

GLOBAL FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THE WEEKLY NEWS BRIEF OF THE GLOBAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT



August 7th - August 14th 2009

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KEY ARTICLES

Women Are Drivers of Positive Change, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Op-Ed, City Press (South Africa)*, August 9

The United States is working to develop partnerships across Africa to ensure that the rights of women are protected and respected, and that they have the opportunity to pursue an education, find a good job, live in safety and fulfil their own potential. President Barack Obama and I believe in Africa's promise. Too often, the world views Africa only through the lens of poverty, disease and conflict. But we see a continent of opportunity, home to 800 million people – more than half of them women – ready to build, create and thrive.

<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/08/127017.htm>

See Also: Women Are Making Progress in Africa, but Many Obstacles Remain, Interview with Melanne Verveer (U.S. ambassador-at-large for global women's issues), America.gov, August 7

<http://www.america.gov/st/democracyhr->

english/2009/August/20090807154827ajesrom0.5448877.html?CP.rss=true

U.S. works to rebuild ties with South Africa, *L.A. Times, August 9*

Clinton's main theme during her seven-nation visit to Africa is increasing trade instead of aid. But analysts say U.S. strategic priorities in Africa remain as they were under the Bush administration: access to oil; competition for resources with China, which has aggressively wooed African leaders; and combating terrorist movements in northern Africa. The main departure of the Obama administration, analysts say, is a global food initiative announced last month at the Group of 8 meeting of industrialized nations in Rome, designed to pump billions of dollars into developing agriculture in poor nations to reduce hunger, poverty and reliance on food aid. **Dan Glickman, an agriculture secretary in the Clinton administration and a strong proponent of the initiative, said the policy had the potential to lift millions of poor farmers, mainly women, out of poverty.** <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-clinton9-2009aug09,0,6671066.story>

Obama's Food Security Initiative in Africa, *Interviewee Laurie A. Garrett (Senior Fellow for Global Health, Council on Foreign Relations), August 12*

At the G8 Summit in July, President Barack Obama announced a multibillion dollar initiative to assist with agriculture development and food security in Africa. CFR Senior Fellow Laurie A. Garrett says that it's not clear if or when Congress will appropriate funding for the initiative, given all its other legislative priorities, including health care reform. She does believe, however, that the initiative's promise to end tied food aid, the practice of exporting U.S. food to developing countries for aid instead of buying food on local markets, is possible in the current political climate. Many details of the new policy have yet to emerge, but Garrett recommends that it focus on how to assist women because they are responsible for doing most of the agriculture work in Africa. "Men do not see dignity in agricultural work because it's women's work, and therefore the whole notion of large-scale loans to big farm operations, akin to how we have brought cost efficiency to farming in America, is a very tough sell," she says.

http://www.cfr.org/publication/20020/obamas_food_security_initiative_in_africa.html

Food Security, Export Growth is the Way to Go, *Namanga Ngongi (Alliance for a Green Revolution), AllAfrica.com, August 9*

Recently, business and policy leaders from the United States of America and Africa gathered for the 8th annual U.S. - Sub-Saharan African Trade and Economic Cooperation Forum, known as AGOA. This year, the forum tackles a crucial issue: how Africa can take full advantage of the export opportunities offered by trade with the world's largest economy. For Africa's smallholder farmers-who dominate the agricultural sector-the challenge involves access to finance and to markets. The solutions require public and private investments to transform Africa's smallholder-based subsistence agriculture into a highly productive, efficient, sustainable and competitive system.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200908101201.html>

Climate Change Seen as Threat to U.S. Security, *The New York Times, August 8*

The changing global climate will pose profound strategic challenges to the United States in coming decades, raising the prospect of military intervention to deal with the effects of violent storms, drought, mass migration and pandemics, military and intelligence analysts say. Such climate-induced crises could topple governments, feed terrorist movements or destabilize entire regions, say the analysts, experts at the Pentagon and intelligence agencies who for the first time are taking a serious look at the national security implications of climate change. Recent war games and intelligence studies conclude that over the next 20 to 30 years, vulnerable regions, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and South and Southeast Asia, will face the prospect of food shortages, water crises and catastrophic flooding driven by climate change that could demand an American humanitarian relief or military response.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/09/science/earth/09climate.html>

See Also: Climate Change as Security Threat Is Nothing New, Reuters, August 9

<http://www.reuters.com/article/gwmCarbonEmissions/idUS423807962420090809>

Africa: Reducing Poverty by Increasing Trade, *Sherri Kraham (Acting Vice President for Policy and International Relations, U.S. Government's Millennium Challenge Corporation), AllAfrica.com, August 7*

Assistance from international donors can also help African partners participate in global trade by literally building the infrastructure to do so. Landlocked African countries cannot trade regionally or globally if they do not have the roads, bridges, or airports to move their goods. Such assistance also bolsters critical industries, like the agricultural sector vital to the economies of many African nations, by ensuring that the

crops grown and harvested in fields have the ability to reach domestic and international markets at the peak of freshness and when they will command the best price. This means more jobs and greater incomes for African farmers as they work to replace poverty with opportunity.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200908070828.html>

India's water use 'unsustainable', *BBC News, August 13*

Parts of India are on track for severe water shortages, according to results from Nasa's gravity satellites. Writing in the journal *Nature*, they say rainfall has not changed, and water use is too high, mainly for farming. The finding is published two days after an Indian government report warning of a potential water crisis. That report noted that access to water was one of the main factors governing the pace of development in the world's second most populous nation. Dr Raj Gupta, a scientist working for the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), said that the current drought would lead to more groundwater extraction. "Farmers receive no rains so they are pumping a lot more water than the government expected, so the water table will fall further. The farmers have to irrigate, and that's why they're pumping more water, mining more water. The situation has to stop today or tomorrow." Dr Gupta noted that some farmers might be able to switch from rice to crops that demand less water, such as maize or sorghum.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/8197287.stm>

See Also: Is Northwestern India's Breadbasket Running Out of Water?, Scientific American, August 12

The fields of barley, rice and wheat that feed much of India are running out of water, according to a new study based on satellite data. The consequences include wells that run dry, water shortages in India's capital and, potentially, a decline in yields from agriculture.

