

## GLOBAL FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THE WEEKLY NEWS BRIEF OF THE GLOBAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE



November 20<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>, 2009

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Please visit the [Global Food for Thought Blog](#) which provides expert commentary, debate, and updates on key developments in real time.

For more information on the Global Agricultural Development Initiative, and previous editions of *Global Food for Thought*, please visit the Initiative's new website: [www.thechicagocouncil.org/globalagdevelopment](http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/globalagdevelopment).

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### KEY ARTICLES

**Is There Such a Thing as Agro-Imperialism?**, *New York Times Magazine*, November 22

Foreign investors — some of them representing governments, some of them private interests — are promising to construct infrastructure, bring new technologies, create jobs and boost the productivity of underused land so that it not only feeds overseas markets but also feeds more Africans. (More than a third of the continent's population is malnourished.) They've found that impoverished governments are often only too welcoming, offering land at giveaway prices.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/22/magazine/22land-t.html>

**See Also: The Ultimate Crop Rotation**, *Washington Post*, November 23

Lured by a new business model, wealthy nations flock to farmland in Ethiopia, locking in food supplies grown half a world away.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/11/22/AR2009112201478.html>

**Investors in a Rush to Feed the World**, *Financial Times*, November 24

The commodities sector's obscurity changed almost overnight after last year's price spike. Bankers say investors, however, have been cautious about pouring money into food commodities openly, for fear of being accused of profiting from increasing world hunger. But the compelling fundamentals – including years of underinvestment because of low prices in the 1990s and early 2000s, a structural increase in demand as the world's population has risen and demanded a diet richer in meat, and the introduction of biofuels – have been enough to attract many investors.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/64416590-d7c5-11de-b578-00144feabdc0.html>

**See Also: Volatility Gives Food for Thought**, *Financial Times*, November 24

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/59c09424-d7c5-11de-b578-00144feabdc0.html>

**The New NUE Thing**, *The World in 2010*, *Economist*, November 13

Imagine you could wave a magic wand and boost the yield of the world's crops, cut their cost, use fewer-fossil fuels to grow them and reduce the pollution that results from farming. Imagine, too, that you could both eliminate some hunger and return some land to rain forest. This is the scale of the prize that many in the biotechnology industry now suddenly believe is within their grasp in 2010 and the years that follow. They are in effect hoping to boost the miles-per-gallon of agriculture, except that the fuel in question is nitrogen.

[http://www.economist.com/theworldin/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=14742733](http://www.economist.com/theworldin/displaystory.cfm?story_id=14742733)

**How Can We Help the World's Poor?**, *Nicholas Kristof*, *New York Times*, November 22

One of the challenges with the empirical approach is that aid organizations typically claim that every project succeeds. Failures are buried so as not to discourage donors, and evaluations are often done by the organizations themselves — ensuring that every intervention is above average. Yet recently there has been a revolution in evaluation, led by economists at the Poverty Action Lab at M.I.T. They have designed rigorous studies to see what actually works. The idea is to introduce new aid initiatives randomly in some areas and not in others, and to measure how much change occurred and at what cost.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/22/books/review/Kristof-t.html>

**The lure of Africa**, *Dambisa Moyo*, *The World in 2010*, *Economist*, November 13

For African governments it is clear that aid flows will go down in 2010, and dramatically so. Donor governments have slashed their aid budgets, and with most facing unfavourable demographic shifts and large deficits, to depend on their largesse is no longer sensible. The good news is that the bond markets offer a real opportunity for Africa's governments to be serious about financial discipline and transparency—and to escape from the yoke of aid.

[http://www.economist.com/theworldin/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=14742683](http://www.economist.com/theworldin/displaystory.cfm?story_id=14742683)

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## RELEVANT U.S. ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

**Remarks by President Obama and Prime Minister Singh of India in Joint Press Conference**, *Office of the Press Secretary*, *White House*, November 24

“To advance our historic food security initiative, American and Indian researchers will collaborate to improve agricultural output and reduce hunger -- not only in India, where enormous strides have been made, but around the world -- and India has much to teach the developing world in terms of achieving food sufficiency.”

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-obama-and-prime-minister-singh-india-joint-press-conference>

**See Also: Fact Sheets: U.S.-Indian Cooperation**, *Office of the Press Secretary*, *White House*, November 24

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/fact-sheets-us-indian-cooperation>

**Special Briefing on Secretary Clinton's Recent Trip to Afghanistan and Pakistan**, *Richard Holbrooke*, *Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan*, November 23

“As I think you all know, after the security issue, we believe agriculture is our highest immediate priority in the civilian area, for the simplest reason: it's 80 percent of the people. They're great farmers. They had mass – they had big export markets until 1978. They exported pomegranates and raisins, they dominated the world

raisin export market – almonds, pistachios, saffron, wheat. And they want to get back to that, but they need help. We inherited a situation where we were – the United States was putting less money into agriculture than were in poppy crop destruction. That didn't make a lot of sense to us. So as I mentioned the last time I was here, we phased out supporting poppy crop eradication.”

