

The Study Circle for

DEVELOPMENT ISSUES / SKOV



cordially invites you to a Seminar on:

WATER FOR FOOD SECURITY

Date: Thursday 20 December 2012 at 15:30 hr

Venue: Hof van Wageningen (v/h WICC/IAC), Lawickse Allee 9, Wageningen

Programme:

15:10 Welcome, coffee, tea

15:30 Opening by Ir Cor de Jong, president of SKOV

15:35 Introduction of the theme by Ir Henk van Schaik, Programme Co-ordinator of the Cooperative Programme on Water and Climate (until April 2012), The Hague/ Wageningen

15:45 **“Strategies for sustainable water use in a globalizing world”**
Prof. Dr Pieter van der Zaag, professor of integrated water resources management, UNESCO-IHE Delft

16:15 **“Water allocation in theory and practice”**
Prof. Dr Ir Petra Hellegers, professor of the economics of water, Wageningen UR

16:45 Coffee/tea break

17:15 **“Global debates on water scarcity and climate change: obstacle or opportunity for Africa’s majority of small-scale water users?”**
Dr Ir Barbara van Koppen, Principal Researcher on Poverty, Gender, and Water with the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), Southern Africa Programme, Pretoria.

17:45 **Plenary discussion.** Chair: Ir Henk van Schaik

18:30 Closure by Ir Cor de Jong. Aperitif.

19:00 Diner (optional) at the “Hof van Wageningen” for speakers and participants

Participation in the Seminar is free of charge, including aperitif.

Please register by return e-mail to huydtsbm@pt.lu or by surface mail to the Secretariat of SKOV (see below) by 18 December. Subsidized dinner fee is € 20,- for SKOV members and € 30,- for non-members (payment in cash on the spot). Please indicate whether vegetarian or non-vegetarian. **Dinner registration is required and binding.**

Secretariat KLV: c/o P. O. Box 79, 6700 AB Wageningen. fax: 0317- 483976

WATER AND FOOD SECURITY

Water is key to food security. Crops and livestock need water to grow. Agriculture requires large quantities of water for irrigation and of good quality for various production processes. Feeding the world and producing a diverse range of non-food crops such as cotton, rubber and industrial oils, will require an increasing amount of fresh water. Irrigation now claims close to 70 percent of all freshwater appropriated for human use. Since the amount of usable water is limited, a more economic use of the available water resources is needed, in order to secure their sustainable use.

Therefore, water challenges will increase significantly in the coming years. Continuing population growth and rising incomes will lead to greater water consumption, as well as more waste. The urban population in developing countries will grow dramatically, generating demand well beyond the capacity of already inadequate water supply and sanitation infrastructure and services.

Source: UN International Decade for Action “Water for Life”2005-2015.

In the framework of the Seminar on Water for Food Security, Professor Pieter van der Zaag will highlight two strategy lines for ensuring sustainable water use in a changing and globalizing world. The first line focuses on investment in hardware and physical structures a) to improve the efficient use of rainfall in dryland agriculture and b) to upgrade existing irrigation systems and develop additional water storage infrastructure, and c) to invest in precision agriculture. The second line focuses on investment in software, in order to empower water users to training, to gain adequate knowledge through monitoring of water resources and their uses and to use this knowledge for making improvements. Also the judicious use of financial incentives and the need for strengthening of water institutions will be discussed.

Next, Professor Petra Hellegers will speak about water allocation in theory and practice. In theory market-based water allocation mechanisms, such as water pricing, water markets and tradable water rights, can improve the allocative efficiency, but in practice their role is limited due to market failures and high transaction costs. Besides, such mechanisms are not very effective in balancing the supply and demand for water, and hence not suitable to reduce over-allocation of water. While it is important that the sum of the water allocations, on average, equals the renewable supply on average. Security of water availability is important as well as flexible allocation institutions, investments and mechanisms that can reallocate water when appropriate.

Finally, Dr Barbara van Koppen will review the recent global debates on water scarcity and climate change and discuss their relevance for Sub-Saharan Africa’s small-scale water users. In many parts of Africa, water resources are abundant, but poorly developed. Moreover, the presently developed water resources are very unevenly distributed. Most of them are governed by large-scale farmers. Recent regulatory measures to combat the ‘water scarcity’ tend to widen the existing inequalities. Currently, the pressure on the available water resources is strongly increasing because of the large-scale water grabbing, linked to land grabbing, by foreign, mainly Asian and European, investors.

The notion of ‘water scarcity’ will especially be illustrated by the situation in the Republic of South Africa.

The presentation concludes by exploring the possible meaning of the recent debates on the human right to water for domestic uses and broader socio-economic rights and more accountable community-driven investments in infrastructure for domestic and productive uses.