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=is-india-running-out-of-water>

See Also: Satellite-based estimates of groundwater depletion in India, Nature, August 2009

<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/vaop/ncurrent/abs/nature08238.html>

RELEVANT U.S. ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

An Integrated Approach to Afghanistan and Pakistan, *Center for American Progress, August 12*

Holbrooke and his interagency team engaged in their first public discussion of the United States' "AfPak" strategy. This multidisciplinary team, which heads the civilian aspect of the counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan as well as the regional diplomatic effort, is made up of participants from nine different agencies. Otto J. Gonzalez from the U.S. Department of Agriculture described an agricultural development program aimed at restoring jobs and income to Afghanistan's largest sector and increasing Afghans' confidence in their government. "What we have is a strategy that is integrated, resourced, civilian, and military, and one that really puts agriculture in the forefront where it needs to be in a country like Afghanistan," he said. This new emphasis on agriculture is designed to complement a shift in counternarcotics strategy. The team has phased out poppy eradication in favor of agricultural development—working with the country's farmers, rather than against them—and targeting high-level drug traffickers.

http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2009/08/holbrooke_event.html

Agriculture Secretary Vilsack Discuss Obama Administration's Commitment to Addressing Climate Change, *USDA, August 10*

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack today addressed attendees of the 2009 North American Biochar Conference and discussed the Obama Administration's commitment to taking international leadership on climate change, and the potential to create rural jobs and opportunities for landowners through the use of biochar. "Farmers, ranchers and forest landowners can play a very important role in addressing climate change and creating a new energy economy. Biochar has the potential to create opportunities for the agriculture and forestry sectors to mitigate the effects of a changing climate while creating jobs in rural communities and offering new income sources to landowners.

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/.s.7.0.A/7.0.10B?contentidonly=true&contentid=2009/08/0376.xml>

Update on Paul Farmer and USAID, *Nicholas Kristof (Blog), August 10*

So I hear it's final: Dr. Paul Farmer will not run USAID, after all. Indeed, he's now in Rwanda, actually doing good work instead of being pummeled by vetters. I still think the proper response is to throw the vetters overboard — if a saint like Farmer can't get through, who can? — but in the meantime we need an administrator for USAID. That's particularly true at a time when the administration is pushing for a systematic rethink of how our aid program works.

<http://kristof.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/08/10/update-on-paul-farmer-and-usaid/>

See Also: **Former USAID nominee gets job with (the other) Clinton**, *The Cable*, August 11

http://blog.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/08/11/former_usaid_nominee_gets_job_with_the_other_clinton

Restoring USAID's Capabilities, *Senator Richard Lugar, Letter to the Editor, Washington Post, August 9*

The institutional atrophy and loss of expertise at the U.S. Agency for International Development has led to a proliferation of aid programs across the government with little coordination or a common framework to evaluate what works and what doesn't. Without a more robust aid agency, President Obama's pledge to double foreign assistance would be like adding a third story to a house that had a crumbling foundation. Sen. John F. Kerry (D-Mass.) and I have recently introduced, with bipartisan co-sponsors, the Foreign Assistance Revitalization and Accountability Act to give USAID the lead role in coordinating American foreign assistance activities in the field, create a comprehensive system to evaluate successes and failures, reestablish a policy and strategic planning bureau within the agency, and strengthen personnel. Without a strong administrator, USAID's voice will be lost in the current interagency debate.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/08/08/AR2009080802082.html>

Interview With Susan Rice, *State of the Union with John King, CNN, August 9*

RICE: "And what we're pursuing now [in Afghanistan], John, is a strategy with three components. Not only on the military side where we're stepping up security in support of the Afghans in the run-up to the election, but critically important, strengthening the ability of the Afghan government to deliver for its people, provide hope and economic opportunity, get away from poppies and invest in agriculture, and similarly fight corruption and improve government."

<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0908/09/sotu.01.html>

NEW REPORTS/POLICY BRIEFS/BOOKS

Technology and Innovation in World Agriculture: Prospects for 2010-2019, *Wallace Huffman, Iowa State University Department of Economics Working Papers Series, Working Paper # 09007, April 2009*

The objective of this paper is to assess prospects for increasing agricultural productivity through advances in technology and innovation in farming techniques for developed and selective developing and transition countries over 2010-2019. The paper first provides a review of agricultural TFP growth for OECD countries and other large developing or transition economies. Second, a discussion of the organization of science and technology for agriculture is presented. Third, new agricultural technologies for cereal, oilseed, and potato production and for livestock production are discussed and their impacts assessed. Fourth, the contributions of public and private agricultural research capital to agricultural productivity are summarized. Fifth, prospects for new agricultural technologies primarily developed by the private sector over the next decade are described and evaluated.

http://www.econ.iastate.edu/research/webpapers/paper_13060_09007.pdf

Promising Approaches to Address the Needs of Poor Female Farmers: Resources, Constraints, and Interventions, *Agnes R. Quisumbing and Lauren Pandolfelli, International Food Policy Research Institute, July 2009*

Recognizing that "gender matters," many development interventions have aimed to close the gender gap in access to resources, both human and physical, and to address the specific needs of female farmers. This paper critically reviews attempts to increase poor female farmers' access to, and control of, productive resources in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. It surveys the literature from 1998 to 2008 that describes interventions

and policy changes across several key agricultural resources, including land, soil, and water; labor-saving technologies; improved varieties; extension services; and credit.

<http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/dp/IFPRIDP00882.pdf>

How Does Food Price Increase Affect Ugandan Households? An Augmented Multimarket Approach,

John M. Ulimwengu and Racha Ramadan, International Food Policy Research Institute, July 2009

Almost unaffected by the 2008 wave of soaring world food prices, Ugandan local market prices exhibit signs of high price volatility in the first quarter of 2009. At the household level, while net producers may reap some benefits from this increase in food prices, net consumers are more likely to suffer from it. Overall, the authors found that household welfare is expected to decrease with loss in consumption and increase with income gain as a result of higher food prices for the cereals producers. Simulating change in cereals consumption induced by a 50 percent increase in cereals price and taking into account the profit effect, our results predict a 23 percent decrease in food consumption for net sellers, compared with 44 percent when using the consumption approach alone.