<http://www.state.gov/p/sca/rls/remarks/132307.htm>

**Advancing Women a Top Clinton Goal**, *New York Times*, November 25

Hillary Rodham Clinton has pursued initiatives to help women gain political power, personal safety and enough money to help their communities and countries transition to democracy. While Mrs. Clinton is America's third female secretary of state, the political profile of women is still low: Only 18.6 percent of Parliament members globally are women, according to the Geneva-based Inter-Parliamentary Union. Women perform 66 percent of the world's work and produce 50 percent of the food, while earning 10 percent of the income and owning 1 percent of the property, data from the United Nations Development Fund for Women show.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/25/us/25iht-letter.html>

**Building a Twenty-First Century Development Bank: New Challenges, New Priorities**, *Remarks by Senator John Kerry at the World Bank*, November 18

“To be sure, our international financial institutions have evolved in response. But still, their representation and funding priorities continue to reflect the imperatives of another, earlier time. We need to reform them to reflect the needs of now, and address new development priorities. These include mitigating and adapting to climate change, enhancing food security, and empowering women—all of which we increasingly view as fundamental to the bank's core mission of reducing poverty worldwide.”

<http://go.worldbank.org/KL290KV1L0>

**Shah Confirmation Hearing Scheduled**, *Politico*, November 24

The confirmation hearing for Rajiv Shah to be USAID administrator has been scheduled for Tuesday, Dec. 1, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee notified members. Chairman John Kerry will preside over the hearing at 10 a.m. in Senate Dirksen 419.

[http://www.politico.com/blogs/laurarozen/1109/Shah\\_confirmation\\_hearing\\_scheduled.html?showall](http://www.politico.com/blogs/laurarozen/1109/Shah_confirmation_hearing_scheduled.html?showall)

**Obama to Attend Climate Talks in Copenhagen**, *The Washington Post*, November 25

President Obama will travel to Copenhagen in December to help kick off the global climate talks despite the conference's failure to secure a binding worldwide treaty to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/11/25/AR2009112501448.html>

**See Also: U.S. to Offer Target for Emission Cuts**, *The Washington Post*, November 24

The United States will identify a near-term emission reduction target as part of an effort to reach a comprehensive climate agreement in Copenhagen next month as long as other major greenhouse gas emitters do the same, senior administration officials said. "There will be a submission that takes cognizance of where we are in the legislative process," an official said.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/11/23/AR2009112303136.html>

**U.S. Senate Confirms Daniel W. Yohannes as CEO of Millennium Challenge Corporation**, *Millennium Challenge Corporation*, November 20

The United States Senate unanimously confirmed President Barack Obama's nomination of Daniel W. Yohannes as the new Chief Executive Officer of the U.S. Government's Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). As CEO, Mr. Yohannes will undertake MCC's mission to reduce poverty through economic growth.

<http://www.mcc.gov/mcc/press/releases/us-senate-confirms-daniel-w-yohannes-as-ceo-of-mil.shtml>

**Addressing Food Insecurity**, *Editorial Reflecting the Views of the US Government*, *VOA News*, November 24

The United States is committed to the vital issue of food security. In July, President Obama announced that the United States would commit \$3.5 billion over 3 years to sustainable agricultural development. At the President's request, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton has been leading a whole-of-government effort to build a comprehensive food security plan. Meanwhile, the United States maintains its longstanding commitment to providing humanitarian food aid to some of the world's most vulnerable people.

<http://www.voanews.com/uspolicy/2009-11-24-voa6.cfm>

**The Senate's Duty on Climate**, *Editorial, New York Times, November 21*

The news that world leaders have abandoned hope for a comprehensive, legally binding climate change treaty in Copenhagen next month inspired no end of finger-pointing. Our own candidate for criticism is the United States Senate.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/22/opinion/22sun2.html>

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**NEW REPORTS/POLICY BRIEFS/BOOKS**

**Towards a EU Policy Framework to Assist Developing Countries Addressing Agriculture and Food Security Challenges**, *European Commission, November 2009*

The European Commission is considering revising its approach to agriculture and food security in order to propose a policy framework for the European Community (EC) and the EU Member States. The development of an EU framework would appear particularly relevant and needed at this point in time, given the new challenges posed to developing countries' agriculture by demographic changes, globalisation and climate change. Similarly ongoing discussions on possible changes in the international agriculture and food security governance system and agenda also require a coherent response by the EU. The main purpose of the proposed EU policy would be to provide a common framework to address long term food security challenges, which is relevant in today's world where people and markets are more and more interconnected and in which population growth and pressures on natural resources are increasingly threatening sustainable access to food for all. Concerning short-term, emergency interventions, the Commission is in the process of redefining its approach to humanitarian food assistance.

