

**Alert No. 10 (27 April 2010)**

**1. WOCAT – World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies**

WOCAT is soliciting cases for Sustainable Land Management (SLM), and has prepared the questionnaire. CA-CoP subscribers are requested to respond to WOCAT's initiative to inventory SLM cases dealing with CA systems.

We would encourage as many CA-CoP subscribers as possible to submit as many diverse examples of CA from diverse agro-ecosystems and climatic zones.

The WOCAT questionnaire states as follows:

“SLM in the context of WOCAT is defined as the use of land resources, including soils, water, animals and plants, for the production of goods to meet changing human needs, while simultaneously ensuring the long-term productive potential of these resources and the maintenance of their environmental functions.

The ultimate goal of this exercise is to improve the effectiveness of SLM by analysing field experience. To achieve this, we need to obtain a better understanding of the reasons behind successful experience with SLM – be it introduced by projects or found in traditional systems. Within SLM WOCAT focuses mainly on efforts to prevent and reduce land degradation through conservation technologies and their implementation approaches.”

There are two sets of WOCAT documents. For both categories of documents, there is a manual describing the format, a filled in example and a template to fill in. For the QT group, there is another file with the codes for the categorization of the systems

There are QT documents related to Technologies, i.e., describing the technology and what has been done, which in the case of CA-CoP subscribers would relate to functional CA systems.

[QT manual](#)

[QT template](#)

[QT example](#)

[QT codes](#)

There are the QA documents related to the Approaches, i.e., how it has been done, which could include farmer groups, or clubs, or associations or FFS or other extension or capacity development mechanisms etc.

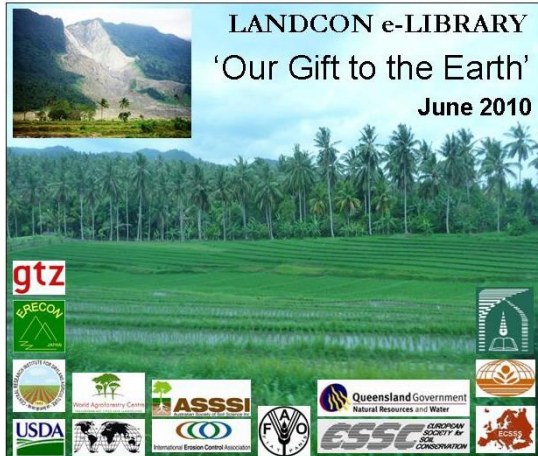
[QA manual](#)

[QA template](#)

[QA example](#)

## 2. LANDCON e-LIBRARY: Our Gift to the Earth (from WASWAC)

### WASWAC invites you to join “Our Gift to the Earth” project



The World Association of Soil and Water Conservation (WASWAC) is producing **LANDCON e-LIBRARY: Our Gift to the Earth**, a set of 4 DVDs offering a collection of technical papers/documents that will serve *research* and *implementation* in the fields of land, soil & water degradation, management, care, restoration, conservation, and improvement. The goal is to preserve valuable works for the long term and to enhance the visibility of works, authors, organizations and publishers. **We invite you to submit digital works, including: (1) papers/articles from meetings, proceedings,**

**books, magazines, bulletins; (2) whole books, reports, journals, magazines, bulletins, newsletters, MSc & PhD dissertations; (3) PowerPoint presentations and (4) posters, brochures, flyers, paintings and other forms of art, calendars, maps, soil museums, video-movies, audios (e.g. songs related to land, soil, water, river, forest, mountain), poems, photographs etc.** Contributors will receive one complimentary set of DVDs and co-publishers will have their logos printed on the box. Contact Samran Sombatpanit at [sombatpanit@yahoo.com](mailto:sombatpanit@yahoo.com)

## 3. “European Congress on Conservation Agriculture: Towards agro-environmental, climate and energetic sustainability”, to be held in Madrid 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> October 2010

The Spanish Conservation Agriculture Association / Living Soils (AEAC/SV), jointly with the European Conservation Agriculture Federation (ECAAF) and the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) are organizing the "**European Congress on Conservation Agriculture: Towards agro-environmental, climate and energetic sustainability**", to be held in Madrid 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> October 2010.

