



# Towards transparency in Global Land Deals and Land Governance

The experience of the Land Matrix and land governance in Cameroon

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The screenshot displays the Land Matrix website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with three icons: a globe, a magnifying glass, and a pencil. Below this, the text "GET THE IDEA" is centered. The main content area features a central orange cube icon with a blue outline, surrounded by six smaller panels: "Dynamics of transnational deals", "Data availability" (showing a pie chart with 78.42%), "Perspective I", "Perspective II", "Local, Regional and National data", and "Show deal details". Below the cube, the text "GET INVOLVED" is centered. At the bottom, there are three icons: a document, an envelope, and a download arrow, with labels "Report a land deal", "Get in touch", and "Download the dataset" respectively. The "Land Matrix" logo is prominently displayed in the center of the screenshot.

Université de Yaoundé 1, 6/11/2013



# SUMMARY

- I. Introduction to the phenomenon, definition of the phenomenon
- II. The Land Matrix
  - I. The Land Matrix as a database
  - I. The Land Matrix as a tool for transparency and public policy development
- III. Some examples – Patterns of global land deals
- IV. Concluding remarks, the future of the LM and beyond

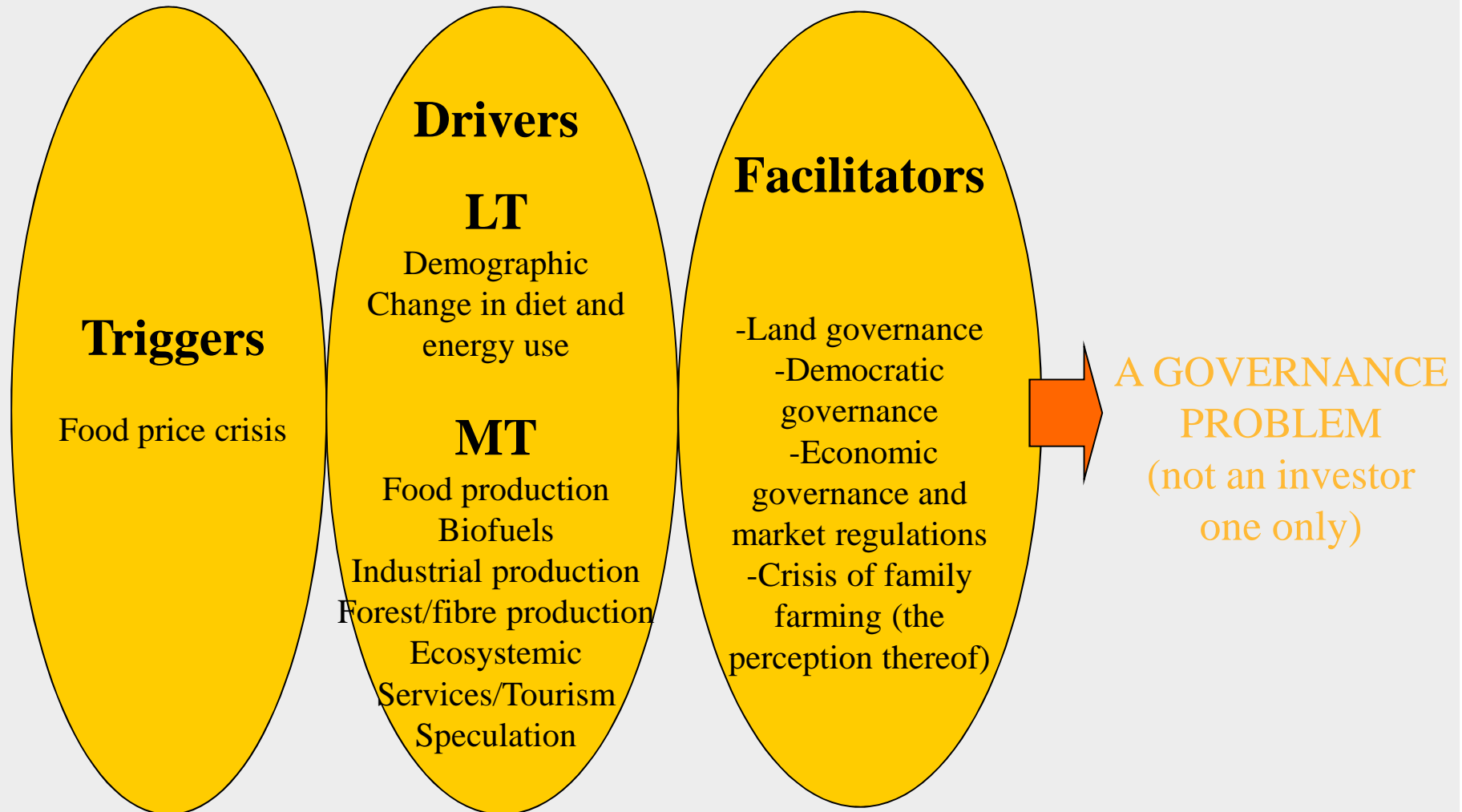


## Introduction to the phenomenon

- LSLA - Phenomenon « emerged » in 2008
  - Context of high food prices
  - Numerous cases of very large acquisitions (Daewoo case in Madagascar)
  - High implication of media and civil society and, subsequently, of research and international organisation
- Lack of transparency of these LSLA
- Lack of understanding on the nature of the actors, the size, the triggers and drivers of the phenomenon



# A complex and inter-dependent environment ...





## Introduction to the phenomenon

- LSLA fulfill the following criteria
  - Entail a transfer of rights to use, control or ownership of land through sale, lease or concession
  - Have been initiated since 2000
  - Cover an area of 200 hectares or more
  - Imply the potential conversion of land from smallholder production, local community use or important ecosystem service provision to commercial use



**GET THE IDEA**



**GET INVOLVED**

documented 936 deals worth \$100 billion in investment account for 78.42% of all land deals in the world. The largest land deal in Africa is in Africa.

