

FOOD POLICY UPDATE

FROM ROME

ISSUE 11
February 2012

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

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This project is
funded by the EU

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The Committee on World Food Security (CFS)

The [draft agenda](#) (38.5 KB, PDF) and the definition of priorities and key issues to be addressed at the 38th Session of the CFS (15 to 20 October 2012) are currently under discussion. Two major issues that will be discussed during the CFS 38 are **Climate Change** and **Social Protection**.

During the Bureau meeting of 19 January, the Civil Society Mechanism (CSM) presented their [view on the CFS priorities for the next two years](#) (45.5 KB, DOC). Currently, there is a consensus not to overload the CFS work plan and to focus on the three most-relevant processes for 2012: 1) the conclusion and adoption of the **Voluntary Guidelines** for the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Forests and Fisheries (VGs), 2) the phase I of the consultation process on the **responsible investments in agriculture**, and the adoption of the **Global Strategic Framework** (GSF) by the Plenary.

In addition, the CFS priorities for 2013 will require preparatory work during 2012, and the related consultations will be carried out by dedicated task teams. The topics at the top of the agenda are: **food reserves** - for which ActionAid and IFSN are pressing for a dedicated task team to be established - the **agenda for action on protracted crisis, gender, nutrition, biofuels and constraints to smallholder investment**.

Regarding the national implementation of the policy guidelines and recommendations adopted during the CFS 37, some attention is focused on the **monitoring and mapping initiative**. This initiative was originally intended to inform policy development in multi-actor governance mechanisms at country, regional and global levels. However, many CSOs are raising concerns that the initiative has become too technical to fulfill its purpose in time, and are urging for an evaluation of its mechanism. On the other hand, CSOs are working to consolidate a preliminary proposal for the monitoring and evaluation of the CFS process as a whole, which can be applied to monitor compliance of other instruments such the VGs.

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

The final round of CFS-led Intergovernmental Negotiations on the VGs will take place from 5 to 9 March. The [‘Consolidated Changes to the First Draft of the VGs’](#) (641 KB, PDF) will be the basis for the negotiations.

During the last October negotiations, 75% of the VGs text was agreed, including critical issues for farmers’ organisations and social movements (e.g. a strong gender-sensitive approach, the recognition and protection of customary tenure, the tenure of forests and fisheries and the protection of the defenders of the rights of peasants, farmers, fisherfolk, indigenous peoples, pastoralists and nomadic peoples, as well as the commitment not to criminalise

the social struggles undertaken to defend their natural resources). Several controversial issues, such as those relating to investments in agriculture, remain open.

The most crucial parts to be negotiated in March are Section 12 (Investments) and Part 7 (evaluation, implementation and monitoring). Still pending items include the inclusion of water issues, and the insertion of a paragraph on policy coherence stating that all the policies having direct impacts on land, including biofuels development, should be consistent with international human rights and the State's tenure rights obligations. Some sections have not been discussed at all in the previous negotiations: Sections 23 (Climate change), 24 (Natural disasters), and 25 (Violent conflicts).

The negotiations are expected to be concluded in March and the VGs will be adopted in a special session of the CFS to be held on 14-18 May. In the meanwhile, the text will be translated into all FAO languages and sent to governments at least three weeks before this special session. In order for the VGs to be approved, it is of primary importance that the governments adopt the text without raising problems from the translations. Otherwise the text will be adopted with reserve or with the exception of some governments. CSOs at the country level should make all efforts to organise lobby meetings with their respective governments for the adoption of the VGs and for their implementation thereafter. A lobby note will be circulated in due course by the CSM working group on land in order to support national CSOs in these meetings.

Further reading:

- [Invitation Letter for the March VGs Negotiations from the CFS Chairman, Yaya Asisa Olaitan Olaniran](#) (64 KB, PDF)
- [Process letter on the VGs from the Chair of the Open-Ended Working Group, Gregory Meyers](#) (106 KB, PDF)

CFS-led consultation on the principles for responsible agricultural investments

While the RAI Principles (Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment that Respects Rights, Livelihoods and Resources) initiated by the FAO, IFAD, UNCTAD and the World Bank failed to gain broad ownership, the CFS is leading an inclusive and participatory process for developing an alter-

native set of principles.

