

Summary notes from the Climate-Smart Knowledge Day

29 November 2011, Durban South Africa

This knowledge day was organized by the FAO to present on-going work on climate-smart agriculture and to exchange experiences and visions with countries and civil society.

Key messages from presentations and discussions

- Climate-smart agriculture (CSA) places the farmer at the center and emphasizes the need to secure productivity and resilience in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, and also to find opportunities for reducing emissions and removing greenhouse gases;
- The three pillars of CSA can be applied to any type of agriculture and food system. But solutions will vary considerably across the wide range of real-world situations;
- Knowledge is crucial. We need better understanding of basic processes such as land-use change and energy consumption in food systems. We also need to share experiences and evidence of CSA approaches, and develop guidelines related to practices, policies, economics as well as finance;
- There are concerns from stakeholders that CSA will be used to promote isolated interests, in particular climate change mitigation. A continued inclusive dialogue and transparent communication on the holistic objective of CSA is necessary.

Session summaries

Further information, including presentations, are available at <http://www.fao.org/climatechange/unfccc-process/climate-smart-day-agenda/en/>

Session A - Implementing Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA)

Peter Holmgren, Director of the Climate, Energy and Tenure Division of FAO introduced the event and gave a brief overview of the climate-smart agriculture concept.

Pieter Mulder Deputy Minister of the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Ministry of South Africa set the context . He recalled that FAO is working on climate-smart agriculture for several years and welcomed the event in the context of the international negotiations. Food security is not ensured and will be further under threat given growing population, increasing scarcity of natural resources and climate change. He called for a climate-smart agriculture, combining the fight against poverty, adaptation and low cost mitigation options.

John Mussa, the Director of Land Resources Conservation Department, of the Ministry of Agriculture & Food Security of Malawi shared the experiences being developed in his country related to CSA practices and their adoption.

Leslie Lipper, from FAO looked at the uptake of CSA by small-scale farmers, the definition of CSA and how its application need to vary depending on the scale under discussion, and the inclusion of agriculture into the UNFCCC process.

Participants at the meeting highlighted the fact that organic farming wasn't mentioned as a climate-smart practice. In response, the presenters noted that organic agriculture is certainly one of the potential options for implementing CSA and that the options need to be evaluated based on the objectives of the system under study (i.e. food security, adaptation, mitigation). The role of the

agriculture sectors in mitigation and adaptation discussions has benefitted from awareness building over the last few years and its profile has been raised.

Panel on Climate-Smart Implementation at Country Level

The panel members presented perspectives and priorities of CSA implementation from one SIDS's country **Faipule Foa Toloa**, Titular Head of Government of Tokelau, **Alexandre Meybeck** from the FAO and **Saveis Joze Sadeghian** from the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD. Priorities for implementation included:

- The need to acknowledge potential tradeoffs among the three pillars of CSA when win-win-win options are not available;
- to include the small-scale farmer as the central unit of CSA implementation;
- to allow the implementation of CSA to be context specific; and
- to link all facets of the private and public sectors in garnering sustainable financing and institutional options as part of building positive incentives for implementing CSA.

Discussions stemming from the panel interventions regarded on the role of consumer demand to support the transition to CSA, the need to guide and support private investments toward CSA (large-scale and small-scale) as these are most likely to be the biggest source of CSA financing. Many examples of CSA are already being put into place and support sustainable development efforts.

Session B - Knowledge for Forestry, Agriculture and Fisheries

FAO presented a wide array of tools and guidelines to mainstream climate change in agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors spanning from the remote sensing survey of the Global Forest Resources Assessment to the work being carried out on Fisheries, aquaculture and climate change passing through the guidelines for gender and climate change. Presentations were carried out by FAO officers, **Adam Gerrand, Cassandra De Young, Susan Braatz and Marja-Liisa Tapio-Bistrom.**

Panel on Sharing Knowledge to Improve Linkages between REDD+ and Climate-Smart Agriculture

Panel members included **Peter Saidu Turay**, Technical Adviser on REDD+ to the Government of Sierra Leone; **Giovanni Rum**, from the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) Secretariat and **Dorothee Herr**, from the Global Marine and Polar Programme, IUCN.

Panelists stressed that integrated and cross-sector approaches are essential for implementation of REDD+; policies, practices and monitoring cannot be done in isolation. Success in adaptation, emission reduction and increasing resilience in agricultural sector has direct impact in the success of REDD+. A concrete example was that of mangroves that are a small – but highly productive area for REDD+, both in terms of carbon sequestration and value of mangroves. There are many commonalities with soil carbon.

