaged with the government during the year, organizing two seminars with the National Economic and Social Advisory Council and the National Human Rights Commission in September and October respectively. Formal complaints were submitted to the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and the House Committee on Public Health and, together with the People Living with HIV Network, a mobilization was organized against the proposed EU-Thai FTA at the Ministry of Commerce in October.

Although Focus was able to spur debate and slow down the process, the campaign clearly needs to continue into 2013 and possibly beyond. The Thai government approved the EU FTA negotiation framework in December 2012. Moreover, on the occasion of US

President Obama's visit to Thailand in November 2012, PM Yingluck announced the government's interest in joining the TPPA. Together under the banner of FTA Watch, Focus and our allies shall continue to address these agreements and other unjust trade policies.

### Philippines

In the Philippines, as the government geared up for the start of formal talks for an EU-Philippines FTA, Focus as part of the broader campaign network spearheaded efforts to raise the critical issues around the proposed trade talks and build broader campaign platforms around these issues. Focus drew attention to IPR, access to medicine and related health issues negatively affected by FTAs through a statement, raising the issues in a national government consultation, and co-organizing a seminar with Action for Economic Reforms seminar on the anatomy of tobacco exclusion from trade and economic agreements.

Beyond working with health advocates, the campaign also broadened its platform to include human rights networks through a series of discussions with civil society organizations and the government Commission on Human Rights (CHR) on the theme of business and human rights. From these efforts, Focus shall proceed towards forming a CSO-CHR working group to compile relevant research and advance CHR involvement in trade negotiations and FTA reviews through human rights impact assessments and other means. And in response to government claims that tuna exports benefit under the proposed EU-Philippines FTA, meetings



were organized with fisheries networks Tambuyog and Kilusang Mangingisda (Fisherfolk Network) leading to a discussion on EU-Philippines FTA and fisheries at the National Agriculture and Fisheries Council Meeting in December.

Through the Philippine network Focus also organized a roundtable discussion of academe, media, government and civil society on the investor to state dispute settlement mechanism in FTAs and its implications for policy space. Other efforts to democratize trade policy included a network statement on the importance of Freedom of Information (FOI) in trade policy-making

in the Philippines, participation in mobilizations of the national campaign for the passage of FOI Act and submission of a position paper on House Resolution 937 dealing with transparency and governance issues in trade policy making.

### Investments and Corporate Accountability

Investments were also a major concern in 2012 as governments continued to push the agenda of investment liberalization. Across Asia the impacts of investments particularly in land, agriculture and natural resources remained a key concern among grassroots communities and social movements. The

calls for corporate accountability and stronger regulatory regime on investments reverberated throughout the year through various national, regional and global campaigns on investments.

A number of activities and initiatives were conducted which were meant to provide space for discussion to deepen the analysis of investment policies and their impact on communities and broader national development goals.

In the Philippines, Focus co-organized a February forum entitled Crisis and Opportunity: A Forum on Prospects for 2012 where we made a presentation on trade and emerging investment regime. A similar presentation was made on global investment regime and the power of corporations at the Council of Leaders Conference of the Alliance of Progressive Labor in August. On behalf of the EU-ASEAN Network, Focus drafted and submitted a position paper on double taxation treaties to the Senate Committee on International Relations.

Focus actively engaged in the working group on the People's Treaty of the Global Campaign to Dismantle Corporate Powers. This had developed from a Brussels meeting in 2011 and was formally launched in Rio in June 2012. Focus participated in a meeting in December 2012 in Amsterdam where major agreements were reached on the political content, the process and the plans towards the campaign for a people's treaty.







# Climate & Environmental Justice

Since 2007, Focus on the Global South has been a key driving force behind climate and environmental justice campaigns, being a co-founder of the international Climate Justice Now! Network, the regional campaign platform that aimed to create an ASEAN environmental pillar, and in coalitions in Thailand and the Philippines that are actively working on national climate policies. Much of the rapid economic expansion in the region is fueled by environmentally unsustainable activities such as expanding consumer markets, deforestation and other forms of natural resource extraction that are helping to bring greenhouse gases levels to the point of irreversible climate change. While the wealthy might find ways to adapt to these changes with high-tech solutions such as sea walls, farmers, urban slum dwellers and other marginalized groups are already beginning to suffer the more profound consequences such as flooding and crop failures.

In 2012 Focus continued to take an active role in the climate justice campaign at the local/national and international levels. At the international level, key events in 2012 were the Rio+20 Summit in June, the UNFCCC Intercessional Meetings in Bangkok in August/September and the 18th Conference of Parties in Doha in November/December. The UNFCCC negotiations lost any promise they once had held, overtaken by corporate interests following consistently dismal results since Copenhagen. The Durban results showed the trend for

a new international architecture where market-based approaches would be prioritized in climate mitigation, with emissions continuing to push the planet towards a point of no return. The key role of Focus has been in initiatives that seek to forge unities among various groups and networks to address this dilemma from below.

