

1.6 Subsumed deals

As a rule, separate deals should be differentiated from each other and be added individually to the Land Matrix database. However, in some cases, investors carry out several different projects (based on different agreements) in the same country, region, or sub-region. This can make it very difficult, or even impossible, to identify the single projects of one investor or group of investors in a specific area or specific details about an individual land acquisition (e.g. exact location, corresponding contracts, primary investors, and investment conditions). In these situations, you may only be able to obtain general information, for example, the number of hectares an investor has acquired in a given region. In cases like these, where information is too scarce to distinguish single projects, there is no other option but to “subsume” various deals under one parent deal – that is, enter several projects of one investor in the same region or country as one single deal. The problem with this, however, is that, while the system allows you to make several entries for some variables (e.g. location, land area under contract/in operation, intention of investment, negotiation and operation status) in order to subsume multiple deals, these variables cannot be connected to each other, nor can the individual deals be differentiated from each other.^[1] These subsumed deals should therefore be split up in the long run, as soon as further details can be found. This also decreases the risk of duplications, since each deal can be identified.

[1] For instance, if you know that an investor operates in several (specified) regions, that contract farming (CF) is applied and that 1,000 ha were leased, and then enter these data, it is not clear whether CF is applied in all projects or just some – maybe the investor leased 1,000 ha in one of the areas but in others only operates via CF, without having acquired any land (if it is CF on farmers’ own lands, see section 2.8). Likewise, if you select “in operation” in 2005 and “project abandoned” in 2009 for implementation status, if the deal subsumes different projects, whether all operations were closed in 2009, or just one in one certain area, cannot be seen. In such cases, it is therefore very important to use the “additional comment” fields to note such ambiguities and to give more explanations on your entries.

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