Fukushima, ProSAVANA and Ruth First: Examining Natália Fingermann's "Myths behind ProSAVANA"

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Introduction

When I read Natália N. Fingermann's article "Os mitos por trás do ProSAVANA[2)]" on the *IDeIAS Boletim* (May 29, 2013 published by IESE[3)]), the first thing that came to my mind was neither Mozambique, nor the triangular cooperation programme called ProSAVANA-JBM (Triangular Cooperation for Agricultural Development of the Tropical Savannah in Africa[4)]). I thought instead of the nuclear accident that occurred at TEPCO's in Fukushima, in my home country of Japan, on March 11, 2011, which led many Japanese researchers to halt and seriously re-consider their role, objectives, responsibility and approach to research[5)]. I also thought about the lessons from the life and work of Ruth First, who fought for the liberation of Africa and Africans, and was killed in Maputo by a bomb sent to her at CEA (*Centro de Estudos Africanos*) in 1982 by the South African apartheid regime.

Until March 11, 2011, many of us, Japanese academics, were mostly concerned with our own personal career advancement or with promoting state/ corporate business interests. We are now being forced to reconsider our role in society. Before the accident, we were taught – and believed – that our role was the "search for truth", without reflecting if this search served only to reinforce power while ignoring the risks and dangers to the people.

The "precautionary principle" – an approach developed in the field of environmental studies and adopted as one of the 27 principles of the "Rio Declaration on Environment and Development" at the UNCED ("Rio" Summit) in 1992 – offers us another way to address problem in society. In fact, the precautionary principle[6)], was neglected by most of us either because we were not comfortable with the idea of "anticipating" and "preventing" problems or because were we not willing to place the burden of proving the safety of a given technology

onto Japanese companies that we worked for. Many of us also thought that engaging with current issues carried the risk of being "too political", and that "academic neutrality" would be harmed. This culture of privatisation and self-interest produced in Japan, one of the most advanced countries in the field of science and technology, the worst nuclear accident in human history. Two years have passed, but we are still without any effective means of dealing with the on-going human and ecological crisis. Once a technological failure of this kind and scale occurs it is too late to prevent the resulting damage. We finally see the importance of the "precautionary principle" after the deeply and painful lesson of Fukushima.

This came to mind after reading Fingermann's article since she called for civil society and academics to act "in a responsible manner", to make critiques "with real bases", and to open channels for "productive communication" for "future" (Fingermann, 2013: 2). I totally agree with her, and this is also what I learned from CEA and Ruth First.

Yet, Fingermann calls critical perspectives on ProSAVANA by academics and civil society organisations, "myth". She lists three following "myths": (1) "ProSAVANA is a replica of PRODECER (Japan-Brazil Agricultural Development Cooperation for the Brazilian Cerrado region)[7]"; (2) "ProSAVANA will grab land from Mozambican small farmers"; (3) "There are conflicts between agribusiness and Mozambican farmers" (*Ibid*.: 1-2). I became puzzled after reading her arguments and reasoning, because I could not find any "real bases" in her article for drawing those conclusions.

In this article, I shall examine Fingermann's arguments regarding "three myths behind ProSAVANA" based on the analysis of public and non-public documents obtained by public access and through participant observation, media sources, interviews, and discourse in Portuguese, English and Japanese, using a comparative approach. At the end of this article, I will discuss the issue of "responsible research" and ProSAVANA in the context of the current post-Fukushima discussions in Japanese academia and the work of Ruth First.

2. The bases of Fingermann's three ProSAVANA "myths"

2.1. Examining "Myth 1 - ProSAVANA is a replica of PRODECER"

Fingermann shares three reasons why she thinks it is a myth that ProSAVANA is a replica of PRODECER: (a) "the differences in the historical moment and political situation between Brazil in 1980s and today's Mozambique", and the fact that "negative aspects of PRODECER are recognised and not hidden by the governments of Japan and Brazil"; (b) for "being a trilateral initiative, transparency will be improved in comparison with PRODECER, a purely Japanese initiative"; and (c) the reason that "Quick Impact Projects (of ProSAVANA) are considering environmental impacts and including family agriculture", unlike PRODECER (*Ibid*.: 1).

2-1-1. The origins of the idea that "ProSAVANA is a replica of PRODECER"

It is true, as Fingermann points out, that PRODECER is a programme that was implemented thirty years ago in a different part of the world (*Ibid*.). However, it was not academics or civil society who first emphasised the idea that "Northern Mozambique was similar to the Cerrado" or used catchphrases such as "bringing the success of PRODECER/agricultural development in the Cerrado to ProSAVANA".

The first person to use the expression "a replica of PRODECER" was the Mozambican Minister of Agriculture, José Pacheco, who made this public statement following his meeting with delegates of JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) at the end of 2012: "**ProSAVANA is a replica** of a development project that occurred thirty years ago in Brazil. (…) we shall look into every possibility **to replicate this in Mozambique**" (*AIM*, Dec. 25, 2012). His statement appeared in an article published by the national news agency, AIM, and was "**officially supported**" by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, MoFA (Feb.28, 2013[8]). So why does Fingermann write as if it was civil society who began to use these expressions?

The first statement from UNAC (*União Nacional de Camponeses*, the largest farmers' association in Mozambique) in fact used exactly the same expression that Fingermann herself uses in her article (Fingermann, 2013: 1): "[ProSAVANA] **was inspired** by an earlier agricultural development project

implemented by the Brazilian and Japanese governments in the Brazilian Cerrado" (UNAC, Oct. 11, 2012).

Yet it was Japan which promoted the image (PRODECER to ProSAVANA) in the initial phase of the programme, although they did not use the expression "a replica". This is clear from many documents released by JICA examined in my previous paper (JICA June 30, 2009; JICA Sept. 28, 2009; JICA July 31, 2012; Funada-Classen, 2013ab). One can also observe how important it was for Japanese and Brazilian actors to bring this idea of replicating PRODECER in the final report of the preparatory study for ProSAVANA (JICA, 2010: S-1).

The report explains the concepts and objectives behind ProSAVANA as follows:

(1) The Japanese contribution to the Brazilian Cerrado (PRODECER) was successful;

(2) The cooperation between Brazil and Japan is of great importance;

(3) **Africa's "tropical savannah" is a target** for (2);

(4) "**Mozambique to be selected as a first case**" of (3) to "**implant**" **the technologies gained by PRODECER** (*Ibid.*).

The priority for the preparatory study was to identify "**similarities with" the Cerrado and find out "what can be used from" the experiences of Brazil** (*Ibid.*), although the MoU (Minute of Understanding) and MoM (Minute of Meeting) of ProSAVANA had already been signed by three governments based on "facts" of "the common/similar agronomical characteristics of Northern Mozambique with the Cerrado" (MoM, Sept. 17, 2009; JICA, Sept. 28, 2009). Thus, investigating the realities of local small scale farmers – who make up more than 80% of the labour force of Northern Mozambique and occupy more than 95% of farmland (INE, CAP 2009-10) - became secondary. They conducted only 20 interviews with local "farmers" (including medium and large scale operators) although their budget was over 8 million US Dollars (NGO-MoFA, Dec. 13, 2012).

What was the result of this research, this quest to "discover similarities between the Cerrado and the Nacala Corridor"? Both EMBRAPA (The Brazilian

Agricultural Research Corporation) and JICA had to admit the following: “in these areas (along EN13, the corridor), **there is no farmland where large-scale farming can be developed**, and **there is no land similar to Cerrado**. (…) **These facts leave two challenges for seeking market oriented agricultural development**” (EMBRAPA, *in* JICA, 2010: S-23). The area along the corridor is characterised by fertile land and abundant water, and for this reason is thus densely populated, unlike the Cerrado, a sparsely populated region where the soil was infertile with high acidity and aluminium content and population density was low[9] (*MOZAMBIQUE* no.210, 2012).

Based on their fact-finding research, EMBRAPA identified two “challenges”: (a) that **introducing commercial farming technology** would be impossible; and (b) that production by local medium and **small farmers would have to remain more important “for a while**” (EMBRAPA, *in* JICA, 2010: S-23). In order to match ProSAVANA to Brazilian interests - though not to those of local farmers or with the realities on the ground - EMBRAPA strongly suggested that 6,400,000 ha of heavily forested and lightly populated land in the northwest of Niassa Province should also be included as part of the ProSAVANA target area. This area, however, was not along the corridor, thus it emphasised “similarity with the Cerrado” (*Ibid*.). The three governments agreed. If the real objective of the programme was to “support local farmers of the Nacala Corridor” as recently emphasised by the ProSAVANA actors (by JICA’s President, Feb. 22, 2013; Minister Pacheco, April 2, 2013[10]), then why did the programme need to include that area?

2-1-2. “Negative aspects of PRODECER are not hidden by Japan”?

Let us examine Fingermann’s argument for the latter half of her first “myth”, that is, “negative aspects (environmental and social impacts) of PRODECER are recognised and not hidden by the governments of Brazil and Japan” (Fingermann, 2013: 1). Despite what she states so confidently, I could not find any clear description or analysis of these negative aspects in any of JICA’s published reports on PRODECER, except several sentences in (JICA, 2001; 2010).There are numerous research and reports on environment impacts on the Cerrado region

conducted by JICA, but nothing about the deforestation and pollution caused by PRODECER is mentioned. Rather, JICA's "PRODECER: Environment Monitoring Report" only lists general environmental problems in the region (JICA, 2000: 2-4), and stresses some measures taken by JICA for "protecting environment" (*Ibid*.: 8). Any discussion of a cause-and-effect relationship between the general problems and PRODECER is completely omitted. In the report's introduction, a JICA board member declares: "[through this report, you will come to understand] that **PRODECER was an environmentally friendly developmental enterprise, like other Frontier Agriculture (programmes)**, and this fact should influence **to future consideration and planning of cooperation projects**" (*Ibid*.: Introduction).

PRODECER is more frequently described as a "success" and a "miracle" by the Japanese government and JICA. This can be observed clearly in the title of a book by Yutaka Hongo (a key figure in JICA's implementation of PRODECER and one of the planners of ProSAVANA), and Akio Hosono (a former director of JICA's Research Institute): "**Miracle** of Development of '**Cerrado', Barren Land** in Brazil" (Hongo & Hosono, 2012). Those authors even describe PRODECER as "**environmentally prudent**", promoting an eco-friendly image of the programme during the Rio+20, UN Conference on Sustainable Development (JICA-RI News & Topics, 2012). In addition, whenever ProSAVANA or PRODECER are discussed, JICA's Hongo comes and stands up and says: "the critiques are all false. You will realise if you read MY BOOK" (Nov.8, 2012; May 28, 2013[11]). These are people who are highly influential in designing and carrying out the programme.

The fact is that PRODECER did clear almost 300,000 ha of the Cerrado of biome, an area that was formerly home to a wealth of biodiversity, with 7,000 recognised species, and high levels of endemism (Klink & Machado, 2005: 1), and to the main Brazilian watersheds. But for Hongo and the Japanese government, the Cerrado region is "barren land" (Hongo & Hosono, 2012; JICA, June 30, 2009)[12]. Together with other development programmes carried out by the Brazilian military dictatorship (1964-85) in the Cerrado, almost 50% of this was "converted into pasture and agricultural lands occupied mostly with cash crops" (IBAMA, 2009: 12; Klink & Machado, 2005: 1).

PRODECER came as the last phase in the promotion of mega-scale

development programmes of the Cerrado. It was criticised for reproducing "an economic model imposed by the post-1964 system", and the decision of expanding PRODECER to PRODECER II in 1984 was seen as an act of "inconsideration of the necessary changes that were taking place in the Brazilian agrarian structure" (*Diário de Manhã*, March 10, 1984). PRODECER I, II and III ended up opening vast areas for only 717 *colono* (settler) families, mainly Japanese and European immigrants/ descendants who were living in the south of Brazil, and were considered to be "superior farmers" (capable of conducting modernised farming)"(Hongo's interview in JICA, June 30, 2009). Each *colono* family, already better-off financially, was granted 400 to 500 ha with additional financial support, at a time when locals were struggling to obtain land in order to overcome unjust land distribution dated since colonial period[13]. The frustration caused by this is clear from the enduring land conflicts all over the Cerrado region since 1980 (*Folha de São Paulo*, 1985, in Pessoa,1988: 181-182). Even though JICA's preparatory research revealed this (JICA, 1983: 91), it did not stop the agency from continuing with unjust land and credit distribution (assistance)[14]. Rather, JICA even expanded the same scheme to many other states, and opened an "agricultural frontier" adjacent to the Amazon.

Fingermann implies that those who recognise misconduct (PRODECER) can improve their behaviour in the future (ProSAVANA), but her assumption is not borne out by the facts. Civil society organisations in Mozambique, Brazil and Japan are not concerned about thirty years ago, it is about what JICA's veteran associates are saying today, and how this has been passed on to JICA's younger ProSAVANA staffs. For instance, in remarks such as: "JICA through **PRODECER conducted environment related projects in order to promote conservation farming** (…) "**Cerrado-type Family Agriculture" based on large-scale farming**(…). **JICA believes that it is Japan who can contribute to inclusive and environmentally friendly development** (…). (Kota Sakaguchi, Nov. 15, 2012[15]). JICA did not see any problem with emphasising the "success of 'family agriculture' of PRODECER" as a useful experience for Northern Mozambique until it was criticised by the Japanese NGOs at the 1st NGO-MoFA meeting on ProSAVANA held on Jan. 25, 2013[16].

2-1-3. "The trilateral initiative will improve transparency"?

As Fingermann confirms, PRODECER did suffer from lack of transparency because it was result of a "purely Japanese initiative" taking place "during military government" (Fingermann, 2013: 1).Yet, it is not true to say that "there were no possibilities for civil society organisations to monitor and expose its negative aspects" (*Ibid*.). Since the beginning of the 1980s, a multitude of voices have criticised the programme: Brazilian deputies, farmers (with/without land), religious organisations, researchers, associations and unions, journalists, and even governmental institutes (Câmara dos Deputados, 1980; *Revista Urgente*, 1981; *Diário de Manhã*, March 10, 1984; Associação dos Engenheiros Agrônomos do Estado de Goiás (AEAGO), 1984; Comissão Pastoral da Terra (CPT), 1984; 1985; San Martin & Pelgrini, 1984; IPEA; and Pessoa, 1988). And we can observe a common thread in the following descriptions of problems regarding both of the programme: "PRODECER is prepared **from the top and outside**, and there was **no consultation with the people**" (Pessoa, 1988: 128) and "We have noticed a **lack of information and transparency from** the main stakeholders involved.(…) ProSAVANA is a result of a **top-down policy**" (UNAC, Oct. 11, 2011).

Why do we see identical critiques despite a time-lag of thirty years? Because the initiators of the programmes (the Japanese government and JICA) are the same, the principle objectives of these programmes are the same, thus same kind of procedures and attitude are repeated. Both programmes are shaped by food crisis around the world and in Japan (1973- and 2008-), a focus on "vast uncultivated land", "public-private enterprise", and "agricultural cooperation through strengthened Japan-Brazil relations" (JICA, 1979; 1983; MoM, 2009; JICA, 2011; and Funada-Classen, 2013abc). This can be observed in identical expressions given as principle reasons in JICA's initial documents for these programmes: "in the centre-western region of Brazil, there is an **extended unexplored area with almost 1,300,000km^2** (almost 3.5 times bigger than Japanese territory)" (JICA, 1979: 1); and "**70 % (or 540,000km^2) of national territory is (…) left as vast unused land** suitable for agriculture" (JICA, Sept. 28, 2009). The strong focus on "vast unused land" was the basis for the formulation and attraction of both PRODECER and ProSAVANA[17].

The other common element connecting the initial phase of these programmes is not something that was said, but something that was not: the needs and fate of the local population - including farmers - and of the forest.

Thirty years have passed since the beginning of PRODECER. Mozambique is not ruled by a dictatorship as Brazil was in the 1980s. Several stakeholders meetings were organised[18], but many local farmers' and civic organisations who attended them feel that these meetings were held only with the intention that the ProSAVANA actors could later claim that the process is inclusive and democratic[19]. In fact, the JICA's internal document ("work instructions") to the Japanese consultants supporting these meetings indicates that their focus is on the number of participants from various sectors and the transmission of information rather than listening to and discussing issues with the participants (JICA, 2011: 8; 11)[20]. The same document, however, orders the consultants to integrate the opinions and needs of the Japanese corporations into various plans (*Ibid*.: 4).

Certainly there are more formalised monitoring systems available for civil society compared to PRODECER, but this does not mean that the programme is transparent and accountable in reality. This can be seen in the strong anxiety and frustration shown in the "Open Letter" from 23 Mozambican civic organisations to leaders of three governments (of Japan, Brazil and Mozambique) calling for the immediate suspension of all activities and projects under ProSAVANA ("Open Letter", May 28, 2013).

