

Thursday , 15 October 8:30– 9:30

Red Room

Addressing Food Security In The Face Of Climate Change: GACSA’S Actions in the Context of Climate-Smart Agriculture #37

ORGANIZERS

Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture (GACSA)

Department for International Development (DFID) UK

CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS)

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

FAO

Abstract: The mission of the Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture (GACSA) is to address the challenge of ensuring food security for a growing world population in the face of climate change. The approach is to mobilize the wealth and diversity of resources to stimulate concrete actions at all levels. GACSA provides a platform for those working on climate-smart agriculture to share and exchange knowledge, information, expertise, experiences, and views on adaptation of agricultural production systems to climate change, and on mitigating agricultural greenhouse gases. GACSA’s initial focus is on three action areas: Knowledge, Enabling Environment and Investment; each driven by an Action Group. The Knowledge Action Group focuses on increasing and promoting knowledge, research and development into technologies, practices, and policy approaches for climate-smart agriculture (CSA). The Investment Action Group aims to improve the effectiveness of public and private investments support to CSA. The Enabling Environment Action Group aims at integrating climate-smart agriculture into policy, strategies and planning at all levels and across landscapes. The side event will provide a platform for the three Action Groups to share and discuss their activities and short-term achievements; and to engage in a dialogue on the next steps.

KEYWORDS: Climate Smart Agriculture , Climate Change , Vulnerable communities , Global Food security and nutrition, Farmers’ income and livelihood

Languages: EN, FR, SP

Refreshments

Summary: The mission of GACSA is to promote climate-smart agriculture (CSA) as an approach to enhancing food security in the face of climate change, based on three pillars: (i) sustainable and equitable increase of agricultural productivity, (ii) greater resilience of food systems and farming livelihoods, (iii) reduction and/or removal of greenhouse gas emissions associated with agriculture, where possible. GACSA established Action Groups (AGs) on knowledge, enabling environment, and investment to advance the understanding and implementation of CSA. Each AG presented their work progress. Ms. Friis presented on behalf of the Knowledge Action Group (KAG) which had identified five priority work areas: (i) Technical interventions and practices in CSA; (ii) Evidence base of CSA; (iii) Support, services and extension for CSA; (iv) Inclusive knowledge systems for CSA; (v) Integrated planning and monitoring for CSA. Ms. Friis reported that KAG had produced three practice briefs and more would be coming up ahead of the GACSA Annual Forum in early 2016. The KAG will also deliver other knowledge products covering farm level practices for CSA, the development of metrics for CSA, extension tools for CSA, and index-based insurance among others which were all validated through a peer review process. Mr. Manis presented on behalf of the Enabling Environment Action Group (EEAG) which promotes the integration of CSA into policy, strategies, and planning at regional, national, and local levels. Mr. Manis reported that case studies in six GACSA member countries (Costa Rica, France, Ireland, Malawi, Tanzania, Viet Nam) were on-going – The case studies are exploring the effectiveness of existing strategies and policies to promote CSA and identifying their major gaps. The case studies are country-led, allowing for contributions by all concerned stakeholders, and would be presented at GACSA Annual Forum in 2016. Mr. Howlett presented on behalf of the Investment Action Group (IAG) which seeks to improve the effectiveness of public and private investments that support the three pillars of CSA. Mr. Howlett reported that current focus was on (i) mapping and sharing of knowledge of current investments in CSA; (ii) identification of new private and public investment opportunities; (iii) draft metrics on CSA for use by public and private agriculture investment frameworks. All presenters underlined the interdependence of the AGs, and the importance and existing efforts of collaboration among them. The panel discussion with the presenters revolved around the following issues, mainly raised by CSO representatives:

- The panelists clarified that food security was an overarching objective for GACSA – stipulated in paragraph 4 of the Framework Document – and therefore not further mentioned in the pillars of CSA.
- Responding to concerns that GACSA might be utilized by private sector companies to green-wash, in particular if considered sufficient for CSA activities to deliver only on one pillar (productivity increase), the panelists clarified that GACSA members were expected to deliver on all three pillars simultaneously, keeping in mind possible variation in balance between pillars based on local context.

- Responding to critiques that GACSA's definition of CSA – including a broad range of agricultural models (from GMOs to agroecology) and failing to distinguish CSA from conventional agriculture – was not suited to promote sustainable change in agriculture, the panelists noted that GACSA was not prescribing specific production systems to its members nor would it introduce criteria for membership other than the assent of the GACSA Framework Document; each member was free to choose its preferred options to achieve GACSA's aspirational outcomes, but AGs could contribute to promote more sustainable options among members.
- The panelists confirmed that metrics for CSA would include environmental aspects beyond climate change and allow for assessments of environmental impacts of CSA interventions.
- The panelists clarified that GACSA did not promote carbon markets.

The panelists and GACSA co-chairs:

- recalled that GACSA was an open platform for dialogue on CSA, also for controversial views;
- welcomed the challenging questions and invited the participants to engage in the AGs;
- invited the participants to the GACSA Annual Forum 2016 and to engage in continued dialogue with GACSA.