

Bulletin of the drylands

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# Topical Journal

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farming the *jatropha* plant in the  
Volta Region of Ghana. The oil  
from *jatropha* seeds can be used  
to make biodiesel fuel

*Credit Yetsa A. Tuakli-Wosornu,  
Courtesy of Photoshare*



# Climate change: The issue that won't go away

*ARE BIOFUELS the answer to climate change? Is green energy the holy grail of climate change mitigation and adaptation? This is the focus of debate in this issue of **Haramata**. The debate is very polarised and there is evidence both for and against growing crops for fuel. The case studies provided here paint a less than rosy picture. Colleagues in India have some very grave concerns about the role of government and big business in promoting biofuels. We welcome your views and thoughts on the issue. Do you have more positive experiences and stories to share?*

*Global politicking on climate change continues. Since **Haramata 53**, the 14th Conference of the Parties (COP) for the UN climate change convention took place in Poznań, Poland. The coming months will be a negotiating marathon toward COP 15 in Copenhagen in December 2009, when a new global climate regime will be established. The COP in Poznań was a vital last chance for countries, or groups of countries, to make sure their ideas and proposals for the Copenhagen agreement were tabled.*

*Ensuring that this new regime adequately*

*addresses the challenges we face will be key in ensuring that we are able to deal with the stark warnings of high global temperatures and food insecurity predicted in our news article on a future of food insecurity.*

*Looking to the future, **Haramata** is changing. We are working to transform **Haramata** into a broader communications programme under Africa-based editorial management and responsibility. Over the last three years, we brought you a new format, a brighter design and we sought out articles and contributions from our readers. It is now time to establish an Africa-based editorial steering group to direct a drylands communications programme, so as to provide a research-policy-practice platform to debate and disseminate African perspectives for Africa's drylands. Watch this space for news of changes!*

*Entering this new phase, we are distributing the Drylands Issue Papers separately. Please complete and return the enclosed IIED publications subscription form, indicating which publications you would like to receive.*

## Is solar power the answer?

SOLAR POWER may be a better alternative to biofuels, reports Senegal's *Le Quotidien* newspaper. Research carried out by Ibrahima Thomas from the Senegalese Agricultural Research Institute ISRA (*Institut Sénégalais de Recherches*) on the impacts of biofuel production on poverty and access to clean energy in Senegal, shows that solar power may be a better solution. "Energy sovereignty in Senegal will not be achieved through the development of biofuels," says Thomas.

According to Thomas, the policies governing the production of *jatropha* are inadequate and land tenure is a main constraint. The government of Senegal has planned for 321,000 ha of land to be given over to *jatropha* cultivation, that is a tenth of arable land or about 1,000 ha per rural community. The objective is to produce 3,200,000 tons of seeds per year, which is 1,190,000 litres of oil. Many foreign companies are interested in acquiring large tracts of land for biofuel production. But where will this land come from, given that there is no "reserve" of arable land to allocate to these new investors? Will small farmers lose out? And what are the consequences for food production and rural livelihoods? The proliferation of large scale agriculture would also have environmental impacts.

The official line is that *jatropha* cultivation can take place on arid and salinated lands but



A. Japel/Still Pictures

*Jatropha hastata*  
Flower power or solar power?

Thomas questions this idea. According to him, *jatropha* will grow on these kinds of soils but production will be low. And he is convinced that production would be greater (and more profitable) in areas where rainfall is greater than 500 mm per annum.

In light of all these obstacles, Ibrahima Thomas concludes that large-scale solar energy production is a better alternative to biofuels for achieving energy independence in Senegal.

① *Le Quotidien*, 24 December 2008

## A future of food insecurity?

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION is dramatically affected by rising temperatures. What does this mean in a context of climate change? A recent article by David Battisti and Rosamond

Naylor published in *Science* gives some serious warnings. Using 23 global climate models, the researchers demonstrate an over 90% chance that by 2100 the growing season temperatures in the tropics and subtropics will be higher than the most extreme seasonal temperatures recorded from 1900 to 2006.

The Sahel is particularly at risk as crop and livestock production play an essential role in the region's economy. Sixty percent of the people in the Sahel rely directly on farming for their livelihoods. From year to year the temperature does not vary very much. The temperature during growing season, however, has been very high with average summer temperatures ranging from 25°C in the south to 35°C in the north. And temperatures have increased since 1980. Despite rains returning to some locations of the Sahel during the past 15 years, the growing season for staple crops is shorter, maize yields are far below potential and millet and sorghum yields continue to stagnate.

Most worrisome for the Sahel is that average growing season temperatures by 2100 are expected to exceed the hottest seasons recorded during the past century. This hot weather will compound food insecurity caused by variable rainfall in the region. It will also increase the number of droughts caused by elevated evapotranspiration, low soil moisture and high rates of water runoff from hard pan soils. New levels of heat stress will make the region's population far more vulnerable to poverty and hunger-related deaths and will likely drive many people out of agriculture altogether thus expanding migrant and refugee populations.

In the past, threats to food security and human lives caused by unusually high seasonal temperatures dissipated when the extreme temperatures subsided, when food deficits in one area were balanced with food surpluses from other locations and when farmers autonomously adapted their practices

or migrated. The future, according to this research, could be entirely different, unless major adaption investments are made today.

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① *"Historical Warnings of Future Food Insecurity with Unprecedented Seasonal Heat"* by David S Battisti and Rosamond L Naylor, published in *Science*, Vol 323, 9 January 2009, p. 240-244.

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## New restrictions for charities in Ethiopia

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ETHIOPIA'S PARLIAMENT has passed a law to regulate charities, despite strong criticism from opposition politicians, international human rights groups and national civil society organisations. The Proclamation for the Registration and Regulation of Charities and Societies was passed in January during an ordinary session of parliament "to create a conducive environment for NGOs and CSOs and to provide a separate legal framework for them", according to Meles Tilahun, a whip in parliament.

Critics fear the new law could restrict the activities of some charities and they argue that the new rules, especially on foreign funding of local NGOs, would adversely affect human rights groups critical of the government and could disrupt aid operations by such groups. The government, however, says charities have been used by political

activists who are working on “other issues”, not “catastrophes that required aid and assistance”.

Former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, told IRIN: “I am very concerned about this legislation. It is regrettable to have legislation which might close the enabling space for civil society because it is actually part of the development of a country.”

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① IRIN, the news agency of UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA). Report online at: [www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=82223](http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=82223)

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## Niger condemned for slavery

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NIGER HAS BEEN FOUND responsible for failing to protect 24-year-old Hadijatou Mani from slavery. The judgement was delivered in Niamey, Niger on 27 October 2008 by the Community Court of Justice of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

The Court, which has authority across most of West Africa, found Niger in breach of its own laws and international obligations in protecting its citizens from slavery. Ms Mani is to be compensated 10 million CFA, the equivalent of £12,300/\$19,000 in damages. The Court in its judgement stated that: “There

is no doubt that Hadijatou Mani was held in slavery for almost 9 years in violation of the legal prohibition on this practice.”

Niger criminalised slavery in 2003, but five years on at least 43,000 people remain enslaved across the country. Hadijatou was born into an established slave class and like all slaves in Niger, was inherited, sold and made to work without pay.

Ms Mani brought the case to the regional ECOWAS court after failing to receive any redress in Niger’s domestic legal system and state authorities, which had at times been complicit in her master’s attempts to deny her freedom. The judgment is recognition of the long standing abuses she has suffered. Local lawyers were assisted in bringing the case by INTERIGHTS, the International Centre for the Legal Protection of Human Rights, with support from Anti-Slavery International and Niger NGO Timidria.

This was the first time that the ECOWAS Court has heard a slavery case and the first time a slavery case has been brought against the state of Niger to any international or regional court. The ruling sets a legal precedent with respect to the obligations of states to protect its citizens from slavery.

A slave is:

- forced to work -- through mental or physical threat;
- owned or controlled by an ‘employer’, usually through mental or physical abuse or threatened abuse;
- dehumanised, treated as a commodity or bought and sold as ‘property’;
- physically constrained or has restrictions placed on his/her freedom of movement.

Source: Antislavery International

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① *Anti-Slavery International.*  
[www.antislavery.org](http://www.antislavery.org)

# Baobab fruit pulp hits Europe

IN JULY 2008, *PhytoTrade Africa* was granted authorisation to market baobab dried fruit pulp in Europe. Under EU legislation, any food that has not been commonly eaten in Europe prior to 1997 is classified as a “novel food” and must gain special approval before it can be used in products for the European market.