<http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/dp/IFPRIDP00884.pdf>

See Also: Surviving hunger pangs in NE Uganda, locals strive to live, Xinhua, August 7

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-08/07/content_11844022.htm

Linking Urban Consumers and Rural Farmers in India: A Comparison of Traditional and Modern Food Supply Chains, *Bart Minten, Thomas Reardon (Experts Committee Member), and Anneleen Vandeplass,*

International Food Policy Research Institute, July 2009

Food supply chains are being transformed in a number of developing countries due to widespread changes in urban food demand. To better anticipate the impact of this transformation and thus assist in the design of appropriate policies, it is important to understand the changes that are occurring in these supply chains. In a case study of India, the authors find that overall urban consumption is increasing; the urban food basket is shifting away from staples toward high-value products; and modern market channels (modern retail, food processing, and the food service industry) are on the rise. They document differing practices in traditional and modern food supply chains and identify an agenda for future research.

<http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/dp/IFPRIDP00883.pdf>

High Stakes in a Complex Game: A Snapshot of the Climate Change Negotiating Positions, *Jan von der Goltz, Center for Global Development, August 2009*

Developing countries with large greenhouse gas emissions play a decisive role in negotiating a post-Kyoto climate agreement. No effective program to reduce global emissions is possible without their support. At the same time, developing countries face a delicate task in balancing their growing responsibility for a livable climate with the pursuit of continued economic development. This article discusses the negotiating positions major developing country emitters are taking on core issues. Among the most vital unsettled questions are burden sharing between developed and developing countries, the role of the market in the international climate architecture, as well as implementation arrangements.

http://www.cgdev.org/files/1422602_file_High_Stakes_FINAL081009.pdf

Estimates Of Health Care Professional Shortages In Sub-Saharan Africa By 2015, *Richard M. Scheffler, Chris Brown Mahoney, Brent Fulton, Mario R. Dal Poz, Alexander S. Preker, Health Affairs, August 2009*

This paper uses a forecasting model to estimate the need for, supply of, and shortage of doctors, nurses, and midwives in thirty-nine African countries for 2015, the target date of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. We forecast that thirty-one countries will experience needs-based shortages of doctors, nurses, and midwives, totaling approximately 800,000 health professionals.

<http://content.healthaffairs.org/cgi/reprint/hlthaff.28.5.w849v1>

See Also: 800,000 More Workers Needed in Africa to Meet Health Goals by 2015, The New York Times, August 10

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/11/science/11glob.html>

2009 World Population Data Sheet, *Population Reference Bureau, August 12*

Global population numbers are on track to reach 7 billion in 2011, just 12 years after reaching 6 billion in 1999. Virtually all of the growth is in developing countries. And the growth of the world's youth population

(ages 15 to 24) is shifting into the poorest of those countries. The Population Reference Bureau's 2009 World Population Data Sheet and its summary report, to be released on Aug. 12, offer detailed information about country, regional, and global population patterns.

<http://www.prb.org/Publications/Datasheets/2009/2009wpds.aspx>

SEE ALSO: Global Population to hit 7 billion in 2011, *Xinhua (China)*, August 13

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-08/13/content_11872124.htm

Lifecycle Greenhouse Gas Emissions due to Increased Biofuel Production: Methods and Approaches to Account for Lifecycle Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Biofuels Production Over Time, U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency, August 2009

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has undertaken a lifecycle assessment of the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with increased renewable fuels production as part of the proposed revisions to the National Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) program. Evidence suggests that biofuel-induced land use change produces significant near-term GHG emissions, with displacement of petroleum by biofuels over subsequent years in effect "paying back" earlier land-conversion impacts. Therefore, it is critical to select an appropriate time horizon over which to analyze emissions and apply a proper discount rate to value near-term versus longer-term emissions.

<http://www.epa.gov/otaq/renewablefuels/rfs2-peer-review-emissions.pdf>

See Also: Panel gives mixed review to U.S. biofuel rules, *Reuters*, August 9

<http://www.reuters.com/article/GCA-GreenBusiness/idUSTRE5765WQ20090807?sp=true>

Thirst for African Oil: Asian National Oil Companies in Nigeria and Angola, *Chatham House Report*, Alex Vines, Lillian Wong, Markus Weimer and Indira Campos, August 2009

The report provides a comparative study of the impact of Asian companies on the two leading oil producing countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria and Angola. The report shows that Asian companies that gained a foothold in the Nigerian oil sector in return for their commitments to invest in downstream and infrastructure projects failed to understand the political context of the time. The report considers why, in contrast, the Chinese oil strategy has been so successful in Angola to the detriment of other Asian national oil companies and international oil companies; how Angola emerged as the second largest supplier of oil to China in 2008; how Chinese oil companies have negotiated deals; and what the benefits are for Angola. China's experience is compared with those of India, South Korea and Japan.

http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/publications/papers/download/-/id/768/file/14524_r0809_africanoil.pdf

See Also: Asian Oil Majors Yet to Affect Ownership in Africa, Report Says, *Bloomberg*, August 10

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601207&sid=a19II0UINeV8>

Criss-Crossing Globalization: Uphill Flows of Skill-Intensive Goods and Foreign Direct Investment, *Aaditya Mattoo and Arvind Subramanian, Center for Global Development, August 2009*

We tend to think of sophisticated goods and foreign direct investments (FDI) as flowing from high-income countries to lower-income countries, but flows in the opposite direction are increasing in frequency and significance. In this working paper, the authors document this trend and explore its consequences on source countries. Considering not only the composition of exports but their destination as well, they find a positive relationship between the uphill flows of sophisticated goods and FDI and economic growth, suggesting perhaps that development benefits might derive not from deifying comparative advantage but from defying it.

http://www.cgdev.org/files/1422581_file_Mattoo_Subramania_Uphill_Skill.pdf

50 million women in Asia at risk of HIV from their intimate partners, *UNAIDS, August 2009*

An estimated 50 million women in Asia are at risk of becoming infected with HIV from their intimate partners. Evidence from many Asian countries indicates that these women are either married or in long-term relationships with men who engage in high-risk sexual behaviours. A major vulnerability for migrants their sexual partners is social vulnerability, which includes poverty, lack of legal protection, exploitation, harassment, discrimination against migrants, xenophobia, gender discrimination and a lack of power.

http://data.unaids.org/pub/Report/2009/intimate_partners_report_en.pdf

SEE ALSO: UN says 50 million women in Asia risk HIV, *The Washington Post*, August 11

