

Bulletin of the drylands

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Cover photo: Patita Tingoi prepares a presentation on Kenya's draft Land Policy for the regional training on pastoralism and policy advocacy in east Africa held by MS-TCDC in Arusha, Tanzania. Patita works as the governance and development programme officer at the Centre for Minority Rights Development (CEMIRIDE), an advocacy organisation working with pastoralists and ethnic minorities in Kenya.

Photo: Ced Hesse



Erratum: The cover photo of *Haramata 50* showed a man cleaning solar panels in a Sudanese village. It should have been credited to Hartmut Schwarzbach/Still Pictures.

Which do you want first...

...the good news or the bad news? Whichever you choose, the world's drylands this year are having to swallow some of both. And Africa, as so often, provides some of the extremes.

On the positive side, there is heartening news from Mauritania, with the election of a new President in what was judged the first free and fair election since independence (see News, p5). An admirable example, on the face of it, to show how enlightened leadership can give the people their democratic rights. And in neighbouring Mali, 500 people from around the world have come together to support and promote the concept of food sovereignty, which has won growing support at the grassroots in many countries (Reports, p20).

These are both encouraging signs for the future, which we can hope that others will build on to bring change for the better. But this hope does not permit us to ignore the bad news, which is liable to get worse if we try to bury it.

For its future peace and prosperity, the last thing Africa needs is more guns and soldiers.

But that's what is likely, either in the shape of clandestine guerrilla forces or the official armies being given more and bigger weapons to defeat them (News, pp 4,6). Citizens – whether they are farmers, herders or town-dwellers – must be aware of the process of militarisation if they are ever to have a chance of stopping it.

Two other ominous developments reported in this issue are (1) the climate forecast which warns that food production in some African countries could be slashed by half in less than 15 years, and (2) a warning that unless Europe offers more generous terms, its so-called Economic Partnership Agreements with Africa risk driving some of the poorest countries deeper into poverty (News, 8-9).

The new-look Haramata has been welcomed by almost all those who sent us comments on the last issue, both for its lively articles and comment as well as the smarter, more spacious design. This time we're pleased to have thoughtful pieces by Oussouby Touré and Mariame Dem responding to articles in that issue – and we hope that more readers will join the debate on these or other topics.

Alert over terror training in the Sahel

THE LONG RIBBON of the Sahel, stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea, has become the latest conflict zone of the international 'war on terror' – underlining the fact that remote and sparsely-populated dryland regions are often ideal training grounds for extremist groups.

One of Algeria's main Islamic rebel groups, the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), recently pledged loyalty to Osama bin Laden and announced that it was re-naming itself 'Al-Qaida of the Maghreb'. The GSPC is regarded by some European governments as a dangerous new force in recruiting and training *jihadists* for suicide bombings and other terror attacks in their countries. Spanish police believe 35 people recruited by a GSPC militant in the Barcelona area were sent for training in the Sahel, where they learned about heavy weapons, mortars, ground-to-air missiles and the use of satellite phones, as preparation for attacks in Europe.

The GSPC/Al Qaida is known to have developed working links with the Tuareg of northern Mali and with other groups in Mauritania, Niger and Chad. According to sources quoted by the Spanish newspaper *El Pais* , their training camps never stay in the same place for more than 2-3 days, so that even if identified by spy satellites they will be

gone before anyone can drop bombs on them. Last November, a GSPC column of about 100 fighters, coming from Mali and Niger, was identified in southern Algeria. They brought down a reconnaissance helicopter before scattering in different directions.

Governments, however, have begun to co-operate in resisting the terrorists' networks, either on their own account or under the umbrella of the US-led 'Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Initiative' (TSCTI), which is providing funds and training for special army units in 10 countries of the Maghreb and the Sahel.

Algeria is reported to be offering an arms amnesty to 3,000 Tuareg warriors, presumably financed under the TSCTI. In return for surrendering their old weapons at an Algerian camp near Mali's northern outpost of Kidal, the Tuareg are promised modern weapons and membership of an auxiliary force supporting the Malian army to keep out any foreign fighters.

Meanwhile, in February army chiefs of all Sahelian zone countries met in Dakar with US General William Ward, who is tipped to be the first Commander-in-Chief of the Pentagon's newly created Africa Command. Previously, most of the African continent was treated for US military purposes as part of their Europe Command, but the terrorist threat judged to be lurking in countries like Somalia and Sudan, and now the Sahel, has convinced Washington of the need for an independent command structure. Other factors in the decision were the need to protect trade with Africa in oil and other resources and to counteract China's rapidly rising influence on the continent.

US military involvement in Africa appears to be spreading rapidly. One French newspaper reports that US Special Forces have carried out joint exercises with Algerian troops near Tamanrasset, not far from the Malian border. And on the other side of

the continent, US war planes were allegedly taking off from Ethiopia in January to attack retreating Islamicist units in Somalia when they were blocked on American instructions at the Kenya border. Under a deal with France to share its military bases in Africa, there are now 1,800 US Marines stationed at Camp Lemonier in Djibouti. Other base facilities are being extended in Uganda and Senegal.

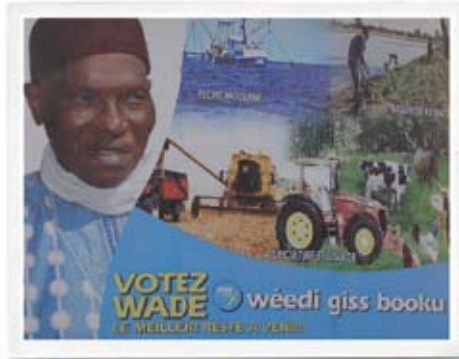
For people living – and trying to make a living – in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, the only hope can be that things do not get worse before they get better.

① *Courrier International* 1/3/2007, www.af.mil/news, www.fpif.org/fpifxt/3136, www.globalpolicy.org, <http://commentary.co.za>, www.ainfos.ca

“Gorgui, dolli nu”

IN THE WOLOF LANGUAGE of Senegal, this was Abdoulaye Wade’s Presidential campaign slogan: “*The old man, we want him again!*” And it’s one that several other African leaders facing re-election this year might be glad to adopt.

For the 80-year-old Wade, whose abrasive style doesn’t always win friends, it certainly seemed to work. Against the expectations of many political commentators and opinion



A poster depicting Wade’s vision of Senegal

© Lorenzo Cotula

polls, he won by a mile in the February election: almost 56 per cent voted for him, compared with 15 per cent for Idrissa Seck, his former Prime Minister, who was the closest of 14 challengers.

Known as ‘the builder president’ due to his fondness for grand projects, Wade made sure to scatter a few big promises along his campaign trail. In Oussouye, Casamance, to the stupefaction of most observers he declared his intention that Senegal should build a nuclear power station. Of course it would be for peaceful purposes, he made clear, but there were no details on how, when or where this project might materialise.

Following just a month after the Senegalese vote, neighbouring Mauritania went to the polls on March 25 to choose a new Head of State. This election was the culmination of a remarkable democracy-building process which started, somewhat improbably, with an army coup d’etat in 2005.

When the coup leader, Col. Ely Ould Mohamed Vall, swept away the old autocratic regime, he quickly won international support for his plans to introduce free elections for the first time since independence, as well as freedoms of expression and of the press. Measures were introduced, including a code of ethics, to assure the independence of the judiciary – and many ordinary citizens were

amazed by the extent of reforms they thought they would never live to see.

The transitional process culminated in March in presidential elections, which attracted 19 candidates. The two with most votes in the first round were a long-time opposition leader, Ahmed Ould Daddah, and a former government minister, Sidi Ould Cheikh Abdallahi. In the second round, Abdallahi was the victor, receiving over 52 per cent of the votes in what foreign observers declared a very free and fair election. He had the support of political parties once loyal to the former dictator Ould Taya.

Africa's path to democracy will be tested in many other countries this year, with presidential or parliamentary elections due in Nigeria, Mali and Chad (April), Algeria, Burkina Faso, Congo-Brazzaville and Lesotho (May), Sierra Leone (July), Ethiopia (November) and Kenya (December).

www.jeuneafrique.com, www.afrol.com

Where next for the World Social Forum?

A PEOPLE'S PLATFORM across many nations insisting there is something better than the money-centred model of globalisation... That's the World Social Forum (WSF), a huge travelling circus for alternative movements

everywhere, which started six years ago in Porto Alegre, Brazil, with the slogan "Another World is Possible" and which pitched its tents this year in Africa. A week in Nairobi in January, to be precise.

Afterwards, the hardest job everyone had was deciding whether WSF-Nairobi had been a success. For some, it demonstrated that the World Social Forum had come of age and proved its value as a mobilising force for people in many different movements. Others asked why at least 100,000 of the expected 150,000 participants were conspicuous by their absence. Did the organisers miscalculate that badly, or did so many change their minds?

Steve Ouma of the Kenya Human Rights Commission and Firoze Manji of Pambazuka News were two commentators who detected an imbalance, both of numbers and influence, between participants from larger, better-off organisations and those from grassroots groups, who couldn't afford glossy publications to put their message across. If the Forum really wanted to develop the idea of globalisation-from-below, said Ouma, the big boys had better start listening to the people's movements, who often couldn't afford the food being sold by the official caterers on the conference stadium.

Manji was impressed that the WSF represented a great "diversity of people from all parts of the world". But not everyone had equal voices: those with greater wealth had more events in the calendar and African social activists were under-represented.

www.pambazuka.org,
www.forumtiersmonde.net,
www.ipsterraviva.net

Somalia: a nightmare without end

FOUR MONTHS after the Ethiopian army invaded Somalia with American air support to prop up the weak, western-backed transitional government, the country once again fell into violent chaos.

Some of the worst fighting for 15 years flared in the capital, Mogadishu, at the end of March, leaving more than 1,000 civilians dead or wounded in less than a week before a fragile truce was agreed between the government forces and the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC). The UIC had taken control of Mogadishu and much of the south of the country last year and brought some sort of order before the Ethiopian invasion. But the United States feared the UIC would provide



Somali women with luggage leave Mogadishu, Somalia, April 2007.

a regional bridgehead for Al-Qaida, even if independent observers considered the evidence for that fear to be thin.

The United Nations estimated that upto 100,000 people fled Mogadishu during the recent fighting, bringing the country's total of internal refugees to about half a million. Though a national reconciliation conference was scheduled for mid-April, there were few hopes of any agreement that would halt Somalia's continuing political disintegration.

Some African countries may lose half of their food

THE LONG-AWAITED 4th Assessment Report on global warming by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – the first since 2001 – paints an alarming picture of the conditions in store for many parts of the world.

Poor countries will suffer the worst of climate change, according to the scientific evidence – partly because tropical ecosystems are less adaptable than temperate ones to variations of temperature, and partly because these countries lack the monetary or material resources to protect their people.

The IPCC report represents a worldwide consensus of more than 1,000 climate scientists and it concludes that Africa will be one of the regions hardest hit by a level of climate

change now considered unstoppable for most of the 21st century. In many African countries, agricultural production, including access to food, is expected to be “severely compromised” and in some countries the yields from rain-fed agriculture could fall by as much as 50 per cent in less than 15 years. In the same period, between 75 and 250 million Africans are likely to face increased difficulty with their water supplies, according to the report of the IPCC’s Working Group 2, published in April.

“In the Sahelian region of Africa,” it said, “warmer and drier conditions have led to a reduced length of growing season with detrimental effects on crops. In Southern Africa, longer dry seasons and more uncertain rainfall are prompting adaptation measures.”

① *IPCC Secretariat, c/o WMO, 7bis Avenue de la Paix, CP 2300, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland. www.ipcc.ch*

The San get their land back – or do they?

THE OLDEST INHABITANTS of southern Africa – the Gana and Gwi people known collectively the San (or “Bushmen”) – won a big victory in December 2006 when the High Court of Botswana ruled that the government had acted ‘illegally and unconstitutionally’ in



San hunting, Botswana.

© Paul Weinberg / Panos Pictures

expelling them from their ancestral lands in the Kalahari desert.

The San have been under threat since diamonds were discovered in their reserve in the 1980s. In the past 10 years, the government ordered three big clearances which forced almost all of them off the land and into ‘resettlement camps’. There, being prevented from hunting, which was their way of life, they became dependent on government handouts and victims of alcohol, depression and other new illnesses.

Initially the San celebrated the High Court judgment. However, it soon became clear that the government intended to make things as difficult as possible for them. It said only those named as applicants in the court case and their children could return to the reserve. They would not be allowed to use an existing water borehole in one of their settlements, because it was government property – and the San would have to reapply for their hunting licences, despite the court having ruled that it was unlawful for the government to have taken these licences away.

Another court battle may have to take place before the case is settled.

① www.jeuneafrique.com, www.afrol.com

Can Africa apply the brake to Europe's trade grab?

Seven years ago the European Union (EU) and its African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) partner countries signed the Cotonou Agreement to replace their former Lomé Convention. Under this new framework treaty, all parties agreed to negotiate detailed trade agreements between the EU and ACP sub-regions (West Africa, East and Southern Africa, etc) by 2008.

These proposed new trade pacts are called Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), but with negotiations now entering their final, critical phase, many voices are being raised against the terms demanded by the EU, which they say could be disastrous for African economies.

Early in March, Europe's trade chief, Peter Mandelson, was threatening the ACP group that they will lose their preferential access to European markets if they don't sign EPAs by the end of this year. Rather than negotiate on key outstanding issues, the EU steamroller seems determined to flatten African objections, in particular their insistence that more time is needed to reach a fair deal. On the other hand, Mandelson himself has come under attack from French President Jacques Chirac for wanting to give too much away, so things aren't always what they seem.

Commenting on the deadlock, West Africa's trade representative, Gilles Hounkpatin, said: "Our economies will be affected by the EPAs, and we want a global view first. If you negotiate, you cannot just impose a date."

Other critics are more outspoken. A series of studies for the British NGO, Christian Aid, show that the EPA requirement of opening up Africa's markets to European imports (often subsidised) could prevent the development of new industries and would leave African economies dependent on low-value export commodities.

In another report a few months ago, the international NGO Oxfam said that EPAs risked driving some of the world's poorest countries deeper into poverty. Oxfam's policy director declared: "Unless there's a radical shift in approach from the EU, these negotiations will jeopardise jobs and entire industries in developing countries."

In Eastern and Southern Africa, one recent report found a serious lack of consultation within governments involved in the negotiations, with even cabinet ministers not knowing the details in some cases. It said agriculture – already hammered by three decades of structural adjustment – was likely to be one of the sectors worst affected.

However, the ACP are not yet lying down in front of the European steamroller. All ACP regions agree they must have long transition periods – upto 25 years – for opening their markets to EU imports, and the option of safeguard measures against an unexpected surge in European imports. They also want to know how the Commission intends to spend the 2,000 million euros it has promised to make ACP economies more competitive.

www.wto.org, www.bilaterals.org, www.tvnafrica.org, www.stopepa.org

Desertification: four targets for better results

by Oussouby Touré

REGARDING THE DECADE spent implementing the Convention to Combat Desertification (CDD), as discussed by Sokona and Essahli (*Haramata 50*), it's important to recognise that this has been more about tackling challenges than racking up achievements. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, the CCD has failed to HOLD the attention of the international community, and therefore gets less support than conventions on biological diversity and climate change. This is mainly because there has been no concerted effort to keep land degradation high on the agenda of development agencies and major international NGOs.

The second reason comes in two parts: i) the discrepancy between the scale of land degradation problems and the limited scope of the instruments used to address them through the CCD; and ii) a focus on the opportunities for external financial support offered by the CCD rather than the internal changes needed to generate more effective policies to combat land degradation. The theory is that programmes of action should be underpinned by harmonised policies. In reality, however, such programmes give no clear indication of how this can be done.

Opinions differ about the future prospects for the CCD. Some observers question the value of a convention that seems to be more about “anti-desertification” than development. Others believe that it masks the more fundamental issues of poverty reduction, equitable access to

natural resources, and conflict prevention and management.

While there is some basis for these criticisms, there can be no denying that using a convention to tackle the issue of desertification has had the effect of mobilising different elements of civil society. And this could well be key to improving on the mixed results so far achieved. It entails changing procedures in several core areas in order to:

- Harmonise programmes with other sectoral and cross-cutting policies;
- Improve the mechanisms for funding natural resource management (NRM) and development actions (rural credit schemes, village investment funds, etc.) and broaden the funding base;
- Provide capacity building so that people involved can better grasp the issues, become actively involved in planning processes, and help improve the impact of activities at the local level;
- Establish reference points that will allow policy and economic decision-makers to measure future developments.

1) Youba Sokona and Wafa Essahli: *What successes and where are efforts still failing*



Oussouby Touré is a rural sociologist who has worked for many years on environmental policy issues in the Sahel. He currently works as a research consultant.

East Africa urgently needs framework for customary law

by Michael Ochieng Odhiambo

IN ALL THREE member countries of the East African Community, the rural poor constitute the absolute majority of the population. All the three countries are constitutional democracies, in which the governing parties ascend to power on the basis of their appeal to the majority of the voters.

Security of land tenure for the rural poor is therefore a key political issue in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. It has been an abiding part of political discourse since colonial times, but it has not translated into any lasting solution.

In all the three countries there exist plural systems operating side by side, notwithstanding the tendency for policy and legislative frameworks to privilege the modern systems of property relations over traditional ones – even as they retain the rhetoric of recognition and support for the latter. Indeed, customary land tenure systems continue to exist in spite of rather than because of these frameworks.

The new name of the policy game in the area of land and natural resources is ‘formalisation’ [– à la Hernando de Soto and the Commission for Legal Empowerment of the Poor]. However, formalisation is not a new thing: it has been a reality of property relations in the three countries since the advent of colonisation, and it has tended to benefit an elite minority while the majority

of the poor and vulnerable have ended up worse off.

Customary land tenure continues to be relevant for people’s livelihoods and the development of rural areas of East Africa, notwithstanding over 100 years of either policy neglect or deliberate policy interventions to extinguish or substantially transform it. In view of this, only policies and laws that provide a framework for the orderly and systematic evolution of customary land tenure will truly begin to address the challenges of tenure security to support sustainable rural livelihoods.

The challenge for policy and law is to ascertain, clarify and articulate customary land tenure with a view to providing a policy and legal basis for its continued application and orderly transformation on the basis of internally generated social, cultural, economic and political dynamics.

There is an urgent need in the three countries for the establishment of appropriate frameworks for the orderly development of a jurisprudence of customary law.



Michael Ochieng Odhiambo, currently Executive Director of the Resources Conflict Institute based in Nakuru, Kenya, is a long-standing advocate for the interest of resource dependent communities in East Africa. His current research interests include land and natural resource policy and environmental law and conflict.

A response to Adam Thiam

We've come a long way, but there's still far to go

by Mariame Dem

Bu yoon jeexul, waaxusil du jeex. This saying in Wolof, one of the national languages in Senegal, roughly translates as 'You've got to keep pushing ahead to get to the end of the road'. It is a saying that applies particularly to the situation of women in Africa, for while much has changed, a huge amount still needs to be done to ensure that they are recognised and treated as full members of the human race. The exclusion of half the continent's population constitutes a serious obstacle to its development.

In many respects our friend Adam Thiam hit the mark with his article 'Progress and pitfalls in women's advance' (Haramata 50, October 2006). His optimism about the progress made in this area is well founded, given the social, political, economic and cultural advances achieved to date. But it also raises the question of whether such progress should be judged in terms of what the situation used to be like for women, or where they should be now, given how the rest of the world has moved on. Some see it in terms of where women started from, taking a 'historical', retrospective viewpoint. For my part, however, I believe that we need to look at progress in terms of where we are going, that a prospective approach is more appropriate – one that judges the condition and status of women in terms of where they should be now. That's

why, since there is still much ground to make up, we really have to get a move on.

Should we be satisfied with the improvements that have been made in girls' education so far, or should we be demanding that all school-age girls be educated, whether they come from urban or rural, nomadic or sedentary, rich or poor families? Too many African women aged 15 and over are still unable to read and write. In 2005, the age of the Internet and IT, only 8% of women in Burkina Faso were literate, 9% in Niger, 12% in Mali and 29% in Senegal, according to UNDP. With literacy levels like this, how can women act as levers of progress for the continent?

Even now, rural African women have little or no access to land (particularly good quality land), water, energy or the means of generating an income. And the minority of women that do have access to these resources have to contend with an inequitable commercial system that either excludes them or is largely beyond their control. Their best hope of obtaining funding for productive activities is micro-credit, but even this system does not suit all their investment needs or the scale of all their activities.