The pulp will be used in a range of products such as smoothies (mixed juice drinks), cereal bars and other similar foods. A depectinated

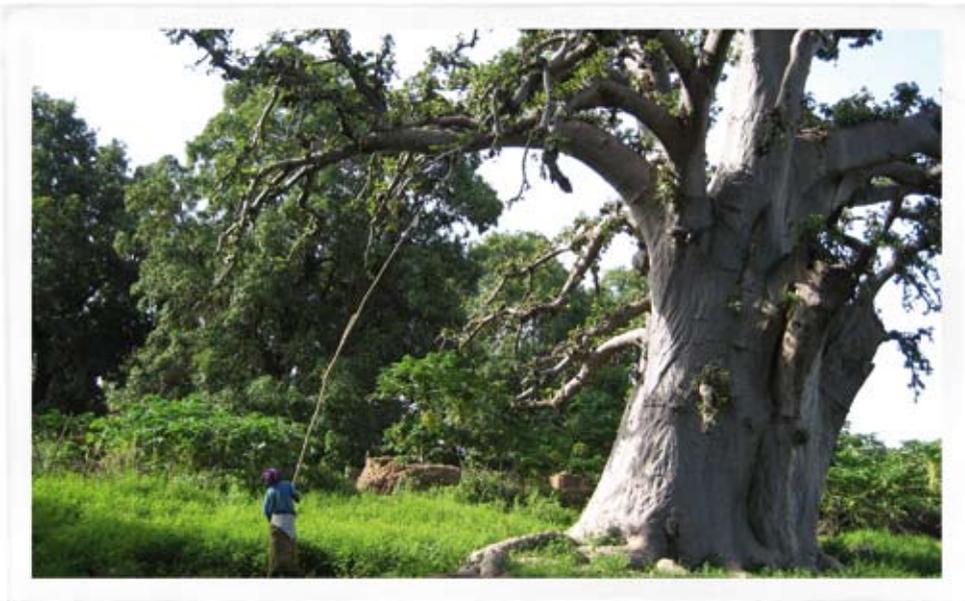
baobab fruit pulp will also be marketed for use in other food products such as biscuits, confectionery, and related products.

Traditionally used all over Africa, the baobab tree (*Adansonia digitata*) has a great array of uses, both as a food and for medicinal purposes. As well as its popular fruit, the leaves are commonly eaten as a relish, especially in times of drought, and its seeds yield an edible oil which is a useful substitute for vegetable oil, and they can also be ground up to produce a coffee-like hot beverage. The fruit juice is also used as a sauce or a fermenting agent.

The baobab also has high nutritional value. The pulp has levels of vitamin C nearly six times higher than that of an orange, it is also high in antioxidants, natural fibre and an excellent source of calcium and iron.

Opening up this product to the European market is good news for producers in Africa.

**i** *PhytoTrade Africa, PO Box BE 335, Belvedere, Harare, Zimbabwe*  
[www.phytotradeafrica.com](http://www.phytotradeafrica.com)



Marie Morimart

The baobab tree – an important resource in Africa

# Fertilisers and the food crisis: debating soil fertility in Africa

*Improving soil fertility is crucial for ensuring our food supply. A recent e-debate sponsored by the Future Agricultures Consortium<sup>1</sup> (FAC), focused on policy options for improving soil fertility in Africa.*

*by Ian Scoones*

A DEBATE ON policy frameworks for increasing soil fertility in Africa was launched with a discussion paper, to which world experts on agriculture, soils and food security contributed. Five recurring themes were identified.

## 1. Context

Social, economic and ecological contexts are critical. Programming without understanding and integrating these contexts has been tried before and failed. Where soils are highly responsive to chemical fertilisers, programmes focused on fertiliser use appear to work. But all sorts of measures make sense. Building up organic material in soils is also important. The responsiveness of soils is highly dependent on broader soil health. But where soils are less responsive (due to low organic matter, poor rainfall, or both), or when returns to inputs are low (due to high prices of fertilisers, low prices of farm products, poor market and transport linkages), other options are required. An integrated approach, suited to diverse contexts, is needed.

## 2. Scale

The responsiveness of soils can vary dramatically within a farm and field. A farmer's

own soil fertility management strategies are often geared to small scale. Micro-dosing with inorganic fertilisers, complemented by organic fertiliser applications, can allow very fine-tuned approaches. Larger programmes must be able to respond to scale variations and be flexible in their design and approach. They need to be supported equally by participatory, bottom-up design, and by effective soil diagnostics, testing and mapping.

## 3. Socio-economic differentiation

Designing support schemes requires a detailed understanding of socio-economic variation among farmers and households. In some areas, simple market mechanisms, perhaps supporting the growth of agro-dealer networks, work well. In other areas, 'smart subsidies' may develop positive spirals, where increased production enables farmers to invest more in soil fertility. Many current programmes do not take into account differentiation, opting instead for a bureaucratically easier and more politically saleable blanket approach. This is dangerous, generating distortions, disincentives and inefficiencies.

#### 4. Longer-term dynamic trends

Contexts matter, but they are not fixed. They also change over time and in different ways for different people. For example, a drying climate may make the application of inorganic fertilisers less like a good bet. Yet, low-cost soil and water conservation measures can help increase resilience. Another trend is the price of inorganic fertiliser. Measures are needed to protect against future shocks and long term trends.

#### 5. Cultural dimensions

There are dangers of a ‘technical fix’ approach to solving soil fertility problems. Farmers see things differently to soil scientists. Their understandings of soils are more holistic, centred on a perspective that looks at the wider health of the soil-plant system.

Indigenous, cultural understandings of soils and their management need to be taken on board, and seen as central to the design of programmes and policies.

1. [www.future-agricultures.org](http://www.future-agricultures.org) – A network of agriculture researchers from Africa and international development institutions in the UK.

**i** For more information visit [www.future-agricultures.org/EN/e-debates/Soil\\_Fertility/soilfertility\\_main.html](http://www.future-agricultures.org/EN/e-debates/Soil_Fertility/soilfertility_main.html)

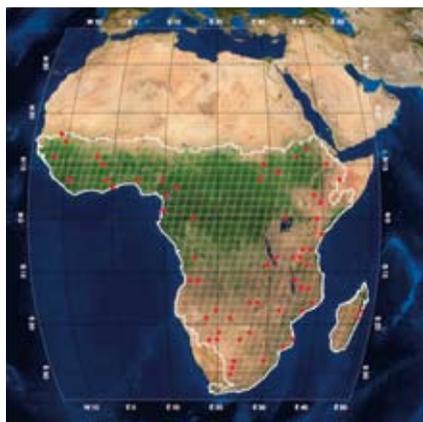
**Ian Scoones** is a professorial fellow in the Knowledge, Technology and Society (KNOTS) Team at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK. An agricultural ecologist by training, his work has focused on the intersection between issues of rural livelihoods and institutional and policy change. Much of his work has been in southern and east Africa, notably Zimbabwe. E-mail: [i.scoones@ids.ac.uk](mailto:i.scoones@ids.ac.uk)

#### Digital soils map for Africa

An ambitious new effort to produce the first detailed digital soils map for sub-Saharan Africa was announced by the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) in January 2009. This project combines the latest soil science and technology with remote satellite imagery and on-the-ground efforts to analyse thousands of soil samples from remote areas across the continent to help provide solutions for poor farmers, who suffer from chronically low-yielding crops largely because of degraded soils.

The map represents the area of Africa where the soil samples will be collected for the African Soil Information Service (AfsIS) project. The sampling sites have been randomly selected using a computer programme to remove any sampling bias. The red spots are referred to as sentinel sites. This is where the project will collect soil samples. AfsIS has 60 sentinel sites with an additional 60 sites identified as alternates. AfsIS will use 12 of these sites in Nigeria, Mali, Malawi, Kenya, and Tanzania for integrated soil fertility management (ISFM) field trials to development management recommendations for the different regions.

The digital soil map is being developed as part of a global soil mapping initiative, called GlobalSoilMap.net. <http://africasoils.net/>



African Soil Information Service (AfsIS) sample map with sentinel sites

Copyright © CIAT 2009

# Gender based violence among the Afar in Ethiopia

*Fatima<sup>1</sup> is a 21 year old girl, living in Afar Region, Mille woreda, a pastoral-dominated region in Ethiopia. When she told her parents about her intention to marry her boyfriend, her family disagreed. Instead they decided that she should marry her uncle's son, following the tradition of absuma.*

*by Ahmed Mohammed and Fiona Flintan*

CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE or *absuma* is common in the Afar culture and in Mille district almost every girl is expected to marry her uncle's son, with or without her consent. These arrangements are said to create harmonious relations between the couple - as relatives they should be more tolerant and sympathetic towards each other than 'strangers'. It is also said to strengthen relations between clan members and retain property within a clan. Within such a marriage no dowry is exchanged, however, if an 'outsider' wants to marry an Afar girl he must pay 12 heads of cattle to her family. *Absuma* also ensures that all girls marry.

Unfortunately for Fatima this was the beginning of a nightmare. After her marriage, and following tradition, her new husband took her to the forest to take her virginity. For Afar girls this is an extremely painful experience due to them having been circumcised as an infant (between 1-7 days old). For Fatima not only was the ordeal painful, but she also suffered terrible violence at the hands of her husband. Eventually she was able to divorce him through the clan system. Finally she was free to marry her boyfriend.

"Now I am very happy for marrying my lover. I forgot the pain and the hardships, because I could marry the man whom I loved very much. But, what I feel bad about is the clans. They are obstacles for the women's right. Because either they don't allow women to go to the law enforcement bodies or they themselves can't defend the rights of women. When I told them what he did to me, they said to me that since he is your husband he has the right to do whatever he wants. Finally, what I want to say is that in Afar the traditions are for men and completely against the women. We need these to be changed urgently by the help of Allah. We need governmental and non-governmental organisations to help us in changing this condition."

