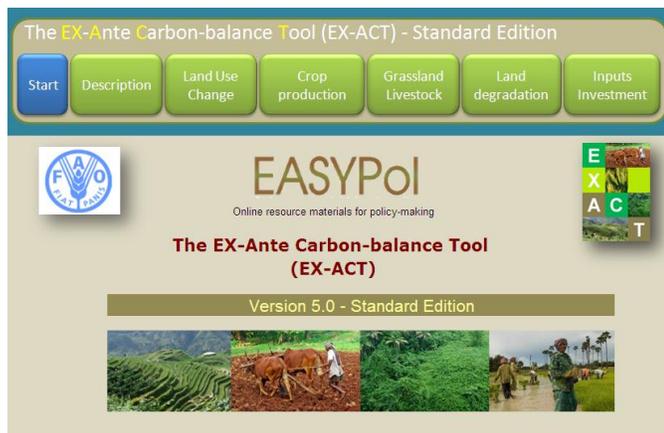




EX-ACT Version 5 Released!

Italy - Rome, October 2013: After a substantial review process the new Version 5 of EX-ACT has been released. The revision process focussed on making the tool more user-friendly and intuitive and Version 5 is as a result characterized by an entirely new user interface.

EX-ACT is henceforth structured in six easy distinguishable topic modules that cover different activity areas of agriculture, forestry and land use change and guide the user to targeted data entry.



Screenshot of the new EX-ACT Version 5

Thereby EX-ACT version 5 is released in the two editions “[Standard](#)” and “[Tier One](#)”.

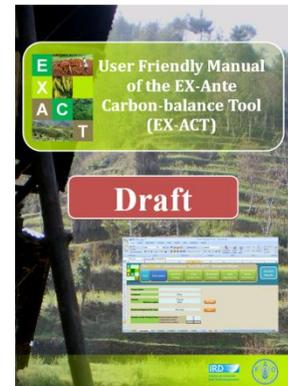
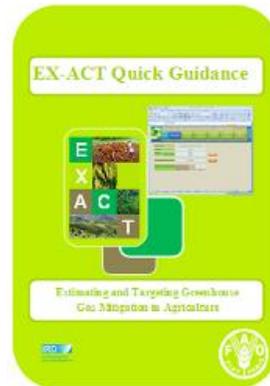
The edition “Tier One” is a simplified version that is reduced to the exclusive use of default emission coefficients that are provided by the tool, while not guiding users to specify further regional specific Tier 2 data. The “Standard” edition comprises the full functionality of EX-ACT: It allows users to either use Tier 1 or Tier 2 level of complexity, following the IPCC definition.

Since both versions are in all other aspects identical, the accompanying guidance material applies to both editions of the tool.

EX-ACT Guidance Material Published:

Quick Guidance & User Manual

Italy - Rome, December 2013: The EX-ACT team has published two complementary documents that aim at leading users to independent proficiency in using EX-ACT. They are valuable documents for officers from national planning institutions and international investment banks that received an initial training in using the tool. The EX-ACT team is then available for backstopping and quality control of such externally conducted analyses.



EX-ACT Quick Guidance and User Manual

- [Quick Guidance](#)

The Quick Guidance material provides a well-founded and concise overview of methodology, data needs, application and final use of EX-ACT. It is structured into two parts: A Guidance for Decision Makers (10 pp.) discusses in the first part of the document the main logic and utilization of the tool. The then following Guidance for Tool Users (8 pp.) introduces more technical aspects around methodology as well as data collection and entry.

- [User Manual](#)

The User Manual provides the comprehensive guide to all aspects of EX-ACT. It deals in detail with methodology, data collection, data entry as well as results utilization and leads users to proficiency in the independent use of the tool. The User Manual consists of a series of practical and easy digestible steps that allow for selective, non-sequential reading.

