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LAND MATRIX



NEWSLETTER | LATIN AMERICA FOCAL POINT

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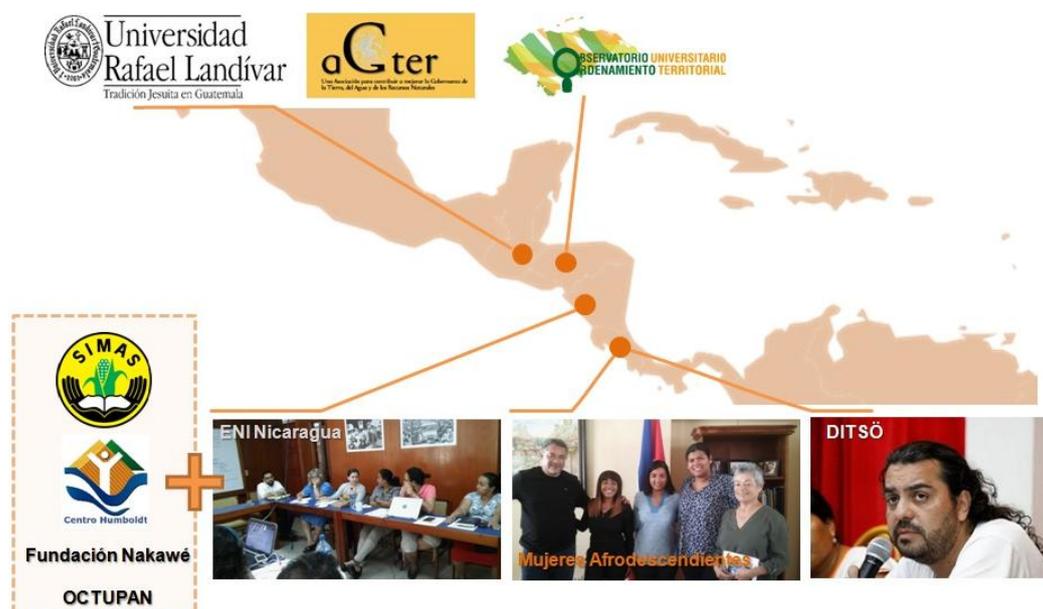
Meeting of the Steering Committee



The Land Matrix Steering Committee met in Rome in November (15 through 17). The meeting was attended by members of the different focal points and representatives of the funding institutions. Coordination was provided by ILC (International Land Coalition). The meeting took place at the headquarters of the United Nations International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). Lucas Seghezze (INENCO) represented the Latin America Focal Point at this meeting. Participants presented the results obtained during last year and discussed how to

guarantee the continuity and growth of the initiative in the future. The Land Matrix Analytical Report II, entitled "International Land Deals for Agriculture. Fresh insights from the Land Matrix" was officially launched during this meeting.

Strengthening of the network of partner institutions



Martín Simón (FUNDAPAZ) and Carmen Collado (Nitlapan) traveled to Central América in order to widen the network of partner institutions of the Focal Point. They met with 12 institutions from Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala, which will likely start cooperating with Nitlapan on the detection of land acquisitions. Most of these institutions indicated that large-scale mining and agribusiness have intensified the process of land concentration in their respective regions. They manifested their interest in participating in the Land Matrix initiative not only to contribute with new land deals, but also to generate regional alliances aiming at mitigating the phenomenon of land concentration.

New and updated land deals

As shown in Figure 1, the number of new and updated land deals increased significantly during the second phase of the initiative (2015-2016). FIJATE QUE NO QUEDEN ESPACIOS EN BLANCO EN EL PDF...

