

SPORE

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INTERVIEW
DENNIS GARRITY,
Chair of the Evergreen
Agriculture Partnership

WATER GRABBING

**The hidden cost
of land acquisition**

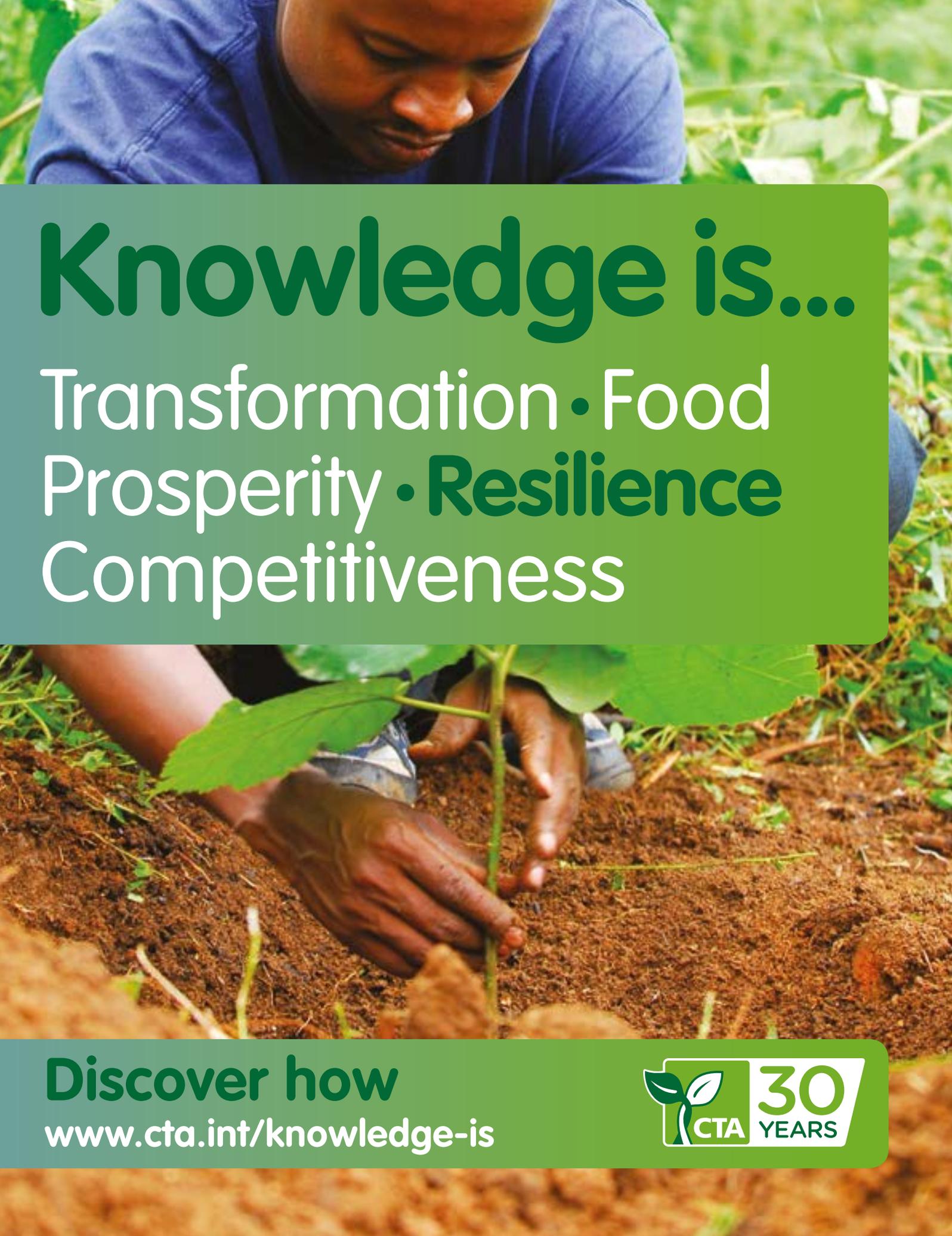
TARO

**Time to
trade up?**

SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

**Emerging
nations play the
agricultural card**





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Editorial

Agri-finance in overdrive



If you were a farmer in Europe or the US, you would have an open line of credit with your bank to use for buying inputs or even equipment. If you were a Brazilian farmer, and wanted to buy inputs on credit, you could issue an 'I owe you' note to your supplier, who in turn would redeem it at the bank. Some Indian banks have introduced products, such as warehouse receipt finance, that permit them to issue (as one advertised) "commodity-backed loans in an instant, at unbelievable rates." But, in most African, Caribbean or Pacific countries, farmers face difficult financing conditions. The vast majority of smallholder farmers have no access to commercial bank lending, and the share of agriculture in banks' loan portfolio tends to be in the low single digits. In countries like Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda, less than 10% of farmers have access to formal credit. In Ghana and Nigeria, less than 4% of commercial bank loans are for agriculture.

But it need not be that way. Reasons given for denying credit are often mere excuses. If best practices in ICTs, loan products, risk management methods, and in regulatory policies were applied, ACP farmers would be able to convert their control over productive assets into easy access to credit. The private sector, government decision-makers and international development partners should join hands to upscale these best practices. To catalyse this process, CTA and its many partners will gather delegates from around the world from 13 to 18 July 2014 in Nairobi to decide how to 'Revolutionise Finance for Agri-Value Chains'. You too can be part of the revolution.

Michael Hailu
Director – CTA

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The hidden cost of land acquisition

With the recent rise in foreign investment for land in Africa, is greater insight and policy intervention needed on the impact on water access and rights for local communities?

Over the last decade, rising food and fuel prices, coupled with increasing pressure on water resources, has resulted in large-scale land acquisitions by nations that have traditionally depended on imports to meet their food needs. According to global estimates by the International Land Coalition, 57 million ha of land have been leased in Africa to foreign investors since 2007. Referred to as ‘land grabbing’, the trend has sparked a passionate debate in media and academic circles, and prompted considerable research on the implications for human rights. In contrast, however, relatively little attention has been paid to how land acquisitions impact on water access for those living nearby or further downstream.

The issue of ‘water grabbing’ is not a simple one. Water flows from one place to another and its availability varies, affected by the seasons, human use, or climate change. In addition, rights, access and uses are complex and varied. Who has the right to the water in a river: the people who live near it; the farmers who use it for irrigation; those living upstream or downstream; or all of these?

A valuable ‘freebie’

It is well documented that need for water is one of the prime drivers of the global rush to acquire land. Even a cursory look at the global ‘water stress index’ (published annually by risk analysis firm Maplecroft), shows clearly why countries such as China, India and South Korea, along with oil-rich Gulf states, are racing to buy land in developing countries and grow crops abroad. Yet despite the fact that land without water is generally useless, most land deal contracts do not explicitly mention water usage. “With the land comes the right to withdraw the water linked to it,” writes former CEO of Nestlé, Peter Brabeck-Letmathe in the magazine, *Foreign Policy*. “In most countries [this is] essentially a freebie that increasingly could be the most valuable part of the deal.”

In cases where foreign investors do make an explicit demand for water rights, a study by the International Institute of Environmental Development has found that governments generally comply without the consultation of the land owners. In other cases, where investors pay to use water, they are often charged according to how much land is irrigated rather than how much water is used.

Often, the boundaries between legality and illegality,



when claiming rights to water, are obscure and questions of jurisdiction unclear. In Ghana, according to research by the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), the separation of land and water rights has resulted in pre-existing customary water rights being abolished and ownership, management and control of water being placed under the authority of the State. As a result,

As a result of water grabbing for large-scale irrigation, the predicted drop in water levels will leave this part of Lake Turkana dry

large-scale land acquisitions have resulted in poor farmers being displaced, with very little compensation paid, and losing access to both land and water, a pattern that IWMI has also observed in Mali.

A 'damming' issue

Land deals and water usage not only impact on local communities but also on downstream users. In Ethiopia, the Gibe III dam, due to be completed by the end of 2014, will enable irrigation of 150,000 ha that the government has allocated to investors. Downstream, however, lies Kenya's Lake Turkana, on which half a million people depend. According to a 2012 report by the African Studies Centre at Oxford University, reduced water flows caused by the damming project could lower the level of the lake by 8 m within 10 years. "Ultimately, the 6,400 sq km lake could shrink to two small lakes," says Sean Avery, a



© K. Avery

Nairobi-based hydrologist who studied the impact of the dam project for the African Development Bank. Writing in the UK's *Guardian* newspaper, he continues, "The picture that emerges from these predictions bears a striking resemblance to the Aral Sea, which was once the world's fourth-largest inland water body. And yet, no feasibility studies or social and environmental impact assessments

have been published." (The Aral Sea in Central Asia is reported to have shrunk by 90% over the last 50 years as a result of diverting river water to irrigate and increase Soviet cotton production). Reduced water levels will impact not only on the people dependent on Lake Turkana but also the remaining wildlife, which are already in serious decline.

In response, Berhanu Kebede, Ethiopian ambassador in London, also quoted in the *Guardian*, strongly refuted the University of Oxford study, stating that Lake Turkana will not lose a considerable amount of water and that the dam will permit the rational management of water in the Omo River basin.

The Tana Delta, an estuarine region of Kenya, is home to subsistence farmers, fishers and pastoralists who have traditionally shared its fragile land and water resources through delicately balanced agreements. In recent years, however, the flood plain has been marked by the Kenyan government as 'unused' and included in Kenya's national development plan for expansion of large-scale, irrigated agriculture. The recent unrest in the Delta region, as local people fight against the selling of their land and resettlement of communities, has highlighted the risks when governments ignore complex social realities and arrangements that may have evolved over generations to maintain a wide diversity of water-dependent livelihoods.

What needs to be done?

From a legal perspective, while a complex array of national and international laws governing water allocation currently exists, investors frequently target African countries where national legislation on water rights is either non-existent, vaguely defined or weakly enforced. Yet, without adequate regulation and enforcement, the bargaining power of local communities is nearly always less than that of the foreign investor, who is generally supported by the government.