Meaningful and effective stakeholder engagement, including farmers, is a prerequisite for REDD+.

Session C - Moving forward - Managing Ecosystems for Sustainable Livelihoods and a Green Economy

The *Energy-Smart Food for People and Climate* report was launched, emphasizing access to and efficiency of energy, and the urgent need to substitute fossil fuels with renewable energy systems.

Ralph Sims, from the University of Massey, New Zealand, described the challenges facing energy and food production. According to the report, some 32% of global energy use goes to the food system – there is tremendous potential to improve efficiency and use renewable in this systems.

Alexandre Meybeck, from FAO presented a comprehensive overview of the work of FAO on adaptation which included aspects on genetic resources to disaster risk reduction and FAO's overall framework on adaptation: FAO-Adapt.

There is already recognition that genetic resources are an essential asset to address climate change but more work needs to be done on conservation, characterization and sustainable use of genetic resources for climate change adaptation.

Suggestions to consider genetic resources for food and agriculture in the program of work on losses and damages and in the Nairobi work programme and to include management of genetic resources for food and agriculture in planning and implementation in NAPs and NAMAs were made.

In closure, **Peter Holmgren** provided FAO's current proposed messages on Rio + 20 and the road ahead. There are strong links between CSA and the Rio+20 FAO messages on agriculture including the recognition of the importance of improved natural resources use for agriculture.

Linkages between climate-smart and energy-smart approaches should be made more explicit.

For agriculture to adapt, local knowledge should be made more mobile.

Rio+20 = Stockholm +40. While since Rio agriculture has been basically excluded in the environment agenda, there is now a clear recognition that agriculture is part of “environment and development”, and therefore CSA is also a part of the solution and contributes to the ongoing debate on sustainable development and green economy.

The main points raised during the discussions included: the need to have a country driven and farmer-centered process with private sector involvement. The consideration of the development of small, local enterprises, and be economically sustainable. In order to address simultaneously the challenges of food security and climate change, it has to take a holistic, systemic approach, managing ecosystems for sustainable livelihoods.

To read the presentations carried-out during the day please visit

<http://www.fao.org/climatechange/unfccc-process/climate-smart-day-agenda/en/>

Civil Society Dialogue on Climate-Smart Agriculture

The dialogue gave the opportunity to civil society to share their concerns and views about CSA.

Peter Holmgren, Director of the Climate Change, Energy and Tenure Division of FAO opened the session by highlighting the three pillars of climate-smart agriculture: sustainably increases agricultural production and income; strengthened resilience to climate change and variability (adaptation); and reduction in the contribution of the agricultural sectors to climate change (mitigation).

Lindiwe Majele Sibanda, CEO of the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN), urged putting the farmer at the centre of the CSA debate and focusing on improving small-holders' farming systems through access to information and improved technology.

Andre Leu, President, Chair of IFOAM, illustrated the benefits of modern organic agriculture, emphasizing its value in reducing the vulnerability of small-holders to climate change.

Mariana Nogueira Pavan from the Institute for the Conservation and Sustainable Development of Amazonas (Idesam) spoke of Brazil's linked efforts to intensify cattle production and conserve Amazonian forests.

Theo de Jager, Vice-President of the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU) highlighted that UNFCCC should deal more explicitly with agriculture and that farmers needed to be part of the dialogue.

Most participants felt that the emphasis of CSA should be on food security for small-holders, who together produce the majority of food worldwide but are the most vulnerable to climate change and variability.

Most considered adaptation to climate change of higher priority than mitigation. Techniques and systems shall be adapted to local specificities and be farmer centred. Financial investment in CSA was seen as crucial for adaptation.

Many considered food security to be of such crucial importance that financial investment in sustainable agriculture should not be reliant on carbon markets, particularly given their volatility. One participant pointed out that options other than the carbon market existed for incentivizing CSA for climate change mitigation, and that these could simultaneously contribute to food security.

Various opinions were expressed about the degree to which agriculture should be addressed by UNFCCC. One participant felt that international policy deliberations on agriculture were better dealt with by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), which considered the multiple functions of agriculture. Another indicated that the increasingly more holistic treatment of REDD+ by UNFCCC was an indication that the Convention could address broader dimensions of agriculture. Many felt that given the importance of agriculture to both adaptation and mitigation, more focus on CSA in UNFCCC was warranted.

Strong concerns were expressed about potential links to carbon markets which are not adapted to small holders. Moreover the future of carbon markets was considered insecure and cannot be considered a reliable enough source of financing.