



May 1st-8th, 2009

For more information on the Global Agricultural Development Project and previous editions of *Global Food for Thought*, please visit www.thechicagocouncil.org/globalagdevelopment.

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KEY ARTICLES

Experts say world nears record 1 billion hungry people, despite drop in food prices, *Chicago Tribune*, May 6

The number of hungry people in the world could soon hit a record 1 billion, despite a recent drop in food prices, the U.N. food aid organization said. The recent financial crisis, though it has helped bring global food prices down, also has led to falling trade and lower development aid, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization's general director, Jacques Diouf. As a result of the crisis, an additional 104 million people were likely to go hungry this year.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/sns-ap-eu-france-world-hunger.0.1612447.story>

See Also: **World Food Situation: Food Price Indices**, *FAO*, May 2009

<http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/FoodPricesIndex/en/>

FAO Food Price Index Data:

http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/worldfood/Reports_and_docs/Food_price_indices_data.xls

Don't Forget About Foreign Aid, *Madeleine Albright and Colin Powell, Op-Ed, The Wall Street Journal*, May 5

President Barack Obama's inaugural address included a ringing endorsement of U.S. engagement with the developing world: "To the people of poor nations, we pledge to work alongside you to make your farms flourish and let clean waters flow; to nourish starved bodies and feed hungry minds." He announced plans to work with Congress to double support for agricultural development, a driver of economic growth in many of the world's poorest countries.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124148276774185481.html>

Revisiting the Global Food Price Crisis, *Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, May 2009*

At about this time last year, a massive wave of concern over drastic increases in global food prices crested and then seemed to recede, as storm clouds gathered on the wider economic horizon. Does that mean the food crisis is over? Or has concern about food security simply been swamped by greater fears over the consequences of a prolonged global economic recession? The answer to both questions is a resounding “no.” <http://www.cgiar.org/monthlystory/may2009.html>

Africa: Carson Assumes Top U.S. Africa Policy Post, Departs for Zuma Inauguration, *AllAfrica.com, May 7*

Ambassador Johnnie Carson was sworn in Wednesday as U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, the administration's senior Africa policymaking position. His nomination by President Obama, which was announced on March 21, was approved by the U.S. Senate by unanimous consent on Tuesday night. <http://allafrica.com/stories/200905080001.html>

Africa's Surprise Success Story, *Tony Blair, The Daily Beast, April 29*

Africa may have escaped the initial shock of the global financial crisis, but it is not being spared from its knock-on effects. Foreign investment is drying up, aid budgets are being slashed, remittances are down, and NGOs are struggling to raise funds. Sierra Leone is one such country. With 57 percent of Sierra Leoneans living on less than a dollar a day, the scale of the challenge is immense. But so is the scale of the opportunity. From agriculture and fisheries to services and tourism, Sierra Leone has huge untapped potential. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/blogs-and-stories/2009-04-29/africas-surprise-success-story/>

Plan to end global hunger needs support, *Helene Gayle, Op-Ed, Atlanta Journal Constitution, April 26*

In the fight against global poverty, the United States has a history of punching far below its weight. Government efforts, however well-intentioned, are spread across multiple agencies, without enough coordination. Nothing drives this home like the way we've approached hunger. U.S. officials too often have thrown food at the problem, flooding local markets with cheap imports and bankrupting local farmers our development dollars aim to support. <http://www.ajc.com/services/content/printedition/2009/04/26/gayleed0426.html>

The Next Big Thing: H2O, *Peter Brabeck-Letmathe (Chairman, Nestlé), Foreign Policy, May/June 2009*

As food prices skyrocketed over the last two years, countries and state-sponsored companies were quietly snapping up land around the world. Few noticed when South Korea began investing in farms in Madagascar, or when China, Japan, Libya, Egypt, and Persian Gulf countries acquired farmland in Laos, Cambodia, Burma, Mozambique, Uganda, Ethiopia, Brazil, Pakistan, Central Asia, and Russia. The purchases weren't about land, but water. http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=4853

Out of Africa? *Francis Fukuyama, Slate, May 4*

Between 2002 and 2008, sub-Saharan Africa started growing again, buoyed like much of the rest of the world by the global commodity boom and Chinese investment. The turnaround signals the possibility of new opportunities for Africans, yet the past year's astonishing drop in commodity prices as a result of the global recession suggests how fragile that upswing is. <http://www.slate.com/id/2217394/>

Farm Futures: Bringing Agriculture Back to U.S. Policy, *Foreign Affairs, May/June 2009*