To ensure that future land acquisitions adequately consider crop water requirements and likely impacts on the livelihoods of smallholder users and the ecosystem, new institutional arrangements are needed, says Tim Williams, IWMI's Africa director. "For these arrangements to be effective and workable, they must be based on social, political and economic realities, which requires integrated and coordinated input from the different land and water agencies, rigorous water use impact assessments and a recognition of the rights of existing land and water users," he adds.

In addition, local water management should be promoted, with African governments and donors investing in sustainable water management systems. These would include water harvesting, storage, use of wastewater and small-scale irrigation that would benefit smallholders while managing land and water resources in a sustainable way. According to Citigroup chief economist Willem Buiter, "Water will eventually become the single most important physical commodity-based asset class, dwarfing oil, copper, agricultural commodities and precious metals." Given the accelerating pace of land - and water - acquisition, securing access to water for rural communities will therefore become an increasingly urgent priority. ■

Susanna Thorp

URBAN AGRICULTURE

Watercress farming in Madagascar

Around 342 urban farmers in Antananarivo growing watercress on small plots are producing 80% of national production. The popularity of the crop has been driven by its low market cost for customers and tolerance to growing in contaminated urban water.

NUTRITION

Food gardens for African youth

The Italian-based Slow Food Foundation intends to help African young people plant 10,000 food gardens and promote seed exchange; the organisation has so far supported the establishment of 1,000 gardens in more than 350 communities in 38 countries worldwide.

SUSTAINABILITY

Raising incomes in Comoros

Adopting improved potato and banana varieties has led to farmers doubling annual incomes to €200 per farmer. Training on no-till agriculture, drip irrigation, fertiliser application, anti-erosion techniques, and compost-making has also reduced soil erosion.

CASSAVA

New technologies double yields

Using disease-resistant, high starch varieties and best-bet practices, farmers in southwest Nigeria have increased yields from 12 t/ha to 22 t/ha. Over 8,000 farmers supply cassava to Allied Atlantic Distilleries Ltd., Africa's biggest ethanol producer from cassava.



Training on integrated pest management reduced the use of toxic pesticides in Mali

EXTENSION

Eliminating pesticides

Farmer field schools reduce toxic pesticides used by cotton growers in Mali

An FAO study was conducted in two areas: the Bla region of southern Mali, where FAO established a farmer field school programme in 2003, and a second area, Bougouni, where the programme was not yet active. While only 34% of cotton farmers in the area participated in the

programme, pesticide use on all of Bla's cotton farms - more than 4,300 households - dropped a staggering 92%.

Alternative methods of pest control proved to be three times more cost-effective than purchasing and using synthetic pesticides, according to FAO's analysis. By refraining from applying more than 47,000 litres of toxic pesticides and shifting to alternative 'biopesticides' like neem tree extract, growers in the Bla study group reduced their average individual production costs, saving nearly half a million dollars over the study period. The study further found that the move away from pesticide use had no negative impact on yields. For the full article see: <http://tinyurl.com/pkayvzj>. ■

MAIZE

Improved preservation techniques

New techniques for storage and preservation reduce postharvest losses

Over 130,000 t of maize is lost each year in Benin due to poor storage conditions, equivalent to a loss of €30 million. However, the adoption of new storage and preservation techniques - effective at combating insect attacks and reducing the

risk of contamination - is reducing postharvest losses by at least a third. In northern Benin, the best technique for storing maize involves placing the crop in polyethylene bags after shelling. The bags are then stored in blocks of mud with sheets made from a local plant - *banbassou* - reducing grain loss to nearly zero. In the south of the country, the best options used are granaries made from plant matter, primarily neem leaves (*Azadirachta indica*) and bags treated with the insecticide Phostoxin. The adoption of these new storage techniques has reduced the loss rate to less than 2% in the north, with a financial gain of 1.5 billion CFA (€2.28 million). In the south, the loss rate has been reduced to 5%, generating a profit of around 3 billion CFA (€5.56 million). ■

FARM MANAGEMENT

New tools bear fruit

Producer performance improved by access to simple management tools

To increase the skills of farmers and their output, Benin's federation of producers, Fédération des unions de producteurs du Bénin (FUPRO-Benin), introduced two management tools in 2005. The family farming consultancy (Conseil à l'exploitation familiale, CEF) includes elements such as writing accounts and evaluating production costs and margins. A second tool, the

management consultancy (Conseil de gestion, CdG), includes stock management, allocation of inputs and planning.

Since their introduction, these methods have become highly successful and widely used: 87% of food producers are CEF members and use the cashbook, stock sheet and monthly accounts table. These tools help producers control production-related expenses. Over 1,000 female food producers regularly use the management tools to ensure the profitability of their income-generating activities and to manage their accounts better. Nearly 3,000 food producers are currently using stock sheets to monitor inputs and to determine the quantity of food needed to feed their family, ensuring sustainable production investment. ■



Tsiperifery is a wild pepper native to Madagascar

CONSERVATION

Wild pepper in danger

Domestication of wild pepper for conservation

Tsiperifery is a wild pepper native to Madagascar. It is a rare commodity with significant added value potential, and has a strong reputation in international gastronomy, leading to high demand and overharvesting. A combination of factors is threatening the survival of tsiperifery including increased human settlement in forest basins, the disorganised nature of the sector, and extremely destructive and

uncontrolled harvesting practices: wild harvesting involves cutting down trees on which pepper vines are growing.

However, researchers at the French agricultural research centre, CIRAD, and the University of Antananarivo are working in close collaboration with village communities to introduce more sustainable harvesting methods. There are two aims: preserving forest resources and providing higher revenue for the local population. Sustainable harvesting primarily consists of domesticating the wild pepper by cultivating and then selecting varieties with desirable traits. In addition, communities are encouraged to diversify their income-generating activities through market-gardening, fish farming or beekeeping, in order to reduce pressure on wild pepper. ■

APPRENTICESHIP

Farmer to farmer beekeeping training

Since 2010, associations of beekeepers have been thriving in Haute Matsiatra in Madagascar. As part of the PROSPERER programme, beekeeping techniques have been passed on from one group of farmers to another: villagers, who have become coaches, teach and advise their apprentices.

CONSERVATION AGRICULTURE

Success without ploughing

In Kailo, Kasongo and Kabambare in the province of Maniema in the Democratic Republic of Congo, farmers have been successfully experimenting with conservation agriculture since 2009. Groundnut production has risen by 63%, maize by 132%, black-eyed pea by 80% and rice by 62%.

CONFLICT

Agro-industrial parks vs. agricultural villages

The launch of agro-industrial parks (commercial farms, support for small marginal farmers and development of agricultural cooperatives) in the Democratic Republic of Congo is causing farmers to fear becoming mere labourers. Instead, the creation of agricultural villages is proposed.

MECHANISATION

A boost for Niger

As part of its 3N initiative (Nigeriens Nourish Nigeriens), the government will be offering 1,500 tractors made by Chinese company DTE half-price by March 2015. This programme also provides for the training of 1,500 operators and 300 maintenance workers.

WIRELESS

Solar-powered internet access

The Mawingu initiative (Kiswahili for 'cloud') is providing cheap, wireless broadband to previously unserved rural areas through solar-powered base stations in Kenya. Microsoft aims to roll out this initiative to other sub-Saharan countries in 2014.

VIDEO

Rice-based innovation

A new educational video, called SMART Valleys, details a participatory and sustainable approach to developing inland valleys for rice-based systems in sub-Saharan Africa. The approach makes extensive use of farmer knowledge and focuses on construction of low-cost water control infrastructure.

DATABASE

Global vision of land cover

A new FAO database (Global Land Cover SHARE) collects previously scattered and unharmonised land cover information into one centralised database. By standardising measurements and recording methods, it will be possible to monitor the use of land according to soils and impact of climate change.

TOUCH AND PAY

Facilitating access to inputs

The GES Touch and Pay (TAP) system is targeting 500,000 farmers in Nigeria. It is an offline technology that records farmer's details and their photo. After registering, a TAP card is issued which is used to redeem subsidised inputs.

GLOBAL MONITORING

An eye on the forest**A new forest monitoring and alert system for better forest management**

The US-based World Resources Institute (WRI) and around 40 partners, including the internet giant, Google, and the University of Maryland, have launched an online forest monitoring and alert system to allow users worldwide to improve forest management. Global Forest Watch (GFW) monitors deforestation, illegal logging and forest fires by combining the latest satellite

technology, open data and crowdsourcing, to guarantee access to detailed and reliable information about forests.

"Companies, governments and communities need urgent information about forests, and now they can have it," says Dr Andrew Steer, President and CEO of WRI. "GFW is an almost real-time monitoring platform that will change the way people and companies manage forests." According to FAO, the world lost around 130 million ha of forest between 2000 and 2010 (3.2% of the total forest surface area in 2000), but recovered around 78 million ha of forestland, primarily thanks to forest plantations and the natural expansion of forests. For more information, see:

<http://www.globalforestwatch.org> ■

CLIMATE CHANGE

ICTs make local weather forecasts a reality**Ugandan farmers are benefitting from timely climatic information**

Under the national Ugandan Climate Change Adaptation and ICT project, weather and market data is being collected in each sub-county by 75 agents, entered into mobile phones, and transmitted to a server at the meteorological department in Kampala. The data is used to produce a 10-day forecast and a 3-month seasonal

forecast for farmers and herders in local languages and in English. Livestock and crop prices are also aggregated for different markets on a weekly basis.

"Forecasts in January predicted rain for January 15 and 25," explains Paddy Seddinda, who lives in Wabinyoyi sub-county. "The rain came on those days. This enables me to plan. For example, in the dry period when we are drying sweet potatoes, on the days I expect rain I make sure people are around to quickly remove them so we don't lose them." The project also enables farmers to submit questions to a team of experts, providing a two-way information loop for communities. This is improving understanding of climate change impacts and providing evidence to policymakers to help them make informed decisions. ■

An agent entering weather and market data into a mobile phone



WIND FARMS

Reducing emissions

Cabo Verde moves ahead in renewable energies

Four wind farms, installed on four Cabo Verde islands, provide an annual savings of 20,000 t of imported heavy fuels, resulting in savings of more than €12 million for the country.