Women and girls are the greatest victims of violence in situations of conflict, particularly



© Alfredo Caliz, Panos Pictures

Members of a women's micro credit union laugh during a meeting, Dakar, Senegal.

armed conflict. Rape has become another weapon of war, reinforcing the feminisation of AIDS. Little or nothing is done to enforce the various laws and resolutions designed to protect women and girls, such as UN Resolution 1325, the resolution made at the Beijing Platform in 1995 or, more recently, the Maputo protocol adopted by African governments. While there is no doubt that any legal texts and resolutions that protect women are to be welcomed as a step in the right direction, African women have yet to enjoy the benefits of such progress.

In terms of governance, the representation of African women in political institutions (parliament, government, local administration) still falls short of the UN benchmark of 30%. Rwanda, Burundi and, just this year, Mauritania, are the exceptions that prove the rule. On average, women hold only

20% of such positions in West Africa; in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, women were elected to only 8.4% of seats in parliament at the most recent elections.

The world is richer now than it has ever been, and we know that Africa is brimming with resources (minerals, oil, water, etc.). Yet none of this wealth or resources is being harnessed to eliminate the poverty and inequalities that blight the lives of so many women and girls. Adam Thiam was right to remind us of the huge sums being wasted on the war in Iraq. And what about the vast sums generated by transactions in the financial markets of developed countries, which are all controlled and utilised by a predominantly Northern-based minority? We need to get beyond the rhetoric of aid and co-operation and take concrete action to create the conditions where wealth can be

redistributed, bringing:

1. An end to extreme poverty and hunger;
2. Universal access to primary education;
3. The promotion of gender equality and women's independence;
4. Reduced infant mortality;
5. Improved maternal health;
6. Effective means of combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other illnesses.

Of the eight Millennium Goals, these six mainly affect women and girls.

Africa may not have won the 'sprint' towards development, but it's still in there for the long run. And since there can be no question of dropping out of this race, radical and rapid change is essential in the conditions and status of Africa's women. We can make this world a more humane place through changes that build respect for everyone's human dignity and encourage world peace through sharing, solidarity and equality.

Citizens of the world – both men and women – need to push for hard-hitting policies that will enable their governments to manage the world's wealth so that everyone benefits from it. Mbejum Kanam borom akoy fajjal Boppam : Vengeance is the victim's prerogative.

The men and women of Africa have an important role to play in pressing for positive change for women, especially the intellectuals who are responsible for analysing the situation and advising on what needs to be done in terms of organisation, mobilisation and action. It is up to them to faithfully represent and defend the ideal for female progress and equality in the institutions and meetings from which most women are excluded – even if that means they have to stand in for the vast majority of women.

Perhaps this is what makes our friend Adam Thiam say that the driankéés must not be allowed to monopolise the cause. But it's worth noting that the Wolof word drianké

refers to any elegant person who takes pride in their appearance. It applies to both men and women, even if it is currently seen as a predominantly female characteristic. And while Adam is quite right in what he says about the grandes dames of development, he forgot to mention its "big men": the specialists and experts who claim to speak for their country on human rights, governance, education and so on. We all need to be vigilant in ensuring that African women's participation and leadership is not killed off or hijacked by driankéés of either gender.

Today more than ever, our priorities should be to:

- Educate African women about their rights;
- Develop strong, representative female leadership to give women an effective voice in decision-making bodies;
- Build and promote strong networks and alliances to defend women's issues, particularly those of poor women; and finally
- Raise awareness among men and women in Africa and elsewhere so that they mobilize behind people-centred rather than profit-driven development. The status and conditions of African women are a priority in this battle – and this is where *Haramata* can and does play a role.

It seems appropriate to finish with another Wolof saying: 'There's no difference between the two hands that secure the pagne¹ and those that tie the trousers'. Let's get to work on giving them equal value.

1) A cloth wrap traditionally worn by women

Mariame Dem is a member of the National Association for Adult Education (ANAFE) and on the board of directors of the Senegalese NGO consortium, CONGAD, based in Dakar.

Barcelona or bust?



Many thanks to Sidi Lamine Dramé for this cartoon depicting an idea by Mariame Dem on the clandestine emigration of many young people with the motto “Barcelona or bust!” The bad management of marine resources has brought local fishing to its knees – which has affected many young people. So they use motorised canoes to cross the Atlantic Ocean with the hope of reaching the Canary Isles and then Spain.

How ‘good governance’ can be a bad idea

– an example from Namibia

by Brian T. B. Jones

ACCOUNTABILITY, COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION and preventing the elites grabbing everything – these make up the new holy grail of good governance in community-based development. But like all such holy grails they prove elusive. Reports abound of money going missing, the wealthy growing wealthier at the expense of the poor, and community committees taking decisions without involving the community. These are certainly some of the accusations levelled at community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) in southern Africa.

But is this the reality – or more importantly, does it have to be the enduring reality? Evidence from the implementation of CBNRM in Namibia, Africa’s driest country south of the Sahara, provides some interesting food for thought.

CBNRM in Namibia is based on communities forming natural resource management institutions called conservancies. According to Namibian legislation, a conservancy must have a defined membership, defined boundaries, an elected management committee, a constitution, and an equitable plan for the distribution of benefits. A conservancy registered by government receives rights to use wildlife and rights over tourism activities. In conservancies with high value wildlife and significant tourism attractions the income is high – in some cases

as much as N\$1 million per annum (approx. US\$142,000). In the semi-arid and arid communal lands area of Namibia, wildlife and tourism are becoming important forms of land use and livelihood diversification. And from a conservation perspective, the approach is successful – with well-documented increases in wildlife including species such as elephant and black rhino, and even predators such as lion and cheetah.

But what about governance in conservancies? What happens to the income, who decides how it should be used and who gets it? Research carried out a few years ago by myself and a colleague (Long and Jones 2004) suggested that there were large gaps between the conservancy committees and conservancy members. Participation of members in decision-making needed to be improved and committees needed to be more accountable to members. My colleague and I then made the usual prescriptions for NGOs and others to intervene to promote greater participation and accountability, using the usual mix of participatory methodologies (Household Livelihood Security matrices, identifying social networks, Community Development Planning, etc.).

On reflection, however, this is the wrong approach – partly because it assumes that external agencies can build democracy in



© Brian Jones

Members of the Doro Nawas Conservancy consider changes to the conservancy constitution in order to prevent conflict over decision-making.

local communities, and that they need a whole range of special externally developed tools to do it. But democratic governance cannot easily be imposed or grafted on from the outside – it needs to be forged by local people themselves. And when so forged it is often the result of conflict and experiments with different forms of governance structures and decision-making procedures. But this takes time – time which doesn't fit into project cycles and which stretches beyond most research projects. So the tendency is to be interventionist and think that through project activities and participatory tools, we can promote democratic governance in a local community.

