

# **Food security and the globalization of water footprints in Ethiopia**

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Following the global "food crisis" of 2008 and successive seasons of droughts, Ethiopia is again on the brink of a famine - as more than 6 million Ethiopians are currently in need of emergency food relief. The country's chronic food insecurity is strongly connected to high vulnerability to water scarcity, while the sustainability of its water resources is increasingly exposed to the globalization of food and agriculture. In this context, the proposed research will assess the sustainability impact of increasing volume of agricultural exports and imports. Based on the concept of "virtual water" - the total volume of water used to produce a commodity - the study will investigate how the patterns of "virtual water trade" affect the sustainable use of water and food security. It is envisaged that the results of the research will have policy relevance beyond Ethiopia, and shed some light on the heightened debate on food security, water scarcity and climate change adaptation in sub-Saharan Africa.