

what
next?
FORUM



The Resilience and Development Programme (SwedBio)
at Stockholm Resilience Centre

Stockholm Resilience Centre
Research for Governance of Social-Ecological Systems



Stockholm
University



Seminar invitation

Rio +20 or Silent Spring-50? What Next after Rio? How can Sweden take international leadership on precaution and technology assessment?

Pat Mooney and Silvia Ribeiro, ETC Group

Thursday 20 September, 9.00-12.00 (sandwiches from 8.30)
Venue: K.A Almgren Sidenväveri museum,
Repslagargatan 15A, Stockholm (T-bana, Slussen)



We are pleased to invite you to a seminar with Pat Mooney and Silvia Ribeiro, ETC Group, to tackle some of the biggest, but yet least discussed issues we are facing in the coming decades: the potential impacts of new, emerging technologies and societies' ability to deal with these in fair and sustainable manners.

Through their work in ETC Group, Pat and Silvia have worked over decades tracking the developments of new technologies – early biotech, nanotechnology, human performance enhancement and more recently synthetic biology and geoengineering. They have been remarkably successful to, at an early stage, alert society about wider socio-economic and ecological implications of such new technologies and through their own action influence governments and the UN system to form policies and regulations.

The moratorium on geo-engineering – an idea originally conceived by ETC group – that was unanimously accepted by all 193 member states of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Nagoya 2010, was a direct result of ETC Groups' close interaction with civil society groups and governments.

At Rio +20 earlier this year, ETC group succeeded in advancing these achievements further as governments reaffirmed the moratorium on ocean fertilisation (one kind of geoengineering technology), and also included a recognition of the importance of strengthening technology evaluation in the light of the possible impacts of New Technologies. In Rio +20, it was also agreed to request the UN Secretary-General to report back to the General Assembly later in 2012 on how a technology facility could be constructed within the United Nations. In another area of ETC Group engagement, the ground-breaking and participatory model of the re-constituted Committee for World Food Security was highlighted by Rio +20 as a model for more inclusive global governance.

In this seminar, we will hear Pat and Silvia elaborate on their knowledge, work and perspectives on these issues at large, and particularly at Rio +20. They will also share their overall analysis of Rio +20 and its shortcomings. Most importantly, we will discuss possible ways forward.

In particular we would like to discuss possibilities for Sweden to continue taking a positive, active role in pursuing the *precautionary principle* by taking the issue of technology assessment forward.

According to ETC Group, Sweden played a supportive and constructive role in the government negotiations at Rio+20, thus enabling a successful outcome in this area. Pat's and Silvia's purpose with their visit to Sweden is therefore to follow-up and engage in discussions on next steps to encourage continued international leadership on these issues. This necessarily includes also a broader mobilisation and engagement by society at large, which is why we invite you to this seminar. Our idea is to gather a diverse group of people from government, state agencies, academia, civil society, media and others.

Having worked closely with Pat and Silvia for many years, we can promise you a dynamic, stimulating, humorous, inspiring and very challenging morning about some of the biggest challenges of our future.

The structure of the seminar is very informal – we will begin by allowing Pat and Silvia to first set the context by briefly outlining the key trends in relation to new, emerging technologies and their possible implications on society, and then move into the Rio +20 process. The latter part of the seminar will be fully participatory with open discussion on the way forward.

The seminar is free. We encourage you to arrive in advance of the meeting to join us for a coffee/tea and sandwich. We will also provide coffee/tea during the seminar.

Please register in advance (latest 18 September) by sending an e-mail to pamela.cordero@stockholmresilience.su.se.

The seminar is organised in cooperation by the What Next Forum and The Resilience and Development Programme (SwedBio) at Stockholm Resilience Centre, and the Right Livelihood Award Foundation.

We wish you warmly welcome to the seminar!

Niclas Hällström
What Next Forum

Maria Schultz
The Resilience and Development
Programme (SwedBio) at Stockholm
Resilience Centre

Ole von Uexkull
Right Livelihood Award
Foundation



About ETC Group and Pat Mooney

Pat Mooney is the founder of ETC Group (Action group on Erosion, Technology and Concentration) and has worked on issues relating to environment and development during his whole life. He was the winner of the Right Livelihood Award (Alternative Nobel Prize) already in 1985. Pat and the ETC Group has always been at the forefront of the debate, and played a critical role in identifying new issues at an early stage. They highlighted the implications of corporate control over seeds and their packaging with pesticides already in the 1970s, were among the first to highlight risks and controversies around biotech and GMOs, brought the issues or risk in relation to nanotechnology and related emerging technologies to the international public debate, and have recently been focusing much on geo-engineering and synthetic biology – technologies with profound implications for humanity and the earth's ecosystems.

