

FOOD POLICY UPDATE

FROM ROME

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Food Policy Updates from Rome aims to provide an up-to-date information on the global food governance system and strategic activities of ActionAid.

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The Committee on World Food Security (CFS)

1. Provisional Agenda for the CFS Plenary, 17-22 Oct 2011

The [agenda](#) (52.4 KB, PDF) for the upcoming CFS Plenary Session was discussed for the second time at the CFS Joint Bureau/Advisory Meeting on 25 May. Three round tables have been confirmed in the agenda: a) food price volatility; b) investments in agriculture including new sources of funding; and c) [gender, food security and nutrition](#) (concept note, 90.3 KB, PDF). A Task Team, composed of the CFS Secretariat and interested civil society members, will propose panelists including chairpersons, and prepare background documents that will be the basis for the round table discussions.

2. First Meeting of the Coordination Committee (CC) of the Civil Society Mechanism (CSM)

As the governing body of the CSM, the CC is responsible for ensuring that the functions of the CSM are carried out as effectively as possible. The 40 member CC represents civil society focal points in each constituency and sub-region of the CSM. An initial face-to-face meeting of the CC took place in Córdoba, Spain from 30 May to 1 June. Aquiles Dávalos, Executive Director of AIPE (La Asociación de Instituciones de Promoción y Educación) and member of the Steering Committee of IFSN, attended the meeting.

- Annotated agenda: <http://bit.ly/k6SbN9> (572 KB, PDF)
- Timetable of the meeting: <http://bit.ly/kYTzVY> (237 KB, PDF)

3. Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of tenure of Land and Natural Resources (VGs)

The Zero Draft of the VGs was released and submitted for an electronic consultation on 14 April. ActionAid and IFSN submitted separate comments, outlining land grabbing as one of the key driving forces behind the growing conflicts over land and natural resources and related human rights violations.

ActionAid and IFSN raised concerns over the weak provisions regarding private investments, and demanded clear procedures and legal framework to regulate land transactions by the state. ActionAid and IFSN underscored the importance of transparency and accountability of public institutions in ensuring that all land transactions protect the rights of local communities and that they follow due procedures. In addition to separate comments submitted, ActionAid and IFSN contributed to and endorsed the CSO joint position, which was prepared by FIAN and now available in English French and Spanish.

- ActionAid comments: <http://bit.ly/IWiTUs> (155 KB, PDF)
- IFSN comments: <http://bit.ly/m5UOAH> (261 KB, PDF)
- CSO consolidated comments: <http://bit.ly/ixEwIk> (ENG, 180 KB, PDF)

Based on the comments received, the First Draft of the VGs has been produced in all FAO languages, and it has been submitted to the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group (OEWG). The OEWG, which is responsible for the negotiation of the text, will meet on 14, 16 and 17 June to help governments highlight specific issues and to present points of agreement/disagreement in order to narrow the scope of decisions. Five participant slots will be reserved for civil society at this meeting, while there will be unlimited seats for observers; civil society representatives will be selected through the CSM. The review for the First Draft will peak in the CFS-led plenary negotiations on 12-15 July. The final text of the VGs will be submitted in August for consideration of the 37th Session of the CFS in October.

- First Draft of the VGs in [English](#) (156 KB, PDF), [French](#) (189 KB, PDF) and [Spanish](#) (206 KB, PDF)

Visit <http://www.fao.org/nr/tenure/infores/voluntary-guidelines/en/> to download a series of working papers produced by the FAO on several aspects on land.

The latest one is [Land Tenure Working Paper 19: Governing Land for Women and Men: Gender and Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Tenure of Land and other Natural Resources](#).

4. Discussion on the Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment that Respects Rights, Livelihoods and Resources (RAI)

The CFS Bureau, the executive arm of the CFS made up of 12 countries representing all regions, has approved the [latest proposal](#) (181KB, PDF) on RAI consultations on 26 May. A broad consultation process will be set up in November 2011 for the development of the RAI to be adopted in October 2012. The process will comprise of two steps: 1) mapping the existing developments, processes and initiatives related to responsible agricultural investments from June to October 2011; and 2) e-consultation and tentative consultations in Rome and in other regions. The review and finalisation of the discussions will be completed by end of July 2012.

5. The High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) Study on Food Price Volatility and on Land Tenure and International Investments in Agriculture

The HLPE has released the Zero Draft of both studies on [food price volatility](#) (1.14 MB, PDF) and on [land tenure and international investments in agriculture](#) (344 KB, PDF). The two studies will be finalised at the end of July and will be the basis for background notes on food price volatility and investments on land that the CFS will prepare for the policy discussion at the October Plenary round tables.

The study on food price volatility provides an analysis of the root causes of volatility in agriculture and advances some policy recommendations to mitigate its negative impacts. The use of buffer stocks to regulate price movements at the national level, which ActionAid is advocating for, has been incorporated into the draft.

- Comments on the study on food price volatility, prepared by Aftab Alam Khan, ActionAid's Asia Right to Food Coordinator: <http://bit.ly/iN4U1x> (77KB, DOC)

The study on land tenure seems to be a very detailed outline rather than a draft. However, if expectations are met, the study will provide a comprehensive analysis of the causes and consequences of large scale land acquisitions, accompanied by a comparative analysis of large scale and small scale models of productions in terms of their productivity and their social and human rights impacts.

In a [joint comment on the study on land tenure](#) (127 KB, PDF), ActionAid and IFSN maintained that the final goal of the study (i.e. "food security and sustainable intensification") is too narrow, as producing more food does not always go hand in hand with the progressive realisation of the right to food.

