

## Interdisciplinary Seminar WT 2013/14

# “The Political Economy of Land Grabbing”

Organization: Prof. Dr. Bernhard Neumärker / Prof. Dr. Reinhart Kößler  
Prof. Dr. Tim Krieger / Dr. Marcel Baumann

### Target group:

This joint seminar of the Institute for Economic Research, the Seminar of Political Science and the Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institute targets **students of**

- **M.Sc. Economics & M.Sc. VWL & Diplom VWL**
- **M.A. Politikwissenschaft & Angewandte Politikwissenschaft**

### Content:

Land Grabbing refers to large-scale land acquisition and lease contracts between investors on the one side and state agencies of the target countries - mostly developing countries on the other side. Such large-scale land deals have been criticized for a variety of reasons including forceful deprivation of land and livelihood options from previous land users, putting food security in the target countries at risk and giving rise to violent social conflicts. At the heart of such criticism lies the assumption that power asymmetries are misused to the severe detriment of local land users.

In this seminar we will use the approach of Political Economy to understand the power asymmetries and conflict dynamics of Land Grabbing and the role of institutional design options at international, national, regional and local levels to regulate land use and land transactions.

**Dates:** precise dates t.b.a.

- Preparatory meeting at the beginning of the winter semester.
- Two-day block seminar in January 2014.

### Place and Costs:

- The seminar will take place in the unique atmosphere of the **Uni-Haus Schauinsland**.
- The costs for breakfast, lunch, dinner, coffee breaks and lodging (**max. 50€ p.p.**) have to be covered by seminar participants.
- Participants have to arrange their travel arrangements to the Schauinsland (ca. 30 mins.) themselves. Facilitation and a limited number of lifts is offered by the organizers.

## Topics:

<b>Block (A): Economic and Political Foundations of Land Grabbing</b>
(1) Land Grabbing and the Theories of Global Political Economy (MB) (2) Notions of Property and Strategies of Land Grabbing (RK) (3) Conflict Mitigation by Formalisation of Land Tenure: Opportunities and Constraints (NE) (4) The “Resource Curse” and Land Grabbing: Two Different Approaches to the Same Problem? (TK)
<b>Block (B): Actors, Power and Conflict Dynamics in Land Grabbing</b>
(5) Land Grabbing and Conflict Studies: Key Concepts of Conflict Resolution, Management and Transformation (MB) (6) The Role and Power of the State in Controlling Land Grabbing (NE) (7) The Incentives to Resist and Revolt against Land Grabbing Activities (NE) (8) Empirical Analyses: Can Land Grabbing Conflicts be Resolved (MB) (9) Competing Uses of Land: Between Shifting Cultivation and Land Grabbing (RK)
<b>Block (C): Land Grabbing and Development Strategies</b>
(10) Land Grabbing as a National Strategy for Food Security (RK) (11) Land Transactions as a Means to Foster Poor Nations’ Development: A Neoclassical Analysis (TK) (12) Does Fracking Imply Land Grabbing? (TK)

Supervisors (in brackets):     *Economics:*             NE: Prof. Neumärker     TK: Prof. Krieger  
                                       *Political Science:*     RK: Prof. Kößler         MB: Dr. Baumann

## Examination modalities:

- Term paper; participation in class; presentation.

## Registration modalities:

- The number of participants is restricted to a maximum of 24 students.
- Application phase: August 1-30, 2013.
- Note: Students of economics and political science can apply for the topics supervised by their respective institutes (see supervisors).
- For registration, please send an email to [christoph.oberlack@vwl.uni-freiburg.de](mailto:christoph.oberlack@vwl.uni-freiburg.de)
- Needed information: name, surname, matriculation code, course of study, semester, your 3 most preferred topics. You will receive a confirmation about your application by email.