While tracking technological development, Pat and ETC Group have also consistently monitored the private sector in terms of both corporate mergers and control of intellectual property. While doing cutting-edge analysis of future trends, Pat and ETC group have been remarkably active in influencing and shaping policy-making as well as the concerns of social movements. They conceived of a UN Treaty on plant genetic resources that 20 years later came into existence (the first UN treaty of the new millenium), they were the key actor behind the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) moratorium on geo-engineering, eventually backed by 193 countries, and as a more recent example, recently stopped a UK government funded geo-engineering experiment by mobilising a large part of civil society.

Since many years Pat has been working closely with the What Next Forum (and earlier the What Next project), and, inspired by this work, wrote a book outlining both business-as-usual and alternative scenarios for the coming three decades. The book is already published in German, with English and French editions forthcoming.

More information about Pat and the ETC Group can be found at www.etcgroup.org and www.whatnext.org.

About Silvia Ribeiro

Silvia Ribeiro is the Latin America Director for ETC group. She is based in Mexico. She has a background as a journalist and environmental campaigner in Uruguay, Brazil and Sweden. She has extensive experience in social and environmental advocacy. As a civil society representative, she has attended and followed the negotiations of several of United Nations environmental treaties. She has also been an invited speaker at many civil society events around the world speaking on transgenic and other new technologies, corporate concentration, intellectual property, indigenous and farmers' rights. Silvia has also produced a number of articles related to these issues, that have been published in Latin American, European and North American magazines and papers, as well as chapters in several books. She is a member of the editorial committee of the Latin American magazine "Biodiversidad, sustento y culturas", published by Grain and REDES-AT, the Spanish magazine "Ecología Política" and others.

The Resilience and Development Programme – Swedbio

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The Resilience and Development programme at Stockholm Resilience Centre – SwedBio – is a knowledge interface working for resilient ecosystem management and governance through policy and methods development, facilitation of dialogues, contributions to strategic programmes in developing countries and learning from the international partners for later dissemination.

SwedBio's intention is to contribute to an improved dialogue culture in its field of work. An important aspect of SwedBio's work is the exchange of experiences and information between different actors and stakeholders, e.g. between grass-roots levels, science and policy and decision makers.

Over time, SwedBio has been building trust and positive relations with a broad range of stakeholders, and has become internationally known and recognised as a strategic and well-respected contact that can contribute to international policy and methods development. Our areas of expertise are agriculture, forestry, aquatic resources and urban and rural issues.

More information about Swedbio can be found at www.stockholmresilience.org



The What Next Forum is an emerging initiative that builds on many years of prior work on 'Another Development' and the What Next Project at the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation. As a set of core activities the What Next Forum seeks to convene informal dialogues, roundtable discussions, exploratory seminars, strategy workshops, as well as public debates to facilitate a broad range of actors to meet each other in new constellations.

The What Next Forum aims to explore new issues, challenges and alternative views on environment and development. The meetings strive to create opportunities for new thinking and exploration of unconventional ideas – and of possible trajectories ahead. Activities strive to catalyse promising ideas and initiatives into action. By convening meetings of actors and thinkers, the What Next Forum hope to catalyse the formulation of strategies, help initiate networks and organisations, and provide active support to both policy-makers and activists.

More information about What Next Forum can be found at www.whatnext.org



The Right Livelihood Award was established in 1980 to honour and support those "offering practical and exemplary answers to the most urgent challenges facing us today". It has become widely known as the 'Alternative Nobel Prize' and there are now 145 Laureates from 61 countries.

Presented annually in Stockholm at a ceremony in the Swedish Parliament, the Right Livelihood Award is usually shared by four Recipients, but not all Laureates receive a cash award. Often an Honorary Award is given to a person or group whose work the Jury wishes to recognise but who is not primarily in need of monetary support. The prize money for each Laureate is 50,000 € (2011). The prize money is for ongoing successful work, never for personal use.

The Right Livelihood Award is widely recognized as the world's premier award for personal courage and social transformation. Besides the financial support, it enables its Recipients to reach out to an international audience that otherwise might not have heard of them. Often, the Award also gives crucial protection against repression.

More information about the Right Livelihood Award can be found at www.rightlivelihood.org