In the, Rio +20 Peoples' Summit, Focus was represented by Mary Ann Manahan in the international committee organizing the Blue Pavilion, where high-level debates and discussions related to water justice were organized. Focus Executive Director Pablo Solon was part of all the important panels in the People's Summit that analyzed the Green Economy, REDD, Rights of Mother Earth, Food Security and Climate Justice. Focus also held a very successful public discussion on climate change with more than 200 representatives from social movements, human rights advocacy networks and local organizers. Dorothy Guerrero organized and co-hosted six 30 minute long radio programs addressing the dismal status of the Rio+20 negotiations, green economy, climate justice, food sovereignty and land issues, role of women in the global climate justice movement, water justice, role and power of corporations, alternatives and how movements can organize beyond Rio+20 to find alternatives and solutions to the climate crisis. Focus also formally launched a report and video entitled "Whose 'Clean' Development?"

showcasing experiences in Thailand, India and the Philippines.

During the UNFCCC intercessional, Focus was a co-organizer of the international facilitation group meeting and the global assembly to launch the Global Campaign to Demand Climate Justice. Taking advantage of the convergence of international climate activists in Bangkok for the intercessional, Focus helped organize a meeting of Asian social movements and civil society groups, now known as the Social Movements for Alternative Asia, with climate and economic justice activists from Europe, Africa and the Americas, to build momentum towards more collaborative efforts at ending the current financial and environmental crises. An op-ed piece Focus had published in the Bangkok Post during the negotiations generated debates among climate activists, as Focus pointed to China and the US as main beneficiaries of the stalemate and argued for binding emissions reductions for emerging economies, which should be much lower than Annex I countries. Focus decided not to participate in COP18 in Doha because of the trends in the negotiations after Durban and the Bangkok meetings. Nonetheless Focus published a position paper on the negotiations and we were consequently interviewed by local and international media why we were not in Doha and our analysis of the status of the negotiations.





Focus also used other prominent regional and international forums to advance the climate justice concept, making relevant presentations at venues such as the Asia Europe People's Forum in Vientiane, 2nd International Conference on International Relations and Development in Chaingmai, and the World Social Forum on Migration in Manila.

### Philippines

Focus' country-based work on climate and environmental justice is very much linked with the national networks co-organized and maintained together with local partners. Focus is in in the National Council and Coordinating Committee of the Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCI), a broad network of NGOs



and social movements on climate in the Philippines. Focus leads the network's False Solutions Working Group tasked to expose and resist so-called climate solutions such as the Clean Development Mechanism and REDD that violate human rights, generate private profits at the expense of people and the environment, and promote privatization and commodification of ecological resources. In addition to producing critiques of the Green Economy, through PMCI Focus continued engagement with the National Climate Change Action Plan, begun in 2011.

### Thailand

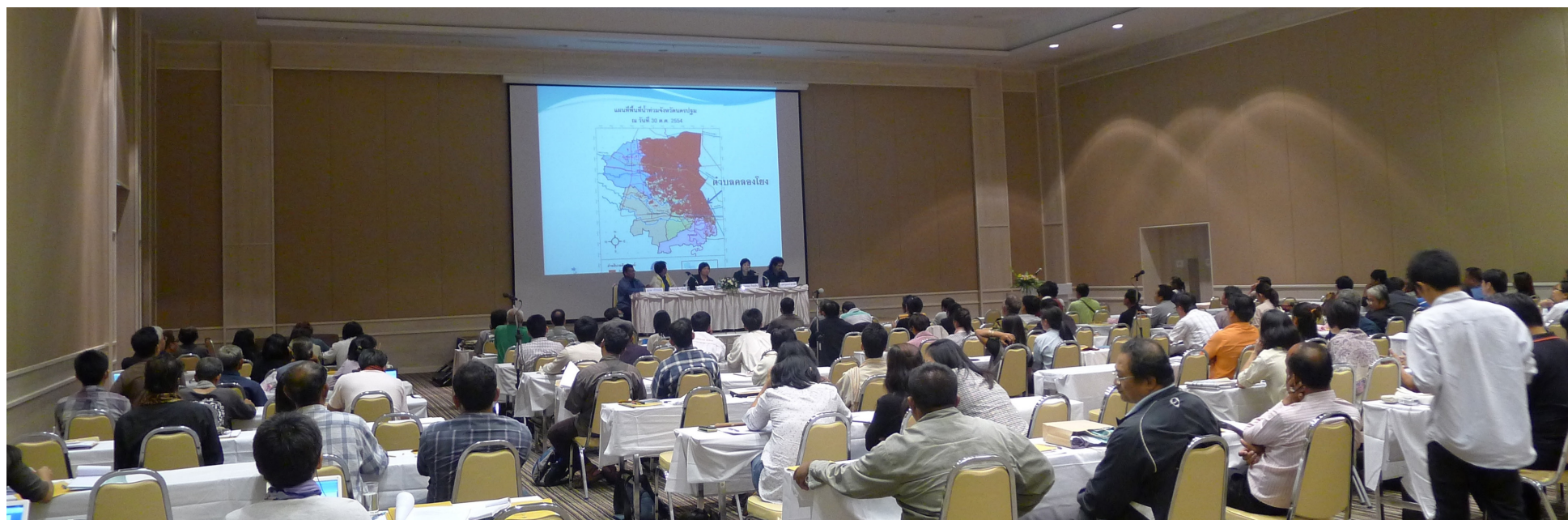
In the first quarter of the year, Focus accepted a request to host the Thai Working Group for Climate Justice (TCJ) with Jacques-chai Chomthongdi as the



coalition's coordinator. TCJ developed and promoted climate justice and sustainable development arguments through engagement in public debates on the 'green economy' and 'sustainable development' both at the national and regional levels through various platforms, including TCJ self-organized events. The engagement has successfully presented critiques of the mainstream market-based interpretation of sustainable development. An academic paper on climate justice in Thailand was submitted for publication in 2013, while critiques of the criminalization of forest people and the government's energy development policies were well received in mass media.