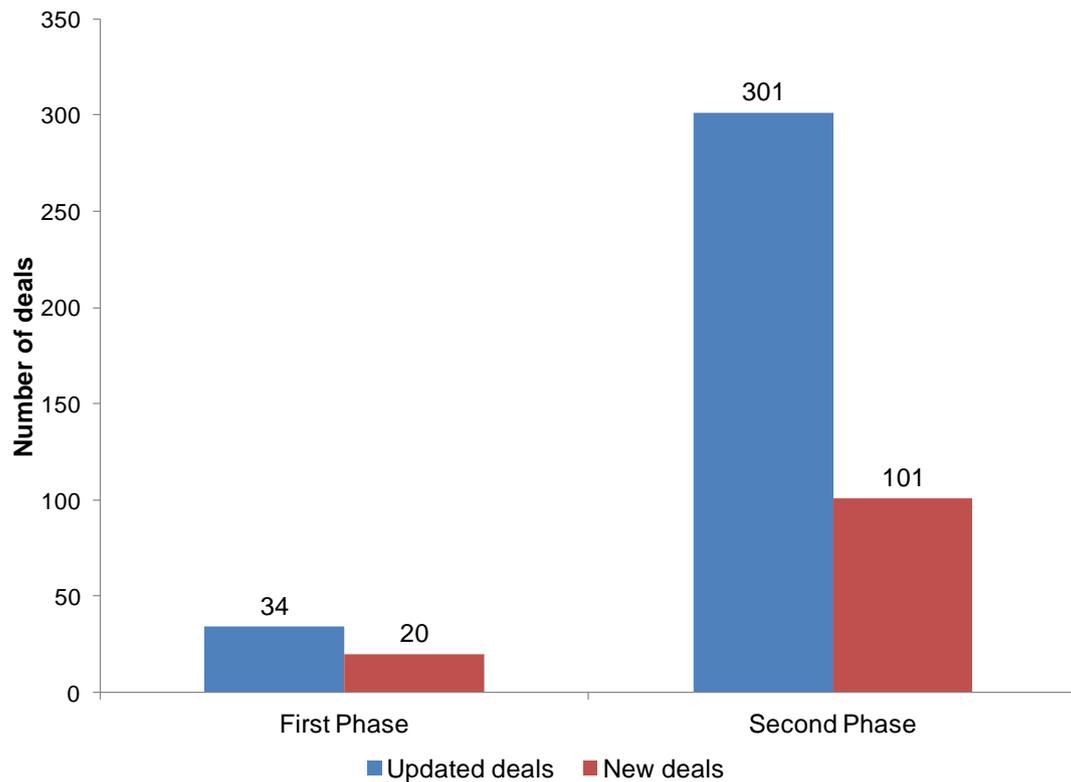


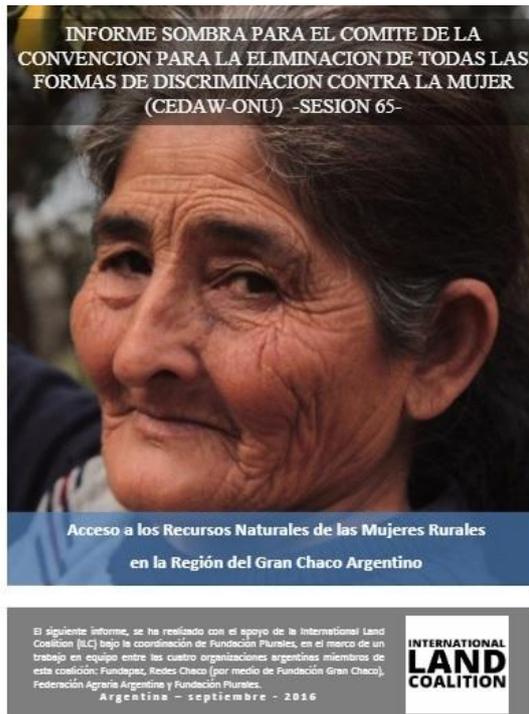
Figure 1. New and updated land deals in Latin America. First phase: 2014-2015; Second phase: 2015-2016.

Dissemination of the Land Matrix



On October 11th, 2016, Lucas Seghezso and Cristian Venencia commented on the Land Matrix initiative and the activities of the Focal Point during an extensive interview conducted during the show "Comunidad Natura", aired by the radio station of the National University of Salta (UNSa) (www.radio.unsa.edu.ar). The program was conducted by Verónica Flores and José Luis Pay. The audio can be listened to, for a limited period of time, at: <http://radio.unsa.edu.ar/audios/Comunidad%20Natura/11-10-2016%20Natura.mp3>

Mentions to Land Matrix in regional documents



The ILC regional strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean used information from the Land Matrix to highlight the process of land concentration in the region. Similarly, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), a UN body, also referred to the Land Matrix in its recently released shadow report.

Land Matrix at the university



The issue of large-scale land acquisitions was included for the first time in the course "Environmental Sociology" within the Environmental Engineering program at UNSa. This course was given by Lucio Leonardo Yazlle and Lucas Seghezzo, while practical aspects were covered by Cristian Venencia. Students learned how to use the Land Matrix web page and analyzed sets of data from different countries in the region.

Research on virtual water



Graduate and undergraduate students at INENCO, supervised by members of the Focal Point, carried out a study on large-scale land acquisitions as a mechanism of water appropriation and export in the Chaco region of the province of Salta (Argentina). The study detected 230 deals occupying 21% of the study area (equivalent to 1.4 times the size of Jamaica). The total amount of "virtual water" associated with only three food crops (soybean, corn, and bean) exported from this region was 456 Hm³/year between 2014 and 2015. Only seven countries imported 248 Hm³/year (Figure 2). This work was presented in two scientific conferences held in Tucumán and La Plata (Argentina) during 2016.