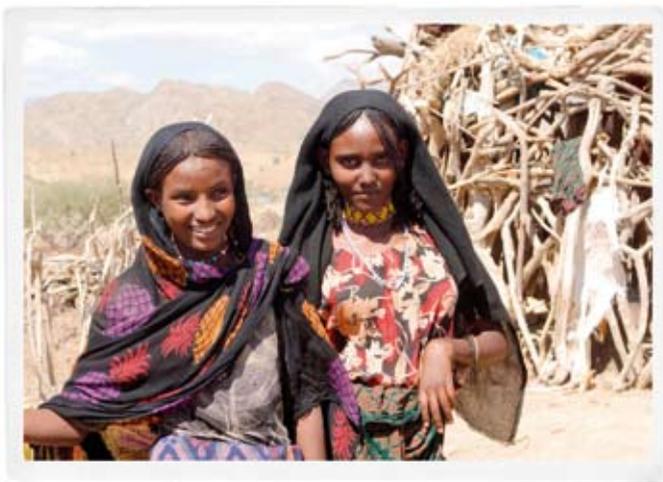
Fatima's story is not unusual. Gender based violence is common across Ethiopia. However in pastoral communities, it appears to be particularly prevalent and practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), domestic violence and customary early marriage, abduction and practices such as *absuma* are so ingrained in tradition that sometimes they are not considered as violence against

women. In a study carried out by SOS Sahel in Mille, Afar and Fentalle Oromiya, out of the total boy respondents, 82.1% said that they would not marry girls who had not undergone FGM and 70% of married men and women participating in the survey would not allow their sons to marry a girl who was not circumcised.

Often girls and women do not survive this gender based violence, contributing to the highly skewed

population ratio in pastoral communities in favour of men. A study by the Ministry of Agriculture's Pastoral Extension Team – the Pastoral Areas Development Study<sup>2</sup> – used the Ethiopian Census of 1994 to highlight that of the 8 million people who were living in the pastoral areas at the time, 4.2 million were men and 3.7 million were women. A normal population ratio should have slightly more females than males. Indeed, even if the ratio were 1:1 it would mean that within these pastoralist areas there would be over 500,000 “missing women”. In Afar region the ratio was 136 men to 100 women, based on a population of 725,000 men and 531,000 women. This means that at the time there were 194,000 “missing women” in Afar alone.

Ethiopia ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1981. However until the Revised Penal Code of 2004, practices such as abduction, if followed by marriage, were not illegal. Since 2005, this exemption has been abolished. However this and other violent practices have been going on for a long period of time and enforcement is difficult. Even in cases which reach the courts,



Afar girls

Biosphoto / Ziegler-Jean-Luc & Françoise / Still Picture

traditional ideas may prevent women's rights being protected.

Though some regional governments have banned FGM, including the Afar regional government, it will be a long time before attitudes within communities change, as well as the attitudes of women themselves.

*Fatima's testimonial and others can be read in a book produced by SOS Sahel Ethiopia on gender, pastoralism and socio-economic change. This is the final volume of a 3-volume series on gender and pastoralism, part-funded through the Pastoral Livelihood Initiative (PLI) programme. A version of this article also appeared in the PLI Newsletter, May 2008, Ethiopia. For more information visit [www.sahel.org.uk](http://www.sahel.org.uk)*

1. Fatima's name has been changed to preserve her anonymity,  
2. Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development Pastoral Areas Development Study (PADS) Addis Ababa & Rome 2004.

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# Biofuels – a polarised debate?

*Much of the global discourse on biofuels has been polarised, and has sometimes lost track of the overriding concern to understand how biofuel production is affecting, positively or negatively, the livelihoods of rural people. The articles in this section are an attempt to document what is happening on the ground in dryland contexts.*

*by Lorenzo Cotula*

BIOFUEL PRODUCTION is expanding rapidly. Government objectives for substituting biofuels for oil to provide energy and transport (driven by fluctuating oil prices), for supporting rural development, for taking advantage of export opportunities and for mitigating climate change, are driving this growth. Projections suggest that biofuel production is likely to continue expanding in the coming years.

At the same time, the policy debate about the merits and drawbacks of biofuels is growing and changing rapidly. Important concerns such as the ability of biofuels to mitigate climate change effectively, the impact of biofuel production on food prices, and the social and environmental impacts of production have been voiced in policy circles as well as in the media and in public opinion.

Biofuels could revitalise rural agriculture and livelihoods. In some contexts, smallholders have been able to use and even consolidate their land access through biofuel cultivation for income generation or for local energy self-sufficiency, independently or through synergies with bigger players.

But biofuels may also marginalise poorer people, particularly where local land rights are

insecure, capacity to enforce them is limited, and major power asymmetries shape relations between local resource users and industry players. In many contexts, policymakers are allocating large areas of land to large-scale biofuel cultivation. Although some of this land is seen as “marginal” or “idle”, poorer and vulnerable groups often depend on it for crop farming, herding or gathering wild products. The fact that biofuels like *jatropha* can successfully be grown on lands that were previously considered as “marginal” increases land values and outside interest in dryland areas. This may result in users of those “marginal” lands, such as pastoralists, losing out.

The articles in the following section contain some strong views and we welcome your feedback and reaction to the arguments presented here. We very much hope that this can facilitate balanced and informed debate about how best to seize opportunities and minimise risks associated with the spread of biofuel production.

**Lorenzo Cotula** is a senior researcher in Law and Sustainable Development at IIED (Email: [lorenzo.cotula@iied.org](mailto:lorenzo.cotula@iied.org)). He recently co-authored a report entitled *Fuelling exclusion? The biofuels boom and poor people's access to land*. Copies can be downloaded at: [www.iied.org/pubs/display.php?o=125511IED](http://www.iied.org/pubs/display.php?o=125511IED)

# What do the experts say about biofuels?

*IUCN interviewed two leading global drylands experts, Drs Mike Mortimore and Uriel Safriel, to get their views on the future of drylands in a context of climate change. Here is an extract from that interview where both experts give their opinion on the potential of biofuels.*

**IUCN:** Biofuels seem to be the latest new hope for developing and greening the drylands, could they be a solution?

**Mortimore:** Large-scale biofuel production in drylands occupied by smallholders amounts to the sale of plant nutrients in exchange for financial payments on a scale that makes the colonial export of nutrients in groundnuts or cotton look trivial by comparison. And these nutrients will be burnt! Yet the greatest need of primary production systems in drylands, after rainfall, is plant nutrients. In fact it has been shown that in the Sahel, where rainfall is the main determinant of plant biomass, nutrients are the major constraint. While one might think that by selling biofuel farmers could buy chemical fertilisers, these are not an adequate substitute for natural nutrient and biological cycles in the soil. Even the strongest advocates of subsidised fertilisers realise that chemical and organic fertiliser use must be integrated. Biofuel production is not the answer either to smallholders' needs or to environmental degradation in drylands.

**Safriel:** The problem of agriculture in the drylands is that of marketing, including transportation infrastructure, credit

mechanisms and market information dissemination. These deficiencies will make biofuel agriculture more vulnerable and non-sustainable than food agriculture. Also, as with food agriculture, it will soon become obvious that producing biofuel products is cheaper in non-drylands than in drylands, unless it is acceptable that the dryland farmer can be paid less than a non-dryland farmer. Furthermore, the movement to biofuel will reduce food security for many dryland farmers.

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**i** This extract has been taken from an interview in the 2008 IUCN publication **The nature of drylands: Diverse ecosystems, diverse solutions**, Download it from: [http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/the\\_nature\\_of\\_drylands\\_diverse\\_ecosystems\\_diverse\\_solutions\\_2008.pdf](http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/the_nature_of_drylands_diverse_ecosystems_diverse_solutions_2008.pdf)

**Mike Mortimore** and **Uriel Safriel** are on the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM), a network of about 400 volunteer ecosystem management experts from around the world, which provides expert guidance on integrated approaches to the management of natural and modified ecosystems to promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. The Commission works closely with other IUCN Commissions, regional offices and global thematic programmes.

# Bioenergy – a new opportunity or a major threat to pastoralism?

*Can pastoral communities benefit from the cultivation of biofuel crops? Work carried out by SOS Sahel International UK to facilitate debate and understanding on the current biofuel boom in dryland Africa points to some interesting possibilities. At the same time many questions need to be answered before pastoralists can benefit from bioenergy production.*

*by Daniel McGahey and SOS Sahel International UK*

ONE CRITICISM OF biofuel production is that it contributes to food insecurity and pushes up food prices. To avoid these negative impacts, energy companies and governments are searching for new crops and land where cultivation will not compete with food production. To a growing number of governments and biofuel investors the cultivation of non-edible dryland biofuel crops such as *jatropha curcas* on marginal arid land or wasteland is an ideal solution to the food versus biofuel debate. Yet these lands are vital to the survival and food security of millions of pastoralists and agro-pastoralists. While the renewed focus on drylands is an opportunity for pastoralists to re-emphasise their often underestimated, vital roles within the carbon cycle and the wider economics of arid lands, there are some obvious knowledge gaps which require more research before the key facts and development options can be effectively communicated and debated.