UPCOMING EVENTS

International ISHS/ProMusa Symposium Global Perspectives on Asian Challenges

Date: September 14-18, 2009

Location: Guang Dong, China,

ProMusa, in collaboration with the Guang Dong Academy for Agricultural Sciences (GDAAS), the International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS) and Bioversity's Banana and Plantain Regional Network for Asia and the Pacific (BAPNET), has announced the "International Banana Symposium: Global Perspectives on Asian Challenges."

http://www.promusa.org/symposium_2009/home.html

http://www.farmpolicy.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/fischerboel-hill-event_may-06-09-invite-final-3.pdf

Fifth Annual Meeting of the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI)

Date: September 22-25, 2009

Location: Sheraton New York Hotel and Towers, New York, NY

The following are among those who have confirmed their attendance at the 2009 CGI Annual Meeting: 35 current and former heads of state, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Larry Summers, Valerie Jarrett, Lloyd Blankfein of Goldman Sachs, Angela Braley of WellPoint, John Chambers of Cisco, James Dimon of JP Morgan Chase & Co., Mike Duke of Wal-Mart, Carlos Ghosn of Nissan Motor, Muhtar Kent of The Coca-Cola Company, Jack Ma of Alibaba Group, Indra Nooyi of PepsiCo, Inc., and Carlos Slim Helú of Grupo Carso S.A. de C.V. For the Fifth Annual Meeting, CGI is introducing four new Action Areas – points of collaboration and intervention – that will guide CGI's program. The 2009 Action Areas are: Harnessing Innovation for Development; Strengthening Infrastructure; Developing Human Capital; Financing a Sustainable Future.

Agenda: <http://www.clintonglobalinitiative.org/Document.Doc?id=460>

UN General Assembly Meeting

Date: September 23-30, 2009

Location: New York, NY

President Obama scheduled to address the assembly on September 23.

For a preliminary outline of agenda items, see

http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/64/50.

For the Assembly's "Resolution on Agriculture and Food Security," developed March 17, 2009, see

<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N08/484/89/PDF/N0848489.pdf?OpenElement>

G-20 Summit

Date: September 24-25, 2009

Location: Pittsburgh, PA

<http://www.pittsburghsummit.gov/>

Annual Meeting of the World Bank and IMF

Date: October 6-7, 2009

Location: Istanbul, Turkey

<http://www.imf.org/external/am/2009/schedule.htm>

2009 World Food Prize and "Borlaug Dialogue" symposium: Food, Agriculture, and National Security

Date: October 14-16, 2009

Location: Des Moines, IA

The formal awarding of the \$250,000 World Food Prize will be the cornerstone of a week-long series of events that will attract several hundred government officials and policymakers, private-sector and agribusiness executives, academics and scientists, and NGO and development-agency leaders from over 65 countries. The "conversations" of the annual Norman E. Borlaug International Symposium will this year focus on the connection between food and agriculture and national and international security and cooperation,

with speakers including renowned global CEOs, agricultural ministers and diplomats, noted intelligence and security experts, and other eminent leaders in agricultural and rural development.
<https://www.worldfoodprize.org/symposium/2009.htm> (registration available)

FAO Summit on Food Security

Date: November 16-18, 2009

Location: Rome, Italy

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/29219/icode/>

AGRICULTURAL ISSUES

Invest in Africa, invest in the whole world, *The Guardian (U.K.)*, August 13

There are about 1 billion people who live in abject poverty (on less than \$1 a day), and who do not get enough to eat. About 75% of the poor live in rural areas where they depend primarily on agriculture for their livelihoods. They go hungry not because there is not enough food available in the world market, but because they do not have enough income to buy it. Most poor farmers have not been able to participate in the agricultural revolution and they have too little land to feed themselves using traditional low-input, low-yield farming methods. There is no doubt that Africa could turn from the basket case to the bread basket of the world. If supported, millions of poor farmers could lift themselves out of poverty and flood the global food markets with surplus food. It could provide a solution to the global food shortages and spiraling food prices we are all facing. Investment in sustainable agriculture is not just an investment in Africa, it is an investment in the whole world.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/katineblog/2009/aug/13/money-livelihoods>

Recast food policy to address malnutrition, *Thaindian News (Thailand)*, August 13

With Indians eating less cereals and pulses, the government must recast its food policy and launch a nutrition literacy movement fast if it is serious about addressing the problem of malnutrition, experts warn. Their suggestions come after some alarming official statistics that say the per capital consumption of cereals and pulses in both urban and rural India registered a sizeable decline over the past decade.

http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/business/recast-food-policy-to-address-malnutrition-experts_100231722.html

Crops do well, still not enough, *Mission Network News*, August 12

There are 12.5 Zimbabweans who need more than two million tons of cereal, for example. Thus far, only 1.4 million tons will be available domestically according to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Food Programme (WFP) and Zimbabwe's government. Though maize crops have done twice as well as the previous year -- a 130 percent increase, only 12,000 tons will be harvested -- the lowest amount ever. The problem lies in the high cost of fertilizers and seeds in combination with farmers' lack of funds and unreliable electricity supply for irrigation.

<http://www.mnnonline.org/article/13059>

Fight Droughts with Science, *The Wall Street Journal*, August 12

More than 13 million farmers in at least 25 countries already are using genetically modified crop varieties to produce higher yields with lower inputs and reduced impact on the environment. In 2008, India ranked fourth in the world (behind the United States, Argentina and Brazil) in cultivation of genetically modified crops, with 7.6 million hectares. But research and development are being hampered by resistance from activists and discouraged by governmental overregulation. There are more than a dozen vocal and radical activist groups—of which Greenpeace is the prototype—around the world opposed to this kind of technology.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970203863204574345290928452448.html>

Food crisis blamed on disastrous policy compounded by killer disease in Amhara region, *Afrik.com*, August 12

Ethiopian government has been forced to reduce food rations to some 5.3 million beneficiaries owing to a serious shortfall in food aid. The shortfall, according to official sources, is not only due to the failure of donors

to deliver but also an erratic rainfall pattern, which wrecked havoc to last year's agricultural harvest. The Ethiopian government, after promoting an agricultural development strategy, encouraging small-scale farming and boosting food productivity, saw its economy expand by a 12 per cent annual average from 2004. However, the system, being highly dependent on rainfall, was compromised when rain patterns became erratic.

