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Grain harvest, Photograph:  
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## Cooperation project 'German-Ukrainian Agricultural Policy Dialogue'

**IAMO, jointly with IAK Agrar Consulting GmbH, was commissioned by the German Federal Ministry of Nutrition, Agriculture and Consumer Protection (BMELV) to coordinate the project 'German-Ukrainian Agricultural Policy Dialogue' starting from 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2015.** The project seeks to support Ukrainian decision-makers with demand-oriented policy advice in the fields of agricultural policy reform and agricultural legislation. Herein, focal topics are e.g. agricultural economy and trade, land market reform, product and quality standards, rural development as well as education and training. IAMO, in its capacity as an agricultural economics research institute which is primarily focused on transition processes and development deficits in agrifood sector as well as rural areas in Central and Eastern Europe will make an important contribution towards implementing this project which is lead-managed by IAK.

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## Overview

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Financial speculation with  
agricultural commodities,  
Photograph: fotolia

## Index funds may stabilize the agricultural price level

**Also the most recent IAMO publication 'Do index funds speculate on agricultural futures markets? Explanatory notes on the business model and the additional need for research', in collaboration with Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg and Christian-Albrechts-Universität of Kiel, disproved the presumed negative impact of index funds on commodity futures markets.** Public debates are rife with false information claiming that index funds cause increases in agricultural commodity prices and are even responsible for hunger in the world. Several civil society organizations have tagged index funds as 'hungermakers' and demand a strict limitation or even a total prohibition of agricultural futures market transactions by index funds. 'On the contrary, the much discussed 'long-only' index funds tend to contribute to a stabilization of prices so that a regulatory restriction of their business transactions would most likely not improve but deteriorate the functionality of futures markets', warns IAMO

director Thomas Glauben.

A previous study carried out by IAMO and University Halle-Wittenberg to review international research literature on this issue also showed that the current state of knowledge does not confirm the accusations made against index funds. This assessment also found consent among relevant experts and prompted 40 professors, who are dealing with this topic in research and teaching, to write an open letter to German Federal President Gauck, in order to draw more attention to the state of the art in research and demand a distinct enhancement of information levels and discussion standards in the public debate about agricultural speculations. [The current discussion paper on this issue can be accessed here.](#)

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Healthy diet, Photograph:  
fotolia

### Exchange of knowledge for a healthy life

IAMO was selected as a member of the Knowledge Hub on 'Determinants of Diet and Physical Activity' (DEDIPAC) which was recently established under the European Joint Programming Initiative 'A Healthy Diet for a Healthy Life' (JPI HDHL). The objective of this consortium is long-term promotion of well-coordinated research into enhancing public health through sound diets and physical activity and thus avoiding inefficient double-work in European research efforts. The consortium is made up of representatives of 190 research groups in 11 countries, which cover such diverse fields as nutrition, epidemiology, sports sciences, psychology, sociology and economics. IAMO, represented by Stephan Brosig, is a member of the working group 'Measurement, Assessment, and Harmonization'. This group is tasked with reviewing the large variety of data regarding nutrition and health that is currently used in Europe and encouraging harmonized approaches to measuring nutrition quality. The first Networking Workshop was held in March 2013 in Berlin and a joint pilot application for public research funds will be prepared by a coordination group until May 2013.

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**FORUM 2013**  
JUNE 19-21  
Rural Areas in Transition

### IAMO Forum 2013



IAMO Forum, Photograph:  
T. Jung

**This year's IAMO Forum 'Rural Areas in Transition: Services of General Interest, Entrepreneurship and Quality of Life' will be held from 19 to 21 June 2013 in Halle (Saale).** The conference, which is co-organized by Thünen-Institut (TI), will provide a platform for international scholars to discuss central issues relating to the shaping of future living conditions in rural areas in Eastern Europe and Asia. The forum will commence on 19 June with keynote presentations by Linxiu Zhang (Center for Chinese Agricultural Policy of the Chinese Academy of Sciences) and Marek Furmankiewicz (Wroclaw University of Environmental and Life Sciences, Poland) who will discuss provision of public and private services. The panel speaker Gerard McElwee (Sheffield Hallam University, UK) will thematize impacts of rural entrepreneurship and Birgit Riess (Bertelsmann Stiftung, Germany) will highlight the role of Corporate Social Responsibility on Day 2. Quality of life in rural areas will be featured by Ida Terluin (Wageningen University and Research Centre, The Netherlands) and Charles M. Becker (Duke University, USA) on the last conference day. IAMO Forum 2013 is supported by the German Research Foundation (DFG), the Ministry of Science and Economic Affairs of Saxony-Anhalt, the city of Halle as well as Marga und Kurt Möllgaard-Stiftung. [You are invited to register for](#)

[participation in the conference from 25 March 2013 here.](#)

### **IAMO Forum 2013**

*Rural Areas in Transition: Services of General Interest, Entrepreneurship and Quality of Life*

