

# **Food governance and the city**

## **A case study of the Philippi Horticultural Area, Cape Town**

**Author: Gareth Haysom**

Paper prepared for the Carnegie III Conference

Cape Town, 03 – 07 September 2012.

***Draft working paper, not for citation***

### **Abstract**

Not only is the world food situation rapidly being redefined by new driving forces, but changes in food availability, rising commodity prices and new producer-consumer linkages all wreak havoc on the lives of poor and food-insecure people. Cities are centres of human activity, and as such they rely on food, water and energy. However, in most instances, food access is governed through distant national governments. The role of urban food governance in cities is critical, particularly in rapidly developing African cities. This paper discusses the consequences of food governance oversight through a case study of the Philippi Horticultural Area within the city of Cape Town.

The Philippi Horticultural Area is rural zoned food production area of over 1000 hectares located adjacent to poor areas of the city. The area serves the city by providing food, particularly fresh produce, to many residents within the city. The area also plays a critical role in supporting urban ecosystem services, through rain water recharge and the closing of metabolic flows. The area is under threat. The precarity of the area is precipitated by a lack of understanding of the broader food security needs of the poor and a clear lack of appreciation for the food system challenges that the city faces today, and will face in the future, as a result of the converging and mutually reinforcing sustainability challenges.

This paper reviews the importance of the Philippi Horticultural Area, discussing findings from a recent research project, reflecting on the importance of the area in addressing urban food and nutritional needs whilst simultaneously, providing significant climate change and general community resilience. The case study provides key insights into how other urban areas view productive land within the urban space and questions the broader urban food governance and policy actions necessary to address food security needs and protect and preserve these important urban assets.

**Key words:** Food Systems, Food Security, Urban, Food Governance

## Introduction

Late in 2007, Joachim von Braun, then head of the International Food Policy Research Institute, provided a prophetic warning that “the world food situation is rapidly being redefined by new driving forces, but changes in food availability, rising commodity prices and new producer-consumer linkages all wreak havoc on the lives of poor and food-insecure people”(Von Braun, 2007:1). Shortly thereafter, the full consequences of Von Braun’s food system warning became apparent. The warning foretold the food crisis that emerged in 2008, when food prices escalated rapidly resulting in the highest costs of food experienced in a 20 year period, with the 2008 food price index being 29 percent higher than the 20 year average (FAO, 2011). While a temporary respite in food price escalations was observed thereafter, arguably facilitated by the financial crisis, the 2011 food price index was 43 percent higher than the 20 year average (adjusted for inflation as at July 2011) (FAO, 2011). The Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) further reported the first decade long food price increases since the 1950s ( see Nellemann et al, 2007) and warned that this would be the case for the following decade (FAO, 2011). While there are multiple drivers contributing to the crises, the impacts of such challenges are felt most severely by the poor, a situation confirmed by Frayne et al (2010) and Battersby (2011) in reference to the South African Development Community (SADC) and South African challenges. The scale of the challenge means that traditional developmental and poverty alleviation approaches, while laudable, are unable to arrest the ever escalating challenge. The impacts of these challenges also have a temporal nature in that the consequences of undernutrition (McLachlan and Thorne, 2009) and food insecurity (Crush et al, 2011; Stupar et al, 2012) are borne by society for a significantly longer period than the time of the crisis alone, increasing the urgency in seeking appropriate responses.

The food crises are also part of a broader set of converging and mutually reinforcing sustainability challenges, referred to by Swilling and Annecke (2012) as the polycrisis. The term polycrisis is used to articulate how the challenge of rapid urbanisation, particularly to areas of informality (UN-Habitat, 2003), increasing inequality (UNDP, 1998), anthropocentric driven climate change (IPCC, 2007), ecosystem degradation at a global scale and the undermining of ecosystem services (MEA, 2006), the consequences of peak oil (ODAC, 2008; IEA, 2008) and the increasing scale of the food crisis (IAASTD, 2008; UNEP, 2009; FAO, 2010) interact and reinforce one another. These global issues further interact with current global trends including the ongoing financial crises and hegemonic shifts.

These global issues interact with and constrain local development challenges. The consequence of this is that traditional ways of understanding developmental issues and the responses planned need to alter dramatically if the challenges faced by South African society are to be addressed. Considered differently, these converging challenges experienced within the South African context, when viewed within the context of the polycrisis, offer insights into alternative possible strategies to overcome poverty and inequality. The challenge arguably lies in the development of effective strategies initiated and implemented at the correct scale to overcome these issues.

This paper while responding to the city and towns theme, focussing specifically on urban food security issues, presents a broader and more encompassing argument. Using the case study of the Philippi Horticultural Area in Cape Town, the paper argues that in the context of the urban food security challenge, alternative governance strategies are required. Currently the traditional silos of

public and development interventions undermine the potential development impact. When food security interventions are considered through the lens of the polycrisis, the need for integration and multidisciplinary approaches, across scales, becomes all the more urgent. While focussing on the urban food challenge, this paper offers a lens through which to apply interventions that respond to issues associated with public space, safety, land and agriculture, issues associated with environmental and resource assets and also, when considered from a systemic point of view, to health impact.

In South Africa, the food crisis is escalating (Altman et al, 2009; Kessides, 2005; Rudolph et al, 2012; Battersby, 2011) and as a component of the polycrisis, conventional responses to the food crisis of increased food production, generally through highly industrialised systems (Foresight, 2011) and nutrition supplementation (NPC, 2011) are inappropriate responses. Engagement across the entire food system at the various points of intervention is required.

Equally there is a need to engage the food system as part of a far broader social, economic, environmental system (Ericksen, 2008). This scale of engagement within the food security challenge is not taking place in South Africa at this time. Currently food insecurity in South Africa is addressed via the Integrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS), a programme located within the Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF). The problematic location and status within the DAFF means that the strategy does not suitably respond to the food security challenges at the national scale (Drimie and Ruysenaar, 2010; Pereira and Ruysenaar, 2012) let alone at the urban scale, as evidenced by the AFSUN findings (Frayne et al, 2009; Frayne et al, 2010; Battersby, 2011).

This paper argues that while food is on the South African development agenda, the approach and engagement with food security, and the food system as a whole, is inappropriate and does not effectively support the needs of the poor. The agricultural bias at the national scale further undermines the ability of the IFSS to effectively respond to broader food security challenges. Further, food security responses generally focus on two predominant aspects; increasing food production and rural food insecurity (NPC, 2011; Jacobs, 2009). As argued by Crush and Frayne (2010), the urban is generally omitted when food security is considered. If the urban is considered, the productionist orientation generally dominates with the primary intervention being urban agriculture (Haysom, 2010; Marshall Smith et al, 2005).

The following section discusses the dominant urban development and urban sustainability perspectives and the disregard the urban food question, considering recent research into the urban food challenge while reviewing new governance approaches emerging at the urban scale.