[http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/files/europa\\_only/CONS\\_EU\\_policy\\_framework\\_food\\_security\\_20091113\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/files/europa_only/CONS_EU_policy_framework_food_security_20091113_en.pdf)

**Charting Our Water Future: Economic Frameworks to Inform Decision-Making**, *2030 Water Resources Group, McKinsey Co., November 2009*

Growing competition for scarce water resources is a growing business risk, a major economic threat, and a challenge for the sustainability of communities and the ecosystems upon which they rely. It is an issue that has serious implications for the stability of countries in which businesses operate, and for industries whose value chains are exposed to water scarcity. The report offers case studies from four countries with drastically different water issues, which will collectively account for 40 percent of the world's population, 30 percent of global GDP and 42 percent of projected water demand in 2030: China, India, South Africa and Brazil. The report's methodology identifies supply- and demand-side measures that could constitute a more cost effective approach to closing the water gap and achieve savings in each country.

[http://www.mckinsey.com/App\\_Media/Reports/Water/Charting\\_Our\\_Water\\_Future\\_Full\\_Report\\_001.pdf](http://www.mckinsey.com/App_Media/Reports/Water/Charting_Our_Water_Future_Full_Report_001.pdf)

**See Also: Report Warns of Rising Water Demand**, *New York Times (Green Inc. Blog), November 23*

<http://greeninc.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/11/23/report-warns-of-rising-water-demand/>

**Rethinking School Feeding: Social Safety Nets, Child Development, and the Education Sector**, *World Bank and the World Food Programme, November 2009*

This book is written jointly by the World Bank Group and the World Food Programme, building on the comparative advantage of both organizations. *Rethinking School Feeding* seeks to provide an analysis of the evidence for benefits from school feeding programs and to offer evidence-based guidance on the design and operation of school feeding programs. It explores how food procurement may help local economies and emphasizes the centrality of the education sector in the policy dialogue on school feeding.

[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1099079877269/547664-1099080042112/DID\\_School\\_Feeding.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1099079877269/547664-1099080042112/DID_School_Feeding.pdf)

**The Global Gender Gap Report**, *World Economic Forum, November 2009*

Global challenges such as climate change, food security, conflict, education and health require our immediate, collective efforts to find solutions and will, in fact, be intimately linked to our long-term global economic recovery. Girls and women make up one half of the world's population—without their engagement,

empowerment and contribution, we cannot hope to effectively meet these challenges nor achieve rapid economic recovery.

<http://www.weforum.org/pdf/gendergap/report2009.pdf>

**Warming Increases Risk of Civil War in Africa**, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, November 2009

Armed conflict within nations has had disastrous humanitarian consequences throughout much of the world. Here we undertake the first comprehensive examination of whether global climate change will exacerbate armed conflict in sub-Saharan Africa. We find strong historical linkages between civil war and temperature on the continent, with warmer years leading to significant increases in the likelihood of war. When combined with climate model projections of future temperature trends, this historical response to temperature suggests a roughly 60% increase in armed conflict incidence by 2030, or an additional 459,000 battle deaths if future wars are as deadly as recent wars. The authors' results suggest an urgent need to reform African governments' and foreign aid donors' policies to deal with rising temperatures.

[http://iis-db.stanford.edu/pubs/22752/burke\\_et\\_al\\_PNAS\\_11\\_23\\_09.pdf](http://iis-db.stanford.edu/pubs/22752/burke_et_al_PNAS_11_23_09.pdf) (new reports)

**See Also: Can Climate Change Cause Conflict? Recent History Suggests So**, *Scientific American*, November 23

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=can-climate-change-cause-conflict>

**See Also: Climate 'Is a Major Cause' of Conflict in Africa**, *BBC News*, November 24

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/8375949.stm>

**Integrating Agriculture in a Global Climate Deal: Benchmarks for Copenhagen**, *Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy*, October 2009

Countless voices are calling for the inclusion of agriculture in the next global climate agreement. Missing from the collection of voices is an agreed vision for what that would mean in practice. As climate negotiators consider whether, and how, to include agriculture in the deal at Copenhagen, the following paper has several recommendations aimed at ensuring a positive contribution.

<http://www.iatp.org/iatp/publications.cfm?accountID=258&refID=106837>

**Climate Negotiations and Development**, *Overseas Development Institute*, November 2009

Climate change negotiations can have more important welfare consequences for poor countries than other negotiations such as the current trade negotiations. The authors review key negotiation issues in the run-up to Copenhagen climate change negotiations, set out key scenarios and model their effects on incomes in poor countries. The paper suggests that developing countries gain from emissions stabilising policies as they enjoy lower environmental damages but they suffer a reduction in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) if they themselves are subject to emissions stabilising policies without a breakthrough in technological change.