By Dan Glickman and Catherine Bertini

It is not easy for Americans to understand the starvation that afflicts much of the developing world. Families in the poorest parts of Africa and Asia spend up to 80 percent of their incomes on food; for the average U.S. household, that would mean an annual grocery bill of \$40,000. Yes, there are hungry Americans in the millions, and the U.S. food-stamp program is operating at record levels. But hunger in the United States does not put tens of thousands of infants into hospitals and require them to be hooked up to feeding tubes. Nor does it lead to stunting, wasting, and debilitating forms of malnutrition, such as kwashiorkor and marasmus. Yet even if Americans strain to comprehend the depth of hunger that plagues much of Africa and Asia, they do care about it. They know that chronic hunger among Afghans, Congolese, or North Koreans can pose a threat

to their national security. Surveys conducted by the Pew Research Center have consistently revealed that Americans want to make ending hunger and poverty a priority for U.S. foreign policy. A recent survey conducted by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs showed that the American public feels aid to poor farmers overseas should play a more prominent role than any other form of U.S. development assistance.
<http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/FA.pdf>

NEW REPORTS/POLICY BRIEFS

Gender, Poverty and Environmental Indicators on African Countries 2009, *African Development Bank, May 2009*

Gender, Poverty and Environmental Indicators on African Countries 2009 is divided in three main parts: Part One presents a special feature article on Assessing progress towards the attainment of the MDGs in Africa and the status of the MDGs Africa Initiative; Part two focuses on Africa's progress towards attaining the Millennium Development Goals with three sections presenting comparative crosscountry data on Gender, Poverty and the Environment; and Part Three provides detailed country-specific data for each of the 53 countries.

http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Vacancies/GenderPovertyEnvironmental_IndicatorsAfricanCountries2009_01_Full_Report.pdf

The Global Economic Crisis: Challenges for Developing Asia and ADB's Response, *Asian Development Bank, May 2009*

This paper provides a brief overview of the evolving economic crisis in developing Asia and ADB's response.
<http://www.adb.org/Documents/Reports/Economic-Crisis/Global-Economic-Crisis-042709.pdf>

Measuring the Economic Impacts of Transgenic Crops in Developing Agriculture during the First Decade: Approaches, Findings, and Future Directions, *International Food Policy Research Institute, May 2009*

Biotechnology in agriculture has generated a great deal of controversy in recent years. The use of crops that are modified by the transfer of genes across species has provoked concerns that continue to be echoed in the media and the academic press and have reached into the fields and lives of farmers in both rich and poor countries. This review of scholarly literature explores a key concern of IFPRI's: whether biotech crops can benefit poor farmers.

<http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/fpreview/pv10.pdf>

Future water availability for global food production: The potential of green water for increasing resilience to global change, *Water Resources Research, May 2009*

While past strategies for agricultural water management have focused on irrigation (use of blue water), this paper demonstrates the dominance of green water in food production. A global, yet spatially disaggregated, green-blue analysis of water availability and requirement, using the LPJmL dynamic vegetation and water balance model, indicates that many countries currently assessed as severely water short are able to produce enough food for their populations if green water is considered and is managed well.

Abstract: <http://www.agu.org/pubs/crossref/2009/2007WR006767.shtml>

See Also: **Better use of water helps reduce future food crisis: study**, *Xinhua*, May 6
http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-05/06/content_11319749.htm

Towards an Integrated Global Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Model: Greenhouse Gases from Agriculture Simulation Model (GreenAgSiM), *Center for Agricultural and Rural Development, May 2009*

The Greenhouse Gases from Agriculture Simulation Model (GreenAgSiM) presented in this paper aims to quantify emissions from agricultural activity on a global scale. The model takes emissions into account that are directly attributable to agricultural production, such as enteric fermentation, manure management, and agricultural soil management.

<http://www.card.iastate.edu/publications/DBS/PDFFiles/09wp490.pdf>

Is global warming the defining challenge of our age? *Indur M. Goklany (Office of Policy Analysis, US Department of the Interior), Energy & Environment, Vol. 20 No. 3, May 2009*

In order to deal with climate change beyond the 2085-2100 timeframe, the paper recommends expanding research and development of mitigation options, reducing barriers to implementing such options, and active science and monitoring programs to provide early warning of any “dangerous” climate change impacts.

http://goklany.org/library/Goklany%202009%20EE%2020-3_1.pdf

Potential Impacts of Climate Change in the United States, *Congressional Budget Office, May 2009*

This Congressional Budget Office (CBO) paper—prepared at the request of the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources—presents an overview of the current understanding of the impacts of climate change in the United States, emphasizing the wide range of uncertainty about the magnitude and timing of those impacts and the implications of that uncertainty for the formulation of effective policy responses.

http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/101xx/doc10107/05-04-ClimateChange_forWeb.pdf

Comparing U.S. and EU Program Support for Farm Commodities and Conservation, *Congressional Research Service, April 2009*

The European Union (EU) is one of the United States’ chief agricultural trading partners and also a major competitor in world food markets. Both the United States and the EU provide significant government support for their agricultural sectors. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the EU and the United States together accounted for more than 60% of all government support to agriculture among the major developed economies in 2007.