At the policy level, the coalition successfully forced the government to revise a draft National Master Plan





that helped produce a new version containing stronger mitigation measures and giving more attention to vulnerable groups. This was done using a constitutional provision to democratize such process, which had been achieved through Focus' previous work as part of the Thai FTA Watch coalition. TCJ also formed an alliance with consumer groups and local communities to push for power sector reform by challenging the national Power Development Plan. In addition to active participation in the AEPF, co-organizing workshops on the Green Economy and REDD, TCJ participated in civil society meetings at the UNFCCC Bangkok intercessional, organizing a rally outside the meeting with the support of international groups.

## India

Compared to the Philippines or Thailand, civil society groups in India have not been as unified under a strong national network that could have an influence over government climate policies. The situation here was more complicated due to many climate-related policies being decided and implemented at the state level. Still, Focus made some advancements in 2012 by reactivating the India Climate Justice network, organizing a public discussion among key groups in New Delhi in September, participating in a group effort to look at India's role in the UNFCCC stalemate, and participating in preparatory meetings organized by the WWF and the Indian Youth Climate Network for the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD).

Focus also attended the CBD Conference of Parties held in Hyderabad, featuring a side event panel on synthetic biology, contributing to the NGO newsletter produced during the meetings, and co-organizing two workshops at the Peoples Biodiversity Festival: Unity for Diversity, held concurrently by Indian civil society groups, one on "Building community-based global coalition for community rights" and the other on "Rights of Mother Earth".



## Multi-Thematic Alliance Work

During 2012, Focus also played a leading role in many coalition initiatives which spanned across and beyond our thematic areas. These were:

- Support for the initiative now being called the Social Movements for Alternative Asia, with allies including La Via Campesina, Jubilee South and the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions. Focus assisted in organizing meetings in Jakarta, Rio de Janeiro, and Manila, and provided the logistical support for the major meeting of the year in Bangkok in August, which also brought representatives from climate and financial justice movements from other parts of the world, including from East Asia, Europe, Africa and North and South America. This meeting was held to analyze how social movements across the world were addressing economic and climate issues, and how we could take steps to unify the diverse movements to build the common strength that would be needed to overcome the powerful interests pursuing profit above the increasingly heavy burdens on humans and the planet.
- Working with groups to revive the Peoples' SAARC network in India, which had been dormant since 2010. Peoples' SAARC is an alliance of members of social movements, civil society organizations, labor unions, peasant movements, other working people's organizations and women's groups from South Asia. As part of the India process, Focus organized a series of consultations across the cou-

ntry to discuss and evolve a structure and consensus document for constituting the Indian Peoples SAARC. Main objectives of the Peoples SAARC are to demand for an alternate regional trade and economic framework that meet the needs and aspirations of small and medium producers and labor; to engage and persuade the governments of South Asia to bring the peoples' issues on the SAARC



agenda; to intervene and campaign for broadening the participation of people's organizations in SAARC institutions, policy making, implementation and monitoring; and building cross border consensus between various movements and people's organizations for an alternative vision of a democratic, sustainable and peaceful South Asia. Focus

also contributed a paper on the "SAARC Food Bank: Panacea for food security in South Asia" for the Reader on Alternative Regionalisms published by TNI, Netherlands.

- Serving in the International Organizing Committee of the Asia-Europe People's Forum (AEPF) in Laos, working with both Lao and international groups during preparatory meetings in Laos, consultations in Jakarta and Hanoi, and in the actual AEPF in October. The AEPF process was met with much excitement, as the Lao government gave non-profit associations equal status as the government-aligned mass organizations, and Lao civil society proved capable of conducting such a large event. However, the situation in Lao PDR deteriorated significantly with the December disappearance of Sombath Somphone, a leading figure in Lao civil society and co-chairperson of the AEPF.
- Participating in the Regional Organizing Committee of Solidarity for Asian People's Advocacy (SAPA), which was complicated by diverging civil-society events during Cambodia's hosting of the ASEAN summits. After attending the March forum in Phnom Penh, Focus concentrated on supporting Cambodian groups which organized the ASEAN Grassroots Peoples' Assembly in November. As the coordinator for the SAPA Working Group on the Environment, Focus also continued to build the campaign for an Environment Pillar in ASEAN.



## Gender and Women's Rights

Though Focus has always recognized the importance of gender and women's right issues, in 2012 Focus underscored in its strategic planning the need to develop this theme more programmatically and begin initiatives that will contribute to this by making this a cross-cutting issue, covering all the thematic work areas in our 2012-2014 Whose New Asia? Program.

At the research and campaign levels, Focus staff participated in processes and events that highlighted women's rights to resources, their roles in social movements and as actors for progressive change. Gender issues became regular components of our trade campaigns, highlighting how IPR and other provisions of free trade agreements harm women's rights. Focus continued to advocate for women's rights to land and monitor the gender-differentiated impacts of land and resource grabbing, particularly in the Philippines, Cambodia and Laos. Focus continued and further strengthened work with progressive rural women's movements that are at the frontline of land struggles (e.g. in Boeng Kuk Lake in Cambodia, PKKK in the Philippines). Focus staff made presentations dealing specifically with gender and resource grabbing in Southeast Asia at the ICCO Regional Conference Promoting People's Rights to Land and Natural Resources and at the Asia Europe Peoples' Forum, co-organized a forum during the rural women's market week in the Philippines, and drafted a statement for the World Women's March.