## **Providing energy**

Large-scale commercial initiatives, in which corporations take over vast areas of 'wastelands', is only one of several possible models for growing biofuels. Before the recent boom in this sector there were many small-scale pro-poor bioenergy initiatives in Africa aimed at improving rural poverty and supporting energy self-sufficiency. However, energy requirements in pastoral areas are generally low, and little is known about where and when energy self-sufficiency could be beneficial. For pastoralists, energy requirements are likely to vary depending on the level of income and context. For example, where fuel is required to run pumps for boreholes, and where there are high demands for fuel for the transport of animals and animal products, small scale biofuel projects could be beneficial. There are also major uncertainties about whether crops like *jatropha* will provide the yields necessary to ensure a constant supply of



SOS Sahel

Boy and cattle in North Kordofan, Sudan

fuel. The agronomy and potential of the crop under arid conditions is poorly understood and yields are likely to be poor in most pastoral areas unless irrigation is used. Better understanding of potential dryland bioenergy crops is required to explore whether a successful smallholder model of biofuel production is possible.

### Improving incomes

Biofuel projects could also offer significant improvements in household incomes. For example, women in Zimbabwe earn supplementary incomes selling soap, and fuel for cooking and lighting extracted from *jatropha*. Similarly, in the drylands of Benin people have exported *jatropha* seeds to France for soap production since the 1940s. More recently in Mali and Ethiopia, rural people have gained income from selling

*jatropha* seeds to the industry through outgrower schemes. If these projects could be initiated without interfering with livestock management and mobility, significant improvements in poverty in pastoral communities could be gained.

### Addressing persistent problems

The renewed interest in the development of pastoral drylands could be used as an opportunity to address many of the persistent social and environmental problems found in these regions. Remote pastoral societies tend to be marginalised from decision-making processes, unable to defend their rights to land. Their arid rangelands are often the last to receive investment, and when development interventions are made these are usually inappropriate. The current focus on pastoral rangelands for bioenergy production

represents an excellent opportunity for pastoralists to gain greater recognition for their rights to land and for involvement in decision making, especially where weak national laws and policies concerning bioenergy development offer poor protection from exploitation.

The present bioenergy boom also creates an opportunity for pastoralists to highlight their vital, underestimated role in providing wider environmental services and valuable economic gains from marginal land. Interest by investors in acquiring pastoral land for bioenergy production should be accompanied by an analysis of the total costs of these investments compared to the diverse economic gains from pastoralism. As well as providing direct economic benefits, pastoralism creates various indirect tangible and intangible values to society. It is also increasingly being recognised as an important linchpin to solving several global environmental problems. Pastoralists are active managers of their natural resources and have developed some of the most biodiverse habitats in the world, supporting carbon sequestration and wildlife conservation. When their ability to access and manage their rangelands is restricted by inappropriate development policies or the appropriation of favourable areas of land and critical resources, such as water, their mobility and capacity to manage their natural resources declines. This is an opportunity cost, as the loss of variability in the remaining rangeland means that indirect global environmental services are lost. These losses must be weighed against any likely economic benefits from bioenergy production.

### **We need to know more**

It is clear that there could be potential to improve pastoral livelihoods but we must learn more about how biofuel use and

cultivation could be integrated with existing dryland uses. Reports emerging from existing large-scale *jatropha* schemes suggest that in some cases dryland people have been granted access to intercrop groundnuts for the first few years before the plants mature. In some parts of India the focus has shifted from *jatropha* to *pongamia pinnata*, as the plant grows taller and thus has a greater potential for intercropping. Could these crops also offer potential for intergrazing with livestock? Successful small-holder development of *jatropha* would provide farmers and agro-pastoralists with new cash crops and could also provide energy for local use and may provide wage labour opportunities. On the other hand, the cultivation of non-edible dryland crops like *jatropha* as presently planned seems likely to take over substantial areas of seasonal pasture essential to pastoral livelihood systems. Even if *jatropha* cultivation were not possible for agronomic reasons, land once alienated from pastoral uses is rarely returned and the toxicity and lifespan of this crop means a return to permanent pasture is likely to be difficult and costly.

There are clearly a number of research questions in need of urgent answers before governments and pastoralists can make informed choices regarding bioenergy production in the drylands.

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Source: **Bioenergy and Pastoralism: Challenging the Wastelands Myth**, by Daniel J McGahey, SOS Sahel International UK, 2008

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 For further information contact SOS Sahel UK.

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# Biofuels and land rights in Mozambique – the ProCana case

*Access to land for biofuel cultivation is often negotiated with rural communities. Ensuring that sufficient consultation and discussion are carried out and that agreements are respected is a big challenge. This case study from Mozambique illustrates some of the difficulties.*

*by Lino Manuel and Alda Salomao*

PROCANA LIMITADA is the first corporate business permitted to produce biofuels on a large scale in Mozambique. US\$510 million is being invested in 30,000 hectares of land in Massingir district, Gaza province in the south west of the country, for growing sugar cane and constructing infrastructure for processing ethanol. This energy will supplement that produced by the Cahora Bassa dam system and may be exported to Swaziland, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Malawi. The business should generate employment for 7,000 people and contribute to the reduction of abject poverty in the country.

These facts and figures are impressive but there is more than meets the eye with regard to the process for granting land to ProCana.

According to the company, the requirements set out for Community Consultation for the Granting of Rights for the Use and Exploitation of Land (DUAT) have been respected. But there is some evidence to show that communities are not fully in agreement when it comes to the decisions

taken regarding land allocation. Members of affected communities stated at a recent meeting organised by the NGOs JA (*Justiça Ambiental*) and UNAC (*União Nacional dos Camponeses*), that ‘agreements’ regarding the delimitation of land are not being respected by the company.

## **Government and big business**

Ideally in this situation, communities should make their grievances known to the state authorities. The consultative councils created within the decentralisation framework should provide opportunities for communities to voice their concerns.

But in this case, ProCana has taken possession of half the land intended for the resettlement of communities displaced by Limpopo National Park. This has led to a further delay in a resettlement process which has been dragging on for the past 8 years. This is a clear example of the government contradicting itself in the way it applies land legislation, as this area was originally

intended for resettlement and not for growing biofuels. This decision calls into question the government's commitment to ensuring the well-being of the communities bordering the National Park.

In addition, ProCana has opened a project office on the premises of the district administrative offices which raises questions over the government's independence. The scale of investment also provides an opportunity for undermining governmental neutrality – a prerequisite for maintaining effective control over implementation of the national legislation.



CTV meeting with villagers in Massingir, September 2008

Frederico Dava, CTV

### **Are agreements being respected?**

In October 2008, the NGO Centro Terra Viva (CTV) met with representatives of five villages in Massingir district – Zulu, Banga, Tihovene, Chinhangane, Condzwane and Cubo. The objective was to discuss communities' perception of: the procedures for community consultation as laid out in the land law, and private-community partnerships.

In general, the village representatives were dissatisfied with what they called encroachment onto their lands by private investors, namely ProCana. The representative of Chinhangane village said "members of ProCana arrived at the village and met with our leader, together with some other members of our community. They were told that they (ProCana) were asking for some land for their activities. Some members of our community were chosen to indicate an area where they could work and the boundaries of that area. Today, ProCana pays no attention to the established boundaries and is in the process of opening up trails which pass close to our houses and destroy cultivated

fields. We have nothing against ProCana establishing itself in our district, on the contrary, we want them to help us to rise up out of the poverty which affects us. However, we demand that ProCana remain within the limits of the land that was ceded to them."

When asked about the way in which the communities came to know of the existence of ProCana and its interest in land, another participant, representing Chinhangane community, said that it was the Massingir district administrator who had introduced ProCana to his village. At a meeting she had announced the company was looking for land where it could work and generate employment opportunities in the district. The population agreed to cede a part of the land that was not in use to ProCana, while retaining other areas for its own activities such as subsistence farming and pastoralism.

CTV wanted to know if the community had been previously informed of the kind of activity which ProCana was going to develop in Massingir and of the extent of the total land

area which it wanted to occupy. The same source said that the community had been advised in advance and that it had had time to select the areas which were later ceded to ProCana. "What worries us at this moment is the fact that ProCana is not respecting the limits we set in the beginning," he stated.

The representative of Zulu village said that the same thing happened in his community. He further emphasised that when some members of the community drew attention to the boundaries of the area ceded to ProCana, company representatives said that they were incorrect because they had already identified these when the area was surveyed from the air. "At that stage we wanted to know how they could have identified the area and its boundaries without consulting us, knowing that it belonged to us. We thought that they would take our position into account following our complaints, but we have seen that that is not the case, since they put in a trail from where they believe to be the true boundary of their land into our land. The zone which ProCana is currently occupying is where we cut the poles for construction of our houses. As a means of compensation we asked that they should build us conventional houses and also dig irrigation trenches and put in sources of water. Up to now we have had no reply to these demands and nobody from that undertaking has been willing to make a promise to do so."

As for Banga village, the meeting participant felt that the information given to his community on the ProCana project was not enough. The villagers were merely told by the district administrator that ProCana wanted to plant sugar cane, without mentioning the area on which this would take place. "We were not told how many hectares ProCana wanted, they merely told us that they wanted land and we, in view of our immediate and future requirements, ceded some portions." He added that the Banga community had

also asked for some compensation in return for ceding the land, but that ProCana had not made any promises.

The representative of Tihovene village, where the district headquarters of Massingir are located, said that the greater part of the village's productive land was taken by ProCana, without the consent of the population.

