

The access to land working group; directions and a call for contributions.

As a warm autumn sun tickled the backs of our eyes, and the forest grew softly all around, a motley crew at Wiersehoisel set about pruning the unruly bush that is the access to land working group.

It was decided that the aim of the working group will be to research and publicise information on accessing land in different legal and cultural contexts in order to provide both a living archive of relevant information and a point of comparison between contexts. Through the collection of histories and narratives, and the investigation of models, supportive organisations, tools, techniques and useful information, we aim to compile a comprehensive collection of resources on the issue of access land. This work is aimed at both helping people who are seeking to access land for agricultural projects as well as those attempting to understand the varied histories of land distribution and use that shape the societies we live in.

The research is built on the premise that anyone who has access to land has access to food, water, energy, shelter, healing, and wisdom. Anyone who has access to land therefore has the key to autonomy from the fiscal and political hierarchies of capitalism. For this reason, democratised access to land is not simply a threat to landowning elites – it is a threat to the ideology of the free market and the power structures that depend on it. Facilitating access to land by sharing experiences, information and advice is an essential step in the direction of food autonomy and a sustainable future, one turning on the path away from capitalism.

The access to land research will be divided into subjects that will be published on the RTF website, categorised by both country and content. This will allow the archive to function as a point of comparison across different places and as a library of information on specific legal and historical contexts. The substance of the information will be constituted by the research that we do, and the steps we take to share it.

This is a call and an invitation for your contribution.

The categories we have identified for research are:

- Histories of land distribution and use; a bibliography of useful articles and texts
- Details of organisations that work to link people and places
- Sources of information on the state of planning law, available grants and useful legal precedents
- Information on projects that have successfully gained access to land and the techniques they found useful.

If you can contribute to this research please send articles or information to malte@riseup.net. We would like to have contributions in a format that is ready for publication. The first set of documents will be uploaded by January and from then on the process will be rolling.

The question we should be asking is why is land not a political discussion? And what can we do to reconnect the wealth of the earth to the people who want to reap, grow and sow? The market is a web of illusion and promise, and yet concealed behind every new commodity lies

a truth; the ultimate source of all wealth is the land. When capitalism fades the earth will remain.