Gender issues were highlighted by our staff at high-profile events, such as the rights of women farmers at the Committee on World Food Security in Rome and the role of women as defenders of the natural commons at the Global Land Grabbing Conference II at Cornell University. In 2012, Focus staff attended the international conference of the Association of Women in International Development (AWID) in Turkey, a Southeast Asia Consultation on Using CEDAW to Strengthen Accountability for Women's Human Rights in Development, a Basti Sabha (Community Meeting) of women domestic workers in New Delhi and other events.

At the administrative level, Focus staff launched a review of the organization's anti-discrimination and gender policies, deciding to devote time during the next full staff meeting in January 2013 to update the policies to better implement gender justice within the organization and our work with others. While Focus has been able to bring some attention to some gender related issues, it continues to be an on-going challenge to bring meaningful contributions to the struggles against patriarchy in the cultures we work in. Focus hopes to make further progress in 2013.

## Organizational Strengthening

From the restructuring process, Focus was able to identify where the organization was making the most influential and resourceful contributions to progressive change in the region, and to prioritize these programs to maximize decreased resources. This included cutting the staff size from 29 to just 15 people, and

closing the office in Mumbai along with the thematic program dedicated to peace and democracy issues. We also decided not to have a full China Program, but continue addressing the country through our work on BRICS and in each thematic work area. However, Focus maintained presence in its three main countries of operations, India, Thailand and the Philippines. By the end of the year, Focus had successfully recruited a new staff, combining ten of the former Focus members with five new administrative and program staff, including the newly created positions of Operations Manager and Executive Director.

Focus is now based in three offices (eight staff in Bangkok, four in Manila and three in New Delhi). Two full staff meetings were held in Bangkok, in January (with the Transition Team that was established in 2011) and in July (with our new Executive Director, Pablo Solon) respectively. Through these meetings, conference calls and email discussions throughout the year Focus continued discussions on Whose New Asia? Program to enrich it.

Focus also strengthened internal management, revising and creating new internal office policies dealing with financial management to ensure transparency and consistency between the three offices. For the first time in the organization's history, all staff members were given individual performance assessments. In 2013, Focus is looking further at ways to improve gender policies, internal accountability procedures and other administrative issues in the coming year.



## Conclusion

Focus ended the year not only with high hopes for its programs in 2013 but with key outputs in the thematic areas of work such as the states of play that will inform its work. It also maintained its visibility, presence and leading role in national, regional and international platforms for social movements. With the new team solidified, Focus is in a better position to address the serious challenges facing the peoples of Asia and the Global South. In 2013, Focus sees itself taking not only active but key roles in major international events, such as the World Social Forum in Tunisia, the 6th International Conference of La Via Campesina, and the 9th Ministerial of the WTO in Bali, which shall be used to further highlight the contradictions created by pursuing the neoliberal economic growth model in a finite world of increasingly limited resources, while advancing alternative paradigms such as deglobalization, food sovereignty and buen vivir / living well.