Together, the four wind farms produce more than 25.5 MW of electricity, equalling around 25% of the country's demand. In addition, they reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 67,440 t per full

year of operation. The first wind farm was inaugurated on Santiago Island in 2011. It supplies 20% of local energy consumption, while the Boavista, São Vicente and Sal farms fill 25%, 35% and 31% of local demand, respectively.

The planned progress in renewable energies on the archipelago over the next 7 years will save around €40 million annually in fuel imports (approximately 75 million litres of fuel and diesel) and create more than 800 direct and indirect jobs, in addition to cutting carbon dioxide emissions by 225,000 t.

The programme was developed by Cabeólica, a Cabo Verdean public-private partnership which, in 2013, won the Ashden Award for Small Island Developing States, backed by the World Bank. ■



WATER HARVESTING

Sand dams help against drought

Artificial aquifers in Kenya are stimulating horticultural production

Sand dams are being used to turn dry valleys into productive horticultural plots along the Ikangaani river, in Kenya's Makueni county. "The sand dams initiative, locally known as *Ngome* or *Ming'eto*, has reduced famine relief dependence by 70%, as the farmers are now capable of producing enough food for sale and for domestic use," explains Damaris Muia, the chair-lady of Ikangaani self help group. By producing vegetables

and drought-tolerant crops, including kale, tomato, onion, green grams, cowpea and sorghum, farmers are improving their food security and increasing their income.

The small dams are constructed across the bed of seasonal streams, just below or at the height of the river bank, allowing high water to flow over the top. As sand builds up behind the dam, an artificial aquifer is created. "This place used to be too dry for anything to grow," says Esther Katiwa, who now earns between 80,000 and 120,000 Ksh (€650-1,000) per year growing tissue culture banana. With the support of local NGOs, Sasol Foundation and Utooni Development Organisation, over 2,500 sand dams have been constructed in Machakos, Makueni, Kajiado and Kitui, benefitting about 100,000 people. ■

Sand dams are enabling farmers along Kenya's Ikangaani river to produce enough food for consumption and sale

DEFORESTATION

Tree planting in Kenya

Over 50,000 subsistence Kenyan farmers have planted over 7 million trees in five districts since 2005. For example, fruit trees (avocado, mango and orange) provide farmers with alternative income and help to combat poverty and climate change.

MITIGATING RISK

Crop insurance expands in Africa

By the end of 2015, an estimated 1 million Eastern African farmers will be insured and protected from losses due to unpredictable weather. Over 180,000 farmers in Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania are already benefiting from index-based weather-linked crop insurance.

REFORESTATION

Boosting forest cover

Kenya's government and the Kenya Red Cross plan to support the planting of 10 billion trees by 2030 across the country to increase forest cover. Over 2,300 volunteer youths have already been trained to establish and manage tree nurseries.

GREEN FARMING

Private sector innovation

Wanda Organic, a Kenyan organic fertiliser company, plans to establish fertiliser facilities in Eastern Africa to reduce costs of importing fertiliser. Farmers are being trained and demonstrations conducted on the benefits of organic fertiliser in order to build demand.

BAMBARA GROUNDNUT

An underutilised crop

Researchers from Burkina Faso have been working on the Bambara groundnut (*Voandzoia subterianea*), a nutritious pulse for those unable to afford meat which is primarily grown by women. Ten of the best performing varieties have so far been selected.

OPEN ACCESS

Information on the semi-arid tropics

To improve access to research data, a new website has been launched which tags information according to various criteria. Other features include subject-based update subscriptions and social media sharing options (<http://exploreit.icrisat.org>).

TISSUE CULTURE

Clean cassava cuttings

The first certified and disease-free cassava planting material is to be released in sub-Saharan Africa, opening the way for greater commercialisation. Millions of seedlings are to be propagated to benefit 30 million farmers and combat disease losses of US\$1 billion annually.

INCOME FOR DRYLANDS

Enhancing benefits of wild fruits

The Kenya Forestry Research Institute is teaching farmers sustainable ways of collecting and domesticating indigenous fruits. Communities are also learning to add value to Vitex payos, baobab and other fruits by making flour, jam and juice.

COWPEA STORAGE

Improved protection

The triple bagging technique improves cowpea storage without adding chemicals

To protect and store cowpeas without using chemical products, researchers at Burkina Faso's national agricultural research institute (INERA), in partnership with Purdue University in the US, developed a triple-layer bagging system known as PICS (Purdue

Improved Cowpea Storage). The triple-layer technique consists of packaging cowpeas in two polyethylene bags, which are themselves placed in a woven, protective, polyethylene bag. Each bag costs 1,100 CFA (€1.68), which is 300-400 CFA (€0.45-0.60) more than traditional methods. However, with this method, the cowpeas are preserved better and bags can be reused several times.

Implementation of the PICS technique began in 2008 and has been spread through much of the country by researchers, farmer associations and NGOs active in the cowpea sector. In addition, since 2010, the government of Burkina Faso has ordered large numbers of bags, in order to make them widely available for producers. ■



YAMS

Full of promise

An aeroponic system provides yam producers access to clean seed

A group of Nigerian scientists from the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) have made a breakthrough: they have succeeded in growing yams without soil, using aeroponics. The plant roots are suspended in mid-air, using supports, and are provided with nutrients via constant spraying of nutrient solutions containing mineral salts. Although the method is widely used by seed potato growers, this is the first

time it has been used for yams.

According to the researchers, a properly managed aeroponics system could provide yam producers with their own seed yams. Dr Robert Asiedu, IITA director for West Africa, believes the results are impressive, saying, "Yam is an important crop in Africa and addressing the seed constraints will go a long way in improving the livings of farmers who depend on the crop for their livelihood." This technique could, the researchers suggest, breathe new life into yam growing. The tuber is vitally important for over 250 million people in West Africa, especially in Nigeria, where it is a common part of the daily diet. ■

With triple-layer bagging system PICS, the cowpeas are much better preserved

ADDED VALUE

Packaging changes everything

Jars improve product presentation and improve sales

Since 2010, Malagasy fruit and vegetable processors and honey producers have been promoting their products by packaging them in jars. With better presentation, the products sell better. “Now, we sell 6 t in a year compared with 1 t before,” says the president of the Regional Network of Beekeeper Associations. Before, honey was sold in reused plastic bottles or in large

bowls. The current challenge is making the jars available in rural areas, which is now being tackled under the PROSPERER programme, which supports rural micro-businesses and regional economies.

The programme aims to promote systematic use of standardised packaging, to allow producers to expand their markets and ultimately generate additional revenue. Producers receive training in entrepreneurial skills, and technical supervision in adhering to storage, packaging and hygiene standards. To date, over 2,220 micro-businesses have been supplied with jars. With the creation of a producers’ network and a collaboration and support platform, people in rural areas can be supplied with other types of packaging in order to better meet consumers’ needs. ■

Centre: Madagascar honey packed in a glass jar. Left: Jars used to package jam and green peppers



AFFORDABLE FERTILISER

The benefits of saving

A customised savings system is helping producers buy inputs

Baoré, meaning ‘granary’ in Burkina Faso’s Mooré language, is a customised savings system that allows producers to receive high-quality fertiliser at better prices, when they want it. Through transfers of a minimum of 1,000 CFA (€1.50) for men and 500 CFA (€0.75) for women, producers save money between December and May, without a fixed schedule, to cover at least 60% of the cost of the

fertiliser they want to buy. At the end of the farming season, after harvest, the producer pays off the remaining 40%.

The system was created under the initiative of the Coopérative agricole du Passoré (CAP), located in Yako in northern Burkina Faso. Last season, 3,000 producers adopted the *Baoré* savings system, a little over half of whom were women. Thanks to this system, 190 t of fertiliser was purchased, worth around 69 million CFA (€105,000). Producers received competitive prices: a 50 kg bag was sold to them for 18,500 CFA (€28), slightly less than the local market price of 19,250 CFA (€29). In addition, the fertiliser was delivered to their homes. “The operation owes its success to rigorous and transparent management,” claims CAP President, Noufou Sankara. ■

DIGITAL HUB

Online market place for young farmers

Young Kenyan farmers are using a digital hub to trade their produce (crops, livestock, fish fingerlings and seed). Mukulima Young, set up by entrepreneur Joseph Macharia, has almost 14,000 agribusiness members; 95% of members are aged 32 years or below.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Public-private partnership

Partnership between Gabon’s national parks agency and an energy and water company, SEEG, will allow sites located in the Crystal Mountains National Park to be redeveloped. An environmental learning teaching centre will be created and ecotourism will also be developed.

NICHE MARKETS

Becoming champions of chocolate

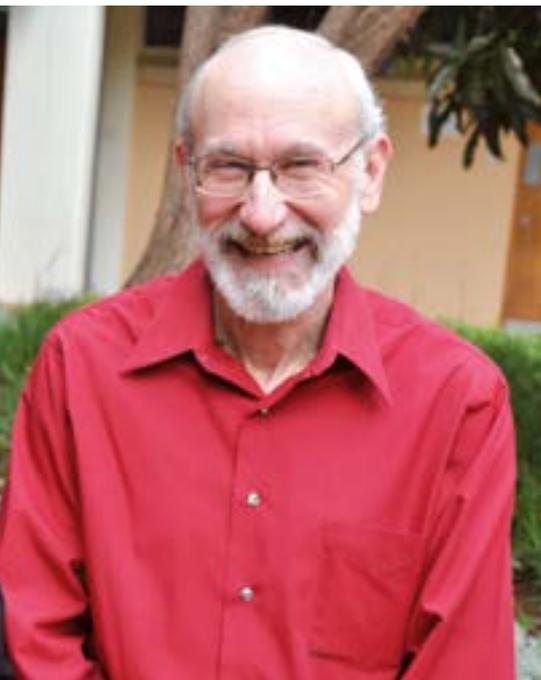
The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research, Australian chocolatiers Haigh’s Chocolates and Bahen, and American company Guittard, are working with cocoa farmers in Vanuatu to test the quality of their beans and suggest techniques to access niche markets.