EX-ACT Appraisals and Climate Resilience Analyses

Kyrgyzstan – Bishkek, November 2013: Increasing Agriculture Sector Resilience to Climate Change in Kyrgyzstan

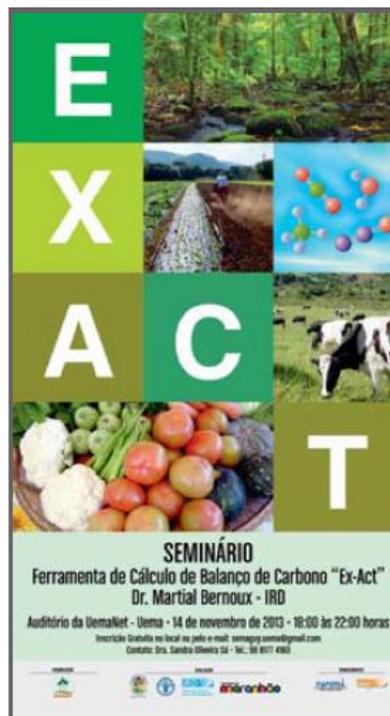
In Kyrgyzstan, FAO is preparing a project to improve the capacity to manage climate related hazards and disasters through increased climate resilience of the agriculture sector and sustainable contributions to food security for the most vulnerable parts of the population. The project will build a joint platform for climate resilience (policy, analysis and strategy support) in order to:

- (i) Raise awareness, sensitize and promote readiness for enhancing resilience to climate hazards in the agriculture sector, as besides others through actor mobilisation, experience building and training of farmers and policy makers;
- (ii) Support the integration of climate resilience into agriculture, food and nutrition security policies;
- (iii) Promote climate resilience building options at community level through project appraisal and monitoring using landscape and household resilience indicators linked to food security.

EX-ACT will be used for appraisal and monitoring of project impacts on resilience assets (carbon , biomass, natural assets). It will be completed by multi-criteria qualitative approaches (area-based, landscape resilience index).

Brazil – São Luis - Maranhão, November 2013: EX-ACT Appraisal for Monitoring Project Carbon Impacts

EX-ACT will be used by the State University of Maranhão (Universidade Estadual do Maranhão – UEMA) to appraise the impact of different land-use scenarios in the Brazilian State of Maranhão. This activity will be part of a joint research project (Semaguy) with the research Unit Eco&Sols based in Montpellier, France. In November a short seminar was given to present EX-ACT to the different participants and students from UEMA.



FAO INVESTMENT CENTRE

Ukraine – Kiew, June 2013: EX-ACT Appraisal of Investments in Conservation Agriculture in Ukraine

Ukraine is a major player in the international grain markets contributing to global food security. This strategic production asset relies on rich soils known as Chernozems that cover almost 90 percent of the arable lands of Ukraine. However, soils have been widely degraded over time by erosion. During the last years Conservation Agriculture appeared to be a solution for controlling erosion and bringing other benefices: Conservation Agriculture, as most often defined by the principles of minimal soil disturbance, permanent soil cover and crop rotations, may have important multiple benefits for protecting and rehabilitating large and degraded annual crop land.

In cooperation with the FAO Investment Centre (TCI) and the World Bank, the EX-ACT team analysed the potential impacts of various sector investments for the adoption of conservation agriculture practices in Ukraine.

The results show that especially on the degraded areas of the analysed regions, reduced tillage and increased soil inputs are foreseen to reverse the low levels of soil organic carbon and thus lead to the multiple benefits of sequestering carbon, increasing soil fertility and enhancing water retention. This preliminary assessment will require more in depth verifications and wider validation.

EX-ACT Conference Participations and EX-ACT Trainings



France – Montpellier, 6-8 November 2013: Workshop of the multi-country support programme on agro-ecology PAMPA

Organized by a wide consortium of French development organizations, led by the French Research Institute for Development (IRD), this workshop presented the recent findings from the agro-ecology programme RIME PAMPA “Sustainable Rural Development based on Soil Conservation Practices”. The workshop mobilized a diverse set of approximately 85 participants from 8 countries (France, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Madagascar, Tunisia, Cameroun, Zambia), including besides others researchers (IRD, CIRAD, INRA, CNRS, FOFIFA, various universities), agronomists, development practitioners (AFD, MAE) and NGO partners.

The workshop focussed on the capitalisation of recent project experience and discussed the further roles and functions of the agro-ecology approach for sustainable rural development. Four roundtables explicitly focused on the key questions: (i) Agro-ecology: Which place in public policies, (ii) Agro-ecology and sustainable agriculture in developing countries: The point of view of civil society, (iii) Agro-ecology: Which bottlenecks and issues for research? (iv) Training needs in agro-ecology.

EX-ACT was presented as a tool for appraising projects and policies and for training and supporting development planners in integrating agro-ecological practises in regional and local planning, value chain support programmes and investment projects.



Poland – Puławy, 26-27 September 2013: International Soil Platform Conference

Organized by the Polish Institute of Soil Science and Plant Cultivation – State Research Institute (IUNG-PIB) this conference focussed on the issues:

- How planning institutions (ministries, regions, cities) deal with approaches of sustainable soil

management and how improvements could be achieved,

- The most recent practical solutions and knowledge on soil protection as identified by research organizations within European projects,
- National/regional programs for monitoring of soil quality.

Soils play many functions that are very important from socioeconomic and environmental perspective (production of food, feed and biomass; water retention, buffering and filtering; provision of biodiversity; carbon storage). EX-ACT was presented as a tool for enhancing soil quality through SOC sequestration as part of policies and public decision making. This technical meeting was attended by about 40 experts, from research centres, universities and other institutions from all over Europe. It showed the progress made through integrating sustainable soil management in national and local policies in the European context. Highlighted examples were e.g. REFERTIL (Reducing mineral fertilizers and chemicals use in agriculture by recycling treated organic waste as compost and bio-char products) and CATCH-C (Compatibility of Agricultural Management Practices and Types of Farming in the EU to enhance Climate Change Mitigation and Soil Health), that both support the agricultural sector to achieve *Best Management Practices* in terms of productivity, climate change mitigation, and soil quality.



Italy – Rome, 17-18 December 2013: EX-ACT at the FAO Investment Days

The annual FAO Investment Days focussed this year with one of their key themes on investments for climate change adaptation and mitigation in agriculture. EX-ACT was presented as an important tool for targeting mitigation aspects as part of agricultural investment planning in a cost-effective and integrative manner. The FAO programme “[Economics and Policy Innovations for Climate-Smart Agriculture](#)” (EPIC) underlined how the further evidence base on Climate-Smart Agriculture can be built and how adaptation and mitigation assessments can be systematically combined for investment proposals.

France – Montpellier, December 2013: EX-ACT Training at Agro-Paris Tech and Montpellier SupAgro

Two training sessions on the use of the EX-ACT tool were delivered in December to master students with various educational backgrounds (agronomy, forestry, environment) from the group “Environmental Management of Ecosystems and Tropical Forests” (Gestion Environnementale des Écosystèmes et Forêts Tropicales - GEEFT) of AgroParisTech and the group “Management of Water, Cultivated Land and Environment” ([Gestion de l'Eau, des Milieux cultivés et de l'Environnement](#) –GEME) from Montpellier SupAgro.

EX-ACT in publications



The [French Scientific Committee on Desertification](#) (CSFD) released in December 2013, its Thematic Report n°10 concerning “Soil carbon: multiple functions benefiting societies and the environment” and targeting drylands. In this report (currently available in French; English publication foreseen for early 2014) EX-ACT is

presented to underline that appropriate calculators for landscape-scale greenhouse gas assessments for the agriculture and forestry sector are useful tools to identify that agricultural and forestry activities for food security, control of land degradation and effective catchment management, can also mitigate further climate change.

- [Full version in French](#)
- [Summary in English \(2 pages\)](#)



[Orozco et al. 2013: Environmental Bio Economic Impact in Nicaragua](#)

This journal article uses EX-ACT to quantify the GHG impact of electricity production on the basis of biomass from sugarcane bagasse in Nicaragua. The article compares such power plants using biomass to electricity production on the basis of conventional petroleum. In such a way the authors underline how GHG impacts from the agriculture and energy sectors may be interlinked. Furthermore the two different modes of electricity production are compared with cost-benefit analyses.



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The FAO-EX-ACT team supports carbon appraisals of agriculture and forestry projects all over the world. Please contact us by email if you are interested in organizing a training workshop for using the tool within your organization and visit our website for further information.

Any feedback concerning ongoing applications of EX-ACT by external users (sharing of results, suggestions for improvements, clarifying questions, etc.) are very welcome for the continuous improvement of the EX-ACT tool!

EX-ACT Team: Louis Bockel, Martial Bernoux, Giacomo Branca, Uwe Grewer.

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