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Critical Agrarian Studies Colloquium No. 4

Global land grabbing:

towards broader and deeper theoretical and empirical perspectives

A day-long Colloquium
11 June 2012, 9:00 to 18:00 hrs

International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), www.iss.nl
Kortenaerkade 12, 2518AX The Hague, Netherlands
Venue: Attic

2012 will be a big year for the study of global land grabbing. After a few years dominated by important reports from NGOs and the media, as well as initial scoping studies from some academics, the first batch of academic studies that are empirically fresh and theoretically rigorous is finally coming out.

By June 2012, there will two journal special issues that will be available, namely, 'Green grabbing: a new appropriation of nature' (*Journal of Peasant Studies*), and 'The new enclosures: critical perspectives on corporate land deals' (*Journal of Peasant Studies*). Around middle of the year, the journal *Water Alternatives* will release its special issue on 'water grabbing', and *Feminist Economics* will come out with a special issue on 'gender implications of global land grabbing'. Later in the year, the journal *Globalizations* will release a special issue on 'land grabbing and global governance'. Another special issue focusing on 'the role of the State in land grabbing' is currently under review in *Development and Change*, and if accepted may come out by October 2012. *Geopolitics* is releasing a special issue on 'Geopolitics of Global Food Security' with significant content on land grabbing. Finally, the *Canadian Journal of Development Studies (CJDS)* is releasing a special issue on 'land grabbing in Latin America and the Caribbean' during the fourth quarter of 2012.

Altogether this first batch of academic studies – more or less 100 articles – will offer an important body of knowledge that can (re)shape our further understanding of contemporary global land grabbing and its implications for public action.

Meanwhile, during the first half of March 2012, the UN Committee for Food Security (CFS) completed the negotiation around the Voluntary Guidelines on land. It is an important process and civil society groups were deeply engaged. In April, the World

Bank is convening a major gathering in Washington DC of economists, government officials and other researchers around the issue of land governance and land investments and land grabbing. Finally, Rio+20 will be held in Brazil third week of June.

It is critical to dialogue with these important mainstream policy processes that are, in a variety of ways, addressing the issue of global land grabbing. Therefore, we will convene another *Critical Agrarian Studies Colloquium No. 4* around the theme of global land grabbing. We will hold this on **11 June, 9:00 to 18:00 hrs** at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) in The Hague. As in the past colloquia, it will be jointly organized by Initiatives in Critical Agrarian Studies (ICAS – www.iss.nl) of the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), Land Deal Politics Initiatives (LDPI, www.iss.nl), Transnational Institute (www.tni.org), and the Inter-Church Organization for Development Cooperation (ICCO, www.icco.nl). It will build on the very successful tradition of the Critical Agrarian Studies Colloquium Series, in which three colloquia were held in 2011. The CAS Colloquium has been a very productive, reenergizing space and process for academics, development policy professionals and activists, Europe-wide.

In addition, **several contributors** to the special issues will be available at the Colloquium and will provide a great opportunity for exchanges. There are also **important research initiatives** around land grabbing, e.g. those coordinated at: LANDac-IS academy/Utrecht University, University of Amsterdam, VU-Amsterdam, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, and so on. Key representatives and researchers involved in these initiatives will be in the Colloquium as well – all providing for excellent space for exchanges of information and networking.

We will be able to provide free lunch and snacks. **Please register in advance (or before 4 June 2012) through: iss.icas@gmail.com.** For further information, please contact Jun Borrás (borras@iss.nl).

Colloquium Programme

9:00 -- Part 1: Presentation-discussion of major studies
Brief opening remarks

Mohammed Salih, ISS Deputy Rector for Research
Marinus Werweij, Director General, Inter-Church Organization for Development Cooperation (ICCO)
Ian Scoones, Colloquium Co-Chair, Frames the colloquium

Susan George, Chair of the Board, Transnational Institute (TNI), Colloquium Co-Chair for the morning sessions 9:15-10:15 hrs.

