



THE WORLD BANK

## Annual Bank Conference on Land Policy and Administration

### ACQ4: Large Scale Agricultural Investment: Social, Economic, and Environmental Impacts

Monday, April 26, 2010 | 4:45-6:15PM | MC13-121

Session notes by Ildar Gazizullin

#### **Establishing a framework for transferring public land** (Hernandez)

The presenter described the successful experience of Peru with establishing a legal framework for transferring public land to private owners. A specific condition of the land transfer was that only large land plots were sold. The major factors of land transfer success were openness (transparent and open tenders) and bundling of land and water rights. As a result of the investment Peruvian agricultural exports more than doubled their value in less than 4 years.

#### **Whose lands are you giving away, Mr. President?** (Wiley)

The author has presented her assessment of the state's role as a lessor in Africa. The main problem is that the legislation largely ignores the land rights of the local inhabitants. Therefore, the author suggests that the local communities should be shareholders when land transactions occur, even if they do not own land formally.

#### **Large scale land acquisition for agro-development in Papua, Indonesia: implications for policies and investment practices** (Obidzinski)

The presenter shared experience of launching a large-scale palm-oil project in the frontier region of Indonesia. The project has potentially significant benefits for the local population living in poverty. Yet the project faces significant risks as well. A key problem is that the project was based on too many assumptions that may not prove true and some issues (e.g. social impact) were not estimated properly.

#### **Discussant notes** (Lindsay)

The discussant has narrowed down the following issues that presenters have focused upon: transparency (and adequacy) of legal mechanisms of land transfer and the failure of government to take in to account the customary land rights. The discussant has also pointed out that the timeliness land reforms is important and hence imperfect land sale by the governments in Africa may be justified. Protection of customary land rights needs democratic local authorities which is often not the case given widespread "chiefmanship" in Africa.