<http://en.afrik.com/article16034.html>

Research must reach farmers, *Science Alert (Australia), August 12*

African universities must embrace agricultural research and development — and ensure such research is translated into policy and meets the needs of its farmers, a meeting has heard. Richard Mkandawire, head of the Comprehensive Agricultural Action Programme (CAADP) at The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), said African tertiary institutions continue to be perceived as ivory towers in many countries. He urged African universities to work together through the African Universities Forum Network to embrace the CAADP action plan, agreed by African heads of state in 2003. The plan was endorsed as a vision for the restoration of agricultural growth, food security, and rural development in Africa. CAADP seeks an average annual growth rate of six per cent in agriculture — yet to be met by most African governments.

<http://www.sciencealert.com.au/news-global-food-crisis/20091208-19550-2.html>

Rising food prices have hit Katine hard, *The Guardian (U.K.), August 12*

Food prices have hit Katine hard over the past few months. Prices have been rising continuously, but have increased sharply in the last few weeks. Even worse is that it is the food stuffs that constitute the staple diet in Katine which have increased in price the most. While meat and fish have remained relatively static, cassava has almost tripled in price. Groundnuts have also risen from US\$ 5,500 (around \$2.60) per basin to US\$ 12,000 and maize has doubled. While food prices have risen across east Africa, the residents of poor rural communities like Katine are the most vulnerable to these increases.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/katineblog/2009/aug/12/rising-food-prices>

Will 'Energy Crops' Become the Next Kudzu? *The New York Times, August 12*

U.S. policies are subsidizing new energy crops that are likely to spread off the farm and wreak economic and ecological havoc, a federal advisory board cautioned yesterday. For years, researchers have worked to develop "advanced" biofuel feeds from unconventional crops such as grasses and algae. The goal is to enable a switch away from corn- and soy-based biofuel to cellulosic energy crops that don't compete on the food or feed market and have a smaller carbon footprint. A 2007 energy law, in fact, requires a total of 160 billion gallons of the plant-based cellulosic fuels by 2022 that these crops would produce. As a result, researchers are now selecting, breeding and engineering species that demand less water, fertilizer and agricultural land and grow year-round at high yields.

<http://www.nytimes.com/cwire/2009/08/12/12climatewire-will-energy-crops-become-the-next-kudzu-16525.html?scp=2&sq=biofuels&st=cse>

Fake inputs, high cost affecting agricultural sector, *Morrison Rwakakamba (resident consultant and manager, Policy Research and Advocacy, Uganda National Farmers Federation), Op-Ed, Daily Monitor (Uganda), August 11*

First, we should note that the quest for profiteering by some agriculture input dealers can in the long run result in the death of the agriculture sector in Uganda. Fake chemicals are destructive to farming. A fake pesticide will not kill pests and a fake herbicide will not stop grass from growing. Instead, the farmer will realise poor yields as well as adverse effects on the environment. Fake chemicals accelerate soil deterioration the result of which is substantial crop losses.

http://www.monitor.co.ug/artman/publish/opinions/Fake_inputs_high_cost_affecting_agrucultural_sector_89463.shtml

Urban agriculture key to alleviating world hunger, *Bizcommunity.com (South Africa), August 11*

The urban poor have been hit the hardest by the global hunger epidemic, which has been fueled by the ongoing food, economic, financial, and environmental crises. Getting healthy food into cities in sufficient quantities is an extremely difficult task. For the first time in the history of mankind, over half the world's population lives in cities.

<http://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/410/87/38757.html>

Drop in wheat price worries farmers, pleases consumers, *IRIN News, August 10*

Farmers in Afghanistan's top cereal-producing provinces worry that the decline in wheat prices will push them into poverty, while urban consumers welcome the fall. Wheat prices have dropped by more than 30 percent over the past year but are still significantly higher than in early 2007, according to the Agriculture Commodity Price Bulletin released by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL).

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=85640>

Maized and confused, *The Economist, August 10*

Adding ethanol to the traditional markets for maize (food and fodder) inevitably pushes the price up. That encourages farmers, including those in poor countries, to boost production. If some of those farmers plough up savannah or cut down forest to grow the extra crops, the carbon dioxide released from the plants destroyed and soil ploughed up reduce the benefits of substituting the ethanol produced for petrol. If forests that are still growing are cleared, the environment loses the effect of their future uptake of carbon dioxide, too.

http://www.economist.com/world/international/displaystory.cfm?story_id=14205727

UK must produce 'as much food as we can', *Financial Times, August 10*

More food for the UK market should be produced in Britain, the government said, as it launched a review of how best to ensure the nation's food security. The review from the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), will be followed by a "food strategy for the future" to be published later in the year.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/d4ecdb80-859a-11de-98de-00144feabdc0.html>

See Also: **Waste and increased consumption pose threat, *Financial Times, August 10***

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/9c32b208-85e3-11de-98de-00144feabdc0.html>

See Also: **Feast and famine, *Editorial, Financial Times, August 10***

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/997f66fa-85e3-11de-98de-00144feabdc0.html>

Meeting the challenge of food security, *The Tribune (India), August 9*

To tackle the food crisis, the immediate food needs of the poor people must be addressed. It also requires correcting previous failures in the agricultural policy by investing more resources into research and food production, establishing reliable systems for assisting vulnerable populations, and setting up a fair global trading system and an attractive investment climate for the private sector to become more engaged in agriculture production and food value chains.

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/2009/20090809/edit.htm#2>

Wish you weren't here: The devastating effects of the new colonialists, *The Independent (U.K.), August 9*

Thousand of protesters took to the streets, waving the orange flags of the opposition. Before long, looting began. Buildings were set on fire. The urban poor were angry at the price of food, which had been high since the massive rise in global prices of wheat and rice the year before. Food-price rises hit the poor worse than the rest of us because they spend up to two-thirds of their income on food. But what whipped them into action was news of a deal the government had recently signed with a giant Korean multinational, Daewoo, leasing 1.3 million hectares of farmland – an area almost half the size of Belgium and about half of all arable land on the island – to the foreign company for 99 years.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/nature/wish-you-werent-here-the-devastating-effects-of-the-new-colonialists-1767725.html>

World food prices stabilise, no drop in sight –WFP, *Reuters, August 7*

World food prices have stabilised but will not return to levels seen before 2008 when commodity prices skyrocketed pushing up inflation in many emerging markets, the U.N. food agency said.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/homepageCrisis/idUSL7351159.CH.2400>