<http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/4537.pdf>

**Strategic Grain Reserves in an Era of Volatility**, *Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy*, October 2009

This paper provides a brief and partial summary of the idea of building a strategic grain reserve and its history, looks at some of the basic mechanisms involved, and raises some questions for public officials charged with exploring the idea, and for the wider audience of policy advocates concerned about food security.

<http://www.iatp.org/iatp/publications.cfm?accountID=451&refID=106857>

**Aid Effectiveness Through the Recipient Lens**, *Overseas Development Institute*, November 2009

The Paris and Accra commitments are insufficient to ensure donors improve the development impact of their aid, according to this Briefing Paper. It highlights key findings from in-person interviews with mid-range and senior politicians, and senior government officials in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Zambia.

<http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/2746.pdf>

**FORMA: Forest Monitoring for Action**, *Center for Global Development*, November 2009

Rising concern about carbon emissions from deforestation has led donors to finance UN-REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries), a program that offers direct compensation for forest conservation. Sustainable operation of UN-REDD and other direct-compensation

programs will require a transparent, credible, frequently updated system for monitoring deforestation. In this paper, the authors introduce FORMA (Forest Monitoring for Action), a prototype system based on remotely sensed data. They test its accuracy against the best available information on deforestation in Brazil and Indonesia.

[http://www.cgdev.org/files/1423248\\_file\\_Hammer\\_Kraft\\_Wheeler\\_FORMA\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.cgdev.org/files/1423248_file_Hammer_Kraft_Wheeler_FORMA_FINAL.pdf)

**Uncharted Territory: Land, Conflict and Humanitarian Action**, *Humanitarian Policy Group, November 2009*

Many of the land issues that come to the fore during a humanitarian response touch on different sectors of intervention, including food security, protection and shelter and camp management. Food security interventions in crises tend to focus on the short- and medium-term availability of food, establishing therapeutic feeding centres, providing food aid and distributing seeds and tools. The last of these activities in particular is often carried out with little understanding of people's access to farming land, and is usually not linked to interventions designed to maximise this access. Humanitarian organisations also tend to pay limited attention to how local production systems and land distribution change over the course of a crisis.

<http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/4409.pdf>

**The Story of Phosphorus: Global Food Security and Food for Thought**, *Global Environmental Change, 2009*

Food production requires application of fertilizers containing phosphorus, nitrogen and potassium on agricultural fields in order to sustain crop yields. However modern agriculture is dependent on phosphorus derived from phosphate rock, which is a non-renewable resource and current global reserves may be depleted in 50–100 years. While phosphorus demand is projected to increase, the expected global peak in phosphorus production is predicted to occur around 2030. The exact timing of peak phosphorus production might be disputed, however it is widely acknowledged within the fertilizer industry that the quality of remaining phosphate rock is decreasing and production costs are increasing. Yet future access to phosphorus receives little or no international attention. This paper puts forward the case for including long-term phosphorus scarcity on the priority agenda for global food security. Opportunities for recovering phosphorus and reducing demand are also addressed together with institutional challenges.

[http://www.agci.org/dB/PDFs/09S2\\_TCREWS\\_StoryofP.pdf](http://www.agci.org/dB/PDFs/09S2_TCREWS_StoryofP.pdf)

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Confirmation Hearing for Dr. Rajiv Shah**

*Date:* December 1, 2009

*Time:* 10 a.m.

*Location:* Senate Dirksen 419, Washington, DC

The confirmation hearing for Rajiv Shah to be USAID administrator has been scheduled for Tuesday, Dec. 1, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee notified members. Chairman John Kerry will preside over the hearing.

### **The Financial and Economic Crash of 2008 and its Impact on Food and Agriculture in Developing Countries**

*Date:* December 3, 2009

*Time:* 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.

*Location:* International Food Policy Research Institute, 2033 K Street, NW, Washington, DC

Once again, global attention has turned to agriculture and food for effectively responding to the crisis and ensuring that global progress in reducing poverty and hunger continue, amidst the turmoil and confusion caused by the economic and financial crash. The impact and linkages between the financial crisis and the agricultural and rural sectors need to be better understood. This seminar seeks to understand the channels, quantify the magnitude, and examine the scope of impact through which the financial crisis and economic recession has affected developing countries.

<http://www.ifpri.org/event/financial-and-economic-crash-2008-and-its-impact-food-and-agriculture-developing-countries>

### **Next Steps for the US Food Security Initiative**

*Date:* Thursday, December 3, 2009

*Time:* 8:30 AM-12:30 PM

*Location:* APLU Ground Floor Conference Center, 1307 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C.

