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“Management of land use systems for enhanced food security:
conflicts, controversies and resolutions”

Value Chain Development for Food Security in the Context of Climate Change- A Contribution through Strengthening Capacity in Higher Education in Eastern Africa (ValueSeC)

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Abstract

In East Africa, the sustainable use of natural resources and the preservation of productive agricultural land are priority objectives in the region to secure the nutrition of rural as well as growing urban populations. A large majority of the poor live in rural areas and depend directly on agriculture for their livelihoods. Likewise, in the region, climate change is projected to experience higher mean temperatures and dramatic changes in rainfall patterns, higher risk of droughts, shorter growing seasons and new distributions of pests and diseases. As a consequence, climate change will affect food security, food availability as well as food system stability. In particular, small-scale farmers are most vulnerable to changes in cropping conditions and climate change facing an immediate risk of crop failure. It is believed that strengthening didactical and technical capacity as well as regional integration of higher educations in the region enables to improve the performance of food value chains in response to challenges of climate change.

The EU-funded (ACP-EU Cooperation Programme in Higher Education) Project ValueSeC seeks to improve higher education in the field of natural resource management and value chains in the context of climate change. The partner universities (Humboldt-University Berlin, Germany; University of Nairobi, Kenya; Haramaya University, Ethiopia; Karatina University, Kenya) cooperate to foster locally relevant research and higher education in the East African region. Together, the partners intend to build a competence network including policy makers, policy advisors, professional associations as well as local actors in agriculture and rural development, such as smallholder farmer groups, extension services and non-governmental organisations.

This presentation offers the experience and results of the project on strengthening the capacity of higher education and creating competence network. Beside, it also deals the understanding of the inter-institutional linkages, networking and academic partnership among higher education with in Easter Africa and beyond.

Keywords: Climate change, food security, value chains