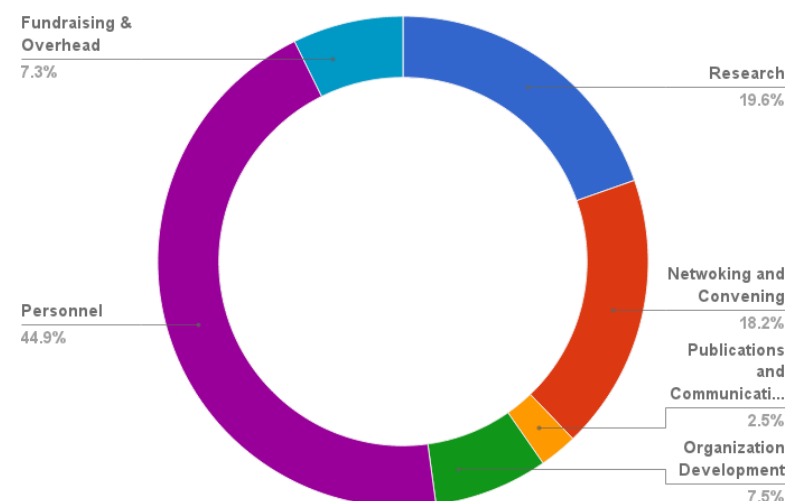
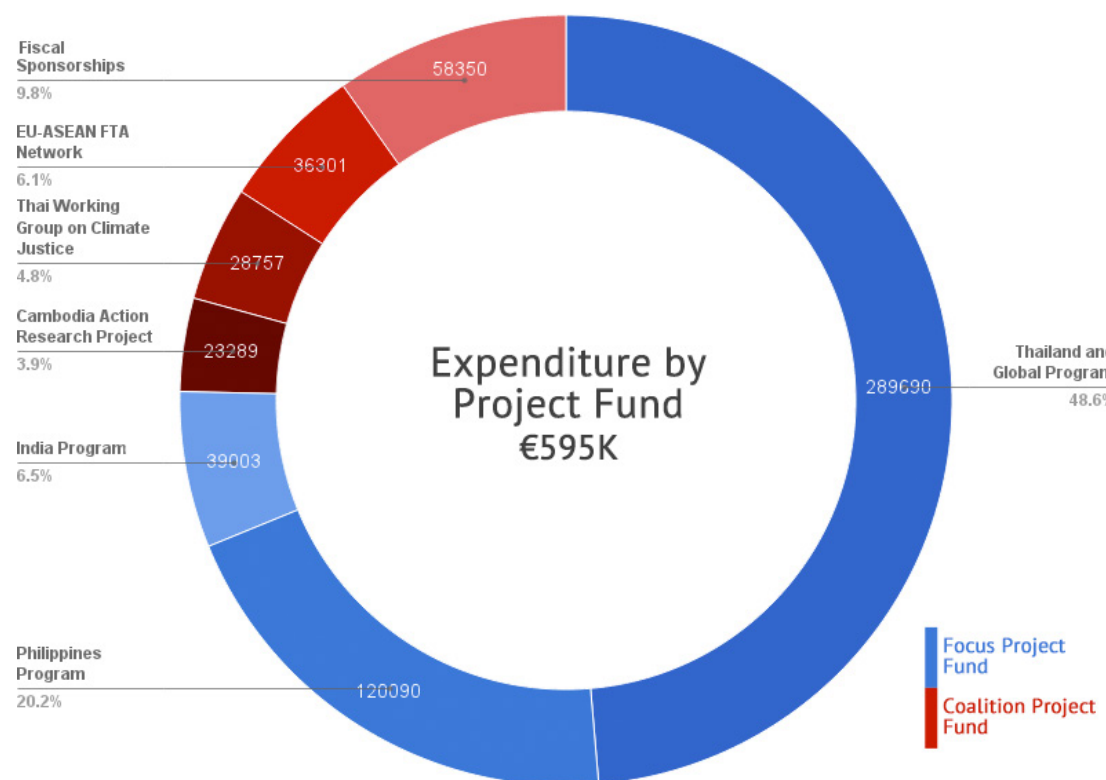
While we have been largely successful in bringing our organization through the transition, Focus is still in a financially challenging situation, as are many of our allies and partners. Focus would not have been able to make it through the transition without the trust, patience and support (financial and otherwise) of our donors, former staff and other friends, which we greatly appreciate. With governments unable or unwilling to address the environmental and economic crises, Focus knows that now is a historical moment where a larger, more powerful movement is needed to break the deadlock. The odds might be against social movements defeating the corporate interests in the years ahead, but nevertheless we see ourselves upping the ante in campaign and advocacy work together with allies old and new.





# Income & Expenditure

Financial Status {,000 EUR}						
Assets	Total Cash & Bank Balances	Program Funds	Coalition Funds	Fiscal Sponsorships	Gratuity and Severance Reserves	Operational Reserves
Balance as of 31 Dec 2011	506.18	42.44	45.95	26.96	340.98	49.83
Income During 2012	665.37	538.85	95.13	31.39	-	-
Expenditure During 2012	856.26	448.78	88.35	58.35	260.78	-
Balance as of 31 Dec 2012	315.29	132.51	52.75	-	80.19	49.83





# Focus Staff



## Pablo Solon

Pablo is our Executive Director. He was the former Bolivian ambassador, under the Evo Morales government, to the United Nations. As ambassador to the UN, he became known as a tireless advocate for the rights of nature; he delivered the now famous speech explaining why Bolivia chose to “stand alone” by not signing the Cancun climate agreement in 2010.



## Walden Bello

Walden is one of the founder of Focus. He is currently one of our senior analysts and a representative in the 14th and 15th congress of the Republic of the Philippines. A 2003 recipient of the prestigious Right Livelihood award (the ‘Alternative Nobel Prize’), Walden is considered the most respected anti-globalization thinker in Asia by the Belgian newspaper “Le Soir”.



## Andrew de Sousa

Andrew joined Focus on the Global South in 2012 as the Operations Manager. His experience includes working with the Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala, the Timor-Leste Institute for Reconstruction Monitoring and Analysis, and most recently as the director of the Gunung Palung Orangutan Conservation Program in Indonesian Borneo.



## Nathaporn Meesuay

Note graduated in Accounting from Chulalongkorn University, Thailand and MSc. in Management Information system from University of Surrey, U.K.. He has worked as an accountant for several private companies in different industries. Note recently joined Focus as our accounting and finance officer.



## Dorothy Guerrero

Dottie is an educator, writer, researcher, and organizer. She has both organized and participated in local and international courses, workshops and conferences on climate change, China, regional integration/ASEAN, social and environmental impacts of trade and investments, transition and democratization. She coordinates our Climate and Environmental Justice programme.





## Jacques-Chai Chomthongdi

JC has an MA in Development Studies from the University of East Anglia, United Kingdom. He joined Focus on the Global South in July 2000. For nearly two years, he worked at the Catholic Council of Thailand for Development (Caritas Thailand). He currently coordinates the Thai Climate Justice Working Group and is very active in the Thai FTA Watch.



## Shalmali Guttal

Shal joined Focus in 1997 and currently specializes on our work on defending and reclaiming the commons. She comes from an NGO background and has worked in India, the United States, and mainland Southeast Asia. Her academic background is in the social sciences with particular emphasis on participatory education and qualitative research. She coordinates our Reclaiming the Commons programme



## Soontaree Nakaviroj

Soon has a BA English and History of Arts degree from the Faculty of Archaeology at Silpakorn University, Thailand. She is a former administrative assistant of SARCS Secretariat at the Environmental Research Institute, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. She joined Focus in 1998 as an administrative assistant.