Join the Partnership to Cut Hunger and Poverty in Africa for a special discussion.

Two separate panels will discuss:

- Recent policy events, including plans for implementing the US Food Security Initiative, highlights of the FAO World Food Summit, and outcomes of the CAADP-donor platform meeting in Abuja
- Key outcomes of the Partnership's February 2009 US-Africa Forum on Transforming Food Security and Agricultural Development, and implications for the US Food Security Initiative

RSVP: [partnership.events@gmail.com](mailto:partnership.events@gmail.com)

### **United Nations Climate Change Conference**

*Date:* December 7<sup>th</sup> – December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009

*Location:* Bella Center, Copenhagen, Denmark

<http://en.cop15.dk/frontpage>

### **CAADP Post-Compact: High-Level Stakeholders Meeting**

*Date:* December 7-8

*Location:* Kigali, Rwanda

[Agenda](#)

[Concept Paper](#)

**See Also: Rwanda to Host Continental Agro Meet**, *AllAfrica.com*, November 24

Rwanda will play host to the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program (CAADP) stake holders' meeting slated for December 7-8, 2009. Addressing the media yesterday, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Ernest Ruzindaza, said the high level meeting will bring together all CAADP partners and stakeholders. The meeting is expected to attract representatives from the continent's regional economic blocs and the donor community.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200911240077.html>

### **The Economics of Structural Change and Competition in the Food System**

*Date:* December 7

*Location:* Waugh Auditorium, USDA Economic Research Service, 1800 M Street NW, Washington, D.C

"In today's business environment, a variety of forces are influencing the economics of every sector of the food system," says Farm Foundation President Neil Conklin. "The economics, in turn, are a significant driver of structural changes in every sector of the food system. This conference examines current research on the economics of structural change and competition, with the intent of helping industry leaders and policy makers better understand the factors at work." Targeted to agribusiness leaders, policy makers and researchers, the conference program will feature current research being done by academics from across the United States.

<http://www.farmfoundation.org/webcontent/The-Economics-of-Structural-Change-and-Competition-in-the-Food-System-1721.aspx?a=1721&z=90&>

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## **AGRICULTURAL ISSUES**

**Put Farming First**, *Thomas Rosswall (Farming First Spokesperson, Chairman, CGIAR Challenge Programme on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security), United Nations Climate Change Conference Blog, November 24*

By 2050, the world's population is expected to increase from 6 to 9 billion people. Demand for carbon-intensive foods such as meats and oils are also expected to increase. Meanwhile, yields from key staple crops are expected to decline, especially in many of the poorest countries, due to climate change. Wheat yields in sub-Saharan Africa are expected to fall by 34% and rice output in South Asia by 14%.

<http://en.cop15.dk/blogs/view+blog?blogid=2674>

**Stronger world food security governance agreed**, *FAO, November 24*

FAO's top governing body has cleared the way for setting up a stronger and more effective system of global food security governance. In a separate decision, the Conference agreed to increase FAO's regular budget for the 2010-2011 biennium by 7.6 percent to \$1,000.5 million.

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/37643/icode/>

**New Website to Debate Agriculture and Development**, *The Guardian (UK), Katine Chronicles Blog, November 23*

A website that aims to provide "a one-stop-shop" for information on international agriculture and development issues launched last week. **The site, launched by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs on Friday, is part of the Global Agricultural Development Initiative, a body that informs the US government, as well as interested companies and organisations, on global agricultural development. The initiative is chaired by Catherine Bertini, former executive director of the UN World Food Programme, and Dan Glickman, former US secretary of agriculture.**

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/katine/katine-chronicles-blog/2009/nov/23/chicago-council-global-affairs>

**Kids Smuggle Food for Cents Along War Border**, *CNN, November 23*

Sabar Mina is cloaked in a light green shawl tinged with dirt. All day long Sabar takes items back and forth between two of the most dangerous countries in the world, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Normally she smuggles flour from the Pakistan side where she is from. Pakistan has a ban on exporting food items to Afghanistan because of a spike in food prices, so flour is a hot commodity right now. Once over the border Sabar gathers and carries firewood to take back from Afghanistan. Her job is hard and sometimes dangerous.

<http://edition.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/asiapcf/11/20/afghan.border.children/>

**Crop Progress**, *National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), Agricultural Statistics Board, U.S. Department of Agriculture, November 23*

<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/nass/CropProg/2000s/2009/CropProg-11-23-2009.pdf>

**Results of UN Food Summit Seen as Disappointing**, *Voice of America, November 22*

The meeting in Rome produced only limited measures to fight rising hunger.

