

The next Great Trek? South African commercial farmers move north

Ruth Hall

To cite this article: Ruth Hall (2012) The next Great Trek? South African commercial farmers move north, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 39:3-4, 823-843, DOI: [10.1080/03066150.2012.677037](https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2012.677037)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2012.677037>



Published online: 28 May 2012.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 1457



View related articles [↗](#)



Citing articles: 3 View citing articles [↗](#)

The next Great Trek? South African commercial farmers move north

Ruth Hall

This paper analyses the shifting role of South African farmers, agribusiness and capital elsewhere in the Southern African region and the rest of the continent. It explores recent trends in this expansion, and investigates the interests and agendas shaping such deals, and the ideologies and discourses of legitimisation employed in favour of them. While for the past two decades small numbers of South African farmers have moved to Mozambique, Zambia and several other countries, this trend seems to be undergoing both a quantitative and a qualitative shift. Whereas in the past their migration was largely individual or in small groups, now it is being more centrally organised and coordinated, is more frequently taking the form of large concessions for newly formed consortia and agribusinesses, and is increasingly reliant on external financing through transnational partnerships. By early 2010, the commercial farmers' association Agri South Africa (AgriSA) was engaged in negotiations for land acquisitions with the governments of 22 African countries. This essay is the product of a scoping study to document and analyse major land acquisitions by South African farmers and agribusinesses, and the processes through which these have occurred and are occurring. It considers the changing character, scale and location of South African investments elsewhere in the region and the continent, and focuses specifically on the AgriSA-Congo deal (the largest deal concluded thus far), and acquisitions by the two South African sugar giants, Illovo and Tongaat-Hulett, for outgrower and estate expansion elsewhere in the region. The study addresses the degree to which South Africa is no longer merely exporting its farmers, but also its value chains, to the rest of the continent – and what this means for trajectories of agrarian change. It questions how we might understand the growing trend of 'intra-regional land grabbing' and, in the cases discussed, suggests that South African-based companies are acting as arteries of global capital.

Keywords: land grab; South Africa; agricultural investment; sugar; investment funds

1. Introduction

While for the past two decades small numbers of South African farmers have moved to Mozambique, Zambia and several other countries, this trend seems to be undergoing both a quantitative and a qualitative shift. Whereas in the past their

I am deeply grateful to the Future Agricultures Consortium, funded by the UK Department for International Development, for supporting this research, to my colleagues in the Land Deal Politics Initiative (LDPI) for advice on this paper, as well as to three anonymous reviewers whose comments were immensely helpful. All errors and omissions are mine.

migration was largely individual or in small groups, now it is being more centrally organised and coordinated and, as this paper shows, is more frequently taking the form of large concessions for newly formed consortia and agribusinesses, and is increasingly reliant on external financing through transnational partnerships.

This paper builds on a review of land deals in Southern Africa (Hall 2011) which noted among other trends the significant role of domestic and regional actors in what has often been considered 'foreign' land grabbing; the prevalence of deals for purposes other than food production (specifically biofuels, mining and forestry); and the ways in which what is being grabbed extends beyond the land, to water and other natural resources but also, as noted more generally by Li (2011), the labour with which to exploit these, through a range of institutional forms and business models. One conclusion of that paper was that South African businesses are not merely relocating elsewhere in the region, but are acquiring land as part of wider business strategies to extend South African value chains and to position themselves as intermediaries for other global interests. The actors and interests involved, then, are not merely those of 'farmers', but are of a wide range of private and public sector actors in 'host' countries and in South Africa, but also from further afield.

This paper picks up on these observations and analyses the shifting role of South African farmers, agribusiness and capital elsewhere in the Southern African region and the rest of the continent. It explores recent trends in this expansion, and investigates the interests and agendas shaping such deals, and the ideologies and discourses of legitimation employed in favour of them. It presents the first scoping phase of this work to document this expansion of South African farmers and agribusiness elsewhere in Africa, and reflects on three angles: (i) negotiations by commercial farmer association AgriSA to secure land leases for consortia of its members; (ii) the acquisition of land for estates and outgrower schemes by the major South African-based sugar companies; and (iii) the emerging models through which acquisitions are financed and new actors involved. The paper does not address the totality of South African land-based investments elsewhere on the continent, which include agricultural ventures in other sectors of farming, as well as deals in mining and coastal and safari tourism, among others.

2. Intra-regional land deals and the changing agro-food system

As the literature on transnational land deals expands, it is becoming apparent that several developing countries are not only the destination of large-scale land deals, but also the source of new investments. South-South land grabs challenge traditional conceptions in political economy, and raise questions as to whether these arise from or produce different dynamics than 'North-South' deals. This paper draws attention to some ways in which there are new and distinctive intra-regional dynamics of land grabbing in the present era. In this context, policy agendas of regional integration, and the development agendas of regional institutions, may be read as forms of legitimation of regional powers' expansionary interests.

These trends are evident elsewhere, in Latin America and East Asia. Mackey (2011, 1) shows that Brazil is 'not only a destination but also a driver of transnational land investments across the tropical world'. His analysis of the expansion of Brazilian soybean production in Bolivia draws attention to the legitimating discourses deployed by these intra-regional grabbers, and the ways in which private investors' strategies are located within and dependent upon the

Brazilian government's strategic ambitions and its policy, institutional and sometimes financial support. Similarly, Dwyer (2011) shows that Laos, having signed away 15 percent of its territory within the past decade, has been the target of 'land-hungry neighbours' – in this case, not only China but also Vietnam – rather than remote neo-colonialists. This is not merely due to corruption and collusion between deep-pocketed investors and greedy officials; rather, foreign investment by regional powers plays a role in the Laos government's efforts 'to govern and develop a rural hinterland where both natural resources and local populations are seen to be undeveloped' (Dwyer 2011, 4).

Further, Visser and Spoor (2011) demonstrate how the former Soviet Union is a major target for land deals, and also how ex-Soviet republics are involved in intra-regional grabbing, especially of their poorer neighbours. Their work suggests that, while global academic, policy and civil society attention has been turned to land deals in the developing world and Africa specifically, European, Gulf and Far East companies and investment funds have secured vast areas within the former Soviet Union (see also Visser *et al.* 2012). Among those that are part of this trend are Russian, Kazakh, Lithuanian and Estonian companies acquiring agricultural holdings in the far east of Russia, with some individual holdings exceeding half a million hectares (ha) (Visser and Spoor 2011).

Analysis of land deals, then, should focus not only on the traditional powers (Europe, North America), and the rising role of China, Korea and the Gulf states, but also on other emerging key actors. The global agro-food system is being recast by the rising influence, among others, of the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), in contrast to previous food regimes anchored by empires on both sides of the Atlantic, in Western Europe and North America (Borras *et al.* forthcoming). In view of this, how do we understand this new range of actors, their interests and strategies, and the implications for new geopolitical configurations? By focusing on elements of the role of South Africa in Africa, this paper aims to contribute to the emerging literature that explores empirically how the interests of these regional and other international investors intersect in these deals. This should inform efforts to understand and to outline the contours of a new emerging 'agrofood regime' (McMichael 2009).

3. The restructuring of South African agricultural capital

South Africa's (still almost exclusively) white commercial farmers have over the past two decades experienced dramatic changes in their political and economic situation. A combination of pressures has put these farmers – once a primary political constituency of the National Party apartheid government – into new difficulties, both objective and subjective. The new pressures have been well documented and arise from the dismantling of an elaborate architecture of policy and institutional support for commercial farming: agricultural deregulation including the removal of direct and indirect subsidies, state-controlled marketing boards with floor prices and pan-territorial pricing, cheap credit and tax breaks; the rapid liberalisation of trade in agricultural products; and sharp increases in the prices of key farming inputs, particularly diesel and electricity (Bernstein 1996, Vink and Hall 2010, Williams *et al.* 1998). Further pressures adding to the actual and perceived difficulties of pursuing commercial farming include the introduction for the first time of basic labour rights for farm workers in the 1990s, and since then also minimum wage regulations, the

extension of tenure rights to farm workers and their families (Atkinson 2007) and the placing of historical land claims to large areas of commercial farmland by former black occupiers, owners and tenants, in terms of the Restitution of Land Rights Act, 22 of 1994 (Walker *et al.* 2010).