The representatives of the five villages were unanimous in stating that ProCana failed to respect the boundaries set by the communities on their lands. As a result, CTV asked if during the process of identifying the areas to be ceded to ProCana, the communities were supported by technical assistants from the geographical and land registry services. A member of the Condzwane community said that the population was informed that in due course somebody from those services together with the inhabitants would demarcate the region, but that this had not happened.

CTV is still trying to meet with ProCana representatives and to have access to the community consultation minutes to confirm these statements.

*Our thanks to Marina Bond for translating this article from Portuguese.*

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**i** For more information visit Centro Terra Viva's website [www.ctv.org.mz](http://www.ctv.org.mz). Background information is also available at [www.bioenergyafrica-ltd.com/Investments/Procana.html](http://www.bioenergyafrica-ltd.com/Investments/Procana.html)

The original version of this article in Portuguese is available at [www.iied.org/pubs/display.php?o=Go2479](http://www.iied.org/pubs/display.php?o=Go2479)

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# Biofuels – A view from India

*When biofuels emerged on the global scene, they were regarded as the final answer to our dependence on fossil fuels and our climate change concerns. But over the last couple of years, biofuels have uncovered another face – one of disaster and destruction.*

*by P.V. Satheesh*

BIOFUELS HAVE CONVERTED crop fields into fuel farms, sent food prices soaring, threatened people's food security, and have brought the spectre of corporate control over agricultural farms and community commons closer to reality.

New arguments that detail the dangers of biofuels abound. We already have the examples in Mexico where maize prices have increased by 60% since maize has been used as a biofuel crop. This has given birth to the new slogan *Crops for humans or crops for cars?* In Africa, millions of hectares of common lands and forests are being converted into biofuel plantations displacing local communities from the benefits they regularly derived from these commons. Brazil is clearing thousands of hectares of tropical Amazon forests almost on a daily basis to plant sugarcane for ethanol production. Everywhere, biodiversity on farms and forests is being replaced by monocultural plantations.

India sees itself as a big player in this arena. The argument becomes far more complex in India where the booming economy has created millions of neo-rich who live in splendid isolation from their rural fraternity, for whom their farms and commons are their

only sources of food and livelihood security. The biofuelling of these spaces will destroy whatever residual security the poor have. In addition, many Indian multinationals are looking to Africa to colonise the continent with the lure of their investments to create biofuel plantations. Like any coloniser, India supports this plan saying that Africa needs investment and jobs.

*Jatropha* plants appear to fill the core of these dreams. Large scale *jatropha* plantations on wastelands is a seductive discourse. *Jatropha* plantations are bandied as a win-win situation. The argument goes that they will green the wastelands and provide biofuels for the auto industry and livelihoods for the people. Who can fight this compelling logic?

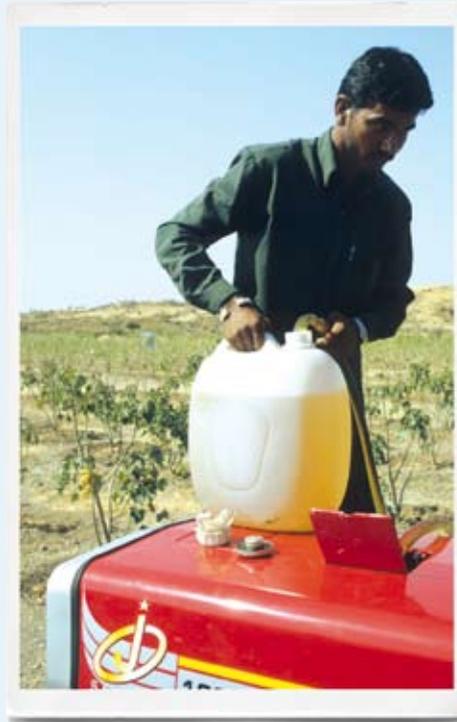
However, a deeper analysis would reveal that all the wins will stay with the rich and the poor will be confronted with a lose-lose situation. They are not the car owners, hence cheaper "envirofriendly" fuels have no meaning for them. On the other hand, they will lose their commons which give them access to a large number of food and medicinal plants, uncultivated foods, fuelwoods and fibre. Their replacement with

ecosystem-destroying *jatropha* is disastrous for them.

Genetically engineered agriculture, which the Indian government is proactively trying to spread, is likely to play a key role here. There are already reports of research being carried out to modify trees such as eucalyptus and poplar so that they will break down more easily for the pulp and paper and the emerging biofuel industries. The Norwegian–Brazilian Company *Aracruz Cellulose*, believes that genetic engineering of forest species “can bring benefits to society through sustainable development”. GE multinationals such as *Monsanto* and petroleum giants *BP* as well as other players are teaming up to reap a rich economic harvest out of this new opportunity.

On the other hand, once the auto industry and the urban middle classes get used to cheaper, “ecofriendly” fuels, they will pay for more of the same. That would turn farmlands into spaces for biofuel crops. That is when this disaster will be total. If this is to be prevented, a vigorous debate that does not get influenced by the hype and big business interests is urgently needed. Countries like China and the US, which are big petroleum users, can get carbon credits by bankrolling “green energy sources” projects (as agrofuels are euphemistically called) and evade responsibility for contributing immensely to the climate crisis. This is very evident particularly with China, which is arranging agrofuel deals, at the same time as investing heavily in its own automobile industry without even a slight change in domestic policies (e.g. regulating car engine sizes or emissions). Same is the case with India which is emerging as a new plunderer of the natural wealth of Africa.

Therefore, it is very important that voices are raised against this plunder. While all these issues surround the complexity of biofuels, it is unfortunate that there is hardly any debate on them. It is in this context that the India



Joerg Boehling / Still Pictures

Experimental farm with *jatropha* oil plant for production of biodiesel in Bhavnagar, Gujarat, India

Consultation on Agrofuels was set up. This was the first civil society debate focusing on global as well as India-specific issues in order to develop more informed understanding about biofuels in the Indian context.

**i** This article is based on the Introduction to a report of a national consultation on Biofuels in India, organised by the Deccan Development Society, in collaboration with GRAIN, which was published in February 2008. To read the statement issued visit: [www.ddsindia.com/www/biofuel\\_india.html](http://www.ddsindia.com/www/biofuel_india.html)

For more information visit [www.ddsindia.com](http://www.ddsindia.com) or [www.grain.org/agrofuels](http://www.grain.org/agrofuels)

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# No place for the poor as Dakar's building boom fuels land speculation

*Urban development in Senegal has accelerated over the last twenty years. Dakar seems little more than a huge building site, unregulated neighbourhoods are expanding piecemeal, and the mad rush to construct new houses or extend existing buildings upwards and outwards is forcing many people into areas where no building is permitted, often with disastrous ecological consequences.*

*by Serigne Mansour Tall*

THE LAND MARKET in Senegal is becoming increasingly inaccessible to the vast majority of the population, who are witnessing a building frenzy that takes no account of town planning regulations or acceptable living standards. A new, more homogenous, urban landscape is taking shape as homes disappear or are surrounded by high fences.

## **An increasingly urban country**

The rate of urbanisation in Senegal is such that the majority of the population (currently nearly 10,821,000 inhabitants) will be city dwellers by 2040. The average annual growth rate of the urban population is 3.5% higher than that of the national population, which is expanding at around 2.5% per annum.<sup>1</sup> Nearly 41% of Senegalese people live in urban areas, and 40% of these people live in insecure housing.<sup>2</sup>

## **Imminent land saturation**

The dynamics of this process are most obvious in Dakar, where rapid and largely unplanned population growth poses a serious threat to sustainable urban development, and the situation is exacerbated by the capital's location on a peninsular. The commodification of land has reached the point where the land market in neighbourhoods near the city centre deals in marginal built-up areas rather than vacant plots. Public land reserves are being broken up and sold on to wealthy individuals, and even the land around Dakar's International Trade Fair buildings have been parcelled up for residential use. The case of the *Grand Centre des Parcelles Assainies* shows that the local population rarely benefit from such developments: this land had been set aside for the neighbourhood's key amenities, but was fraudulently parcelled off,



Ron Clilling / Still Pictures

An overview of the city and harbour of Dakar

leaving residents with little prospect of seeing any services installed. Only a select few such as expatriates, traders and the political elite have access to this market.

**Insatiable demand for housing**

The current obsession with house building is fuelled by various factors:

- the symbolic and practical aspects of home-ownership;
- security of investments and opportunities for rental income;
- limited administrative procedures,
- opportunities to plan and manage fixed rental revenues.

The main motivation is social aspiration – a desire to join the small circle of people that have built their own houses, and to create solid assets that can be passed down through the family.

Building continues apace, with landowners adding extra storeys to achieve their residential and speculative ambitions on

shrinking plots. However, no additional amenities are being put in place to cope with the extra residents, and densely populated areas in Grand Dakar are deteriorating due to overcrowding, failure to deal with the increasing urban density caused by the building boom, and poorly maintained housing. Septic tanks in urban areas present serious biological hazards and physical and chemical risks, such as pollution of the water table in suburbs in what was until recently the interdunal lowlying area of Niayes.

