

Unethical and inimical practices in large-scale land acquisitions in West Africa

Timothy O. Williams
Director, Africa

International Water Management Institute (IWMI)



Presentation Outline

- Background on LSLAs in WA
- Framework for analysis of LSLAs & impacts
- Summary of unethical and inimical practices
- Economic, social and environmental impacts
- Factors responsible for negative practices
- Strategies for improving integrity in LSLAs



Background on LSLAs in WA

- Ghana & Mali have in recent years recorded LSLAs for the production of biofuels and food crops. Three LSLAs in Ghana totaling 126,200 ha and two in Mali totaling 140,000 ha were studied.
- Governments in the 2 countries view FDIAL as a way of infusing capital, modern technology and infrastructure into their agricultural sector to increase productivity.
- In Ghana where 80% of the total land area is held under communal ownership, customary land owners equally welcome FDIAL.
- Questions remain about the transparency and accountability of land deals.

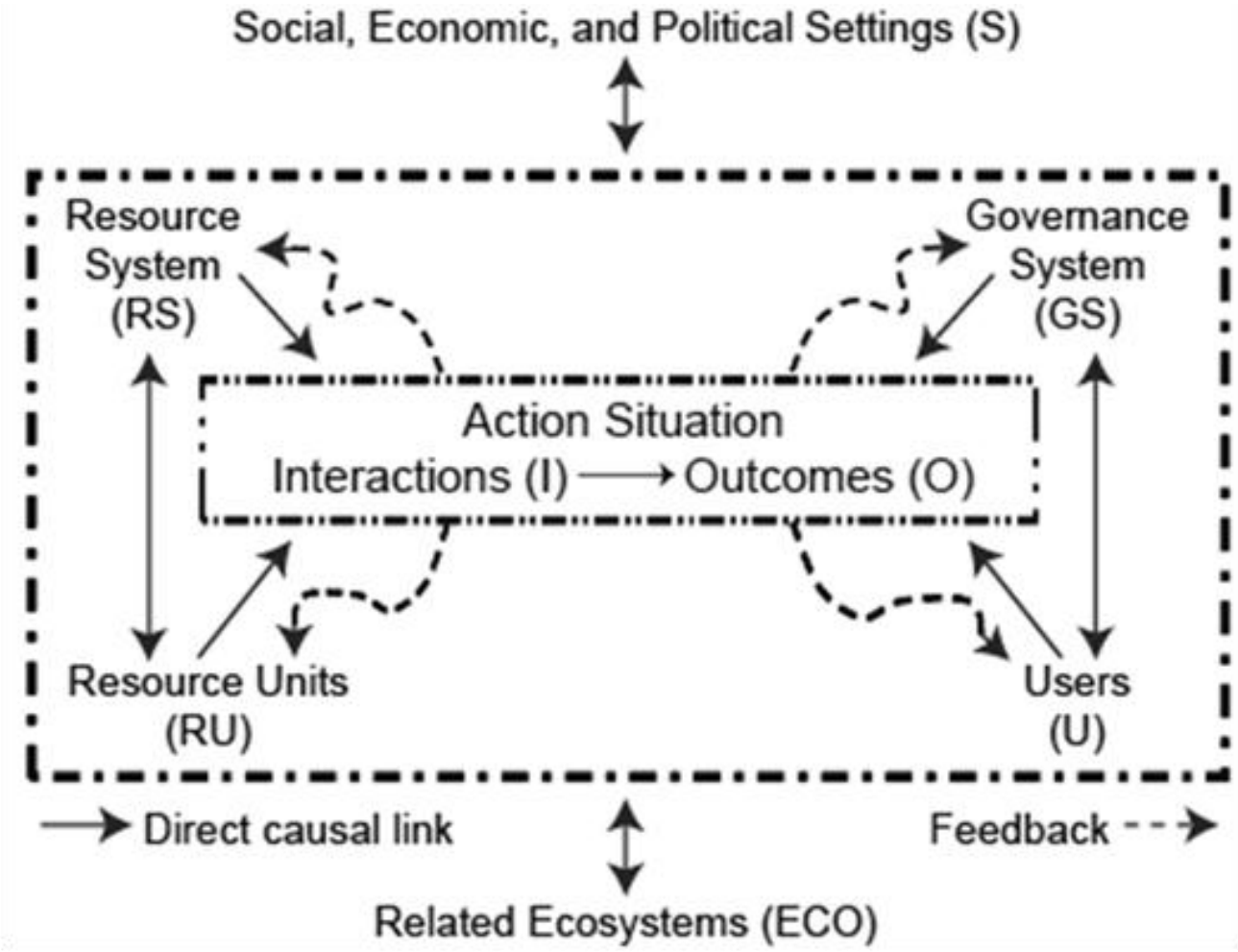


Background on LSLAs in WA (contd.)