<http://www.farmpolicy.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/crs-report-us-and-eu-program-support.pdf>

The global financial crisis: risks for fragile states in Africa, *Overseas Development Institute, April 2009*

This Opinion argues that the impact of the global financial crisis in fragile states has serious implications for peace and security. With economic and social stability going hand in hand, recession could result in increased unrest and violence in countries that are already under pressure as a result of poverty and the effects of high food and fuel prices.

<http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/3064.pdf>

Action on Aid: Steps Toward Making Aid More Effective, *Homi Kharas, Brookings Institution, April 2009*

In a recent report, Homi Kharas presents several fundamental challenges to delivering more effective aid and offers actionable steps to resolve them. Here, Kharas notes the challenge of aid volatility; he highlights the fact that despite recent emergency efforts, improving aid effectiveness remains a key activity in helping low-income countries recover from the global financial crisis.

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2009/04_aid_kharas/04_aid_kharas.pdf

See Also: A Case Study of Aid Effectiveness in Ethiopia: Analysis of the Health Sector Aid Architecture, *Getnet Alemu, Brookings Institution, April 2009*

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2009/04_ethiopia_aid_alemu/04_ethiopia_aid_alemu.pdf

Social protection: A global imperative, *Overseas Development Institute, April 2009*

In April 2009, the G-20 committed to fund social protection for the poorest countries as part of its global plan for recovery. This Opinion sets out the agenda needed to translate words into action, outlining what should be done by both developing country governments and international donors.

<http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/3271.pdf>

Developing Countries: The United States Has Not Fully Funded Its Share of Debt Relief, and the Impact of Debt Relief on Countries' Poverty-Reducing Spending Is Unknown, *Government Accountability Office, January 2009*

In 1996, the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative was created to provide debt relief to poor countries that had reached unsustainable levels of debt. In 2005, the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) expanded upon the HIPC Initiative by eliminating additional debt owed to four international financial

institutions (IFI): the IMF, World Bank's International Development Association (IDA), African Development Fund (ADF), and Inter-American Development Bank (IaDB).

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d09162.pdf>

SUMMARIES – FY10 BUDGET REQUEST AND RECENT LEGISLATION

President Obama FY10 International Affairs Budget Request – Summary of Agricultural Development Funding Request

Summary

The President's budget requests **\$3.4 billion** to address global food insecurity, including emergency and non-emergency food aid, funding for other emergency food security interventions such as local and regional purchase of food and cash transfer and voucher programs, nutrition for children, especially those under two, and assistance focusing on increasing agricultural production and productivity. Of this amount, **\$1.4 billion is for agricultural development assistance, \$1.7 billion for Title II PL 480.**

The Administration's principal priorities for increases in DA funding in FY 2010 include:

- Working on long-term development programs that add value to agriculture, particularly in well-governed but food insecure countries in Africa and other low-income regions.
- Support for policy reform and improved governance, expanded agricultural research and extension, improved rural infrastructure, and other related development programs will increase agricultural productivity, raise the incomes both of farmers and the landless rural poor, increase the supply and lower the cost of high-quality food products in both rural and urban markets, improve nutrition and health, stimulate rapid, broad-based economic growth and poverty reduction, and reduce dependence on food based humanitarian assistance over time.
- Funding is also requested for a multilateral contribution to support agricultural development.

A summary of the President's FY10 International Affairs budget request is attached. To view the budget request in full, please visit

<http://www.africanhunger.org/uploads/articles/568f27cc331f64f106e4354b65fa69c0.pdf>.

Thanks to Sue Schram of the Coalition for Agricultural Development and Julie Howard of the Partnership to Cut Hunger and Poverty in Africa for sharing this information.

Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009, cosponsored by Senator John Kerry and Senator Richard Lugar

Originally introduced with Senator Joe Biden in July 2008, this legislation aims to help transform the relationship between the U.S. and Pakistan: instead of a transactional, tactically-driven set of short-term exercises in crisis-management, the legislation will aim to build a deeper, broader, long-term strategic engagement with the people (and not just the leaders). The bill includes authorizations for funding towards agricultural development and food security in Pakistan.

For a summary of the legislation please see <http://www.lugar.senate.gov/sfrc/pdf/PakistanSummary.pdf>.