## Kordet Thinkohkaew

Jack was the administrator of the Bangkok office for part of 2012. He has previously worked in both private sector and international non profit organizations. Jack graduated with a Bachelor in Arts from Assumption University of Thailand.



## Raffy Simbol

Qiqo is the current IT/Librarian of Focus. He joined Focus in 2008 but prior to that, he had been an intern of the Philippines Programme for two years. Qiqo manages several websites and databases of Focus. He is also in charge of the Focus mediatheque and knowledge management. He graduated from the University of the Philippines with a degree in Bachelor of Library and Information Science.



## Clarissa Militante

Clark has a degree in AB Literature from the De La Salle University, Manila (1985). Professionally she started as a journalist, having worked as a reporter-writer for Philippine News and Features in the mid-1980s and early 1990s. She also became Special Reports Editor of gmanews.tv in 2006. Her first novel was long listed in the 2009 Man Asian Literary Prize. She is the head of the Philippines office





## Joseph Purugganan

Joseph joined Focus in February 2003 to help coordinate the nationwide campaign of the Stop the New Round Coalition to derail the WTO-Doha round negotiations. He works on trade and climate issues in Focus and is the co-coordinator for Southeast Asia of the EU-ASEAN FTA Campaign Network. Joseph coordinates the Trade and Investment team.



## Lyn dela Cruz

Lyn is our Administration and Finance officer in Manila. With 11 years of experience working with the peoples organizations, Lyn joined Focus in January 2010. She graduated from Polytechnic University of the Philippines, with a degree on Bachelor of Accountancy and Law.



## Mary Ann Manahan

Meanne is a program officer based in our Manila office. She joined Focus in March 2003 and has since worked on the commons (land, water, and freedom of information issues), including issues related to international financial institutions such as the ADB and the WB; issues of privatization and regulation of public utilities.



## Trisha Agarwala

Trisha joined Focus as a Programme Officer in April 2012. She possesses a master's in Sociology from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and also holds a diploma in French. Prior to joining Focus, she was with the Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability, New Delhi where she was tracking government budgets in water and sanitation and health.



## Afsar Jafri

Afsar has been with Focus since 2005 and is our India/ South Asia coordinator based in New Delhi. With over 15 years of work on agriculture and food policy, he has been leading Focus' research on food sovereignty. Afsar has close links with farmers groups within and outside India. He has a Masters in Philosophy (International Law) from Jawaharlal Nehru University.



## Mansi Sharma

Mansi joined Focus on the Global South as our New Delhi Finance & Administration Officer in 2012. She possesses ten years of rigorous experience in managing accounts and administration in various organizations of national and international repute. She is activist by heart and has led many programs & campaigns on the issues of rural livelihoods, women social & political empowerment.