ADDING VALUE

Making coffee more competitive

To increase coffee revenues, Rwanda is aiming to increase the proportion of fully washed coffee that is exported to 71% by 2018. Last season, 33% of exported coffee was fully washed, generating 45% (€17 million) of total coffee revenue.

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Dennis Garrity is Chair of the Evergreen Agriculture Partnership, Senior Fellow at the World Agroforestry Centre and Drylands Ambassador at the UN Convention to Combat Desertification.

How is Evergreen Agriculture different to agroforestry?

Evergreen Agriculture re-branded what had been known as ‘tree-crop intercropping’. Agroforestry has too often been considered a type of forestry and the agricultural community has tended to ignore the potential of trees when grown in association with crops. But when grown among crops and properly managed, trees provide a source of biofertilisers, reduce temperatures, conserve rainwater in the soil, and produce abundant wood for cooking fuel and construction and nutritious fodder for livestock.

Evergreen Agriculture is a type of more intensive farming that integrates trees into crop and livestock production systems, to sustain a green cover on the land throughout the year. It is a matter of choosing and incorporating the right kinds of trees with crops, and managing them for optimal benefits. There are three main types of Evergreen Agriculture: farmer managed natural regeneration (farmers select trees that come up naturally in their cropland), conservation agriculture (zero tillage) with trees, and incorporating trees within conventional agriculture.

What are the main obstacles and drivers of success for this initiative?

Evergreen Agriculture is an under-appreciated but truly ecological approach.

DENNIS GARRITY

Evergreen Agriculture: rethinking modern farming

The Evergreen Agriculture Partnership was launched in 2009 to build the capacity of smallholder farmers to integrate trees in their cropping systems in order to increase productivity and incomes, while making farming systems more resilient in the context of climate change.

It is all the more relevant when climate change endangers world food security and the livelihoods of smallholder farmers. The main challenges are conventional attitudes and technical constraints. Models of ‘modern’ agriculture typically promote a trend toward monoculture, which goes in the opposite direction to an ecologically-sane agriculture for the future.

How can the approach be scaled up and what support will be needed?

About 1.2 million farmers in Niger have established Evergreen Agriculture systems across 5 million ha of farmland. Evergreen Agriculture is also practised in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mali, Senegal and Zambia, amongst others. Inspired by these successes, many international and national organisations, NGOs and governments are now working to scale-up Evergreen Agriculture systems. The research community is working to fill knowledge gaps and provide practical recommendations for this. Due to climate change, the world is realising that it needs to rethink how agriculture will be practised in the future. The most favourable option to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in agriculture is to sequester much more carbon in agricultural systems, and the expansion of trees on farms is an

obvious option to do this while achieving production, profit and environmental co-benefits.

Can Evergreen Agriculture increase food and nutrition security?

Food security is a major challenge since climate change is already affecting farmers across the world. Building more climate-resilient farming systems is key to overcoming this challenge. This is why the Evergreen Agriculture Partnership is deeply engaged in creating ‘climate smart agriculture’. Recently the World Agroforestry Centre hosted a workshop in Nairobi, gathering together the African Union, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, major development NGOs and many other organisations working in Africa, as well as country representatives. This meeting conceived an African Climate Smart Agriculture Alliance, with a target of enabling 25 million African farmers to practise climate smart agriculture by 2025. I am a strong believer in the importance of creating a continent-wide movement to achieve this ambitious target and see that Evergreen Agriculture contributes to a more sustainable future for the entire planet. ■

Anne Perrin

The growing presence of emerging countries on the world stage is driven primarily by economics, but geopolitical and diplomatic aspirations are also high and South-South cooperation is one way of achieving them. With the exception of Brazil, the agriculture sector is not overlooked but is by no means a priority sector for these new players.

SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

Emerging nations play the agricultural card



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Know-how from China

The Asian-African Conference in Bandung, Indonesia, in 1955 led to the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement to promote cooperation between developing countries. It was formalised with the adoption of the 1978 Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries.

South-South cooperation therefore has a long history, but recent economic growth in some of these countries since the dawn of the new Millennium, in addition to changes in the cooperation framework, has given it a new dimension. “The policy challenges facing Brazil, China, India and Russia, not forgetting South Africa, are to reshuffle the cards and take the lead diplomatically, economically and financially on the international scene. It’s very clear that these donors are not altruistic, they’re defending their own interests,” says Jean-Jacques Gabas, economist and researcher at the French research centre, CIRAD. These new stakeholders - in addition to striving to claim a place in global governance - share common values, such as non-interference in the domestic affairs of countries benefiting from their assistance. Developing countries consider themselves to all be equal and they generally make little distinction between factors pertaining to their cooperation policies, trade and investment.

In the agricultural sector, Brazilian, Chinese and Indian interventions in Africa clearly highlight a willingness to share experience, especially on enhancing food security, which these countries have had some success in improving. These initiatives have been gratefully received by African countries at a time when aid from industrialised countries is drying up. Funding for agriculture in Africa has been following a bell curve pattern: from a steady US\$5 billion in 1975, aid rose to US\$8 billion in the 1980s, to drop to US\$5 billion in 2006-2007, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development’s (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC). There was a slight upward trend in 2008, but this was marginal in the light of the higher increases forecasted by OECD member countries.

A new orientation for Chinese aid

Agriculture has long relied on technical assistance, and as such has been a prime target of Chinese aid policies - Beijing is also a leading contributor to the Special Programme for Food Security launched by FAO in 1996 - but there has been a noteworthy shift in this orientation since 2006. Chinese aid has been geared more towards investment and trade since the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2006. A decision was made during FOCAC to set up around 20 demonstration centres throughout Africa to spearhead Chinese cooperation.

These centres are focused on technology transfer



through training and extension, particularly in rice and vegetable production sectors, while implementing a relatively technocratic approach. The arrangement is that China provides full funding for these centres and pays participating experts and technicians for the first 3 years. The administration and management is then



© FAO/R. Faidutti

Above: China has provided expertise to assist in the implementation of FAO's Special Programme for Food Security in Ghana

Left: Women from India and Kenya being taught how to install, repair and maintain solar cookers, lighting and water heaters

entrusted to a non-subsidised Chinese company. The centre thus becomes autonomous and operates under a purely economic rationale where everything is sold, including products and services.

“How viable is this Chinese so-called ‘public-private partnership’ model?” asks Gabas. It is still too early to say. Assessments are under way and problems have already been highlighted, such as the lack of links with local research. Contrary to common opinion, Chinese public and private companies have not been acquiring much land in Africa, i.e. only around 300,000 ha according to Land Matrix, an online interface that offers access to data and analytical tools concerning land deals. Most Chinese acquisitions are focused in a few countries like Benin, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali or Mozambique. These include sugar production projects such as SUCOBE, run by the Complant company in Benin and Madagascar, and N’Sukula in Mali. Most agricultural projects promote the production of food crops for local and regional markets.

Brazil – know-how and expertise

After Lula da Silva took office as President of Brazil in 2003, there was a marked rekindling of political, ►

Brazilian models applicable in Africa



© Embrapa/J. Duarte

Launched in 2003, the *Fome Zero* (zero hunger) strategy has been successfully implemented in Brazil – 40 million Brazilians have been rescued from hunger and poverty in 10 years. *Fome Zero* has become a global reference, a model that the country now exports and tailors to specific local situations via the Food Acquisition Programme (PAA) and the National School Food Programme. The Centre of Excellence Against Hunger was founded for this purpose in Brasilia in 2011, in partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP), to share this Brazilian expertise.

PAA aims to combat food insecurity and strengthen domestic food markets. This involves stockpiling or purchasing foodstuffs produced by smallholders, which are then distributed to food-insecure families or schools. This programme was launched in 10 African countries in 2012 and has already been successful in Kédougou region in Senegal: in 200 school canteens, children eat rice that has been produced locally by around 1,000 smallholders. Brazil provides funding, FAO supplies seeds and support on improved agricultural techniques, while WFP buys 50% of the rice that is distributed to the canteens.

Brazil is also testing the *Mais Alimentos* (more food) programme in Africa. The aim is to enhance productivity and food security by improving access to technology. A credit facility of around US\$100 million was set up by the Bank of Brazil to enable farmers to buy Brazilian machinery and other equipment. Credit lines have been negotiated with Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Senegal and Zimbabwe.

DOSSIER

► commercial, investment and cooperation relations with Africa. Brazil's linchpin in agricultural cooperation is Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária (Embrapa), a state body consisting of 47 research centres scattered throughout the country and several overseas offices, including one in Ghana that was set up in 2006. Brazil is offering over 40 years of expertise in tropical agriculture to benefit African countries, which is especially relevant given the close geological and agro-climatic similarities between Brazil and Africa.

