



Fact sheet for Seeing People through the Trees.

Convergence of forests, food, fuel and fibre: The Last Great Land Grab.

- Agriculture, energy and forestry all need cropland and marginal land for expansion, especially in the South, but insufficient land is available. Where will it come from?
- Using conservative estimates, the amount of land needed to meet future demand is 515 million hectares. 200 mHa are needed for agriculture, 290 mHa for bioenergy, and 25 mHa for industrial tree plantations.
- Worldwide, after accounting for built-areas, cultivated lands, forests, non-vegetated areas, parks, steep sloped land (mountains), and grasslands for meat production, there are only between 250 and 300 mHa of land left to produce all of the additional global demand for biomass (food, fuel and fibre).
- The additional 200 mHa needed to meet future demand will come from forests.

Conflict

- Between 1990 and 2004, armed conflict took place in 9% of the world's dense forests.
- In Africa, between 1990 and 2004, conflict affected over one-half of the continent's forests and 52 million people.
- In mid-2008, at least 71 violent conflicts are underway world-wide, and around two-thirds of them are driven by contested land rights claims.

Biofuels

- Booming global demand will create and is already creating a wave of capital and speculation as investors scour the planet for land capable of producing energy, food, minerals and fiber. Much of this pressure is heading to the developing world, where land is more productive and labor cheaper.
- In the last several years, the pressure to develop biofuels and non-food oils has resulted in an explosion of foreign-owned plantations in developing countries. For example, a Chinese company has committed to investing US\$1 billion to establish a 3 million hectare biofuel plantation in DRC. In Tanzania and Mozambique, Swedish companies have announced plans to develop over 400,000 hectares of land for bioenergy production.
- Over 20 national governments have explicit goals to increase biofuel production over the next decade and many more have set targets for biofuel consumption.

- Financing in the global biofuels industry rose from US\$2.5 billion in 2005 to US\$4.7 billion in 2006 and amounted to almost US\$2.5 billion in the first quarter of 2007.

Other statements

- The protected-area model was implemented with the worthy intention of conserving biodiversity but in application it generally failed to recognize the rights or even existence of local people, constituting at its worst, a direct land grab.
- Worldwide, forest communities spend an estimated US\$2.5 billion or more in cash and labor purely on the conservation of their forest areas – more than double the sum invested by international organizations and equivalent to the budget allocations to protected-area systems of all developing countries combined.
- The ability of Payments for Eco-systems services to scale up without undermining the lot of the rural poor will depend on the degree to which markets can be shaped to respect local rights and governance systems.
- Perhaps the most important finding from the last 50 years of development intervention in forest areas is about what was *not* done. No serious, substantial attempt was made to recognize and clarify property rights in forest areas, or to empower forest communities to advance themselves economically and politically.
- New bases for equitable governance and development in forest areas require a sound institutional foundation and recognition of local land, civic and political rights as a foundation for social, political and ecological resilience.