This European Congress offers a quality leap forward on issues under a holistic view within the field of Conservation Agriculture. This event will comprise presentations communications and experiences delivering the latest results achieved, not only in the traditional Conservation Agriculture areas of research, but also in those that have been opened in response to current problems facing the environment, including **climate change, energy saving and profitability**, and the search for models of **sustainability** in European agro-ecosystems.

Development agencies and donors, policy makers and administrators, environmentalists, farmers, agricultural scientists and advisors, and the agricultural industry are welcome to attend this event. The Congress has attracted among its keynote speakers and delegates, authorities and leading scientists on **conservation agriculture, soil management, agronomy, crop protection and global environmental issues**.

Additional details about this European Congress can be found in the flyer enclosed and in the Website: [www.eurocongressca.eu](http://www.eurocongressca.eu)

#### **4. Updating CA Data base in AquaStat, FAO**

We are updating the CA land area data base displayed in AquaStat ([www.fao.org/ag/ca](http://www.fao.org/ag/ca)), and will be contacting our regular sources of information in the next few weeks. However, anyone else who would like to provide information on the land area under CA systems at the national level would be most welcome. Ideally, we would appreciate receiving the CA area information at the sub-national level, together with any relevant historical information on adoption, cropping pattern, farm size, agro-ecology, constraints, etc.

For the recording pls. adhere to the quantification of the CA definition on the FAO-CA website (<http://www.fao.org/ag/ca/6c.html>):

1. Minimum Soil Disturbance: Minimum soil disturbance refers to low disturbance no-tillage and direct seeding. The disturbed area must be less than 15 cm wide or less than 25% of the cropped area (whichever is lower). There should be no periodic tillage that disturbs a greater area than the aforementioned limits. Strip tillage is allowed if the disturbed area is less than the set limits.
2. Organic soil cover: Three categories are distinguished: 30-60%, >60-90% and >90% ground cover, measured immediately after the direct seeding operation. Area with less than 30% cover is not considered as CA.
3. Crop rotation/association: Rotation/association should involve at least 3 different crops. However, repetitive wheat or maize cropping is not an exclusion factor for the purpose of this data collection, but rotation/association is recorded where practiced.

We would further like to stress that the database counts actual land area under annual crops with CA (permanent no-till). Area under perennial crops will be recorded separately. No-till area by crop will not be recorded to avoid double recording of the same land area.

#### **5. Conservation Agriculture Website at Cornell**

Lucy Fisher and Peter Hobbs have at finished the final touches to a web site on Conservation Agriculture. We have tried to put materials in here that are different than on other CA web sites and would complement other materials. The main emphasis is on basic information on CA from the literature and web pages. We have selected you all to view this web site and send us feedback on what you think, what needs to be added or removed and whether you would like to be part of this site by sending us materials we can post (with proper acknowledgment of course). The photos and RefWorks literature database is just a sprinkling of materials and will be added to over time. Lucy has also added a huge amount of information on soil health that can be accessed from the "Related Websites" page. Lucy and Peter hope you find this web site useful and would appreciate any feedback for improvement. The link is <http://conservationagriculture.mannlib.cornell.edu/>

#### **6. Articles on No-Tillage by Tom Borland in the Farmer's Weekly (Zambia), February-March 1980**

Tom Borland published a series of [three articles on No-Tillage in the Farmer's Weekly](#) in Zambia in February-March 1980. The first article was: Why Plough? The second was: The Advantages of No-Tillage. The third was: The Effects on Soils. Tom has kindly made the articles available for distribution to CA-CoP subscribers.

**7. European Society of Agronomy Congress, 29 August to 3 September 2010, Montpellier -- <http://www.agropolis.fr/agro2010/index.html>**

There will be a session chaired by Ken Giller at the forthcoming meeting of the European Society of Agronomy in September 2010 entitled: "S1.4: **Conservation agriculture: Did we fail in Africa and which research priorities for the future ?**"

There will be a keynote talk by Marc Corbeels and Pablo Tittonell, and there will then be a round table discussion for half an hour. This will be a useful forum to exchange views so it is hoped that many of you will be there.

If you are able to attend the conference and would like to participate in the debate as part of a panel, please contact Ken Giller directly at: [ken.giller@gmail.com](mailto:ken.giller@gmail.com).

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