See also: Presidents of Pakistan, Afghanistan Meet With Senators Weighing Aid, Washington Post, May 8

Senators who will shortly be voting on massive aid packages for Afghanistan and Pakistan grilled the presidents of both countries yesterday about their dedication to the fight against extremists and the capabilities of their democratic governments.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/07/AR2009050704181.html>

UPCOMING EVENTS

House Hunger Caucus Briefing: U.S. International Food Aid, Nutrition, and Agriculture Development Programs

Date: May 13, 2009

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Location: 210 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C.

Contact: Eileen Hyde, eileen.hyde@mail.house.gov

Members of the world community have renewed their commitment to address acute and chronic hunger and to promote greater global food security. At the recent G-20 Summit in London, President Obama pledged to work with Congress and double U.S. support for agriculture development and aid for vulnerable populations in the developing world. Soon after, Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack also addressed this issue in meetings with other G-8 Secretaries of Agriculture to discuss collective efforts for food security. At this important briefing, high-level experts from federal agencies and departments will describe the role of U.S. international food aid, nutrition, agriculture and other development programs in achieving global food security. This briefing is open to all Members of Congress, congressional staff and the public.

Panelists discussing U.S. international food aid, nutrition and agriculture development programs will be:

- **Jolyne Sanjak**, Managing Director for Implementation Support in the Department of Compact Implementation at the Millennium Development Corporation
- **Patricia R. Sheikh**, Acting Associate Administrator at the Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service
- **Bill Craft**, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Trade Policy and Programs at the Department of State
- **Franklin Moore**, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Africa at the Agency for International Development
- **Gayle Smith**, Senior Director at the National Security Council

"The Future of Kenya and Africa," The Honorable Raila Amolo Odinga, Prime Minister of the Republic of Kenya

Date: May 21, 2009

Location: Intercontinental Hotel, Chicago, IL

Kenya, which is expected to achieve economic growth rates of at least 3% in 2009 even amid the global economic challenges, is considered the leading economy in East Africa and has much to attract foreign investment. Yet not all Kenyans or Africans in the region are enjoying the benefits of economic growth, and concerted domestic and international effort is needed to overcome levels of extreme poverty. The Honorable Raila Amolo Odinga, prime minister of the Republic of Kenya, will share his thoughts on the future of his country, and how international investment and partnerships can be most effective for reducing poverty and increasing economic growth.

To register, please visit

http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/chicago_council_event_corporate_detail.php?eventid=2079

"Africa and the Financial Crisis: An Agenda for Action"

Date: May 13-14, 2009

Location: Dakar, Senegal

The 2009 Annual Meetings of the Boards of Governors of the African Development Bank and the African Development Fund will be held in Dakar, Senegal, at the King Fahd Complex Conference Center, Meridian President Hotel, on 13-14 May 2009 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. They will be preceded by technical meetings.

<http://www.afdb.org/en/annual-meetings/>

The World Agricultural Forum's Sixth Biennial World Congress,

Date: May 18-20, 2009

Location: St. Louis Ballpark Hilton Hotel, St. Louis, MO

Speakers: Honorable James Bolger (ONZ, former Prime Minister of New Zealand and Ambassador to the United States); Honorable Raghuvendra Reddy (Minister of Agriculture for Andhra Pradesh, India and Paul Collier)

The World Congress provides one of the world's largest biennial gatherings of agricultural leaders in government, non-governmental organizations, businesses and academia to discuss the world's growing population and the impacts on food, fuel, fiber and water in both emerging and developed markets.

<http://www.wisconsinagconnection.com/story-national.php?Id=742&yr=2009>

Book Launch – How Multilateral Banks Can Help Developing Countries Manage Volatility

Date: May 21, 2009

Time: 4:00-5:30 p.m.

Location: Center for Global Development, Washington, D.C.

As the demand for traditional loans grows once again, Guillermo Perry's new book *Beyond Lending* is a timely reminder that multilateral development banks should move beyond lending to provide innovative risk-management tools for developing countries to manage volatility in pursuit of sustained growth. Join us for the book launch event of *Beyond Lending*, with discussants Nancy Lee, Santiago Levy, and Arvind Subramanian adding their views to this debate.

<http://www.join.cgdev.org/site/Calendar?view=Detail&id=102861>

45th Annual Conference and 2009 Future Leaders Forum: “The Global Food Crisis” (hosted by the Association of International Agriculture and Rural Development)

Date: May 31-June 3, 2009

Location: 550 C Street SW, Washington, D.C.