As communities are provided with new rights over wildlife and tourism and new income streams through CBNRM, it is unsurprising that there is conflict over control of these resources. Some of this conflict arises in Namibia when communities start to realise that they have the power to call their conservancy committees to account. They are asking committees to explain

how their money has been spent, asking for external audits and voting out committee members who are not performing in the community interest. At a growing number of conservancy AGMs, members are approving the budget and making the decisions on how income should be spent (NACSO 2006). This is all part of the emergence of good governance that is being shaped by people themselves.

Further, researchers and practitioners seem to expect communities in rural Africa to exercise far higher levels of participatory democracy than exist almost anywhere else in the world. We seem to have in mind some idealised form of democracy where everyone in the village, community forest or conservancy has actively participated in making decisions. But this rarely happens. In the most arid areas of Namibia, practical constraints to participatory democracy include the large distances between settlements, the time required to travel to and attend



© Brian Jones

Elephants and other wildlife are increasing in Namibian communal area conservancies, bringing increased income from tourism and hunting. Deciding how to use this income in a transparent and participatory way is an important governance issue for local communities.

conservancy meetings, other more pressing livelihood obligations, etc. Conservancy committee members could, if they wished, spend their time in a never-ending round of participatory meetings, livelihood surveys, participatory rural appraisals, focus group consultations with the poor, the women's groups and the youth to ensure that they were making the right decisions for the community!

Somewhere the balance needs to be found between the high expectations of many outsiders and practical realities on the ground. Conservancies are seeking this balance by experimenting with their decision-making structures. In the past many conservancies elected a committee of individuals from anywhere within the conservancy. Now, many of them are dividing into sub-areas which then elect representatives to the committee. This enables better communication from the committee to members through the sub-area representatives, who are also more accountable to their constituents in the sub-area. Conservancies are also starting to

readjust their constitutions in order to improve governance procedures, because of examples of abuse of power by committee members.

So what is the role of external agencies? Surely it is to assist communities in putting the appropriate procedures in place to ensure that office bearers will be accountable to those who put them in power. Making these procedures work and enforcing accountability will be up to the people themselves.

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Brian Jones is an independent environment and development consultant focusing mostly on policy development and implementation of CBNRM. He is a Namibian and currently is advisor to the Namibian Ministry of Environment and Tourism.

For a world where all of us control our food

“We, more than 500 representatives from more than 80 countries, of organisations of peasants/family farmers, artisanal fisherfolk, indigenous peoples, landless peoples, rural workers, migrants, pastoralists, forest communities, women, youth, consumers and environmental and urban movements have gathered together in the village of Nyéléni in Sélingué, Mali, to strengthen a global movement for food sovereignty. We are doing this, brick by brick, as we live here in huts constructed by hand in the local tradition, and eat food that is produced and prepared by the Sélingué community...”

Introduction to the Declaration of Nyéléni, adopted in February this year by the Forum for Food Sovereignty, which was organised by an alliance of international social movements around the concept of ‘food sovereignty’ first proposed 10 years ago by the peasant movement Via Campesina. It is a concept that goes well beyond the conventional one of food security.

by Khanh Tran-Thanh

THE DECLARATION OF NYELENI¹ commits its signatories to fighting for “a world where all peoples, nations and states are able to determine their own food producing systems and policies that provide every one of us with good quality, adequate, affordable, healthy and culturally appropriate food.” In many ways it is a culmination of efforts which began 23 years ago when a group of 150 progressive NGOs, farmers and researchers met in Rome as the World Food Assembly to make similar radical demands under the noses of the UN’s food agencies. As evidenced by the huge support for the Forum in Mali, with the attendance of the country’s President

Amadou Toumani Touré, the movement has come a long way since then, although in terms of practical results almost everything remains to be done. Mali is one of the first countries (with Bolivia) to make food sovereignty a primary goal, with its new Law of Agricultural Orientation, which supports the development of family farms.

After setting out its objectives and the challenges to be confronted, the Forum agreed a plan of action “to share our vision of food sovereignty with all peoples of this world”.

Prior to the Forum, some of its participants attended a ‘Farmers Exchange on the



Local farmers show Bamako workshop participants how to prepare a meal with local crops.

© Khanh Tran-Thanh

Privatisation of Seeds' in the Malian capital, Bamako. The Bamako event was designed as a 'farmer exchange for mutual learning', organised by the Bibliothèque d'Echange de Documentation et d'Expériences (BEDE) and the Coordination Nationale des Organisations Paysannes du Mali (CNOP)², and facilitated by IIED and its partners from India, Peru, Indonesia and Iran. It was held before the *Nyeléni* event to raise awareness and inform West African farmers about the threats and impacts of the privatisation of knowledge, seeds and livestock genes on food sovereignty and independence.

The main outcomes, which were taken to the *Nyeléni* World Forum and are outlined in the Bamako Declaration on the Privatisation of Seeds and Farmer Knowledge, were:

- To support the use of traditional seeds and animal breeds for food sovereignty,

- To stop the privatisation of seeds and biopiracy,
- To ban GMOs in Africa,
- To support farmer exchanges and innovations.

i For more information visit www.iied.org/NR/agbioliv/ag_liv_projects/Farmers_Exchange.html and www.diversefoodsystems.org

1) www.nyeleni.2007.org

2) The CNOP is an umbrella organisation representing Malian farmers organisations.



Khanh Tran-Thanh is a researcher with the Sustainable Agriculture, Biodiversity and Livelihoods Programme in the Natural Resources Group at IIED.

The small-town challenges of decentralisation

In March 2007 representatives from countries participating in the regional Making Decentralisation Work programme gathered in Dakar for their annual meeting.¹ While there, Haramata interviewed Monsieur Lamine Tounkara, general secretary of the local council in the rural municipality of Bancoumana in the Kati District of Koulikoro region, Mali.

H *In the context of decentralisation, what is the principal challenge you face?*

Lamine Tounkara: Education is one of the main problems in our municipality. This is something that concerns the whole population, not just elected local officials, so we consulted everyone who's supposed to be involved in decentralisation to find out whether people in the municipality really understand what the decentralisation process is all about, and to help the new authorities make informed decisions about educational policies in our municipality. As a result, we've built literacy centres and designed modules to make parents aware of the importance of educating their children. Girls are the most affected by illiteracy. We also organised training on the decentralisation process for elected officials in Bancoumana. This capacity building exercise was very well received and has helped them better understand their roles and their rights and responsibilities.

H *Has the municipality taken action in other fields?*

LT: Another major challenge is ensuring that elected officials are accountable to the local population. As I said, the first step is to educate our local officials – but people also need to be able to monitor what their elected representatives are doing. So, in 2002 we used the MDW network to set up a participatory monitoring and evaluation (PME) team to keep up with decentralisation in the municipality.² This team now has 11 members who have received training on decentralisation, PME indicators, data collection and analysis, and extension techniques. I've been really pleased to see how quickly people of all kinds of intellectual ability and background have picked up the PME techniques, and how these tools not only allow us to monitor what's going on in the municipality, but have also helped build trust between the municipal authorities and local people.