It is not a natural process for Governments or private enterprises to be transparent and accountable. Human history teaches us that - around the world - this can only be achieved when the local people fight for it. It was Brazilians who fought against PRODECER and the development scheme in the Cerrado who brought Agrarian Reform to their country, and ended the dictatorship. In the case of ProSAVANA, it is precisely those whom Fingermann denounces as creators of "myths" who are committed to obtain transparency and accountability for people and the environment despite many sacrifices[21]. And the Japanese ProSAVANA actors, JICA's staff and Japanese consultants, who cannot accept the claims made by Mozambican civil society, also join to denounce them as being "only one part of the society", saying "they are criticising ProSAVANA because they belong to an

opposition party", spreading this mislead message in order to justify themselves (Dec. 2012 – June 2013[22]).

2-1-4. "Quick Impact Projects are considering environmental and social impact"?

Although Fingermann does not acknowledge it, these civil society organisations did substantiate their arguments ("Joint Statement", April 29, 2013; "Open Letter", May 28, 2013). One of the most important documents they consulted was Report No.2 prepared by the teams contracted for ProSAVANA-PD (Support Agriculture Development Master Plan), one of three major activities of ProSAVANA (see Note 4), completed in March, 2013[23]. The subtitle of the report is "Quick Impact Projects", but as the report itself explains, its objective is to "draw up an overall plan (blueprint) for agricultural development in the Nacala Corridor" (Report No.2, 2013: 1-3). Thus, it is not "just a report", it is also a document setting out the framework of the Master Plan, and endorsed by the Mozambican Ministry of Agriculture (as can be seen on its cover). The presentations given by the Ministry at ProSAVANA's stakeholder meetings in Maputo and Nampula in March and by MoFA/JICA at an NGO-MoFA meeting in Tokyo in April of 2013 were based on this report[24]. There is no reason to ignore the document.

Although Fingermann concludes, based on her interviews with ProSAVANA actors[25], that "QIPs are mitigating environmental impacts and including family agriculture" (Fingermann, 2013: 1), a comprehensive analysis of the reports (especially, Report No.2) gives a completely different picture.

Three problematic tendencies are observed in this "blueprint", Report No.2. The first one is regarding a central feature of the Master Plan, "**zoning**". Report No.2 classifies the entire target area into six categories (I to VI) and gives the outcomes of SWOT analysis of each zone. Although the idea of "zoning" itself is very problematic ("Experts Analysis", 2013[26]), this SWOT analysis highlights deeper problems. It classes a "**large forest area" as "helpful**" while "**high population" and "large forest conservation area"** are seen **as "harmful" to "agricultural development strategy**". (Report No.2, 2013: 2-27; 2-24). If the real objective of ProSAVANA-PD or the Master Plan is to support local farmers and the

programme is mitigating environmental damages, why was it written in this way?

The second problem is found in the ProSAVANA Development Initiative Fund (PDIF), which Fingermann listed as a "QIP", but in fact is listed as a "Pilot Project" in the report. The report does mention "criteria" for such considerations (*Ibid*.: 3-8), but how it is/will be implemented and monitored is obscure. More importantly, as the "Open Letter" criticises, proceeding with the projects while there is still so much debate over the programme, and the contents of the Master Plan are not widely known, proves to be very problematic. The letter calls for an "Urgent Stop" because "(ProSAVANA) is **already being implemented** (…), **without the Environmental Impact Assessment Study ever having been carried out, publicly discussed and approved** (…)". In the Japanese context, "pilot projects" carried out prior to controversial governmental enterprises are used by the government as means of creating "local beneficiaries (thus allies)" and *fait accompli*. In fact, responding to the strong tone of the letter, JICA's representative said "there are on-going projects and people who are expecting to receive (benefits), thus we cannot stop" (JICA, May 28; 30, 2013[27]).

The third problem is in QIPs. The criteria for selecting QIPs includes "**visible direct and attractive impacts in short term (1-6 years)**", and fail to mention anything about mitigation (Report No.2, 2013: 4-2). As the Japanese experts have noted with concern, seeking "quick impacts" tends to result in negative social and environmental effects ("Experts Analysis", 2013). The report lists 8 Public and 8 Private Sector Projects (Report No.2, 2013: 4-3; 4-4), and admits that six of them **may lead involuntary resettlement** (*Ibid*.: 4-60). Still, ProSAVANA-PD welcomes these projects since they are "quick and visible and will generate attractive impacts".

The report does not mention which QIPs are those requiring resettlement, but there is a project called "Planning of Land Reserve for Medium and Large[28] Scale Investment", allocating "**10,000 ha of land**" to be "**divided into 500 to 900 ha**" for "**medium and large scale companies**" for "**ensuring a mechanism for large-scale production**" in Ribáuè of Nampula Province (*Ibid*.: 4-19). Ribáuè is included in Zone III where 43% of the land is already cultivated by local farmers and 46% is covered by forest (*Ibid*.: 2-7). The project also listed "**promoting a**

non-shifting cultivation system" as one of its target goals. Another QIP "Land Registration of the Small and Medium Scale Farmers" seems to be for small farmers, but its goals are set to "**facilitate the identification of areas for the promotion of agriculture by large farmers, private companies**" (*Ibid*.: 3-15). Another project is "Model Project for Family Farming", and again despites its name, its goal is defined as "**combat(ing) the practice of shifting agriculture**" (*Ibid*.: 3-48; 4-55), and only "**small farms for transition to a fixed agriculture" are intended to be "give(n) DUATs[29] (land titles)**" (*Ibid*.: 3-61).