- Questions also remain about lack of consideration of water dimensions of FDIAL. Specifically:
 - water requirements of crops planted on newly acquired large tracts of land;
 - impacts of water use on ecosystem services;
 - impacts on water rights and livelihoods of existing land users.



A framework for analysing SES (based on Ostrom 2009)



Current land use

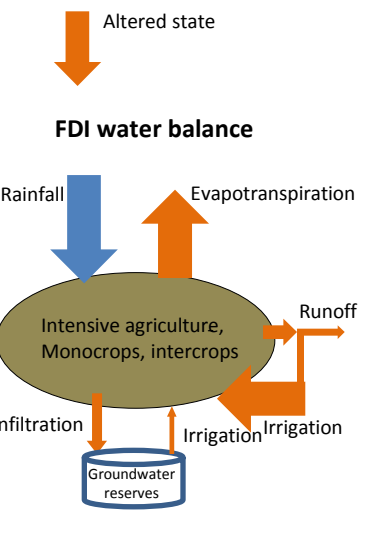
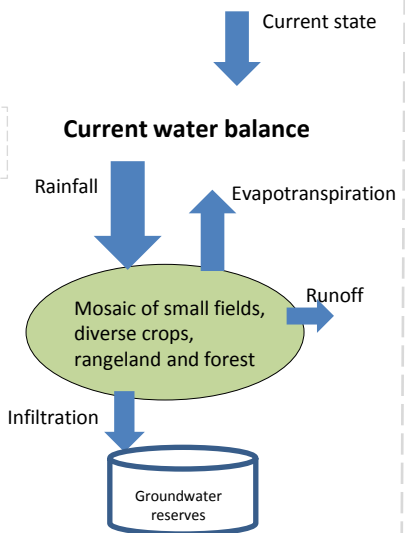
Land use under FDI in biofuel and food production

Livelihoods, Ecosystems and Hydrological implications

Hydrological

Hydrological

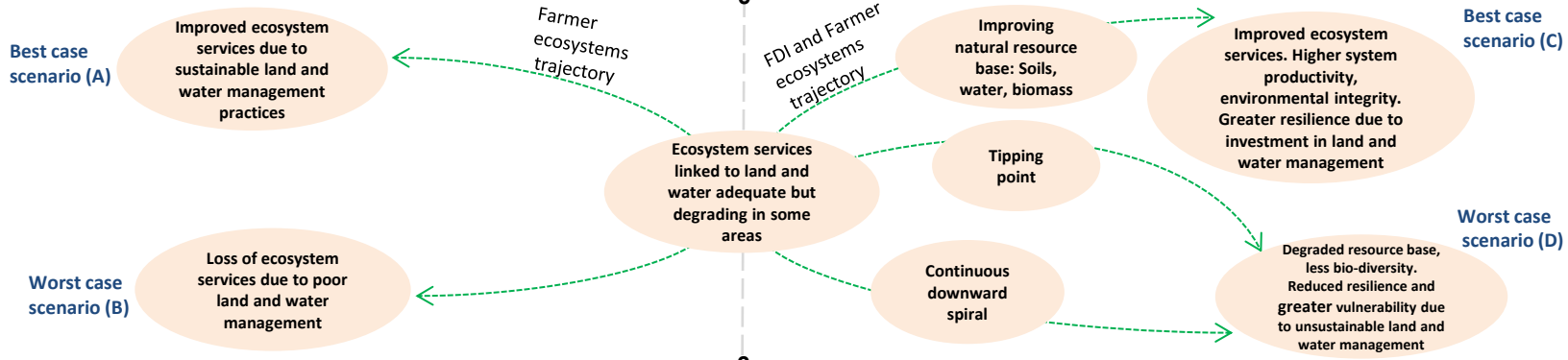
Opportunistic reliance on green water use



More capture and use of blue water with green water management insufficiently considered.