H *Apart from creating a bond of trust, and more education and training, do the people recognise any concrete benefits arising from decentralisation?*



© Lorenzo Cotula

Lamine Tounkara, general secretary of the local council in the municipality of Bancoumana, Mali.

LT: Decentralisation will only succeed if people feel that it can make a positive difference to their daily lives, so it's important that local authorities are seen to be dealing with local issues. Our area has a problem with land-related conflicts, and we decided to tackle this by getting nine municipalities involved in two types of local convention. One was an agro-sylvo-pastoral convention, and the other was a land management agreement put in place to help defuse social tensions over land. We always used to arrange loans through verbal agreements, as that's how things were done in our area. But some of these transactions ended up creating violent conflicts, so we organised workshops to see how disputes over land could be avoided and came up with this convention. Now all new loans are agreed in writing and everyone involved goes to the site to identify the area in question

– the owner of the plot, the customary landowner, the person who wants to borrow the land, representatives of the village chief and the council, plus the neighbours – and the plot is properly marked out rather than just using stones or trees to indicate the boundaries. Also, the council has introduced a land register to record every kind of land transaction, whether it's a gift, a sale or a loan, and this is helping to build up trust between local people and their elected officials.

1) Making Decentralisation Work (MDW) is an action-research programme implemented by IIED in partnership with Sahelian organisations in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal. Through capacity building and dialogue on policies the programme aims to create the conditions that will enable local people to use decentralisation as a vehicle to improve their livelihoods, through NRM and effective, sustainable and more equitable use of the natural resources on which they depend.

2) PME is a tool that allows citizens to monitor the activities of their elected local officials, particularly the way in which they carry out their responsibilities.

If it's important, shoot it!

by Richard Grahn

THEY WERE GIVEN CAMERAS and told to go and take photographs of whatever was important in their lives. The result: fifty budding photographers and nearly 1,000 pictures. The Pastoral Visions project of the African Union's Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU/IBAR) provided an opportunity for pastoralists to share their lives through their own images and stories.

Disposable cameras were distributed to livestock owners, animal health workers, community chiefs and others living in the Karimojong Cluster of NW Kenya, NE Uganda, SW Ethiopia and SE Sudan who were invited to "capture what you see around you". Afterwards, the project team returned to these individuals to discuss the meaning behind their photos and find out more about the photographers. The pictures and the stories accompanying them were then made into a Pastoral Visions book a website and a travelling exhibition, which has been displayed on several occasions in Nairobi and Kampala to date.

From the images and stories a unique perspective on pastoralist lives emerges. Pastoralists themselves describe their own realities in their own words – and several issues were clearly articulated for policymakers to respond to. These included: access to animal health services and livestock markets, the importance of migration across international

Lokol Andrew

Dodoth, Kaabong, Uganda

I work as a Community-Based Animal Health Worker (CAHW). In 1993, Dr. Akabwai trained us. Then I was incorporated into the government veterinary department as



local staff. They elected me because my father was a CAHW in the early 50s and 60s. I would stay with him when he was working, and I enjoyed it. That is the work which made me want to go to school. My parents educated me and I stopped in senior three, in 1989. When Akabwai came with his project of paravets, I decided to join him. I supplied the pastoralists with many things, including vaccinations and drugs. So the department identified me as their own paravet. I'm enjoying this work so much.

I am a meat inspector in Kaabong town. I inspect the cows, goats and sheep. Every day, animals are slaughtered to be sold to the public. It is important that I ensure that the meat is fit for human consumption, free

borders, and the impact of conflict in the region. The underlying theme is that pastoralists desire a stronger voice in debates on the issues concerning their lives and livelihoods – from food aid to infrastructure. As the Kenyan Minister for Livestock Development said in his foreword to the Pastoral Visions book and website, “Increasing opportunities for pastoralists requires that they are given a voice to express themselves, and that there is an effective institutional response to that voice.”

While the Pastoral Visions project may have prompted many debates, it is not yet clear that the institutional response is as strong as needed. The recent drought of 2005-6 and debates around climate change have re-evoked some of the more disempowering visual and textual images of pastoralists, that have a strong influence in policymaking. The very real livelihood challenges in many parts of the region reinforce the need for innovative opportunities for dialogue between pastoralists and policymakers, among which Pastoral Visions represents one experiment and methodology. Work with pastoral communities on peacebuilding and other issues has shown that high-level dialogues also need to be backed up with substantive, issue-focused local-level discussions in order for progress to be made.

from diseases, worms and cysts. Secondly, I was trained in spraying animals and removal of external parasites like ticks and fleas. I am doing it now for the whole district.



This photograph was taken at a local market in Kaplenba Parish. What you are seeing are gourds that have sour and fresh milk inside. There are also saucepans used for carrying milk. The people have brought chickens to the market for sale. There are women from the village, not from town and, at the market they sit together.

I took this picture because I saw that most of these women had come from the cattle camp, and the most important thing for me was to look for livestock people. Most of them had plaited their hair. They had also smeared their hair with butter oil. They mix it with charcoal and rub it around their head. That’s why the hair appears black and beautiful.”

i For more information, www.eldis.ids.ac.uk/pastoralism/cape/pastoral_visions/index.htm or www.au-ibar.org

Richard Grahn is currently working on pastoral programming with Oxfam GB, co-ordinating their work with pastoral communities in Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan, Somaliland, Tanzania and Uganda. Prior to that he worked with AU/IBAR on pastoralism and conflict issues and was in the team working on the Pastoral Visions project.

Safe sex for insect pests

Sterilising harmful insects in order to reduce or eliminate them is not something very new, but the appliance of science now holds out the hope of cutting the huge losses suffered by fruit and vegetable farmers around the world and avoiding the need for chemical spraying

by Charlie Rose

STERILE MALE INSECTS mate with wild females and the pest population drops without the use of chemicals. This is the basic principle of Sterile Insect Technique. SIT can be described as “insect birth control”. It is an ecological means of controlling or eliminating insect pests that threaten agriculture or human health, replacing heavy dependence on pesticides with a more cost-effective biological approach. And it allows “natural enemy” insect populations to thrive.

So how does it work? With SIT, wild female insects do not reproduce. This is achieved by releasing large numbers of sexually sterile male insects of the target species over a wide area. Wild females that mate with sterile males will not produce viable offspring. So, if a sufficient number of females mate with sterile males, the insect pest population will crash.

SIT has been used to control and eradicate insects on every continent except Antarctica, from Albania to Zambia, and has been used against many species, including Screwworm Fly, Mediterranean Fruit Fly, Tsetse Fly and Mosquitoes. Tsetse was



© Milan Kozanek

Male and female medfly on an orange

eliminated from Zanzibar using SIT between 1994-1997. PATTEC (Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign) is currently doing SIT tsetse releases in Mali. SIT was used to eradicate the screwworm from north Africa in the 1990s. This involved the release of up to 40 million sterile male insects per week over 40 thousand square kilometres for nearly one year.

