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“Competition for Resources in a Changing World:
New Drive for Rural Development”

High Demand to Find Pathways to Secure Food for Man

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Abstract

Last years showed declining reserves of major food stuff due to further increasing world population, limited land resources and declining yield increases. As a result food prices increased rapidly and released increased social problems which partly even led to riots, since people were not able to pay their daily food.

Forecasts show, that world population will grow from about 6.7 billions today to about 9.1 billions in 2050 - an increase of about 50 % or about 81 million per year. Already today it is estimated, that more than 800 million people do not have enough to eat day by day or seasonally. It has to be worried, that this number will increase, if there will be no basic advances in food production, storage and proceeding. The development will hit particularly the people who do already struggle to feed themselves and their families because of very limited resources and income.

An increase of food production by using additional land seems to be only possible on a limited scale. The major productive land resources are already used. Further extension of arable land will come across environmental issues such as sustainability of land use, limited water resources or erosion. On the other side increasing fuel prices made biofuel production economically more interesting and so an additional competition for land was generated.

To overcome this arising problematic situation and to be able to feed the increasing world population on a sustainable way, we do have to support research to increase our knowledge about these fields. We do need innovations in the different areas to improve food production and food availability on a sustainable way. And last but not least we do have to bring this knowledge and innovations to the people who need this information in a way, that they are able to adapt it into their daily live. It is not sufficient to have scientific solutions as long as “solutions” are not adapted by the people. We still need more information about the socio-economic forces improving or hindering the adaption processes in different regions. These fields, which were not in the focus of the international community in the last decades, have to be followed forcefully to overcome this serious emerging situation.

Keywords: Development strategies, food security