9:15 – 9:45 hrs – ‘The new enclosures: critical perspectives on corporate land deals’, Ben White, ISS, and Ruth Hall, PLAAS, South Africa, co guest editors, *Journal of Peasant Studies* special issue

9:45 – 10:15 hrs – ‘Green grabbing: a new appropriation of nature’, Melissa Leach, IDS, Sussex and James Fairhead, U. of Sussex, co guest editors, *Journal of Peasant Studies* special issue

10:15 – 10:45 -- Water-grabbing, Lyla Mehta, IDS Sussex and Gert Jan Veldwisch, Wageningen, co guest editors, *Water Alternatives* special issue

10:45 – 11:15 – Plenary discussion

11:15 – 11:30 – Coffee/Tea break

Chair (sessions 11:00 to 13:00): Annelies Zoomers, Utrecht University

11:30 – 11:45 – Geopolitics of global food security and land grabbing, Philippe le Billon, University of British Columbia (UBC), Canada, co guest editor, *Geopolitics* special issue

11:45 – 12:15 – The role of the State in land grabbing, Wendy Wolford, Cornell University, co guest editor, *Development and Change* special issue, under review

12:15 – 12:45 – Global governance and land grabbing, Matias Margulis, University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC), Canada, and Nora McKeon, Terra Nouva, Rome, co guest editors, *Globalizations* special issue

12:45-13:15 – Plenary discussion

13:15 – 14:15 – Lunch break

14:15 onwards -- Part 2: Discussion and debate

Note: discussion and debate should address the key findings presented in the first part of the Colloquium seen from the panel member's own work on the issue, plus framed in the context of the recently concluded FAO Voluntary Guidelines process and the upcoming Rio+20 event/debates

Machteld Ooijens, ICCO Policy Department Head, Chair, 14:15-16:30

14:15 – 14:30 -- Brief announcements of major research initiatives on Land grabbing: LANDac, University of Amsterdam, VU-Amsterdam, PLAAS, plus

14:30 – 15:15 – Reactions and presentations by:

Sofia Monsalve, Foodfirst Information and Action Network (FIAN),
International Secretariat. Heidelberg, Germany
Duncan Pruet, Oxfam International
Sergio Sauer, Professor, University of Brasilia, and Special Rapporteur
for the Right to Food in Brazil
Gaynor Paradza, PLAAS, Cape Town, South Africa

15:15 – 15:30 – Reaction and presentation by Fred Pearce, journalist and author of a new book on global land grabbing: *The landgrabbers: the new fight over who owns the earth*, London: Eden Project Books, US: Beacon Press

15:30 – 16:15 -- Plenary discussion

16:15 – 16:30 – Coffee break

Ian Scoones, Colloquium Co-Chair, chair, sessions 16:30 to 18:00

16:30 – 17:20 – overall response/presentation by

Frits van der Wal, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development
Cooperation
Esteve Corbera, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain
Philip McMichael, Cornell University, USA

17:20 – 17:50 – Plenary discussion

17:50 – 18:00 – Concluding panel

Ian Scoones, Colloquium Co-Chair
Wendy Wolford, host, LDPI Cornell October 2012 conference on land
grabbing
Max Spoor, ISS, and host, Critical Agrarian Studies Colloquium

18:00 – 19:00 Drinks

NOTES ON THE SPEAKERS AND CHAIRS

Esteve Corbera is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Environmental Science and Technology (ICTA) and the Department of Economics and Economic History, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. His research focuses on the governance of land-use management and clean development across scales, including the analysis of large-scale agriculture for biofuels production and of climate-policy and biodiversity conservation related instruments, such as land-use offset projects and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD).