Medfly is the main pest targeted with SIT. It originated in sub Saharan Africa and has spread throughout the Mediterranean region,

Southern Africa, southern Europe, the Middle East, Western Australia, South and Central America, and Hawaii. It is now found in most tropical and subtropical areas of the world causing some countries to become so anxious about infestation that they have established strict quarantine barriers.

The female medfly attacks fruit and vegetables by piercing the skin and laying eggs inside. The hatched maggots feed off the pulp of the fruit. Infested produce prevents growers from exporting to valuable markets. Total annual losses to medfly in the Mediterranean region are estimated at around \$300 million per year.

A number of countries on the African continent including South Africa, Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt are using or planning to use SIT on a wide scale. In South Africa, SIT is used to protect the most valuable fruit growing areas of the Cape against medfly, paid for jointly by growers and government. In Morocco and Egypt large scale SIT programmes of over 10,000 hectares are planned.

InSecta, the world's leading commercial developer of SIT, is a partner in the EU-funded Cleanfruit Project which has held seminars about SIT for over 700 key people in all the main fruit growing regions of the Mediterranean over the last three years.

InSecta provides its clients with the goods and services necessary to establish effective SIT control at all stages of the control process: defining the programme, planning, implementation and operation.

Partly as a result of Cleanfruit disseminating SIT information, growers and government agencies in both Morocco and Egypt are working together to establish large scale SIT medfly programmes. In the past growers would generally have expected government to fund such programmes, not taking into account the economic benefits. With the urgency to adapt from chemical control, the situation has changed.

i For more information, go to www.insecta.co.uk or www.cleanfruitsit.org



Charlie Rose is an experienced biotechnology executive, currently Head of Business Development for InSecta Ltd., a UK venture based around commercialising SIT (Sterile Insect Technique).

Dear Haramata...

From around the world you have written to give us your comments – mostly very positive – on the new design and content of our journal. Here is a selection from the letters and e-mails received.



The transitional Haramata 50 with its old logo and see-through skin about to be left behind

It's refreshing...

I wish to congratulate the entire team for a very refreshing looking Haramata. I think it is creatively designed, easy to read and good in contents.

At this point in time, while I'm helping ICARDA [International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas] in Aleppo, Syria, with its next decade's strategy, I am able to appreciate the value of your work as a huge world population lives in dry areas.

Dr Sudhirendar Sharma

The Ecological Foundation,
New Delhi, India

more user-friendly...

I have been a grateful recipient of the magazine for a number of years and I have enjoyed its contents. However, the new structure, pagination and indeed the contents are now more reader friendly. In addition to dryland matters, other related issues like water and urbanisation and the like are now treated with more depth and attention.

Congratulations, and more grease to your elbows!

Prof. Tunde Agbola

University of Ibadan, Nigeria

looks nasty!...

What is the additional covering [on *Haramata 50*] made of? It looks nasty and not at all biodegradable.

Sarah Granich

Tiempo Climate Programme
University of East Anglia, UK

For all who wondered, the transparent 'old skin' we were shaking off was made of translucent paper, totally chlorine free (TCF), from sustainable forests, and therefore biodegradable. We should have said so, but thanks, Sarah, for giving us this opportunity. – Ed.

but useful...

Through a colleague I have just come across the 50th issue of Haramata and the dryland issues papers. I find the contents and the themes they address very interesting and useful for development in the arid zone where I work in the southeast of Morocco.

Lhassan Ouhajou

Regional Office for Agricultural Development
Ouarzazate, Morocco

...and very pleasing

Many thanks for the new presentation of your journal, which is very pleasing in appearance and in content.

Keep up the good work!

Youssouf Sanogo

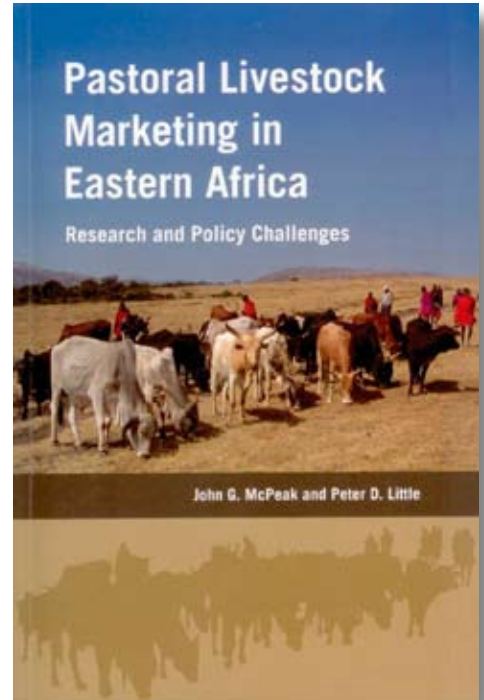
Member of GRAT (NGO),
Bamako, Mali

Stubborn pastoralists? – It's a myth

Contrary to popular belief, pastoralists in Africa had a long association with livestock trade and marketing both within and outside of their communities long before the arrival of colonialism. The perception of the pastoral herder as economically isolated and stubbornly resistant to selling animals is a myth that has persisted largely due to ignorance, prejudice and, until recently, an absence of research on pastoral economies and trade beyond the household and community levels.

Pastoral livestock marketing in Eastern Africa is an impressive publication that should change this state of affairs. Structured around twelve studies it addresses livestock marketing dynamics from the household level to the market level, the links between markets at regional level, and concludes with a chapter identifying where policies can make a difference as well as areas needing further research.

Based on in-depth research, the book provides not only sound evidence on why and how pastoral communities sell and buy livestock, but also detailed information on how markets work, and don't work, for pastoral communities – critical information for development practitioners and policy makers alike. Written by researchers from a range of different disciplines, it presents an holistic analysis of livestock marketing within pastoral livelihood systems while being largely accessible to non-economists. Well worth reading.



i *Pastoral livestock marketing in Eastern Africa: Research and Policy Challenges* edited by John G. McPeak & Peter D. Little, Practical Action Publishing, UK, 2006.
ISBN 9781853396311 Available from: Practical Action Publishing, The Schumacher Centre for Technology and Development, Bourton on Dunsmore, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV23 9QZ, UK. Fax: +44 (0)1926 634502
www.developmentbookshop.com

Environmental risks: The need for precaution

Risk and uncertainty permeate all aspects of today's world. New technologies which bring economic, social and other benefits. Yet they may pose unknown risks to human health or the environment are often unknown. Concerns about these risks induce governments to regulate the use of these technologies. But high economic stakes also result in government action being challenged by technology developers, or by the government of the country in which they are based.

Recent disputes over the regulation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) illustrate this problem. European regulation of GMOs was challenged before the World Trade Organisation (WTO) as unfair trade restriction. Meanwhile, farmers in countries as diverse as Mali and India have mobilised against GMOs, and invoked government regulation restricting their use.

The role of scientific evidence is key. Should governments only restrict use of technologies that have been scientifically proven to be harmful? Or should they be able to regulate technologies even when there is no scientific certainty as to their effects – but the possible risks linked to them are significant?