The 45th Annual Conference will attract a wide array of leaders, field-based experts, students, scholars, and many others from government, academia, business, foundations and elsewhere. The program will consist of presentations by speakers who have been front and center in implementing strategies to alleviate the current crisis as well as long term planners who will think ahead to ways to prevent such a crisis.

<http://aiard.org/meetings/2009annual/invitation.htm>

Joint International Agricultural Conference

Date: July 6-8, 2009

Location: Droevendaalsesteeg 2, 6708 PB Wageningen, Netherlands

The main objective of the joint conference will be to form a platform for cooperation between different fields of research and to provide an opportunity to join forces with representatives from the agricultural industry and policy makers. A second objective will be to exchange research efforts focusing on precision agriculture, precision livestock farming and information technology in agriculture, food and the environment.

<http://www.jiac2009.nl/Home/tabid/362/Default.aspx>

Bread for the World's Gathering 2009

Date: June 14-16, 2009

Location: Washington, D.C.

Register online at <http://ga4.org/Bread/events/gathering/details.tcl>.

*****SAVE THE DATE*** ENOUGH: Why the World's Poorest Starve in an Age of Plenty Book Release, by SCOTT KILMAN and ROGER THUROW**

Date: June 17, 2009

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Location: Blackstone Hotel, Chicago, IL

For more than 40 years, humankind has had the knowledge, tools, and resources to end chronic hunger worldwide. Yet at the start of the twenty-first century, 25,000 people a day – and nearly six million children a year – die of hunger, malnutrition, and related diseases. Malnutrition kills more Africans than AIDS and malaria combined. In this compelling investigative narrative, Roger Thurow and Scott Kilman, award-winning writers on Africa, development, and agriculture, explain through vivid human stories how the agricultural revolutions that transformed South America and Asia stopped short in Africa. They argue passionately and convincingly that this generation is the one that could finally end the scourge that has haunted the human race since its beginning.

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

AGRICULTURAL ISSUES

Remarks at U.S.-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Consultations II, Secretary Hillary Clinton, U.S.

Department of State, May 6

"And we'll be talking today about the concrete initiatives to expand economic opportunities and trade, to bolster the agricultural sector as an essential source of revenue and jobs in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, to help build up the industrial sector in Pakistan again so that it is creating more jobs and opportunities for people, and to improve our joint cooperation on security."

<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/05/122706.htm>

Land: Africa's last great treasure, The Globe and Mail (Canada), May 6

Many of the world's biggest and richest countries are buying or renting huge swaths of farmland in the world's poorest countries. Under pressure from growing populations and climate change - and worried by the food crisis of 2007-08, when prices soared and exporting countries halted food exports - the rich are seeking food security by acquiring land in Africa and Asia.

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/LAC.20090506.MADAGASCAR06ART2246/TPStory/International>

Ensuring food security for the world's poor, Remarks by OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría following the OECD-FAO high level meeting, May 6

"One year ago, almost to the day, I sat here together with Jacques Diouf to discuss the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook. Those were days of soaring commodity prices which placed the issues of poverty, hunger and malnutrition squarely at the centre of international attention. Well, a year has passed and these issues are still at that very centre of our concerns, but with a stronger sense of urgency."

http://www.oecd.org/document/20/0,3343,en_2649_201185_42705364_1_1_1_1.00.html

Standard Chartered, Germany's DEG Partner on African Farm Loans, Bloomberg, May 6

The German development finance institution DEG and London-based Standard Chartered will distribute 100 million euros (\$133 million) of agricultural loans in sub-Saharan Africa over the next three years. The program will aim to improve cultivation methods and help small-scale farmers in Africa to source supplies. Agriculture contributes more than 30 percent of Africa's gross domestic product.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601116&sid=a9lLXFVBL0uw&refer=africa>

Modern crop varieties can increase local genetic diversity, Bioversity International, May 6

It is often claimed that the introduction of high-yielding crop varieties threatens agricultural biodiversity. Farmers who adopt the modern varieties abandon their traditional varieties and overall genetic diversity falls as a result. Generally this is true, but a new paper published online in *Field Crops Research* shows that it need not be the case, especially if the modern varieties count farmer varieties among their parents.

http://www.bioversityinternational.org/news_and_events/news/news/article/modern_crop_varieties_can_increase_local_genetic_diversity.html

81 unusual projects get \$100K in Gates grants, *Associated Press, May 5*

A tomato that delivers antiviral drugs when eaten? How about a fungus that acts like a head cold for malaria-carrying mosquitoes? These are among 81 projects awarded \$100,000 grants by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to support innovative, unconventional global health research. The foundation also announced plans to spend \$73 million over the next five years to help small farmers in impoverished countries.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5hnRcTtHCIV75WBg9DtLCKn-8du2wD97VJD000>