2-2. Examining "Myth 2 - ProSAVANA will grab land of small farmers"

Fingermann thinks that one should not mention the possibility that ProSAVANA will facilitate land-grabbing from small farmers for two reasons: (a) "the Master Plan does not delimit land for any foreign investors including Brazilians"; and (b) "ProSAVANA has no connection with the Nacala Fund" (Fingermann, 2013: 2).

2-2-1. The Master Plan does not delimit land, but "paves a safe path" for investors

The framework of her second "myth" is problematic given that there are no academics or civil society organisations saying that the Master Plan is or will be delimiting land. What they have said is, for instance, "the **copy [the Master Plan] makes clear that the project's intentions** (…) **pave the way for a massive land grab** in Northern Mozambique" ("Joint Statement", 2013). As we previously analysed using documents (JICA, 2010; 2011; Report No.2, 2013), one cannot avoid this conclusion based on the framework of ProSAVANA-PD's Master Plan, where there is a clear intent to create conditions for safe entry of external investors to carry out large-scale agricultural production.

This can also be confirmed in the "ProSAVANA Guidelines on PRAI" presented at stakeholders meetings and mentioned in the Report No.2 (5-1). Although this is the only safeguard designated to protect rights of local farmers and environment, and written everywhere in the report, its framework gives priority to PRAI (the principles of Responsible Agricultural Investmen[30]) which are widely considered to be "facilitating justification of investors" or "damaging peasantry"

(De Schutter, 2010), rather than on the FAO's Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGT), created specifically to overcome the limitations of PRAI. In Report No.2, FAO's VGGT are only mentioned briefly after a thorough explanation of PRAI, and its usage was not incorporated into ProSAVANA's Guidelines, but it is "**recommend(ed) to refer to**" (Report No.2,2013: 5-6) in order to avoid likely criticism of ignoring VGGT completely. The only enforcement mechanism suggested in ProSAVANA's Guidelines on PRAI is an "autonomous agency" under "ProSAVANA's implementing body", but it is not given any legal power to impose sanctions or penalties (*Ibid.*). When there are problems, "**the agency can disclose necessary documents and information if necessary**" (*Ibid*.: 5-8).

Land-grabbing by agribusiness and investors has been a reality since the sharp rise in food prices occurring since 2008, especially in Africa (GRAIN, 2008; 2011; The Oakland Institute, 2009-2013[31]; WB, 2010; UNCWFS-HLPE 2011; Land Matrix 2012; 2013). This was the reason why PRAI and FAO's VGGT were drawn up, although they remain "voluntary", and thus insufficient to have an impact on the ground unless there is a real commitment of the Government structures. The Nacala Corridor area is the most populous area of Mozambique, where over 4 million small farmers are cultivating land. Thusany developmental program, project or plan must be carefully designed. However, from the analysis of the most recent and important ProSAVANA-PD's report for the Master Plan, it became apparent that certain people among the ProSAVANA actors had the intention of opening an easy way for investors to come to the region. These would be done by: (a) expanding the target area; (b) establishing the concept of "zoning" and "clustering"; (c) introducing favourable QIPs; (d) setting loose guidelines; (e) and fixing and limiting the locals' farmland.

One may argue that (e) is in the interests of local farmers and the environment. But then why were the ProSAVANA guidelines set up to be so weak and ineffective for any kind of protection? In fact, as Pro-SAVANA-PD's Report No.1 concluded, farmers' land usage (thus land rights) extends way beyond a current portion of cultivated land, "several times more" (Report No.1, 2013: 2-14). The Land Law of 1997, which is still in effect, was established by UNAC and

civil society along with the government, and it is considered to be one of the most progressive pro-farmer/poor laws (Palmer, 2003: 4-7; Alden Wily, 2013). The Land Law recognises DUATs where farmers cultivate by registration and demarcation under customary norms and practice in order to secure access of land by the most vulnerable people (Palmer, 2003: 4-7; Negrão, 2003: 7).

Thus, the claims of rights of local farmers or communities over land could be much wider and uncertain. This, for investors, is a clear risk, and the underlying reason for insisting on "combating shifting farming" and "fixation of farms" is a way to work around this without touching the current land law. Tomaso Ferrando calls this as "silent land grab"(Ferrando, 2013: 28).

2-2-2. "The Nacala Fund has no connection with ProSAVANA"?

Although Fingermann ignores it, there have been many Brazilians visiting the ProSAVANA target area with the clear intention of land acquisition since another MoU and MoM signed by the three governments to implement ProSAVANA in 2011. The most well-known case refers to remarks given by Luiz Nishimori, a Brazilian deputy and a head of ProSAVANA's Brazilian delegation visiting Mozambique in April, 2012 (*Brazilian Nikkei*, May 1, 2012[32]). He clearly stated that **ProSAVANA is for securing land for Brazilians to conduct large-scale farming in Mozambique"** (TV Camara, June 24, 2012). And he is not the only one looking at ProSAVANA as an opportunity for large scale land acquisition in Mozambique (*Reuters*, Aug.15, 2011; *Brazilian Nikkei*, May 1, 2012). If one does not want to depend on media coverage, one can consult with (JICA, 2010), listing intentions of the Brazilian actors wanting to include 6,400,000 ha to the programme.

