

Expert Consultation on GHG emissions and mitigation potentials in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors

FAO HQ, Rome, 2 (14:00) - 4 (12:30) December 2009

Background

The IPCC assessment is the internationally agreed science base for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and mitigation potentials, including those of the agriculture and forestry (however fisheries sector is not covered by the IPCC). However, more recent science reports have highlighted the large knowledge gaps and variations in the data. This has caused a limited acceptance and utility of this information for policy and development purposes especially at the national and sub-national level.

As the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors have to increasingly meet the food security needs of an ever growing population (which is estimated to reach 9 billion by 2050) and at the same time adapt to and mitigate climate change, it becomes increasingly important to have accurate figures on GHG emissions and mitigation potentials of these different sectors.

Approach

The consultation process will evaluate the current status of data available on GHG emissions and mitigation potential and evaluate what is required to ensure consistent data generation and analysis which is needed for policy, decision making, monitoring, international reporting and the development of low-carbon agriculture, forestry, and fisheries.

The consultation will review the need for a global assessment framework and knowledge platform for emissions and mitigation potentials, as well as assessing the utility of policy relevant comparative approaches like life cycle assessments. The objective is to reduce the high levels of uncertainties and variations in the current estimates of emissions and mitigation approaches.

The consultation and any future assessments will be undertaken in close collaboration with UNFCCC and IPCC and should link closely to IPCC's emerging Fifth Assessment Report (AR5). In this regards the consultation process may also lead to improved IPCC guidelines and reporting.

The preliminary expert consultation meeting to be held on 2-4 December 2009 and is intended to make an initial assessment of the available data, gaps, inconsistencies, requirements and develop the scope and outline of a possible framework which could achieve the generation of data needed to meet the identified requirements. Specifically the meeting will:

- Review the state of knowledge on GHG emissions and mitigation potentials in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors;
- Propose a framework for monitoring and assessment of GHG cycle, emissions and mitigation potential in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors as a means for policy design and implementation, and
- Propose a process by which FAO and partners, together with member countries can enhance the knowledge base, prepare periodical assessments and improve their GHG reporting.

To ensure the analysis is consistent a cross sector approach is suggested where groups of experts from the different fields (forestry, crops, grassland, peatland, fisheries, livestock, bioenergy and soils) work together to identify the key components required for accurate estimates on emissions and mitigation potentials. This should prevent the inconsistencies and variations which have been observed in previous analysis which was undertaken per sector. In this regards, it is suggested that the analysis be undertaken by 2 major categories: terrestrial assessment and life cycles. Case studies are a subsequent category (which if there is time will be addressed also during the expert consultation). The table below provides some additional details but should not be considered as definitive but a rather a point of initial discussion.

Analysis type	Details
1. Terrestrial Assessment	<p>Potential questions of discussion (to be finalized by group):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the requirements and what should be included? • What are the land use/management systems that need to be used? • Which are the measurement and assessment approaches that need to be considered? • Which should be the reporting categories how do these relate to IPCC guidelines and UNFCCC reporting requirements? • What are the knowledge gap in the IPCC AR4 and ways for improvement?
2. Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) of products	<p>Potential questions for discussion (to be finalized by group):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What methodology should be used (e.g. goal and scope, life cycle inventory, life cycle impact assessment, interpretation)? • What type of life cycle approach is most appropriate (cradle-to-grave, cradle-to-gate, etc.)? • What are the requirements in the different sectors? • What should be the minimum data requirements (including accuracy)? • What is the needed standardisation of methodologies and consensus as to where to set the limits to ensure that LCAs has meaningful values?
<p>Case Studies (to be discussed by breakout groups and plenary if time allows).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific examples and case studies, good practices (and examples of bad ones), options and scenarios, knowledge and advice. • Pilot testing and verification of LCA and terrestrial assessments. 	

Consultation outcome

The consultation meeting should be seen as the beginning of a process to allow the initial discussions and scoping to take place. At the end of the meeting the participants should have identified the key issues, identified the key stakeholders who should be involved, allocated tasks and determined timelines for next steps. A short position paper and presentation for the upcoming UNFCCC COP15 are being considered.

Draft Agenda

Wednesday 2 December		
14:00 – 15:30 Opening Plenary		Room: Malaysia Room (B227)
14:00	Welcome Round of introduction	Alexander Müller, Assistant Director General, NR
14:15	Scoping: How does initiative relate to IPCC, UNFCCC and other international processes? What are the main issues to be addressed, stakeholders and main goals and objectives? What is expected from the meeting? Proposal for Terrestrial Assessment and Life Cycle breakouts. Discussion, preparation into breakout sessions.	Peter Holmgren, Director, NRC
15:30 – 17:30 Breakout session		
15:30	Breakout session 1: Review the state of knowledge on emissions and mitigation potentials using a cross sector approach. What are the gaps in knowledge and data, what are the main inconsistencies, what should be included or not included, who are the main stakeholders (in regards to data and information providers and users). 2 breakout groups: 1. Terrestrial assessment 2. Life Cycle Assessments	<u>Rooms available</u> Espace Gabon (ground floor A building) Queen Juliana Room (B324) NR meeting Room (B503) NRC Directors Office (B512)
17:30	close of session	
18:00 – Reception (time and location to be confirmed)		Aventino Room (B building 8th Floor)

Thursday 3 December		
9:00 – 10:30 Plenary		German Room (C269)
9:00	Report back from breakout groups. Group discussion and evaluation on current status and what needs to be achieved. How can we get to consistent numbers (short term) and more accurate (long term) (Lead into the need of having monitoring and assessment framework)	From each breakout Chair
10:30 – 10:45 Coffee		
10:45	Breakout session 2: What is the simplest and most achievable framework which can generate acceptable figures and data? 1. Terrestrial assessment 2. Life Cycle Assessments	Rooms available: German Room (C269) Queen Juliana Room (B324) NR meeting Room (B503) NRC Directors Office (B512) Doris Soto's Office (F503)

12:30 - Lunch		
13:30	Breakout session 2 continued.	
15:30 - Coffee		
15:45	Breakout session 2 continued.	
Plenary		German Room (C269)
16:45	Breakout report back Prioritization of issues for last day of consultation	
18:00 – Day close		
Dinner		

Friday 4 December		
9:00 – 12:30 Plenary		Room: German Room (C269)
9:00	Process, way forward and objectives Time lines and allocation of tasks	Nigeria room is also available for the morning if breakouts are needed.
12:20	Summary and thanks	Peter Holmgren
12:30 Close of meeting		