

# 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 Session, Oct 2011

The CFS is currently discussing the [provisional agenda](#) for the next Plenary Session to be held from 17-22 October. During the first day, a session will be devoted to the final adoption of the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land and Natural Resources (VGs). On the second day, there will be two policy roundtables on food price volatility and investment in agriculture, while parallel discussions will be decided among the different topics proposed.

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

The 11 constituencies and the sub-regions of the CSM made good progress in selecting the members of the CC. More information on each of the endorsed CC members can be found on the [CSO4CFS website](#). The CSM is trying to organize an initial meeting of the CC towards the end of May. This meeting would be accompanied by two days of thematic discussion/sensitization on the two major themes on the CFS agenda: 1) price volatility and 2) land tenure and investment. On the third day, there will be a discussion/clarification on the role and responsibilities of the CC and the election of the four civil society members of the CFS Advisory Group who will take the place of those have served on an ad interim basis thus far: Beatriz Gasco Verdier (IPC, International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty), Chris Leather (Oxfam), George Fernandez (MIJARC, the International Movement for Catholic Agricultural and Rural Youth) and Mamadou Cissokho (ROPPA, Réseau des Organisations Paysannes & de Producteurs de l'Afrique de l'Ouest). The Spanish Government will provide financial support for the meeting in response to the [funding proposal](#) prepared by the CSM.

### 3. Funding the CSM

The FAO has opened up a multi-donor trust fund for the CSM so that funds can be granted either directly to the CSM (the option preferred by CSOs) or through the FAO if a given government prefers this option. Unfortunately, no government has contributed to this fund thus far, and this is affecting the work of the civil society representatives that continue to assure the functionality of the CSO component of the CFS on their own capacity.

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

The [Zero Draft of the VGs](#) has been officially launched in a public hearing at the FAO headquarters in Rome on 15 April.

From 18 April to 16 May, civil society is invited to submit comments via the Electronic Consultation on the Zero Draft. The FAO Secretariat will take the comments received into account while preparing Draft One, which will be communicated on 1 June to the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group (OEWG). The next meeting of the working group is scheduled for 25 July, and the negotiation of the first draft is expected to be completed by the end of the same week. The final draft will be presented to CFS for consideration on 12 August and will be adopted during the 37th Plenary Session in October.

The CSOs that have been involved in the two-year process of the preparation of the VGs, led by FoodFirst Information and Action Network (FIAN), are now preparing a joint CSO position on the Zero Draft to be finalised by 16 May. ActionAid and IFSN provided input to this joint position, but will also submit separate comments. Buba Khan, Africa Right to Food Coordinator, will consolidate comments from ActionAid colleagues while Alberta Guerra, Food and IFSN Policy Officer, will consolidate comments from IFSN members.

<b>18 April – 16 May</b>	E-Consultation on the Zero Draft
<b>10 May</b>	Final CSO consolidated comments due
<b>17 – 30 May</b>	Finalisation of Draft One
<b>1 June</b>	Submission of Draft One to the OEWG
<b>2 June – 23 July</b>	Regional and stakeholder reviews of Draft One
<b>25-28 July</b>	Finalisation of the VGs in an OEWG CFS Plenary Session
<b>12 August</b>	Submission of the final draft
<b>18-22 October</b>	Consideration of the VGs by the CFS

## 5. Meeting with Greg Myers, Chair of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group (OEWG)

Greg Myers, Chair of the OEWG, met with civil society delegations on 14 April prior to the public reading of the Zero Draft of the VGs. The delegations included FIAN, MIJARC, ActionAid and the CSM Secretariat. He sought their support for the changes he had in mind to make the consultation more inclusive and particularly, particularly through an additional meeting of the OEWG in June to highlight issues and receive major clarifications from the FAO Secretariat. He also proposed to set up and coordinate a Friends of the Chair Group to help with the meeting scheduled for 25-28 July.

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

The issue of the RAI principles was strongly debated at the last Joint Bureau/Advisory Group Meeting on 16-17 March. Civil society representatives argued in favour of a new set of principles regarding agricultural investment to promote food security and to support smallholder food production and livelihoods. As a result of civil society comments, a [revised proposal](#) for a consultation process was released with the following timeline:

<b>May 2011</b>	Establishment of an open-ended working group
<b>September 2011</b>	Informal seminar to all Permanent Representatives and other stakeholders on state of play as far as the principles are concerned
<b>October 2011</b>	CFS Plenary Session: general progress report of the CFS working group and approval of the foreseen consultation process up to October 2012
<b>November 2011</b>	Start up of broad consultation process in Rome. Details still to be determined but will most likely include electronic consultations, regional consultations, and 5-10 full-days of working group meetings.
<b>October 2012</b>	Endorsement/Adoption/Agreement at the CFS plenary session

