



Issue 16- March 2009

## Introduction

Welcome to the March edition of the [Livelhoods Resource Centre](#) eBulletin. In this general edition we look at the latest news and publications relating to livelihoods and highlight various events meetings and conferences that may be of interest.

We continue to welcome your reports, comments, suggestions and letters on any livelihoods subject you think will be of interest to readers. Please email [lrc@htspe.com](mailto:lrc@htspe.com) with submissions.

## News



### [Linking Indonesia's Small Farmers to the Global Supply Chain](#)

The Australian and Indonesian Governments and [International Finance Corporation](#), a member of the World Bank Group, are working together to help small farmers in Indonesia improve their income by linking them to the global supply chain. The three parties hosted the 2009 Sustainable Agribusiness Supply Chain Forum targeted at potential agribusiness firms earlier this month. This is part of the Australia Indonesia Partnership's Smallholder Agribusiness Development Initiative to improve the livelihoods of small farmers in rural areas. The forum aims to promote good social and environmental practices in agribusiness and demonstrate how linking small farmers into the global supply chain can lead to better income, competitiveness, and sustainability.

### [Bio-diesel Enhances the Forest Based Livelihood and Prevents Climate Change Effects](#)

A one day workshop on "Facilitating livelihoods for forest based communities: legal feasibility of village level bio-diesel fuelled energy system in tribal Orissa" was held in earlier this month. The objective of the workshop was to identify key policy hurdles and to look at the legal feasibility of bio-diesel energy systems for tribal communities of Orissa. A Carbon Neutral Bio-diesel Fuelled Energy System (CNBFES) has been developed as a village scale technology using local oil-bearing trees species. Such a conversion of fruits and seeds into fuel, not only leads to value addition in the local economy but also opens up the possibility of local-fuel for the provision of basic services such as water supply and sanitation. But in spite of its clear advantage the production of bio-diesel from local resources faces policy hurdles in respect to both access to and control over forest produce and procurement.

### [Mekong River Hydroelectric Dam Threatens Livelihoods and Endangered Species in landlocked Laos](#)

The Mekong River flowing through Siphandone (Four Thousand Islands) in southern Laos, is a magnet for tourists and an important site for international conservation. The Mekong River basin supports one of the most diverse fish faunas in the world however this is currently being threatened by a government plan to build a hydroelectric dam only a few kilometers upstream. As landlocked Laos is one of the poorest countries in South Asia the government is keen to harness one of its few natural resources. Embracing hydropower development could supply power to Laos with surplus energy being used regionally This has triggered an enormous response from environmental organisations and international scientists in protest

of the plans. If the dam goes ahead it will threaten the already endangered Irrawaddy dolphins and giant catfish and will also block fish migrations that feed millions of people in the region. Fisheries experts argue the dam would impact fishermen living in the area and beyond as some species swim up from the estuary in Vietnam all the way to Luang Prabang in northern Laos. Up to 60 million people in this region are dependant on fisheries for their food and their livelihoods.

#### [New Data Analysis Tool on National Basic Food Prices](#)

[FAO's Global Information and Early Warning System unit](#) now includes a useful online tool which enables users to analyse trends in domestic and international food prices. Users are able to see the latest price information, retail and wholesale, for major foods, at country level and internationally. The database holds information on food prices for 55 developing countries and international cereal export prices. To use this tool and for more information please click [here](#)

#### [Food and Environment Research Agency: A new executive Agency of DEFRA.](#)

In 2007, the Management Board of the UK Government's Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) approved the creation of a new Executive Agency.

The new Agency, which is to be known as The Food and Environment Research Agency will be launched on 1 April 2009. The Food and Environment Research Agency will be formed by the merger of:

- Defra's Plant Health Division (PHD), including the Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate (PHSI)
- Defra's Plant Variety Rights and Seeds Office (PVS)
- Central Science Laboratory (CSL)
- UK Government Decontamination Service (GDS)

According to Adrian Belton, Chief Executive, the merger will provide a number of benefits including closer integration between policy development, the scientific evidence that informs policy decision making and inspection services, specifically in the areas of plant and bee health. It is hoped that this will provide an integrated service that can respond quickly to protect the public interest, whilst removing unnecessary delays for businesses involved in both national and international trade. The new Agency will also be in a better position to provide national coverage to support emergency response to Defra and Government.

## Publications

### [The Environmental Food Crisis](#)

A new rapid response assessment report released by United Nations Environment Programme, UNEP warns that up to 25% of the world's food production may be lost due to increased environmental variability by 2050 unless action is taken. Prepared by the Rapid Response Assessment Team at [UNEP/GRID-Arendal](#) and [UNEP-WCMC](#), the report provides the first summary by the UN of how climate change, water stress, invasive pests and land degradation may impact world food security, food prices and how we may be able to feed the world in a more sustainable manner. The report makes seven significant recommendations. These include opportunities for boosting aquaculture and fish farming without intensifying damage to the marine environment alongside potential for minimizing and utilizing food wastes throughout the supply chain. The report concludes while major efforts have gone into increasing efficiency in other sectors, food has received inadequate attention.

### [Poverty-Wellbeing: Brief No 14 – Rural Livelihood Systems \(RLS\)](#)

This briefing paper presents an adaptation to the DFID Livelihoods Framework. It is based on a shift in emphasis of sustainability away from a single focus to a much more holistic – and complex – exploration of sustainability. With this shift the targeting of development interventions can be improved by better understanding of the visions and expectations of individuals and households that guide their decision-making. Using the RLS framework can provide the platform for selecting the most appropriate entry point for poverty reduction.