- Report a land deal
- Get in touch
- Download the dataset





# PROMOTING...

- Global data base - Making the data available and the phenomenon understandable
- Transparency in decision-making over land and investment, as a step towards greater accountability
- Public participation in building a constantly evolving database and in the debate on large-scale land deals

Launched in April 2012 –  
World Bank Land and Poverty Conference



# DATABASE CHARACTERISTICS...

- 30+ variables - Information on
  - investor (origin, type),
  - deal (production intention, size),
  - target region (former land use)
  - Sector and production
  - Etc.
- Records intended, concluded or failed land acquisitions (land acquired by purchase, lease or concession)
  - For agricultural production, timber extraction, carbon trading, mineral extraction, industry, renewable energy production, conservation, and tourism
  - In low and middle income countries





# CHARACTERISTICS and ADDED VALUE...

Crowd-sourcing instrument

Verified data – cross-check inputs

- Levels 0-1-2-3 – only 1 or higher are published
- 50% published
- Objective to verify everything

Huge uptake

- High degree of attention
- Some controversy - Valuable lessons on the challenges and successes of promoting open data



# CHALLENGES...

1. Definition of the phenomenon – size/sector choice induce partialities (leading to important differences)
2. Quantification and assessment. What and how do we measure the large-scale land acquisition phenomenon?
3. Status of the land deals
4. Data availability and reliability remain problematic. LM - effort to reduce the reliance on media reports, issues regarding accuracy also appear in sources considered to be more reliable.
5. Communication
  - What the data is about and its limitation
  - Encouraging engagement



## 2<sup>nd</sup> PHASE: A dynamic and participatory tool

- No categorisation of deals according to level of verification, but according to source
  - Users to judge themselves of reliability
  - Much more data will be available
- Better categorization of the status / progress of the deals
  - Getting a more precise image
  - Allow tracking of changes of deals over time
- Exclude deals that do not fulfil our minimum information requirements
- Longer term –
  - Mechanism of following activities on land
  - Inclusion of land-based investments not involving transfer of land rights (outgrowing schemes)
- Better communication



## 2<sup>nd</sup> PHASE: A dynamic and participatory tool

Greater emphasis on first hand, primary information, continuously updated

Necessitates strategies for continuous data collection and checking

- Crowdsourcing and mechanism of continuous follow up of status of the projects/tracking of new projects
- Setting up long-term partnerships
  - Network of key informants
  - AU – UNECA – African portal, with LPI focal points
  - Private sector / governments????
- Collaboration with existing/new – often national initiatives
  - Decentralized land observatories
  - Cameroon



# TOWARDS OPEN Source/Governance...

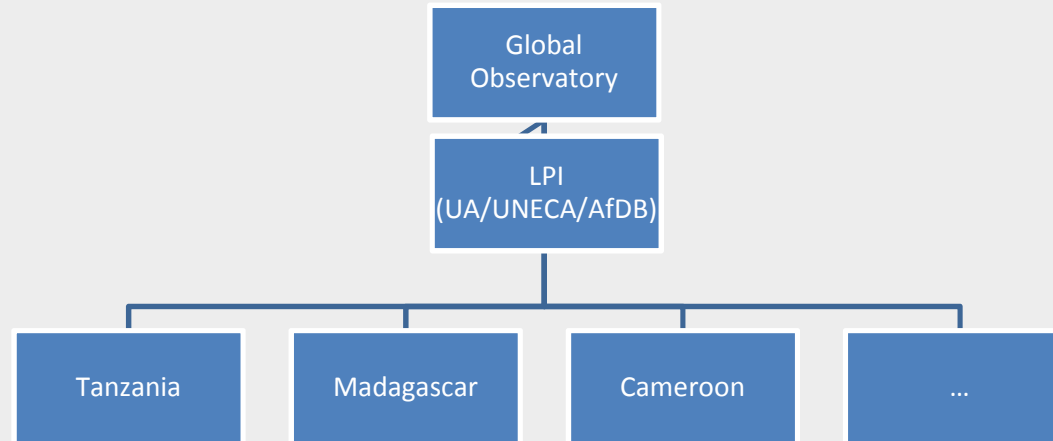
- LM Open Data ...
  - Promotion of use/participation to data
- BUT ALSO
  - Adapt software and approach to support infra-global initiatives: All data AND software available for anyone to use, for any purpose, at no cost.
- LM Project ...
  - Support the establishment of Land Observatories that concentrate on a specific area of interest (geographical/Thematic)

- *Global Observatory* (focusing on transnational data and visualizations)
- *Regional Observatories* (such as being developed with LPI for Africa),
- *National Observatories* (currently being developed in Peru, Tanzania, Madagascar, Cambodia and Laos),
- *Thematic Observatories* (currently being developed on rangelands).



# TOWARDS OPEN Source/Governance...

- Development of a pyramid



## Each Observatory

- Relatively independent, managed by own interest group
- Multi-stakeholder platform is a primary condition
- LM partnership provides development support, linking to the global database



# TOWARDS OPEN DATA/Governance...

- Contribution to broader objectives ...Beyond data and assessment
- Twin goals:
  - Improving the quality and inclusiveness of international and national policy dialogue and decision-making on land resources
  - Combining a global database with information for decision-making AND promoting participative decision-making in specific national/thematic contexts
    - Participation
    - Ownership
- Towards new alliances:
  - National governments, civil society, ...
  - Research, decision making spheres, ...
  - G8 (UK, France), World Bank (OpenContracting), LPI - AU/UNECA/AfDB, VGs, RAIs,



**GET THE IDEA**

Dynamics of transnational deals | Data availability (78.42%) | Perspective I | Perspective II