<http://www.voanews.com/specialenglish/2009-11-22-voa1.cfm>

**Hard Choices Over Food Versus Education in Malawi**, *BBC News, November 20*

Food or education? Public spending choices are never easy. But in Malawi, one of the world's poorest countries, the choices are particularly stark. The government has made "food security" - which means making sure people have enough to eat - the top priority for government spending. The programme of providing heavily subsidised fertiliser and seeds to poor farmers has had real success in reducing hunger. But education in Malawi is under-funded and struggling.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/8369120.stm>

**UA Lands \$1.3M Grant to Research Viruses to Crops**, *Inside Tucson Business, November 13*

University of Arizona researchers received a \$1.3 million grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to fund the next phase of research on global food security. The researchers have been studying cassava, a root crop that serves as the primary food source for more than 750 million people per year across Africa and Asia. Cassava is susceptible to pathogens and in Africa, one third of the continental harvest is lost each year to viral diseases.

[http://bio5.arizona.edu/news/news\\_release/13-million-grant-ua-bill-melinda-gates-foundation-will-fund-next-phase-cassava-res](http://bio5.arizona.edu/news/news_release/13-million-grant-ua-bill-melinda-gates-foundation-will-fund-next-phase-cassava-res)

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## FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

**World Bank to Start Agriculture Fund with \$1.5 bln**, *Reuters, November 24*

The World Bank will start a trust fund to boost agriculture in poor countries with an initial \$1.5 billion, its president Robert Zoellick said, warning of the risk of another food price crisis. Crop shortages in India and the Philippines combined with increased speculation in commodity markets by investment funds have increased the risk that food prices could spike, as happened in 2008, Zoellick said.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSN24326650>

**More Foreign Aid to Pakistan**, *Copenhagen Post*, November 24

Denmark will send an additional 100 million kroner in aid to Pakistan to help stabilise and rebuild areas along the Afghanistan border that have been adversely affected by the Taleban and al-Qaeda. Development Cooperation Minister Ulla Tørnæs said the money would especially serve as a weapon against Islamic fundamentalism by rebuilding schools and giving both boys and girls in the area access to education.

<http://www.cphpost.dk/news/international/89-international/47579-more-foreign-aid-to-pakistan.html>

**Fulfilling the Promises of Cairo**, *Foreign Policy*, November 11

Improving the economic climate in poorer Muslim countries will also require trade reforms to attract more foreign investment and development. Toward that objective, the U.S. Trade Representative's office should establish a Muslim world task force to expedite negotiation of U.S. trade and investment framework agreements (TIFAs) with those Muslim nations that so far have not done so.

[http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/11/11/fulfilling\\_the\\_promises\\_of\\_cairo](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/11/11/fulfilling_the_promises_of_cairo)

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## ENVIRONMENT (WATER/CLIMATE)

**China Drought Risks Food, Stability, McKinsey Says**, *Bloomberg*, November 25

China's long-term food security and social stability may be threatened unless the world's largest grain producer invests more to fight the effects of drought, McKinsey & Co. said.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601091&sid=aEkFntzmyQU0>

**Climate Change Help for the Poor 'Has Not Materialised'**, *BBC News*, November 25

Large sums promised to developing countries to help them tackle climate change cannot be accounted for, a BBC investigation has found. Rich countries pledged \$410m (£247m) a year in a 2001 declaration - but it is now unclear whether the money was paid.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/8376009.stm>

**Liberians Face Rising Flood Threat**, *BBC News*, November 25

Liberia on Africa's west coast is in desperate need of help as it suffers from the effects of climate change.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/8375301.stm>

**Looking Ahead, Brazil's Farmers Take Up Reforestation**, *Washington Post*, November 23

For nearly 20 years, Luiz Alberto Bortolini cleared trees and planted soybeans as fast as he could, one of many pioneers who turned this barren outpost into prosperous farmland. Now, he and hundreds of other successful farmers are replanting trees as part of an ambitious initiative to reduce deforestation. Their goal -- to set aside one-third of their farms for native vegetation -- is revolutionary in a region long resistant to environmental controls.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/11/22/AR2009112201845.html>

**India Questions Western Data Linking Climate Change, Himalayan Melt**, *Washington Post*, November 22

As countries around the world prepare to flex their negotiating muscles at next month's climate-change summit in Copenhagen, India has begun to question the Western model of computing global warming statistics.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/11/21/AR2009112102010.html>

**Sixty-five Leaders to Attend Climate Summit**, *Financial Times*, November 22

At least 65 world leaders have agreed to attend the Copenhagen summit on climate change in December, raising the stakes on a deal being reached and lending “critical mass” to the meeting, according to senior officials.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/352a6362-d796-11de-b578-00144feabdc0.html>

**The Wind May Carry a Solution for Kenya**, *Washington Post*, November 21

Kenya's Chalbi Desert is a bleak, forbidding stretch of coarse sand and ash-gray ridges broken by clusters of tiny huts. It is also one of the windiest places on Earth, experts say, and it soon will be the site of Africa's largest wind farm.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/11/20/AR2009112004313.html>

**Global Warring: Don't Militarize the Climate Debate**, *The New Republic*, November 20

For years, advocates of climate-change legislation have struggled to find a sales pitch that will sway even the most hardened of skeptics. Polar bears, green jobs, urgent pleas to think of the grandkids ... none of them have quite done the trick. But recently, a new argument has come to the fore: the national security case for cutting carbon emissions.

