

Food Security in Sub-Saharan Africa: Vulnerability in the Context of Mounting Pressure on Land

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Background (about 200 words)

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted by the United Nations has formalized the right to food as a basic human right (Baro & Deubel 2006). However, until today, many people suffer from a lack of food. In Sub-Saharan Africa, around one third of the population is affected by undernourishment, the highest level worldwide. At the same time, global demand for land-based products and services is rising and productive land is becoming increasingly scarce (Haberl et al. 2014). Demand-side factors exerting pressure on land include population growth, changing dietary patterns and demand for bioenergy. On the supply-side, climate change, soil erosion, declining soil fertility and rapid urbanization reduce the productivity of the land (Lambin & Meyfroidt 2011). While food insecurity generally is a problem of distribution, not of availability, the growing competition over land resulting from these demand- and supply-side factors is putting pressure on guaranteeing the right to food to everyone.

International food price shocks can significantly increase the risk for food insecurity. The precise factors that influence this risk are highly context-specific and dependent on the country.

Aims/Research questions (50-100 words)

The aim of the thesis is to develop a framework to assess countries' vulnerability to food price shocks and food price increases that can result in food insecurity. The questions the study wants to answer are the following:

What are the key determinants that influence countries' vulnerability in terms of food security?

With a view to food security, which countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are particularly vulnerable to food price shocks and increases?

Methods (100-200 words)

Literature review and data analysis to identify key determinants that affect food security at national level

identification of indicators

development of vulnerability framework by developing method to obtain the data and aggregate the indicators to a vulnerability score

application of the framework to SSA

Studiengang – Study programme	M.Sc. Environmental Sciences (EnvEuro)
Laufzeit – Lifetime	03/2016 - 09/2016
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