1 Local, Regional and National data | 2 Filtered land deals | 3 Show deal details

**GET INVOLVED**

# Land Matrix

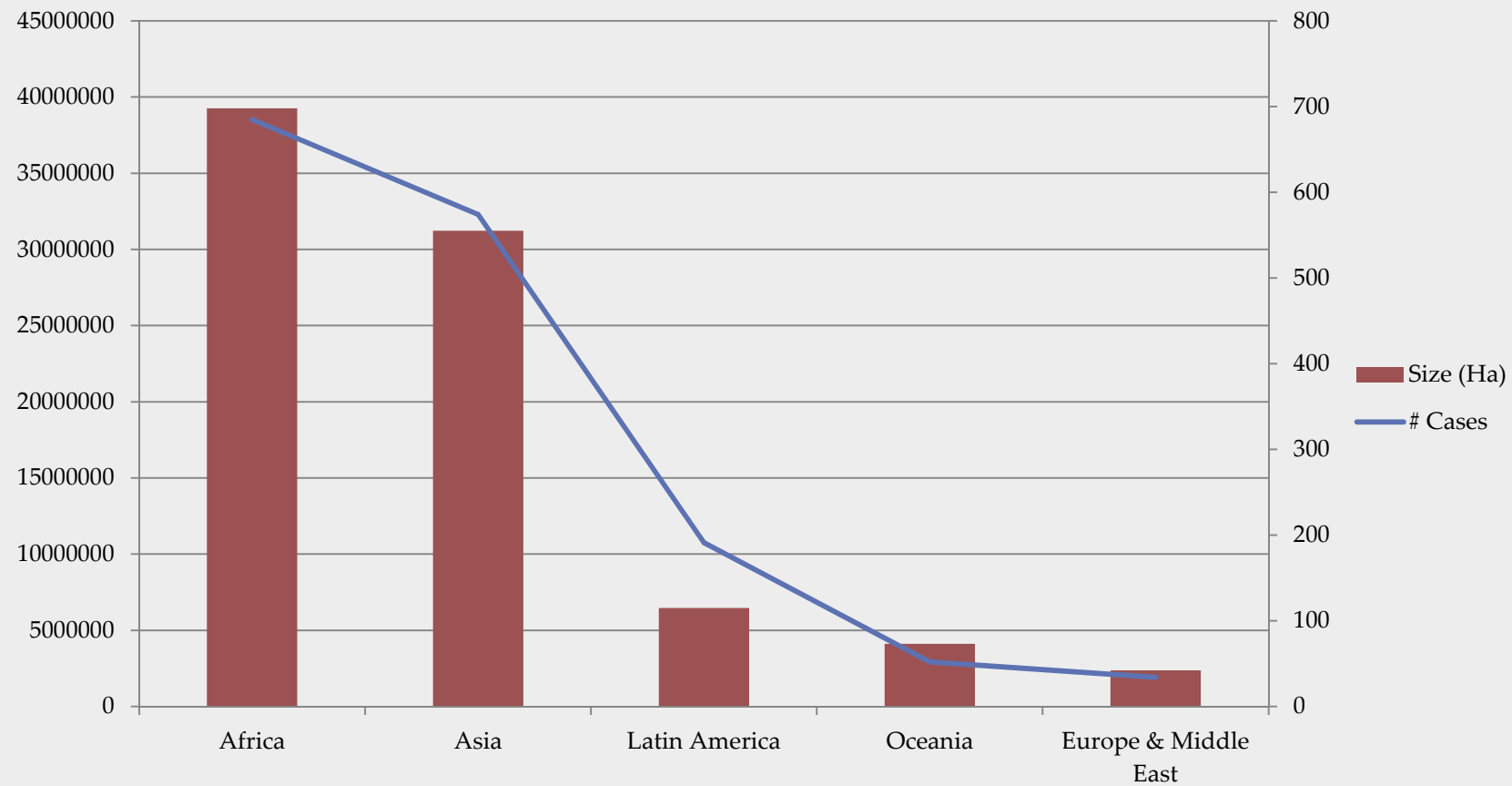
Report a land deal | Get in touch | Download the dataset

