

Wageningen, the Netherlands, 16 February 2011



Introduction

Domestic and international investors are increasingly showing interest in natural resources (i.e. fertile land, minerals, forests and forest-related products, watersheds). Changes in entitlements to these resources can have enormous implications for rural livelihoods and environmental sustainability. When land is acquired, the implications for local communities living on and from these resources are huge, while their rights may not have been respected. Hence, governance of land and natural resources is most important in a globalized world.

Aims of the seminar:

The aim of this seminar is to explore the governance challenges with respect to particularly international investments in land and other natural resources.

What are suitable entry points, modalities at various levels (from global to local) for balancing local rights and livelihoods, sustainable economic development and investors' interests? What are the challenges?

Three short presentations intend to illustrate leverage mechanisms that facilitate sustainable management of land and natural resources. There will be particular attention to the roles and capacities of local governments to deal with those global challenges.

Venue and date

Venue: Wageningen Hof van Wageningen,
Dorskampzaal

Date: Wednesday 16 February 2011

Time: 14h00 – 17h30.

Key questions

The following key questions will be discussed:

- What are the main challenges for improving governance of land and natural resources?
- What are suitable entry points, strategies and modalities for promoting equitable governance of land and natural resources?
- How to initiate change in the current governance system?

Programme

14.00 – 14.15	Opening
14.15 – 14.45	Presentation by Thea Hillhorst (KIT): <i>What role for governance in improving the development outcomes of large-scale land acquisitions?</i>
14.45 – 15.05	Presentation by Sarah Stattman (WUR): <i>Biofuels – fueling (local) government?</i>
15.05 – 15.25	Presentation by Diewwke Klaver (WUR-CDI): <i>How to bring about change in natural resource governance in the mineral sector in the DRC?</i>
15.25 – 15.40	Coffee break
15.40 – 16.30	Group discussions
16.30 – 17.00	Presentation of highlights and conclusions
17.00 – 17.30	Drinks

Initiators of this seminar

This seminar is part of the international course on Local Governance & Rural Decentralization organized on a yearly basis by the KIT and Wageningen UR-CDI. The course participants are practitioners coming from different countries and continents.

In order to ensure that Scientists meet with Practitioners this mini-seminar will be organized together with the Wageningen UR Centre for Governance that has created a network of PhD candidates working in the field of governance.

Interested to participate?

Please contact: Lotte.vandenBerg@wur.nl.



Elaborate programme

Below the three presentations and group work themes will be explained in further detail.

Presentation 1: What role for governance in improving the development outcomes of large-scale land acquisitions? (by Thea Hilhorst, KIT)

Large-scale land acquisitions (for farming, mining, tourism, forestry, special economic zones, capturing carbon credit) have major consequences for rural livelihoods. Governance issues are influencing: decision making on development pathways, how the land (and its natural resources) is acquired, how it will be used, and how the costs and benefits will be distributed, are only a few examples in which good governance is crucial. Following an introduction to the drivers of large-scale land acquisitions, the various governance related initiatives taken or discussed will be presented, such as at the international level, national level, business sector, social movements and locally.

Presentation 2: Biofuels: fueling (local) government? (by Sarah Stattman, WUR)

In 2004 the National Biodiesel Program of Brazil started as an ambitious policy to promote sustainable development in the poorer regions of Brazil. Central to this policy were social and economic incentives to create opportunities to improve the livelihood of small scale farmers in the poorest regions. In spite of these objectives the national government has not been able to improve the inclusion of these farmers into the biodiesel chain. Recently private / semi-governmental parties are trying to reorganise the program in order to reach the objective of social inclusion. This presentation will discuss differences in national versus local interests and the role of private actors in improving local sustainability.

Presentation 3: How to bring about change in natural resource governance in the mineral sector in the DRC? (by Dieuwke Klaver, WUR-CDI)

Cassiterite, coltan and other minerals are used in electronic devices for consumers (mobile phones and computers) and in machinery for the industrial sector. Part of these minerals is extracted in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Both the army and rebels control parts of the artisanal mining sites and their supply chains. This militarization of mining is prolonging the armed conflict for more than 12 years.

During this presentation the current situation and potential entry points for change are highlighted at international, national and local level. The aim of these changes is breaking the links between natural resource exploitation, conflict and corruption.

Discussion

On the basis of the three presentations, the participants will split up in three smaller groups. Each group will work on specific questions posed by the key speakers. During the group work we will try to find leverage mechanisms that could lead to sustainable management of natural resources, specified for the three presented case studies.