## Board of Directors

### **Christophe Aguiton**

Attac France

### **Walden Bello**

Focus on the Global South – Philippines Program

### **Alejandro Bendaña**

Centro de Estudios Internacionales

### **Niyada Kiatying-Angsulee (Left in 2012)**

Chulalongkorn University  
Social Research Institute

### **Vitaya Kulsomboon (Joined in 2012)**

Chulalongkorn University  
Social Research Institute

### **Indra Lubis**

La Via Campesina

### **Seema Mustafa**

Director at Centre for Policy Analysis

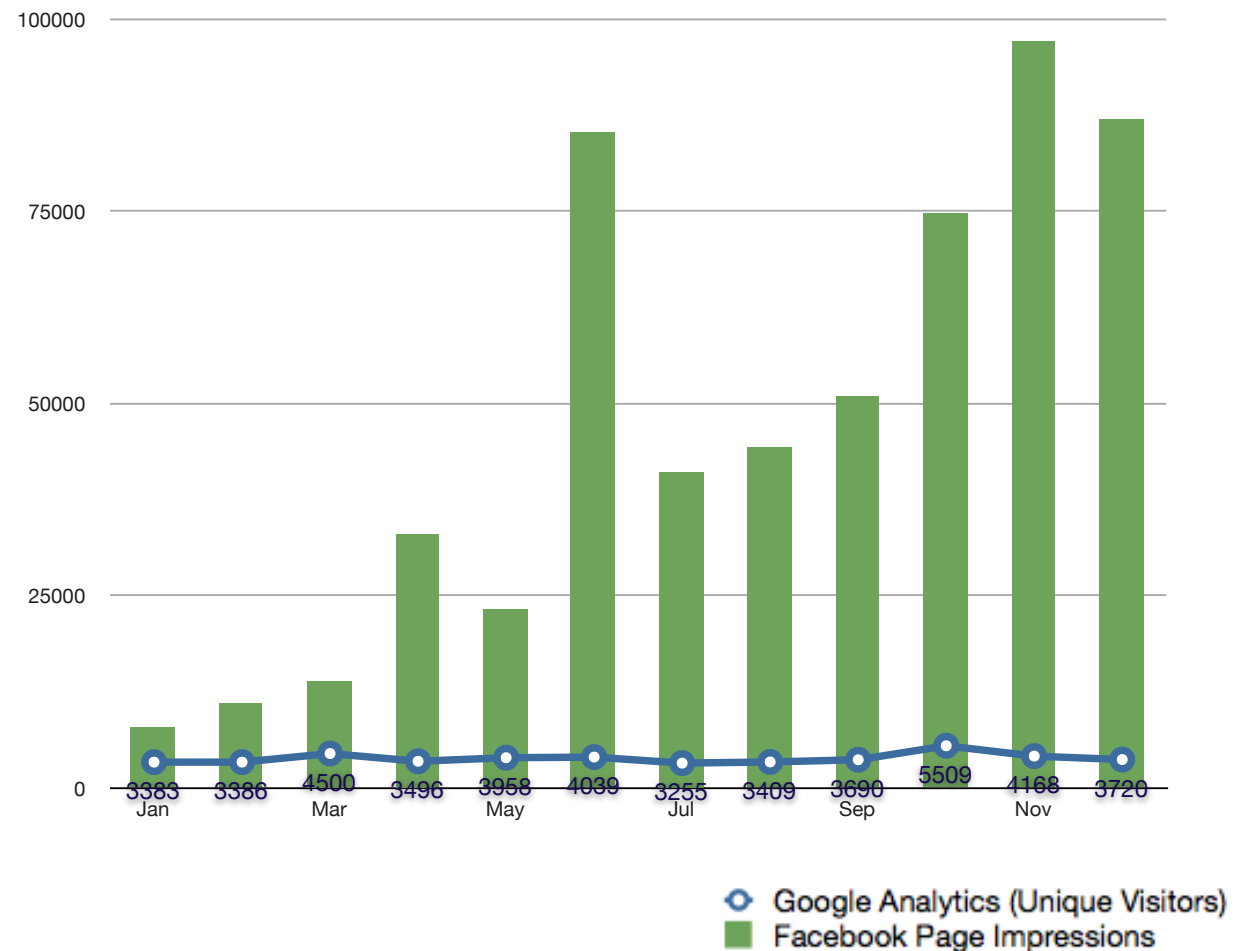
### **Peter Rosset**

Land Research Action Network

### **Surichai Wun'Gao (Chair)**

The Rotary Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies  
Chulalongkorn University

## Web Outreach



We re-designed our webpage ([www.focusweb.org](http://www.focusweb.org)) to better reflect our Whose New Asia programs. In 2012, we reached an average monthly audience of over 51,000 through our website, Facebook, Twitter and email newsletter, a 16% increase from 2011



## Key Articles

Joseph Purugganan. **Business as Usual in ASEAN's Trade Policy.** January 2012

Joseph Purugganan. **Responsible Agricultural Investments: Rationalizing Land Grabbing.** January 2012

Walden Bello. **Wall Street Excess and Main Street Distress: The Apple Connection.** Philippine Daily Inquirer. February 2012

Joseph Purugganan. **Position Paper on Double Taxation submitted to Senate Foreign Relations Committee.** February 2012

Joseph Purugganan. **Position paper on House Resolution 937 on transparency and participation in trade policy making. Submitted and presented before the House Special Committee on Globalization.** February 2012

Pablo Solon. **The International Campaign on the Commodification of Nature. No Green Economy.** February 2012

Pablo Solon. **Climate Change: We Need to Guarantee the Right to Not Migrate.** February 2012

David A. McDonald and Greg Ruiters. **Public Options for Essential Services in the Global South.** MSP, February 2012

Pablo Solon. **We Need to End the Apartheid Against Nature.** February 2012

Walden Bello. **Urgently Needed: Transparency in US-Philippine Relations.** Philippine Daily Inquirer. February 2012

**State of Agrarian Report.** Focus on the Global South. March 2012

Mary Ann Manahan, Buenaventura Dargantes, Daniel Moss and V. Suresh. **Water Commons, Water Citizenship and Water Security Case Studies.** March 2012

Mary Ann Manahan. **Overcoming the Challenge to the Right to Water in Asia.** Focus on the Global South. March 2012

Mary Ann Manahan, Gabriella Zanzanini and Claudia Campera. **Future of Water Movement Session: A Summary.** Focus on the Global South, Food and Water Watch Europe and Water Watch/RED VIDA. March 2012

Clarissa Militante. **Women Must Stand Against Militarism.** Focus on the Global South. March 2012.

Mary Ann Manahan. **"Green Economy" and Rio+20. Paper/Speech** delivered at the Government-CSO Meeting on the Right to Water and Sanitation. March 2012

Mary Ann Manahan. **Springs of Hope: Defending, Reclaiming and Redefining Public Water.** April 2012

Pablo Solon. **It's the Time for the Rights of Mother Earth.** Climate Connections. April 2012

Mary Ann Manahan. **Buying Back the Public, 136 Euros at a Time.** April 2012

Mary Ann Manahan. **Walk the Talk: From Marsai-les to Rio, Together.** April 2012

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Clarissa Militante. **Disempowering Women Through Green Economy.** Climate Connections.