These pressures have elicited a number of responses on the part of South Africa's white farmers. One response has been the decision by many to exit farming, sell their farms and invest in new careers in other sectors of the economy. Indeed, the total number of commercial farming units contracted dramatically from about 60,000 in 1996 to just under 40,000 by 2007; ownership of multiple farms suggests that these figures might even under-represent the scale of exit from commercial farming (DAFF 2009). A second response has been diversification into non-agricultural sectors, or into up- or downstream activities. A third response has been to either individually or collectively move out of South Africa, to locations elsewhere on the continent.

In the midst of these changes, the South African Agricultural Union (SAAU), formed in 1904 to represent white farmers, renamed itself Agri South Africa (AgriSA) in 1999 as a newly deracialised association of farmers' organisations, keen to recruit black membership and to build relations with the post-apartheid political dispensation and the ruling African National Congress (ANC). Chief negotiator for their commercial farmers is Theo de Jager, deputy president of AgriSA, who in recent years has led numerous delegations of farmers to meet with agriculture and foreign affairs ministers of other African countries offering land.

In contrast to AgriSA is the conservative Transvaal Agricultural Union (TAU) of South Africa – which refused to join this deracialised union – and which represents the agenda of white farmers battling to escape black rule, in part by betting on Georgia in the former USSR as the main new destination for its membership. TAU general manager Bennie van Zyl was invited on a three-month study tour, together with key advisors (TAU 2010), and reportedly concluded an agreement 'to send farmers who want to leave South Africa to Georgia' (Bloomberg 2011). This was backed up by a visit in February 2011 by 90 prospective new settlers to inspect land on offer (McGuinness 2011). The terms on which land is being offered by the government of Georgia have not been made known, though the South Africans involved suggest that:

... what the ANC is prepared to expropriate, the government of the Republic of Georgia is willing to give away for free. Is it possible that they know something about the character of the Boer-Afrikaner that the ANC just won't admit. When they [the ANC] lose the Boer, they'll lose the security of their food supply. When they lose that, what will they eat? (Phillips 2010, original emphasis).

News headlines and right-wing websites warn of an impending 'exodus' of 'thousands' of white 'boer' farmers; that 'the last of the white farmers are about to depart for greener pastures' (Phillips 2010). Many predict disaster for food production in South Africa if this small, skilled community decides to emulate its predecessors – who, in the 1830s and 40s, embarked on a 'Great Trek' from the Cape colony into the hinterland, and thence to establish the Boer republics of the Orange Free State and Transvaal. Harking back to this iconic moment in the contestation between Boer and British – over labour and the abolition of slavery – the implication is that these resilient farmers are once again without a secure homeland. Images abound of farmers in khaki shorts and Springbok rugby caps visiting snow-covered

Georgia in the former USSR, testing the soils of Libya, and imagining a new life in the Congo. Such images promote an understanding of racist farmers, resistant to change in a new South Africa and fearful of a future under ANC rule.

Elements of such a narrative may indeed be true in some cases. Yet, as this paper shows, the current migration is far more complex, largely signifying *not* a threatened 'boer' nation fleeing one regime to establish a new order elsewhere, but rather a web of interlocking strategies: diversification, building of political alliances, extension of value chains, sourcing of patronage, and the consolidation of a greater global market share (and days on the supermarket shelves of Europe). This is not to be understood (or written off) as the desperate knee-jerk reaction of alienated white Afrikaners unable to see a future for themselves in South Africa, but rather a realignment of interests at different scales – domestic, regional and global – which, as I show, is producing surprising new alliances.

4. Rebranding for the continent: 'AgriSA Africa'

In 2010, Agri South Africa formed an 'AgriSA Africa committee... with a view to securing funding for those farmers who wish to extend their farming operations into other African countries' (AgriSA 2010a). The committee was tasked with liaising with African governments regarding land acquisitions and farming support. By 2009, about 1000 farmers had signed up to be part of the expansion 'into Africa', according to AgriSA chief negotiator Theo de Jager (Hoffstatter 2009a). AgriSA has discursively constructed its land deals as development partnerships, and considers the Congo deal as a pilot project which would guide the format for further AgriSA to government deals (Pienaar cited in AgriSA 2010c). A resolution from the AgriSA congress in October 2010 declared that: 'Within [the] Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Africa it is essential to promote regional economies of scale in respect of primary and related development, i.e. joint projects must be developed' (AgriSA 2010b).

The South Africans have been actively networking with others negotiating for, and offering, land deals across the continent. A key such opportunity was the Conference on Large-Scale Farming in Africa, held in Cairo in April 2010. Here, AgriSA president Johannes Möller claimed that South African commercial farmers want to move into Africa 'as a result of scarcity of natural resources and land redistribution' at home (Derby 2009), echoing in more measured terms the claims of TAU that white farmers are being marginalised and threatened by economic transformation initiatives at home. At this event, South Africa and Zimbabwe were agreed to be the only countries on the continent not safe as destinations for agricultural investment, because of concerns about land reform programmes and labour regulation (*Farmers' Weekly* 2010).

South African farmers already have operations underway in Mozambique, Malawi, Botswana, Kenya and several other countries (Reuters 2010a). The terms vary quite substantially but, in the past year or two, diplomatic missions of various countries have made direct contact with AgriSA, offering preferential investment terms. Zambia, for instance, has offered to waive import duties and value added tax, invest in roads and extend power grids in order to attract South African farmers to its two new 150,000-ha 'farm blocks' available for colonization (Reuters 2010a). Among the recent South African farmland deals are some for sugarcane production by TSB (the sugar company formerly known as Transvaal Suiker Beperk) in Mali,

sugarcane and palm oil in Madagascar, palm oil in Benin, jatropha in Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia, and sugarcane in Zimbabwe and Namibia (ILC 2011). Of the 16 major land acquisitions by South African companies elsewhere in Africa, three are largely for food crop production, one is for carbon sequestration under the United Nations' Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) and the rest (12) are for agrofuels – jatropha for biodiesel, sugarcane for bioethanol, or a combination of other feedstocks like maize, soya and palm oil (ILC 2011). One high-profile deal that is now off is the proposed allocation of 35,000 ha of former state farms for grapes and olives in Libya (Hoffstatter 2009b, Reuters 2011). During 2010, further talks got underway with Angola, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Egypt, Gabon, Guinea, Cameroon, Mozambique, Namibia, Senegal, Sudan, Uganda and Zambia (Bloomberg 2011, Groenewald 2010, Reuters 2010a, Reuters 2011). By late 2010, 'AgriSA Africa' was in negotiations for land with the governments of 22 African countries (AgriSA 2010a, Reuters 2010c).

4.1. *The Congo deal*

The most significant recent deal offering African farmland to South African farmers has been concluded between AgriSA and the Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville, not DRC). In October 2009 the government of the Congo signed an agreement with AgriSA (AgriSA undated) in terms of which it allocated to a consortium of South African commercial farmers an initial area of 200,000 ha of former state farms, with the option of expanding to 10 million ha (Donnelly 2009). The land in question consists of state-owned farms, neglected for many years following civil conflict. The land lies in the southwest of the country, between the capital Brazzaville on the Congo River and the coastal city of Point-Noire to its west, and occupies much of the fertile Niari Valley in the departments of Niari and Bouenza (Roch Eulogie N'Zobo, Director, Observatoire congolais des droits de l'homme, Congo, personal communication, 26 March 2011).