**Who is funding the building boom?**

Nearly 80% of the money made by public property developers (SICAP and SNHLM) was generated before 1980; today, the public construction industry is in crisis. Studies have revealed that the key players in the industry now are new actors such as expatriates and, to a lesser extent, those who benefited financially from the political changeover in March 2000. Senegalese expatriates transferred nearly 500 billion



Nicole Kenton

Luxury appartments being built in the Mermoz area of Dakar

francs CFA into the country in 2007, 18% of which was invested in the construction industry, and nearly 80% of which went straight into the broader economy. The newly moneyed expatriates, traders and ruling political elite have a monopoly over land and are contributing to its commodification, forcing the increasingly impoverished middle classes and poor out of urban areas and into uninhabitable zones such as wetlands, land acquired for public purposes, outlets and shorelines, etc. This monopoly, and their unbridled rental speculation has reached such a pitch that the National Assembly is now moving to regulate the rental market.

As the poor are excluded from the increasingly monetarised mechanisms for land appropriation, they are being pushed into uninhabitable areas and exposed to the risks of flooding and water-borne diseases like diarrhoea and cholera, skin conditions and pulmonary infections. Many are farmers who were chased off their degraded lands in the Peanut Basin, adding to the urban population

and highly vulnerable to natural hazards like the floods of 2005 and the coastal erosion and floods that hit Rufisque in 2007. All this is exacerbating urban poverty and undermining the potential for local economic development in urban areas.

*Our thanks to Lou Leask for translating this article from French.*

1. 2002 General population and housing census.
2. DSCRIP II 2005 and ESAM II.



**Dr Serigne Mansour Tall** is the UN Habitat programme manager for Senegal and Cape Verde. He previously headed the programme on natural resource management, decentralisation and governance at IED Afrique (formerly IED Sahel). He now works on research and policy formulation on the urban environment. His email is mansour.tall@undp.org

# WoDaaBe herders turn unpredictability into a key resource for animal production

*The use of pastoral mobility to manage the highly unpredictable dryland environments is becoming common sense within the development community.*

by Saverio Krätli

MOVING IS USUALLY explained as a way of reducing risk: mobility allows pastoralists to neutralise the risks posed by erratic rains, staying away from the areas where key resource supplies are scarce. From this perspective, mobility is a necessary copying strategy in an adverse environment. Descriptions of livestock movements focus on intensity and itineraries (distance, frequency and places). Compared to the traditional way of seeing mobility as a primitive stage of evolution on a progression from nomadism to sedentarisation, this new view represents an important step forward.

However, moving to reduce risk is only one of many reasons for pastoral mobility and perhaps the least interesting economically. More characteristic of the business of pastoralists is mobility as a production strategy. The WoDaaBe cattle keepers of Niger distinguish at least four types of mobility (according to purpose not to intensity or itinerary), three of which have the objective to enhance production.

Their strategy targets feeding conditions

that are known to be most beneficial to the herd, namely accessing combinations of fodder plants (grass, tree leaves and shrubs) at their peak nutritional content and under minimum stress. However, peak nutritional content only lasts for a brief period in the life-cycle of fodder plants. Should bush vegetation develop everywhere at the same time, most of the nutrients would be used by the plants for their own development before the cattle arrive to feed on them.

Instead, the erratic rainfall of the drylands (on a diversity of soils and vegetation) results in patches of peak nutritional content distributed over time and space. To mobile pastoralists with cattle bred and trained for operating as efficient selective feeders, this patchy succession is a key asset. The WoDaaBe livestock system nurtures and promotes competent feeding behaviour and social functional organisation within the herd. Through sophisticated breeding and management practices, the herders harness unpredictable variability in the natural environment and exploit it for production.



Frans Lemmens / Still Pictures

Wodaabe cowherd near Agadez, Niger

Thus, most of their mobility is not meant to minimise the effects of unpredictable variability but rather to seek and harness the opportunities it provides as far as is possible.

Seeing mobility as a strategy to enhance production has important practical consequences. All current projections on global climate change agree on the increasing unpredictability of natural environments. If all that we see in pastoral mobility is a strategy to counter environmental unpredictability, we can expect climate change to exacerbate environmental pressure on pastoral systems. On the other hand, understanding mobility as a production strategy gives a different perspective on pastoralism and climate change. The example of the WoDaaBe suggests that by increasing environmental variability, climate change actually strengthens a major asset in pastoral production – as long as mobility is possible.

**i** Further reading: Krätli S., 2008. *Cattle breeding, complexity and mobility in a structurally unpredictable environment: the WoDaaBe herders of Niger*. *Nomadic Peoples* 12(1), pp 11-41.  
 Krätli S., 2007. *Cows who choose domestication. Generation and management of domestic animal diversity by WoDaaBe pastoralists (Niger)*, PhD thesis, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK.



**Saverio Krätli** is a freelance researcher specialising in the interface between science and policy in pastoral development, he has recently completed a PhD on cattle breeding amongst the WoDaaBe of Niger. He is based at the Institute for Development Studies (IDS), University of Sussex, UK. Email: [saverio.kratli@gmail.com](mailto:saverio.kratli@gmail.com)

# Breaking the communication barrier – using mobile phones in pastoral livestock marketing

*Transborder livestock trade in the Horn of Africa has improved considerably due to enhanced communication between market actors. Although trade is continually constrained by poor roads, dilapidated communication systems, and insecurity, the use of mobile phones has enabled traders to overcome these challenges and minimise trading risks. Mobile phones remain the most important link between traders in the arid and remote northern region of Kenya and the largest meat market in the country, Nairobi.*

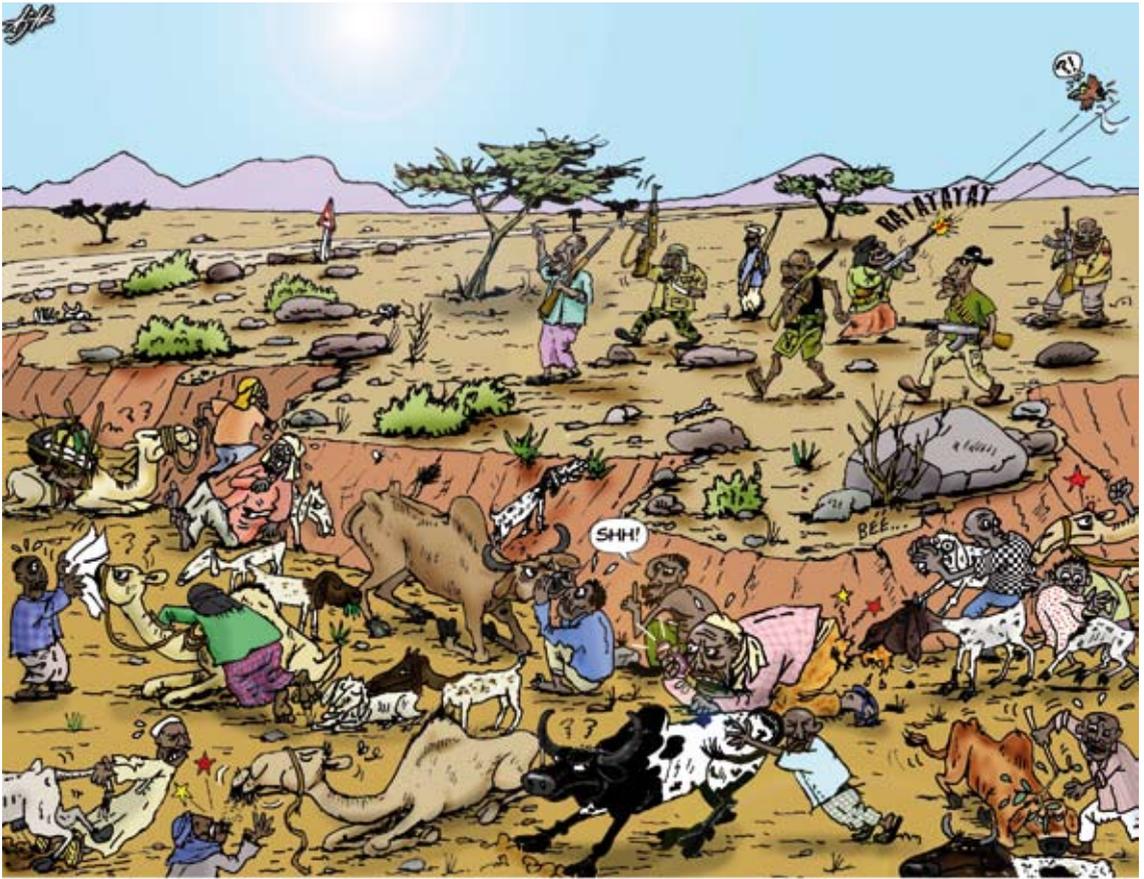
*by Hussein Abdullahi Mahmoud*

LIVESTOCK TRADERS USE technologies to increase the efficiency of their trading operations. Peter Little's<sup>1</sup> major work among Somali livestock traders on the Kenya/Somalia borderlands examines the resilience of Somali traders. The traders' entrepreneurship has facilitated and improved the trade between Garissa in north-eastern Kenya and locations in Somalia. Similarly, northern Kenya livestock traders use mobile phones to facilitate livestock trade between the area and Nairobi as market transactions proceed on both ends of the trading chain.

