

Bulletin no. 6 – June 2008

Competing Claims on Natural Resources research programme

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1. **Linked programme: Competing Claims, Competing models in bio-fuel production**

Early 2008, the DGIS-WUR funded programme on biofuels and competition on natural resources – *Competing Claims, Competing Models* – has started (see also bulletin no.5). The programme consists of several work packages, which are implemented by a number of research groups of Wageningen University and partners in the Netherlands and southern Africa. The work packages focus on different aspects of bio-fuel production systems and their expansion:

1. Small-scale versus large-scale processing for added value
2. Connecting smallholders to bio-energy markets: Governance structures in the supply chain.
3. The Economics of Biomass for Energy
4. The role of charcoal production from common land in the bio-energy economy of Mozambique
5. The role of knowledge in enhancing societal negotiation about bio-fuel production
6. Bio-fuel networks and international trade regulations and their power to shape local realities
7. The impact of bio-energy production on food security at household and national level.

More elaborate descriptions of the work packages will appear on the website soon.

2. **Annual Workshop 2008**

The Competing Claims annual workshop is planned to take place in Massingir, Mozambique, from 6-12 December 2008. We hope you can all attend. More announcements will follow.

3. **PhD projects**

In April, *Abel Ramoelo's* PhD research proposal: 'Predicting consumption of resources along gradients of nutrients and moisture', was given a go-ahead by his supervisory team (Prof. Herbert Prins and Dr. Ignas Heitkönig of the Resource Ecology group of Wageningen University, and Andrew Skidmore of ITC).

Chaka Chirozva and *Edson Gandiwa*, PhD students with the Communication & Innovation Sciences group and the Resource Ecology group respectively, are currently developing their research proposals at Wageningen University. *Steven Matema*, who was also recruited late 2007, is preparing a scoping study on livestock-related competition for resources in the Mid-Zambezi Valley, Zimbabwe. After completion of his scoping study, he will further develop his PhD proposal in Wageningen, under the supervision of *Karen Eilers* of the Animal Production Sciences group. All other PhD students are currently in the fieldwork phase of their respective projects.

4. **Competing Claims at conferences, meetings and courses**

PhD Course: Analyzing Farming Systems & Rural Livelihoods, Harare (ZW), 10-23 Feb. 2008

Almost all Competing Claims PhD students participated in this two-week interdisciplinary course, which was jointly organised by the universities of Zimbabwe and Wageningen. Resource persons were *Paul Mapfumo* and *Amon Murwira* from the University of Zimbabwe, and *Jens Andersson*, *Pablo Tittonell* and *Ken Giller* of Wageningen University. The course was funded by Wageningen Graduate Schools, the Graduate School for Production Ecology and Resource Conservation (PE&RC), the Soil Fertility Consortium for Southern Africa (SOFECSA), and the African Network for Soil Biology and Fertility.

During the course a lot of time was spent in the field with farmers from a smallholder dominated rural area near Harare. The aim was to get hands-on experience of methods to observe and analyse farming systems and rural livelihoods. Data collected through observations and in interviews was processed, analysed and modelled at the University of Zimbabwe.

AHEAD-GLTFCA Working Group Meeting, White River, South Africa, 5-7 March 2008

The Animal Health for the Environment And Development (AHEAD) Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area (GLTFCA) working group, which brings together stakeholders in the GLTFCA, addresses cross-sectoral challenges emanating from efforts to connect protected areas across land-use types and international borders. The working group constitutes a critical discussion forum on the key conservation and development challenges facing the vision of a transfrontier conservation area. See: www.wcs-ahead.org/workinggrps_limpopo.html

At the 8th working group meeting of AHEAD-GLTFCA, the Competing Claims programme was well-represented. *Jessica Milgroom, Chaka Chirzova, Jens Andersson, and Petronella Chaminuka* gave well-received presentations on both the Competing Claims programme and other, related topics, while *Nicia Giva, Chrispen Murungweni* and *Xavier Poshiwa* gave short, informal talks on their research projects and provoked critical discussion. A number of presentations are downloadable from: www.wcs-ahead.org/gltfca_march2008/agenda_march2008.html

Resilience 2008 International science & policy conference, Stockholm, Sweden, 14-17 April 2008.

Competing Claims staff members and PhD students *Tom Veldkamp* (LAD), *Wayne Twine* (Wits) *Chrispen Murungweni, Dirk van Apeldoorn* and *Jens Andersson* attended the Resilience 2008 conference, which focused on the interdependency of society and nature in social-ecological systems, the adaptability of these systems, and cross-scale and dynamic interactions represent new challenges for governance and management in relation to interdependent social-ecological systems and ecosystem services. See: www.resilience2008.org and www.resilience-foundation.nl/

KNP Annual Science Network Meeting, Skukuza, South Africa, 21-25 April 2008

During the 6th Annual Kruger Network Meeting, the Competing Claims programme was represented by *Jessica Milgroom* (with *Jen Shaffer*), who presented on the consequences for land use of population resettlement from the Limpopo National Park (LNP) in Mozambique. A second presentation, by *Ignas Heitkönig* and *Jens Andersson*, focused on the relation between conservation and development in the academic and policy discourse on the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area (GLTFCA). Both presentations are downloadable from: www.sanparks.org/parks/kruger/conservation/scientific/noticeboard/knp_snm6.php

5. Other News: Publications/websites/visiting scholars/sabbatical Maja Slingerland/ZW

- *Erwin Bulte* (Development Economics group, Wageningen University) recently published an article entitled 'Linking Natural Resources to Slow Growth and More Conflict', in *Science*. See: <http://www.sciencemag.org/content/vol320/issue5876/index.dtl>
- The ISRIC-World Soil Information Database contains valuable country reports with information on soils, climate and potential for crop production. See: <http://library.wur.nl/isric/>
- Competing Claims has applied for travel grants for *Almeida Siteo* (CC site programme leader, Mozambique) and *Henrique Massango* (Coordinator of the resettlement programme of the Limpopo National Park) to come to Wageningen University for study visits.
- *Maja Slingerland* will spend her sabbatical (5 September–31 December 2008) in Mozambique. She will a.o. be involved in work relating to the Competing Claims programme as well as the related DGIS-WUR biofuels programme 'Competing Claims, Competing models'.
- As all NGOs have been forbidden to work in rural areas in Zimbabwe, it has been decided to temporarily suspend all fieldwork in Zimbabwe.
- Upcoming Katoomba conference on market-based conservation strategies, including payments for ecosystem services, Sept. 2008. See: www.katoombagroup.org/event_details.php?id=18

***Competing Claims researcher Fred Baudron is to be married to Gaby in France on the 12th July
We all wish them an enjoyable day and every happiness in the future!***

If you have relevant information to share for the next Competing Claims bulletin, please send it to the Regional Coordinator (Jens Andersson) or the Programme Coordinator (Maja Slingerland).

Competing Claims on Natural Resources

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