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INTERNATIONAL
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Buitenlandse
Zaken

DPRN Expert Seminar:

Commercial pressures on land:

Rethinking policies and practice for development

Utrecht, 8 July 2009

Academiegebouw, Domplein/near Domtoren, Utrecht

Centre for Development Studies (CDS), Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen

co-organized with:

Section of International Development Studies (IDS), Faculty Geo-Sciences, Utrecht University

Oxfam Novib, The Hague

International Land Coalition, Rome

Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department for Sustainable Economic Development

Please note:

This seminar is hosted in conjunction with the seminar on 7 July "Sustainable development – Liberalization of land markets and new processes of land grabbing". The preceding seminar will provide academics with a platform to discuss ongoing research. The DPRN seminar on July 8 focuses on reviewing land policy and practice that enable a response to commercial pressures on land.

Program

Chair: Professor Peter Ho, Centre for Development Studies, University of Groningen

- 8.30–9:00: Registration and coffee
- 9.00–9.05: Opening and introduction –Jan Donner, Chair of the DRPN Taskforce and President of Royal Tropical Institute
- 9.05–9.20: Keynote speech, The Netherlands' support to improved land governance in developing countries, Maarten Brouwer, Ambassador for Development Cooperation, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- 9.20–9.35: Keynote speech, Mrs. Dorine Burmanje, Chair of the Executive Board, Dutch Cadastre Land Registry and Mapping Agency
- 9.35–9.50: Keynote speech, Mrs. Wei Suying, Director-General, Ministry of Land Resources of China
- 9.50–10.10: Prof. Saturnino 'Jun' Borras Jr., Research Chair in International Development Studies, Saint Mary's University, Canada, (Re)framing Land Issues and Struggles in the Context of Global Commercial Pressure on Land
- 10.15–10.35: Book presentation *Developmental Dilemmas* (Routledge, 2009) and the Concept of Credibility in Land Governance, Prof. Peter Ho, CDS
- 10.35–11.45: Questions
- 11.45–11:00: Coffee and tea break
- 11:00–11:15: Taking stock: how are we responding to the global rush for land? – on behalf of the DPRN partners, Mike Taylor, International Land Coalition
- 11.15–12.45: Panel 1 (90 min.; 15 min. per presentation plus 30. min. discussion): Southern stakeholder perspective: promoting socially and environmentally responsible land-related investments

LUNCH: 12:45–13:30

- 13:30–15:00: Panel 2 (90 min.): Corporate codes and multi stakeholder initiatives: redressing social and ecological effects caused by foreign corporate activity in Southern countries
- 15:00–15.15: Coffee and tea break
- 15.15–16.45: Panel 3 (90 min.): Role of the international community: working towards socio-economically and environmentally responsible investments in natural resources for crop production

A case of land governance: Chinese Local and Global Impact

- 16.45–17.05 Prof. Gao Guiying, Ningxia University, China Western Development Centre, China
- 17.05–17.25 Hans Moleman, Correspondent, Volkskrant, China's ambitions and challenges in exploitation and capacity building in Angola and Laos. Including Video of the China Railway Construction Corporation (CRCC)
- 17.25–18.00: Discussion and closure

RECEPTION AND DRINKS: 18.00

Panel 1: Southern stakeholder perspective: promoting socially and environmentally responsible land-related investments that respect local tenure systems.

Chair: Nathaniel Don Marquez,

Governments in the south face the challenge of attracting investment to stimulate economic growth, a particular challenge in rural areas. Offers from investors to invest in agribusiness are thus in many cases accepted, but land may be offered without putting in place adequate mechanisms to mitigate risks and promote opportunities. Civil society organisations and local stakeholders are often not consulted, and have in general opposed the handover of land to investors. Questions to be addressed:

1. How could host governments be better supported to implement effective legal and land-related tools, enabling local land users to benefit from commercial interest into land and to prevent or mitigate its social, environmental and labour consequences.
2. How could civil society organizations in host countries, including producer organizations, better lobby for a general and transparent set of rules enabling them to preserve and protect their livelihoods in the face of wealthy stakeholder's interests.
3. What could local CSOs and governments do in order to effectively and adequately include local land users into the decision making processes on land and natural resources transactions directly or indirectly affecting local communities.