James Fairhead is Chair in Social Anthropology at the University of Sussex and also chairs the Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth. His ethnographic research in West and Central Africa on agro-ecological and environmental questions ranges from the study of local knowledge and practices to the study of science and policy. He has published widely, including the trilogy of books *Misreading the African Landscape* (CUP, 1996), *Reframing Deforestation* (Routledge, 1998) and *Science, Society and Power* (CUP, 2003).

Susan George (Doctorate in Political Studies, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, University of Paris, 1978), Chair of the Board of the Transnational Institute (TNI). Her earlier work was on the politics of food and hunger. In 1976 her first book was published: *How the Other Half Dies: The Real Reasons for World Hunger*. From 1999 to 2006 she was vice-president of ATTAC France (Association for Taxation of [financial] Transactions to Aid Citizens) and remains a member of its scientific council; she was awarded the title of honorary president in 2008

Ruth Hall is Associate Professor at the Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) at the University of the Western Cape in South Africa. Her research interests include land and agrarian reforms, rural labour markets and farm worker rights, agricultural commodity chains, and the politics of rural development. Publications include an edited volume entitled *Another Countryside? Policy Options for Land and Agrarian Reform in South Africa* with Lungisile Ntsebeza, and *The Land Question in South Africa: The Challenge of Transformation and Redistribution*. She is a co-coordinator of the Land Deal Politics Initiatives (LDPI), and is Book Reviews Section Co-Editor of the *Journal of Peasant Studies*. Email: rhall@uwc.ac.za

Philippe Le Billon is Associate Professor at the University of British Columbia with the Department of Geography and the Liu Institute for Global Issues. Working on linkages between environment, development and security, he has published widely on natural resources and armed conflicts. His two latest books are *Wars of Plunder: Conflicts, Profits and the Politics of Resources* (Columbia UP, 2012) and *Oil* (Polity Press, 2012 with Gavin Bridge). He is co-editing with Melanie Sommerville and Jamey Essex 'The 'Global Food Crisis' and the Geopolitics of Food Security', *Geopolitics*.

Melissa Leach is a Professorial Fellow at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) Sussex, and Director of the ESRC STEPS (Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability) Centre. Her interdisciplinary and ethnographic research engages anthropology with historical and natural science approaches, exploring the politics of local knowledge and practices and science-policy processes in West Africa and beyond. Extensive publications include the recent books *Dynamic Sustainabilities and Epidemics* (Earthscan, 2010). Corresponding author email: m.leach@ids.ac.uk.

Matias Margulis is Assistant Professor of International Studies at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC), Canada. His research focuses on global governance, agriculture and food, and human rights. His current book project, *Hunger in a Globalizing World*, explores the global regulation of agricultural trade and food security with a particular focus on the interactions between the World Trade Organization and the United Nations system. He is a former Canadian trade policy advisor and worked on food security at several international institutions.

Nora McKeon, after many years at FAO, now divides her time between writing, teaching and activism on food systems, global governance and peasant movements. Recent publications include *Peasant Organizations in Theory and Practice* (with Michael Watts and Wendy Wolford, UNRISD 2004), *The United Nations and Civil Society: Legitimizing Global Governance-Whose Voice?* (Zed 2009), *Global Governance for World Food Security: A Scorecard Four Years After the Eruption of the "Food Crisis"* (Heinrich-Böll Foundation, 2011).

Philip McMichael, Professor of Development Sociology, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, USA. Trained as a historical sociologist, his research examines capitalist modernity through the lens of agrarian questions, food regimes, agrarian/food sovereignty movements, and most recently the implications for food systems of agrofuels and land grabbing. This work centers the role of agri-food systems in the making of the modern world, including an examination of the politics of globalization via the structuring of agri-food relations. He is author/editor of numerous books (including *Biofuels, Land and Agrarian Change*, Routledge 2011, co-edited with Jun Borras and Ian Scoones), and articles (including 'The land grab and corporate food regime restructuring', *Journal of Peasant Studies* 2012).

