

consumers, and stabilize prices through timely exports and imports. Governments' direct support should be directed to remedying the underinvestment in the public goods (roads, research, extension) and facilitating farmers' access to land.

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*Seed Trade in Rural Markets: Implications for Crop Diversity and Agricultural Development.* Edited by L. Lipper, C. Anderson and T. J. Dalton. Rome and London: FAO and Earthscan (2010), pp. 232, £29.95 (paperback). ISBN 978-1-84407-785-4.

The material presented in this book is largely drawn from the Food and Agriculture Organization's research programme on 'Using Markets to Promote Sustainable Development' that seeks to provide a better understanding of the interaction between agricultural markets and the use and conservation of crop genetic resources. The conservation and enhancement of agricultural biodiversity is recognized as a critical element in sustaining the flow of agricultural innovations and enhancement of productivity. Although crop genetic resources have several public good characteristics, market-based arrangements and incentives are being increasingly suggested as mechanisms to support the on-farm conservation of agricultural biodiversity. Informal agricultural seed markets still play a dominant role in seed supply in developing countries, but there is relatively little empirical work on how these markets work and the outcomes they achieve. This book provides a set of five rich case studies from Bolivia, India, Kenya, Mali and Mexico that provide valuable empirical insights into the operation of these markets and how they affect farmers' choice of varieties. A key message from the book is that developing effective strategies to improve the working of informal agricultural markets calls for a good understanding of the diversity of their characteristics, social context, functions and outcomes. The case studies illustrate both the limitations and opportunities of agricultural market development to support the conservation of agricultural biodiversity.

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*Assessing the Costs of Adaptation to Climate Change. A review of the UNFCCC and other recent estimates.* By M. Parry, N. Arnell, P. Berry, D. Dodman, S. Fankouser, C. Hope, S. Kovats, R. Nicholls, D. Satterthwaite, R. Tiffin and T. Wheeler. London: IIED (2009), pp. 111, £26.50 (paperback). ISBN 978-1-84369-745-9.

The list of authors of *Assessing the Costs of Adaptation to Climate Change* reads like a Who's Who of the UK climate impacts community. The authors do not aim to perform a new assessment of adaptation costs. Their aim rather is to review the existing assessments, show their deficits, and thereby define the research agenda for the next few years. This they certainly achieve.

The book consists of eight chapters. The first chapter gives an overview over the existing global estimates of adaptation costs and points out the shortcomings in these. The following six chapters review the sectoral assessments in the areas of agriculture, water, health, coastal protection, infrastructure and natural ecosystems. The final chapter then looks into the costs and benefits of adaptation. In many cases costs of adaptation to climate change in developing countries are severely underestimated, since current adaptation deficits, i.e., missing adaptation to present climatic conditions, are not taken into account. In addition there is a severe lack of bottom-up case studies, leading to assessments that are not sufficiently grounded in hard data.

The book certainly is a worthwhile read for those in the academic community who are interested in the impacts of climate change. Unfortunately it is not suitable for a wider audience, since a real understanding requires background information that cannot be given in a book of this length.

Thomas Kleinen