Presenters:

- i. Abdoul Karim Mamalo – Permanent Secretary, Code Rural, Niger

- ii. Vidya Bhushan Rawat, Director, Social Development Foundation (SDF) – India
- iii. Lorenzo Soliz, Centre de Investigación y de Promoción del Campesinado (CIPCA) – Bolivia
- iv. Le Quang Binh, Institute for Studies of Society, Economy and Environment (ISEE) – Vietnam
- v. Gaëtan Vanloqueren, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food

Panel 2: Corporate codes and multi stakeholder initiatives: redressing social and ecological effects caused by foreign corporate activity in Southern countries

Chair: Ujjaini Halim, IMSE (India)

How can non-domestic corporations mitigate social and ecological effects caused directly or indirectly by its investments or other commercial activities concerning domestic natural resources for food, feed and energy production?

It is attractive to corporations to operate or invest in countries with low costs. Low costs however, can be both cause and consequence of inequity and an unsustainable exploitation of resources. Do we expect companies to restrict their operations, forgoing competitive edge, even in case national or international laws and authorities do not force them to? The last few years international companies are increasingly interested in accepting social and ecological rules in such circumstance, often partnering with international NGOs and/or domestic CSOs in so called Roundtables of Multi Stakeholder Initiatives which try to agree on corporate codes or certification. Their motives may be the protection of their brand for their own constituencies (consumers and shareholders), pressure exerted by CSOs, governments or other stakeholders, a recognition of the value of a secure, stable and sustainable operative environment, or, of course, a sense of decency.

Are these corporate-CSO/NGO regulatory mechanisms effective? Do they contribute to local sustainable land use? Do they help to mitigate food insecurity? Do they replace government regulation to the degree that they become illegitimate? Why do many of these mechanisms revolve around European companies and NGOs and do Chinese and Indian corporations and other stakeholders rarely participate, if at all?

Presenters:

- 1. Sawit Watch (Indonesia): Abetnego Tarigan
- 2. Bart de Steenhuijsen Piters, Mali Biocarburant SA
- 3. LARRRI (Tanzania): Yefred Myenzi

Panel 3: The role of the international community: working towards socially and environmentally responsible investments in natural resources for crop production

Chair: Sander van Bennekom, Oxfam Novib

Inter-governmental organisations concerned with rural development are at the forefront of efforts to facilitate a globally coordinated response to the food crisis. One of the key questions in this response is the role of family farming, and the extent to which increased levels of support to the agriculture sector will either undermine or strengthen the role of family farmers. At the same time, international civil society organisations are increasingly addressing questions of socially and environmentally responsible trade, simultaneously engaging with producer organisations, global and regional trade policies, and international human rights instruments and mechanisms. This panel will attempt to answer the following questions:

- i. What existing or new instruments could inter-governmental organisations use to promote commercial activities directly or indirectly using or affecting land and natural resources that are socially and environmentally responsible, preserve local livelihoods and respect natural resources use systems?
- ii. What role can international civil society play in promoting trade-related policies allowing and encouraging a sustainable commercial use of land and other natural resources?
- iii. How can international organisations (inter-governmental and civil society) strengthen the capacity of local stakeholders to be a part of the decision making processes on land and natural resources transactions directly or indirectly affecting local communities?

Presenters:

- i. Klaus Deininger, Lead Economist, World Bank
- ii. Paul Mathieu, FAO Land Tenure Section
- iii. Harold Liversage, IFAD Land Tenure Advisor'

The Development Policy Review Network (www.DPRN.nl) promotes informed debate and synergy between scientists, policymakers, development practitioners and entrepreneurs. DPRN has a web portal which provides searchable access to development expertise in the Netherlands and Belgium (www.global-connections.nl) and a repository for publications of Dutch development organisations (www.Search4Dev.nl).