The former approach would limit economic losses to business operators who develop new technologies, and possibly enable societies to reap benefits from these technologies. But in a world characterised by rapid technological development, waiting for incontrovertible evidence of negative impacts may entail

releasing technologies that cause substantial social and economic damage. When conclusive evidence is obtained, it may be too late – the damage may be irreversible.

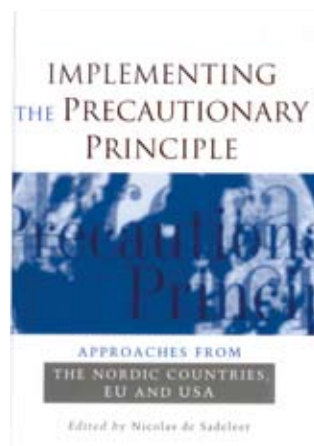
This is at the heart of the “precautionary principle”. This principle of international (and increasingly national) environmental law requires

governments to take action even in the absence of scientific certainty of the existence or extent of a risk. The legal nature, content and implications of this principle are very controversial – not least because of the high economic, social and

environmental stakes involved.

Drawing on legal systems with the most advanced environmental legislation, this book teases out the meaning and implications of the precautionary principle. Particularly interesting are the five chapters on the application of this principle to GMO issues.

Although the book is fairly technical and may be daunting for non-lawyers, the topic is of fundamental importance for all. Besides advancing legal thinking, there is a need to disseminate accessible information and facilitate informed debate at all levels. This book is a useful resource for environmental and/or development agencies working towards that.

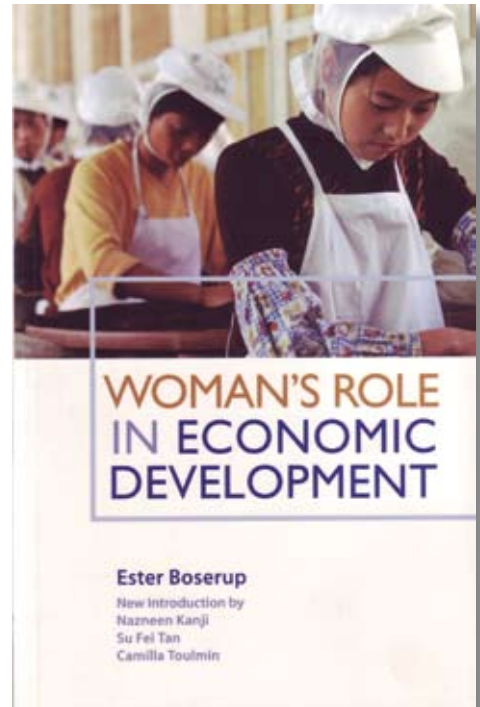


① *Implementing the Precautionary Principle. Approaches from the Nordic countries, EU and USA*, edited by Nicolas de Sadeleer, Earthscan Publications, 2006 ISBN 1844073122 / 9781844073122. Available from Earthscan Publications, 8-12 Camden High St., London NW1 0JH, UK www.earthscan.co.uk

Women in development: How far have we come?

This is reprint of Boserup's pioneering book which was first published in 1970 which drew attention to women's contribution to agricultural and industrial development, and highlighted the way in which development policies and processes, from colonial times onward, had been biased against women. This work inspired the UN Decade for Women (1976 – 1986) and heralded an era of research and enquiry on gender issues. An important feature of her work was its strong empirical grounding, providing data and hard evidence of women's contributions to agriculture and industry. Even if processes of economic development have not evolved exactly as Boserup predicted, her ideas and insights, particularly on the gender division of labour and what motivates actors in development, are still very relevant. Her analysis signalled many trends for women's participation in development, some of which have turned out to be alarmingly accurate. Of course, there are forces which she could not have foreseen, such as some impacts of globalisation, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and the challenges we face as a result of climate change.

Boserup's contribution to our thinking on women's role in development cannot be underestimated. Her keen observations, her use of empirical data and her commitment to greater gender equality are still an inspiration to students, researchers and activists who



are interested in a better and more equal world. This reprint also begs the question: Despite over thirty year of work how far have we come since 1970? And why do gender inequalities still persist?

This reprint includes an introduction by Nazneen Kanji, Su Fei Tan and Camilla Toulmin.

i *Woman's Role in Economic Development* Ester Boserup, Earthscan, first published in 1970, reprinted 2007. ISBN 1844073920 / 9781844073924. Available from Earthscan Publications, 8-12 Camden High St., London NW1 0JH, UK www.earthscan.co.uk

Erratum: The cartoon on page 39 of *Haramata 50*, wrongly attributed to Alan Hesse, was in fact by Sholto Walker. Apologies to those concerned.



© John Rowley

KLM's 2007 calendar depicting the Maasai

Write to us!

What do readers think of this image being used to promote KLM? Do you have any other similar examples? Please contact us at the address below.

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partners and communities to help vulnerable groups find their
voice and ensure their interests are heard in decision-making



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The Haramata takeaway

The idea of the Haramata Takeaway, as we explained last time, is to give you “a few bite-sized reminders of the golden nuggets of information and comment in this issue” and also to offer a foretaste of some other editorial dishes we’re preparing and invite your responses.

* First on the menu this time is Oussouby Touré’s assertion that the Convention to Combat Desertification has failed to hold the attention of the international community, largely because there has been no concerted effort to keep land degradation high on the agenda. He puts forward four priorities to improve things (page 10).

* Next comes Michael Ochieng Odhiambo declaring that there is an urgent need in East Africa for a policy and legal basis for customary land tenure, which has been neglected but is still relevant for people’s livelihoods and the development of rural areas (page 11).

* Responding to an article in the last issue, Mariame Dem points out that “even now, rural African women have little or no access to land, water, energy or the means of generating an income” (page 12). And if the ‘grandes dames’ of development may be open to criticism, so are the ‘big men’. Vigilance is needed to ensure that development is not hijacked by the bosses of either gender. There are many issues here, so how can they be taken forward?

* From Namibia comes a cautionary tale that governance in small communities will only be ‘good governance’ if forged by the local people themselves. It seldom works if imposed or grafted on from the outside (page 17).

Still simmering on the Haramata stove:

> The future of family farming in Africa. President Wade’s vision for Senegal is clear – just look at his campaign poster on page 5 of this issue – and it is a vision shared by many other governments in Africa. But what do you think? Is progress and development synonymous with imported farming techniques, land formalisation and foreign investment? Where does history and culture fit in? Write to us with your views.

> Ways of protecting the commons in the drylands. A livelihood resource for many people, common land such as forests and pasture is increasingly being privatised for other uses. But how to protect it: that is the question. Michael Ochieng Odhiambo offers a partial response, but do you have any examples of how this can be done in practice?

Please send your letters with questions, comments or ideas for articles to: Haramata, Drylands Programme – IIED, 3 Endsleigh Street, London WC1H 0DD, UK, or email us at: drylands@iied.org