

**Erasmus University Rotterdam, the Netherlands**  
**CSC PhD 2015 Project Description**

<b>School/Department:</b>	<p><b>International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) of Erasmus University Rotterdam</b></p> <p>Political Economy of Resources, Environment and Population (PER)</p>
<b>Project Title:</b>	<p><b>Meating China's Needs: Global Politics and Socio-Environmental Implications of Increasing Meat Consumption in China</b></p>
<b>Abstract:</b>	<p>Meat is booming in China. Intensive livestock production has skyrocketed over the past 30 years, to the extent that people are eating more meat today in China than at any time in the past: since 1980, the country's average per capita meat consumption has quadrupled to more than 54 kg, a level well above the global average, but well below Western Europe's average of 85 kg (FAO 2013). In addition to supportive agricultural development policies within China, this impressive growth is propelled by relationships between Chinese and foreign firms, governments, and farmers, and with implications for both domestic and global people and places. This research project investigates these relationships and implications, linking China's reform era meat revolution to the global food system in general, and to agrifood politics in Europe in particular.</p> <p>The Global Livestock-Feed Complex (GLFC) is an orienting concept for the project. It describes relationships between actors, resources, and policies involved in the massive expansion of intensive livestock production over the last half-century, of which China and Europe are important sites. In 2013, China imported 66% of all internationally traded soybeans, which domestic and foreign-owned companies processed into soybean meal to feed the country's burgeoning industrial livestock populations (USDA 2014). Pig production is key. Farmers and companies in China raised more than 55 million tons of pork in 2013, an amount twice the production in all 28 EU countries combined, five times the amount in the United States, and more than half of the global total. At the same time, China is the world's second largest poultry producer, and ranks fourth in beef production (USDA 2014).</p> <p>For its part, the EU is the largest soybean meal importer, accounting for 33% of trade in 2013. About a quarter of the EU's 30 million tonnes of soybeans and soybean meal imports passed through the Netherlands, an important hub for the region's livestock industry (Soy Barometer 2012). The EU is second only to China in whole soybean imports, and in pork production and consumption. It also ranks among the top five producers of poultry and beef (USDA 2014). So</p>

	<p>although meat consumption may be slowing across Europe, the EU continues to play a critical role in the global livestock-feed complex.</p> <p>More than occupying similar world leading positions in various feed and livestock sectors, China and Europe are intimately connected within the global livestock-feed complex. They are linked through shared trading partners in North and South America for soy, through trade and innovation in livestock production technologies and models, by similar consumer concerns over food safety, and importantly, by a mutual need to tackle the social and environmental challenges associated with industrial livestock production at global and local scales. These shared issues and challenges – including livestock-related greenhouse gas emissions, water pollution, declining biodiversity, land-use change, corporate concentration, and food safety and security – are the subject of this research project.</p> <p>Specifically, the project examines social and environmental consequences of increased meat consumption in reform era China, analyzed from the perspectives of political economy and political ecology. Field research and secondary data analysis will engage the challenges identified above as they relate to intensive livestock production within China, as well as its alternatives. The project will situate China within the global food system, focusing on the shared nature of these challenges, while also exploring the implications of ‘meeting China’s needs’ for other regions of the world, particularly Europe and the Americas.</p> <p>The project supervisor, Dr. Mindi Schneider, has been conducting interdisciplinary research on political, social, and agro-ecological aspects of food and agricultural systems for the past 15 years. Since 2007, her work has focused on issues of agricultural development and industrial livestock production in China, where she has carried out extensive fieldwork. The supervisor has published widely on this research, and also speaks Mandarin Chinese.</p> <p>In addition to the supervisor, Dr. Max Spoor will serve as Promoter for the project. Dr. Spoor is the Chair of the Research Program in Political Economy of Resources, Environment and Population (PER) at the ISS-EUR. His research focuses on rural and environmental issues, such as land grabbing, access to water resources, poverty, inequality, and social exclusion, particularly in Asian transitional economies (China and Vietnam) and Central and Eastern Europe where he has worked for 25 years. He is a Guest Professor at</p>
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	Nanjing Agricultural University, and is also associated with the China Exchange Program of the Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW).
<b>Requirements of candidate:</b>	<p><b>Background:</b> The ideal candidate should have a background in political economy, political ecology, and/or environmental sociology. S/he should have an interest in studying environmental and social aspects of food systems, in both domestic (China) and global contexts.</p> <p>Master degree: Yes  IELTS Grade: 7.0 (<i>minimal 6.0 per component</i>)  or  TOEFL: 100 (<i>minimal 20 per component</i>)</p>
<b>Supervisor information:</b>	<p><b>Ass. Prof. Mindi Schneider</b>  PhD in Development Sociology, Cornell University USA, 2014  Post-doctoral Fellow, Arrighi Center for Global Studies, Johns Hopkins University, 2013-2014</p> <p>At present: Program Convenor, Agrarian, Food &amp; Environmental Studies (AFES)  ISS-Erasmus University Rotterdam</p> <p>email: <a href="mailto:schneider@iss.nl">schneider@iss.nl</a>  Personal website: <a href="http://iss.academia.edu/MindiSchneider">http://iss.academia.edu/MindiSchneider</a></p>