The right to food depends on having enough income to purchase food, and it also hinges upon a sustainable food system that satisfies current needs without compromising the ability to meet future needs. Likewise, ActionAid and IFSN demanded that the study adopt a long term goal of “guaranteeing the right to food of the current population while promoting a sustainable food system that protects the ability of future generations to sustain their lives on this planet”.

6. Global Strategic Framework for Policy Coherence (GSF)

The Task Team of the GSF, composed of the CFS Secretariat and members of the Advisory Group, developed the first draft of the annotated GSF. Due to the tight timeframe for consultation, CSOs were not able to submit one consolidated comment. Nonetheless, all comments received will be taken into account when preparing the final version of the annotated outline. This is then to be translated and further developed during an inclusive e-consultation process facilitated by the Food Security and Nutrition Forum (FSN) from mid July to early October 2011.

7. Mapping Food Security Actions at Country Level

The CFS Secretariat organised a Technical Consultative Workshop on Mapping Food Security Actions at Country Level with concerned stakeholders in order to share experiences and views on existing systems, tools and practices. During the workshop, many governments presented their national-level experiences and other non-state organisations shared their initiatives—such as the [International Aid Transparency Initiative \(IATI\)](#), the [REACH approach](#), [WHO Landscape Analysis](#) and [Food Security Aid Map](#).

At the workshop, ActionAid presented the [Public Finance for Agriculture \(PFA\) project](#) (164 KB, PPT) and the [toolkit](#) (430 KB, DOCX) produced to assist with agricultural budget and policy analysis. The discussion around PFA revealed that governments face various constraints when mapping food security actions, and this has reconfirmed the need for better quality information in designing food security programmes and interventions.

- Final draft of the workshop report: <http://bit.ly/kS05yV> (317 KB, DOC)
- List of participants: <http://bit.ly/l4YPCA> (21.7 KB, PDF)

UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)

FAO Regional Policy Seminars to Address High Food Prices

ActionAid is attending two seminars in June in El Salvador and in Haiti for the Latin America region, and negotiating its presence at the seminar scheduled on 20-21 June in Nigeria for the Africa region.

- Report from the first seminar held in Bangkok for the Asia region: <http://bit.ly/iRjkFl> (25.6 KB, PDF)
- For updates on seminar schedules: <http://bit.ly/jkDjSw>

CONCORD European Food Security Group (EFSG), Brussels

I. EFSG Meeting in Brussels

The meeting of the EFSG was held on 16 May in Brussels. Each agenda item was introduced by a background note to update on achievements and to propose new activities.

Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Reform

The European Commission (EC) is preparing an Impact Assessment Report, which will provide an analysis of potential impacts of the [CAP Reform](#) (EFSG background notes, 566 KB, DOC), on a number of selected countries—Bolivia, Kenya, Ghana and Nepal. The report is due in October.

The EFSG discussed the possibility of producing a report in reaction to the EC study by collecting evidence from the countries identified above and showing how European politics is negatively affecting their development. The [Terms of Reference](#) (59.5KB, DOC) for the report is now available and its progress will be subject to the availability of volunteers and capacities within the group.

CONCORD Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) Report

CONORD is preparing its second report on PCD, following the 2009 report entitled '[Spotlight on Policy Coherence](#)' (1.04 MB, PDF). The [2011 Spotlight report](#) (background notes, 559 KB, DOC) aims to inform and influence the European Union (EU), including Member States' governments and their national parliaments, with evidence-based analysis on the impact(s) European policies (e.g. agriculture, trade, biodiversity, land and fisheries) may have on development outside Europe.

The report will address four thematic areas: 1) Security and development, 2) Migration and development, 3) Natural resources management and wealth distribution, and 4) Food security. On the food chapter, the EFSG is mandated to lead the work along three main items: a) models and multifunctionality of agriculture, b) access to land including biofuels, and c) EU Agricultural Policy including EU trade relations with developing countries.

This report is to improve the institutional system of PCD both at the EU and national level, and to advocate for policy change with a view to refining incoherent policies. It is primarily targeted towards decision makers who have the political leverage to influence the PCD agenda. The final report is scheduled to be released in October.

EU and the Preparation for the 37th Session of the CFS

In order to lobby EU positions on land and food price volatility at the CFS Plenary Session in October, the EFSG discussed the possibility of organising a meeting with the EC before July, when official review and finalisation of the VGs are due to take place. A second meeting with the EC is tentatively scheduled for September to discuss the EU's position on the broader CFS agenda items.

Upcoming Events

JUNE

- **Association of Southeast Asian Nations—Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (ASEAN—SEAFDEC) Conference: “Fish for the People 2020: Adaptation to a Changing Environment”**
13-17 June, Sofitel Centara Grand Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand
- **Open-ended Working Group Meeting for the VGs**
14,16,17 June, FAO, Rome, Italy
- **European Seminar: Agricultural Market Volatility—Consequences and Political Actions**
21 June, 10am-1pm, European Parliament (Room PHS 7C50)
For more information: <http://bit.ly/IUVEV6>

- **G20 Agricultural Ministers Meeting**
22-23 June, Paris, France
- **37th Session of the FAO Conference**
25 June–2 July, FAO, Rome, Italy

OCTOBER

- **Family Farming International Congress: Feeding the World, Caring for the Earth**
- Organised by World Rural Forum
5-7 October, Bilbao, Basque Country, Spain
For more information: <http://www.ruralforum.net>
- **CFS 37th Plenary Session**
17-22 October, FAO, Rome, Italy



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