Information is vital in pastoral livestock marketing. This is for knowing the prevailing

livestock prices in Nairobi and whether or not the market has been flooded by traders from other pastoral areas of the country. The lack of it has posed serious setbacks to pastoralists' and livestock traders' capacity to compete competitively in Nairobi markets. Lack of access to livestock trading information is often overlooked in policy forums. Mobile phones are popular in northern Kenya for the following reasons:

- **Trading partnerships** – trading partnerships between livestock traders in northern Kenya were not common until recently. Livestock traders form trading



Cartoon: Alan Hesse

"HELLO NAIROBI? YES, THIS IS AHMED, LISTEN, I CAN'T TALK FOR LONG RIGHT NOW - TELL AMIN NOT TO BRING THE CASH! NO, NOT TO BRING IT - THERE ARE BANDITS...YES, BANDITS! TELL HIM TO MAKE THE DEAL WITH DAHABSHIL STORES, LIKE LAST TIME! ..."

partnerships to easily handle the hassles of trading. The formation of trading partnerships increases as risks associated with trading intensify. Second, trading is more complex now, for example, debt collection in Nairobi is almost a full time occupation, which necessitates the need for a trading partner. Mobile phones provide a crucial link between trading partners based in different markets. These partnerships entail relatively equitable

forms of collaboration: equal work sharing, equal profit sharing, and a division of labour based on specialisation and expertise. The common type of partnerships often involves two or more traders, though it is not uncommon for partnerships to involve more than two partners. Table 1 shows the residence patterns and roles of trading partners.

- **Cash transfers** – livestock marketing in northern Kenya involves a transfer of

**Table 1: Livestock trading partners, residence patterns, and roles**

Livestock traders	Residence	Roles
Partner 1	Moyale (northern Kenya)	Procure livestock, facilitate transportation, prepare documents
Partner 2	Nairobi	Sell livestock, collect debts, remit cash to Moyale, monitor Nairobi market and advise partner accordingly by mobile phone

comparatively large amount of money. Traders have progressively become targets of bandit attacks. To avoid the hassles of existing cash transfer systems and associated expensive fees and banditry on the highway, traders hand over their cash to a Moyale businessman/ woman who may be in Nairobi buying goods to transport back to Moyale. A quick phone call is made to Moyale on the border to confirm the transaction and the Moyale-based partner collects the cash from the wholesaler’s business at the border town. The system is not only safe, but also fast and free of charge. It is based on trust and personal relations reinforce the system. One trader says: “I use businessmen who have shops in Moyale to transfer my cash. No commissions are charged and both of us benefit from the arrangement. There are no contracts, no signatures, and we only use telephone to instruct our partners in Moyale.”

– Northern Kenya Livestock Trader

Mobile phones have become tools of immense importance in pastoral livestock trade facilitation and more importantly aid in gaining insights into market conditions, security, and accessibility of the roads, especially during the wet season. Livestock traders are now better informed of market conditions and policy issues than in the past. With increasing livestock trade between

Kenya’s northern borderlands and the capital, Nairobi, the innovative use and associated benefits of mobile phones will increase significantly.

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1. Peter D. Little is a professor of anthropology at Emory University in the US, whose work among Somali livestock traders on the Kenya/Somalia borderlands provides important insights on trader networks and cross-border trade dynamics.

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**i** Further reading:  
 Mahmoud, Hussein A., 2008. *Risky Trade, Resilient Traders: Trust and Livestock Marketing in Northern Kenya*. *Africa* 78(4): 561-581.  
 Little, Peter D. and Hussein A. Mahmoud, 2005. *Cross-border Cattle Trade along the Somalia/ Kenya and Ethiopian/Kenya Borderlands*. *PARIMA Research Brief* 05-03. *The Global Livestock CRSP*.  
 Little, Peter D., 2003. *Somalia: Economy without State*. Oxford: James Currey.



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# Offsetting the problem?

*In our last issue, we published two articles (see Haramata 53 pp 24-27, which offered different perspectives on a carbon offset programme in Uganda. Here is a reaction from the Forests and the European Union Resource Network (FERN).*

The contrasting perspectives expressed in the *Haramata 53*<sup>1</sup> articles on Uganda illustrate well why many such projects are controversial. The FACE Foundation's view that "local people's interests are competing with the wider concerns of water supply and biodiversity" is common among investors in tree planting and conservation offset projects. Rarely do they specify whose "wider concern" is paramount to local needs, but argue instead that the access needs of local communities should be restricted for the greater good of biodiversity conservation. In too many cases this approach means blaming local communities for forest loss when the reality is much more complex. Often it is local communities who have been guarding the forest against destruction. FACE states that its objective is to "restore the integrity of the degraded forest ecosystems and enhance biodiversity by planting indigenous tree species on a 2–3 km wide strip along the 200 km long boundary of the park." But when this results in employing armed guards to keep subsistence farmers with customary rights or even legal title to their lands from entering their crop gardens, it is clear that the project proponents have failed to understand or incorporate into their work the political context within which their project is placed.

The exchange between the authors of the articles raises another important question – that of responsibility when things go wrong. Sadly, the FACE Foundation's approach to the grave problems that have arisen for the local communities affected

by this offset project seems to be to blame others – The World Rainforest Movement and local NGOs for "false accusations and wrong information", the Ugandan authorities for the violence and evictions (see "The CO2 Alibi", a Dutch documentary by the Television company Zembla<sup>2</sup>). Where is the Foundation's responsibility? Is it enough for FACE and its clients to accept the functioning of Uganda's institutions at face value, or do they have the responsibility to look below the surface and ask why communities insist on rights to use the margins of what today is considered a national park? They must realise that the problems are real, as, after years of controversy, the Forest Stewardship Council has recently withdrawn its certificate from the Mount Elgon project.

More importantly perhaps is the question as to whether it is morally acceptable for any company in the global North to be paying to protect forests from subsistence farmers in order to allow the North to continue or even increase its pollution. Mount Elgon is just one example of the carbon imperialism that is popping up all over the world.

*FERN was created in 1995 to keep track of the EU's involvement in forests and to coordinate NGO activities at the European level. FERN focuses on the underlying causes that lead to forest loss. For information visit [www.fern.org](http://www.fern.org)*

1. Downloadable at [www.iied.org/pubs/display.php?o=125531IED](http://www.iied.org/pubs/display.php?o=125531IED)

2. Available with Portuguese or English subtitles from <http://zembla.vara.nl> or [Julie@fern.org](mailto:Julie@fern.org)

# Pastoralism and Livelihoods Task Force

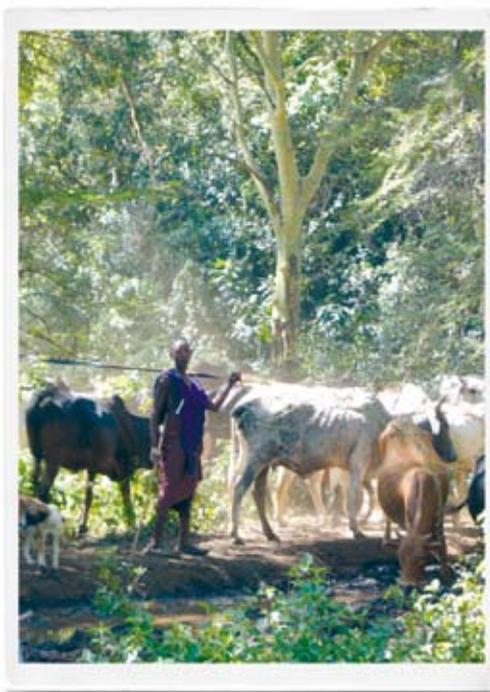
The Pastoralism and Livelihoods Task Force (PLTF) was re-launched last year from the previous Rangelands and Livelihoods Task Force. It is chaired by the Pastoralists Indigenous NGOs (PINGOs) Forum<sup>1</sup> and hosted by the Tanzania Natural Resource Forum (TNRF). Much of PLTF's focus is on pastoralism, reflecting its constituency.<sup>2</sup> Recent activities include:

- **Advocacy on the Wildlife Act 2008**

The PLTF continues its advocacy efforts around the Wildlife Bill. At the parliamentary session the PLTF made an analysis of the revised Bill, based on the recommendations by civil society. Although the revised Bill incorporated some of comments of the stakeholders as presented during the public hearings, PLTF partners have identified key issues still to be addressed.

- **The Pastoral Meat Value Chain Analysis**

The PLTF has assembled a research team for a value chain analysis of the pastoralist economy.<sup>3</sup> The results of the study will support future advocacy work to promote pastoralist livelihoods by documenting and evaluating the contribution of pastoralism to the national economy. The research responds to the current dilemma where many policymakers are not able to understand the



Howard Frederick

A herder and his cattle in a forest in Ngorongoro, Tanzania

value of pastoralism because they lack quality data on the pastoralist economy.

1. The PINGOs Forum is a membership organisation for pastoralists and hunter-gatherers established in 1994. For more information visit [www.pingosforum.net](http://www.pingosforum.net)
2. PLTF partners are: Afya Bora, ERETO Ngorongoro Pastoralist Project (ERETO NPP), FARM Africa, HakiKazi Catalyst, Indigenous Heartland Organisation (IHO), IIED, Kimmage DSC, Maasai Women Development Organisation (MWEDO), Ngorongoro Non Governmental Organisation Network (NGONET), Pastoralists' Alliance for Climate Change, Adaptation and Development (PACCAD), Pastoralists Indigenous Non Governmental Organisations Forum (PINGOs Forum), SNV, TANIPE (Tanzania Network for Indigenous People), Tanzania Pastoralist and Hunter-Gatherers Organisation (TAPHGO), Tanzania Natural Resource Forum (TNRF), Tanzania Veterinary Services (TVS), Ujamaa Community Resource Trust (U-CRT), VetAid Tanzania.
3. The research is funded by IIED's Drylands Programme in partnership with VET AID Tanzania and ERETO NPP.