### **Mindi Schneider: Recent Publications (selections)**

- Forthcoming in 2015. Mindi Schneider. "What, Then, Is a Chinese Peasant?: Nongmin Discourses and Agroindustrialization in Contemporary China," *Agriculture and Human Values* (manuscript reviewed and accepted).
- Forthcoming in 2015. Mindi Schneider. "The State of Agribusiness in China: Dragon Heads, Pork Politics, and Trajectories of the Corporate Food Regime," *Journal of Agrarian Change* (manuscript reviewed and accepted).
- Forthcoming in 2015. Gustavo de L.T. Oliveira and Mindi Schneider. "The Politics of Flexing Soybeans in China and Brazil," *Journal of Peasant Studies* (manuscript reviewed and accepted).
- Forthcoming in March 2015. "Food sovereignty and China," *Third World Quarterly*. Invited manuscript for the special issue on 'food sovereignty'.
- 2014 Mindi Schneider. "Developing the Meat Grab," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 41(4): 613-633.
- 2011 Philip McMichael and Mindi Schneider. "Food Security Politics and the Millennium Development Goals," *Third World Quarterly* 32(1): 119-139.
- 2010 Mindi Schneider and Philip McMichael. "Deepening, and Repairing, the Metabolic Rift," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 37 (3): 461-484.
- 2014 Mindi Schneider. "China's Pork Miracle: Agribusiness and Development in China's Pork Industry," Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP), <http://www.iatp.org/documents/china%E2%80%99s-pork-miracle-agribusiness-and-development-in-china%E2%80%99s-pork-industry>.
- 2011 Mindi Schneider. "Feeding China's Pigs: Implications for the Environment, China's Smallholder Farmers and Food Security," Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP), <http://www.iatp.org/documents/feeding-china%E2%80%99s-pigs-implications-for-the-environment-china%E2%80%99s-smallholder-farmers-and-food>.
- 2012 Mindi Schneider. "Dragon Head Enterprises, Vertical Integration, and Contract Farming in China: How State Policy is Restructuring Agricultural Value Chains and Consolidating Agribusiness Power," Report commissioned by Oxfam Hong Kong.
- 2012 Mindi Schneider. "Discourses and Policies on Poor Rural and Agricultural Livelihoods in China," Report commissioned by Oxfam Hong Kong.
- 2011 Mindi Schneider. "China Living Wage Study," Report commissioned by Solidaridad China.

- 2008 Mindi Schneider. "We Are Hungry!": A Summary Report of Food Riots, Government Responses, and States of Democracy in 2008," Published at RajPatel.org, <http://rajpatel.org/2009/11/02/we-are-hungry-exclusive/>.

### **Max Spoor: Recent Publications (selections)**

- Forthcoming in 2014. Visser, A., Mamonova, N.V., Spoor, M. & Nikulin, A. (2014). "Quiet Food Sovereignty" as Food Sovereignty without a Movement? Insights from Post-Socialist Russia. *Globalizations* (manuscript reviewed and accepted).
- 2014 Spoor, M., Shi, X. & Pu, C. (2014). Small Cotton Farmers, Livelihood Diversification and Policy Interventions in Southern Xinjiang. In H Zhang (Ed.), *Rural Livelihoods in China: Political Economy in Transition*. London and New York: Routledge.
- 2014 Visser, O., Spoor, M. & Mamonova, N.V. (2014). Is Russia the emerging global "breadbasket"? Re-cultivation, agroholdings and grain production. *Europe-Asia Studies*.
- 2012 Spoor, M. (2012). Agrarian reform and transition: what can we learn from 'the East'? *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 39(1), 175-194.
- 2012 Spoor, M. & Robbins, M.J. (2012). *Agriculture, Food Security and Inclusive Growth*. The Hague: Society for International Development (SID), ISS and NCDO.
- 2012 Borrás, Saturnino M. Jr., Jennifer C. Franco, Sergio Gomez, Cristobal Kay and Max Spoor (2012), 'Land grabbing in Latin America and the Caribbean', *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 39 (3-4): (845-872).
- 2010 Arsel, M. & Spoor, M. (2010). *Water, environmental security and sustainable rural development : conflict and cooperation in Central Eurasia* (Routledge ISS studies in rural livelihoods, 5). London and New York: Routledge.
- 2010 Beckmann, V., Dung, N.H., Shi, X., Spoor, M. & Wesseler, J. (2010). *Economic Transition and Natural Resource Management in East- and Southeast Asia*. Aachen: Shaker Publishers.
- 2010 Spoor, M., Heerink, N. & Qu, F (2010). *Dragons with Clay Feet? Transition, Sustainable Land Use and Rural Environment in China and Vietnam*. Lanham, New York and Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, Lexington Books.