<http://www.tnr.com/article/environment-energy/global-warring>

**Where the Wild Things Were**, *Steve Sanderson (President and CEO Wildlife Conservation Society), Foreign Affairs*, November 19

As the International Year of Biodiversity approaches in 2010, the loss of wildlife, genetic material, ecosystems, and evolutionary processes is as marked as ever. Climate change, meanwhile, is becoming an even greater threat to the biosphere.

<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/65688/steven-sanderson/where-the-wild-things-were>

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## WOMEN

**Climate Change: Are Women the Solution?**, *Christian Science Monitor*, November 24

It is often asserted that climate change will affect women the most in the developing world. That's because most women will have to walk farther for drinking water, work harder to grow food, pull daughters out of school to help with family chores, and fuss more about family hygiene as the world – and particularly the developing world – becomes a hotter, drier place to live. But women could also be the key agents of change that help countries to do a better job of preparing for climate change, and mitigating the damage.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2009/1124/p06s10-woaf.html>

**Don't Limit Women to Gender Debate**, *Franco Frattini (Foreign Minister, Italy), Op-Ed, Business Day Africa*, November 24

In many areas of the world — the African continent, for example — it is the women who are at the centre of the processes of production and who guarantee the minimal levels of food and social security, in addition to the concrete prospects for development and well-being for their families as well as entire communities.

<http://www.businessdailyafrica.com/Opinion%20&%20Analysis/-/539548/802612/-/sy7eflz/-/>

**Obama Honors Mugabe Foes for Defying a Dictator**, *Reuters*, November 24

U.S. President Barack Obama honored a group of women who have confronted Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe and said they had defied a dictator. Mugabe is a pariah in the West, blamed by critics for plunging his southern African country into poverty through his authoritarian rule and economic mismanagement. Mugabe has often blamed Western foes for ruining his country via sanctions, which he says are in retaliation for the seizing of white-owned farms on behalf of landless blacks. Critics say the policy is used as a tool to intimidate political opponents and to give land to Mugabe's ZANU-PF party loyalists.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/politicsNews/idUSTRE5AN03820091124>

**See Also: Mugabe's fearless opposition**, *Michael Gerson, The Washington Post*, November 25

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/11/24/AR2009112402813.html>

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## MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE ISSUES

### **WTO Ministers to Confront Faltering Doha**, *Reuters*, November 25

With the WTO's Doha round -- already the longest-running set of trade negotiations -- limping into its ninth year, the anecdote sums up the difficulty, if not futility, of trying to reach new deals to open trade in an ever more complex world. Perhaps it is for that reason that negotiations on Doha, launched in November 2001 to open markets and help poor countries prosper through trade, will not be on the agenda when ministers from the WTO's 153 members gather in Geneva on Nov. 30 for a delayed conference to take stock of the body and its work. WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy says that the deal -- which would cut industrial and agricultural tariffs and farm subsidies and open up trade in services like construction and finance -- is 80 percent done.  
<http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSGEE5AN1D5>

### **Tea Sets Record High**, *Financial Times*, November 24

Tea prices set a fresh all-time high, extending this year's gains above 80 per cent on the back of strong seasonal demand and low supply due to droughts in Kenya, Sri Lanka and India, the world's top exporters.  
<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/9587cec6-d8e9-11de-99ce-00144feabdc0.html>

### **Afghan Apples Headed for Indian Markets**, *Yahoo India*, November 24

India provides a large and growing market for Afghan agricultural products, several of which have excellent brand value in the Indian market. Regional trade and transit arrangements for the transport of Afghan agricultural produce to the Indian market would facilitate both the growth of regional trade and prosperity, as well as the process of stabilization of Afghanistan and its reemergence at the cross-roads between Central and South Asia. The growth of the Afghan agriculture sector is a key part of the efforts of the Government of Afghanistan to accelerate the process of reconstruction and development, provide an alternate source of livelihood for its predominantly rural population and counter the pernicious influence of terrorism, extremism and the narcotics trade.