Fingermann declares: "the Nacala Fund has no connection with ProSAVANA", based on her interview with "*Mozambican policy makers*" (Fingermann, 2013: 2). Then why does Report No.2 mentions that **the Nacala Fund is one of the "33 component projects" and "prioritised projects" for the Master Plan** (Report No.2, 2013: 3-2; 3-7)? Also, although she did not mention this in her article, there is another obvious and direct linkage between ProSAVANA-PD and the Nacala Fund. ProSAVANA-PD's sole contracted consultant from the Brazilian side and the "independent initiator of the fund (Fingermann, 2013: 1)" are the same

institution: FGV (Fundação Getúlio Vargas) Projetos[33]. It was Giuliano Senatore of FGV Projetos, a Brazilian team leader of ProSAVANA-PD and one of his staff members who gave presentations on ProSAVANA and the Nacala Fund during an international conference in November 2012[34]. Why are the same personnel from the same institution working on and making public presentations about both the ProSAVANA and the Nacala Fund if the two have nothing to do with each other?

FGV is a Brazilian research, educational and business institution, and said to be the "**principal author of Report No.2**[35]", whose stated objective was to "**attract large-scale agricultural development projects/investment**" (Report No.2, 2013: 3-2; 3-7). The international researchers from Future Agricultures Consortium also question the "parallel role" of FGV: "**how FGV's involvement in the technical cooperation component of ProSavana is related to its involvement in a parallel private initiative of mobilising foreign direct investment** into the Nacala region (through the launch of the Nacala Fund)" is a question arising (Cabral & Shankland, 2013: 15).

Why is Brazil's FGV Projetos, which is collecting investment money around the world to the Nacala Corridor, allowed to draw up the "blueprint" of the Master Plan of the same region? How can it be held accountable enough to serve the interests of the people and prioritise the environment over their clients' (investors) interests? As far as we can observe from close analysis of Report No.2 written by FGV Projetos, their intention of prioritising and serving business interests is very clear while their enthusiasm for protecting locals' rights is terribly weak. Where land rush and conflicts are occurring, (The Oakland Institute, 2011; UNAC & JA, 2011; Land Matrix 2013) does not this give severe obstacles to transparency and accountability of the programme, and contradict the objective of ProSAVANA, meaning "supporting local small farmers"?

2-3. Examining "Myth 3 - Conflicts between Agribusiness and small farmers"

The last "myth" Fingermann tackles is a question of (a) whether there will be land conflicts caused by ProSAVANA or not; and (b) if there are currently such conflicts taking place in the Nacala Corridor area (Fingermann, 2013: 2). Her answer for (a) is that "it cannot be said if there will be (what kind of) conflicts

related to ProSAVANA" since "the time has not arrived" (*Ibid*.). One wonders why wait to confirm if these conflicts will really occur when all the ProSAVANA related documents indicate the possibility of land conflicts between the locals and agribusinesses? As we have already shown, six QIPs are listed and the potential need for "involuntary relocations" were identified (Report No.2, 2013: 4-60).

2-3-1. "Only one case of land conflicts in the region"?

She wrote that she recognises only one case of such conflict in the region; a case in Matanusca, Nampula Province, pointing to a report published by UNAC and Justiça Ambiental, organisations that she considers as creators of "myths" (Fingermann, 2013: 1; UNAC & JA, 2011). Yet, two years have passed since the publication of the report, and many more land conflicts between agribusiness and local farmers are occurring not only in the Nacala Corridor area, but also all over Mozambique.

Let us take a look at the most famous case located in the ProSAVANA target area, the case of Hoyo Hoyo, in Lioma, Gúruè District, Zambézia Province. This case was firstly written about by Hanlon and Smart (2012), and IPS followed it up in their recent article (*IPS*, Feb. 25, 2013). Hoyo Hoyo, or Quifel (the registered company name), obtained 10,000 ha of Lioma State Farm that was abandoned by the government during the war, but which returnees began using after the 1992 peace accord. When the company showed up, 836 local small farmers were cultivating 3,500 ha of the farm. Hoyo Hoyo promised the locals compensation, employment, and new land to work with. But the company only partially fulfilled their promise, and no land was ever offered (*Ibid*.).

There are many other agribusiness investments in Lioma, including some actors related to ProSAVANA. AgroMoz obtained 10,000 ha of land for large-scale soybean production in September 2012, and it is owned by Grupos Américo Amorin of Portugal (which owns Banco Único in Mozambique), Pinesso (a major Brazilian soya producer), and Intelec Holdings (a Mozambican company partly owned by President Armando Guebuza) (Hanlon & Smart, 2012: 7). According to Devlin Kuyek of GRAIN and "Joint Statement", Grupo Américo Amorim controls Galp Energia to whom FGV seems to offer consultant services for their agribusiness activities (Kuyek, 2013[36]; "Joint Statement", 2013).

Is it a pure coincidence that one notices many of the ProSAVANA players, such as FGV, the Mozambican president, and a Brazilian soybean producer, are listed? Why are they together obtaining vast areas of land in the ProSAVANA target area a year after another accord for implementing ProSAVANA signed by the governments of Brazil, Mozambique and Japan, and in the middle of the Master Plan preparation?

2-3-2. Land conflicts in the ProSAVANA target area noted on Report No.2

In Report No.2, land conflicts between the local farmers and agribusiness are clearly mentioned in four out of six zones (Zone I, Zone III, Zone V, Zone VI) (Report No.2, 2013: 2-24; 2-26; 2-27). Lioma, highlighted above, is described as having "**serious land conflicts between local farmers and corporate farms**", but it is still to be designated as "**corporate farmland**" in the same report. It is the same with Zone VI (north-west Niassa), considered by the Brazilian actors as "suitable" for large scale soybean production: "serious land conflict between local farmers and corporate farms in all districts" (*Ibid*.: 2-28), but Report No.2 is willing to assign this land to "**a single legal entity**" (*Ibid*.: 3-43).

