

00:00:13 Mia Audrey

Welcome to Earth Matters, environmental justice stories from so called Australia and around the world, produced at the studios of Three CR on Welcome to Earth Matters, environmental justice stories from so called Australia and around the world, produced at the studios of Three CR on Wurundjeri, Weimaran Country in Narm, Melbourne and broadcast across the continent via the Community Radio Network.

00:00:30 Mia Audrey

I'm Mia Audrey, I pay my respects to elders past and present, of the Wurundjeri Wovrung and of the many lands our content reaches.

00:00:41 Mia Audrey

Sovereignty has never been ceded, always was, always will be.

00:00:46 Mia Audrey

There can be no environmental justice without justice for First Nations people across the globe.

00:00:53 Mia Audrey

It's a very concrete struggle for land, but it's also a struggle for who defines the imaginary of what is fair, what is healthy, what is good for everybody, and what is the model of agriculture that we should have society support.

00:01:20 Mia Audrey

Take a moment to remember what you've eaten so far today.

00:01:24 Mia Audrey

Consider the ingredients that went into your food.

00:01:27 Mia Audrey

How much do you know about where they came from?

00:01:31 Mia Audrey

Was your food produced nearby, or did it travel far overseas, even?

00:01:36 Mia Audrey

Was it picked and processed by hand or by machine?

00:01:41 Mia Audrey

How many pesticides and chemical fertilisers made your food possible?

00:01:46 Mia Audrey

How much topsoil was eroded, compacted or depleted of its nutrition?

00:01:51 Mia Audrey

How much water was used?

00:01:53 Mia Audrey

How much wasted?

00:01:55 Mia Audrey

Who, human or otherwise, was harmed along your food chain?

00:02:01 Mia Audrey

This is not a test.

00:02:03 Mia Audrey

The reality is that for many of us, these questions are impossible to answer.

00:02:07 Mia Audrey

The backstories of our food are shrouded in mystery, often unfolding in shadow places, Val Plumwood's term for places we rely on but don't know, and which bear the brunt of environmental degradation.

00:02:22 Mia Audrey

The ability to make informed choices about our food is 1 aspect of food sovereignty.

00:02:28 Mia Audrey

More broadly, food sovereignty is the right to define our own food systems and to access healthy, culturally appropriate food that is produced sustainably rather than the demands of the market and corporations.

00:02:43 Mia Audrey

Food sovereignty puts the needs of the people who produce and consume food at the heart of food systems and policy.

00:02:50 Mia Audrey

It's key to addressing the overlapping crises of climate, hunger and inequality.

00:02:56 Mia Audrey

Despite this, it's likely you don't hear the term food sovereignty around much.

00:03:02 Mia Audrey

The food system accounts for about 25% of total greenhouse gas emissions, yet it's commonly left out of discussions about the climate emergency.

00:03:12 Mia Audrey

Over half of the land on this continent is used for agriculture, but rarely do we bring food and farming into land backed discussions, as a climate solution, as a Nexus of decolonisation, as a battleground for workers rights and more.

00:03:29 Mia Audrey

Food is so close, so ever present, we can forget to pay attention.

00:03:34 Mia Audrey

There are of course exceptions, individuals and communities who are working to fix what's fixable, halt what's causing harm and build better food systems.

00:03:46 Mia Audrey

In this episode and my next one in a month's time, you will hear from some of these unsung heroes, the farmers and organisers of the food sovereignty movement.

00:03:56 Mia Audrey

This episode is an in depth feature on Brazil's Landless Workers Movement, also known as MST, a champion of food sovereignty for over 40 years, which has been instrumental in its development into a global movement.

00:04:10 Mia Audrey

Through its story, you will hear how struggles for land, social transformation and human emancipation converge in the food sovereignty movement.

00:04:20 Mia Audrey

Calling into a recent food sovereignty convergence in Narm Melbourne, here's Anna Cha, member of the National Coordinators Network of the Landless Workers Movement, about how it came to be and its vision for the food system in Brazil and beyond.

00:04:37 Anna Cha

So in Brazil, the question of access to land and, and the ownership of land has always been a very important issue.