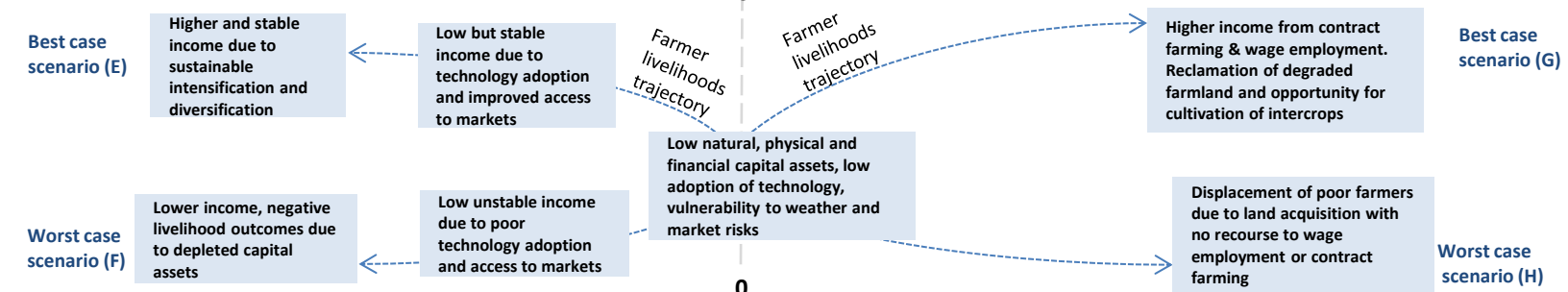
Ecosystems

Ecosystems



Livelihoods

Livelihoods



Relative Time (Years) 50 Baseline 50 Relative Time (Years)



Methods

1. Surveys and Reviews

- Cohort groups surveyed: Investors, Regulatory agencies, Traditional Chiefs and Smallholder farmers;
 - Documents reviewed: Land lease agreements, Land and Water Policies, Environmental Impact Assessments
-

2. Biophysical Modeling

<p>Water Evaluation And Planning</p>		<h3>Hydrology model</h3> <p>Computed catchment water fluxes e.g. surface runoff and ground water recharge, that occur outside conventional crop water use.</p>
--	--	--

