

Transforming Food Systems through Agroecology: Biovision Launches the Agroecological Food Futures Prize

Kigali, Rwanda this December 3rd, 2024 Biovision Foundation is proud to announce the Agroecological Food Futures Prize, a first-of-its-kind initiative to spotlight and support sustainable agri-SMEs in East Africa that deliver solutions for transforming food systems.

Combining ecological, economic, and social principles, agroecology addresses the urgent need for sustainable food systems amidst global challenges like climate change and economic inequality. It aligns with the Paris Climate Agreement and international biodiversity targets, offering pathways to sustainable development and Zero Hunger (SDG 2).

The Agroecological Food Futures Prize: Shining a Light on Solutions

The Prize aims to recognize Agroecological Enterprises (AEEs)—small and medium-sized businesses exemplifying the 13 principles of agroecology. These enterprises play a vital role in creating sustainable jobs, protecting nature, strengthening local value chains, and providing healthier, safer food options.

“We hope that by shining a light on them, we show that in the short term, their positive environmental and social impacts are extremely important and worth investing in. And in the longer term, these are also investable opportunities. These are profitable companies.” **Hans von Zinkernagel, Biovision Foundation, Program Manager, Policy & Advocacy.**

Following a rigorous selection process, six finalist businesses with high growth and impact potential make their pitch. The three winners will receive: 1) \$20,000; 2) \$10,000 with customized technical assistance; 3) \$10,000. All finalists will also gain access to a regional network of donors, investors, technical experts, and like-minded entrepreneurs.

“I am so excited to win this award today, many thanks to Biovision and other Partners for organizing this event. My vision, my company’s vision, or our mission will be achieved because what we were lacking, as a Startup company dealing with agroecology is funding and visibility. Our products and innovations are good, but how do we reach people, how do our innovations reach people? This was the challenge! As part of this funding, we are going to train farmers so that they become aware of what we are producing. Again to distribute these products was a challenge, so we are going to distribute them after distributing where expecting impact on purchase.” **Dr. Never Zekeya, Founder and CEO of Plant Biodefenders Limited (TZ)**

The prestigious jury panel comprised of experts from the African Development Bank, African Food Sovereignty Alliance, British International Investment, Rabo Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, and Welthungerhilfe. Attendees can also expect a high-level panel discussion with representatives from Agence Française de développement (AFD) FD, International Fund for Agricultural Development (FAD), and the Commercial Agriculture and Smallholder Agribusiness (CASA) program, offering insights into agri-SME financing, food system transformation, and sustainable development.

Event Highlights that participants can look forward to:

- Dynamic pitches from trailblazing agroecological entrepreneurs.
- Expert insights on financing, investing, and transforming food systems.

- Networking opportunities with key investors, entrepreneurs, and thought leaders.
- A celebration of innovation and resilience in agroecology with music and drinks.

About Biovision

Biovision is dedicated to advancing agroecology to achieve global food security and environmental sustainability. By championing agroecological enterprises, Biovision contributes to creating a healthier, more equitable world.

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