

**IFAD staff discussion of draft EU Land Policy Guidelines
11 March 2004 (Rome)**

Main comments and points of discussion were as follows:

- Draft guidelines include a good definition of land tenure – as a system of access, management and control over natural resources.
- Important to articulate land as the most important asset to address – given scarcity and encroachment that is occurring globally.
- Paper looks at land primarily through the lens of efficiency, which is needed because the value of land is paramount in the minds of most of those who use it. How value is defined and measured, though, may be dependent in part on social or cultural contexts, as well as economic conditions.
- The paper is a good basis for opening dialogue with countries concerning land reform – while respecting existing traditions regarding land.
- There is a need for incentives to use land properly. This is not a question of ownership, per se, but security of access. A pragmatic approach would be to encourage usage that allows for improved livelihood. Discussion is often too focused on land ownership, which is problematic in contexts where there are not sufficiently open land markets.
- Perhaps the policy framework should focus more on basic principles. This would allow more room for the formulation of more specific guidelines at the country levels. The document will be most useful if it provides a framework that can be adapted to local contexts.
- There is a need also to involve national parliaments (i.e., not only government bureaucracies) in dialogue on land policy as well as the actors already mentioned – so we have accurate idea of what legislators / parliamentarians would and would not support.
- There is a need to develop pre-conditions in which investment in lands can be made more successful.
- Social capital should be addressed – how it affects the ability to people to gain access to assets – what is its link to land and land access challenges and methodologies.
- In cases where it is particularly difficult to discuss land, there may be ways to increase the political leverage for the poor, particularly at the local level.
- The link between HIV/AIDS and land policy could be more clearly articulated in the document.

- What is the basis for defining land as “the broad range of natural resources, such as trees, pasture, water, game animals and fish stocks” in the preface of the document? It may be sensible as “access to assets” but still seems like an unusual formulation vis-à-vis land policy guidelines.