Some examples - Patterns of large-scale land acquisitions

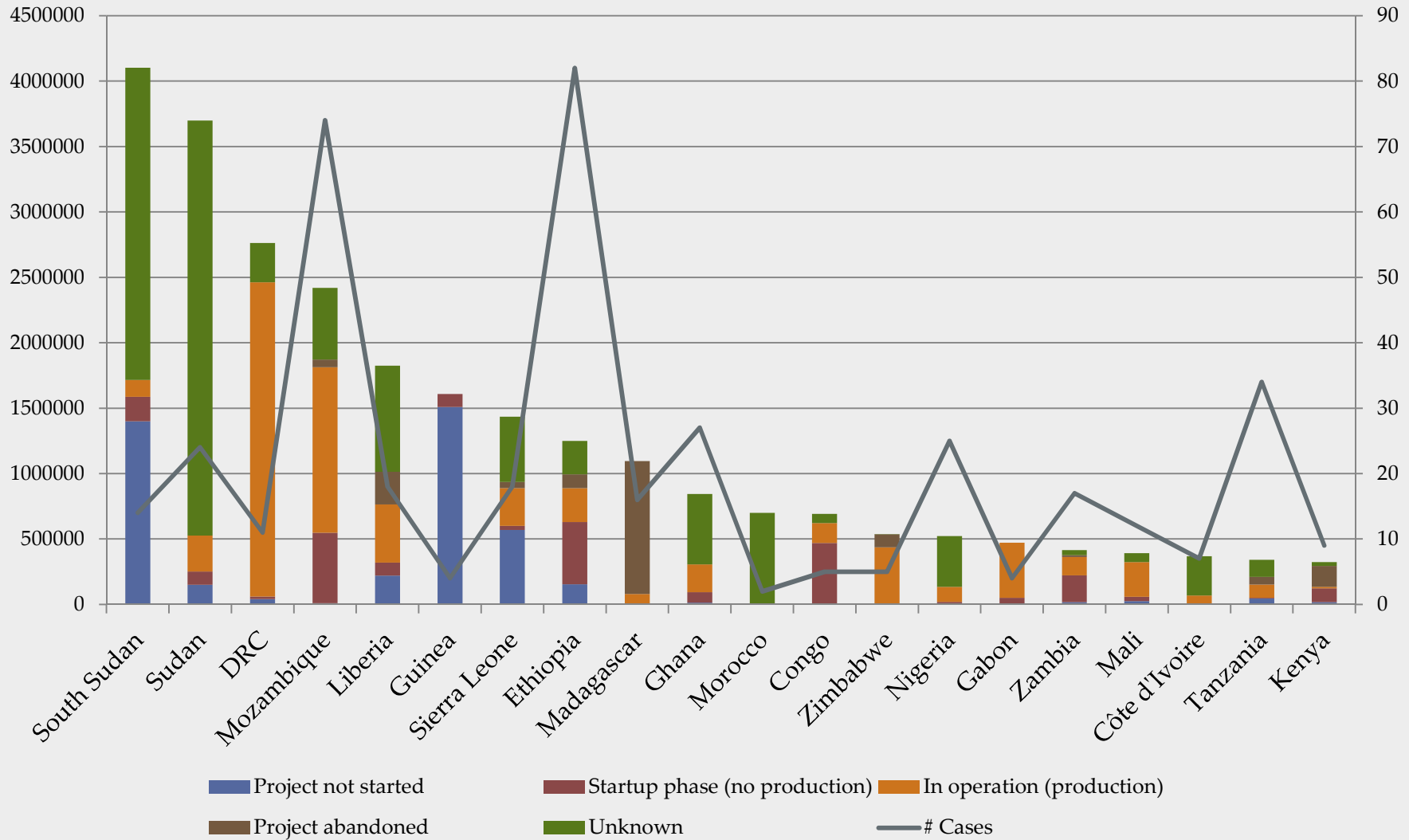




