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Invitation to the Discussion Forum

TRANSPARENCY AND DYNAMICS  
OF INTERNATIONAL LAND ACQUISITIONS

Berlin, 22 May 2014, 7.00–9:30 p.m.  
GIZ House, Reichpietschufer 20, Room K5.1 (5th floor), 10785 Berlin

Speaker:

Dr. Stefan Schmitz (BMZ)

J.-Prof. Dr. Jann Lay (GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies)

Meghan Sapp (PANGEA)

Szócs Boruss Miklós Attila (Ecoruralis)

Moderation:

Dr. Michael Taylor (International Land Coalition)



Federal Ministry  
for Economic Cooperation  
and Development

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Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



**Land Matrix**



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Large-scale land acquisitions – or land grabs – are an issue of high relevance. Over the last few years, knowledge about investors, target countries, and the impacts has been increasing. Nevertheless, we are only in the initial stages of learning about the dynamics of land deals. Of the 35 million hectares of land that investors have leased in developing countries over the past 15 years, only 4.3 million hectares seem to have come under production. The low rate of implementation may imply that the “land rush” will not have such important effects on local communities in host countries as has often been assumed. At the same time, if the 35 million hectares of land under contract were to be actively utilized in the coming years, this would mean that we are currently seeing only the tip of the iceberg in terms of impacts.

The lack of transparency has been identified as a key challenge of understanding land acquisitions. This is particularly alarming as these deals are often targeted at countries where land governance systems are weak and corruption is rampant. Accordingly, policymakers and the international community have been engaging heavily in debates on transparency. At the 2013 G8 Summit, world leaders emphasized the need for greater transparency, accountability and open data on land and extractives. The international community has issued a number of codes of conduct and voluntary guidelines. The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) released a strategy paper in early 2012. Another important initiative is the Land Matrix Global Observatory, which aims to increase the transparency of land acquisitions.

This forum will bring together experts from civil society, politics, the private sector, and academia to discuss the dynamics and transparency of land acquisitions. Short talks by Dr. Stefan Schmitz (BMZ), J.-Prof. Dr. Jann Lay (GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies), Meghan Sapp (PANGEA) and Szócs Boruss Miklós Attila (Ecoruralis) will be followed by a roundtable discussion on transparency and international land acquisitions moderated by Dr. Michael Taylor (International Land Coalition).

The discussion will be held in English.

Please register by 18 May at [landmatrix@giga-hamburg.de](mailto:landmatrix@giga-hamburg.de).