Congo's Agriculture Minister claims that the country imports 95 percent of its food requirements – though this presumably refers only to marketed produce – and that the deal would stimulate agriculture as part of the national New Plan of Action (Fin24 2009). Because of its reliance on imports, food prices in domestic markets (particularly for fresh produce) are high by international standards, which makes production for the local market attractive to the prospective settlers – yet their entry will arguably affect those local farmers already supplying this market, a point to which I return below. Although initially mooted as a 99-year lease, it appears that a renewable 30-year lease was signed, in terms of which no rent is payable, and which contains guarantees regarding the tariff-free importation of agricultural inputs, and unlimited rights to export produce, and for these rights to be heritable (N'Zobo, personal communication, February 2010). Says de Jager, 'farmers would pay no import duties or tax on equipment, unlike in SA where we are heavily taxed in many ways'; in addition, farmers would be able to repatriate profits to any part of the world, and receive a five-year tax holiday (Sharife 2010).

Soon thereafter, on 8 May 2010, the governments of South Africa and Congo concluded a new bilateral investment treaty, expanding the terms of pre-existing cooperation agreements dating from 2003 and 2005. This suggests not that the two countries did not have bilateral relations, or agreed terms for these, but rather that the terms are changing. Next, *pro forma* 'Government to Farmer' contracts were drawn up by AgriSA and Congo authorities: 'The contract will apply more

specifically to activities of individual farmers, the stipulation of boundaries and terms and conditions for farming activities. The agreement will help farmers... who establish businesses in the Republic of Congo, open bank accounts and start farming, with the protection of the said contracts and with all the benefits for the farmer as negotiated by AgriSA' (Swanepoel cited in AgriSA 2010c). The first contracts, for 88,000 ha, were concluded between the South African farmers and the Congolese Ministries of Agriculture, Livestock and Land at a ceremony at Point-Noire on 10 March 2011 (N'Zobo, personal communication, 26 March 2011). The next step by AgriSA was to develop an affiliation structure for prospective Congo farmers, now called 'AgriCongo', so that they have a local association of their own through which to voice their interests (Swanepoel cited in AgriSA 2010c).

Three ambiguities emerge from the many statements by the protagonists in this deal. These concern the South Africans' motivation for the deal; who is occupying this land currently, if anyone; and what types of production are envisaged, for which markets.

First, the deal in the Congo (as with negotiations elsewhere on the continent) have been accompanied by narratives that rest on a developmental discourse of pan Africanism and good neighbourliness – suggesting that South African farmers are fulfilling a duty, as mandated by their government, to bring about development in other African states. This focuses on the need for increased productivity and supply to meet national food demand, and the transfer of skills and technology to enable the growth of indigenous small- to medium-scale commercial farming. According to the Agricultural Business Chamber, explaining to the Johannesburg Stock Exchange the benefits of such deals with South African farmers, Africa can gain through 'technology transfer, employment creation, infrastructure development, GDP growth' and also increased local food supply for domestic markets (Maluleke 2009). At the same time, AgriSA (and to a greater degree, TAU) have emphasised 'push' factors: the need to escape government regulation and taxation and the threat of land expropriation. Less prominent in these narratives are the obvious economic advantages of the cheap deals and preferable terms on offer. Andre Botha, president of Agri Gauteng, a division of AgriSA, encompassed several arguments when he explained that:

There are three main reasons we are in the Congo. The first is, of course, to diversify our businesses; the second is to assist local farmers to commercially develop their own land; the third reason is to assist the government of South Africa to fulfill the expectations of the world in stabilising the African continent through the exchange of skills and technology (Sharife 2010).

Second, the merits of the deal rest on what Cotula *et al.* (2009) call an 'idle land' or 'wasteland' discourse – the claim that the land is unoccupied and unused. AgriSA's expectation is that 'the farmers will move into the houses on the propert[ies]' (de Jager, cited in Sharife 2010). Despite such claims, both by the government of the Congo and by AgriSA itself which describes it as 'virgin land', there is evidence not only that people live there, but also that they have been farming on this land and consider themselves to have rights to remain there. A Congolese human rights organisation, the Observatoire Congolais des Droits d'Homme (OCDH), alleges that communities in the affected areas, which hold customary land rights, were not adequately consulted (N'Zobo, personal communication, February 2010). Though official sources claim that the land in this remote valley is

vacant and unused, they have also promised that the local people would benefit from employment (Fin24 2009). OCDH reports that:

we know that in Bouenza's Dihesse or Mantsoumba [which form part of the initial area leased to AgriSA], local communities have been using this land, which government abandoned decades ago. They had indeed planted manioc, groundnuts, etc. How come government does not provide technical and financial support to encourage this local initiative and increase yields? (N'Zobo, personal communication, 26 March 2011)

Third, there are ambiguities regarding the types of production and their destination markets. While it has been reported that the 17 South African farming syndicates will focus on 'producing grain and red meat for the local market and fruit for export' (Bloomberg 2011), AgriSA has claimed that its primary intention is to produce vegetables and poultry for the local market (Sharife 2010). A further motive, though, appears to be to expand its market share and shelf space in European supermarkets. Geographic diversification to a production base in Congo, with its two rainy seasons and earlier harvest, may just be the answer, as AgriSA's de Jager has acknowledged: 'The farmers will grow tropical fruit and hopefully give us an edge against farmers in South America where they traditionally beat us to the European markets by about a week' (de Jager, cited in Sharife 2010). Which production will predominate in practice remains to be seen; without restrictions on exports, the promise of boosting local food supplies for Congo will depend on its profitability compared with markets elsewhere.

Like so many instances of 'land grabbing', the deal has been characterised by a silence about those on the land – their rights, livelihoods and future – once the South Africans move onto these farms and 'move into the houses' that are still standing on them. But, as pointed out by de Schutter (2011, 258–9), even more obscured from view in many deals, and certainly in this one, are the potential impacts of the influx of large-scale commercial producers on *other* farmers elsewhere in the Congo. If indeed the South Africans focus on the domestic market, existing Congolese farmers, without external financial backing and without the tax breaks and other preferential terms offered to the South Africans, will compete with the new operators for domestic market share. On this, there is a total silence in all statements from both sides.

4.2. *AgriSaMoz*

Another current project of AgriSA Africa is the establishment of 'AgriSaMoz', an association of South African commercial farmers in Mozambique, launched in May 2011 at a function in Pretoria with senior government politicians and officials from both countries in attendance to affirm their support. According to AgriSA, the primary motivation for forming such an association is to enable individual commercial farmers to get expert advice (and political support) to secure land rights in their new country:

A request received in November 2010 at an agricultural investment conference in Xai-Xai in the Gaza province of Mozambique to the effect that South African farmers should register their interest in writing with AgriSA, had attracted wide response... Although land is inexpensive in Mozambique, the establishment of land use rights is a lengthy and time-consuming process. The process commences when a prospective land user identifies the land and negotiates with the local traditional leader to register such a right (usually for 50 years) (AgriSA 2011).

AgriSA was also negotiating additional 50-year land leases in Mozambique in the past few months for land to grow sugar for ethanol, as well as tropical fruit and livestock. Authorities in Gaza province in the south of the country indicated that they were able to make available a million ha to AgriSA members (van Burick 2010). 'At this stage there are just over 800 [South African] farmers who have already established interests in Mozambique and seemingly another 800 are in the process of trying to tie up land, with a deal that is being closed with the Gaza province', said de Jager (Reuters 2011). A prominent exponent of these deals, and a personal friend of Zuma, is Charl Senekal – who faces a land restitution claim on his R160 million farm in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal province – who declared at the Xai-Xai meeting:

We are very anxious to provide and feed the Mozambican people with affordable food... Farmers wanting to diversify or who have lost their farms in [South Africa's land] redistribution have a new opportunity in Mozambique (Reuters 2010b).

