Hype and agroecology: Is ‘low input’ farming better for the environment and economy?

[Editor’s note: Henry Miller, physician and molecular biologist, is a fellow in Scientific Philosophy and Public Policy at Stanford University’s Hoover Institution.]

In the 1960s, when biologist Paul Ehrlich was predicting mass starvation due to rapid population growth, plant breeder Norman Borlaug was developing the new crops and approaches to agriculture that would become mainstays of the Green Revolution. Those advances, along with other innovations in agricultural technology, are credited with preventing more than a billion deaths from starvation and improving the nutrition of the billions more people alive today. Yet some seem eager to roll back these gains.

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[T]the United Nations Human Rights Council recently published a report by Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food Hilal Elver that called for a global agroecology regime, including a new global treaty to regulate and reduce the use of pesticides and genetic engineering, which it labeled human-rights violations.

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This all might be dismissed as simply more misguided UN activism. But it is just one element of a broader and more consequential effort by global NGOs, together with allies in the European Union, to advance an agroecology model, in which critical farm inputs, including pesticides and genetically engineered crop plants, are prohibited.

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Depriving developing countries of more efficient and sustainable approaches to agriculture relegates them to poverty and denies them food security. That is the real human-rights violation.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: The Right to Agricultural Technology