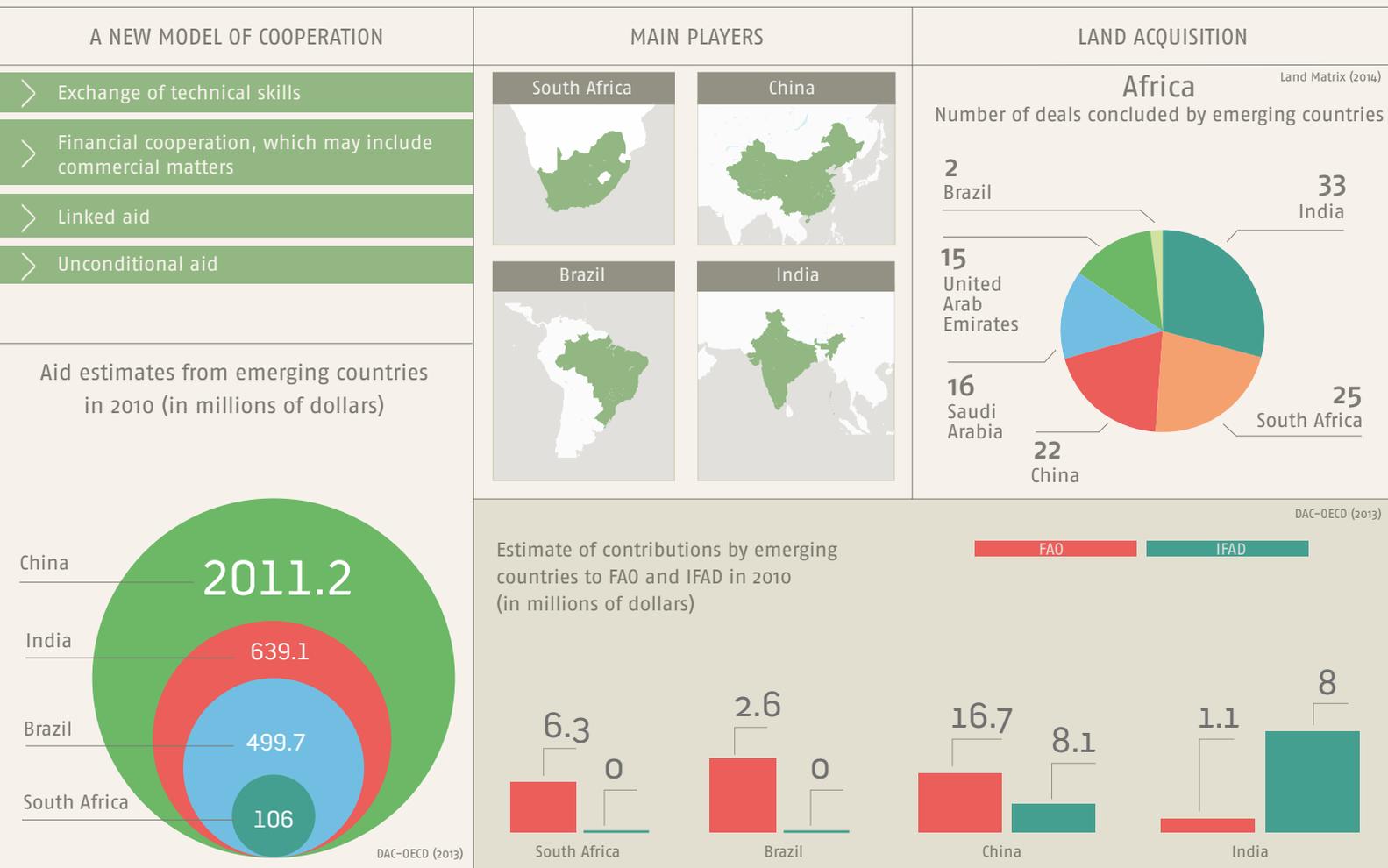
Brazil aims to share its agricultural development model which is based on two pillars - agribusiness and family farming - and its cooperation with Mozambique is revealing. Since 2012, Brazil and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) have been supporting the Mozambique Food and Nutrition Security Programme to develop fruit and vegetable production and distribution. The Mozambique Institute of Agricultural Research received more than 90 vegetable varieties from Brazil that are being tested in the Umbeluzi agricultural research station for subsequent distribution to farmers. Meanwhile, the Triangular Co-operation Programme for Agricultural Development of the Tropical Savannah in Mozambique, conducted jointly with the Japan International

Cooperation Agency, aims to develop agriculture in the Nacala Corridor under a purely agribusiness strategy. Besides Mozambique, Brazil has developed 'structured' projects in the rice-production sector in Senegal, and in the cotton-production sector in Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali. These large-scale projects often have a regional impact, but there are not many since Brazil is generally only involved through support missions.

Brazil is also very active in training and research in partnership with local institutions under various arrangements: scholarships, expertise missions, training at Embrapa or at the Universidade da Integração Internacional da Lusofonia Afro-Brasileira, and joint research with the Brazil-Africa Agricultural Innovation Marketplace supported by several donors including the World Bank, UK Department of International Development, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the International Fund for Agricultural Development. Joint research programmes have thus been launched, for example, between Pipal Ltd (Kenya) and Embrapa on adapting sorghum varieties for ethanol production, and between Mekelle University (Ethiopia) and Embrapa to enhance honey production for food security.

The number of projects is increasing, but it is hard to

South-South cooperation in Africa



measure their impacts in the field. Brazil was until very recently an aid recipient and the Brazilian Cooperation Agency has just started allotting aid funds, which is why few development-oriented projects have been undertaken to date. Note also that Brazil, like India, serve their relatively long-term interests by focusing on creating markets for their capital goods. Within the framework of the *Mais Alimentos* programme (see box on p.15 *Brazilian models applicable in Africa*), credit lines are subject to the purchase of Brazilian machinery.

India – a discrete approach

Drawing on its Green Revolution experience, India is keen to promote agricultural development in Africa through technology transfer and research. India, with the support of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa, has introduced innovative platforms and agribusiness incubators in agriculture-specialised universities in five African countries, i.e. Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Uganda and Zambia.

One feature regarding Indian cooperation is that private companies were the forerunners to the Indian government's involvement. Some Indian companies such as the Kirloskar Group, a leading global pump manufacturer, have long been active on the African continent. This pattern changed in 2008 when the first India-Africa Summit took place. Unlike other emerging countries, India has targeted eight priority countries and formed the Technico-Economic Approach for Africa-India Movement which, besides India, includes Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Mali and Senegal.

In February 2013, Sharad Pawar, the Indian Minister of Agriculture, declared at the first Asia-Africa Agribusiness Forum, "As land in Asia is under pressure from population growth and urbanisation, there is an opportunity for responsible investment by Asian countries in Africa to promote agriculture." Many Indian companies, such as the Karuturi Group which is active in Ethiopia and Kenya, have already invested in the agricultural sector for the production of sugar, palm oil, sugar, and flowers, part of which is targeted for export.

From bi-lateral to tripartite?

Could South-South cooperation be a way to overcome the known limits of North-South cooperation? "We shouldn't consider this strictly in black-and-white terms. Very little is really being done by China and Brazil in the agricultural sector," says Gabas. But this is just the beginning of the process. The future would seem to be in favour of tripartite cooperation involving one industrialised donor country or international organisation, an emerging country and a beneficiary country or regional entity. "We need converging views," says Gabas, while also establishing a dialogue with these new cooperation players and DAC member countries. Emerging countries seem ready.

Tripartite projects are now under way. Some OECD countries, such as Germany, the UK and the US, are already involved with the support of multilateral agencies such as the World Bank and private foundations. ■

Anne Guillaume-Gentil

Viewpoint

Jean-Joseph Boillot, a professor of economics and social science, is an advisor to CEPII, the French research centre in international economics, on large emerging economies.



© J J Boillot

Africa: a potential agricultural giant?

Why do emerging countries intervene in the agricultural sector in Africa?

Policies, market security and technical cooperation are the three components of the intervention logic of China and India, to which I would also add an agro-industrial component for Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. The common denominator between emerging countries is that Africa is clearly viewed as a potential agricultural giant. This drives the intervention strategy of emerging countries towards Africa.

How do the intervention methods of emerging countries differ from developed countries?

There is a fundamental difference between the North and South. The North does not need to invest in African agriculture since it is basically in a surplus situation from an agricultural standpoint. Its intervention logic is focused on the export of finished products or raw materials to Africa, while providing technical assistance to promote agricultural development.

For the South, partnerships are much more balanced because emerging countries need to tap Africa's agricultural potential, which in turn is developed through large-scale agro-industrial farms, or serves to secure agricultural supply. This last point is especially relevant for China, with its growing import market, and India, which is addressing two major challenges concerning saturation of available land and high pressure on water resources. For political reasons, the two countries are also developing real technical agricultural cooperation regarding seeds, equipment and cropping methods under a genuinely balanced partnership logic.

Could Chinese and Indian agricultural development experience serve as a model for Africa?

Basically, yes! China and India implemented initiatives – most of which were successful – to deal with a major food crisis affecting them during 1960–1980. They are now readily able to feed their people. China and India have different experiences that are both useful for Africa. In India, the Green Revolution is focused on small- and medium-scale rural farms, while being highly labour intensive, and water/input efficient. This process is combined with agricultural research on new varieties, including 'made in India' GMOs that fulfil the need to save resources.

In contrast, Chinese agricultural development is based on the management of cash crops using highly efficient technologies. When China and India propose technical cooperation in Africa based on their experience, they speak the same language and are fully able to understand the problems facing African farmers.



Know-how from China

A Chinese agricultural technology demonstration centre has just been set up at Kombé, south of Brazzaville, to help boost agricultural production by changing the farming techniques used by Congolese farmers.

At Kombé, a village located 17 km south of Brazzaville, the Centre de démonstration des techniques agricoles (CDTA) opened in September 2012. This technology demonstration centre, funded by the Chinese Cooperation Programme, is currently set up on a 59 ha site and is geared towards the dissemination of agricultural technology to local stakeholders. Ten Chinese experts are already studying six cassava varieties, 12 maize varieties, and 60 vegetable crops belonging to 24 species, including Chinese cabbage,

pepper, watermelon, green vegetables and mushrooms.

In 2013, 120 farmers aged 20-55 years, and from all 12 Congolese departments, attended 20 1-day training sessions. On completion, these farmers trained other farmers in their respective departments. The courses, given in Chinese with simultaneous translation into Congolese languages (Kituba and Lingala), consisted of theoretical classroom training and practical field-based training and were devoted particularly to cassava and maize cropping practices. This provided an opportunity for farmers to

Below: CDTA vegetable experiments



upgrade their cultivation practices. “I have now changed my old cassava planting habits, where I didn’t respect the required distance between cuttings, which had an impact on production,” says Christian Tsama, a successful trainee. Georgette Maboumou, another trainee, noted that once the language barrier was overcome, “These courses helped me understand, in simple terms, the origins of some plants and their crop cycles.” The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock encourages farmers to participate in these CDTA training sessions and Paul Rafael Ongouala, managing director of CDTA, says that the training costs are borne entirely by the State.