## **The urban food question**

### *Food and urban sustainability*

The relationship between the urban and sustainability has been well captured in the urban sustainability literature, addressing many of the more traditional triple bottom line notions of sustainability, including the social aspects, (Davis, 2006, Pieterse, 2008), ecological impacts (Wackernagel and Rees, 1996; Girardet, 2004) and the general convergence of these issues (Amin and Thrift, 2002). In addition, there exists a large quantity of urban systems oriented research, carried out in respect of infrastructure (Swilling, 2006; Arimah, 2005; Jin, et al, 2010; Suzuki and

Dastur, 2010; Swilling and Fischer-Kowalski, 2010; Hodson and Marvin, 2009a; Hodson and Marvin, 2009b; Guy and Marvin, 2001) including transportation (Kane 2010, Barter, 2000, SEA, 2006), energy (SEA, 2006), housing (PGWC, 2008), and general planning (Birkeland, 2008; Wackernagel and Rees, 1996). However, one of the main flows into the urban system is that of food (see Gasson, 2002). Food and the food system of a city are core components of a city, a fundamental activity within the urban fabric. Food (or the absence thereof) is part of everyday life within a city. In a society that is predominantly urban (UN Habitat, 2009, UN DESA, 2008) and becoming more so, food has gone largely unnoticed within the debates concerning sustainable urbanism and sustainable cities in general.

Food also plays a vital role in the social and economic fabric of the city where food and food systems often impact, directly and indirectly, on a variety of other urban systems.

### *The food insecurity transition to urban centres*

Cohen and Garret (2009) argue that while most of the world's poor people traditionally lived in rural areas, the numbers of urban poor, from market towns to megacities, are substantial and cannot be ignored (also see Mehta AK and Shah, 2002; Hulme and Shepard 2003; Mehta D and Venkatraman, 2000). This rapid urbanization is pulling the balance of poverty into cities (Cohen and Garrett, 2009) - arguably already present in cities? The projected growth of cities will result in African cities being the centres of development (Jin et al, 2010) but also the centres of struggle (Myers, 2011) and food insecurity (Crush and Frayne, 2010a). In South Africa, as a country that is over 60 percent urbanised (Crush and Frayne, 2010a:24), this shift is already evident, as highlighted by the recent African Food Security Urban Network (AFSUN) research (Crush & Frayne, 2010).

While in the past, South Africa was generally deemed a net food exporter, this status shifted to one of being more neutral in the latter part of the 2000's (Vink and van Rooyen, 2009:30). As a result of changing demographics and changes in the broader food system, access to adequate food at a household level increasingly depends on how food markets and distribution systems function rather than total agro-food output (Altman et al, 2009: 346). This challenge is made all the more severe by the urban transition taking place in South Africa where poverty and food insecurity are increasingly an urban challenge (Cohen and Garret, 2009; Kessides, 2005; Battersby, 2011; Rudolf, 2012). This point was substantiated by Frayne et al., arguing that "for Cape Town, 80 percent of the poor households were food insecure. The situation is even more severe for Msunduzi, where 87 percent reported being food insecure. For Johannesburg the figure is the lowest, at 42 percent. The average for the three cities is 70 percent, compared to the regional average of 77 percent for the total of 11 cities [SADC] surveyed" (2009:13).

### *The rural focussed, production oriented response to food insecurity*

In the discourse specific to food security within South Africa, the solutions offered generally focus on increasing food supply through agricultural interventions, from small farmer support programmes (NPC, 2011: 203; Altman et al, 2009; Vink and van Rooyen, 2009), recently observed in the emergent Zero Hunger Strategy (Zita, 2012) proposed by the Director General of the Department of Agriculture<sup>1</sup> (DoA), to large scale commercialisation and industrialisation of agriculture (World Bank,

---

<sup>1</sup> Langa Zita, at the time of drafting this paper (July 2012) is under suspension from the department.

2008) as proposed by the Alliance for the Green Revolution of Africa (AGRA), the '2<sup>nd</sup> Green Revolution' which Africa apparently "missed out on the first time" (AGRA, 2008). While AGRA is Africa focussed, the general principles and philosophies associated with this are championed by the South African agro-industry and all associated players, such as banks, seed companies and processors.

Three core issues are generally missing in the solutions offered by increased production. The first is that while there is an emerging discourse challenging the functioning of the food system (McRae, 2011; Ericksen, 2008; Pothukuchi and Kaufman, 1999), this is yet to become mainstream. Regardless of the potential from increased production, enabling access requires a thorough analysis of the food system functions (Ericksen, 2008; McRae, 2011). Secondly, the converging sustainability challenges or polycrisis (Swilling and Annecke, 2012), are seldom considered with suitable rigour when production oriented food security interventions are planned. The third core omission is a discussion on scale and governance (Born and Purcell, 2006; Taylor, 1982; Coates et al, 1977) and specifically what role the various actors play, and should play, in how the broader food system is governed (Ericksen, 2008; Winne, 2008), particularly from an urban perspective. In South Africa, this challenge has been demonstrated in the marginal impact that the Integrated Food Security Strategy of South Africa (IFSS, 2002) is argued to have had in addressing the issue of food insecurity (Watkinson, 2003; Hamid 2005; Drimie and Ruysenaar, 2010; Pereira and Ruysenaar, 2012) and specifically in the urban centres (Crush and Frayne, 2010b; Frayne et al, 2010; Frayne et al, 2009, Battersby 2011).

One of the weaknesses of the current paradigm is that it does not engage the urban food challenge - both in terms of food insecurity and the urban food system. In South Africa, if there is adequate food provision at a national scale, the private sector is effective and financially viable, and social protection is able to resource the most vulnerable, why then is there evidence of faults within the system, manifest in significant food insecurity (Battersby, 2011; Frayne et al, 2010)? This issue presents a real challenge to South Africa, a country where urbanisation is associated with high levels of informality and infrastructure systems that impose greater costs on the poorest of the poor, the vulnerable and the precarious.

Food insecurity is a real challenge in poorer neighbourhoods of urban South Africa (Frayne et al, 2009) and Cape Town is no exception (Battersby, 2011). While some efforts have been made in Cape Town to address this issue, effective responses are hamstrung by the centralised food security response perspective, embodied in the IFSS strategy. Over and above the urban food security challenge, cities face significant other developmental challenges with resources and capacity stretched to the limit by these equally urgent yet competing challenges. In the absence of a specific urban food mandate, other development challenges will always out-compete the food issue. The absence of a food mandate within the urban space not only delegates food based responses to distant government offices, and where possible, to non-governmental organisations, it has a further and more alarming consequence, undermining the existing food structures present within the urban space. This challenge is clearly apparent in the case of the Philippi Horticultural Area (PHA). The PHA, located within the urban fabric of Cape Town (see figure 1), offers insights into the challenge of urban food governance, the systemic weaknesses of the current governance environment and the potential consequences of an absence of a specific urban food focus. The case assists in highlighting a number of the core tensions within the urban food context, particularly the food versus housing debate, and how this interacts with the realisation of a broader basket of socio-economic rights. This

case study demonstrates the food, food governance and broader developmental tensions at the city scale. The PHA case study speaks directly to how food access is viewed within the broader food system, how *non-local* scale governance interventions overlook deeper issues of distribution and consumption habits and how the city is left with limited mandate to effectively support such an area.