00:04:47 Anna Cha

And we, we usually, we used to say that the question of land, it's in the route even today of the great social inequality that exists in our country for you to have a dimension of what that means.

00:05:08 Anna Cha

Still today, 1% of the land owners own more than 50% of all the land in Brazil.

00:05:18 Anna Cha

So it's very concentrated, the land.

00:05:22 Anna Cha

And on the other hand, we still have more than 5 million landless people who could potentially live and work in the land.

00:05:30 Anna Cha

So the struggle for land has always been in part of our historical struggles, whether it's in colonial times, the struggle of the indigenous people, but also the struggle of peoples who were enslaved and who even sought the right to create free communities which were called Columbus [Spelling]

00:05:53 Anna Cha

That still until today are a great inspiration for for all of us who who believe the land should fulfil a social function and not to be in the hands of just a few people.

00:06:11 Anna Cha

But even after the legal signature of the end of slavery, the land was never been democratised and remain in the hands of those few land owners which usually were politicians or very rich people.

00:06:27 Anna Cha

So it's in this process of struggles for land that MSD emerged 41 years ago.

00:06:35 Anna Cha

It was in 1984, the foundation of our movement and Brazil leaves a moment of redemption.

00:06:46 Anna Cha

We have had 21 years military dictatorship and it was a very difficult moment for all those who leave and try to to build a different perspective of what were that moment in government.

00:07:03 Anna Cha

And so there was a lot of persecution against all leftist political organisations and especially also social movements, peasant movements.

00:07:16 Anna Cha

But MSC merged as a social movement that struggled for land.

00:07:21 Anna Cha

But also since the beginning it was the movement who was claiming for a project of Agri reform and had a perspective of social transformation and human emancipation.

00:07:34 Anna Cha

So land was the first goal, the 1st even necessity of people who join MST.

00:07:43 Anna Cha

Landless people usually are very poor people because they don't have the the the means of projections to to are able to survive from their work.

00:07:55 Anna Cha

So they join MST in this goal to to have a small piece of land to produce.

00:08:02 Anna Cha

But since the beginning the the movement had in this perspective a biggest goal of social transformation.

00:08:11 Anna Cha

So when Amnesty joined together with other social movements, especially peasant movements, also some indigenous movements from all over the world, and they found the LA via Campesina, which is this international network that defends the right of peasants defence a a perspective of agriculture on agricolgy principles.

00:08:40 Anna Cha

And of course, one of the pillars of, of the, of the, the struggle of the programme of La Vie Campesina, it's food sovereignty, which is very basically the right to decide what to produce, how to produce and for whom to produce.

00:08:58 Anna Cha

And doing that we are also saying that we need to decide what we want to eat.

00:09:04 Anna Cha

No, So food cannot be a commodity.

00:09:07 Anna Cha

Food, it's a human right.

00:09:09 Anna Cha

And of course, not just for the peasants, but for all people in Brazil, the agriculture system is dominated by Agri business companies and also some Latifun juice.

00:09:22 Anna Cha

These huge amount of land who are owned by just a few landowner.

00:09:29 Anna Cha

And what is the result of this concentration of land and this so unequal distribution of of land?

00:09:38 Anna Cha

Well, the result is the growing of hunger.

00:09:43 Anna Cha

The food we eat, it's full of poisons.

00:09:47 Anna Cha

We are seeing that our soil, the countryside environment is being destroyed and and even the people in the city, they became hostage of ultra possessive and expensive and unhealthy food, even if sometimes that food is laid has healthy food or food for from the future or whatever.

00:10:15 Anna Cha

So it's a combination of the model of producing from Agri business sector, but also this huge cultural industry and propaganda machine that makes people believe that this kind of way of producing and doing agriculture, it's, it's the right way and it's the most modern and it's what we need to support.

00:10:44 Anna Cha

So it's a very concrete struggle for land and for having the means of production and the means of doing agriculture.

00:10:54 Anna Cha

But it's also a struggle in, in the subject subjective ways.

00:11:01 Anna Cha

It's, it's a struggle for who defines the imaginary of what is fair, what is healthy, what is good for everybody.

00:11:12 Anna Cha

And in in our case, what is what is the model of agriculture that we should have society support.