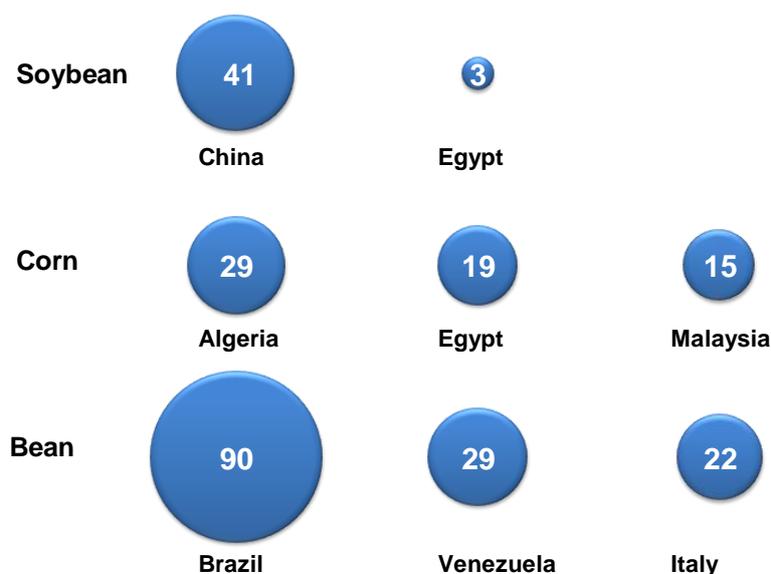


Figure 2. Virtual water flows (Hm³/year) associated to exports of soybean, corn, and bean from the Chaco region of the province of Salta, Argentina, to a selected number of countries.

Contribution to the Land Matrix Analytical Report II

We contributed to the Analytical Report II by providing a short description of the regional implications of the activities of four multinational companies active on the global grain market, namely Archer Daniels Midland (ADM), Bunge, Cargill, and Louis Dreyfus (also known as the ABCD group). These companies operate not only at the stage of commercialization, but have recently begun a gradual diversification process that includes the production and marketing of agroindustrial products. Although companies in the ABCD group have acquired relatively small amounts of agricultural land in Latin America, their increasing

control of the entire supply chain is likely to affect the food and economic sovereignty of some of the countries in this region. Directly or indirectly, these companies also contribute to the processes of deforestation and land use change taking place in several Latin American countries. Our second contribution to the Analytical Report II included a short description of silvopastoral systems as an alternative to conventional farming and livestock raising in semi-dry forest areas (Figure 3). We discussed the social and political implications these systems might have in the province of Salta, Argentina. The Analytical Report can be downloaded at: http://landmatrix.org/media/filer_public/ab/c8/abc8b563-9d74-4a47-9548-cb59e4809b4e/land_matrix_2016_analytical_report_draft_ii.pdf



Figure 3. Silvopastoral systems (left) and illegal burning of vegetable wastes after deforesting native forests for soybean production and livestock raising (right).

Country Profile Argentina

This country profile provided a detailed description of large-scale land acquisitions in Argentina. The analysis was based on 48 land deals in which international investors were involved, out of a total of 88 deals currently in the database (the other 40 deals were carried out by domestic investors). Among other things, the profile revealed that 51% of the deals were intended for food crops, followed by livestock (22%). The number and size of land deals in Argentina since the year 2000 are shown in Figure 4. The country profile can be downloaded at: http://www.landcoalition.org/sites/default/files/documents/resources/country_profile_argentina_draft.pdf



Figure 4. Land acquisitions by category of production, according to implementation status.

Two paradigmatic land deals

Nicaragua Grand Interoceanic Canal

This deal refers to a concession made in 2013 by the Nicaraguan government to a Chinese group (HKND) over an area of over 300,000 hectares of agricultural and forest land located in rural and indigenous areas. The objective of this concession was the development of an inter-oceanic canal similar to the one in Panama.

Land deals in Montes de María, Colombia

Montes de María is a region with strong land disputes in which some processes have been initiated lately to give land back to people displaced by armed conflicts. Displacements have also been promoted by individuals and companies that bought large areas and caused widespread land use changes.

Contribute to the database on land transactions!

This is an [invitation](#) to organizations working on land issues, academic institutions, researchers, grassroots organizations, government offices, and committed individuals to share information on large land acquisitions in Latin America.

If you want to contribute with this initiative, you can file a report on a large-scale land deal by filling in a form available [here](#).

Documents and reports produced by the Latin America Focal Point, including an update of large-scale land acquisitions in the region, available [here](#).

Latin American Focal Point: Fundapaz – INENCO

Network members: Nitlapan (Nicaragua), Pontificia Universidad Javeriana (Colombia), Sabiá (Brasil) y Guyra (Paraguay)