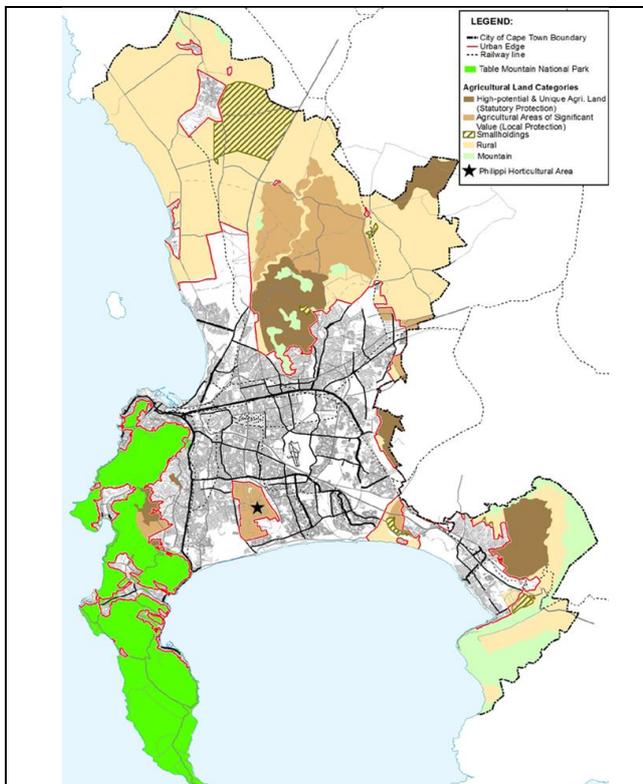


Figure 1: Cape Town SDF Cultural and Agricultural Land (CoCT 2012) \* PHA

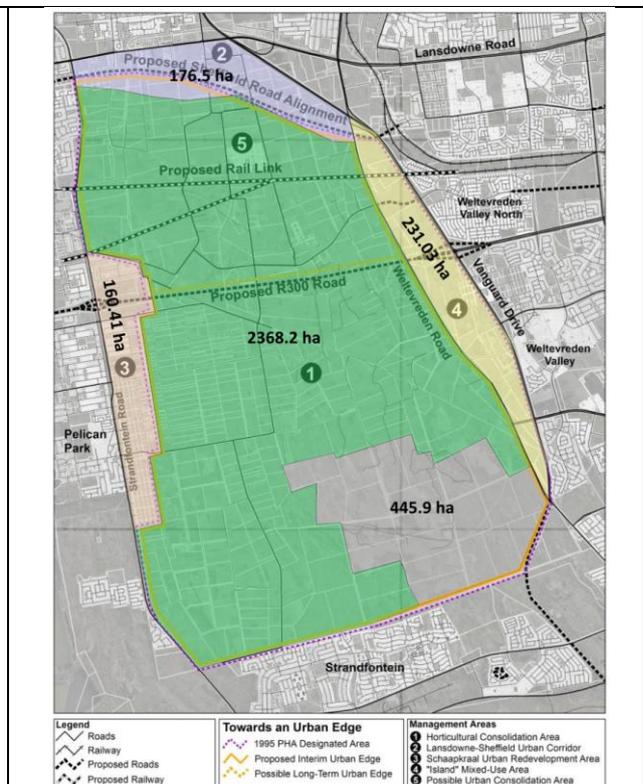


Figure 2 :Research site and Philippi Horticultural Area and specific use typology designations ( CoCT)

## The Philippi Horticultural Area

### Research methodology

The primary focus of this case study was to assess the role and overall value of the PHA to the entire Cape Town food system, the opportunities and challenges that this offered, the beneficiaries of this system and other potential but previously ignored values and challenges presented by the PHA. The research used existing municipal and provincial data, previously commissioned data and historical data that included official data, grey literature and documentary evidence collected by others, synthesising this in a manner that presented as accurate a reflection of the status quo as possible.

While documentary research provided certain insights, it was also necessary to identify which stakeholder voices were absent from these commentaries. This stakeholder identification process took place through discussions with other identified stakeholders such as community organisations and city officials. The research team then conducted interviews with individuals and groups deemed to be critical stakeholders active within the PHA. This data was further synthesised in a detailed research report and presented to stakeholders for comment.

### *The PHA: an area under threat*

The PHA has been subject to active and persistent encroachment. This has resulted in a real disempowerment of certain city officials. Officials, particularly within the planning directorate are challenged in how best to respond to the increasing requests for land use change. Key protagonists in this push have been private property developers and the City's housing department, desperate to acquire land to address the housing backlog (Pollack, 2008). Officials within the planning directorate have tried to present alternative perspectives and retain the current zoning, often funding detailed research to support their approach (Pepco, 2009). However, even after formal City scale decisions are made to protect the land, these have been overruled by ministerial office bearers in the Western Cape Province, as was the case with the 445.9ha area of land in the south western corner of the PHA (figure 2). For most within the city and provincial government structures, the PHA does not reflect the needs of a modern city (Pepco, 2009). Food production has no place within the city, specifically when the other development challenges are considered. Food production and *cityness* do not combine.

Urban growth, a desperate need for housing and other forms of urban development, such as industrial space and gap and middle income housing needs, are placing the PHA under extreme pressure. Generating effective food specific data relevant to the PHA was deemed critical if the area was to be retained.

### **Philippi Horticultural Area findings**

Currently the general perspective offered by certain city officials<sup>2</sup> and commentators on the area, is that the PHA is an area with declining production and disgruntled farmers waiting for the best price for their land before selling (Van der Westhuisen, 2012). This view was not supported in the research findings. The research noted increases in production, new land being farmed and significant investments in infrastructure being made by both the larger scale and emerging smallholder farmers.

The PHA produces well over 50 different horticultural crops with some farmers active in livestock production. In recent years, the farmers have realigned their production identifying new markets and market systems. Farmers are now actively selling direct to the major retailers, retailer agents and other sources such as traders, restaurants and speciality stores. Farmers are also actively involved in on-farm value addition.

While estimating production volumes is arguably subjective, it is estimated that just under 100 000 tonnes of fresh produce is grown in the PHA annually<sup>3</sup>, including an estimated 2 000 tonnes of produce that is given free to farm workers in a year - a flow of food that plays a critical role in the broader food access of the communities in the vicinity of the PHA. All this has been achieved on the back of innovative and proactive farm management strategies. These strategies are further supported by an endogenous economic system; a specialised system designed to be mutually supportive of a number of farm based and off-farm economies. These services support multiple

---

<sup>2</sup> For example articulations of the PHA offered by housing officials in processes leading to PEPCO 2009 meetings on the PHA

<sup>3</sup> Figure informed by interviews with farmers and farmer's association. Calculated on estimated through put to CTFPM and interviews with farmers to ascertain the percentage of their crops sold to the CTFPM (≤15%).

actors in the PHA. These activities reflect an integrated and mutually beneficial set of economic systems that have linkages beyond the PHA.