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Walden Bello. **Why are Philippine Funds Being Used to Bail Out Irresponsible European Banks.** Philippine Daily Inquirer. June 2012  
Shalmali Guttal. **New Permits to Pollute: REDD and Green Economy.** *Revolucion Alimentaria*. June 2012

Pablo Solon. **Confronting the Rio+20 "Green Economy" Calls for Rights of Mother Earth.** Climate Connections. June 2012

Mary Ann Manahan. **Alternative Models for Water Governance and Management: The People's Challenge to "Green Economy".** Focus on the Global South, June 2012

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Pablo Solon. **At the Crossroads Between Green Economy and Rights of Nature.** Global Exchange. June 2012

Pablo Solon. **The European "Desmadre": Uniting the Struggles Against the System.** July 2012

Walden Bello. **Will the Burma Road End in Democracy.** Philippine Daily Inquirer. July 2012

Walden Bello. **We don't Need \$100,000, Mr. Thomas: We Need Action on Greenhouse Gas Emissions.** Philippine Daily Inquirer. July 2012

Walden Bello and Sabrina Gacad. **Another Bright Idea We Cannot Afford.** Philippine Daily Inquirer. July 2012



Dorothy Grace Guerrero. **Can the Green Economy Solve China's Development and Environment Changes?** August 2012

Rebecca Leonard and Jacques-chai Chomthongdi. **Locating Climate Justice within a National Context.** August 2012

Dorothy Grace Guerrero. **The ASEAN and the Challenges of Climate Change: Is Green Economy the Solution or is it Business as Usual?** August 2012

Dorothy Grace Guerrero. **Addressing the Twin Challenge of Energy Poverty and Climate Change: Towards People's Participation for a Sustainable Energy Future.** AEPF Briefing Paper for AEPF9, August 2012

Walden Bello. **Weapons for the Weak in the Climate Struggle.** Znet August 2012

Dorothy Grace Guerrero. **UNFCCC's Increasing Isolation from Reality.** Carbon Market Watch. 2012

Joseph Purugganan. **Greening Free Trade Means Protecting Status Quo.** Focus Policy Review.

Mary Ann Manahan, Buenaventura Dargantes and Cheryl Batistel. **Water Justice and Democracy: Alternatives to Commercialisation and Privatisation of Water in Asia.** Comhlamh, WEED, and AITEC.

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Walden Bello. **An Island of Growth in a Stagnant Sea.** Philippine Daily Inquirer. September 2012

Rebeca Leonard, Jacques-chai Chomthongdi and Faikham Harnarong. **Thai power development plan is at odds with reality.** September 2012

Pablo Solon and Walden Bello. **Why are Climate Negotiations Locked in Stalemate?** Bangkok Post. September 2012

Walden Bello. **Economic Crisis Shake Old Paradigms.** Philippine Daily Inquirer. October 2012  
Walden Bello. **Obama's Victory: How it Happened and What it means.** Philippine Daily Inquirer. November 2012

Joseph Purugganan. **Questioning ASEAN's Path to Development: Grassroots Leaders Raise Concerns on Trade and Investment Policies, Projects.** November 2012

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Pablo Solon. **Climate Migration Central to Doha Debate. Responding to Climate Change.** December 2012

Pablo Solon. **Strike Four for Climate Change Negotiations: Rethinking Our Strategies.** International Journal of Socialist Renewal. December 2012

Clarissa Militante. **Whose Growth? Whose Democracy.** Focus Policy Review. December 2012

Jacques-chai Chomthongdi. **FTA Frenzy in the Land of Smiles.** December 2012

Walden Bello. **Why the Philippines cannot afford to be "Like-Minded" in Doha.** Philippine Daily Inquirer. December 2012

# Newsletter



Over 15 years (1997-2012), Focus published 160 issues of the newsletter Focus on Trade. The final edition, a special on the Rio+20 summit, was published in June 2012. As we completed our transition process, we recast our official publication to reflect the issues we are now emphasizing, the kind of work we are doing and the challenges that we are facing. The first two issues of the new Focus on the Global South Newsletter were published in the second half of 2012.

# Key Publications 2012



Focus Policy Review:  
Whose Growth?  
Whose Democracy?

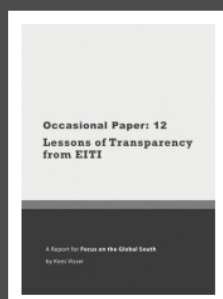


Whose "Clean"  
Development?:  
Communities Speak Out



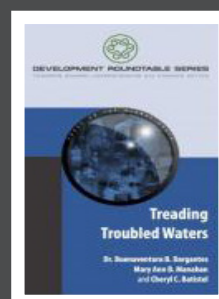
Precedent-Setting  
Insurance for REDD  
Project in Cambodia  
Raises Concerns

For a complete list of our publications visit our website:  
<http://focusweb.org/publications>



Occasional Paper 12  
Lessons of Transparency  
from EITI

by Kees Visser



Treading Troubled  
Waters



## FOCUS ON THE GLOBAL SOUTH

### Regional Headquarters

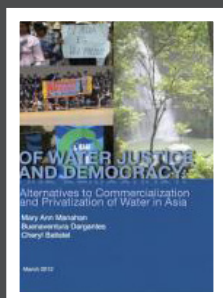
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Bangkok 10330, THAILAND  
Tel: +66 2 218 7363-68  
Fax: +66 2 255 9976

### India Office

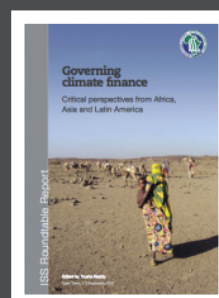
C/o Intercultural Resources (ICR)  
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Of Water Justice and  
Democracy: Alternatives  
to Commercialization  
and Privatization of  
Water in Asia



Governing climate  
finance: Critical pers-  
pectives from Africa, Asia  
and Latin America

with articles from  
Joseph Purugganan,  
Jacques-chai Chomthongdi  
and Nicola Bullard