



**Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations**

Enhancing countries capacity to report to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on greenhouse gas emissions for the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use sector: Costa Rica

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2013-2016

## 1. Background

Costa Rica has submitted three [national communications](#) (NCs 2000, 2009, 2014) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), providing information on greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories, measures to mitigate and to facilitate adequate adaptation to climate change among other information. In 2015 Costa Rica presented its [First Biennial Update Report](#) (BUR) together with the [National Inventory Report](#). In 2012 GHG emissions from the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU) sector contributed with 11 % of total GHG emissions.

Costa Rica was among the eighteen countries attending the Second FAO Workshop on Statistics for Greenhouse gas Emissions<sup>1</sup>, held from 3 to 4 June 2013 in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. It was organized by the Mitigation of Climate Change in Agriculture (MICCA) Programme. The aim of this workshop was to raise awareness of the importance and the linkage between agricultural statistics as a basis for preparing national GHG inventories and planning national mitigation action, and to facilitate communication and exchange of relevant knowledge at national and regional level. Representatives from the National Statistical Office, NSO (*Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos*, INEC) and the Ministry of Agriculture (*Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería*, MAG) in Costa Rica attended the workshop in Trinidad and Tobago.

This brief highlights the implemented activities and fruitful collaboration that were fundamental in assisting Costa Rica in successfully meeting its commitments to the UNFCCC reporting process for the AFOLU sector<sup>2</sup>.

## 2. Implemented activities and outcomes

FAO coaches national experts and institutions and facilitates dialogue and exchange of knowledge for the following areas:

- National Census of Agriculture
- Inter-institutional *ad-hoc* technical committee on statistics for the AFOLU sector
- South-South Cooperation

### 2.1 National Census of Agriculture

Following the Trinidad and Tobago workshop, INEC identified the importance of incorporating queries useful for deriving environmental and climate change indicators into the National Census of Agriculture 2014 ([VI Censo Nacional Agropecuario](#)). A national consultation process for the Census of Agriculture took place between July and September 2013. FAO supported INEC in providing information related to the FAO

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<sup>1</sup> An English and Spanish version of the workshop report is available from: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3397e/i3397e.pdf> (en); <http://www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3397s/i3397s.pdf> (es)

<sup>2</sup> The brochure was written by Rocío D. Córdor-Golec (FAO)

World Programme for the Census of Agriculture (WCA) and guidance on how to include new queries aiming to collect data for improving the preparation of the national GHG inventory for the agriculture sector. INEC involved key stakeholders in the [consultation process](#), which aimed to validate themes, variables and categories to be included in the Census of Agriculture 2014. The *Instituto Meteorológico Nacional* (IMN) is the institution in charge for preparing the national GHG inventory, and was involved in the consultation process of the National Census of Agriculture. Results from the census were published in July 2015 ([Volume I](#), [Volume II](#) and [Volume III](#)).

Furthermore, Costa Rica led a discussion together with Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Panama and Cuba on actions undertaken on national data collection performed by NSOs in support of national GHG emission estimates for the AFOLU sector. Following recommendations from the Trinidad and Tobago workshop, FAO launched a Spanish discussion group platform (*Grupo de discusión en línea sobre las emisiones de gases de efecto invernadero en agricultura*) in September 2013. The aim was to provide countries with a platform for knowledge and experience exchange that can allow the identification of common development opportunities to monitor and report GHG for the AFOLU sector. Currently, 87 members from NSO, as well as ministries of agriculture and environment from 21 countries from the region are involved in this platform. Various institutions from Costa Rica have participated actively and contributed with information and ideas in this platform.

FAO was also able to identify the need for providing further guidance to countries on data collection for emerging themes such as climate change. In response to that, FAO published the “[Estimating Greenhouse gas emissions in Agriculture. A manual to address data requirements for developing countries](#)” in 2014<sup>3</sup>. In 2015, the [World Program of the Census of Agriculture 2020. Volume 1 Programme, concepts and definitions](#)<sup>4</sup> was published, which includes a theme on Environment/GHG emissions.

## 2.2 Inter-institutional *ad-hoc* technical committee on statistics for AFOLU

By the end of 2013, the consultation process led to the consolidation of an inter-institutional *ad-hoc* technical committee on statistics on GHG for the AFOLU sector (*Comité técnico interinstitucional ad-hoc para estadísticas sobre emisiones de gases con efecto invernadero para los sectores agropecuario-forestal y cambios en el uso de la tierra*).

The aim of the *ad-hoc* technical committee was to support and improve statistical processes that can generate useful data to estimate and report GHG emissions for the AFOLU sector to the UNFCCC. The *ad-hoc* technical committee was useful for national

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<sup>3</sup> An Spanish and French version of the manual is available from: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4260s.pdf> (es) and <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4260f.pdf> (fr)

<sup>4</sup> An Spanish and French version of the document is available from: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4913s.pdf> (es); <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4913f.pdf> (fr).

institutions in Costa Rica to coordinate and work cooperatively and have a fruitful discussion on the harmonization of national agricultural and forestry statistics needed to estimate and improve the national GHG emission inventory for the AFOLU sector. Between December 2013 and April 2014, key stakeholders of the Ministry of Environment and Energy and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock joined the *ad-hoc* technical committee.