The PHA was found to be playing a critical role in the broader food security within the settlements adjacent to the PHA. Informed by reported flows of food from the PHA, retail networks that source the bulk of their product from the PHA and due to the food distribution networks in place, there is real potential for fresher and nutritionally dense food to flow into these communities. It was also reported that while food prices do not necessarily differ when compared to food prices from other production areas, should the PHA produce be removed from the distribution system, there is a real risk of significantly higher food prices for all items currently grown in the PHA (Hortsmann, 2012; Rix 2012). The PHA thus plays a key role in moderating prices for all soft leaf green vegetable types (and certain others), regardless of source.

The areas surrounding the PHA experience high levels of food insecurity (Battersby, 2011; Frayne et al, 2010; Frayne, et al, 2009). If the PHA were removed from the Cape Town food system, this challenge would be significantly worse. This research found a definite case arguing the importance of the PHA to food security specifically, and to a more resilient food economy, more generally.

Also reviewed were food sales outlets selling fresh produce in the vicinity of the PHA, including street traders, spaza shops, farmstalls, small wholesalers and traders operating outside established retail stores. For certain stores, specifically the farmstalls and certain street traders, the PHA is the primary source of vegetable produce. However, for many other retail outlets, food travels from the PHA, through various other market mechanisms (such as the People’s Market in Epping) before being sold by these stores. The localised food economies active as a result of the PHA feed multiple channels. Should the PHA be removed from this process market mechanisms would ensure that food would be available within the system but this would be at a far higher cost to the city and in particular to the poor and vulnerable within the city.

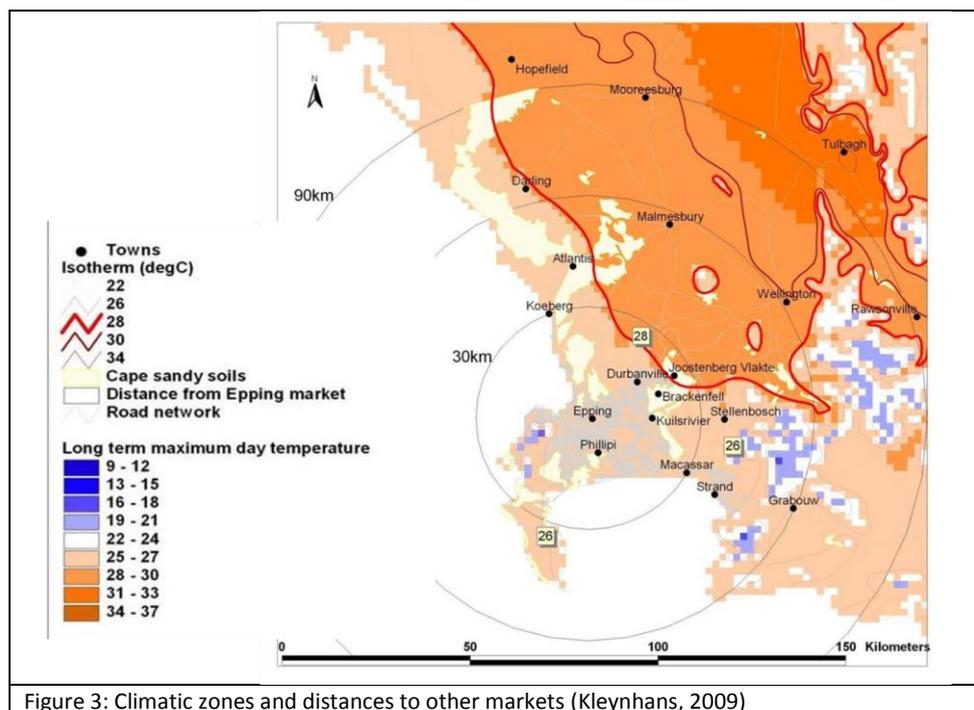


Figure 3: Climatic zones and distances to other markets (Kleynhans, 2009)

Due to the PHA geography, production takes place at a greater scale but also spans the seasons. This fact is a critical benefit. There are times of year when other agri-zones, both within the CMA and nationally, are removed from production due to water scarcity, climate, and other associated factors (Horstmann, 2012). This does not apply to the PHA, resulting in a consistent supply of food items (see figure 3 for a detail of the Cape based dynamics) and price normalisation.

The research found a general trend of high labour usage with an estimated 2 000 full time and 1 000 seasonal jobs (70 percent of all employed are female) considered a conservative estimate (EESP 2012; Van der Westhuisen, 2009).

Regardless of the multiple assumed best uses of the Philippi Horticultural Area (see figure 2), the area is first and foremost a food production area, one with a long history of food production, dating back to the mid 1800's (Rabe, 1992). The area is zoned as rural and located outside the designated urban edge. The research supported the argument that the PHA is an area of high cultural, social and ecological significance (CoCT, 2007).

The importance of the Cape Flats Aquifer (CFA), located below the PHA, to food production, the preservation of access and the recharge of this resource (the CFA), highlighted the links between a variety of anthropocentric and ecosystem service relationships (food, water and climate). Reviewed reports indicated viable and sustainable use of the CFA (while calling for monitoring and management systems) (Parsons, 2009). The importance of the CFA and the relationship between this, the land, the city as a whole, and climate change, were found to be of critical importance, particularly in the context of the links between food production, food prices and the building of climate related resilience. This benefit linked directly to the broader economic system. Increasing pressures imposed on the global food system reverberate through local food systems. These pressures are compounded by crises beyond the control of local food system actors. The PHA allows for a measure of control at the local scale, buffering communities from these crises and providing resilience to the associated shocks. These shocks impact directly on the functioning of the local food system.

The PHA illustrates the complexity of the food system and how context is of critical importance, how this interfaces with the broader food system, the multiple networks, linkages, relationships and flows that enable access to food.

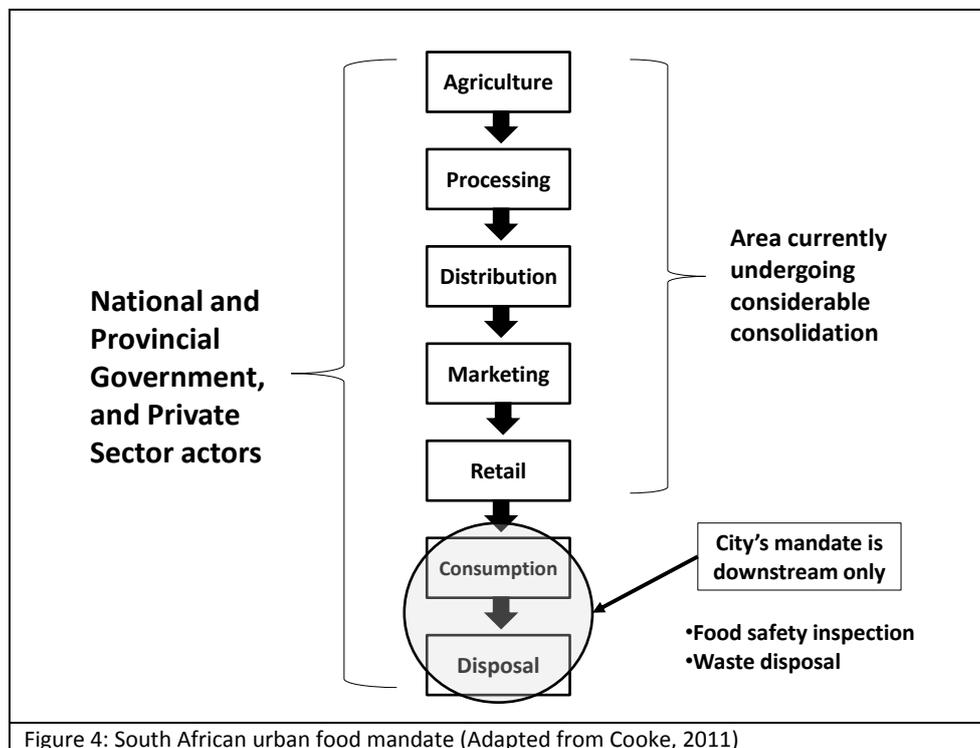
#### *The PHA and the Cape Town food system*

The assumption that the formalised, arguably industrialised food system, one that relies solely on supermarkets, will address the food needs of all residents within the city is flawed. Required are alternative approaches that enable and support the existence of a diverse set of recognised food system actors. Local food system governance is key to enabling a just and equitable food system (Winne, 2008; MacRae, 2011).

The food flows that emanate from the PHA and the thick and active networks that support and rely on these flows of food are overlooked within most city structures. The delegation of food security responsibility to the national department of agriculture through the IFSS, removes from any real food related place-based systemic thinking and removes engagement in the urban food challenge.

### The urban food system challenge

For the lower income groups (LSMs), those living in informality, those reliant on social grants and those with limited employment opportunities, food access strategies are diverse. While many poor residents in Cape Town purchased food from supermarkets, the frequency of these purchases were limited to an average of once a month (Battersby, 2011). The predominant points of food purchase are small traders, street stalls, street restaurants and spaza shops (Battersby 2011, Frayne et al, 2009), with purchases from these areas taking place as often as four times per week (Battersby, 2011). Although traders often operate without the required licences and produce may not always comply with the City required health and safety standards<sup>4</sup>, their role in the food system is critical, particularly for the poorer residents of the city. Regardless of this key role played within the city food system, these traders are subject to frequent harassment, from the destruction of stalls, the confiscation of goods and product to fines (Schroeder, 2012). The disconnect between the role played by these *service providers* and the city responses reflects a lack of understanding of the functioning of the city food systems. This disconnect is evident in how the value of the PHA to the food system is understood.



The inability to engage in the complexities of the local food system is not due to a lack of service delivery or any immediate neglect on the part of city officials. This challenge is a result of a flawed governance approach and related mandate (see figure 4). As argued, food is seen as a rural productionist issue, a view that ignores, or at best, places the local context second. Food security is viewed in the same way. This policy flaw means that other place based actors fill this gap, albeit in the form of emergency response, in the form of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and faith

<sup>4</sup> This report is not arguing for a reduction in food safety standards but the role played by these food system actors is critical. Proactive and collaborative approaches to food safety compliance are required, not mere exclusion from the food system.

based groups (FGBs). The ability of these groups to respond to the food security issues at the local scale speaks to a new and emerging trend in food governance responses, particularly at the city and town scale. In their critique of the IFSS, Pereira and Ruysenaar argue that “if the objective of food security is to be achieved through building the resilience of the food system, new models of governance need to be incorporated into current systems of practice” (2012: 54).

#### *A potential response: Local food policy councils*

Creating an environment where citizens can play an active role in the food challenge is emerging (see Roberts, 2001; City of Portland, 2009; City of Vancouver, 2007), through the development of localised food system governance structures such as food policy councils.

Food Policy Councils seek to address the food system as a whole, often bringing the weight of local, county [district] or state [provincial] government behind grassroots initiatives. Food Policy Councils work across sectors, engaging with government policy and programs, grassroots/non-profit projects, local businesses and food workers. Instead of many advocates working on the isolated symptoms of a failing food system, Food Policy Councils attempt to establish platforms for coordinated action at the local level (Harper, et al. 2009).

This is trend that has been growing over the past 20 years (Roberts, 2008; Winne, 2008), specifically in the North American context, with over 193 food policy councils and local food strategy structures being observed in the US and Canada ([www.foodsecurity.org](http://www.foodsecurity.org)). This trend is not specific to North American cities. Belo Horizonte in Brazil has developed a number of pro-poor interventions, enabled through the national Fome Zero (Zero Hunger) programme, but conceptualised and driven by the city government (Rocha and Lessa, 2009).

Dahlberg provides key insights into possible areas of local food governance intervention. These include the overarching themes of; firstly, a focus on contextual issues, including scale, landscape patterns, population patterns, socioeconomic patterns and food organisation patterns; and secondly, focussing on local leadership of the food system (Dahlberg, 1999:44). Arguably, local officials and broader food system actors understand the contextual challenges and could, if so empowered, play a leadership role in local food system governance. Dahlberg’s contextual and leadership focus is evident in both the cooperative/partnership governance models of the food policy councils and the official municipal or district driven local food governance approaches of Belo Horizonte and certain food policy councils.

The review of the PHA enabled a broader understanding of the Cape Town food system contextual dynamics, demonstrating the significant gaps and constraints in the local food governance structure. The PHA review also highlighted the disjuncture between local needs and the disconnected policy interventions driven through centralised government structures. As the local implementation of the IFSS strategy is a challenge (Pereira and Ruysenaar, 2012), there is a significant gap in local scale food security interventions and food policy governance. Regardless of the identified importance of the PHA to the local food system, and specifically the vulnerable within the Cape Town, the City’s difficulty in asserting this value reflects the need for a review of current food governance structures and strategies.

## Discussion and recommendations

In understanding and addressing food security, the general response, specifically in South Africa, has been to increase production. The same perspective has been applied to urban food insecurity challenges. Food issues are generally regarded as agricultural and rural issues. This needs to change. Internationally there is an emerging trend, a move towards localised food system *governance*<sup>5</sup>. South African municipalities currently face real administrative challenges. However, this should not detract from considerations as to the most appropriate location for food system based interventions. The following recommendations have been proposed, informed by the findings of the PHA case study and supported by international trends, highlighting possible interventions required. These are in no way exhaustive and local contextual issues should be the primary informants of such recommendations.

Place based food security and food system governance is far more appropriate in responding to food system and food security challenges. This requires the following interventions:

- A significant review into local food system challenges, actors, programmes and successes in all major metropolitan areas and where possible, in smaller towns and at a district municipal scale.
- Informed by these reviews, context specific food governance structures that include a diverse group of actors and stakeholders need to be considered and debated.
- These structures need to identify strategic interventions with appropriate timelines and measurable deliverables.
- Various processes are required to identify how such processes could be funded and resourced. Possibly through central funding.
- Academic institutions need to be actively engaged to provide knowledge and research resources to support such processes, possibly through the NRF, MRC, CSIR and others, ideally making use in multidisciplinary research teams.
- Partnerships need to be established with international cities and towns that have already engaged in such processes. Lessons from these cities need to inform South African processes where appropriate and replicable. Required is an understanding of processes not necessarily direct actions.
- A structure is required to facilitate the South African level learning between cities, towns and municipalities, with successful programmes becoming models for others to follow.

Cities need to engage in the food question in far deeper and meaningful ways:

- Funding is required to enable meaningful city and municipal scale responses to the systemic causes of the urban food security challenge.
- Planning and development interventions need to ensure that food access and food system functions are not undermined when interventions are planned and zoning, bylaw and land use departures are approved.

---

<sup>5</sup> It is important to emphasise local food system governance as the focus and not simply localising food production as is argued in some sustainability discourses. Making such a recommendation without a deep contextual understanding of a wide variety of climate, soil, economic, transport, distribution and production factors would be irresponsible.

- All cities, and ideally towns and districts need to have food system structures, reviews, plans and a senior office bearer with full mandate and authority, responsible for the urban food issues.

A significant shift in food security focus is required where the food security challenge is seen as being something more than simply a national production issue:

- Existing research and monitoring structures need to develop alternative measurement and evaluation tools to test local scale food security in more detailed manner. These need to be supported by suitably resourced response structures.
- While agricultural economists' role in tracking and engaging in national food reserves, prices and food economics remains critical, this can no longer be seen as the only food security intervention. This space needs to be populated by development economists, sustainability specialists, urbanists, NGOs, who all have a role to play in the broader food security discourse and resultant narrative.
- Actions are required to review the consolidation and role of actors within the food chain. Further, development interventions and incentives are required to support the so called *informal food economy* and to support this economy in the food delivery process.

Food needs to be seen as a key development activity, specifically in the context of urban development. The current absence of food in most development discourses reflects the real need to for change. This change however needs to be grounded in a far more detailed understanding of the local contextual dynamics. Currently engagement is superficial and reactionary. Interventions need to be strategic in nature.

## Conclusion

As Paul Roberts argues, “the ability to feed cities is the next major food policy objective” (2008:309). Through the context of the PHA case study this paper argued that the productionist approach ignores the broader systemic faults within the food system. Further, in South Africa, responses to the food security challenge have been driven at the national scale, through the IFSS. This focus disempowers relevant local action, at times undermining existing local food systems. City officials are hamstrung as food related interventions, specifically food security actions (due to the current structures associated with the IFSS), are deemed to be what is referred to as an “unfunded mandate” with no direct fiscal support for such process (Linde, 2011; Visser, 2011). It is increasingly evident that initiatives at the national scale do not provide the necessary solutions to the urban food insecurity challenges. These challenges are compounded further when issues associated with the polycrisis converge. The urban food system is less visible than other systems such as transportation, housing, employment, or even the environment (Pothukuchi and Kaufman, 1999:213). This issue is not unique to South Africa and it was only in 2007 that the American Planning Association (APA) produced a Policy Guide on Community and Regional Food Planning (Morgan, 2009). In the South African context the urban food challenge needs to be brought into the development discourse.

The reality for many in South Africa is one of limited food access with undernutrition a very serious and widespread challenge (Altman et al. 2009). The food system solutions lie in how these opportunities are enabled at the local scale. Learning to cope with uncertainty rather than planning

to control it is going to be a challenge (Pereira and Ruysenaar, 2012: 54) but one that needs to be learnt, particularly as the impacts of the polycrisis escalate.

The case of the PHA reflects how a vibrant and active food production area, with links into a wide variety of other food system functions is maligned and its current role within the food system disregarded in favour of urban other development interventions. This disregard for the area is not driven by malice but due to a policy environment that directs focus away from effectively functioning urban food systems to alternatives that do not necessarily respond to the needs of the poor and vulnerable. This misdirection hinders service delivery on a number of levels. If the PHA were to be removed from the food system, regardless of what replaces it, food will cost more and as a result, the poor will bear the brunt of this decision. The removal of a key food source, one that provides affordable fresh produce to poor communities, will result in response strategies that would potentially include nutritional discounting and a reduction in dietary diversity. These would have long term systemic health consequences.

Local food policy interventions reflect an emerging response, one seeking to engage in and facilitate the creation of food governance structures equipped to respond to the diverse needs of changing food system dynamics. These local food policy interventions offer an insight as to how, in the context of inappropriate policy interventions in the national food system, local authorities can navigate alternative food governance avenues.

Current urban based food system decisions do not respond to the needs of the poor. The notion that the larger commercialised and global food system typologies would respond to the development needs to the poor and vulnerable is misplaced. Responding to these issues via a poorly resourced and incorrectly focussed Integrated Food Security Strategy reflects a disconnect with the context specific realities evident at the local scale. Required are local food system governance processes that respond to the needs, nuances and complexities of the local food system.

Understanding the place based complexities of the local food system offers a unique and critically important lens through which to understand a far broader set of development and sustainability challenges. Reviewing a local food system clearly reflects local inequalities, injustice and struggle, but also, thick supportive networks, innovation and collaboration. For this reason, it is argued that a fundamental review of the food security governance within the country is required. Food issues are felt at the local scale and as such, food security responses need to be addressed at the local scale.

## References

- Alliance for the Green Revolution in Africa. (2008). About the Green Revolution in Africa. <http://www.agra-alliance.org/who-we-are/>. Accessed 11 August 2010.
- Altman, M, Hart, T & Jacobs, P, (2009). Household food security status in South Africa. *Agrekon* 48(4), 345–61.
- Amin, A. & N. Thrift (2002). The Democratic City, in *Cities. Reimagining the Urban*. Bristol: Polity, 131-156.
- Arimah, B. (2005). What drives infrastructure spending in cities of developing countries?, *Urban Studies*, 42(8): 1345–1368.

- Barter, P. (2000). Transport dilemmas in dense urban areas. In Jenks, M and Burgess, R. 2000. *Compact Cities: Sustainable Urban Forms for Developing Countries*. Spoon Press, London. 271-284.
- Battersby, J. (2011). The State of Urban Food Insecurity in Cape Town. Urban Food Security Series No. 11. Queen's University and AFSUN: Kingston and Cape Town.
- Born , B. and Purcell, M. (2006) Avoiding the Local Trap: Scale Avoiding the Local Trap: Scale and Food Systems in Planning Research. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*; 26; 195-207.
- Birkeland, J. (2008). *Positive development: from vicious circles to virtuous cycles through built environment design*. London: Earthscan.
- City of Cape Town (2009). Presentation to Joint PEPCO and Housing Portfolio committees meeting: Response to rapid planning review for Philippi Horticultural Area. Internal presentation document. 30 July 2009. Internal working document.
- City of Cape Town, (2012a). *Cape Town Spatial Development Report: Statutory Report*. City Space: Planning Cape Town. City of Cape Town.
- City of Cape Town, (2012b). EESP Directorate. Presentation on PHA to inform key decision making processes, April 2012.
- City of Portland (2009). *Portland Plan: Background Report*, Fall 2009. City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, Portland, Oregon.
- City of Vancouver (2007). *Vancouver Food Charter: Context and Background*. City of Vancouver. Vancouver Food Policy Council.
- Coates, B.E., Johnston, R. J. & Knox, P.L. (1977). *Geography and inequality*, Oxford.
- Cohen, M. & Garrett, J. (2009). The food price crisis and urban food (in)security. *Human Settlements Working Paper Series, Urbanization and emerging population issues – 2*. International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).
- Cooke, B. (2011). Urban food access and the role of municipal government: a Toronto case study. Presentation to the Canadian Studies Group, University of Cape Town, 18 August 2011.
- Crush, J., Drimie, S., Frayne, B. & Caesar, M. (2011). The HIV and urban food security nexus in Africa. *Food Security*, 2011(3):347–362
- Crush, J. & Frayne, B. (eds) (2010). *The Invisible Crisis: Urban Food Security in Southern Africa*. Urban Food Security in Southern Africa, Urban Food Security Series No. 1, African Food Security Network (AFSUN). Cape Town, Unity Press.
- Dahlberg, H, (1999). Promoting Sustainable Local Food Systems in the United States, in Koc, M., MacRae, R., Mougeot, L. and Welsh, J. *For Hunger-proof Cities: Sustainable Urban Food Systems*. Ottawa, Canada. International Development Research Centre. 41-45.
- Davis, M. (2006). *Planet of Slums*. New York, Verso.

Department of Agriculture (DoA) (2002). The integrated food security strategy for South Africa. Pretoria: Department of Agriculture.

Drimie, S., & Ruysenaar, S. (2010). The integrated food security strategy of South Africa: an institutional analysis. *Agrekon*, 49 (3), 316–337.

Ericksen, P. (2008). Conceptualizing food systems for global environmental change research. *Global Environmental Change* 18, 234–245.

FAO (2008). The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2008. FAO, Rome.

FAO (2010). The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2010. FAO, Rome.

FAO, (2011). FAO Food Price Index Database Downloads. Online: <http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/wfs-home/foodpricesindex/en/> Accessed 27 July 2011.

Foresight. (2011). The Future of Food and Farming. Final Project Report. The Government Office for Science, London.

Frayne, B., Battersby-Lennard, J., Fincham, R. & Haysom, G., (2009). Urban Food Security in South Africa: Case Study of Cape Town, Msunduzi and Johannesburg. Development Planning Division Working Paper Series No.15, DBSA: Midrand.

Frayne, B., Pendleton, W., Crush, J., Acquah, B., Battersby-Lennard, J., Bras, E., Chiweza, A., Dlamini, T., Fincham, R., Kroll, F., Leduka, C., Mosha, A., Mulenga, C., Mvula, P., Pomuti, A., Raimundo, I., Rudolph, M., Ruysenaar, S., Simelane, N., Tevera, D., Tsoka, M., Tawodzera G. & Zanamwe, L. (2010). The State of Urban Food Insecurity in Southern Africa. , Urban Food Security in Southern Africa, Urban Food Security Series No. 2, African Food Security Network (AFSUN). Cape Town.

Gasson, B. (2002). The ecological footprint of Cape Town: Unsustainable resource use and planning implications, Paper presented at the National Conference of the South African Planning Institution, 18–20 September, Durban.

Girardet, H. (2004). Cities people planet: liveable cities for a sustainable world. Washington DC: Academy Press.

Guy, S. & Marvin, S. (2001). Urban Environmental Flows: Towards a New Way of Seeing. In: Guy, S., Marvin, S. and Moss, T. (eds.) Urban Infrastructure in Transition: Networks, Buildings, Plans. London: Earthscan. 22-37.

Hamid, G. (2005). The effective co-ordination and implementation of the IFSNP, Draft Issue Paper. Rome, FAO. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization.

Harper, A., Shattuck, A. Holt-Gimenez, E., Alkon, A. & Lambrick, F. (2009). Food Policy Councils: Lessons Learnt. Food First. Institute for Food and Development Policy.

Haysom, G. (2010). Urban Agriculture in the City of Cape Town, in Swilling, M. (ed) 2010. Sustaining Cape Town: Imagining a liveable city. Stellenbosch, SunMedia. 211-223

- Hodson, M. & Marvin, S. (2009a). Urban Ecological Security: A New Urban Paradigm? *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*. 33(1) 193–215.
- Hodson, M. & Marvin, S. (2009b). Cities mediating technological transitions: understanding visions, intermediation and consequences, *Technology Analysis & Strategic Management*, 21(4), May 2009, 515–534
- Hulme, D. & Shepard, A. (2003). Conceptualising Chronic Poverty. *World Development*, 2003
- IAASTD. (2008). Global Summary for Decision Makers: International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development. Washington DC: Island Press. Executive summary of the synthesis report of the IAASTD. <http://www.agassessment.org>. Accessed 19 July 2012.
- IEA (2008). World energy outlook 2008: Executive summary. International Energy Agency.
- IPCC (2007). Synthesis report, summary for policymakers. Available at: [http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar4/syr/ar4\\_syr\\_spm.pdf](http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar4/syr/ar4_syr_spm.pdf) Accessed 12 June 2008.
- Jacobs, P. (2009). The status of household food security targets in South Africa, *Agrekon: Agricultural Economics Research, Policy and Practice in Southern Africa*, 48(4), 410-433
- Jin, D., Michael, D., Foo, P., Guevara, J., Pena, I., Tratz, A. & Verma, S. (2010). *Winning in Emerging-Market Cities: A guide to the World's Largest Growth Opportunities*. The Boston Consulting Group, Boston, MA.
- Kane, L. (2010). Sustainable Transport. Presentation to Sustainable Energy Africa, 30 November 2010.
- Kelly, C. & Schulschenk, J. (2011) Assessing the vulnerability of Stellenbosch's food system and possibilities for a local food economy, *Development Southern Africa*, 28(4), 563-578
- Kessides, C. (2005). The Urban Transition in Sub-Saharan Africa: Implications for Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction, *Africa Region Working Paper Series No 97*, World Bank, Washington.
- Kleynhans, T. (2009). Graphics provided and used in, City of Cape Town, Presentation to Joint PEPCO and Housing Portfolio committees meeting: Response to rapid planning review for Philippi Horticultural Area. Internal presentation document. 30 July 2009. Internal working document.
- MacRae, R. (2011) A Joined-Up Food Policy for Canada, *Journal of Hunger and Environmental Nutrition*, 6(4), 424-457.
- Marshall Smith, P., Junaid Yusuf, M., Bob, U. & de Neergaard, A. (2005). Urban Farming in the South Durban Basin, *UA Magazine*, December 2005. Ruaf Foundation.
- McLachlan, M. & Thorne, J. (2009). Seeding change: A proposal for renewal in the South African food system. *Development Planning Division Working Paper Series No. 16*, DBSA Midrand.
- Mehta, AK. and Shah, A. 2002. Chronic Poverty in India: Overview Study. CPRC Working Paper 7 Chronic Poverty Research Centre.

- Mehta, J. & Venkatraman, S. (2000). Poverty Statistics: Bermicide's Feast. *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 35, No. 27 (Jul. 1-7, 2000), 2377-2379+2381-2382.
- Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005). *Ecosystems and Human Well-being: Synthesis. A Report of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment*. Island Press, Washington, DC.
- Morgan, K. (2009). Feeding the City: The Challenge of Urban Food Planning, *International Planning Studies*, 14(4), 341-348.
- Myers, G. (2011). *African Cities: Alternative visions of urban theory and practice*. London, Zed Books.
- National Planning Commission, (2011). *National Development Plan; Vision for 2030*. Office of the Presidency, Republic of South Africa.
- Nellemann, C., MacDevette, M., Manders, T., Eickhout, B., Svihus, B., Prins, A. & Kaltenborn, B. (eds)(2007) *Averting future food crises*. A UNEP rapid response assessment. United Nations Environment Programme, GRID-Arendal.
- Oil Depletion Analysis Centre and Post Carbon Institute (2008). Preparing for peak oil: Local authorities and the energy crisis. Available at [http://www.odac-info.org/sites/default/files/Preparing\\_for\\_Peak\\_Oil\\_0.pdf](http://www.odac-info.org/sites/default/files/Preparing_for_Peak_Oil_0.pdf). Accessed 19 July 2012.
- Parsons, R. (2009). Philippi Horticultural Area Review – Groundwater. Preliminary report documents to support presentation to Joint PEPCO and Housing Portfolio committees meeting: Response to rapid planning review for Philippi Horticultural Area. Unpublished internal working document, 26 June 2009.
- Pereira, L. & Ruysenaar, S. (2012). Moving from traditional government to new adaptive governance: the changing face of food security responses in South Africa. *Food Security*, 2012 (4) 41–58.
- Pieterse, E. (ed) (2010). *Counter Currents: Experiments in Sustainability in the Cape Town region*. Jacana Media, Johannesburg and ACC, Cape Town.
- Pieterse, E. (2008). *City Futures: Confronting the Crisis of Urban Development*. Cape Town, UCT Press.
- Pollack, M. (2008). City plans for housing. Press release from the City of Cape Town. Online: <http://www.capetown.gov.za/en/Pages/Cityplansforhousing.aspx> Accessed 10 May 2012.
- Pothukuchi, K. & Kaufman, J. (1999). Placing the food system on the urban agenda: The role of municipal institutions in food systems planning. *Agriculture and Human Values* 16: 213–224.
- Provincial Government of the Western Cape Department of Local Government and Housing (2008). *The Road to Dignified Communities, Western Cape Sustainable Human Settlement Strategy*. PGWC, Cape Town.
- Rabe, L. (1992). *Die Groenteboere van Philippi*, Lantern, Special Edition, 1992
- Roberts, P. (2008). *The End of Food. The Coming Crisis in the World Food Industry*. London, Bloomsbury.

- Roberts, W. (2001). *The Way to a city's heart is through its stomach: Putting food security on the urban planning menu*. Crackerbarrel Philosophy Series. Toronto Food Policy Council.
- Rocha, C & Lessa, I. (2009). Urban Governance for Food Security: The Alternative Food System in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, *International Planning Studies*, 14 (4), 389-400.
- Rudolph, M., Kroll, F., Ruysenaar, S. & Dlamini, T.(2012). *The State of Food Insecurity in Johannesburg*. Urban Food Security Series No. 12. Queen's University and AFSUN: Kingston and Cape Town.
- Schroeder, F. (2012). Hawkers challenge Cape Town's swoop, *Cape Argus*, May 21 2012, Available at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/hawkers-challenge-cape-town-s-swoop-1.1301055> Accessed 23 July 2012.
- Stupar, D., Barth Eide, W., Bourne, L., Hendricks, M., Ole Iversen, P. & Wandel, M. (2012). The nutrition transition and the human right to adequate food for adolescents in the Cape Town metropolitan area: Implications for nutrition policy. *Food Policy* 2012(37), 199–206.
- Sustainable Energy Africa (2006). *State of Energy in South African Cities 2006: Setting a Baseline*. Sustainable Energy Africa.
- Suzuki, H. & Dastur, A. (2010). *Eco<sup>2</sup> Cities: Ecological Cities as Economic Cities*. The World Bank.
- Swilling, M & Fischer-Kowalski, M. (2010). *Decoupling and Sustainable Resource Management: Scoping the challenges: Decoupling Working Group*. United Nations Environmental Programme International Panel for Sustainable Resource Management, UNEP.
- Swilling, M. & Anneck, E. (2012). *Just Transitions: Explorations of Sustainability in an Unfair World*. Cape Town: UCT Press.
- Swilling, M. (2006). Sustainability and infrastructure planning in South Africa: a Cape Town case study, in *Environment & Urbanization*. International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).18(1): 23–50.
- Taylor, P. (1982). *A Materialist Framework for Political Geography*. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series*, 7 (1), 15-34.
- UN DESA (2008). *World urbanisation prospects: The 2007 revision. Executive summary*. [http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/wup2007/2007WUP\\_ExecSum\\_web.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/wup2007/2007WUP_ExecSum_web.pdf) Accessed 28 September 2009.
- UNDP (1998). *Human Development Report 1998: Overview*. [http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr\\_1998\\_en\\_overview.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr_1998_en_overview.pdf) Accessed 27 September 2009.
- UNEP (2009). *The Environmental Food Crisis*. UNEP/ GRID-Arendal, Norway.
- UN-HABITAT, (2009). *Planning sustainable cities: policy directions – global report on human settlements 2009*. London: Earthscan.

UN-HABITAT (2003). The challenge of slums: Global report on human settlements 2003. <http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/getPage.asp?page¼bookView&book¼1156>. Accessed 28 September 2009.

Vink, N. & Van Rooyen, J. (2009). The economic performance of agriculture in South Africa since 1994: Implications for food security. Development Planning Division Working Paper Series No.17, DBSA: Midrand.

Von Braun, J. (2007). The World Food Situation: New Driving Forces and Required Actions. Washington: International Food Policy Research Institute. Food Policy Report, 1-27. <http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/pubs/pubs/fpr/pr18.pdf> Accessed 27 April 2008.

Wackernagel, M & Rees, W. (1996). Our Ecological Footprint. British Columbia, New Society Publishers.

Watkinson E. (2003). Overview of the current food security crisis in South Africa, National Labour and Economic Development Institute (NALEDI). [http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0000222/watkinson/Watkinson\\_SA\\_food\\_crisis.pdf](http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0000222/watkinson/Watkinson_SA_food_crisis.pdf). Accessed 5 December 2006.

Winne, M. (2008). Closing the Food Gap: Resetting the table in the land of plenty. Beacon Press, Boston.

Zita, L. (2012). Food Security Policy (Zero Hunger Programme) for the Republic of South Africa. Presentations to stakeholders at the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Pretoria, February 07, 2012.

### **Interviews:**

Stanley Visser. Head, Urban Agriculture Unit, City of Cape Town, February 17, 2011.

Hanlie Linde. Director of Social Development, Stellenbosch Municipality, March 29, 2011.

Pula<sup>6</sup>, Philippi Horticultural Area, 26 April 2012

Philip Horstmann, at Marydale farm, 24 April 2012

Leon Rix, at Geduld farm, 23 April 2012

Neville van der Westhuizen, Setplan, at Country Manor, 18 April 2012.

---

<sup>6</sup> Pseudonym provided as interviewee requested anonymity.