Q&A: "Boosting Agriculture Is Not an Option But an Imperative", *Inter Press Service News Agency, May 5*

New support from donors will enable the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) to help about 70 million poor smallholder farmers increase their productivity and incomes over the next five years, the Fund's new president Kanayo F. Nwanze told IPS.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=46729>

Association of Public and Land-grant Universities Calls for Boosting Federal Funding for Agriculture Research by \$100 Million Annually, *Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, May 5*

The United States should make a sustained commitment to the nation's flagship agricultural competitive grants research program by increasing funding by \$100 million per year over the next five years, according to a coalition that includes the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities and 70 university presidents, deans of agriculture and veterinary medicine, and others. The coalition calls on the federal government to increase funding for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) by \$100 million per year.

<http://www.aplu.org/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=1270>

Gates Foundation CEO outlines agriculture goals, *Associated Press, May 4*

Agriculture is a poverty solution that's been ignored by poor countries and the large donor nations that give them aid, the leader of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation said on Monday.

Jeff Raikes, chief executive of the foundation and a former Microsoft executive, outlined an agriculture plan that includes spending about \$73 million over the next five years to help small farmers in impoverished countries boost yields and reduce costs, among other things.

<http://www.forbes.com/feeds/ap/2009/05/04/ap6374858.html>

Fight to End World Hunger Could Still be Lost, says FAO, *VOA News, May 4*

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization says there's growing evidence that the fight against world hunger could be lost. It estimates nearly one billion people worldwide suffer from hunger and malnutrition compared with 825 million about 10 years ago.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/Africa/2009-05-04-voa32.cfm>

Migiro urges sustainable African Green Revolution to tackle food crisis, *UN News Centre, May 4*

Pointing to Africa as the epicentre of the global food crisis, the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General called for an African Green Revolution, urging the international community to double food yields across the continent through sustainable agriculture. "In contrast to the original Green Revolution of the 1960s and 1970s, which largely bypassed Africa, this must be a sustainable green revolution," Asha-Rose Migiro said.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30692&Cr=food+crisis&Cr1>

See Also: Deputy Secretary-General's opening remarks to the 17th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, *United Nations, May 4*

<http://www.un.org/apps/dsg/dsgstats.asp?nid=168>

Land grab: The race for the world's farmland, *The Independent (U.K.), May 3*

In Africa they are calling it the land grab, or the new colonialism. Countries hungry to secure their food supplies – including Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, South Korea (the world's third biggest importer of corn) China, India, Libya and Egypt – are at the forefront of a frantic rush to gobble up farmland all around the world, but mainly cash-starved Africa.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/analysis-and-features/land-grab-the-race-for-the-worlds-farmland-1677852.html>

Communists' Land Plan Could Backfire in India, *The New York Times*, May 2

Promising land to the landless, the Communists won Abdul Bakir Shah's heart decades ago. Under an ambitious land reform drive, Mr. Shah, a sharecropper all his life, got title to nearly one fertile acre. His village and others like it have voted Communist since, keeping the party in power for an uninterrupted 32 years here in West Bengal State. But things went topsy-turvy two years ago.

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/03/world/asia/03communists.html?_r=1&emc=eta1

Sustainability and Crop Engineering, *Green Inc. Blog, The New York Times*, April 30

A three-day conference — "Feeding a Hot and Hungry Planet: The Challenge of Making More Food and Fewer Greenhouse Gases" — commenced at Princeton University, bringing together scientists and agricultural experts from across the globe. The use of corn, cotton and soybean crops that are genetically modified to be resistant to certain pests or herbicides is already widespread in many parts of the world, so all the big issues were on the table — including whether genetically modified crops are "sustainable."

<http://greeninc.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/04/30/sustainability-and-crop-engineering/>

AU: Africa not benefiting from foreign land deals, *Reuters*, April 28

Africa is giving vast tracts of farmland to rich nations looking to feed their own people without ensuring those on the world's hungriest continent benefit, the African Union (AU) said. "African countries have not been in a reasonable bargaining position," AU Agriculture Commissioner Rhoda Peace Tumusiime told Reuters in an interview at AU headquarters in Addis Ababa. "The pace of the trend was very fast and they didn't envisage that there should be benefits to the community."