# Africa is the most affected

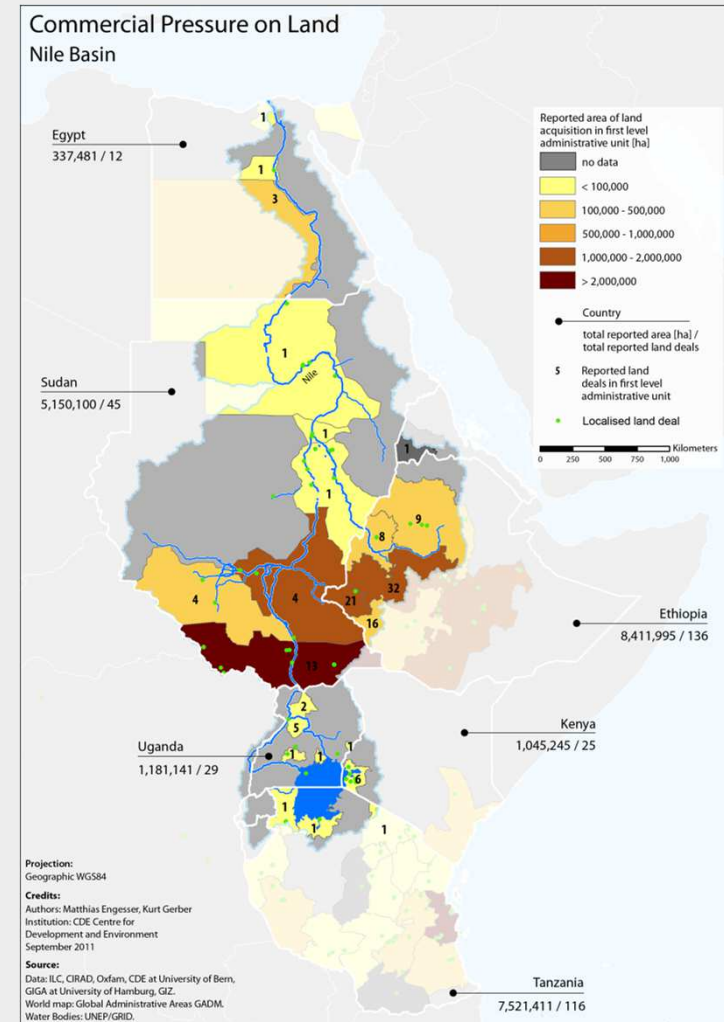
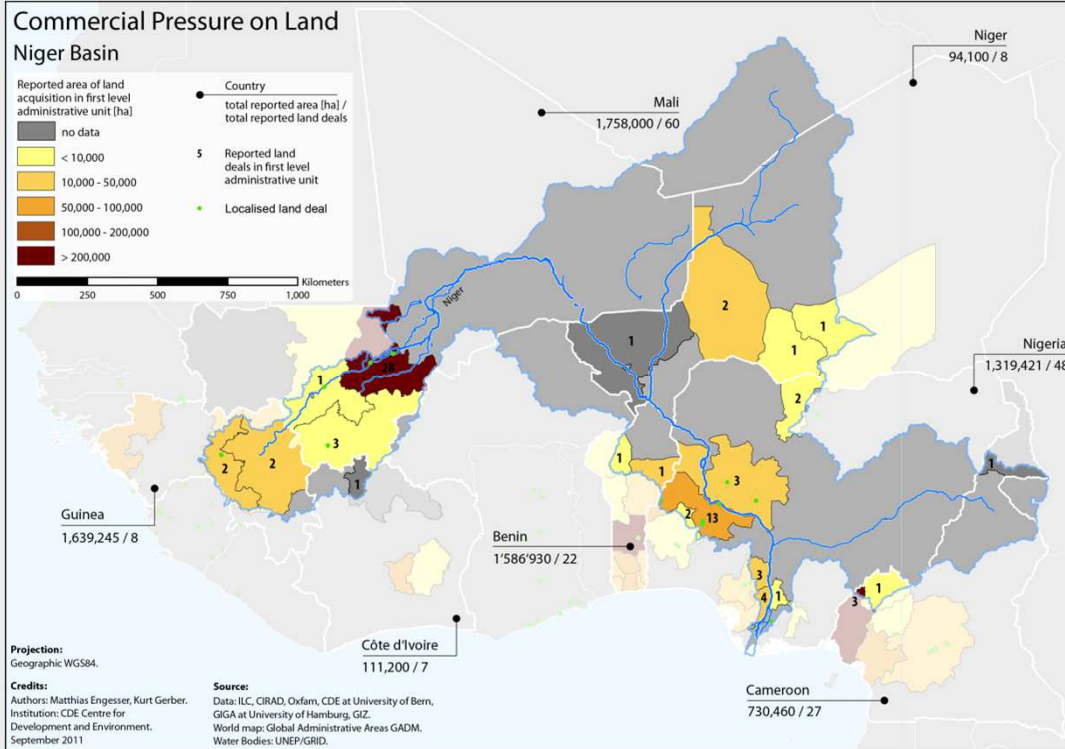


