

MARIA CRISTINA RULLI

Bio

Dr. Maria Cristina Rulli is Associate Professor in Hydrology and Water Engineering at the Politecnico di Milano since 2002. She is author of papers in the fields of hydrology, fluvial geomorphology, slope stability analysis and water resources assessment. Her most recent research investigates the emergent phenomenon of the foreign direct investments in agricultural land (FDI) and the implication on water resources availability and assessment. In 2002 she was awarded with Environmental friendly Innovation Prize by Fondazione Legambiente, Milano, Italy. In 2003 she won the Young researcher award, National Institute for Mountain Research, Roma, Italy.

Abstract

“Water appropriation in large scale land acquisitions”

Societal pressure on the global land and freshwater resources is increasing as a result of the rising food demand by the growing human population, dietary changes, and the enhancement of biofuel production induced by the rising oil prices and recent changes in United States and European Union bioethanol policies. Many countries and corporations have started to acquire relatively inexpensive and productive agricultural land located in foreign countries, as evidenced by the dramatic increase in the number of transnational land deals between 2005 and 2009. Large scale land acquisition is driven by a need for agricultural land. In many cases, however, the lack of adequate freshwater resources in the investor country is also a major contributing factor. The comprehensive evaluation of the water associated to large scale land deals provides an estimate of the freshwater removed from target countries through crops export. This phenomenon is of particular concern because it affects countries prone to malnourishment and in which demographic pressure is dramatically increasing.

WARD ANSEEUW

Bio

Dr Ward Anseeuw, a development economist and policy analyst, is a research fellow at the Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD) seconded to the Post-Graduate School of Agriculture and Rural Development of the University of Pretoria. He is also the co-director of the Center for the Study of Governance Innovations. He has conducted research for the last 15 years in Southern Africa and the African continent, more particularly on the issues of agricultural and land policies, agrarian and land reforms, land conflicts and large-scale land acquisitions. He has published extensively on these issues in scientific journals and with renowned publishers, including *Land, transition and compromise* (with Chris Alden, Palgrave, 2009), *The struggle over land in Africa – Conflicts, politics and change* (with Chris Alden, HSRC Press, 2010) and *South Africa’s Agrarian Reform* (In French, Editions

Universitaires Européennes, 2011). Regarding large-scale land based investments (LSLBI), Ward Anseeuw coordinated for the ILC the Commercial Pressures on Land project and is one of the founding members of the Land Matrix. He released an assessment of LSLBI for Southern Africa, detailing the different investment models being developed in the region, and has implemented a similar African based study for the African Union and the Economic Commission for Africa of the UN.

Renewed interest for agriculture and the rush for land - Some perspectives on investment models, trends and data

Since much of the focus on large-scale land acquisitions is predominantly political and ideological, different models and practices embedded in the phenomenon and, by consequence the diverse implications they imply, tend to be overlooked. In addition, practices are changing and evolving rapidly.

The objective of this presentation is to give a more disaggregated assessment of investment models implemented and to analyze their differentiated implications and trends. It will also lead to some reflections on data and the changing role data plays within the framework of the phenomenon and its regulation.