The meeting in Xai-Xai was organised not by AgriSA but by South Africa's high commissioner in Mozambique, Dikgang Moopeloa, who explained the motive as being to create opportunities for South Africans, to strengthen diplomatic links with Mozambique, and to promote development and regional stability across the Southern African Development Community so as to 'stem the inflow of migrants to SA' (SAPA 2010). The meeting took place against the backdrop of protests against rising food prices, which left several people dead, shot by security forces in Maputo in September 2010.

5. The government connection: funding, political support and BITs

The major constraint on further deals within Africa is the absence of bilateral investment treaties (BITs) to secure investors' assets and the right to repatriate profits (Cotula and Vermeulen 2009). From a South African agribusiness point of view (a view shared with its partners in the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions, representing largely the interests of commercial farmers), this is the precondition for implementation that has scuppered (or at least delayed) several in-principle agreements for allocation of farmland in other countries in the region (SACAU 2010).

In support of business expansion, the South African government recently signed and updated numerous BITs – in the past three years alone, with Angola, Cameroon, DRC, Gabon, Guinea, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mauritania, Namibia, Sudan, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. These are mostly cited as 'Agreement[s] on Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investment' (plus related protocols), but there are many more memoranda of understanding on 'Cooperation in the Field of Agriculture' or 'Mining and Minerals Beneficiation' and agreements to avoid double taxation in source and host countries.

In recent years, the export of South Africa's agricultural skills became government policy, when Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Tina Joemat-Pettersson announced a R6 billion fund for supporting South African farmers, half of which would be spent on projects beyond South Africa's borders (*Farmers' Weekly* 2010). She was previously quoted as saying 'If we can't find opportunities for white South African farmers in this country, we must do it elsewhere in the continent' (Hoffstatter 2009a). This she characterised as 'an equal

relationship between people of the African continent' (Joemat-Pettersson cited in Hoffstatter 2009a).

More generally, the mainstream discourse deployed by AgriSA and the South African government vacillates between pan-Africanism and claims of Boer exceptionalism. The government's interests appear to lie in part in regional expansion but also in appeasement of white farmer (and agribusiness) interests. Economically and politically nuanced strategies are at work, as these farmers are diversifying rather than leaving South Africa. None of the farmers signing up for land in the Congo intended to sell their South African operations and, of those previously considering taking up the Libyan deal (prior to political conflict in that country), most intended to remain based in South Africa, and employ managers (Libyan or South African) to manage their foreign operations (Hoffstatter 2009b, Sharife 2010).

6. The sugar

At the same time that South African farmers are launching into a wide variety of farming enterprises across the continent, South Africa's sugar industry is also expanding, not only establishing (or taking over existing) sugar estates, but also exporting its model of smallholder outgrower schemes – which some commentators consider the basis of potential 'win-win' solution to the problems of 'land grabbing'. Because the AgriSA initiatives are largely in horticulture, livestock and grains, and because of the size and rapidity of the sugar expansion, the latter deserves analysis in order to capture the distinct dynamics of these dual processes.

South Africa's two sugar giants, Illovo and Tongaat-Hulett, are the products of decades of apartheid-era state subsidies and trade protection. Both have rapidly reinvented themselves as regional businesses, and now operate in six countries each in Southern and East Africa. Sugar has long occupied a special place in South African agricultural policy, being the only commodity which – a decade after the closure of the last state marketing boards – still benefits from state-imposed price controls. Both companies have adjusted to new pressures and opportunities by reconfiguring their asset and production portfolios. Since the 1990s they have embarked on three modes of expansion: purchase or lease of state-owned estates (for example in Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia); outgrower schemes where they establish core estates and mills while also entering into supply contracts with neighbouring small-scale farmers; and contract farming only, to supply existing mills. Together, these companies now account for nearly half the sugar factories in Southern Africa (see Figure 1).

Both Illovo and Tongaat-Hulett's production volumes have expanded substantially year after year through the food and financial crises – their financial statements show no symptoms of the recent global recession. The main driver behind the sugar boom in the region is massive increase in global demand, due to a combination of major markets (such as India) becoming net importers, and rising demand for bioethanol buoyed by targets (notably in the European Union) for renewable fuel content (Biopact 2007, Richardson 2010). While McMichael (2010) among others notes the competition of 'food versus fuel', increasingly the food and fuel sectors are now fused together, with the South African sugar industry embodying both, by producing a fungible crop. Its fungibility – as food and as fuel – makes sugar a relatively safe hedge against fluctuations in demand. Added to this are the different

institutional models for production (outgrower, estate and combinations) which provide options to adapt to local conditions, and vary the degree of fixed investment required. The experience of contract farming in sugar shows the adaptability of the industry to outgrower schemes to diverse contexts, and the ways in which contracts have been influenced by considerations of infrastructure, mechanisation and labour mobilisation – but have also responded to ideological contestation over the place of smallholder production in commercialising agriculture (Oya 2012).

While expanding into the region, the South African sugar industry is also lobbying hard at home for mandatory renewable content in national fuel supplies, for billions in state subsidies to enable it to meet this demand and for import tariffs to protect the industry from the competition of the global ethanol industry (Martin Eweg, Consultant, AgriCane, and former research specialist, South African Sugar Association, personal communication, 6 July 2010, RSA 2010, Williams 2011). Already, though, these sugar companies are diversifying far and wide, from the industry’s traditional products of sugar and molasses into byproducts and derivatives like furfural, furfuryl alcohol, diacetyl, 2,3-pentanedione, natural methanol, ethyl alcohol and lactulose, which Illovo now sells to 81 countries. In addition, BioMass Sugar, ‘a liquid organic fertiliser derived from sugar cane, is being sold to a growing number of international markets’ (Illovo 2011). The next big step is to use the ‘bagasse’ biomass left over from crushed cane for ‘co-generation’ of electricity, not only for the sugar factories themselves but also to feed into national grids to shore up domestic energy supplies. This would be a boon for host governments but – other than Swaziland where this is happening already – is still largely in the realm of vague promises for the future.

Illovo, for which data is more readily available (and which therefore forms the focus of this discussion), now owns not only its South African operations, but is a

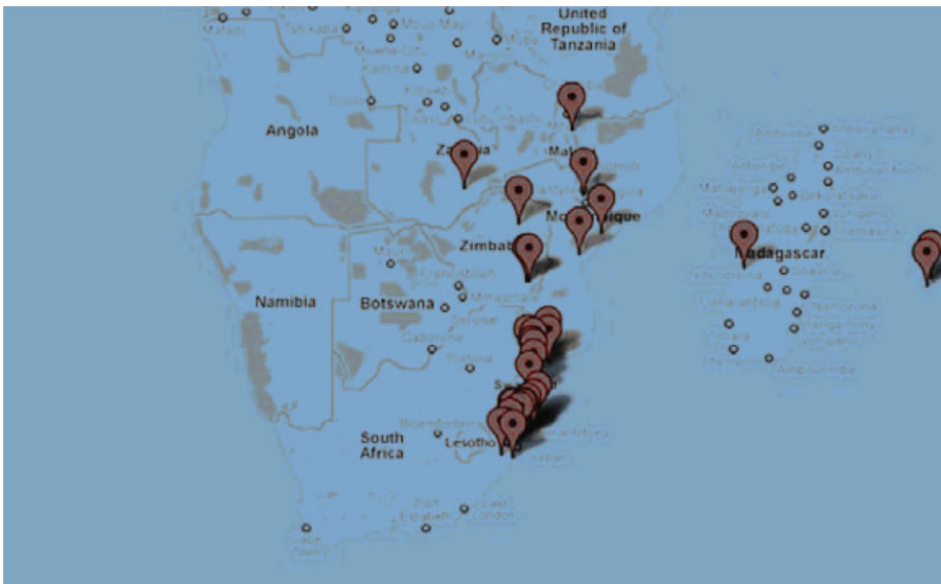


Figure 1. Map of sugar factories in Southern Africa.
 Source: <http://www.sugartech.co.za/factories/groupmap.php?regid=7>