<http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSLS816189>

Rice Today, *International Rice Research Institute*, April 2009 – June 2009

Complete Issue (2 PDF files): http://beta.irri.org/news/images/stories/ricetoday/8-2/rt8-2_complete.zip

FOREIGN ASSISTANCE**EU to give Kenya 400 million Euros for development**, *Reuters*, May 5

The European Union has promised Kenya 399.4 million euros (\$528.7 million) in grants over five years for development projects in east Africa's largest economy. Businesses in the region have long complained that poor infrastructure raises their costs and makes east Africa less competitive when compared with other areas. "The EU will provide 399.4 million euros ... to support transport infrastructure, to enhance regional integration, agriculture and rural development and other programmes," said Mutua Kilaka, a senior official in Kenya's finance ministry.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSL5570158>

FAO-OECD to weigh investments against hunger, *FAO*, May 4

Amid growing evidence that the fight against hunger risks being lost, senior experts from FAO and the OECD opened a two-day, high-level meeting tomorrow to map out long-term investment and financing strategies to avert the menace of unprecedented levels of hunger. Under-investment in agriculture over the past 30 years, high and volatile food prices and continuing economic turmoil are all combining to sharply increase the level of global food insecurity, which is expected to aggravate further this year as the financial and economic crisis hits the developing countries.

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/19334/icode/>

The 'How' and 'Why' of Reforming U.S. Foreign Assistance, *David Beckmann, Huffington Post*, April 30

Since its origins after World War II, U.S. foreign assistance has served our national interests in three ways: enhancing national security, fighting poverty and expanding global economic opportunities, and promoting American values. Despite many successful programs, the system remains badly outdated, poorly organized and generally ill equipped to meet today's global challenges.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-beckmann/the-how-and-why-of-reform_b_194109.html

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID): Management Challenges and Strategic Objectives, *Testimony before the Subcommittee on Government Management, Organization, and Procurement, April 28*

Testimony of Mr. Mike Walsh:

<http://governmentmanagement.oversight.house.gov/documents/20090428084328.pdf>

Testimony of Mr. James Kunder:

<http://governmentmanagement.oversight.house.gov/documents/20090428084544.pdf>

Testimony of Mr. George Ingram:

<http://governmentmanagement.oversight.house.gov/documents/20090428084630.pdf>

ENVIRONMENT (WATER/CLIMATE)

The Climate Debate Heats Up, *The New York Times, May 8*

Earlier this week, and not a moment too soon, President Obama put the weight of his office behind a bill that aims to reduce the nation's dependence on foreign oil, tackle the rise in greenhouse gases and create millions of clean-energy jobs.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/08/opinion/08fri1.html?scp=1&sq=climate&st=cse>

Farm groups seek stake in House climate bill, *The New York Times, April 30*

As House Democrats work behind closed doors to shore up support on a major energy and climate bill, agriculture groups are pleading for major changes to make it more palatable in farm states.

<http://www.nytimes.com/cwire/2009/04/30/30climatewire-farm-groups-seek-stake-in-house-climate-bill-12208.html>

UN gathers experts to help West African farmers cope with climate change, *UN News Centre, April 28*

West Africa, home to 43 per cent of the total population of sub-Saharan Africa, is one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change in the world. The region suffered a 20 to 40 per cent drop in rainfall from the mid to late 20th century, according to a UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report. In addition, IPCC projections indicate that Africa is very likely to warm during this century, decreasing the length of growing seasons for farmers and cutting the potential size of harvests in West Africa.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30623&Cr=africa&Cr1=west+africa>

The Environment and Poverty Reduction, *Millennium Challenge Corporation, April 22*

Through the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the U.S. Government is helping developing countries address natural resource and environmental challenges. MCC's focus on long-term, sustainable economic growth, sound policies, and country-led development encourages countries to establish the appropriate policy and institutional frameworks.

<http://www.mcc.gov/documents/factsheet-042209-mccandtheenvironment.pdf>

GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

Asia faces up to challenges of global crisis, *Reuters, May 4*

The global downturn could lead to unrest, more poverty and environmental challenges in Asia, regional leaders were warned on Monday, after they agreed on a \$120 billion emergency fund to counter the crisis. Asia has been hard hit by the collapse in global demand largely because of the region's heavy reliance on exports. Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan are in recession and growth elsewhere is the weakest in years.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/04/AR2009050400689.html>

Zimbabwe's Economy Shrank 14.1%, Causing 'Catastrophic' Poverty, *Bloomberg, May 6*

Zimbabwe's economy contracted 14.1 percent in 2008, while public spending collapsed, pushing unemployment and poverty to "catastrophic" levels, the International Monetary Fund said. Zimbabwe's economy has shrunk every year this past decade after President Robert Mugabe seized farms belonging to

white farmers to redistribute to blacks. That slashed export earnings, resulting in shortages of food, fuel and foreign exchange.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601116&sid=aqYtGGHistC4&refer=africa>

South Africa's Unemployment Rate Increases to 23.5%, *Bloomberg, May 5*

South Africa's unemployment rate rose in the first quarter as the economy probably entered a recession for the first time in 17 years.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601116&sid=aoB7RbcZCRfU&refer=africa>

Ghana: Economic crisis could halt hunger reduction gains, *IRIN News, April 30*

Rising inflation and drops in foreign investment, exports and remittances are combining with high food prices to increase the number of Ghanaians vulnerable to food insecurity, the World Food Programme and Food and Agriculture Organization say in a joint assessment.