A showcase of Chinese technology and expertise, this demonstration centre, like others set up elsewhere in Africa, operates completely independently without links to local research centres and irrespective of national agricultural policies. According to the agreement signed between China and the Congo, the centre is authorised to operate for 15 years, which is renewable. Knowledge transfer from Chinese experts to Congolese farmers is planned during the first 3-year implementation phase. At the outset of the second 12-year phase in 2016, a Chinese state-owned enterprise will take over administration and management of the centre. The agreement stipulates that this company will not be accountable to Chinese or Congolese authorities and will generate its own source of revenue for its operations, focusing primarily on farming and sustainable development.

The centre’s autonomy is clearly outlined in the agreement, but a Chinese state-owned company holds the keys. This is one way for China to shape the agricultural future of the Congo - a country with substantial potential - with crop varieties, production techniques and equipment.

From the Congolese standpoint, “What is interesting [...] is the new range of skills and expertise. This will boost research on aspects of production and productivity throughout our food production chain, which is essential because we are also seeking to achieve food sovereignty,”



© M N Massala

declares Rigobert Maboundou, the Congolese Minister of Agriculture and Livestock. China represents an invaluable alternative opportunity for the Congo as funding for ambitious development programmes is otherwise currently hard to acquire.

A senior staff member at the Congolese Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock is, however, more reserved. He considers that, “Chino-Congolese cooperation, which is firmly established in the Congo, is not consistent with farmers’ needs because the projects are designed elsewhere and imposed on them. Certainly Congolese farmers require new agricultural practices, but they should be based on their different training needs,” he says, before adding, “whereas North-South cooperation is often participatory and followed up, which is more effective.” ■

Marien Nzikou-Massala

Top:
Through practical, field-based training, Congolese farmers are learning about new production techniques and equipment

Below:
CDTA compound



© M N Massala

Time to trade up?

One of the world's oldest domesticated plants, taro, is consumed worldwide and is of particular cultural importance in the Pacific region. Demand for the root crop in western markets is also providing increased opportunities for export with breeding research and use of ICTs making the product more competitive in price and quality.



Taro is an important starchy staple throughout the tropics, including Asia, the Pacific, Africa, and the Caribbean. The leaves, stems, and root are all edible, although taro is toxic when fresh and has to be cooked to be edible. In 2010, an estimated 9 million t of various taro species was grown and consumed worldwide. West Africa is by far the largest taro producing region (known here as cocoyam), with most consumed locally, according to FAO. However, the crop is a particularly important part of traditional food systems in the Pacific, and is one of the few fresh commodities for which Pacific Island States have been able to achieve a significant level of exports, particularly to Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and the US.

Of the 10,000-12,000 t exported annually (worth approximately €4.3 million), Fiji currently accounts for 95%, with Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu making up the rest. And while there has been little growth in recent years, taro exports have the potential to more than double if the product could be made more competitive in terms of price and quality, states a 2011 study by the European Union-funded Facilitating Agricultural Commodity Trade (FACT) project.

Overcoming market barriers

However, whilst the FACT study highlighted that, "increased taro exports would result in

significant benefits for large numbers of low-income rural people in the Pacific", the study also determined that the market for fresh taro in Australia, in particular, may not be economically viable. This is due to the current quarantine requirement for devitalisation (topping and tailing to prevent propagation), which affects shelf life and greatly restricts market expansion. In contrast, Japan and the US, which have larger taro industries than Australia, have no requirement for devitalisation of taro. No scientific basis has been found to justify the devitalisation for taro and the study states that reform of quarantine import protocols is a necessary requirement for expanding Pacific Island taro exports but that substantial improvement in production, postharvest handling practices, and export certification systems are also required.

To improve the marketability of taro in the Pacific, trials are currently being conducted focusing on a number of potential 'elite' varieties. The research is part of a collaborative partnership between the Government of Samoa, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), University of the South Pacific, Samoan growers, industry groups and various government bodies across the Pacific to boost taro production and build a stronger taro industry. Testing has so far been based on consumer preferences for taste, resistance to blight disease (*Phytophthora colocasiae*), climate resilience and production capacity.

Blight, in particular, is a key issue for the Pacific, after the disease devastated the Samoan taro industry in the 1990s. In addition, training has been provided to agricultural staff in Samoa in taro micro-propagation techniques and protocols developed by SPC's Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees to boost access to clean planting materials.

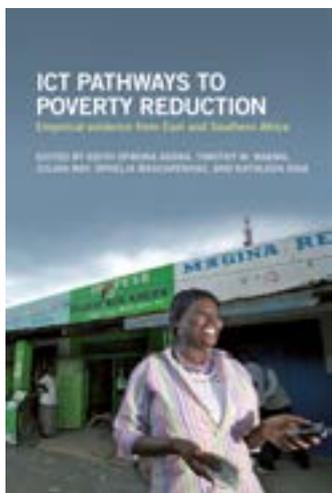
Taro is an important part of the food system in the Pacific

A dashing approach

In the Caribbean, an innovative, ICT-based approach has been used in St. Vincent for exporting taro (known here as dasheen) to the UK. With support from FAO, the Eastern Caribbean Trading and Agriculture Development Organization set up a taro value chain between farmers and buyers. With smallholder farmers reluctant to join a cooperative, consignments for European buyers are filled by using SMS to connect with 200 small farmers. Informed of the price and volumes required, farmers are then free to choose whether or not to supply. With export prices higher than in the local market, the initiative has proved very successful, and growers have increased their revenues by up to 100%. Farmers have also learnt to grade and pack their own dasheen to add further value. ■

Susanna Thorp

Impact study



ICT Pathways to Poverty Reduction: Empirical Evidence from East and Southern Africa

Edited by EO Adera, TM Waema, J May, O Mascarenhas & K Diga
 Practical Action Publishing, 2014; 276 pp.
 ISBN 978-18-5339-816-2
 £17.96 • €22
 Practical Action Publishing
 The Schumacher Centre
 Bourton on Dunsmore
 Rugby, CV23 9QZ, UK
www.developmentbookshop.com

■ Across Africa, policymakers are being advised to invest in ICTs as a panacea for growth and poverty reduction. But does increased access to ICTs actually have an impact on poverty? To answer that question, the PICTURE Africa project conducted household level research, focussing on poor communities in Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. Rather than having a narrow, economic definition of poverty, the research teams applied a sustainable livelihoods framework, understanding poverty in relation to a number of assets, including financial, human, physical and social, plus household vulnerability to external shocks.

Mobile phones and radio proved to be the ICTs most used by poorer households,

and by comparing results gathered in 2007 and 2010, the researchers offer empirical evidence for a link between increased access to ICTs and reduced poverty. Their studies also provide detail on the mechanisms by which ICTs can support households, for example by reducing costs for travel, giving access to assistance during times of need, and providing information, such as on health or agriculture. In general, households reported that ICTs ‘made their lives easier’. The studies also considered how policy can impact on ICT access; the competitive market in which mobile phone provision and FM radio operate was found to stimulate greater access, compared, for example, to national monopolies in landline provision.

▼ Community empowerment

The need to empower communities at the local level, in order for them to identify the obstacles they face and the solutions that suit them best, is a first step in eradicating hunger and malnutrition. This is the conclusion of the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier De Schutter, in his final report to the UN Human Rights Council. De Schutter also highlights the necessity of supportive policies, an enabling international environment, and the promotion of food sovereignty to allow communities to choose which food systems to depend on and how to reshape those systems.

The Transformative Potential of the Right to Food

By O De Schutter
 UN Human Rights Council, 2014; 28 pp.

Downloadable as PDF file from:
<http://tinyurl.com/pqqswha>

▼ Boosting business

This study focuses on the opportunities for livestock development to enhance food security in West Africa through aid and trade, and discusses win-win strategies and trade-offs between aid and trade. Small animals (goats, sheep, grasscutters) are highlighted as an underrated resource to improve the food security of poorer households. Reducing disease, identifying niche markets and encouraging local sourcing are also identified as opportunities, provided a flexible and creative approach is taken.

Aid and Trade for Livestock Development and Food Security in West Africa

By J van der Lee, H Schiere, R Bosma *et al.*
 Wageningen UR Livestock Research, 2014; 32 pp.
 ISSN 1570-8616

Downloadable as PDF file from:
<http://tinyurl.com/nwvx43a>

Ready to work



Youth Employment in Sub-Saharan Africa

By D Filmer & L Fox
 World Bank, 2014; 280 pp.
 ISBN 978-14-6480-107-5
 US\$34.95 • €25.50
 World Bank
 1818 H Street, NW
 Washington DC 20433, USA
www.worldbank.org

■ While many young Africans might disagree, evidence suggests that job opportunities in the continent are growing, whether in export oriented manufacturing, high productivity agriculture or profitable small enterprises. Enabling young people to take advantage of those opportunities, however, presents a major challenge for governments in the region. Customised, country-specific strategies are needed, say the authors, to address youth unemployment. Such strategies are likely to involve: ensuring that primary school leavers have the basic skills they need to be productive adults; giving young people stronger access to land and credit to start their own businesses; and improving the prospects of university leavers to find rewarding careers in the private sector, through courses that have practical relevance to a modern, commercial economy.

Based on a comprehensive analysis of youth employment in Africa, this report provides an update on how countries are creating new jobs, and examines some promising new directions for the continent. It also highlights what policymakers can do to help young people enter the labour market, whether in waged jobs or the informal sector.

▼ Agro-biodiversity

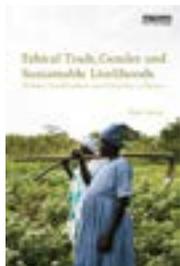
This report states that over the last five decades, human diets have grown more similar – by 36% – and suggests that growing reliance on a few crops may accelerate the rise in obesity, heart disease and diabetes. To improve nutrition and food security, increase genetic diversity and reduce the vulnerability of the global food system to climate change, the researchers have called for increased promotion of a wider range of varieties of the major crops, enhancement of the nutritional quality of major crops, and promotion of alternative, neglected and underutilised crops.