# African countries – in particular east African ones - are among the most affected



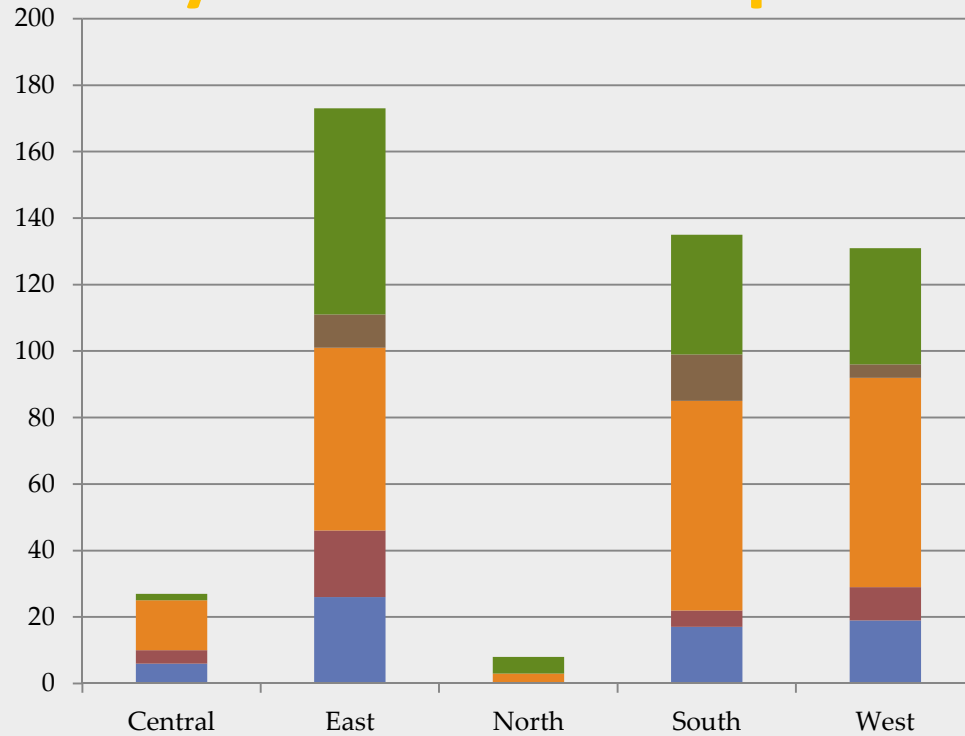


# A pattern of concentration

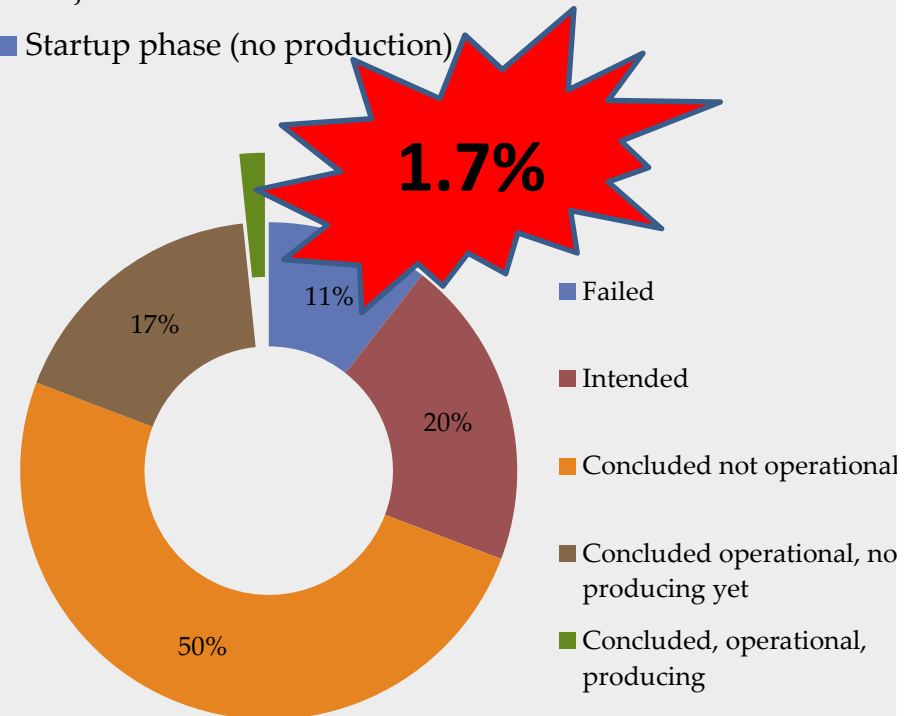




# Very little effective production



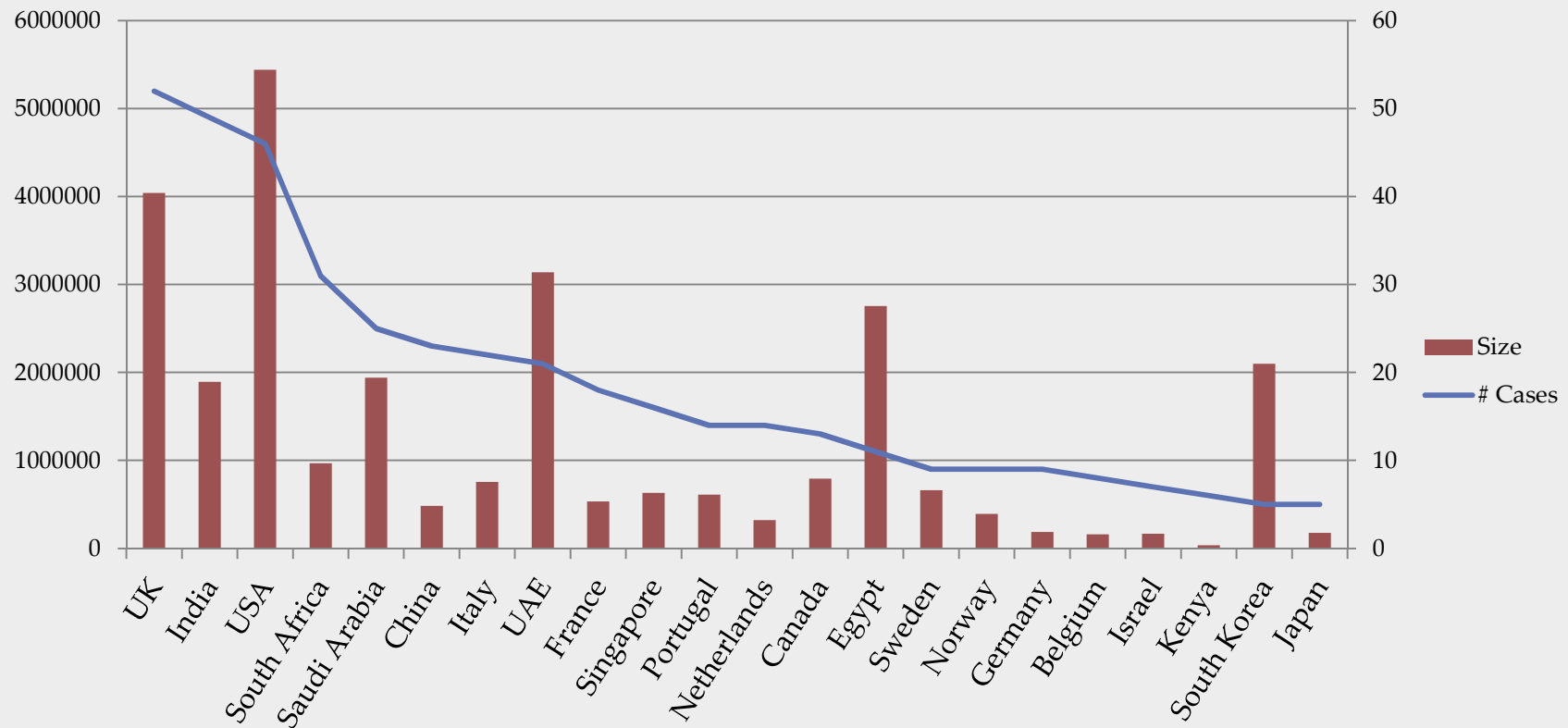
- Unknown
- Project abandoned
- In operation (production)
- Project not started
- Startup phase (no production)



- Failed
- Intended
- Concluded not operational
- Concluded operational, no producing yet
- Concluded, operational, producing



# Investors in Africa





# Investors in Africa

- **Traditional Western** food-producing, processing, and exporting companies seeking to “square the market”
- **Capital-rich / food insecure** Land and water scarce populous but capital-rich (Asian countries, Gulf States - China:20% of world pop / 9% of world arable land)
- **New actors** – Outside of agriculture (financial sector, ...)