## 7. The High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) Study on Land Tenure and International Investments in Agriculture

The Steering Committee of the HLPE announced that the following experts have been appointed as part of the Project Team on Land Tenure and International Investments in Agriculture: **Camilla Toulmin** (Team Leader, UK), **Prem Bindraban** (Netherlands), **Jun Saturnino Borrás** (Philippines) and **Esther Mwangi** (Kenya). The Project Team will elaborate the first version (V0) of the study on the base of [TORs](#), which then will be submitted for further expert input via electronic consultations. The Project Team will finalize a draft report (V1) in early June 2011. The final report will be approved by the HLPE Steering Committee in July 2011 prior to the publication.

## 8. Global Strategic Framework for Policy Coherence (GSF)

After having agreed on the purpose, principles, structure and process of the GSF, the CFS Secretariat has prepared and discussed the [annotated GSF outline](#) in a meeting on 27 April. At the meeting, a revised timeline for the elaboration of the GSF was approved. Next year's FAO Regional Conferences will be key moments for the consultation of the first draft.

The annotated GSF outline will be further revised and elaborated to be finalised within May, and it will be open to electronic consultation until November 2011. The revision of the outline will be largely participatory; CSOs have an excellent opportunity to contribute to the structure and the content of the outline and are invited to play an active role in facilitating the electronic consultation process. Please email any comments on the outline to [Alberta Guerra](#) by 20 May.

## 9. Mapping Food Security Actions at Country Level

The CFS is aiming to support national governments and other stakeholders in order to map food security policies, programmes, projects and resource flows at country level in order to improve national plans and investment coordination. The consultant hired by the CFS Secretariat to make the review of the already-existing tools and applications, taken both from country experiences and academic research, produced a [first draft report](#) which shows how countries have very little experience with mapping.

The report will serve as a background document for the CFS [Technical Consultative Workshop](#) on 23-25 May where the main constraints will be discussed. It is hoped that several countries will be chosen at the workshop to present their experiences and challenges at the 37th Session of the CFS.

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## UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)

### 1. FAO Regional Policy Seminars to Address High Food Prices

In March, the FAO launched a series of seminars designed to bring together interested development partners and to help governments make informed policy decisions to respond to the current rise in food prices. The two-day seminars are being organized at the regional and sub-regional level, starting in Asia and Africa. These seminars provide policy decision-makers from relevant government ministries (agriculture, trade and finance) with the opportunity to exchange experiences from the 2008 food price crisis and to become better acquainted with the pros and cons of the various policy measures mapped out in the FAO's newly updated [Guide for Policy and Programmatic Actions at Country Level to Address High Food Prices](#).

For updates on seminar schedules: <http://bit.ly/jkDjSw>

**Upcoming seminars:**

Region	Sub-region	Date	Venue
Africa	Southern Africa	6-8 June	Lilongwe, Malawi
Europe and Central Asia	Central Asia	8-10 June	Istanbul, Turkey
	Central and Eastern Europe	8-10 June	Istanbul, Turkey
Latin America and the Caribbean	Central America	15-16 June	San Salvador, El Salvador
	South America	7-8 June	Santiago, Chile
North Africa and the Middle East	North Africa	2-4 May	Tunis, Tunisia
	Oriental Near East and Gulf Countries	9-10 May	Amman, Jordan

**2. FAO Council: Profiles of Six Candidates for the FAO Director General**

During the 141<sup>th</sup> session of the FAO Council held in Rome on 11-15 April, the six candidates for the post of Director General had the chance to present themselves and their programmes.

**Abdul Latif Rashid** has been serving as Minister for Water Resources in Iraq since 2003. He has experience in the private sector, UN organizations and government institutions. He outlined how the CFS can carry out its mandate to become a forum for global policy coordination, but stressed that it should not impose its policies on countries. He considers the CFS a space for debate, coordination and advice. He stressed the need to complete the FAO reform and to improve Member States' engagement and decentralization. He announced that, if elected, he would cut his salary by 10 percent and put it back into the FAO's budget for the Technical Cooperation Programme.

**Miguel Ángel Moratinos Cuyaubé** served as Minister of Foreign Affairs Cooperation in Spain from 2004 to 2010. Previously, he has held different positions of responsibility in the Spanish Foreign Service, and was the European Union Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process. He discussed the credibility of the renewed FAO and his intention to work on public-private partnerships and to innovative mechanisms to attract new funds.

