



SOUTHERN AFRICAN CONFEDERATION OF AGRICULTURAL UNIONS

ANNUAL CONFERENCE CONCEPT NOTE

DATE: 27th – 28th of MAY 2019

VENUE: AFECC GLORIA HOTEL, MAPUTO, MOZAMBIQUE

THEME: “TAKING STOCK OF SOUTHERN AFRICA’S CLIMATE SMART AGRICULTURE (CSA)

AGENDA: WHAT ARE THE PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE?”

INTRODUCTION

As has become common practice, the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU)¹ organises a conference as a prelude to its Annual General Meeting (AGM). These conferences are designed to inform and educate the leadership (CEOs and Presidents) of its members on key developments and issues which are considered important for their economic activities, the development of agriculture in the region, and for the members to develop common views and responses on issues emerging from presentations and discussions. The conferences, which are open to interested stakeholders and the press, are primarily based on presentations from various experts, followed by debates and discussions. Themes of previous conferences have focused on land issues; genetically modified organisms (GMOs); youth, technology and agricultural transformation, envisioning future farming skills; and trade as a driver for agricultural transformation. The theme for the 2019 annual conference is “Taking stock of southern Africa’s Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) agenda: What are the prospects for the future?”

BACKGROUND

Projections based on population growth and food consumption patterns indicate that by 2050 agricultural production will need to increase by at least 70% to meet consumer food demand. In sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), where growth in agricultural productivity has been sluggish for several years, meeting these production goals will be more daunting given the effects of climate change. Therefore, urgent solutions are needed to strengthen farmers’ resilience and raise productivity in a sustainable manner, making agriculture less susceptible to extreme weather events. One option is Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA), a concept that has gained considerable traction due to its capability to deliver on the above expectations, including the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions where possible.

As catastrophic weather events are becoming more frequent and continue to negatively affect the agricultural sector, southern African countries have aligned themselves with several continental and global commitments, including the 2014 Malabo declaration, 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, which are all calling for increased adoption of CSA practices. Despite such initiatives,

¹ SACAU is a membership-based organisation that represents the interests of farmers in southern Africa. Its core membership is open to national farmers’ unions based in the region. It currently has 18 members from 12 countries in southern Africa: Botswana Farmers’ Association (BOFA), Lesotho National Farmers Union (LENAFU), Coalition Paysanne de Madagascar (CPM), Confederation des Agriculteurs Malagasy (FEKTRITAMA), Fikambanana Fampivoarana ny Tantsaha African (FIFATA), Farmers Union of Malawi (FUM), National Smallholder Farmers’ Association of Malawi (NASFAM), União Nacional de Camponeses (UNAC), Namibia Agricultural Union (NAU), Namibia National Farmers Union (NNFU), Seychelles Farmers Association (SEYFA), African Farmers’ Association of South Africa (AFASA), Agri-South Africa (AgriSA), Swaziland National Agricultural Union (SNAU), Agricultural Council of Tanzania (ACT), Zambia National Farmers Union (ZNFU), Commercial Farmers Union of Zimbabwe (CFU) and Zimbabwe Farmers Union (ZFU).

the uptake of CSA in southern Africa is currently limited. This is partly attributed to existing institutions, policies, regulations, and programmes, which in most southern African countries do not provide a clear and concise roadmap to deal with climate risk and are generally not conducive for promoting CSA related investments. Such shortcomings often preclude producers and other actors along the agricultural value chain from accessing a range of climate smart products and services. A conducive environment would allow, for instance, public and private sectors' participation in various interventions, including provision of quality and affordable climate smart inputs and equipment, innovative finance and risk management solutions, capacity building of farmers to improve their adaptability to climate change, facilitating farmers' access to improved and affordable storage facilities to reduce food losses, as well as to remunerative markets and other related infrastructure.

The 2019 conference is, therefore, designed to discuss diverse topical issues related to CSA and take stock of southern Africa's achievements (or lack thereof) towards scaling the adoption of CSA practices. The event will be structured in a manner that enables SACAU members to take informed decisions in their future engagements with policy makers and other stakeholders on CSA matters that are pertinent to their economic activities, including the livestock and aquaculture sub-sectors that have often been overlooked in climate change and CSA discussions. Farmers will also use this event to improve their comprehension of the policy and investment environment required to promote the adoption of CSA on a wide scale.

This conference will bring together the leadership of National Farmers' Organisations/Unions in southern Africa, representatives of intergovernmental agencies, international development agencies, the private sector, researchers and development partners and climate change experts, amongst others.

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

The conference seeks to achieve the following key objectives:

- To provide an opportunity for farmer leaders in southern Africa to better understand the CSA concept, policy environment and public and private sector investments required to promote adoption of CSA practices on a wide scale; and
- To improve farmer leaders' understanding of the agriculture and climate change nexus and appreciation of resilient and sustainable farming methods as well as innovative risk management solutions.

CONFERENCE STRUCTURE

The conference structure is designed to encourage dialogue, debates, sharing of experiences and networking by all participants. There will be research and experience-based presentations, panel and plenary discussions. Key areas for discussion are highlighted below.

TOPICAL ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

1. Are public sector investments in CSA near enough in southern Africa? – Where are the shortfalls?

Scaling up CSA requires supportive public policies and institutions that create an enabling environment to trigger the desired transformation in agricultural and food systems. Apart from providing backbone infrastructure, the public sector has the responsibility to shape the environment to appropriately incentivise scaled-up CSA related investments by the private sector as well as farmers. This session will make a critical review of whether the public sector in southern Africa is living up to expectations in this regard. If not, where are the shortfalls, and what needs to be done? Deliberations will be guided by the following questions: As wider adoption of CSA requires the involvement of a range of stakeholders, including farmers and farmers' organisations, are all players involved in the design, implementation and other subsequent processes of CSA related interventions? How climate smart are the region's current and future investment programmes? As the region continues to battle with a relatively high unemployment rate, how do employment creation policies and programmes interface with global climate management objectives?