19 -21 June 2013, Halle (Saale)

[www.iamo.de/forum/2013](http://www.iamo.de/forum/2013)

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Panel Discussion at the GFFA 2013, Photograph: P. Himsel

### **Symposium at Green Week 2013**

**On 18<sup>th</sup> of January, the panel discussion entitled 'From Micro-Credit to Shareholder Value: Access to Finance in the Agricultural Sector in Eastern Europe and Central Asia' at the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) provided a platform for high-profile participants to discuss funding options for various farming structures in Eastern European and Central Asian countries.**

An academic introduction to the topic by IAMO researcher Martin Petrick was followed by insights into political and economic development options in RUK countries by the vice ministers of agriculture of the Russian Federation, Ukraine and Republic of Kazakhstan as well as the representatives of the business community Heinz Strubenhoff, International Finance Corporation (IFC), and Dirk Stratmann, Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations (OA). The panel discussion was attended by over 200 guests and jointly organized by IAMO and the Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations (OA). [Please, click here for further information and audio recording of the panel discussion.](#)

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IAMO Policy Brief

### **Policy Brief 10 provides new findings**

**The title of IAMO Policy Brief 10 published in March is 'The Wheat Export Ban in Serbia. Are Export Restrictions an Effective Instrument to Dampen Food Price Inflation?'** Agricultural economists Linde Götz, Ivan Djuric and Thomas Glauen investigate the impacts of the export ban for wheat in Serbia on the development of domestic prices of wheat, flour and bread and whether certain players along the wheat-to-bread supply chain profited from such political market interventions. Götz summarizes: 'All in all, our analysis has shown that the effectiveness of export controls as an instrument of protection against food price inflation is highly questionable. Moreover, it is not the consumers but the players at the intermediate stages of the added-value chain which profited from such anti-crisis policy, notably the supermarkets and the baking & milling industries'. [The full text of their critical analysis of this topic can be found here.](#)

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Insa Theesfeld, Photograph: private

### New member of the IASC Executive Council

**IAMO researcher Insa Theesfeld has been elected to the Executive Council of the International Association for the Study of the Commons (IASC).** The Association is devoted to understanding and improving institutions for the management of collectively used resources. This includes not only natural resources but also the 'new' common pool resources such as the internet. Theesfeld joined IASC in 2002 and has been an active member since then. With having organized and co-chaired the 2011 European IASC conference on 'Shared Resources in a Rapidly Changing World' in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, she became experienced in the operational duties and strategic aims of this academic association. Currently, Insa Theesfeld is co-editing a special issue in the 'International Journal of the Commons' on post-socialist commons issues. She feels very honored as being elected and full of energy to support this association with this 6 years official position. Together with Insa Theesfeld, Marco Janssen, Director of the Center for the Study of Institutional Diversity and an Associate Professor both within the School of Human Evolution and Social Change at Arizona State University (USA) became the other new Council member. [Please, find further information with interesting life streams from ongoing meetings and debates here.](#)

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Daniel Müller, Photograph: T. Jung

### Habilitation of an IAMO scholar

**Daniel Müller completed his habilitation in geography at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.** The title of his habilitation, which he submitted in September 2012, is 'Post-Socialist Land-Use Change in Eastern Europe: Case Studies in Albania and Romania'. The enclosed papers in his cumulative habilitation suggest a substantial effect of the collapse of socialism on land use. Statistical analyses of land-use change contribute to a better understanding of the spatial patterns and determinants of large socioeconomic and institutional shocks on land use. In February 2013, Daniel Müller defended his habilitation treatise with a scientific presentation on 'Conceptualizing, Measuring and Mapping Land-Use Intensity'.

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Swetlana Renner and Doris Marquardt, Photograph: T. Jung

### Dissertations

**Two PhD students at IAMO successfully completed their doctoral thesis projects in January 2013.** The subject of Doris Marquardt's three-year research study is 'Networking and New Modes of Governance in EU Rural Development Policies – Challenges of Implementation in Romania'. The work examines the (pre-) implementation process of two policy instruments, LEADER and the National Rural Network, which are funded under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, in the new EU member state Romania.

Swetlana Renner's dissertation is titled 'Flexibility of Firms: Theoretical and Empirical Analysis'. Since May 2007, the junior researcher addresses the question of measurement and interpretation of the firm's flexibility. She applies the newly developed theoretical and methodological concepts in her empirical analysis of the magnitude and determinants of flexibility of the Polish agricultural sector.

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## New publications

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### IAMO Annual 2013 Download

### IAMO Policy Brief

Götz, L., Djuric, I., Glauben, T. (2013): The wheat export ban in Serbia. Are export restrictions an effective instrument to dampen food price inflation?, No. 10, Halle (Saale). <http://www.iamo.de/publikation/en/policybrief-10>

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### Discussion Papers

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