Millions in Nepal face food shortages: UN, *Agence France-Presse, August 7*

Millions more people in Nepal are suffering severe food shortages after a "sharp and sustained decline in food security" in recent years, the United Nations warned Friday. The UN's World Food Programme (WFP) said 3.4

million Nepalese people had become "highly to severely food insecure" due to sharp food price rises and the 2008-09 winter drought, the worst in 40 years.

http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iNPsHlgkWi7_zvsMNYCHUSbFLlxQ

See Also: **Rising food insecurity in Nepal**, *Global Politician*, August 7

<http://www.globalpolitician.com/25802-nepal>

Bold Soil-Mapping Venture Seen as Crucial to Efforts on Climate, Agriculture, *The New York Times*, August 7

Long left in the dust by their peers in climate research, a small group of soil scientists is spearheading an effort to apply rigorous computer analysis to the ground beneath our feet. Their goal: to produce a digital soil map of the entire world. It is a daunting task. In many parts of the world, such as Africa and South Asia, knowledge of soil is sketchy at best, relying on fading paper maps. And without accurate soil information, it is difficult for planners to know where crops are best grown, or for climate modelers to predict how much carbon might be released from soil into the atmosphere.

<http://www.nytimes.com/gwire/2009/08/07/07greenwire-bold-soil-mapping-venture-seen-as-crucial-to-e-74103.html?scp=1&sq=%22agricultural%20development%22&st=cse>

FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

U.S. Ambassador Seeks More Money for Afghanistan, *The Washington Post*, August 12

The United States will not meet its goals in Afghanistan without a major increase in planned spending on development and civilian reconstruction next year, the U.S. ambassador in Kabul has told the State Department. In a cable sent to Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Ambassador Karl W. Eikenberry said an additional \$2.5 billion in nonmilitary spending will be needed for 2010, about 60 percent more than the amount President Obama has requested from Congress. The increase is needed "if we are to show progress in the next 14 months," Eikenberry wrote in the cable, according to sources who have seen it.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/08/11/AR2009081103341.html>

World Bank pledges more help for ambitious Rwanda, *The Washington Post*, August 12

World Bank President Robert Zoellick pledged on Wednesday to boost development aid to Rwanda to help the rebuild the country ripped apart by genocide. The tiny landlocked east African state is reviving its economy with spending on tourism, agriculture and mining after 800,000 ethnic Tutsis and politically moderate Hutus were killed over a 100-day period in 1994. After several years of strong growth, Rwanda has been hit hard by the collapse in global trade and commodity prices. Lower levels of foreign direct investment are seen slashing growth to around 5 percent this year from 11 percent in 2008.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/08/12/AR2009081202156.html>

U.S. Policy Shift Needed in the Horn of Africa, *Bronwyn E. Bruton, International Affairs Fellow in Residence, Council on Foreign Relations*, August 6

In a worst-case scenario, the United States may have to threaten to suspend foreign and military aid to Ethiopia. U.S. humanitarian and development assistance to Ethiopia was upwards of \$650 million in 2008, and the U.S. has contributed significant, though less transparent, financial and tactical support to Ethiopia's attempts to modernize its armed forces. Such an action has rightly been perceived as unthinkable in the past, as the cessation of aid would certainly risk destabilizing the Ethiopian government and may precipitate widespread public disorder. At the same time, Ethiopian certainty that U.S. aid is inviolate has allowed the Ethiopian government to effectively tune out demands for reform.

http://www.cfr.org/publication/19982/us_policy_shift_needed_in_the_horn_of_africa.html?breadcrumb=/

ENVIRONMENT (WATER/CLIMATE)

India Plans Focus on Environment, *Wall Street Journal*, August 14

Even as it resists firm caps on carbon emissions, India has established one of the world's largest forest-protection funds and plans to set up a regulatory body modeled on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in an effort to improve its dismal environmental track record. Forest cover accounts for more than 20% of India's land, and it neutralizes more than 11% of India's total greenhouse-gas emissions at 1994 levels -- equivalent to 100% of emissions from all energy in the residential and transport sectors, or 40% of total emissions from the agriculture sector, the report said.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125018657071529801.html>

SEE ALSO: **India plans green overhaul**, *Financial Times*, August 13

http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/8fecf51c-87a0-11de-9280-00144feabdc0.html?nclick_check=1

Antarctic glacier 'thinning fast', *BBC News*, August 13

One of the largest glaciers in Antarctica is thinning four times faster than it was 10 years ago, according to research seen by the BBC. Calculations based on the rate of melting 15 years ago had suggested the glacier would last for 600 years. But the new data points to a lifespan for the vast ice stream of only another 100 years. One of the authors, Professor Andrew Shepherd of Leeds University, said that the melting from the centre of the glacier would add about 3cm to global sea level.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/8200680.stm>

Australian Senate rejects curbs on greenhouse gases, *The Guardian (U.K.)*, August 13

Australia's Senate today voted to reject legislation that would have curbed the amount of greenhouse gas pollution the country emits, but the government said it would resurrect the bill later this year. Climate change minister Penny Wong said the government would continue its campaign to push the legislation through the Senate, in a move that could trigger an early election if the opposition-controlled chamber rejects the measure a second time.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/aug/13/australian-senate-rejects-greenhouse-gas-curbs>

U.N. climate pact seen hinging on deeper CO2 cuts, *Reuters*, August 12

A U.N. climate deal due in December will be a flop unless industrialized nations sharply increase promised cuts in greenhouse gas emissions for 2020, the chair of a key U.N. group said. John Ashe, who leads work at Aug 10-14 U.N. climate talks looking at planned cuts by rich nations, said existing pledges were far short of the range of 25-40 percent below 1990 levels outlined by a U.N. scientific panel as required to avoid the worst of climate change.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/GCA-GreenBusiness/idUSTRE57B3YS20090812>

Next-Generation Biofuels: Field of Dreams, or Feasible?, *Wall Street Journal*, August 12

The U.S. pinned a big part of its hopes for future transport fuel on cellulosic ethanol, something that doesn't even exist commercially today. Basically, cellulosic ethanol can't compete with gasoline unless oil stays above \$90 a barrel. Even then, the industry has a lot of work to do in order to produce large volumes and do so affordably. The good news is that vastly increasing cellulosic ethanol production would be good for the environment, saving the equivalent of 25% of today's emissions from gasoline, or the equivalent emissions from 87 coal-fired power plants.