majority shareholder in five other ‘Illovos’ across the region (see Figure 2) at the same time that it, in turn, is majority-owned by British Sugar, which in turn is a wholly owned subsidiary of the UK-listed multinational Associated British Foods (ABF) (Richardson 2010). This expansion has been largely in partnerships with domestic investors or governments. Illovo’s own description of its ‘group strengths’ emphasises its African (rather than South African) character, and its geographic diversity as key to its resilience, when it defines itself as an ‘African sugar producer with African expertise in sugar cane agriculture, sugar manufacturing and the production of high-value downstream products’ and having a ‘wide geographic and climatic spread of core interests with good access to secure water supplies for irrigation’ (Illovo 2011). In fact, Illovo’s rise was on the back of cheap buy-ups of ailing government estates during the 1990s in Malawi, Mauritius, Swaziland and Zambia (Richardson 2010), on the basis of which it has been involved in a second-wave expansion in the past five years. Now making most of its profits outside South Africa, Illovo’s sources of finance are also increasingly diverse, including through issuing of shares on domestic stock exchanges, as in Zambia. Rather than simply a matter of regional imperialism by South African agricultural capital, this reflects the globalised character of the capital behind the expansion, and the strategic location of South African actors to take advantage of it.

At the same time, production in South Africa is declining and rapidly being eclipsed by other countries (see Tables 1 and 2 below). The milling capacity (for sugar refining) is still highest in South Africa, whereas elsewhere increases in sugarcane output are largely for ethanol rather than sugar.

Equivalent information has not been made publicly available for Tongaat-Hulett. What is known is that through the mid-2000s they were expanding their Zimbabwean estates, aiming for 1 metric tonne per year at the Triangle and Hippo Valley plants, converting these into bioethanol plants, and were expanding in Mozambique at Xinavene and Mafambisse (Biopact 2007).

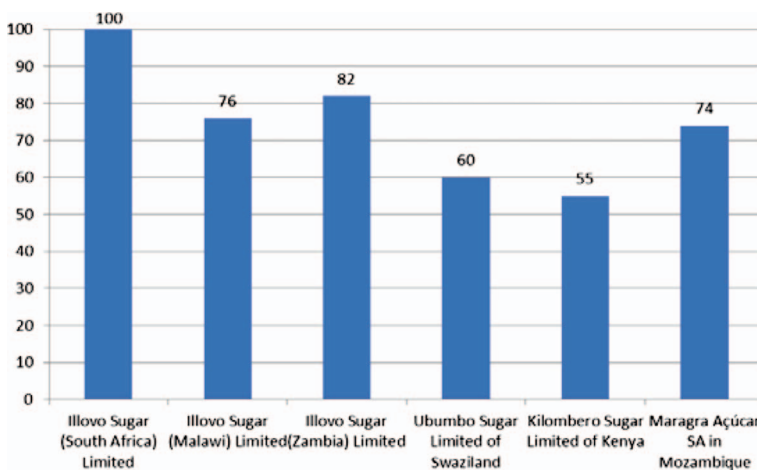


Figure 2. Illovo ownership of sugar companies in Southern Africa, 2010 (percent).
Source: Illovo 2010.

Table 1. Illovo production statistics: sugar cane (× 1000 tons).

Country	2010	2009
South Africa	361	464
Malawi	2 136	2 122
Zambia	1 705	722
Swaziland	804	741
Tanzania	614	555
Mozambique	488	450
Total	6108	5054

Table 2. Illovo production statistics: sugar (× 1000 tons).

Country	2010	2009
South Africa*	663^	922
Malawi*	295	304
Zambia*	315	194
Swaziland*	211	210
Tanzania*	120	118
Mozambique	81	76
Total	1685	1824

* - Sugar cane supplied by the group’s own agricultural operations and private growers

^ - Excludes Pongola and Umfolzi [sic] – sold

Source: Illovo 2010.

Illovo data shows robust growth in regional operations and substantial dominance of the sugar industry in several countries, notably Malawi and Zambia (see Figures 3 and 4 below).

Rather than simply increasing output, one of the motives for South Africa’s sugar expansion in the region appears to be improved access to international markets. Producing and exporting from Mozambique and Malawi, for instance, enables these South African companies to benefit from the EU’s Everything But Arms agreement that offered preferential trade terms to least developed countries (LDCs) (Biopact 2007). Together, the South African, Malawian and Mozambican governments have jointly lobbied the EU and its Environment Committee to relax its proposed biodiversity requirements, arguing it was punitive to force LDCs to demonstrate that changes in land use ‘should not disproportionately penalise countries rich in biodiversity with unjustified, wide-ranging restrictions on the sustainable use of their territories’. The strategic benefits of outsourced production extend beyond the region; de Jager has explained that ‘The [South African] farmers in northern Sudan should be able to utilize a preferential sugar trade agreement between Arab nations’ (Bloomberg 2011).

7. Multiple connections in the shifting agro-food regime

While Ben Richardson (2010) talks of ‘Big Sugar’ to describe the conglomeration of multinationals that dominate the industry, in the context of partnerships between the

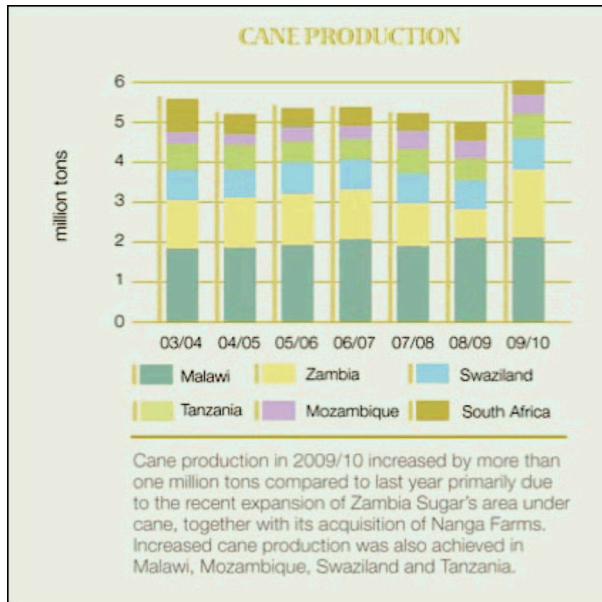


Figure 3. Illovo cane production by country and financial year (in million tons).
 Source: Illovo 2010.
http://www.illovo.co.za/World_of_sugar/Sugar_Statistics/Illovo_Group.aspx



Figure 4. Illovo share of industry production (percentage by country) in 2010.
 Source: Illovo 2010.
http://www.illovo.co.za/World_of_sugar/Sugar_Statistics/Illovo_Group.aspx

US and Brazil driving the expansion of the sugarcane plantation system for ethanol production, Gail Hollander (2010) speaks of ‘assemblages’ that are not only geographically diverse but also take on a distinctive regional character. In the case

she examines, this is the ‘hemispheric’ project of building the ethanol industry in the Americas, as well as the more specific role of Miami as a conduit for information and networks for the multiple actors involved in this industry. Drawing on Hollander’s notion of ‘assemblages’, I argue that, in the African context as in the Latin American, it is important to recognise that behind this expansion are the interests not only of sugar companies, or AgriSA, but a complex of commercial interests that span different sectors. In Southern Africa, many of those who stand to profit from large-scale land deals are not involved with farming at all.