**i** For more information visit: [www.tnrf.org/groups/pastoralism\\_livelihoods](http://www.tnrf.org/groups/pastoralism_livelihoods)  
For details on the status of the Wildlife Bill 2008, visit [www.tnrf.org/node/8917](http://www.tnrf.org/node/8917)

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# The Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards

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*Haramata* readers will recall that we mentioned the forthcoming publication of the Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS) (*Haramata* 52 REPORTS page 26). LEGS is a set of international guidelines and standards for the design, implementation and assessment of livestock interventions to assist people affected by humanitarian crises. It provides guidance on the identification of appropriate livestock responses, followed by detailed information on a number of interventions, namely: destocking, veterinary services, the provision of feed, the provision of water,

livestock shelter and settlement, and restocking. LEGS is a multi-agency initiative supported by a number of donors and based on consultation and contributions from a broad range of individuals and agencies from around the world.

LEGS is being published in March 2009, both as a hard copy and as a free download from the LEGS website. A series of post-publication activities are planned including training and awareness raising, and translation into other languages.



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**i** For further information visit the LEGS website: [www.livestock-emergency.net](http://www.livestock-emergency.net) or email the LEGS coordinator: [coordinator@livestock-emergency.net](mailto:coordinator@livestock-emergency.net)



David Abebe

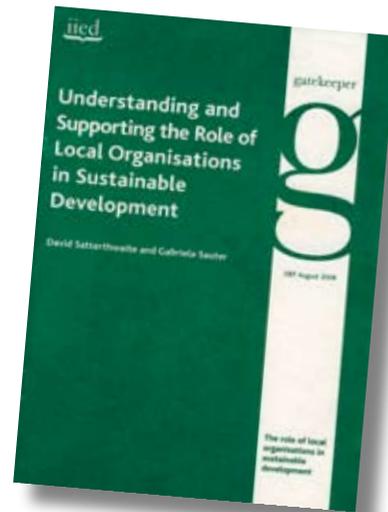
A simple cattle feeding site in southern Ethiopia during the drought in 2006 saved a core breeding herd and had dramatic benefit-cost impact

# The role of local organisations

## Gatekeeper 137: Understanding and supporting the role of local organisations in sustainable development

The Gatekeeper series, published by IIED, aims to highlight key topics in sustainable natural resource management. Each paper reviews a selected issue of contemporary importance and draws preliminary conclusions for development that are particularly relevant for policymakers, researchers and planners.

Gatekeeper 137, by David Satterthwaite and Gabriela Sauter, is one in a series of case studies and synthesis papers looking at the work of local organisations in development and environmental management. These publications were developed in collaboration with the local organisations they profile. They seek to encourage international funding agencies to rethink the means by which they can support, work with and learn from the local organisations that are such a critical part of pro-poor development.



The following case studies will be of particular interest to readers from Africa:

- Gatekeeper 137d. *The Organisation of Rural Associations for Progress, Zimbabwe: Self-reliance for Sustainability* by Dumisani Nyoni
- Gatekeeper 137e. *The Pastoral Women's Council: Empowerment for Tanzania's Maasai* by Maanda Ngoitiko

① Copies can be downloaded at:

[www.iied.org/pubs/search.php?s=SGK](http://www.iied.org/pubs/search.php?s=SGK)

To subscribe or contribute to the Gatekeeper series visit:

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# Understanding land and property rights in Africa

Access to land and property is vital to people's livelihoods in rural, peri-urban and urban areas in Africa. This book looks at the political, administrative and legal institutions which people turn to have their land claims recognised as rights.

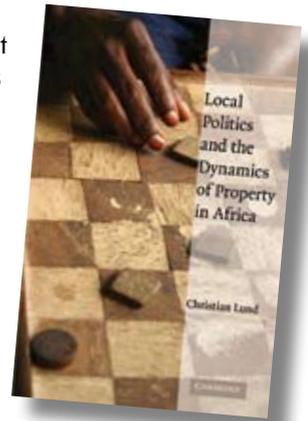
The book provides a detailed analysis of the debates and struggles over property in the Upper East Region of Ghana. In the context of legal and institutional pluralism and the rising competition over land, the constitutional reversal of land tenure that took place in 1979 opened a hornet's nest of potential conflict over land claims and over competing claims as to who had the authority to settle those conflicts. Thus, struggles over land fanned the flames of political conflict over customary authority, which has reemerged as a burning issue in contemporary politics.

Moreover, exclusivity of land rights is increasing at different levels. Whereas chiefs and earthpriests previously had somewhat overlapping authority over land, competing efforts are now being exerted by both parties to acquire more exclusive control, and they have organised themselves to obtain recognition from other institutions to this effect. For "ordinary" people, such organisation produces a paradox. The restoration of property held the promise of greater command over the benefits of land for the "original owners." In competition there is

no guarantee that land users' claims mean greater command. Their claims may be trumped by claims from customary authorities or from rival land users, leading to their exclusion. In consequence, land users tend either to gain more exclusive rights or to see their rights eroded in political processes.

The book studies what goes on in African politics at the local level when such conflicts occur. It explores how "local" issues do not confine themselves entirely within local arenas and demonstrates this through empirical analysis of the central concepts of property and law. Land, property, and power obviously cannot be reduced to being only local matters. Broad structural power dynamics are at play, and national and international economies and politics constrict peoples' opportunities and condition the working and significance of local institutions.

Nonetheless, a focus on local processes emphasises that, even in situations of historical and structural inequality, law and property are dynamic fields. Such processes are key to understanding property and authority in Africa.




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**i** *Christian Lund, Local Politics and the Dynamics of Property in Africa*  
 Cambridge/New York, Cambridge University Press, 2008. ISBN-13: 9780521886543  
 Order from: [www.cambridge.org/uk/catalogue/catalogue.asp?isbn=9780521886543](http://www.cambridge.org/uk/catalogue/catalogue.asp?isbn=9780521886543)  
 Available in paperback during 2009  
 For more information contact the author at [clund@ruc.dk](mailto:clund@ruc.dk) or [www.christian-lund.dk](http://www.christian-lund.dk)

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# The 3rd African Drought Adaptation Forum

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The Third African Drought Adaptation Forum (ADAF3) was held on 17th-19th September 2008 at the United Nations Conference Centre, Addis Ababa. It brought together some 80 policy makers, government officials, UN agencies, donors, practitioners from local and international NGOs and CBOs, the media and applied researchers from around Africa, and the Arab states to exchange practical

experiences, findings and ideas on how to adapt to the increasing threat of drought and climate change in the drylands of Africa.

This year's theme was "Drought risk management as applied climate change adaptation for Africa". Additional themes addressed disaster risk reduction, drought risk management tools, mainstreaming drought risk management and the role of peer learning in mainstreaming good practice.

The next event is anticipated to take place in southern Africa in August this year. Please contact [eric.patrick@undp.org](mailto:eric.patrick@undp.org) for more details.

*Proceedings and workshop presentations can be found at the Drylands Development Centre web page at [www.undp.org/drylands](http://www.undp.org/drylands). If you would like to receive the African Drought Risk & Development newsletter, please contact [ira.frydman@undp.org](mailto:ira.frydman@undp.org) and you will be put on the list serve.*

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## Haramata

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# The Haramata takeaway

*Take a look inside for some tasty morsels . . .*

\* First a round up of news from across the Drylands. Food security is high on the agenda of some climate change researchers as their work shows some alarming predictions for food security and agricultural production over the next 100 years.

Legislation and courts of law also feature as Ethiopia passes some controversial laws regarding the activities of charities and the ECOWAS court finds the Niger government responsible for failing to protect 24-year-old Hadijatou Mani from slavery. And did you know that baobab products may soon be appearing on the shelves in Europe? Will this usher in a new era of baobab farming and export across the Sahel?

\* An electronic debate on the potential role of fertilisers in improving agricultural production and mitigating the risks of food crisis provides some clear guidance for future programmes. Practitioners and decision makers must take into account, context, scale, farmers and external trends when designing programmes and policies to improve soil fertility.

\* A report on female genital mutilation demonstrates that cultural traditions have some serious consequences for the lives and health of young women. Are these human rights issues or should we respect tradition and culture? What are your views?

\* Our focus in this issue continues the theme of climate change and looks at land rights and biofuels with evidence from a case study from Mozambique, a discussion of pastoralists and biofuels and some strong views from colleagues in India. What are your thoughts on their potential?

\* A report from Dakar shows a continuous building boom – but what are the consequences of unregulated construction and urban growth?

\* Mobility among pastoralists is seen as a key factor in dealing with climate change as well as in enhancing production. And our report from northern Kenya looks at the use of mobile phones in livestock trading.

We need your feedback!

Send comments or ideas for articles to:  
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London WC1H 0DD, UK,  
or email us at: [drylands@iied.org](mailto:drylands@iied.org)