<http://blogs.wsj.com/environmentalcapital/2009/08/12/next-generation-biofuels-field-of-dreams-or-feasible/>

Turkey offers water for Iraqi crackdown on Kurdish rebels, *Christian Science Monitor*, August 11

After talks in Baghdad, Turkey pledged to release more water from the Euphrates River to its drought-ravaged neighbor. Iraq, meanwhile, has announced plans to crack down on Kurdish rebels on the Turkish border. "The suffering of the farmers in any region of Iraq is the suffering of the Turkish farmers themselves," Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu told reporters on his first official visit since taking the post in May

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2009/0811/p06s10-wome.html>

China's green leap forward, *Christian Science Monitor*, August 10

Facing dire pollution and wanting to be in on what may be the next industrial revolution, China positions itself to be a leader in green technology – with major implications for the rest of the world.

<http://features.csmonitor.com/environment/2009/08/10/china's-green-leap-forward/>

Time 'runs short' on climate deal, *BBC News, August 10*

Time is running short to agree a new treaty on global warming amid deep divisions over key issues, according to the UN's top climate official. Speaking at the start of the latest round of UN discussions, Yvo de Boer said the political signals were positive, but progress still too slow.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/8193203.stm>

See Also: Time running out for December climate pact-U.N., Reuters, August 10

<http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSLA285715>

North America nations to cooperate on emissions trade, *Reuters, August 10*

The United States, Canada and Mexico said Monday they would put in place infrastructure to cooperate on greenhouse gas emissions trading as part of efforts to fight climate change.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/GCA-GreenBusiness/idUSTRE5793PU20090810>

U.N. Chief Talks Climate Change Challenge, *Time.com, August 10*

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said Monday that climate change is the greatest challenge facing a world beset by crises and called on governments to reach a deal on the environment at a meeting in Denmark later this year. Ban said the world has "less than 10 years to halt (the) global rise in greenhouse gas emissions if we are to avoid catastrophic consequences for people and the planet. It is, simply, the greatest collective challenge we face as a human family," Ban said in a keynote speech at a gathering in Seoul of the World Federation of U.N. Associations.

<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1915490,00.html>

Islanders flee rising sea levels, *GlobalPost, August 8*

Two thousand miles to the east of the Carterets, and roughly halfway between Hawaii and Australia, Tuvalu — population: 12,000 — is often billed as the first community in the southwestern Pacific Ocean likely to be devoured by the region's rising and increasingly turbulent seas. Tuvalu's situation is indeed dire: Seawater and the saltwater table — the level at which underground potable water turns salty — already threaten coconut and taro farming. But according to the latest studies of the region's changing conditions, Tuvalu won't actually disappear for another 1,000 years, though it will become uninhabitable long before then.

<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/asia/090805/watery-apocalypse-the-pacific?page=0.0>

Madagascar: Volatile Climate, Politics Leave Access to Food Precarious – UN, *AllAfrica.com, August 7*

Access to food for the people of Madagascar remains unreliable because of the impact of natural disasters, which routinely strike the island State, and continuing political tensions, a United Nations report warned today. The joint Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP) mission tasked with assessing crop and food security in Madagascar underscored the effect a run of cyclones on the east coast in 2008-2009 and several years of drought in the south has had on the country's crops.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200908070010.html>

GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

An astonishing rebound, *The Economist, August 13*

The West still looks weak, with many economies contracting in the second quarter, and even if America begins to grow in the second half of this year, consumer spending looks sickly. Yet Asian economies, increasingly decoupled from Western shopping habits, are growing fast. The four emerging Asian economies which have reported GDP figures for the second quarter (China, Indonesia, South Korea and Singapore) grew by an average annualized rate of more than 10%. Even richer and more sluggish Japan, which cannot match that figure, seems to be recovering faster than its Western peers. But emerging Asia should grow by more than 5% this year—at a time when the old G7 could contract by 3.5%.

http://www.economist.com/opinion/displaystory.cfm?story_id=14214001

World Bank chief heads to Africa as economies hurt, *Reuters, August 7*

World Bank President Robert Zoellick travels to three countries in Africa next week to see for himself damage inflicted on the region from the global financial crisis and recession. His visit to the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda will focus on encouraging businesses and donors to invest in Africa, as the global crisis seems to be easing in industrialized economies but is still being felt in most of the developing world.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUSTRE5764L220090807>

WOMEN

Congo's Rape Epidemic Worsens During U.S.-Backed Military Operation, *The Washington Post, August 10*

For the women of eastern Congo, a U.S.-backed Congolese military operation meant to save them from abusive rebels has turned into a nightmare of its own. An already staggering epidemic of rape has become markedly worse since the January deployment of tens of thousands of poorly trained, poorly paid Congolese soldiers, with people in front-line villages such as this one saying the soldiers are not so much hunting rebels as hunting women.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/08/10/AR2009081000492.html?sid=ST2009081001043)

[dyn/content/article/2009/08/10/AR2009081000492.html?sid=ST2009081001043](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/08/10/AR2009081000492.html?sid=ST2009081001043)

Women key to food security, *University World News, August 9*

African women scientists have urged leaders on the continent and policy-makers in the United States to place women at the heart of efforts to tackle poverty and hunger in Sub-Saharan Africa and achieve food security. Their call was made during a visit to Kenyan research facilities by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton last week. The scientists expressed concern about the dearth of women involved in decision-making on agricultural development issues and argued that Sub-Saharan Africa would only be able to thwart food crises, achieve food security and cope effectively with the impacts of climate change if women were able to exert more influence over priorities, policies and programmes.