<http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportID=84188>

WOMEN

African Women Worst Affected by Global Economic Crisis, *Inter Press Service News Agency, May 6*

The global financial crisis is on everyone's lips. With first hand reports of job losses, house foreclosures and citizens living on credit card debt, the impact of the crisis on the individual worker in the developed world is clear. In Africa, there have been threats of closures and retrenchments in the Zambian copper mines and Botswana's diamond mines, amongst others. But the impact on the individual citizen and African women in particular, given the existing gender inequalities, has not been well documented.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/africa/nota.asp?idnews=46746>

Women bear brunt of hunger crisis in Africa, world, *Associated Press, April 25*

Ancient traditions and modern circumstances often combine to place the burden on women to feed their poor families. Researchers say women do as much as 80 percent of the farm work in poor countries. And, with food and fertilizer prices rising, and AIDS and the global financial meltdown taking their toll, women are straining under growing responsibilities.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20090425/ap_on_re_af/af_africa_women_and_hunger

MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE ISSUES

Higher commodity prices fuel surge in hedging, *Financial Times, May 8*

The sharp rise in commodity prices in recent weeks is spurring unnerved corporate consumers to hedge their exposure to raw materials and rebuild depleted inventories.

As commodities prices rose yesterday to their highest level in six months, traders said there were signs of widespread activity among consumers - from airlines hedging their exposure to rising oil prices and car manufactures buying cheap aluminium to food companies securing supplies.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/646231da-3b67-11de-ba91-00144feabdc0.html>

Export bans stoke food fears, fuel land grab-FAO, *Reuters, May 5*

Export bans during last year's food crisis hurt global confidence in trade and helped push investors to buy up farmland in developing nations, an official from the United Nations' food agency said on Tuesday.

http://www.forbes.com/feeds/reuters/2009/05/05/2009-05-05T231815Z_01_N05202654_RTRIDST_0_AGRICULTURE-LANDGRAB.html

BIOFUELS
The Next Big Thing: Better Biofuels, *Foreign Policy*, May/June 2009

More than half of the world's bioethanol is generated from sugar cane; the rest, controversially, comes mainly from corn. Biodiesel is mostly derived from rapeseed and sunflower. Jatropha and other "wild" crops are barely in their infancy. On the whole, biofuel crops as a tool to lift small farmers out of poverty remain an unfulfilled dream. The real promise for biofuels lies not in food or feed crops, but in nonfood organic material such as grass, wood, organic waste (this may include the inedible part of crops, such as stalks), and algae.

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=4852

Barack Obama's \$1.8bn vision of greener biofuel, *The Guardian (U.K.)*, May 6

The Obama administration took on the powerful farming interests in America's heartland today, making clear it does not see corn-based ethanol as part of the long-term solution to climate change. Administration officials set out a \$1.8bn (£1.19bn) plan to develop a new generation of more environmentally-friendly biofuels that are not made from food crops and have a lower carbon footprint, while also providing an immediate bail-out of existing corn ethanol producers, which are suffering in the global economic crisis: falling petrol prices have undercut demand for ethanol at the pump.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/may/06/obama-ethanol-green-biofuel>

White House to Step Up Ethanol Efforts, *The Wall Street Journal*, May 5

The Obama administration will step up efforts to increase the availability of ethanol at filling stations and to speed up subsidies to struggling biofuel producers. But the trade-off is that the administration is also expected to propose a rule that could make certain biofuels look less climate-friendly.

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124148381997685649.html#mod=todays_us_page_one

See Also: **Obama to form interagency biofuels group**, *Reuters*, May 4

<http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSN04393040?sp=true>

Rules to Limit Emissions in the Making of Ethanol, *New York Times*, May 5

The Obama administration on Tuesday proposed rules to limit emissions of climate-changing gases from the manufacture of ethanol, a step that would probably curtail the expansion of corn ethanol production. In its first major policy steps on ethanol, the administration said it would help producers of biofuels who could not get credit to refinance their operations, and assist them in selling their products through a growing network of retail fuel distributors and by encouraging the manufacture of vehicles to burn it.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/06/business/energy-environment/06ethanol.html?scp=4&sq=biofuels&st=cse>

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