00:11:23 Anna Cha

So our struggle and what we are proposing is that the model of Agri business, this agriculture that is based on monoculture that is based on producing with, with pesticides, with poison, this way of producing to export and not to, to, to, to, to feed an internal market and, and feed the people.

00:11:57 Anna Cha

We believe that it's not a good option for our society, not even in Brazil, not in any other country of the world.

00:12:07 Anna Cha

And in opposed to that, we are proposing what we are calling people's agrarian reform.

00:12:16 Anna Cha

When MSD was found in our programme, we wish to say that we are fighting for agrarian reform in a classic way of of of thinking, agrarian reform basically redistribute lands for those who don't have land and want to work on land and plant on land.

00:12:40 Anna Cha

But with the advance of all the capitalist system, with the advance of Agri business, we somehow redefined that term of a grammar reform.

00:12:52 Anna Cha

And we say now what makes sense for us is to talk about people's agreement reform and what what is just the difference?

00:12:59 Anna Cha

The difference is it's not just the land that need to be redistribute.

00:13:04 Anna Cha

We need to build a new country project and that has land, has one of the the main course, but land to be produced with based on agricolgy in the respect of nature, in the respect of peasant culture, peasant food culture and people's control of territories.

00:13:27 Anna Cha

And of course, that means we need to have autonomy to produce.

00:13:33 Anna Cha

We need to make our production based on collective work, on equal participation of men and women, with peasant education, with the sharing of ancestral knowledge, but also with technology.

00:13:50 Anna Cha

We used to say it's make the countryside again a, a good place to live, a place not just to produce commodities, but a place where it's good to live.

00:14:05 Anna Cha

So this is our one of our greatest slogans that people's agrarian reform, it's a way of living better and not just in the countryside.

00:14:17 Anna Cha

Because if we are saying we are going to produce good food, healthy food, food produced based on non oppressed relations, we truly believe that the way that food will be received and for the people in the city, it will improve the life of everybody.

00:14:45 Mia Audrey

Anna Char of the Landless Workers Movement on agricultural reform as a thoroughly political project.

00:14:59 Mia Audrey

You're listening to Earth Matters on the Community Radio Network.

00:15:03 Mia Audrey

This is the first of two episodes on the topic of food sovereignty.

00:15:07 Mia Audrey

Next month, we will hear from folks on this continent about local efforts to revolutionise our food systems.

00:15:14 Mia Audrey

Today, Anna Char of the Landless Workers Movement is sharing about the fight for better food systems in Brazil and the growth of a global food sovereignty movement.

00:15:25 Mia Audrey

Here she is again going deeper into the goals and challenges of the movement for people's agrarian reform.

00:15:32 Anna Cha

And but it's not an easy to ask if it was Agri business didn't was not having so much power as it has nowadays, not just in Brazil, but as I was saying in many parts of the world.

00:15:49 Anna Cha

And that's why we also believe and it's one of the principles of MST that builds international solidarity, builds internationalism.

00:16:02 Anna Cha

It's a, a, a very important part of our struggle.

00:16:07 Anna Cha

We really believe that just our struggle won't build good sovereignty even just in Brazil because it's a collective struggle.

00:16:18 Anna Cha

It's an international struggle.

00:16:21 Anna Cha

The same way the our enemy, the Agri business companies, the Nope.

00:16:28 Anna Cha

And now looking in a broader sense to to what is happening in the world.

00:16:35 Anna Cha

Also the the neo fascist ideas and programmes and and then violence are international and are acting connected in different countries.

00:16:50 Anna Cha

So we also need to make our struggle connected with other parts of the world, connected with people who have the the same questions, the same problems, but also share ideas, also share projects, also also share experiences to overcome this, this situation and to make the the struggle for food sovereignty, but also for people's sovereignty.

00:17:16 Anna Cha

So that's very important for us.

00:17:19 Anna Cha

That's why MST since the beginning joined different networks, especially of, of peasant and, and organisations.

00:17:33 Anna Cha

But not just we are also part of the People's International Assembly and other, other networks.

00:17:41 Anna Cha

Because we truly believe that our struggle should be internationalist.

00:17:47 Anna Cha

And that's the, the, the way of, of trying to, to overcome all, all the, the problems that we have.

