



NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

newsletter

LAND TENURE

Calling for participation in the e-Consultation on Voluntary Guidelines



FOR OVER A YEAR, FAO has been engaged in an extensive, worldwide consultation process aimed at gathering input to lead into the drafting of the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land and other Natural Resources. The aim of the Voluntary Guidelines is to serve as an instrument to raise awareness about the role of good governance and to offer guidance about best practices.

The consultation process, one of the most extensive ever carried out by FAO, involved approximately 1000 experts from a wide range of backgrounds, including government, civil society organizations, the private sector, academia and international organizations. Fifteen consultation meetings were held in various worldwide locations, in order to ensure a wide range of views from all regions.



In order to ensure the widest possible participation, FAO is now reaching out to interested individuals to share comments and expertise which may feed in to the First Draft of the Voluntary Guidelines. According to Principal Officer Paul Munro-Faure, "The e-consultation is a means to reach out and engage with as wide a range of partners as possible and not to limit engagement to those who were able to attend the physical meetings. This will be an important opportunity for the public to contribute their views to the drafting of the guidelines."

The First Draft of the Voluntary Guidelines will then be submitted to the open-ended working group of the Committee on World Food Security. Through a negotiation process, a Final Draft will be produced and then submitted to the 37th session of the Committee on World Food Security in October 2011 for its consideration.



To learn more:

[e-consultation pages of the Voluntary Guidelines](#)

[Voluntary Guidelines website](#)

[Land tenure web site](#)

[Press release: Finding common ground against weak governance](#)

NATURAL RESOURCES

The Natural Resources and Environment Newsletter



WELCOME TO THIS ISSUE of the Natural Resources and Environment Newsletter.

This month, we invite you to participate in the e-consultation on Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible governance of tenure of land and other natural resources. Following a lengthy regional consultation process, additional input is being requested prior to the drafting of the Zero Draft Guidelines.

FAO Headquarters marked World Water Day 2011, examining the urgent need for safe water supplies for the world's rapidly growing urban populations. Finally, we proudly announce the Chinese-language version of a disaster preparedness project web site, outlining the findings of a two-year project that took place in China's Juye County. The site is now fully available in English and Chinese.

To learn more:

Natural Resources Management and Environment Department
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

www.fao.org/nr

WATER RESOURCES

2011 World Water Day celebrations

22 MARCH HAS MARKED WORLD WATER DAY since 1993. The theme for this year's event was *Water for the Cities: Responding to urban challenges*. FAO Headquarters held an event to mark the celebrations, highlighting various challenges to ensuring safe and adequate water supplies for burgeoning city populations and pointing to various ongoing projects designed to overcome those challenges.



Parviz Koohafkan, Director of FAO's Land and Water Division spoke about findings of the soon to be released State of Land and Water publication, including the rapid depletion of the world's groundwater and the problems this poses for ensuring food security for a rapidly growing world population. Paul MunroFaure, Chairman of the Food for the Cities Working Group, noted that last year – for the first time- over 50 percent of the world's population resided in cities. He added that by the year 2050, the percentage of city dwellers worldwide is expected to reach a staggering 70 percent. To meet these challenges, UN organizations are partnering with various stakeholders, including NGOs and civil society organizations, the private sector, and governments and local authorities.



Vittorio Fattori, an Environmental Scientist with FAO's Nutrition Division spoke about the 884 million people worldwide – 37 percent of them in sub-Saharan Africa - who do not have access to safe water. Mr. Fattori pointed out that 2 million people die annually of causes related to unsafe water and lack of hygiene. More than 1.5 million children die each year of diarrheal diseases. "Many of these deaths could be avoided if access to clean water throughout the entire food production and processing chain could be assured. Access to safe water is needed in the fields, in the markets, and right on to the household level for safe food preparation."

Mama Touré, the coordinator of an FAO project financed by Spain in Senegal, was on hand to discuss that project's experience with using treated waste water for urban and peri-urban agriculture in Dakar. 73 percent of the beneficiaries of this project have insecure land tenure access. This project, which began in 2009, has increased those workers' access to the land, provided quality water to their crops and ensured better access to markets for their produce.



To learn more:

- [World Water Day 2011 site](#)
- [Food for the Cities site: World Water Day event at FAO \(all presentations are available\)](#)
- [FAO Water site](#)



CLIMATE CHANGE



Strengthening disaster preparedness in agriculture project site now available in Chinese

AT THE REQUEST OF THE Chinese Government, FAO oversaw a two-year project in China's Juye County entitled "Enhancing disaster preparedness of the agricultural sector in Juye country". The project tested within the region a new approach to disaster risk prevention and preparedness, focused primarily on reducing the economic losses of affected farmers, reducing environmental degradation, and improving farmers' overall livelihoods.

The project site – now fully available in English and Chinese – offers a wide range of resources, project reports, and recommendations related to the pilot project.

To learn more:

- [Project web site in English](#)
- [Project web site in Chinese](#)
- [Climate change web site](#)