## Expanding markets:

- Private investors

## Avoiding markets:

- Direct gov. involvement
- Sovereign wealth Funds
- State-owned enterprises

## Speculation (?):

- Hedge funds
- Pension funds
- Invest banks



## Investors in Africa

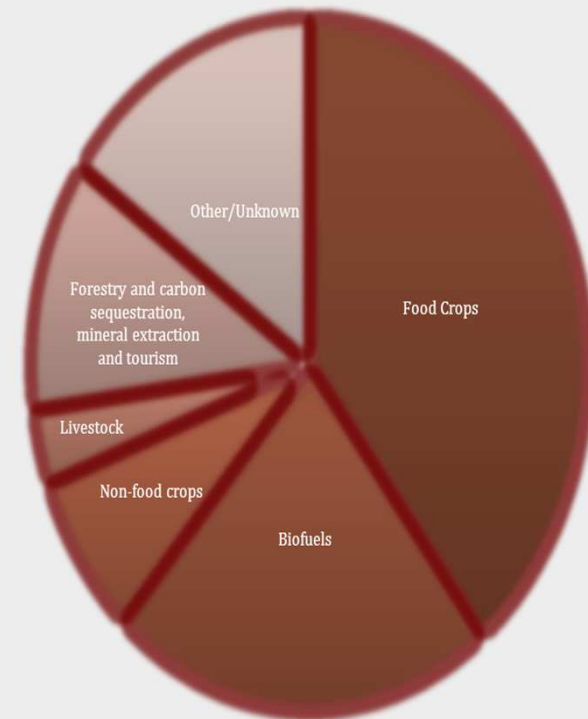
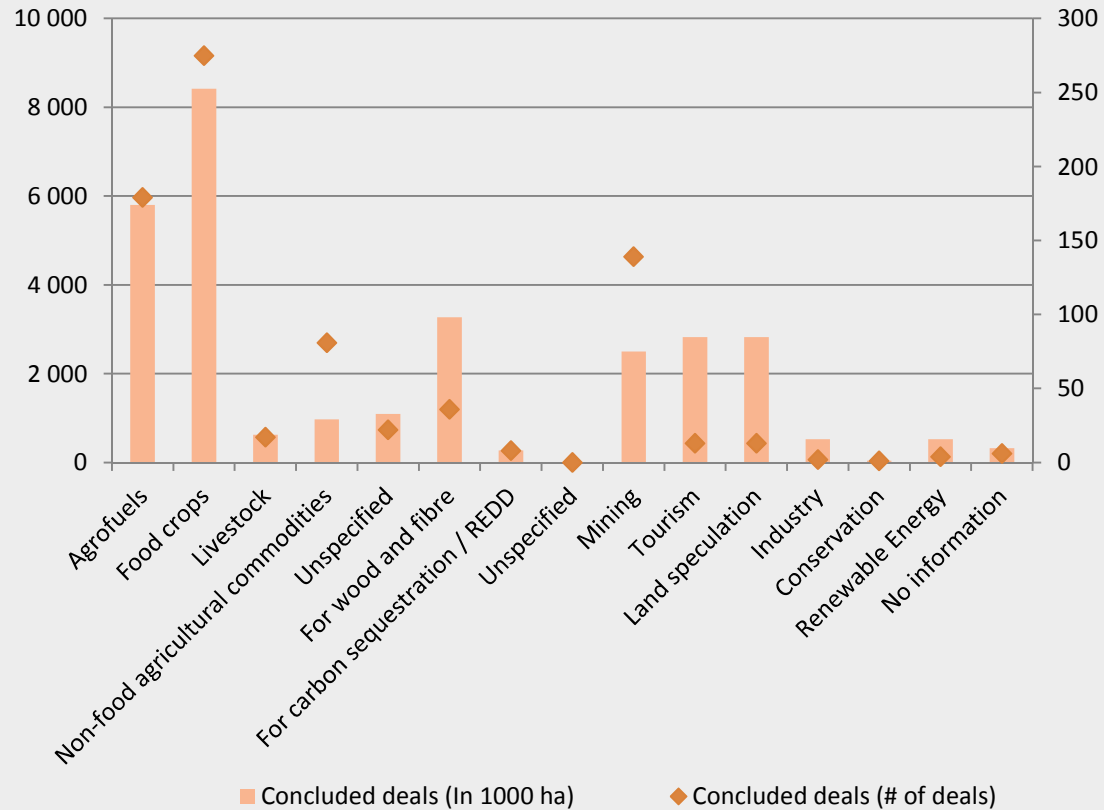
- Different investment types and production models

Independent farmer model	Associative farmer model	Cooperative farmer model	Speculative 1000-day model	Asset management and Investment funds model	Nucleus estate model	Agribusiness Estate model
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- Different outcomes and strategies
- Diverse inclusiveness patterns



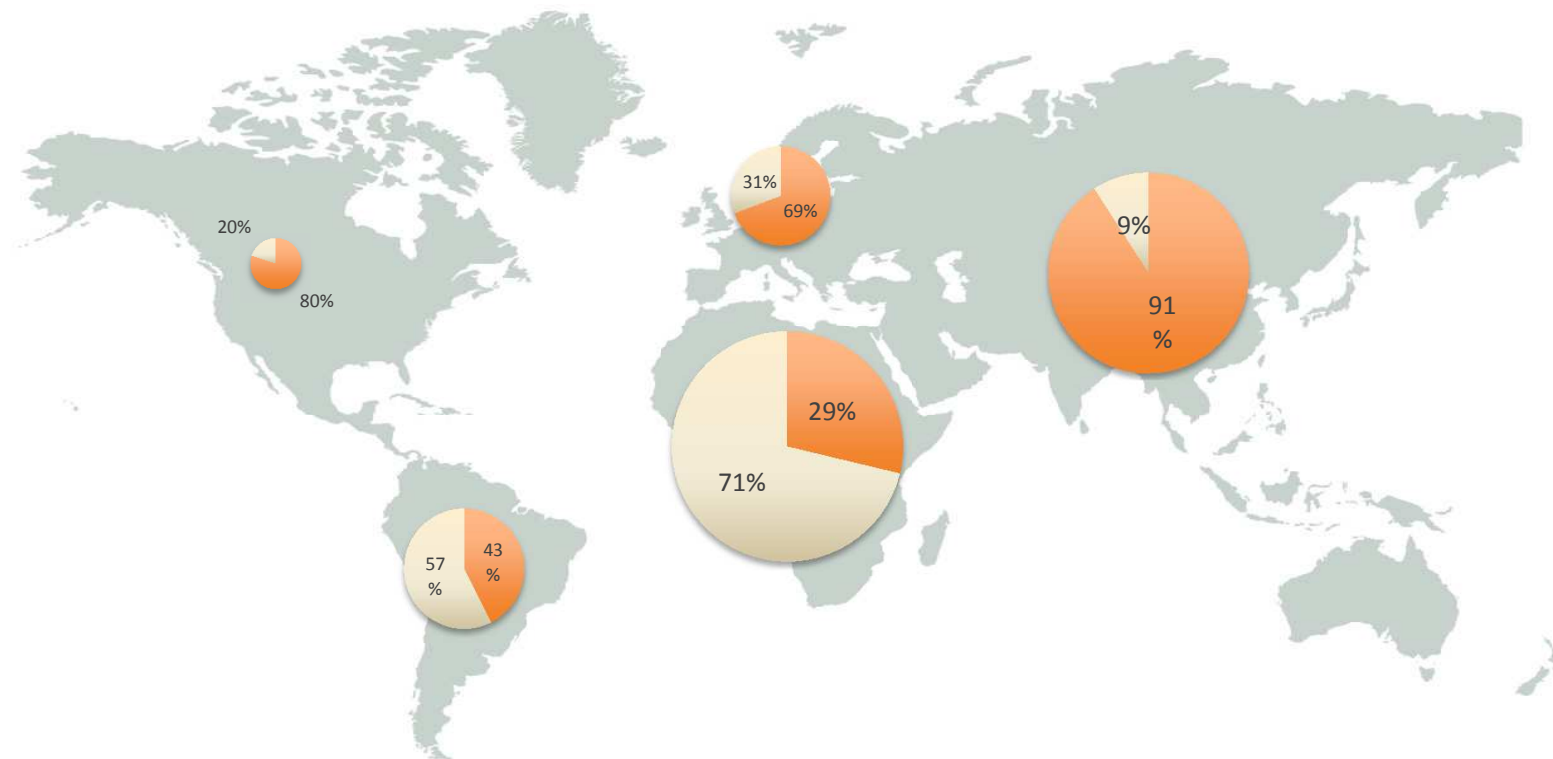
# Drivers: Food crops are more important than agrofuels