Despite the shortage of funds, the CSM is demanding that the consultation process for the principles for responsible agricultural investments be a top priority for the next two years and be adopted by the CFS in 2013. The Swiss Permanent Representative, as Chair of the Open-Ended Working Group responsible for the consultation process, presented a [draft concept note](#) (77 KB, PDF), briefly summarising the progress made so far and outlining a two-step process for moving forward. Step 1 will begin following the adoption of the VGs, and it will entail the identification of the scope, focus and format of the principles. Step 2 will consist of an inclusive CFS consultation to develop and gain broad ownership of the principles. Upon adoption of the VGs, the Chair will start informal discussions to proceed with the process.

Global Strategic Framework (GSF)

A zero draft of the GSF was sent to the responsible Task Team, which met on 13 January ([Minutes of the meeting](#) | 207KB, PDF) to review and discuss comments. From the CSM, the meeting was attended by Natalia Landivar (FIAN - Food First Information and Action Network), Svetlana Boincean (IUF - International Union of Food Workers), Gisele Henriques (CIDSE - international alliance of Catholic development agencies), and Andrea Ferrante (La VIA Campesina). Martin Wolpold Bosien (FIAN), Luca Chinotti (Oxfam), and Maria Pizzini (Save the Children) participated as observers.

During the meeting, the main purposes of the GSF were reiterated: 1) Provide a good structure and framework for the CFS; 2) Consolidate and give new visibility to the main agreed principles and recommendations from valid instruments and decisions; 3) Reflect already agreed decisions and recommendations; 4) Capture common denominators in some areas not yet contemplated in depth in the CFS; and 5) Highlight the gaps in policy convergence, which may be addressed by the CFS in the future.

The CSOs produced the CSM working document, '[Contribution of Civil Society Members of GSF Task Team on Zero Draft](#)' (100 KB, DOC), reflecting their views on the GSF, which served as a basis to analyse the gains and gaps in the various drafts produced.

With regards to the zero draft, the CSOs urged for the inclusion of the reference to the IAASTD (International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development) report, to be conceived as an international consensus document, and the need to ensure the mainstreaming of gender issues and gender equality, not limited to women's needs but with a stronger focus on women's rights. Some other comments have been presented in a joint paper, '[Contribution of Civil Society Members of GSF Task Team on Zero Draft](#)' (74KB, DOC).

The [first draft](#) (578KB, PDF) of the GSF has been released and will be submitted for consultation during the FAO Regional Conferences scheduled from March to April 2012. The CSOs are organising their own consultation prior to the conferences where they will discuss and agree on common feedbacks based on the above-mentioned working document. In mid-June, a three-day meeting of a CFS Intergovernmental Open-Ended Working Group will be organised in Rome to finalise the first version of the GSF that will be submitted for approval at the CFS 38.

The High Level Expert Forum (HLEF) on Food Insecurity in Protracted Crises

The overall purpose of the HLEF is to provide an open space for consultation and policy dialogue to increase the understanding and strengthen the collaborative efforts in order to appropriately deal with food security and nutrition in protracted crises. A [concept note](#) (66.5 KB, PDF) presented during the January 19th Bureau meeting outlined the objectives and modalities for this process, which will be carried out in close collaboration with the CFS Bureau and Advisory Group. The HLEF is tentatively planned for the middle of September 2012, with a view that the outcome will feed into the CFS 38.

UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)

Regional Conferences

Following the FAO institutional reform, the regional conferences are aimed at increasing the relevance of the FAO policy making process and agenda setting, filling the gaps of the past disconnect between regional and global level policies. This is also one of the priorities of the new FAO Director-General, who wants to strengthen the decentralisation effort of the Agency. In the programme of each Conference (which will be autonomously defined by each region), a 40 minute multi-stakeholder session will be allocated to discuss issues related to the CFS, with greater priority given to the GSF and the Mapping exercise. The CSOs, through their own consultation prior to the regional conferences, will have the opportunity to discuss and bring to the attention of the FAO, each region's main priorities and matters relating to the CFS. For the CSO consultation on CFS issues, the CSM has identified two focal points for each region, who will be responsible for the organisation of the CSO participation in both the consultation and the Conference. The focal points are as follows:

31st Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (APRC)	12 - 16 March	Hanoi, Vietnam
Sarojeni V. Rengam PANAP - Pesticide Action Network Asia and the Pacific sarojeni.rengam@panap.net George Dixon Fernandez MIJARC - Mouvement International de la Jeunesse Agricole georgedixon72@yahoo.co.in		
2nd Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean (LARC)	26 - 30 March	Buenos Aires, Argentina
Mani Jorge Stanley Icaza Indigenous Peoples representative of the CSM manigueuigdinapi@yahoo.es Natalia Landivar FIAN - Food First Information and Action Network Landivar@fian.org		

8th Regional Conference for Europe (ERC)	17 - 20 April	Baku, Azerbaijan
Stineke Oenema ICCO - Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation Stineke.Oenema@ICCO.nl Svetlana Boincean IUF - International Union of Food Workers svetlana.boincean@iuf.org		
27th Regional Conference for Africa (ARC)	23 - 27 April	Brazzaville, Congo
Margaret Nakato Lubyani The World Forum of Fish Harvesters & Fish Workers mnakato@worldfisherforum.org Elisabeth Atangana PROPAC - Sub-Regional Platform of Peasant Organisations of Central Africa cnopcameroun@yahoo.fr ; propac_cm@yahoo.fr		
31st Regional Conference for the Near East (NERC)		Date and Venue TBD
Razan Zuayter Arab Group for the Protection of Nature razan.zuayter@gmail.com		

Land Portal

The Land Portal Steering Committee met in December to assess the achievements over 2011 and to plan further activities for 2012 ([Draft report of the meeting](#) | 112 KB, DOC). During the meeting, there was a lot of discussion on how to improve users' access, improve the quality of the services provided, and make the best use of innovative technology as a tool to contribute to policy changes. In order to contribute to the Land Portal, ActionAid's Right to Food Team, Women's Rights Team and the IFSN launched a call to all the ActionAid affiliates and partners to send their land rights related research, papers and materials to build a more comprehensive picture of the Federation's work on land rights. These documents will be collated, categorised and uploaded on hive and on the Land Portal, and serve as the basis for the production of an update/presentation on land rights which everyone can access and use. All documentations should be sent to Alberta Guerra (Alberta.guerra@actionaid.org).

World Food Programme (WFP)

The report of the '2011 WFP/NGO Annual Consultation: From food aid to food assistance' held in December is now available: <http://bit.ly/zye6zU>

Upcoming Events

FEBRUARY

- **Open-Ended Working Group Meeting to discuss 1st draft of the GSF**
7 February, FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy
- **IFAD Farmers' Forum**
20-21 February, IFAD Headquarters, Rome, Italy
- **IFAD Governing Council**
22-23 February, IFAD Headquarters, Rome, Italy
- **CONCORD EFSG Meeting**
27-29 February, Brussels, Belgium

MARCH

- **3rd Round of the Intergovernmental Negotiations on the VGs**
5-9 March, FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy
- **Asia Pacific FAO Regional Conference**
12-16 March, Hanoi, Vietnam
- **Latin America and Caribbean FAO Regional Conference**
26-30 March, Buenos Aires, Argentina

APRIL

- **Europe FAO Regional Conference**
16-20 April, Baku, Azerbaijan

- **Africa FAO Regional Conference**
23-27 April, Brazzaville, Congo

MAY

- **Special Session of the CFS for the final adoption of the VGs**
14-18 May, FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy