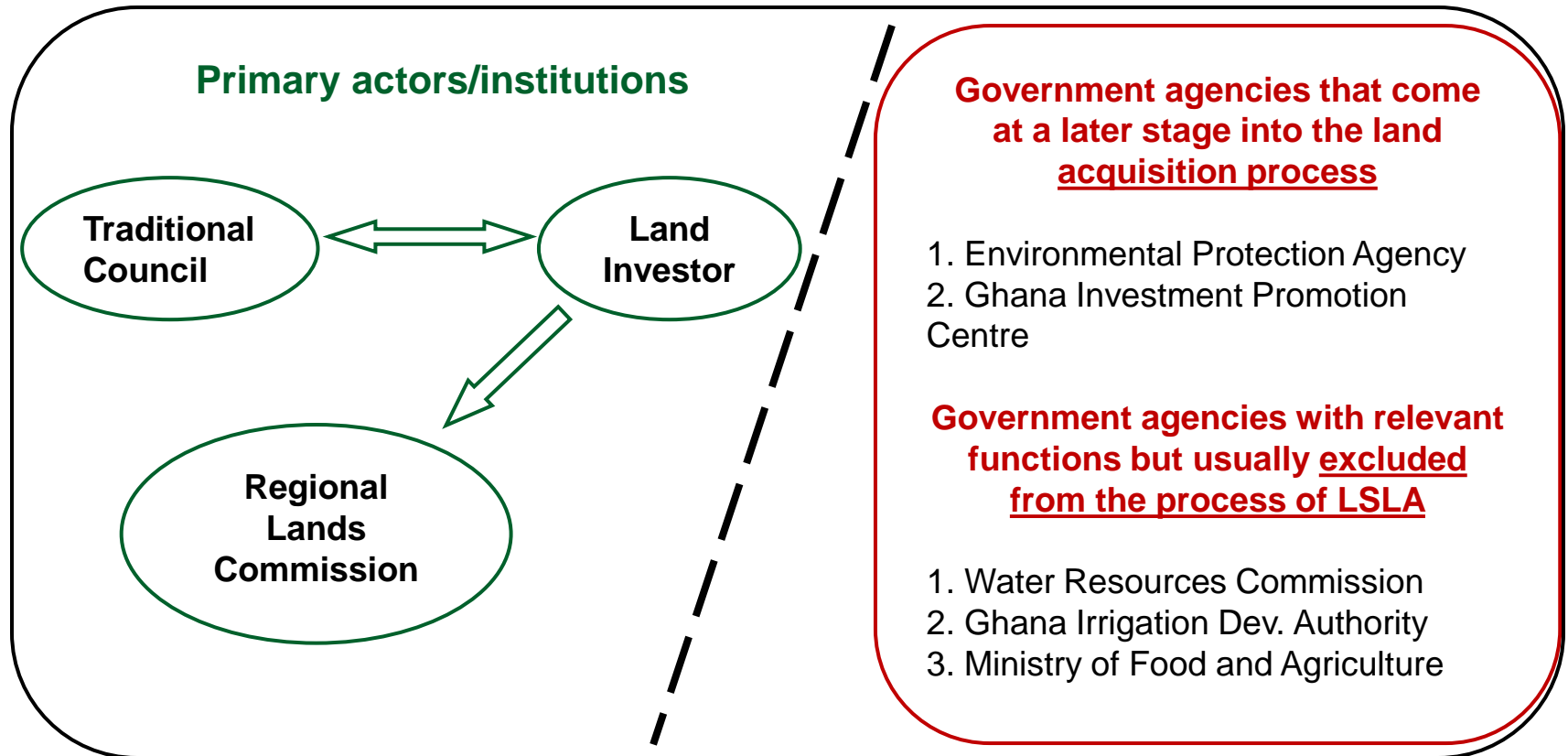
		<h3>Crop water use model</h3> <p>Estimated crop water requirements and irrigation demands of biofuel (LSLAs) and food crops (current land use systems with smallholder farming) over a given period of time.</p>
---	---	--

Summary of unethical and inimical practices: 1

- Lack of consultation, transparency and accountability in land deals by governments and land-owning families.
- By-passing of regulatory agencies by investors.



Actors/Institutions typically involved in LSLAs in the study areas in Ghana



Summary of unethical and inimical practices: 2

- Poor and inadequate EIAs and EMPs that are below international standards.
- Flouting of national legislation and operational rules in the use and management of water by investors.
- Underestimation of implications of LSLAs for:
 - crop water requirements;
 - impacts of water use on ecosystem services;
 - impacts on water rights and livelihoods of existing land users.



Summary of unethical and inimical practices: 3

- Narrowly defined contracts that focus solely on land leasehold.
- Employment arrangements that fail to meet international labour standards.



Economic, social and environmental consequences

- Displacement and involuntary loss of access to land and associated water rights by poor land and water users.
- Direct negative impacts on household food security and incomes of displaced poor people.
- Lack of assessment of water requirements of crops planted and implications for other uses and users.
- Limited overall benefits to local communities from production and processing activities associated with LSLAs.



Causes of negative practices

- Wealth, power and information asymmetries.
- Multiple actors concurrently exercising rights under parallel systems of land and water governance.
- Ambiguous and outdated land and water statutes.
- Poor policy coherence and coordination of activities of regulatory agencies.
- Poorly resourced and ineffective regulatory agencies.
- Inability of poor land and water users to self-organize and lobby for their rights.



Strategies for improving integrity

- Alternative institutional arrangements that will allow FPIC and coordination of cross-sectoral policies.
- Legislative reforms to recognize the rights of existing land users coupled with legal literacy campaigns.
- Address poor funding and weak capacity of regulatory agencies.
- Adoption of internationally agreed voluntary guidelines for responsible land-based investments in Africa.
- Land deals are not considered as inevitable.



Dank u wel

Merci beaucoup

Thank you