<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20090808191426168>

MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE ISSUES

A Global Surge in Tiny Loans Spurs Credit Bubble in a Slum, *Wall Street Journal, August 14*

A credit crisis is brewing in "microfinance," the business of making the tiniest loans in the world. Microlending fights poverty by helping poor people finance small businesses -- snack stalls, fruit trees, milk-producing buffaloes -- in slums and other places where it's tough to get a normal loan. But what began as a social experiment to aid the world's poorest has also shown it can turn a profit. That has attracted private-equity funds and other foreign investors, who've poured billions of dollars over the past few years into microfinance world-wide.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125012112518027581.html>

Africa's mobile banking revolution, *BBC, August 12*

It has been estimated that there are a billion people around the world who lack a bank account but own a mobile. Africa has the fastest-growing mobile phone market in the world and most of the operators are local firms. In countries like South Africa, for example, mobile phones outnumber fixed lines by eight to one. Setting up a bank account on your phone is straightforward. All you do is register with an approved agent, provide your phone, along with an ID card, and then deposit some cash onto your account. Mobile phone banking is attracting charitable backing. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation plans to put \$12.5m into a programme to extend services to the poor.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/8194241.stm>

The dangers of a carbon trade war, *Michael Levi, Op-Ed, Boston Globe, August 12*

Climate policy and trade policy are on a collision course. Last week, 10 Democratic senators sent a letter to President Obama demanding that cap-and-trade legislation include tariffs against dirty imports. Precisely

such tariffs, aimed at countries that are not doing enough to cut their greenhouse gas emissions, were part of the climate legislation recently passed in the House. Proponents argue that the tariffs are needed to prevent the loss of US jobs and the shift of emissions-generating activities to other countries. Free trade advocates are horrified at the prospect, which they worry could violate global trade rules and spark an economic war.
http://www.boston.com/lifestyle/green/articles/2009/08/12/the_dangers_of_a_carbon_trade_war/

Emerging Economies Hold Promise for Continent, *AllAfrica.com, August 10*

Africa's remarkable record of economic growth in recent years has to an important degree been underwritten by the explosive growth of countries like China. With new markets in which to sell their goods and alternative sources of financing, African countries have been able to lower their dependence on traditional partners in Europe and the US. But now the deepest world economic downturn since the Great Depression 80 years ago has dented Africa's burgeoning economic links with its new markets. Export orders have plummeted and many Chinese- and Indian-owned businesses have shut down or have been forced to lay off workers. Yet analysts are optimistic that the economic opportunities presented by emerging economies remain, albeit in less spectacular forms.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200908110111.html>

Country Seeks to Widen Its Export Share to the U.S., *AllAfrica.com, August 8*

A proposal to set up an export development fund is one of the strategies the Kenya government is exploring as it seeks ways of boosting the country's exports to the US market. The proposed fund, which will support the development and promotion of the country's export sector, comes in the wake of the just-concluded African Growth and Opportunity Act (Agoa) forum in Nairobi.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200908100524.html>

Africa: Continent Needs To 'Play Smart' in Trade With Asia, *AllAfrica.com, August 6*

About one-third of Africa's total trade is already with markets in emerging or other developing countries. China alone is now Africa's second-largest single trading partner. Analysts hope these new ties will help Africa rebound from the current global slump, but a new UN study argues that African governments and companies must play smart if they are to reap the full benefits of South-South trade: "Whilst some emerging economies have a strategy for Africa, Africa does not have a strategy towards the emerging economies," notes the UN Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) in the new report.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200908060952.html>

More East African countries to benefit from broadband, *SciDev.net, August 5*

Malawi, Mozambique and Tanzania are set to benefit from affordable communications services following a US\$151 million funding boost from the World Bank. The region is the only one not fully connected to the world's broadband infrastructure, and has the lowest number of telephone and Internet users, as well as high tariffs. About 200 million people are dependent on expensive satellite connectivity. As a result, an international call costs about 10-20 times more than in developed countries and Internet access is about 40 times more costly than in the United States.

<http://www.scidev.net/en/news/more-east-african-countries-to-benefit-from-broadb.html>

AGRIBUSINESS

Britain sees GM foods as answer to self-sufficiency, *Financial Times, August 11*

Genetically modified crops could be part of the solution for making British agriculture more self-sufficient, Hilary Benn, environment minister, said yesterday as the government launched its first review of the nation's food security. "We need to produce as much food as we can ourselves," Mr Benn said as he encouraged consumers to eat seasonally grown British vegetables - instead of out-of-season imports - as part of a drive to make the country less dependent on overseas producers.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/dc9f0f32-860e-11de-98de-00144feabdc0.html>

*See Also: 'Radical rethink' needed on food, *BBC News, August 10**

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/8189549.stm>

The New Investment Frontier, *AllAfrica.com*, August 11

Companies from South Africa, the European Union, the US, and Australia are already looking at projects in mining, agriculture and the manufacturing of primary products. Canadian Caledonia Mining recently announced it would double gold production from its Zimbabwe mines, while steel maker Arcelor Mittal's South African unit is reportedly interested in taking over state-owned Zimbabwe Iron & steel Co. Agro-processing firm Tongaat Hulett plans to inject R145 million in its sugar mills in Zimbabwe to restore full productivity. For investors who got in early, like mobile operator Econet and agribusiness firm Delta Corp, dollarisation of the economy in April rewarded their foresight, enabling companies to achieve quick gains, with Econet reaching a market cap of \$500 million from \$200 million.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200908120463.html>

Qatar's Hassad Food eyes firms instead of farmland, *Forbes*, August 11

Hassad Food, owned by Qatar's sovereign wealth fund, will buck the Gulf Arab trend of buying farmland abroad to secure food supplies and consider taking stakes in agricultural companies instead, its chairman said. Nasser Mohamed Al Hajri said on Tuesday that Hassad Food had an eye to profitability as well as food security, in looking at company acquisitions rather than land purchases. Foreign land acquisitions, sometimes labelled land grabs, have provoked opposition from some groups and from many farmers in developing nations.

http://www.forbes.com/feeds/reuters/2009/08/11/2009-08-11T165730Z_01_LB239216_RTRIDST_0_QATAR-AGRICULTURE-INTERVIEW.html

Antitrust Enforcers Begin Visiting Farm Belt, *Scott Kilman*, *The Wall Street Journal*, August 8

The Obama administration will take an extensive look at concentration in U.S. agriculture as part of its increased emphasis on antitrust enforcement, a Justice Department official said. Philip J. Weiser, a telecommunications-law expert who was recently named deputy assistant attorney general, told a farmer gathering here that federal antitrust regulators are "committed to examining" the level of competition in several agribusiness sectors, such as the marketing of genetically modified seed, dairy processing and meatpacking. Washington has often sympathized with farmers who find themselves selling their commodities to fewer and larger processors. But the Obama administration is taking a further step, with plans for a nationwide series of sessions next year for the U.S. Agriculture Department to hear competitive concerns of farmers.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124966657364914957.html>

Banner Photograph: © Ray Witlin / World Bank