Increasing Homogeneity in Global Food Supplies and the Implications for Food Security

By CK Khoury, AD Bjorkman, H Dempewolf *et al.*
 PNAS, 2014; 6 pp.

Downloadable as PDF file from:
<http://tinyurl.com/pw2cwe7>

Farmers' perspectives



Ethical Trade, Gender and Sustainable Livelihoods: Women Smallholders and Ethicality in Kenya
By K Smith
Routledge, 2014; 246 pp.
ISBN 978-04-1582-154-4
£85 • €100
Routledge
130 Milton Park
Abingdon
OX14 4SB, UK
www.routledge.com

■ Despite the global development of ethical sourcing, including schemes such as Fair Trade, debate persists about the injustice that can be embedded in market-based approaches to improving smallholder livelihoods. Is ethically traded consumption truly providing the kinds of outcomes that farmers in the developing world need or desire? And for policymakers, how might ethical sourcing standards, and their associated processes and institutional structures be improved?

In attempting to answer these questions, Kiah Smith decided to ask those whose voices, she contests, are rarely heard in international dialogue and research on ethical sourcing - the farmers themselves. In Machakos, Kenya, she met with over 180 'shamba ladies' and industry representatives. Some of the farmers had already begun supplying vegetable crops for export markets; others were subsistence farmers. Meeting with them in their homes and fields, Smith reveals how these women experience ethical standards, and the extent to which those standards reflect their own values, their local culture, and their priorities for achieving sustainable livelihoods.

▼ Equality

Using 10 case studies, this publication illustrates the International Fund for Agricultural Development's experience in closing the 'gender gap' in climate change adaptation. In addition to outlining how to do this, the report reveals that gender-sensitive adaptation results in better livelihood options and incomes, improved yields, greater food security and reduced workloads for women and their families.

The Gender Advantage: Women on the Front Line of Climate Change

By IFAD
IFAD, 2014; 23 pp.
ISBN 879-92-9072-471-1

Downloadable as PDF file from:
<http://tinyurl.com/kdt6qtq>

Caribbean challenges



Farming Change: Growing More Food with a Changing Resource Base
By CARAPN, CTA & IICA
CARAPN/CTA/IICA, 2014; 172 pp.
ISBN 978-92-9248-396-8
CTA no. 1720
10 credit points
Downloadable as PDF file from:
<http://tinyurl.com/ogmtnzo>

📖 @ Poor farming practices, climate change and the spread of invasive alien plant and animal species are waging a three-pronged attack on the Caribbean's vulnerable agricultural resource base. For soils, farming practices are both responsible for degradation and potentially the solution. Soilless production methods, such as hydroponics, could be an answer but are likely to be unaffordable for most farmers and consumers. As a more realistic alternative, the author outlines policies, good practices and appropriate technologies that have the potential to reverse the degradation and rebuild the Caribbean's soils.

Meanwhile, the state of forests will play a key role in determining the region's capacity to adapt to, and mitigate, climate change. Countries are urged to integrate forest management into national development plans, and to take part in international schemes for forest protection, such as REDD+. Integrated management systems, including surveillance, prevention and control, are also recommended in the context of invasive alien species, which currently pose a significant threat to agriculture in the region.

▼ Tackling hunger

The *Global Food Policy Report* is the third in an annual series that provides an in-depth look at major food policy developments and trends from the past year. It offers an overview of the food policy developments that have contributed to or hindered progress in achieving food and nutrition security, examines key challenges and opportunities, describes the rising political commitment to food and nutrition security, and sets an agenda for action for 2014 and beyond.

2013 Global Food Policy Report

Edited by A Marble & H Fritschel
IFPRI, 2014; 154 pp.
ISBN 978-08-9629-562-9

Downloadable as PDF file from:
<http://tinyurl.com/obgaltk>

Motivating new farmers



Choices: Caribbean Agriculture - Our Way
By CARAPN, CTA & IICA
CARAPN/CTA/IICA, 2013; 124 pp.
ISBN 978-92-9248-422-4
CTA no. 1719
20 credit points
Downloadable as PDF file from:
<http://tinyurl.com/pm4ygpv>

📖 @ Presumably intended for the shelves of school and college libraries, this attractively presented publication aims to promote careers in farming and the agri-food value chain to youngsters in the Caribbean. Traditionally regarded as the last resort for those unable to enter more glamorous professions, jobs in farming and food are changing and offer bright prospects for those with the passion and entrepreneurial spirit to pursue them. Innovations in technology and trade have widened business options in the farming sector, while the crises in food and fuel prices, combined with a slowdown in tourism due to global recession, are making governments rethink their strategies when it comes to food security and financial stability.

Choices mostly comprises short, personal case studies of those who have chosen to make a go of it in agriculture. These include young people, women and men, a few of whom may be well known to Caribbean readers, while most will not be. National initiatives (including primary school programmes) to encourage new farmers are also covered, along with efforts to make farming more environmentally sustainable.

▼ Smart money

The latest issue of *ICT Update* looks at emerging innovations in mobile finance that are revolutionising the agricultural value chain, creating alternative ways of making payments to farmers, giving them greater access to financial services, and reducing or eliminating supply chain credit risk. The electronic money service, SmartMoney, which has more than 20,000 subscribers in Eastern Africa, is just one intervention this issue covers.

ICT4Ag 76: Mobile Finance - Next Stop for Agriculture

By CTA
CTA, 2014; 16 pp.
CTA no. ICT076E

Downloadable as PDF file from:
<http://tinyurl.com/kgbwumw>

Acquisitions



The Global Land Grab: Beyond the Hype

By M Kaag & A Zoomers
Zed Books, 2014; 272 pp.
ISBN 978-17-8032-894-2
£19.99 • €24
Zed Books
7 Cynthia Street
London N1 9JF, UK
www.zedbooks.co.uk

■ There are two kinds of ‘hype’ about land grabbing, say the authors. Firstly, the actual rush to acquire land in the South, which has been driving large-scale deals since the early 2000s, and which local people seem powerless to stop. Secondly, the coverage which this has received, whether by the media, advocacy organisations or, latterly, academics and international organisations (including FAO and the World Bank). Such coverage, they suggest has been polarised, being either alarmist or hailing the new opportunities for development. Taking a step back, the authors aim to answer some basic questions: does the global land grab exist? If so, how has it manifested itself in different countries, and what is really new about it? And what are the true causes of the trend, and the problems it creates?

Their analysis is driven by 10 country case studies, from Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania), Latin America and Asia. As part of a systematic attempt to analyse land grabbing at country level within a broader global perspective, the studies look at how historical and geographical processes, including the roles of national policies and political realities, have contributed to the current phenomenon. They also look at what may happen after the hype, when opportunistic investors have gone; who, for example, will have rights to the abandoned land?

▼ Fish farming

While investment in aquaculture depends on an enabling economic environment and secure property rights, measures for ecological protection are also vital. This technical paper summarises some of the issues facing aquaculture governance, current ‘best practices’ and potential challenges for the future. Four governance principles – accountability, effectiveness and efficiency of governments, equity, and predictability of the rule of law – are suggested as necessary for sustainable development of the industry.

Policy and Governance in Aquaculture

By N Hishamunda, N Ridler & E Martone
FAO, 2014; 65 pp.
ISBN 978-92-5107-444-2

Downloadable as PDF file from:
<http://tinyurl.com/o404jqn>

Technology choices



Food Security in a World of Natural Resource Scarcity

By MW Rosegrant, J Koo, N Cenacchi et al.
IFPRI, 2014; 174 pp.
ISBN 978-08-9629-847-7
IFPRI
2033 K Street, NW
Washington DC 20006-1002, USA
www.ifpri.org

Downloadable as PDF file from:
<http://tinyurl.com/mtjuwk4>

■ Amidst the visions and paradigms for a world that can sustainably feed 9 billion people by 2050, agricultural policymakers may wish for some straight-forward guidance on which farming technologies they should be promoting. This report from the International Food Policy Research Institute analyses 11 key technologies that deserve attention, using a number of models to assess their comparative value (in terms of yields and resource use), for production of rice, maize and wheat, under two possible climate scenarios (one hotter and wetter than the other).

The results suggest a three-pronged effort is needed. Firstly, increase investment in agricultural research in order to build crop resistance to heat, drought, pests and diseases. Secondly, invest in research, development and use of resource-conserving farm management, including no-till and minimum tillage, integrated soil fertility management, improved crop protection, and precision agriculture. And thirdly, increase investment in cost-effective irrigation, thereby improving the returns to other technologies. In particular, they recommend that support for advanced irrigation technologies, such as drip and sprinkler irrigation, will save water while maintaining yield levels.

▼ Value chains

This paper reviews trade in food staples in West Africa, through the lens of the commodity value chain, from inputs to final products. Key recommendations include: prioritising intra-regional trade as an alternative to national self-sufficiency; promoting private sector involvement in agricultural research and development; and focusing on climatic and demographic trends that will inevitably affect both the supply and demand for food staples in the region.

Barriers to Trade in Food Staples in West Africa

By M-A Jouanjan & J Engel
ODI, 2014; 56 pp.

Downloadable as PDF file from:
<http://tinyurl.com/ov7trb>

Replacing the MDGs



From Rio+20 to a New Development Agenda: Building a Bridge to a Sustainable Future

By F Dodds, J Laguna-Celis & L Thompson
Routledge, 2013; 264 pp.
ISBN 978-04-1571-654-3
£26.99 • €33
For Routledge's address, see p.22

■ In 2015, the Millennium Development Goals will expire and the world will need a new framework for development. The shape of this new ‘agenda’ is likely to draw heavily on the 2012 Rio+20 meeting, which, for the authors, was not just another international conference, but a watershed moment for a series of concepts and commitments that will shape the future for decades. Examples include: the green economy and the introduction of national green accounting; national measures of consumption, production and well-being that go beyond GDP; commitments to sustainable development partnerships, including Sustainable Energy for All, and the introduction of Sustainable Development Goals.

Despite the lofty subject, the book takes a helpful, chronological approach, looking first at the preparations for the conference by the UN and others, both formal and informal. It then charts what happened during the meeting, as countries tried to agree ‘the future we want’, including the roles of developing countries, Europe and America. It describes the expansive list of commitments made, and ends by looking at the different ways in which the conference is and will continue to impact the future development agenda.

