

## Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure

**N**egotiations related to the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security, being developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and its partners, concluded successfully in Rome in early March 2012.

Ninety-six countries (plus the European Union as an FAO Member organization) along with non-governmental groups, civil society organizations, UN agencies and other international organizations, farmers, pastoralist, fishing community and indigenous peoples' associations, and private sector representatives took part in several rounds of talks by an Open Ended Working Group established by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) to negotiate the text of the guidelines. The proposed guidelines are set to be considered for final approval by CFS at a special session in Rome in mid-May. The guidelines have been drawn up through a comprehensive and inclusive process. Developed against the backdrop of the

increasing number of corporate land grabs and appropriation of other natural resources, they outline principles and practices that governments and other actors can refer to when administering land, fisheries and forest rights in order to serve the best interests of their populations, and promote food security and rural development.

The guidelines stress that all programmes, policies and technical assistance to improve governance of tenure through the implementation of the guidelines should be consistent with States' existing obligations under international law, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human-rights instruments.

Notably, gender equality is recognized as an important principle of implementation. States are asked to ensure that women and girls have equal tenure rights and access to land, fisheries and forests independent of their civil and marital status.

For more information: [www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/128907/icode/](http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/128907/icode/) 

### Milestones

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