**BRAZIL: from SAFA to PISA**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations (FAO) has designed a tool called SAFA - Sustainability Assessment of Food and Agriculture Systems. This instrument has emerged as a guiding mechanism to actions regarding the impacts of agriculture enterprises along food and agriculture value chains.

In this perspective, the agriculture sustainability and innovation researching group from the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR - Brazil) here represented by Rafael Araújo Bonatto¹, Raquel Negrelle², Aníbal de Moraes³ and Paulo Carvalho³, have adopted such imperative tool as means of evaluating a public + private pro food security initiative called PISA (Integrated Production Project in Agriculture Systems). Such procedure was part of a PhD thesis chapter.

This whole-farm management project, implemented in 2008, has been designed to focus on the reduction of social inequalities and the achievement of economic development through sustainable and environmentally oriented agriculture production systems.

PISA is a project lead by MAPA (Brazilian Ministry of Agriculture), UFPR and UFRGS. As an equitable and participatory strategy, any type of farmer is welcome to apply voluntarily to the program, and the Universities are responsible for proposed key technologies. PISA is a sustainable intensification production model oriented to increase food production at farm and landscape level based on sustainable agriculture pillars as conservation agriculture, animal welfare, integrated crop-livestock systems, diversity, traceability and certification of farm products, amid other good farming practices.

PISA works the farm as a whole, where multiple activities are all integrated and not treat as isolated sections. PISA adapts to each farmer’s unique profile, and not the contrary. PISA is not oriented to any specific agricultural sector. It can fit any farm and any agricultural operation. Its ambition is to diminish environmental impacts whilst enhancing food security in the context of sustainable intensification.

The Program is funded by a public-private partnership, and technologies are applied at farm level by private and university consultants capacitated in PISA by Universities. In Southern Brazil it concerns mainly small dairy farmers currently encompassing some 1200 small stakeholders (family farmers) in about 61municipalities.

**SAFA USAGE IN BRAZIL**

Since 2014 the Federal University of Parana and more recently the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, have been employing this tool to evaluate the sustainability scenario promoted by the PISA project in the states of southern Brazil.

To date 616 PISA participant properties have been assessed under the framework proposed by SAFA, the state of affairs found was convergent with the majority of aspects assumed by FAO on its sustainable development statement (FAO, 1989) as well as under the SAFA postulation on sustainable agriculture and rural development.

The university´s consultants have utilized the SAFA 2.2.40 version in 2014 and 2015 and the SAFA Smallholders APP during the current year (2016) to evaluate the PISA project participant properties. Apart from it, the institutions have coupled to SAFA tool additional supporting methodologies to enhance the information gathering and processes on rural advisory services (RAS) and political participation evaluation at local level.

The representatives of the Agriculture Sustainability and Innovation researching group from the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR – Brazil) are extremely confident to assume that SAFA, as instrument of sustainability assessment, is a remarkable and easy to use tool. It has allowed to University´s researchers and consultants to have a glimpse on the probable tendencies and pathways of agriculture and rural development at international level.

The way that SAFA instrument has been organized has permitted the researchers to clearly connect the indicators to the realms that they belong in a straightforward and conscious method. It is evident that SAFA ties cause and effects of the practices adopted by an agriculture enterprise, as a result it clarifies the ways to be taken when the performance diverges from the original mission or objective. Moreover, it is sustained by a set of solid references and explanation on how to evaluate each of the component indicators under the four sustainability dimensions.

To the Universities involved on SAFA usage such opportunity has instated the understanding of the foremost certifications and standards commonly adopted by the international community (agencies, NGO´s and private enterprises) when assessing the different aspects of the sustainability. Hence, the university agriculture sustainability think tank aims to incorporate the SAFA approach (defined boundaries, temporal scope and thematic scope) into its future rural extension initiatives.

To demonstrate the importance of SAFA to the Brazilian government the Director of Cooperatives and Agriculture Development Department (DENACOOP - Brazilian Ministry of Agriculture) is very enthusiastic to adopt the SAFA tool as an official instrument to evaluate the PISA project impacts at national level (Ex – Post and Ex – Ante evaluation) at first instance and consequently implement such fundamental mechanism to assess other rural and agriculture development projects carried out by the Ministry of Agriculture in Brazil.

As mentioned by the Director of the Department of Cooperatives and Agriculture Development during an official PISA / MAPA event when referring to SAFA: *“It can emphasize and communicate to society our commitment and achievements on the agenda of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)”.*

This document represents the author´s concern and willingness in becoming part of a change towards a more sustainable, responsible and shared future.