Lyla Mehta is a Research Fellow at IDS in the KNOTS team and an Adjunct Professor at Noragric, Norwegian University of Life Sciences. She trained as a sociologist (University of Vienna) and has a Ph.d. in Development Studies (University of Sussex). Her work focuses on water and sanitation, forced migration and resistance, scarcity, rights and access and the politics of environment/ development and sustainability. She has extensive field research in rural India studying the politics of water scarcity and the linkages between gender, displacement and resistance. Additionally, she has worked on the right to water in South Africa and studied the cultural and institutional aspects of sanitation in Ethiopia, Bangladesh, India and Indonesia. Her work uses the case of water to explore conceptual and empirical questions concerning scarcity, power, politics, rights and access to resources, the contested nature of the 'public' and 'private' and the cultural politics of development. She is currently the water and sanitation domain convenor of the STEPS centre.

Sofia Monsalve, coordinator of the Global Land Programme of Foodfirst Information and Action Network (FIAN) – International Secretariat based in Heidelberg, Germany. <http://www.fian.org>; co-coordinator of the Land Research and Action Network (LRAN) and the 'right to land' work area

of the IPC for Food Sovereignty. She is a co-convenor of the Global Campaign for Agrarian Reform (GCAR) of La Via Campesina, LRAIN and FIAN. Her latest publication is: 'Grassroots Voices: The Human Rights Framework in Contemporary Agrarian Struggles', *Journal of Peasant Studies* (2012): <http://www.tandfonline.com/action/showAxaArticles?journalCode=fjps20>

Gaynor Paradza, PLAAS, University of the Western Cape, South Africa, holds a Doctoral degree in Law and Governance from Wageningen University in the Netherlands. Her PhD thesis focused on single women, land and livelihood vulnerability in the communal areas of Zimbabwe. Before joining PLAAS in September 2010, she was Senior Researcher at the Centre for Policy Studies in Johannesburg where she led research on the role of councilors in South African local government. Prior to that Gaynor worked as a Town Planner for the Zimbabwe Government's Ministry of Local Government. Gaynor also worked as a Lecturer in the University of Zimbabwe's Department of Rural and Urban Planning where. She currently works on land grabbing in Africa.

Fred Pearce is a freelance author and journalist based in London. He has been environment consultant of New Scientist magazine since 1992, reporting from 67 countries. He also writes regularly for the Yale e360 web site in the US, and the *Guardian* and *Mail on Sunday* newspapers in the UK. His previous books include *Peoplequake* (published in the US as *The Coming Population Crash*), *The Climate Files*, *When the Rivers Run Dry* and *Confessions of an Eco Sinner*.

Duncan Pruett is Oxfam International's principal policy advisor on land, and responsible for advocacy on land grabbing within Oxfam's Grow campaign. From 2005-2010, he held a number of roles inside Oxfam Novib, including Livelihoods Programme Manager, and Make Trade Fair campaign manager. From 1997 till 2004, Duncan worked at the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), and as ITUC's campaigns coordinator from 2002-2004.

Sérgio Sauer is professor at the University of Brasilia (Faculty of Planaltina – UnB), researcher in the Center for Agrarian Studies (NEAGRI/UnB) and in the Postgraduate Program in Agribusiness (Propaga/UnB), national rapporteur for Human Rights in Land, Territory and Food (Platform DhESCA Brazil), and Fellow of the Terra de Direitos. His research works are grounded on political sociology, and include themes on struggle for land and territories, social agrarian movements and rural communities' struggles, governmental land policies and land deals, rural development and expansion of agrofuels, rights to food and food sovereignty in Brazil. Sauer has been involved with Brazilian agrarian movements since late 1980s and worked as a political adviser at the Senate for 10 years. He was a member of the 5-person team that wrote the land grabbing report for the UN CFS High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) in July 2011. His latest publication is on land grabbing in Brazil (co-authored with Sergio Leite, *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 2012).