This is all happening while Mozambique has the same administration and the "Pro-poor" land law. This is not a phenomenon limited to Mozambique, according to an expert of land issues, Liz Alden Wily (2013). Many comparative studies have already analysed this phenomenon using Mozambique cases (Palmer, 2003; Theting & Brekke, 2010; FIAN, 2010). It is simply not enough to compare Northern Mozambique with Brazilian PRODECER, and assume that "there will be no land-grabbing because "ProSAVANA is not a replica of PRODECER". The current land rush driven by agricultural investment is a world-wide phenomenon, and there is no reason why Mozambique or ProSAVANA (or the Nacala Fund) should be discussed in isolation. Rather Mozambique is one of the main targets of global land rush (WB, 2010; UNCWFS-HLPE, 2011; GRAIN, 2011; Land Matrix, 2012; 2013). Even adjusted for the latest data, about half of all land transactions take place in Africa, "with many in Mozambique and Ethiopia" (BBC, June 10, 2013). In the latest dataset published by Land Matrix, Mozambique is listed as one of the five most-targeted countries in the world, and over 2 million ha have already

been acquired by transnational land deals (Land Matrix 2013[37]).

Conclusions

As we have seen, from the examination of primary sources obtained from the ProSAVANA actors (JICA, MoFA, EMBRAPA, ProSAVANA-PD, Ministry of Agriculture, and consultants), Mozambican, Brazilian, Japanese and International CSOs, Japanese, international, Mozambican and Brazilian media, through public and personal access, interviews and participant observation, Fingermann's arguments do not stand up to minimum scrutiny. Most of her arguments are based on assumptions, and when she offered "evidence", these were based mainly on "interviews" of the ProSAVANA actors. It became also apparent that she excluded crucial documents or methods for her analysis and conclusions.

In the longer version of this text under preparation, I discuss the challenges of researching ProSAVANA, such as the limited availability of publicly open sources; constantly shifting discourse; the importance of consulting not only Portuguese and English but also Japanese sources; problems with depending too much on interviews of the ProSAVANA actors; and on hasty field research organised and helped by the authority using fixed questionnaires; and the dangers of an attitude of "waiting to see until things occur". From our painful "lessons of Fukushima", I suggest re-discovering the importance of a "precautionary approach" allowing future harm to be anticipated, and four methods for academically-sound research of this type: (1) historical and critical examination of sources; (2) participant observation; (3) field research; and (4) comparative study. I used (1), (2) and (4) in this article. Lastly, we should not forget that whoever we are and however we conduct our research, we cannot omit consideration and analysis of power-relations.

From what we have observed, it becomes clear that we are at a crucial moment for determining the direction of ProSAVANA and its Master Plan. The plan was supposed to have been completed in October 2013, without much modification of Report No.2, had the reports not leaked and had advocacy by local and international civil society not intensified since UNAC's statement on Oct. 2012. I wonder why Fingermann, who listed many of the same sources as I have (except the

Japanese ones), does not appear to have fully examine these. Instead she has created her own “myths”, and denounced those who have been fighting for people’s rights and the environment, basing her conclusions only on “interviews” and assumptions.

Fingermann is not just any researcher. She used to be an “investor relations analyst” at MzGroup, a Brazilian investors’ consultancy company. She has been studying at FGV, which is playing a “dual and parallel role” for ProSAVANA and the Nacala Fund, according to her “linkedin” site[38)].

In Africa, in Mozambique, and even in Japan, certain people are not just poor and vulnerable. Many of them are deprived. It means that their rights are easily denied, and they are not protected when political power and business interests come into the picture. Under such circumstances, the role of independent researchers is very important, as was proven in the case of Fukushima and aftermath.

I end this article citing Ruth First, who contributed to establishing the basis for academia in Mozambique. I shall quote the September 2012 speech given by Carlos Nuno Castel-Branco, director of the *Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos* (IESE) – which it seems Fingermann recently joined as an associate researcher:

“(Ruth used to say:) research is about what we do not know and what we know. Do not begin with ‘solutions’, but focus on ‘what is happening’ and ‘how it is happening’. Do not focus on ‘what is lacking’, but ‘how the current situation is’, and ‘why it is this way’. Politics and Economy seems to exist separately, but always connected. Keep questioning, question even your frame of cognitions”.

Notes

1) Dr. Sayaka Funada-Classen is Associate Professor at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (TUFS) since 2008. An award winning author by her Ph.D. dissertation: “The Origins of War in Mozambique: a history of unity and divisions” - now available online from The African Minds (www.africanminds.co.za), she has been working and doing research in Northern Mozambique since 1994. She is co-author of “The Japanese in Latin America” published from Illinois University Press in 2004 and she was an Associate Researcher at *Centro de Estudos*

Africanos at University of Eduardo Mondlane (Maputo) from 1997 to 2009. Her previous work on ProSAVANA: "Analysis of the discourse and background of the ProSAVANA programme in Mozambique – focusing on Japan's role" can be accessed at:http://farmlandgrab.org/post/view/21574.

2) Information on ProSAVANA at JICA website: Accessible at: http://www.jica.go.jp/english/our_work/thematic_issues/south/project07.html

3) Fingermann, Natália N. (2013), "Os mitos por trás do ProSAVANA", *IDeIAS Boletim,* no.49, IESE.Accessible at: http://www.iese.ac.mz/lib/publication/outras/ideias/ideias_49.pdf

4) According to JICA, ProSAVANA is composed of three activities: ProSAVANA-PD for Support of Agriculture Development Master Plan for the Nacala Corridor (March 2012-Sept. 2013); ProSAVANA-PI for Improving Research and Technology Transfer Capacity for Nacala Corridor Agriculture Development (2011-April 2016); ProSAVANA-PE for Improvement of Agricultural Extension (NGO-MoFA meeting, Jan. 25, 2013; Report No.1, 2013: 1-1).