00:17:58 Anna Cha

Just to mention some of the, the major challenges that we not just as MST, but also as La Vic Campesina we faced and, and we need to invest and put our strength on, on, on them to build food sovereignty as a global and a strategic project.

00:18:19 Anna Cha

So I will, I will mention some of, of that goals.

00:18:22 Anna Cha

Of course, they are many, many.

00:18:25 Anna Cha

So the first one, I I mentioned it a lot already.

00:18:30 Anna Cha

It's to fight against Latifundu, it's the fight against land concentration and to fight against Agri business corporations, which means to propose programmes of people's Agri reform.

00:18:44 Anna Cha

It means to propose policies that can redistribute land, but also propose the idea of a good of the countryside to be a good place to live.

00:18:59 Anna Cha

A second big challenge is to produce healthy food, but healthy food in quality but also in quantity, because we need to feed the entire population.

00:19:10 Anna Cha

Everybody has the right to eat healthy food, food that is not produced with poison, food who was produced by in a agroecology way and manner.

00:19:26 Anna Cha

We need to fight against hunger in in our societies and that is part of of our task.

00:19:35 Anna Cha

But it's we need to do that with any kind of food.

00:19:40 Anna Cha

We need to that and we believe that it's possible to stop hunger, but with healthy foods so that people can not just feed themselves with any kind of food, but with food with that will promote them to have a healthy life and and and be able to to develop all the potentialities that they have as human beings all over the world.

00:20:10 Anna Cha

A third challenge that I could mention is the challenge of produce new relationships between those who produce food.

00:20:18 Anna Cha

Those who consume it between those who produce foods that we don't have, gender inequalities, that we don't have racism, we don't have any kind of oppressions of any type.

00:20:33 Anna Cha

So for us that is very important.

00:20:35 Anna Cha

We cannot say that we are producing and we are deciding what kind of food we should produce if the way we produce that food reproduces some of the the the major problems in society has racism or machismo or other kind of of of inequalities among the human beings in general.

00:21:05 Anna Cha

So for us it's very important the idea to valorise all those who who are producers and try to build different ways and more equal relations among them.

00:21:21 Anna Cha

A fourth challenge it has to be with the idea that food is not a commodity.

00:21:30 Anna Cha

And if it's not a commodity, we need to warranty new and fair regulations so that we know we don't have speculations on commercialization of food or any kind of other speculations of food that we know.

00:21:46 Anna Cha

That only makes that a big part of the population have not access to those food because the food becomes a commodity for us.

00:21:58 Anna Cha

A very, very other important challenge is how to plant, how to produce food, but protecting our forests, protecting our waters, protecting environmental reserves.

00:22:12 Anna Cha

So in MST but also in some organisations, Olivia Campesina, we have this huge campaign that is called Plant Trees and Produce Healthy Food.

00:22:24 Anna Cha

So we have this initiative of and a plan of planting thousands of, of trees in the next 10 years that we truly believe that it, it is with practical actions that we will fight and we will confront the, the climate exchange and not just with Peaches or even with some agreements that we are seeing that don't, don't produce any practical results.

00:22:58 Anna Cha

In this, in this sense, very important for us is to strength the peasant culture, a culture that also have a lot of joy on it, that sings life sings the work that we do that also produce art, produce food culture.

00:23:23 Anna Cha

It connects the past and the ancestral perspectives and and and knowledges with the present and with the future.

00:23:33 Anna Cha

We believe in that sense that a very, very important thing it's how to protect and produce healthy seeds and together with that to fight against the companies that produce genetic and transformed seeds.

00:23:51 Anna Cha

So La Via Campesina has this important and since many years campaign called seeds, a patrimony of people serving humanity and to live.

00:24:04 Anna Cha

It has a final message, the idea of building international solidarity among among people, among the peasants, to build alliance with the peasants, with those who live in the countryside, who live in the forest, who who live and and and dedicate their lives to to produce and to transform also the the waters, but also with the people and the workers who live in the city.

00:24:35 Anna Cha

So for us, it's very important this this class alliance also with the workers of the city.

00:24:41 Anna Cha

So solidarity, it's for us, it's not just an idea, it's a practical action.

