

## BOOK REVIEWS

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*Agriculture, Biodiversity and Markets: Livelihood in Agroecology in Comparative Perspective.* Edited by S. Lockie and D. Carpenter. London: Earthscan (2010), pp. 318, £60.00. ISBN 978-1-84407-776-2.

The editors of this book have brought together a range of studies from around the world that examine the relationships between biodiversity and agricultural livelihoods. The studies are concerned specifically with public and private systems of regulation, market-based incentives and property rights' regimes, and with how these affect the maintenance and use of agrobiodiversity.

The first two parts of this book introduce the importance of agrobiodiversity in farming systems, review the role of international and national regulatory regimes, and present three different case studies on aspects of the maintenance and use of agrobiodiversity in both developing and developed country agriculture. The third section looks at how different market-based mechanisms (e.g. certification, Geographical Indications) can help agrobiodiversity maintenance, and at the analysis and co-ordination of value chains. A fourth section explores the growing field of payment for ecological services in an agro-ecological context.

The questions they address are important. Millions of small-scale farmers in the developing world still depend significantly on agrobiodiversity and improving the sustainability of farming is likely to involve its increased use. This book provides some useful additional material on the services provided by biodiversity to agriculture and agricultural communities and joins a growing number of texts on the maintenance and use of agrobiodiversity. However, much of the material is available elsewhere and readers will have to decide whether this particular compilation is useful for their own needs.

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*Food Security in Africa. Market and Trade Policy for Staple Foods in Eastern and Southern Africa.* Edited by A. Sarris and J. Morrison. Cheltenham and Rome: Edward Elgar and FAO (2010), pp. 423, £89.95. ISBN 978-1-84844-851-3.

This book began with a conference held in 2007, organized in response to the 'need to supplement the debates related to multilateral trade negotiations ... with a clear understanding and reflection ... on the type of agriculture sector trade policy that would be desirable for different developing countries, in boosting their growth and enhancing their food security situation.' The global market price spikes of 2008, financial turmoil and global recession in 2008/09 and rising levels of food insecurity in 2009 have all followed the conference, underscoring the continued relevance of the conference's concerns. The papers in this edited volume usefully analyse the empirical record in eastern and southern Africa to suggest that a too-narrow focus on the use of trade and market policies and direct government interventions in markets to assure the supply of a key staple crop – the white maize on the book's cover – may be good politics, but is unlikely to be good for the food security of the poor or balanced, competitive growth of the agricultural sector. Rather, the evidence presented shows that governments should – contrary to current practice in most countries in the region – provide a stable, predictable trading environment that draws in private investors, encouraging them to build storage, move produce from surplus to deficit zones, compete with each other in providing processing services to the