7.1. Engineering, consulting and construction interests

Interests in the expansion of sugar production in the region extend beyond Illovo and Tongaat-Hulett, to a substantial industry involved in the construction and management of new sugar mills and related estates and outgrower schemes. Also worthy of mention are those involved with logistics, transport, cold storage, financial services, and so on.

A notable example of this wider set of interests in the sugar industry is PGBI consulting engineers. This South African company is one of the top recipients of contracts to build sugar mills and ethanol plants in Africa (Eweg, personal communication, 6 July 2010). It was also commissioned by the International Finance Corporation, part of the World Bank Group, to produce a guide for investors in the sugar industry on how to deal with land, social, and environmental issues to the satisfaction of financiers. PGBI works in Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Tanzania, Mozambique, Zambia, Mali, Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya (for Mumias, the continent’s largest sugar factory) and Sudan (for the Saudis and, soon, likely also for the South Africans) (PGBI 2010). As well as providing professional services to sugar companies, PGBI plays a number of other roles, working for their financiers and for governments, and is itself an investor – it is listed as a shareholder in the 10,000-ha allocation of land in Caprivi, Namibia, for sugarcane production (ILC 2011). The point is that beyond the sugar companies themselves, there are associated service and consulting industries, and there is enormous circulation of people between industry and consultancies to these, including those auditing conditions to the satisfaction of financiers and industry regulatory bodies, and much of this is far from public view. It is worth looking into how these interests work out in practice, yet the emerging literature on land grabbing focuses on the interests of investors themselves, largely obscuring these associated actors.

7.2. The banking connection

With the decline of South Africa’s state-owned Land Bank, and the withdrawal of access to subsidised credit for white farmers as part of the wider deregulation process of the 1980s and 1990s, South African commercial banks have emerged as primary lenders to agriculture. Now three commercial banks are involved in financing AgriSA’s continental expansion: Standard (at the forefront), ABSA and Standard Chartered (Reuters 2010a). At the same time, the ‘South Africanness’ of these banks – and the financial backing behind the farming expansion – is becoming more questionable. First, several South African banks have been acquiring substantial acquisitions of shares in banks in Africa; for instance Standard Bank recently acquired 90 percent of Uganda Commercial Bank, taking over its loan book and

clients. Second, shareholding of these once 100 percent South African-owned banks is now diversifying. The Chinese stake in Standard Bank is growing, starting with the acquisition in 2007 of a 20 percent stake in this the oldest established South African bank, for USD 5.5 billion by the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China. This was followed by a club loan by 5 Chinese banks for USD 1 billion in 2009. These deals involved the Chinese acquiring existing shares, but also new shares – and so apparently funding new expansion. Incidentally, Standard Bank was at the Cairo conference, recruiting clientele looking to invest in African agriculture.

7.3. *The China connection*

More direct China-South Africa partnerships are under negotiation – not only for finance but also for more substantive cooperation (van der Lugt and Hamblin 2011). The multilateral policy context for these new partnerships is the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) concluded between the African Union and China in 2006 and endowed with USD 35 billion to finance Chinese investment in Africa. Within this cooperative framework, one proposal under discussion is Chinese research and funding, through its parastatal institutions, for South African experimentation with genetically modified seed varieties, crop varieties and water management in its new landholdings elsewhere on the continent. Synergies of interests between Chinese biotechnology and agricultural research institutes and South African farmers are evident: ‘They’re aware South Africa has a research problem at the moment and they know they need farming skills for the land they’re acquiring in Africa’ (Christie 2010). The breakthrough in the partnership between AgriSA and China was at the Cairo conference; as AgriSA’s lead negotiator for African land, de Jager, confirmed: ‘They asked us to find land for them, so that if we all reach an agreement, they can immediately start with experimental work’ (cited in Christie 2010). This was to be followed by AgriSA’s visit to China to agree on ‘joint investment ventures with Chinese public firms in agriculture on the African continent’ (Shacinda 2010) – though it has not been possible to verify whether this visit took place and, if so, its outcomes. In such ways, agricultural investments through bi- (and multi)lateral agreements between South Africa and other African states are framed as regional and Pan-African integration – as opposed to land grabbing and Sino neo-imperialism.

7.4. *The investment funds*

A further way in which South African actors and interests are involved in large-scale land acquisitions elsewhere on the continent is through investment funds. Emergent Asset Management is a jointly registered UK/SA management firm, previously focused on hedge funds in international financial markets, and now specialising in farmland investments in Africa. Two of its flagship products are the ‘African Agricultural Investment Fund’ established in 2008, and the ‘African Land Fund’ established in 2010. The latter, through a partnership with Grainvest, one of the top five companies listed on the South African Futures Exchange (SAFEX), has formed Emvest Agricultural Corporation which constitutes the operational side of these two funds’ investments in land and agriculture. Together, these funds offer a vehicle for South African, UK and other investors to diversify their investments into African agriculture, and by late 2010 had secured land holdings in Angola, Botswana, DRC, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South

Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe (EAML 2010). Remarkable increases in land values and yields would be generated through ‘modern farming techniques and technologies, while agglomerating farms to increase efficiency and generate economies of scale’ (EAML 2010). The African AgriLand Fund:

brings together the key themes of agriculture/food security, Africa, socially-responsible investing (SRI) and economic sustainability, purchasing and managing a wide spectrum of agricultural properties across the sub-Saharan region, with investments diversified both geographically and across agricultural sectors – including crops, biofuels, livestock, game farming and timber. Returns, based on those successfully achieved through a 4-year pilot project, are projected to be approximately 30 percent per annum over the Fund’s 5-year term. (EAML 2010)

The European report on financial speculation and private equity funds as drivers of land deals – entitled ‘The Vultures of Land Grabbing’ – concludes that ‘In short, private equity funds not only have a speculative business model, but also represent a conveyor belt for shareholder capitalism from the financial to the real economy’ (Merian Research and CRBM 2010, 1). Susan Payne, head of EAML, was previously at JP Morgan and then was executive director at Goldman Sachs, which is itself one of the institutions at the forefront of this new model of hedging against international market fluctuations by investing in farmland. The Fund demands a minimum investment of 500,000 euros from private investors and 5 million euros from institutional investors, and claims to offer secure and diversified investment packages. Its selling point is explicitly as a vehicle to capitalise on cheap (‘undervalued’) African land.

EmVest has been created as a dedicated agricultural operating and fund management company to execute the strategy. It is based in Pretoria, South Africa and is dedicated to the development and management of the Fund’s assets. EmVest is establishing farming hubs throughout the region, working with national and local authorities to develop large scale agriculture on a commercial basis, within a socially responsible framework, at a consistently high level of execution... The Manager buys agricultural land and manages a wide spectrum of agricultural projects, spread across different commodities. It invests across 14 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, where land is substantially undervalued compared with arable real estate on other continents (EAML 2010).

Questions for further research must include precisely where and how they are investing, via whom, and what kinds of land uses and social relations are being produced through this influx of global capital. Importantly, to what extent is the capital focused on investment in durable production, or on speculative holding of land on a short-term basis? Spectacular promises of profits – as 30 percent returns to investors per annum – hint at the latter.

