



Large-scale foreign land investments in Africa with particular attention to the case of Zambia

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Zusammenfassung:

This study analyses large-scale foreign land investments, the trends, the drivers, the actors and the extent. It focuses on Africa and on Zambia in particular. In addition, it aims to understand the role of smallholder farmers and of host governments in these investments. Further, it seeks to establish how large-scale foreign land investments can contribute to economic development in host countries. The study draws on a large body of literature as well as interviews and data provided by a number of organisations in Zambia. The research shows that in global terms Africa receives most interest, with investors mostly based in Europe and Asia. The single largest investing country is, however, South Africa. Aside from traditional agribusinesses, newly established biofuel companies, investors and governments have become involved in land deals. These actors are driven by high oil prices, biofuel policies, high food prices, the financial crisis and general climate change considerations. From Zambia's experience it is argued that if large-scale foreign land investment is to contribute to economic development and poverty reduction, smallholder farmers, who make up a large part of the rural poor, must be included in a fair way. Rather than using small-scale farmers for taking risks, such as exist with new crops and rain-fed crops, these farmers should be sufficiently supported and given a fair share for their produce. In addition, they should not be forced off their lands and be encouraged to keep part of their land for their own food production. Experiences to date however, show that investors are more interested in short term profit rather than the development of the local area. Many projects have been reported to have displaced the local population, have created only a limited number of jobs at low wages and in general have not generated considerable economic growth.

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