**José Graziano da Silva**, agronomist by profession, has worked as Brazil's Extraordinary Minister of Food Security and Fight Against Hunger, in charge of the implementation of the "Zero Hunger" Programme ("Fome Zero"). Since 2006, he has served as FAO Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean and Assistant Director-General. He developed his programme around five pillars, among which are the successful conclusion of the FAO reform, the promotion of South/South cooperation and the role of the FAO in addressing global challenges in an integrated, coherent and fair manner. He mentioned the reform of the CFS as a response to the need for an effective global food and nutrition security governance system. In his programme, he mentioned as priority the support to family farming, gender policy and local integrated development, which has already been implemented in Latin America.

**Franz Fischler**, after having served as Federal Minister of Agriculture and Forestry in Austria from 1995 to 1999, served as European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development leading the reform of the European agricultural sector in 2003. He said he would use his experience and long-standing networks to strengthen the organisation's relationships with the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank.

**Indroyono Soesilo** is the incumbent Secretary/Deputy Senior Minister of the Coordinating Ministry for People's Welfare in the Republic of Indonesia. He stressed that the Director General has an executive role in building the knowledge capacity of the FAO and bringing it to programmes and countries that need it the most.

**Mohammad Saeid Noori Naeini**, from Iran, served as Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council from 2005 to 2009. He also led the Committee entrusted with the FAO reform, and most importantly, he was the Chair of the Intergovernmental Working Group which prepared the “Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Adequate Food”. He stressed that after the reform of the FAO and the CFS, it is now necessary to put an end to reforms and to move ahead with their implementation, starting with the Immediate Plan of Action. If elected, he promised to serve for one term only.

For candidate’s detailed bios and official speeches: <http://bit.ly/iLzlfI>

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## Land Portal

The Land Portal has been launched at the FAO headquarters in Rome on 14 April, and it is now up and running: <http://landportal.info/>. As introduced in previous issues, the Land Portal is an online platform to share land related information, to monitor trends and to identify information gaps to promote effective and sustainable land governance. It was created by the International Land Coalition (ILC) and Landtenure.info (promoted by ActionAid), and is the result of a broad partnership between more than 40 land-concerned organisations. The site is designed to provide information that is useful to a variety of actors working in or contributing to economic and social development, including government institutions, civil society leaders, multilateral organizations, social entrepreneurs, philanthropists, academic and research organizations and the media.

The portal enables all users to quickly, easily and simultaneously search multiple databases; find reliable and updated information by country and theme; customise user and organisational profiles and alerts; and share knowledge by uploading and validating contents using a range of formats. The portal also helps people to connect, collaborate and take collective action through its vibrant user community and thematic working groups.

The Land Portal is very easy to use and ActionAid encourages everyone to create a profile on the portal by following the instructions below:

- Click on “Join the Portal” tab on the main menu.
- Click on “Create a new account”.
- Fill in the form and provide necessary information.
- You will receive an email with first-time login.
- After logging in, you will be redirected to the Land Portal where you can change your password.

Watch the Land Portal Video! <http://www.vimeo.com/21724375>

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## CONCORD European Food Security Group (EFSG), Brussels

On 8 April, a delegation of the Concord EFSG met with Directorate-General for EuropAid Cooperation and Development (DG DevCo) to [take stock](#) of the progresses since the February meeting. Alberta Guerra (ActionAid) participated in the meeting as a member of the Concord delegation.

Some of the issues raised at the meeting include: the European Union (EU) Policy Framework and the state of its implementation plan; EU's role in the reformed CFS; and DG DevCo's contribution to the Impact Assessment report on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) communication.

European Commission (EC) delegates outlined how they are developing a strategy to implement the EU Policy Framework taking into account the fact that some governments are hesitant to adopt the EU approach in their national food security policies and programmes. In addition, they reiterated their commitment to providing funds to support the FAO/CFS.

On land, they expressed how the private sector should be encouraged to commit to international principles on land tenure and agricultural investments, without explicitly stating whether they were referring to the VGs or the RAI principles. The EC wants to avoid "too many set of principles" in order to avoid confusion and risk of burdening investors. On price volatility, the EC is involved in the G20 process and the CFS process. Concord delegates strongly called for better policy coordination and demanded that the EC play a strong leadership role in the CFS in order to bring coherence to various ongoing initiatives – including the HLPE study on price volatility and the conclusions of the FAO regional policy seminars on high food prices.

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## Upcoming Events

### MAY

- **International Conference on Climate Change, Agri-Food, Fisheries, and Ecosystems (ICCAFF): "Reinventing Research, Innovation, and Policy Agendas for an Environmentally and Socially-Balanced Growth"**  
19-21 May, Hotel Palais des Roses, Agadir, Morocco

### 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
- **G20 Agricultural Ministers Meeting**  
22-23 June, Paris, France
- **37<sup>th</sup> 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, Rome, Italy



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