00:24:49 Anna Cha

And it's also a need that we have has peasants and as working class international solidarity.

00:24:57 Anna Cha

It's about exchanging seeds, for instance, but also as we are doing here, exchanging ideas.

00:25:04 Anna Cha

It's for us about defending Palestine, defending the indigenous people of the world.

00:25:12 Anna Cha

It's it's also about saying no to the war.

00:25:16 Anna Cha

It's about making food a symbol of resistance and of of unity between people.

00:25:27 Anna Cha

So in that sense, I would really love to in in name of MST to, to thank you for the invitations for us.

00:25:37 Anna Cha

It's very, it's very inspiring and it's very powerful when we can be even in a online way, in a virtual way, participating in this, in this process of, of building food sovereignty and people sovereignty.

00:25:56 Mia Audrey

That was Anna Char on food sovereignty as a global strategic project.

00:26:09 Mia Audrey

You've been listening to Earth Matters Community Radio's national environmental justice programme.

00:26:15 Mia Audrey

I'm Mia Audrey.

00:26:17 Mia Audrey

Today on the show we heard from Anna Char, a member of the National Coordinators Network of Brazil's Landless Workers Movement, about how it came to be and its vision for fair food systems.

00:26:30 Mia Audrey

You can find out more at mstbrazil.org.

00:26:35 Mia Audrey

And for a teaser of next month's show, check out the Australian Food Sovereignty Alliance, [afsa.org dot AU](http://afsa.org.au).

00:26:43 Mia Audrey

We'll be hearing from members of AFSA alongside others working for better food systems here in so called Australia.

00:26:51 Mia Audrey

I hope you enjoyed this glimpse of the powerful global movement for food sovereignty.

00:26:56 Mia Audrey

I'm always inspired by how comrades elsewhere, often under harsher conditions, are pushing back against systems that cause harm.

00:27:04 Mia Audrey

It's been an honour to share Anna's words with you and I look forward to zooming back in on the Local next month.

00:27:11 Mia Audrey

If you missed any of today's show or want to catch up on others, you can find our podcasts at 3cr.org.au/earthmatters

00:27:27 Mia Audrey

Earth Matters would like to thank the Community Broadcasting Foundation for their financial support and the Community Radio Network for getting the programme out to you.

00:27:36 Mia Audrey

Earth Matters is produced in the studios of 3CR Narm Melbourne.

00:27:41 Mia Audrey

That's all for now, but Tune in next week for more environmental and social justice

stories.

00:27:59 SPK_3

Do you have a few children's picture books or footy boots that your kids have outgrown but want to find them a loving home?

00:28:05 SPK_3

You'll drop them in at 3 CR and put them in the Books and Boots bin.

00:28:10 SPK_3

Books and Boots regularly sends pre love children's picture books and sports footwear to remote and regional First Nations communities and children across the country.

00:28:19 SPK_3

Contact us at Books and Boots.

00:28:21 SPK_3

We'll go to the website www.booksandboots.org.au we love a good book.

00:28:48 SPK_3

Hi, I'm Jeffrey.

00:28:49 SPK_3

I'm Alfred.

00:28:50 SPK_3

I'm Irwin.

00:28:51 Anna Cha

And we are.

00:28:52 SPK_3

From the Voice of West.

00:28:54 Anna Cha

Papua Tuesday 6:30 until.

00:28:56 SPK_3

7:30 PM.

00:28:58 Anna Cha

News and music from West Papua.

00:29:22 SPK_4

Your station, Your voice throughout the month of.

00:29:24 Anna Cha

June, we're asking.

00:29:26 SPK_4

You to support Fierce.

00:29:27 Anna Cha

Independent and community.

00:29:28 SPK_4

Controlled media by making a donation to our Radiothon.

00:29:32 Mia Audrey

We'll be taking donations online, over the phone, and in the station to help keep 3 CR going for another year.

00:29:37 SPK_4

SO3 CR Radiothon kicks off in June.

00:29:40 SPK_4

To donate, go to 3c-r.org dot AU.

00:29:43 SPK_4

Call the station on 0394198377.

00:29:48 SPK_3

Or drop in at 21 Smith St, Fitzroy during business hours.

00:29:52 SPK_3

3 CR Your station, your voice.