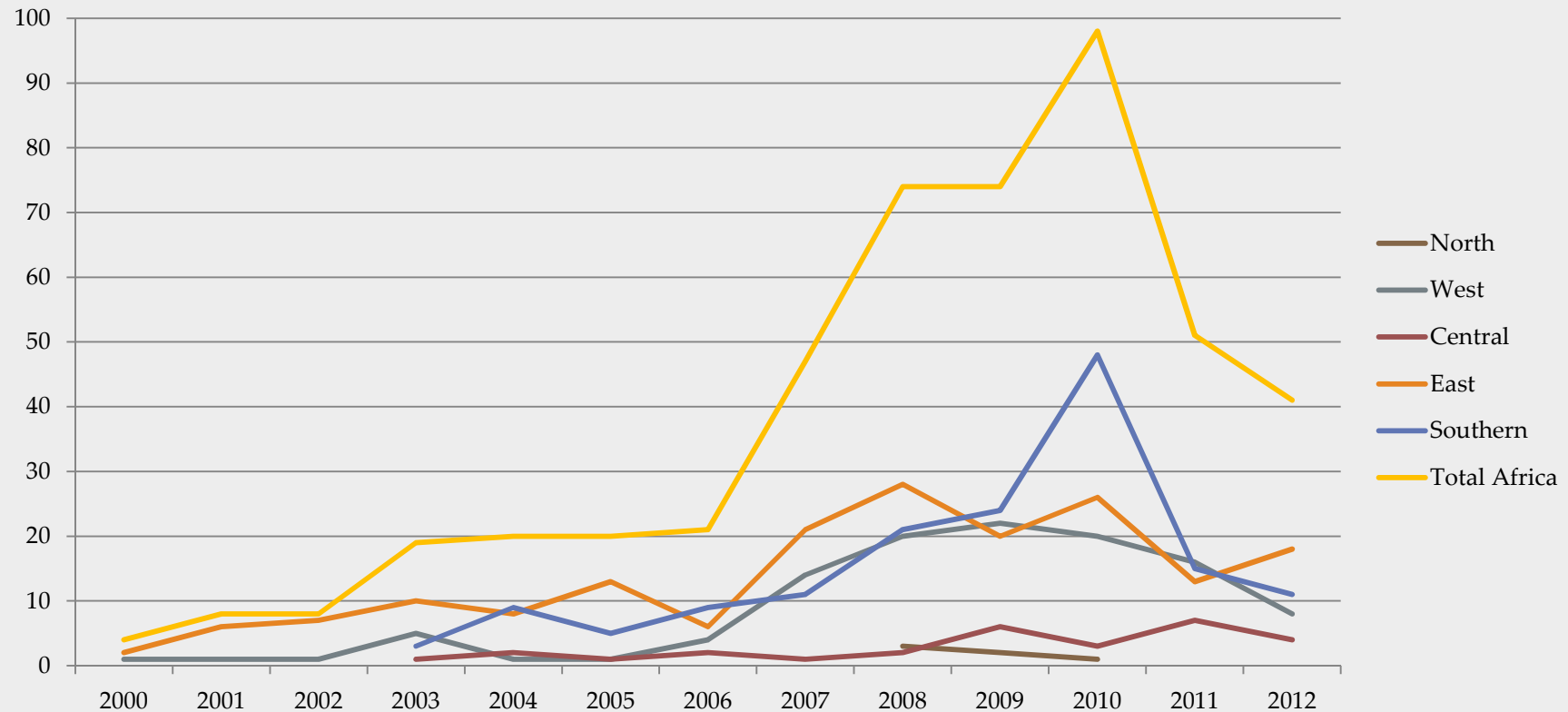
# Intra vs Extra-regional investments



Intra-regional   
Extra-regional 



# Slowing down overall, but evidence of long-term trend of growing commercial interest in land





**GET THE IDEA**

Dynamics of transnational deals

Data availability: 78.42%

Perspective I

Perspective II

Local, Regional and National data

Show deal details

**GET INVOLVED**

# Land Matrix

Report a land deal

Get in touch

Download the dataset

## Conclusion and the future of the Land Matrix



## The Land Matrix and decentralised observatories

- The need for more transparency, inclusiveness, better governance
- The Land Matrix
  - From a database...
  - ...To a tool/instrument for transparency
- The need to decentralise
  - Better information
  - Feeding the debate at the relevant levels

# Related research

Longer term research on structural changes in agriculture/land policies/governance and the food/energy/climate/finance crises (Margulis, 2013) / Agro-food-energy nexus (Borras, 2013)

- Impact (land tenure, NR management, regulations/norms, local/national/global food security...)
- New types of actors (investment funds/role of domestic actors) and changing investment patterns
- Changing production models, linking smallholders to large-scale investments, inclusive business models
- Food regimes/systems
- REDD+, biofuels
- Etc.



## Related research

Research on OpenSource and renewal of public policy

- Transparent, multistakeholder governance,
- OpenGovernance,
- Global norm development/governance,
- Food sovereignty...)



# Cameroon?

- « Land is not a problem in cameroon, its governance is »
- Commercial Pressure on NR
  - Land (agricultural, urban)
  - Minerals
  - ...
- International vs domestic land acquisitions



# Cameroon?

- Information remains sketchy, not precise, not transparent
- Processes not clear, inclusive?
- Governance needs
  - Cadaster
  - Observatory (ies)
- Broader debate of which development trajectory to follow





<http://www.landmatrix.org>