5) This article is a shorter version of longer report in preparation. For more detailed discussions and references, please read the longer version.

6) "Principle 15: In order to protect the environment, the precautionary approach shall be widely applied by States according to their capabilities. Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation". Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992), Annex I "Rio Declaration on Environment and Development" http://www.un.org/documents/ga/conf151/aconf15126-1annex1.htm.This approach was extended to the field of human health and other area at Wingspread Conference on the Precautionary Principle held on January 26, 1998. http://www.sehn.org/wing.html

7) PRODECER (Programa de Cooperação Nipo-Brasileira para Desenvolvimento dos Cerrados) lasted from 1979 to 1999.

8) During the official visit of UNAC's President Augusto Mafigo and a representative of a Mozambican environmental organisation, Justiça Ambiental (JA), to MoFA on Feb.28, 2013.

[9] Until the second half of XXth century.

[10] During his speech at JICA's High Level Seminar on the ProSAVANA held in Tokyo on April 2, 2013.

[11] Remarks from floor at lectures by Japanese and Brazilian civil society representative on PRODECER held at Meijigakuin University on Nov. 8, 2012, and at Jochi University on May 28, 2013. At the university lecture by UNAC's President at Tokyo Univ. on Feb. 28, 2013, Hongo again took a microphone from floor, asking the president, "why don't you talk about China? Chinese and European agribusiness are also causing harm?".

[12] It is interesting to note that they deleted the word "barren" from the title of the English version of the book. The English title they are giving seems to be "Cerrado: Brazil's Agricultural Revolution as a Model of Sustainable and Inclusive Development" (Hosono, 2013:63). http://jica-ri.jica.go.jp/publication/assets/Scaling%20Up%20South-South%20and%20Triangular%20Cooperation_PartI-Chapter3_JICA-RI.pdf

[13] This is thoroughly discussed in the longer version.

[14] Even a JICA funded journalist to visiting the Cerrado had to admit that: "from the traditional small scale farmers' point of view, PRODECER seems to be prioritising large-scale farmers" (JICA, 2001: 23).

[15] Lecture at Meijigakuin University, held on November 15, 2012. Whether he was pressured to give such presentation is not known. This direct translation is based on his hand-out and the minutes of his presentation prepared by the organisers of the event. Its publication was denied by the presenter, thus publically not available.

[16] JICA did not differentiate between those "*colono* families" with 400-500 ha of land with heavily mechanised production system and dependent on local workers and Mozambican family farmers, most of who cultivate less than 1 ha.

[17] This can also be observed on the JICA's official page describing ProSAVANA. Their strong interests are in "landscape transformation" rather than supporting local farmers. http://www.jica.go.jp/english/our_work/thematic_issues/south/project07.html

[18] The problems related to these meetings are dealt in details in the longer version

of this text.

[19] The author's interviews with Mozambican CSOs, Nov. 2012 – to present.

[20] The leaked Report No.2 shows the same tendency. The section of "stakeholder meetings" only list the number of organisations that participated in these meetings, and the number of NGOs is combined with the one of "donors".

[21] The author's interviews with Mozambican CSOs, Sept. 2012- to present.

[22] The author heard this interpretation directly and indirectly from JICA's staffs and consultants who confirmed that it is widely known "facts" among the Japanese ProSAVANA actors.

[23] Leaked Report No.1 and No.2 are available at the following site: http://farmlandgrab.org/post/view/21996

[24] This confirmation was given by JICA's Shinjiro Amameishi, head of tropical agriculture section, during the 3rd NGO-MoFA meeting (April 19, 2013).

[25] No name or affiliation is not indicated.

[26] This analysis of Report No.1 and No.2 was carried out by a group of Japanese experts in the field of agronomy, rural development in Africa, Mozambique, land issues and international cooperation, including the author, and submitted to MoFA and JICA on May 10, 2013.

[27] Reply given by vice director of Africa Division of JICA during JICA's meeting with UNAC's President and Secretary General of Nampula CSO Platform in Tokyo (28 and 30 May, 2013).

[28] According to JICA, for ProSAVANA-PD, they uses following "interim" categorisation: up to 10 ha "small scale"; to 50 ha "medium scale"; and 50 ha "large scale" ("JICA's reply", March 25, 2013).

[29] DUAT stands for *Direito de Uso e Aproveitamento da Terra* (land use and benefit right).

[30] These principles were agreed during the high level conference on RAI held by the Japanese government, World Bank and others on Sept.26, 2009. ProSAVANA was hurried to be signed to be an example of "good investment" a week before the conference for the sake of the Japanese government (Funada-Classen/ 舩田クラーセン , 2013c: 80-82; NHK, 2010).

[31] The reports can be downloaded at: http://www.oaklandinstitute.org/publications

[32] Nishimori said, “I will firmly backup those Brazilians who want to ‘colonise (come and run farm)’ here” (*Brazilian Nikkei*, May 1, 2012).

[33] See the following site for FGV Projectos: http://fgvprojetos.fgv.br/

[34] FGV Projetos (November 6, 2012). In their presentation, the close linkage between ProSAVANA and the Nacala Fund is obvious, and they even put JICA’s logo for the explanation of the Nacala Fund.

[35] This was confirmed by a Japanese staff at the Japanese embassy in Mozambique (July, 2013).

[36] Presentation given by Devlin Kuyek in Yokohama, May 29, 2013. The presentation can be accessed at: http://mozambiquekaihatsu.blog.fc2.com/blog-entry-36.html

[37] http://landmatrix.org/get-the-idea/web-transnational-deals The details of these land deals can be obtained from the following site: http://landmatrix.org/get-the-detail/by-target-country/mozambique

[38] http://br.linkedin.com/pub/natalia-fingermann/25/93b/436

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