<http://in.news.yahoo.com/139/20091124/874/twl-afghan-apples-headed-for-indian-mark.html>

### **Manila Forces Rice Price to Year High**, *Financial Times*, November 23

Rice prices hit their highest level in more than a year on Monday after the Philippines, the world's largest importer of the commodity, announced another massive tender that will bring its purchasing for 2010 to record levels. Rice is the staple of about 3bn people in Asia and prices are a politically sensitive issue for importing countries in the region and for buyers in the Middle East, such as Saudi Arabia and Iran, and west Africa, including Nigeria and Senegal.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/e11eaf3c-d842-11de-8b04-00144feabdc0.html>

### **WTO Farm Talks Edge Forward on Safeguard, Tropicals**, *Reuters*, November 20

Negotiations on agriculture in the World Trade Organisation's long-running Doha round are making progress in a number of sensitive areas, the chairman of the farm talks said. WTO members are looking in detail at how a safeguard to protect farmers in poor countries from a surge in imports -- the issue over which talks in July 2008 seeking a breakthrough in Doha collapsed -- might work in practice, New Zealand's WTO ambassador David Walker said. And talks on reconciling the conflicting demands of different groups of developing country exporters of tropical products such as fruit and sugar are also going well.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/idAFLK69340820091120>

### **US Foot-Dragging Dims Hopes for World Trade Deal**, *Christian Science Monitor (The New Economy Blog)*, November 20

Activists are pushing countries to refocus their trade agenda, but not in the way the US wants. Lori Wallach, director of Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch, hopes the WTO will start to address proper regulation of the financial industry, the climate crisis and related energy matters, and the excessive concentration of food production in relatively few nations. Some 56 developing countries have become net importers of food to feed their populations since the Doha Round started, she says.

<http://features.csmonitor.com/economyrebuild/2009/11/20/us-foot-dragging-dims-hopes-for-world-trade-deal/>

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## AGRIBUSINESS

### **Agribusiness Chief Slams Organics**, *New York Times (Green Inc. Blog)*, November 25

When Michael Mack, the chief executive of Syngenta, a Swiss agribusiness giant that makes pesticides and seeds, hears people say that organic food is better for the planet, he has one response: "Au contraire."

"Organic food is not only not better for the planet," he said, in an interview. "It is categorically worse." "If the whole planet were to suddenly switch to organic farming tomorrow, it would be an ecological disaster," he said.

<http://greeninc.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/11/25/agribusiness-chief-slams-organics/>

### **Biofuels Projects Have Uncertain Future**, *Des Moines Register*, November 22

In two short years, the hopes for next-generation biofuels have gone from bright to downright gloomy. But industry officials, who gathered in Washington last week for an annual cellulosic biofuels conference, also are pointing the finger at the federal government, complaining that the financial restrictions for federal loan guarantees are impossible to meet. These next-generation biofuels plants will cost at least four to five times as much to build as a conventional corn ethanol plant.

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/article/20091122/BUSINESS03/911220319/1029/BUSINESS/Brasher-Biofuels-projects-have-uncertain-future>

**See Also: US Says Ethanol Output Can Eventually Meet Target**, *Reuters*, November 18

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/idUKN1811679720091118?sp=true>

**See Also: Pressures on Fuel Ethanol Production Capacity**, *Energy Information Agency*, November 18

<http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/oog/info/twip/twip.asp>

### **Cadbury Bid Under Study at Hershey**, *New York Times*, November 20

Hershey, after months of internal debate, is now considering a bid for the British candy maker Cadbury, a move that would challenge Kraft's existing \$16.7 billion hostile offer for the company, according to people briefed on the matter. Any Hershey offer would need to be at least \$17 billion and would break from the financial conservatism that has long defined the American chocolate giant.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/21/business/21hershey.html>

**See Also: Some Rivals Weigh Bids For Cadbury**, *New York Times*, November 22

Cadbury has spent months stonewalling Kraft Foods' hostile offer. But the entrance of another bidder could help its negotiating position against Kraft.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/23/business/global/23hershey.html>

### **Reminding Al Gore: 5 'Encouraging Truths' About Ethanol**, *Bob Dinnen, President and CEO of the Renewable Fuels Association (RFA)*, *Huffington Post*, November 20

Having an appreciation for Al Gore's commitment to science and advocacy of responsible policies on energy, the environment, and the economy, I was disappointed by his treatment of ethanol and other biofuels in his new book, *Our Choice: A Plan to Solve the Climate Crisis*. During the late 1970s, Gore was an early supporter of grain-based ethanol and other efforts to promote biofuels. Now, as he writes in his new book, *Our Choice*, he has changed his mind.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/bob-dinneen/reminding-al-gore-5-encou\\_b\\_362357.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/bob-dinneen/reminding-al-gore-5-encou_b_362357.html)

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