Ian Scoones is a Professorial Fellow at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK. He has a background in agricultural ecology and his interdisciplinary research links the natural and social sciences and focuses on the relationships between science and technology, local knowledge and livelihoods and the politics of policy processes. He has worked on issues such as pastoralism and rangeland management, soil and water conservation, biodiversity and environmental change, land and agrarian reform, dryland agricultural systems, crop biotechnology and animal health science policy, mostly in Africa. He is a co-coordinator of the Land Deal Politics Initiatives (LDPI). He is an Associate Editor (member of the Editorial Collective) of the *Journal of Peasant Studies*.

Max Spoor is Professor of Development Studies (in particular regarding economies in transition) at the International Institute of Social Studies, The Hague/Erasmus University (EUR, and Visiting Professor at the Barcelona Institute of International Studies (E-mail: spoor@iss.nl). His research interests are mainly focused on Eurasian transition countries, with special attention to rural and environmental issues, poverty reduction and inequality. His most recent book is: *The Political Economy of Rural Livelihoods in Transition Economies*, Routledge (2009). He is a member of the

International Editorial Committee of the ICAS 'Agrarian Change and Peasant Studies' Book Series, and a Series Co-Editor of the Routledge-ISS Book Series in Rural Livelihoods.

Gert Jan Veldwisch is based at the Irrigation and Water Engineering Group of Wageningen University, contributing to the development of a research and capacity-building programme on Irrigation and Rural Development in Southern Africa. Besides research on market mechanisms and irrigation development Gert Jan is interested in research on participatory irrigation design processes and action-research around cases of inequitable access to water.

Frits van der Wal has worked as Deputy Head and Senior Policy Advisor in the Sustainable Economic Development Department in the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation in The Hague since February 2001. Before joining the ministry, Frits worked and lived for nearly 20 years in Kenya, Mozambique and Tanzania where he worked as advisor and program manager in various agricultural, rural development and governance programs. He has studied tropical soil science and development economics at Wageningen University between 1976 and 1983. In his present position, Frits has been instrumental in getting more attention to issues like nutrition, land governance, social dialogue and technical and vocational education and training. All aspects that are crucial in fostering private sector development and food security in developing countries.

Ben White is Professor of Rural Sociology at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) and Professor of Social Sciences at the University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands. He is part of the Resources, Environment and Livelihoods (RELIVE) research cluster at ISS. He has carried out research on the themes of agrarian change, social differentiation of the peasantry, contract farming, rural labour, land policies, among others, mainly in Indonesia. He has published extensively on these themes. For 17 years, he was Co-Editor of *Development and Change*, until mid-2009. He is a co-coordinator of the Land Deal Politics Initiatives (LDPI). Email: white@iss.nl.

Wendy Wolford is the Polson Professor of Development Sociology at Cornell University. Her research interests include the political economy of development, social movements, land distribution and agrarian societies. Key publications include *To Inherit the Earth: the Landless Movement and the Struggle for a New Brazil* (co-authored with Angus Wright, Food First Books, 2003) and *This Land is Ours Now: Social Mobilization and the Meaning(s) of Land in Brazil* (2010, Duke University Press). She is a co-coordinator of the Land Deal Politics Initiatives (LDPI). She is an Associate Editor (member of the Editorial Collective) of the *Journal of Peasant Studies*. Email: www43@cornell.edu.

Annelies Zoomers is Annelies Zoomers is Professor of International Development Studies (IDS) at Utrecht University. She has published extensively about various development themes, focusing on rural development and changing land policies, sustainable livelihood, tourism and international migration. IDS is currently involved in various research projects related to oil palm expansion in Indonesia, residential tourism in Latin America, and projects related to land grabbing in Asia and Africa. Email: a.zoomers@geo.uu.nl.

The Critical Agrarian Studies Colloquium is in collaboration with the *Journal of Peasant Studies* www.informaworld.com/jps