### [Enhancing the Rural Livelihoods of the Poor: Knowledge Map](#)

Information and communication technologies (ICTs), appropriately adapted, help improve the livelihoods of poor individuals, families and communities in rural areas and increase their income opportunities, thereby improving their chances of escaping from persistent poverty. This Knowledge Map helps understand what we know, both from research and from experience in the field, and what donor staff and their country counterparts most urgently need to know about these issues. In addition, it provides recommendations on the use and role of ICT in enhancing the livelihoods of the rural poor.

### [The Feeding of the Nine Billion – Global Food Security for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century](#)

This new report by [Chatham House](#) on global food security marks the end of a year long research partnership between Chatham House in London and the Centre for International Cooperation at New York University. The report's key diagnosis is that while food prices have fallen significantly from their peak last year, they remain acutely problematic for poor people and poor countries at their current levels and are poised to resume their upward climb when the world emerges from the downturn. On one hand, rising population levels and a growing 'global middle class' will substantially increase demand for food; on the other hand climate change, under-investment in oil production, water scarcity and competition for land are all likely to place restrictions on our capacity to increase food supply.

Accordingly, the last thing policymakers can do at this stage is to become complacent - on the contrary, they need to treat the current easing in prices as a window of opportunity in which to agree the comprehensive, long-term collective action needed to ensure food security in the 21st century. The report sets out a ten point agenda for action in developing countries and internationally to achieve this goal. To download an electronic copy of the report please click [here](#).

## Events

### [Sustainable Livelihoods and Community-driven development: empowering communities or promoting livelihoods? \(26/03/2009\)](#)

As part of an international series, Khanya-aicdd is hosting a seminar bringing together practitioners, policy-makers and academics to explore the links between Sustainable Livelihoods Approaches (SLA) and Community-driven Development (CDD). This seminar will explore the following questions:

- What are the lessons from the Southern & East African region of linking decentralised governance models to sustainable livelihoods?
- To what extent can SLA contribute to understanding links between local and macro level processes?
- To what degree can local level initiatives be scaled up to increase impact and sustainability?

The seminar will take place on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2009 in Midrand, South Africa. As well as attending you can also participate in this and other seminars in the series, through online discussions by joining the [Livelihoods Seminar Group](#).

### [UEA: Professional Development & Short Courses](#)

ODG at UEA continue to run their programme of scheduled short courses in the UK, tailor-made programmes for groups and individuals and specialised training outside the UK.

2009 UK Based Training Courses:

- Climate Change and Development
- Gender and Development
- Management Information Systems for M&E
- Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Activities
- Professional Development Programmes

For more information on the courses and how to apply please click [here](#)

[Practical Action - Hunger and Climate Change: Some Practical Answers? Seminar - Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> April 2009, London](#)

Almost one billion people in the world are hungry today. With current predictions, the world's population will continue to grow until it stabilises at nine billion in the middle of this century, by which time our food systems will have to feed 50% more people than they do today. Achieving this would be a challenge anyway. The likely impact of climate change on agriculture will make the challenge even greater.

This seminar will discuss the issues surrounding hunger and climate change and will focus on three key questions;

- How can we develop sustainable food supplies and tackle hunger in the developing world in the face of climate instability?
- What would constitute a climate resilient food system?
- How can we secure sufficient future food supplies and reverse environmental damage?

The seminar will be followed by a Book Launch and Reception to celebrate the publication of [Understanding Climate Adaptation: Lessons Learnt from community-based approaches](#).

[Future Agricultures Consortium International Conference on Seasonality 8-10th July](#), Call for Papers – April 1st 2009 Institute of Development Studies Brighton, UK

[The Future Agricultures Consortium](#), together with the [Centre for Social Protection](#), is convening a 3 day conference on Seasonality, to be held on Wednesday 8th to Friday 10th July 2009 at [IDS](#) Sussex. Funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the Future Agricultures Consortium operates as an international partnership of research institutions, working together to encourage critical debate and policy dialogue on the challenges of establishing and sustaining pro-poor agricultural growth in Africa, through stakeholder-led policy dialogues on future scenarios for agriculture, informed by in-depth field research.

IDS invite proposals for papers for the conference, focused on the following areas: Seasonal blind spots, seasonal trends, methodologies, policies and projects and social protection responses. Of particular interest are research findings that draw on case studies, examining questions such as: How does seasonality affect small farmers? Are there contrasts within and between countries? Is seasonality gendered? How is seasonality changing? Are there any examples of innovative responses to seasonality? Abstracts of proposed papers (500 words) are due by April 1<sup>st</sup>, with complete papers due by May 31<sup>st</sup> 2009. Papers will be posted on the conference website in advance of the conference.

## The LRC

The Livelihoods Resource Centre is managed by HTSPE in association with [IDS](#), [ODG](#) and [Coffey](#). The LRC provides services in two areas: **commissioned services** available to DFID Advisers and **core services**, including resources posted on the website and the monthly eBulletin.

We hope that you have found the content of previous eBulletins informative and useful and welcome your comments and suggestions for future editions. Please contact [Matthew Roberts](#) or [Jacqueline Wright](#) with your feedback and ideas for further reading and resources.

Click [here](#) to Sign up to the eBulletin. To unsubscribe or change your details [click here](#). For all other enquires relating to the Livelihoods Resource Centre, please email [lrc@htspe.com](mailto:lrc@htspe.com) or visit our website [www.livelihoodsrc.org](http://www.livelihoodsrc.org).

## The LRC at Palace Street

The LRC have a representative at Palace Street twice a week. [Matthew Roberts](#), LRC Manager, will be based in DFID every Tuesday and [Donald Lunan](#), technical advisor will be there every Friday. If you would like to meet with Matthew or Donald to discuss core or commissioned services, please contact them via email.