2. **Are there right policy incentives to crowd in private sector investment to improve CSA adoption in southern Africa?**

It is generally contended that the private sector has a fundamental role to play in helping the food and agricultural sector address climate change related challenges as well as the need to satisfy food and nutritional requirements of the world's growing population. The central question, however, which will be the main focus of this session, is whether the private sector itself recognises a solid business case for building adaptive capacity among farmers and investing in climate-resilient supply chains in the region. What public policy interventions are being implemented to scale up private sector CSA related investments? What policy proposals does the private sector have to increase their presence and efforts? Which areas should be prioritised, and why?

3. **Livestock in the CSA discourse: Is this sub-sector getting its due attention?**

Livestock products are an important agricultural commodity for food security as they provide approximately 33% of global protein consumption. Due to human population growth, rise in per capita income, urbanisation, and changing food consumption patterns, the demand for livestock products has tripled in the past four decades, and is projected to double by 2050. These indicators point to a need to increase protein supply, which may impact the environment and increase global warming. Despite the large degree of interdependence between crops and livestock in SSA, most CSA discussions and interventions at different levels are often biased towards crops, hence weakening emissions reduction and climate change adaptation efforts. What could be the reason(s) for side-lining the livestock sub-sector, and how can this be addressed? In view of the above, is there a compelling value proposition for livestock producers to be climate smart? This session will also broaden members' knowledge and understanding of climate smart livestock practices and technologies (including pasture management).

4. **Aquaculture in the face of climate change**

Aquaculture is among the few fastest growing food production sub-sectors globally and provides essential nutrition and income to a considerable number of households, especially where availability, and possibly, access to conventional foods is relatively low. In Africa, over 200 million consumers derive their proteins, minerals and micro-nutrients from fish and fish products, a trend largely influenced by consumers' appreciation of the associated nutrition benefits. The increasing demand for fish has created opportunities for re-inventing commercial aquaculture development across the continent. As a result of the limited prominence accorded to this sub-sector in the climate change discourse, information and knowledge on how aquaculture compares to conventional agricultural enterprises in terms of GHG emissions, and the extent to which it is impacted by climate change is scant. This session is particularly designed to address this knowledge gap among farmers in the region. Further deliberations will highlight policy interventions that can help aquaculture-dependent communities build their adaptive capacity, using evidence from across the globe.

5. **Current climate change financing mechanisms are not working for the farmer: What are the gaps and what needs to be done?**

Despite sharing little responsibility for global warming, farmers in developing countries are the most vulnerable to climate change and disproportionately suffer from its effects. Finance is arguably one of the key requirements for farmers to enhance their resilience to increasing climate variability and shocks. This session will begin by identifying available sources of climate finance and means of accessing support. Discussions will also indicate whether farmers from southern Africa are benefitting from these funds. If not, what are the underlying causes, and what remedial measures can be proposed to improve accessibility and utilisation in the future? Given the hypothesis that climate finance enables countries to adapt and mitigate better, what is the balance of funding between adaptation and mitigation, and to what extent is climate finance making an impact on CSA? What innovations would be required to enable climate finance to do more than what it is currently doing? To what extent is the provision of climate finance linked to accessibility of other complimentary services that are likely to improve farmers' resilience to climate change? Are the funded activities targeting the right leveraging points?

In view of the limited nature of climate finance, which climate smart interventions would have the greatest impact if prioritised for funding, and what implications would this have for future policies? To what extent are current financing policies in the commercial market amenable to CSA?

6. **Addressing climate change through reduction of food loss and waste**

One of the areas of increasing global concern relates to food loss and waste and the associated implications on climate change. Current estimates suggest that each year, almost a third of all food produced globally is lost or wasted, implying an extended waste of resources used for growing, processing, packaging, transporting and marketing the same food. With 14% of the southern African population estimated to be food insecure in the 2018/19 consumption year, while 30% of produced food goes to waste annually, there is a compelling case to increase efficiency in food systems. This session will deliver a wide-ranging discussion on the food waste and climate change nexus, considering potential solutions as well. What are the common foods that are wasted in the region? How much of the food waste can be attributed to climate change and its management? What could be the role of CSA in addressing climate change related food loss/waste? Any prospects and opportunities in food waste recovery along the entire chain?

7. **Recarbonising the soil – what is the value proposition for farmers?**

Soils act as a source and sink for carbon and other GHG that contribute to global warming, hence if managed sustainably, soils can play a fundamental role in climate change mitigation. Considering the large amount of carbon currently stored in soils, marginal losses would have a significant impact on the atmosphere, hence the global call to put carbon back into the soil and prevent further losses in the future. It is argued that, by virtue of being managers of land and soils, farmers are better placed to lead this process. The question, however, arising from this assertion is: What is the compelling value proposition for farmers to assume a prominent role in this area? This session is principally meant to introduce the soils carbon discussion to the farmers' organisation's agenda and increase members' awareness of potential financial and other benefits of increasing soil carbon.

8. **Enablers for wider adoption of CSA**

In ICT lies a greater part of CSA adoption. Does the southern African region have the right infrastructure to leverage ICTs? What are the emerging lessons and opportunities from programmes implemented within and outside the region? What innovations are required to unlock the constraints – role for policy, private sector and farmers' organisations?

As weather related events have become more unpredictable and occur with increasing frequency, intensity and severity, the need to introduce sustainable innovative risk management solutions cannot be overemphasised. This session will also discuss some of the tools that countries can consider in developing comprehensive climate risk management strategies and the likelihood of managing such innovations from a regional perspective.