8. Conclusions

While the ‘land grabbing’ discourse has tended to focus broadly on ‘foreign’ actors (governments and companies) and, in the context of Africa, on actors from outside the continent, what this paper demonstrates is the rise of *intra-regional land grabbing*. Powerful narratives used to describe large-scale land acquisitions in Africa and elsewhere in the developing world emphasise historical precursors and suggest a return to old patterns of colonial enclaves and mercantilist colonialism. Yet growing

evidence suggests new dynamics and different actors in the latest phase of ‘land grabbing’. Widely acknowledged is the role of the Gulf States, moving away from reliance both on costly and intensive irrigated production at home, and on global commodity markets to meet their national food needs, and towards offshore production instead. But another such dynamic that merits further empirical investigation and theorisation is the intra-regional character of many such land acquisitions and investments. The rise of South-South deals have been led by emerging powers like the BRICS (now joined by South Africa, to form the ‘BRICS’ countries). In the context of ‘rising global interest in farmland’ – the euphemistic phrase deployed by the World Bank – it is not surprising that those regional powers that are well placed both politically and economically to act as initiators and brokers might be among the most significant beneficiaries of this new wave of transnational land leasing. South Africa is undoubtedly one such country.

This paper interrogates the discourse promoted by commercial farmers themselves that they are seeking greener pastures elsewhere in Africa because the new democratic government is driving them out of business – embarking on land reforms, threatening land expropriation, imposing labour regulation and minimum wages, and increasing taxes and exposure to competition from imports, while setting high prices for key inputs (in addition to labour) like diesel and water. There is a certain poignance in what has been described as the ‘white tribe of Africa’ – predominantly white (male) Afrikaner farmers – finding, or claiming, that they are not valued in a new South Africa, and seeing the expressed demand for their skills elsewhere as affirmation of their ‘African-ness’ and a sense of a place and role in the future of the continent. Andre Botha, a livestock and maize farmer who heads AgriSA’s Gauteng branch, said it should *not* be seen as

another Groot [Great] Trek. This is not running away – it is a calculated process of helping Africa take up its rightful place in the world. All over Africa the message we get is: we are looking for South African farmers, which is incredibly important for us. It means that our contribution to the future of this continent is valued (cited in Hoffstatter 2009b).

What exactly might South African ‘farmers’ be bringing to the rest of Africa, though, if (as in some cases so far) they get the land cheaply or for free, do not manage the farms themselves, and do not bring their own capital but raise this through international and political partnerships? One part of their answer lies in their social capital, as they build a platform as ‘African farmers’, in the eyes of their own government, and in the eyes of global investors to whom they look for finance. In this context, a narrative of Afrikaner farmers as hardy, innovative and enduring has been actively cultivated by South African farmers and agribusinesses, to convince African governments that, unlike European or Asian investors, these are ‘expert commercial farmers [accustomed to operating] under tough African conditions’ (Hoffstatter 2009b). None of these processes, though, can be understood outside of global changes.

In what McMichael (2009) terms the newly emerging global food regime, multiple centres of power are emerging; it is ‘polycentric’ (Borras *et al.* forthcoming). This direction of change, and its implications, should be fruitful subjects for further empirical investigation. As Dwyer observes, ‘the transnationalization of corporate access to farmland will be a long-term process, and will necessarily involve a diverse array of coalitions, tactics and locations’ (2011, 4–5). ‘Land grabbing’ by South African firms elsewhere in the region is not therefore merely a fascinating anomaly, but rather is the newest manifestation of these structural changes, and is symptomatic of the restructuring that is underway. This paper’s dual focus on AgriSA and the sugar

industry depicts, on the one hand, a case of consortia that link old farming capital (from South Africa and elsewhere) with new partners in new and less regulated locales, and a case of old agro-industries securing new market opportunities and protection through expansion both geographically and into new products and regimes of profitability, notably in agrofuels. In this changing context, it is not the national identity of the investors that proves most relevant for understanding what is really going on – which is why the depiction of these processes as another ‘great trek’ has missed the mark. Rather, what is of importance for deeper analysis is the articulation of regional and global capital. Further research on intra-regional land grabbing should focus on cooperation, consolidation and competition between ‘capitals’.

Explicitly, the South African farmers are *not* going elsewhere on the continent to secure food supplies for South Africa. They are going to find cheap land, water, labour and more lenient tax conditions from which to export to whichever markets appear the most lucrative – though they may be constrained by deals that require some domestic sales, and by financiers that demand that some or all of their output be exported to the country financing these investments, like China. Though this trend takes the form of South African deals elsewhere on the continent, the phenomenon cannot be fully understood as ‘South African imperialism’ in Africa. The interests shaping it, the financing, and the destination markets extend far beyond South Africa. This is global capitalism.

References

- AgriSA (South Africa). 2010a. *Newsletter*. Centurion: AgriSA. September.
- AgriSA (South Africa). 2010b. *Newsletter*. Centurion: AgriSA. October.
- AgriSA (South Africa). 2010c. *Newsletter*. Centurion: AgriSA. November.
- AgriSA (South Africa). 2011. AgriSaMoz. Media Release. 24 January 2011.
- AgriSA (South Africa). Undated. Settlement of Farmers in the Republic of Congo. Unpublished press release. Available from: <http://www.agrisa.co.za/Dokumente/Afrika/KongoE.pdf> [Accessed 30 March 2011].
- Atkinson, D. 2007. *Going for broke: the fate of farm workers in arid South Africa*. Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council Press.
- Bernstein, Henry. 1996a. South Africa’s Agrarian Question: Extreme and Exceptional? *Journal of Peasant Studies*, vol. 23, no. 2/3. January/April 1996, pp. 1–52 (Special Issue on the Agrarian Question in South Africa edited by Henry Bernstein).
- Biopact. 2007. South African sugar producer expanding operations in Zimbabwe and Mozambique, eyeing ethanol and biomass cogeneration. 20 February 2007. Available from: <http://news.mongabay.com/bioenergy/2007/02/south-african-sugar-producer-expanding.html> [Accessed 19 November 2010].
- Bloomberg. 2011. S. Africa farmers shun Libya, target Sudan bananas, Egypt grapes. 24 February 2011. <http://farmlandgrab.org/post/view/18207> (accessed 30 March 2011).
- Borras, S., J. Franco, S. Gomez, C. Kay and M. Spoor. 2012. Land grabbing in Latin America and the Caribbean. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 39(3&4).
- Christie, S. 2010. China courts SA’s commercial farmers. *Farmers’ Weekly*, 1 October.
- Cotula, L. and S. Vermeulen. 2009. Deal or no deal: the outlook for agricultural land investment in Africa. *International Affairs*, 85(6), 1233–47.
- Cotula, L., S. Vermeulen, R. Leonard and J. Keeley. 2009. *Land grab or development opportunity? Agricultural development and international land deals in Africa*. London: International Institute for Environment and Development, Rome; Food and Agricultural Organization, Rome; International Fund for Agricultural Development.
- DAFF (Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries). 2009. *Abstract of agricultural statistics*. Pretoria: DAFF.
- Derby, R. 2009. South African farmers offered land in Angola, Uganda. *Bloomberg*, 9 October. Available from: <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=aXWZYn1ahnJ8> [Accessed 19 November 2010].