The *ad-hoc* technical committee involved the following national institutions:

- National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (*Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos*, INEC),
- Ministry of Environment and Energy (*Ministerio del Ambiente y Energía*, MINAE) through the National Meteorological Institute (*Instituto Meteorológico Nacional*, IMN) and the Forestry Financing Fund from Costa Rica (*Fondo de Financiamiento Forestal de Costa Rica*, FONAFIFO), and
- Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (*Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería*, MAG) through the Executive Secretary for Planning in the Agricultural Sector (*Secretaría Ejecutiva de Planificación Sectorial Agropecuaria*, SEPSA) and the National Institute of Innovation and Technology Transfer in Agriculture (*Instituto Nacional de Innovación y Transferencia en Tecnología Agropecuaria*, INTA).

## 2.3 South-South cooperation

By the end of April 2014, the consultation process under the *ad-hoc* technical committee led to a formal request to FAO to organize a Mesoamerican workshop. The request highlighted the need to strengthen the *ad-hoc* technical committee of Costa Rica in support of the UNFCCC reporting process and the need to involve other countries of the region.

Following the request from Costa Rica and in preparation of the Mesoamerican workshop, FAO organised several video teleconferences with the *ad-hoc* technical committee in order to facilitate dialogue and identify capacity development activities.

FAO, in collaboration with the government of Costa Rica, organized the [Mesoamerican workshop on national emission inventories and mitigation plans in agriculture & land-use, land-use change and forestry](#)<sup>5</sup>, 21–23 July 2014 in San José. The aim of the workshop was to acknowledge technical and institutional capacities and to identify gaps for the preparation and presentation of the national GHG inventories and BUR for the Agriculture and Land use, Land-use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) sectors. The workshop was jointly organized with the UN-REDD Programme and the Reinforcing REDD+ and South-South Cooperation Project. FAO's principal role was to facilitate dialogue and identify capacity development activities. Fifty-six (56) representatives from 15 countries participated in this workshop. During the workshop, Costa Rica shared their experience and lesson learnt on the work done for the National Census of Agriculture, the national GHG inventory and the institutional arrangements to coordinate both the agriculture and land use sectors in support of rural planning.

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<sup>5</sup> A Spanish version of the workshop report is available from: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4221s.pdf>

Just after the Mesoamerican workshop, FAO organized a dedicated meeting (23 July 2014) with all members from the *ad-hoc* technical committee from Costa Rica and other two pilot countries (Mexico and Uruguay). The aim was to initiate a face-to-face dialogue with FAO in order to identify specific capacity development needs and priorities with the countries.

As a result, in February 2015, the *ad-hoc* technical committee of Costa Rica shared with FAO a work plan for 2015–2016. The identified priority activities focused on improving national statistical processes related to the generation of statistics that can support monitoring and reporting of GHG emissions for the AFOLU sector.

### 3. Conclusion

FAO has successfully used all technical resources and know-how available within FAO Headquarters, FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean and FAO country-office to support Costa Rica. During the last three years, FAO has had the opportunity to address country demand by developing different products (e.g. manual).

The support provided by FAO allowed individuals and national institutions to enhance their knowledge about conceptual and methodological requirements to estimate national GHG emissions, as well as to learn about the [FAOSTAT Emissions database](#) and the [AFOLU Emissions Analysis Tools](#).

Thanks to FAO's effective facilitation and consistent coaching, Costa Rica created an *ad-hoc* technical committee bringing together all the major institutions involved in reporting on GHG for the AFOLU sector (INEC, MINAE and MAG). This has enabled a constructive progress and strong collaboration with FAO's climate mitigation team, with FAO acting as facilitator, and Costa Rica in the lead. The *ad-hoc* technical committee strengthens Costa Rica's institutional set-up for more sustainable national reporting processes. The *ad-hoc* technical committee will be institutionalized into a formal structure within a broader national monitoring system on land use and ecosystem to be launched in 2016.

Costa Rica represents a strong example of country ownership and leadership that supports the enabling environment for lasting change under the UNFCCC reporting process for the AFOLU sector. Raising awareness of the importance of statistics for the GHG monitoring and reporting led to the inclusion of this theme, as well as the mitigation and adaptation one, as part of the national statistical agenda.

FAO is now supporting Costa Rica through a Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) to establish an Integrated System of Agricultural Statistics and generate a system of agricultural surveys. In an integrated agricultural statistics system, the national census of agriculture has provided sampling frames for the agricultural surveys in Costa Rica. FAO is also supporting the development of a national system to monitor land cover, land use and ecosystems.