▼ Natural resources

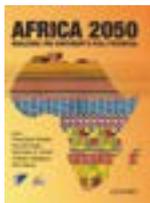
Wetlands are important environments for people, wildlife and plants as they provide freshwater, food, medicines and contribute to the livelihoods of millions of the world's poor. Using many examples from Asia, Africa and Latin America, *Wetlands and People* encourages a ‘people-centred’ approach to managing wetlands sustainably, and supports the move away from their absolute protection to an approach that integrates conservation with development.

Wetlands and People

By IWMI
IWMI, 2014; 32 pp.
ISBN 978-92-9090-784-8

Downloadable as PDF file from:
<http://tinyurl.com/kfgwmyz>

Future vision



Africa 2050: Realizing the Continent's Full Potential
 Edited by T Ahlers, H Kato, HS Kohli, C Madavo & A Sood
 Oxford University Press, 2014;
 524 pp.
 ISBN 978-01-9945-040-4
 £80 • €96
 Oxford University Press
 Great Clarendon Street
 Oxford OX2 6DP, UK
www.oup.com

■ What will Africa look like in 2050? In seeking to inspire Africans, particularly African leaders, to adopt a long-term, transformative agenda the authors offer an exciting new vision, which sees the majority of Africans in the middle class, with average earnings of US\$17,500 per year. The number of poor is reduced by 85%, extreme poverty eliminated and inequality reduced by growth in jobs. Access to electricity, clean water, sanitation, education and healthcare are universal.

While not intended to offer a comprehensive strategy to achieving such a vision, this weighty book offers action agendas in areas that the authors believe will have a decisive impact. These include agendas for education, reducing conflict, private sector development, jobs, agriculture, extractive industries, and cities. "Almost all important changes - in policies, institutions, investment, relations with others - require a long-term perspective, strategy and action agenda," they write. Reconciling such a long-term view with political realities may be the hardest challenge of all.

▼ Micronutrient provision

Agricultural policies in many African countries focus on industrialising food value chains and substituting domestic products for imported ones. Yet experience in Nigeria shows that, by focusing on staple crops and neglecting vegetables, pulses and animal proteins, these policies are missing opportunities to address micronutrient undernutrition. This policy brief calls on governments to implement agricultural policies that build the capacity of domestic value chains to provide high-quality produce, while also strengthening regulatory institutions.

Is Nutrition Losing Out in African Agricultural Policies?

By E Robinson & J Humphrey
 IDS, 2014; 4 pp.

Downloadable as PDF file from:
<http://tinyurl.com/pdmdp8z>

Feeding the world



Sustainable Food Systems: Building a New Paradigm
 By T Marsden & A Morley
 Routledge, 2014; 240 pp.
 ISBN 978-04-1563-954-5
 £85 • €100
 For Routledge's address, see p.22

■ Sustainability, the watchword of the Rio+20 summit, is now widely recognised as a paramount consideration in the development of the global food system. Constructing a new 'paradigm' for food production, however, is a complex task that will demand informed dialogue between policymakers, researchers and practitioners, including farmers. Several key drivers - social, economic and political - will be at play, around a number of themes: regulation and governance; sustainable supply chains; public procurement; rural restructuring and urban food systems; animal welfare and biosecurity.

Building on over 10 years of research, this book critically explores the linkages between social science research and the world's evolving food security challenge. Academic in tone, and focussing predominantly on research conducted in the UK and Europe, it examines how the links between research, policy and practice can begin to contribute to more sustainable, resilient and fair food systems that are better equipped to feed the world by 2050.

▼ Obesity

While millions in the developing world continue to suffer from under-consumption of food, developing countries have also seen the fastest acceleration, globally, in over-consumption, with the number of overweight or obese adults more than tripling between 1980 and 2008, from 250 million to 904 million. This report traces how changes in diet - more fat, more meat, more sugar and bigger portions - have led to a looming health crisis. It also analyses how policymakers have tried to tackle the problem, and looks at the implications for food availability and the prices of staple foods.

Future Diets: Implications for Agriculture and Food Prices

By S Keats & S Wiggins
 ODI, 2014; 133 pp.

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<http://tinyurl.com/m3z67xs>

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CTA is 30 years old!

CTA is celebrating its 30th birthday. Thirty years of service to ACP rural communities! Thirty years of working to promote the agricultural development, food security and welfare of small producers.



CTA was created 30 years ago under the Lomé Convention, signed between ACP countries and the European Union (EU). Initially, its main activity was disseminating information. Although this continues to be a significant portion of its activities, CTA later developed programmes aimed at promoting political dialogue, the development of agricultural value chains and the adoption of information and communication technologies (ICT).

Funded by the EU, CTA has always sought to obtain tangible and measurable results in the field, especially in terms of food security, poverty reduction and improving living conditions for small producers. To achieve this, it has supported numerous farming organisations, formed partnerships with the main development stakeholders and has consistently supported political institutions and universities in ACP countries. Even today, CTA continues to strengthen its links with agricultural organisations, government agencies, research networks, youth and women's groups, and numerous private sector companies. The aim is to create value

and achieve a sustainable transformation of the agricultural sector.

So, we've got some pretty ambitious people at CTA! We are also convinced that, despite the modest size of our organisation, we can make a difference. Moreover, it is not by chance that we have been trailblazers in numerous fields. For example, it was CTA's initiative to launch the Question-and-Answer service in 1985. This service allows planners, researchers, trainers and extension workers in ACP countries to receive expert advice on the various issues they encounter. Our selective dissemination of information project, launched in 1988, allowed us to provide numerous beneficiaries with updated bibliographic information free of charge, taken from the most appropriate agricultural databases. Documents listed in bibliographies (articles in periodicals, reports, minutes of meetings) could be ordered as part of this project.

CTA is also strongly committed to promoting the adoption and appropriate use of ICTs. In 2008, we launched a Web 2.0 introductory training programme. The success of this activity, which also

tackled social media, continues, and even today the interest and enthusiasm of

participants is such that although it was initially fully funded by the centre, the majority of the costs are now covered by the participants themselves or by partners.

The renowned *Spore* magazine, the Brussels Development Briefings, our catalogue of publications, our international conferences and numerous other support programmes (e.g. participatory mapping, knowledge management platforms) have made CTA an essential stakeholder and partner of choice for any institution involved in agricultural and rural development.

This is why we are pleased to invite you to follow our 'Knowledge is...' campaign throughout the year which celebrates the power of knowledge in responsible and sustainable development. Through it, you can find out more about our actions and philosophy. You could also become one of our partners.

For more information, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/pua2uhg>

CTA Director, Michael Hailu, cuts the cake to mark the launch of CTA's 30th Anniversary

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Two important events mark CTA's 30th birthday

Since 2007, CTA has organised regular briefings in Brussels, dedicated to major current issues in agricultural and rural development. The latest on the economic transformation of Africa was also an opportunity to celebrate CTA's 30th birthday.

To celebrate CTA's 30th birthday, a high-level briefing took place on 4 April in Brussels, to discuss the role of agriculture in the economic transformation of Africa. The Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture at the African Union and the Tanzanian Minister for Industry and Trade joined the Director of CTA, Michael Hailu, and a panel of experts, policymakers and investors.

The Tanzanian Minister for Industry and Trade, H.E. Abdallah Kigoda, who was representing President Kikwete, stated that the transformation of African agriculture was a crucial issue: "Agriculture contributes a sizeable proportion of Africa's GDP and it accounts for a sizeable portion of the country's foreign earnings. If we can boost agricultural growth, we will have a better chance of obtaining more robust economic growth and eradicating poverty."

Kigoda pointed out that agriculture represents 25% of Tanzania's GDP and 34% of its export earnings. "So the economic growth and well-being of Tanzania are both dependent on agriculture," he explained. "The transformation of agriculture is an achievable undertaking. There is a growing global consensus to assist Africa in transforming its agriculture."

The Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture at the African Union, H.E. Tumusiime Rhoda Peace, emphasised the importance of the role of agriculture in implementing the African Union's 'Vision 2063', aiming to achieve a 'transformed continent'. "Investing in agriculture is one of the most effective ways to achieve food security and drive inclusive growth," she said. "The agriculture sector employs 65-70% of the

African workforce. It accounts for about a third of the continent's GDP. There is a fast-growing regional food market which is being fuelled by population growth and rapid urbanisation. Agriculture holds great promise for broad-based economic growth and job creation."

Hailu highlighted how favourable the situation was for fulfilling this promise: "Africa has so many reasons to be optimistic, with the majority of the world's fastest growing economies, increasing foreign investment, conflict at historic lows and many democratic countries." He did, however, qualify his views: "We still face major challenges. Among these is the fact that agriculture remains an unattractive option for many of our young people in rural areas."

To mark its birthday, during the briefing, CTA also launched a publication that brings together stories about the impact its activities have had on agriculture and rural life in ACP countries over the past decade: *Stories of Change: Transforming Lives Through Agricultural and Rural Development*. Some stories describe actions that have contributed to improving productivity and the income of small producers and fishers. Others describe the support the centre has provided to institutions and university researchers. Finally, some provide an insight into the numerous policy processes CTA has played - and continues to play - an active role in.

Order your copy today on CTA's publications website (<http://tinyurl.com/patpf2o>), where you can also download the publication free of charge. We are positive that these stories will help you better understand CTA's ventures.

For more information about the Brussels Briefings: <http://bruxellesbriefings.net>.



CTA's new book *Stories of Change* is now available

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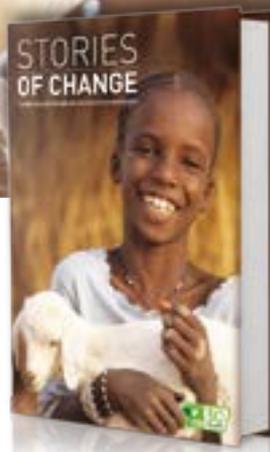
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