- De Schutter, O. 2011. How not to think of land-grabbing: three critiques of large-scale investments in farmland. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38(2), 249–79.
- Donnelly, L. 2009. SA farmers in new scramble for Africa. *Mail & Guardian*, 8 September.
- Dwyer, M B. 2011. Building the politics machine: tools for resolving the global land grab. Paper presented at the International Conference on Global Land Grabbing, hosted by the Land Deal Politics Initiative, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, 6–8 April 2011.
- EAML (Emergent Asset Management Limited). 2010. African AgriLand Fund. <https://www.emergentasset.com/?func=PageAfricanLandFund> [Accessed 19 November 2010].
- Farmers' Weekly. 2010. 'SA, Zim not safe for investments.' 9 May 2010. <http://www.agriworldsa.com/article-archive/economic-environment/sa-zim-not-safe-for-investments> [Accessed 14 May 2010].
- Fin24. 2009. 'Huge Congo deal for SA farmers'. 20 October 2009. <http://www.fin24.com/Business/Huge-Congo-deal-for-SA-farmers-20091020> [Accessed 12 September 2010].
- Groenewald, Yolandi. 2010. Made in China, in Africa. *Mail & Guardian*, 30 May. Available from: <http://www.mg.co.za/article/2009-05-30-made-in-china-africa> [Accessed 31 May 2010].
- Hall, R. 2011. Land grabbing in Southern Africa: the many faces of the investor rush. *Review of African Political Economy*. 128, 193–214.
- Hoffstatter, S. 2009a. Government drive to set up white SA farmers in Africa in *Business Day*, 12 October. Available from: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200910120009.html> [Accessed 26 October 2009].
- Hoffstatter, S. 2009b. Farmers sample what Libya offers. *Business Day*, 9 November. Available from: <http://www.businessday.co.za/articles/Content.aspx?id=86387> [Accessed 19 November 2010].
- Hollander, G. 2010. Power is sweet: sugarcane in the global ethanol assemblage. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 37(4), 699–721.
- ILC (International Land Coalition). 2011. Excel spreadsheet of South African investors (extracted from the Commercial Pressures on Land database). Updated to June 2010, obtained January 2011. Unpublished spreadsheet. Rome: ILC.
- Illovo. 2010. Illovo group statistics. Available from: http://www.illovo.co.za/World_of_sugar/Sugar_Statistics/Illovo_Group.aspx [Accessed 19 November 2010].
- Illovo. 2011. Illovo Sugar Limited. www.illovo.co.za [Accessed 30 March 2011].
- Li, T.M. 2011. Centering labor in the land grab debate. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38(2), 281–98.
- Mackey, L. 2011. Legitimizing foreignization in Bolivia: Brazilian agriculture and the relations of conflict and consent in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. Paper presented at the International Conference on Global Land Grabbing, hosted by the Land Deal Politics Initiative, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, 6–8 April 2011.
- Maluleke, H. 2009. International investment in agriculture and the implications for Africa. Manager: International Trade Intelligence, Agribusiness Chamber. Presentation at the Johannesburg Stock Exchange seminar on 'The Farms Race: The rush for food security in Africa', 31 August 2009.
- McGuinness, D. 2011. Following South African farmers to Georgia. BBC. Available from: http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/worldagenda/2011/02/110228_worldagenda_georgia_farmers.shtml [Accessed 28 February 2011].
- McMichael, P. 2009. A food regime genealogy. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 36(1), 139–69.
- McMichael, P. 2010. Agrofuels in the food regime. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 37(4), 609–29.
- Merian Research and CRBM (Campaign for the Reform of the World Bank). 2010. The cultures of land grabbing: the involvement of European financial companies in large-scale land acquisition abroad. No publication details. Available from: <http://www.rinoceros.org/IMG/pdf/VULTURES-completo-2.pdf> [Accessed 16 November 2010].
- Oya, C. 2012. Contract farming in sub-Saharan Africa: a survey of approaches, debates and issues. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 12(1), 1–33.
- PGBI. 2010. PGBI Engineers and Constructors (Pty) Ltd. Available from: www.pgbi.co.za [Accessed 18 November 2010].
- Phillips, J. 2010. Republic of Georgia to the rescue of South African farmers. *The Afrikaner Journal*. 29 October. Available from: <http://afrikanerjournal.wordpress.com/2010/11/02/republic-of-georgia-to-the-rescue-of-south-african-farmers/> [Accessed 1 April 2011].

- Reuters*. 2010a. S. Africa firms launch \$408 mln farmland fund. 24 March. Available from: <http://farmlandgrab.org/11870> [Accessed 10 September 2010].
- Reuters*. 2010b. SA farmers eye Mozambique. 25 November. Available from: <http://www.iol.co.za/business/international/sa-farmers-eye-mozambique-1.876615> [Accessed 2 April 2011].
- Reuters*. 2010c. South African farmers get more land deal offers in Africa. 17 September. Available from: <http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/article663955.ece/South-African-farmers-get-more-land-deal-offers-in-Africa> [Accessed 19 November 2010].
- Reuters*. 2011. S. African farmers seal Congo deal, wary of N. Africa. Available from: <http://af.reuters.com/article/investingNews/idAFJOE71K09X20110221> [Accessed 30 March 2011].
- Richardson, B. 2010. Big Sugar in southern Africa: rural development and the perverted potential of sugar/ethanol exports. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 37(4), 917–38.
- RSA (Republic of South Africa). 2010. 2010/11-2012/13 Industrial production action plan. economic sectors and employment cluster. February 2010.
- SACAU (Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions). 2010. Land in Southern Africa: key issues for farmers. Report on the 2010 Conference, Misty Hills Conference Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa. 29–30 March.
- SAPA (South Africa Press Agency). 2009. Huge Congo deal for SA farmers. 22 October.
- SAPA (South African Press Agency). 2010. Xai-xai forum attracts farmers. *Business Day*, 26 November. Available from: <http://www.businessday.co.za/articles/Content.aspx?id=127909> [Accessed 1 April 2011].
- Shacinda, S. 2010. S Africa Farmers get land offers in Africa. *Reuters*, 9 July. Available from: <http://farmlandgrab.org/14268> [Accessed 12 September 2010].
- Sharife, K. 2010. The South Africa-Congo concession: exploitation or salvation? Pambazuka News, 7 January. Available from International Land Coalition: <http://www.landcoalition.org/cpl-blog/?p=4172=1> [Accessed 19 November 2010].
- TAU (Transvaal Agricultural Union). 2010. Georgia shows progress with dynamic agriculture project. TLU SA/TAU SA media release. 30 December. Available from: <http://www.africancrisis.co.za/Article.php?ID=88384&> [Accessed 1 April 2011].
- Van Burick, N. 2010. Agri SA brei uit na Mosambiek. *Landbou.com*. 29 November. Available from: <http://www.landbou.com/nuus/nuus-artikel/agri-sa-brei-uit-na-mosambiek> [Accessed 2 April 2011].
- Van der Lugt, S. and V. Hamblin (with M. Burgess and E. Schickerling). 2011. *Assessing China's role in foreign direct investment in Southern Africa*. Stellenbosch: Centre for Chinese Studies and Hong Kong: Oxfam Hong Kong.
- Vink, N. and R. Hall. 2010. Agricultural and land reform in South Africa's first decade of democracy. In: S. Jones and R.W. Vivian, eds. *South Africa: economy and policy 1990–2000*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 644–70.
- Visser, O. and M. Spoor. 2011. Land grabbing in post-Soviet Eurasia. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38(2), 299–323.
- Visser, Oane, Max Spoor and Natalia Momonova. 2012. Land grabbing in Russia: The post-Soviet political economy of insecurity and dispossession. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 39(3&4)
- Walker, C., A. Bohlin, R. Hall and T. Kepe, eds. 2010. *Land, memory, reconstruction and justice: perspectives on land claims in South Africa*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press and Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.
- Williams, Francois, 2011. Sugar industry ready for green energy. *Fin24*. 6 November 2011. <http://www.fin24.com/Companies/Industrial/Sugar-industry-ready-for-green-energy-20111106> (accessed 18 January 2012).
- Williams, Gavin, Joachim Ewert, Johann Hamman and Nick Vink. 1998. Liberalizing Markets and Reforming Land in South Africa. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 197–220.