



2017 ReSAKSS Annual Conference: A Thriving Agricultural Sector in a Changing Climate: Meeting Malabo Declaration Goals through Climate-Smart Agriculture

KEY MESSAGES

The [2017 ReSAKSS Annual Conference](#) brought together about 160 participants to discuss findings of the 2016 Annual Trends and Outlook Report (ATOR) on climate-smart agriculture (CSA) and to review progress in supporting CAADP implementation. Participants included representatives of the African Union Commission (AUC), the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA), regional economic communities, ministries of agriculture, civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, universities, international and technical organizations, and development partners. Below are key messages from the conference:

KEY MESSAGES RELATED TO CONFERENCE THEME

- The effects of climate change are expected to slow progress toward increased productivity of crop and livestock systems and improved food security in Africa south of the Sahara (SSA).
- CSA provides an *integrated framework* for addressing challenges presented by climate change by offering a set of approaches that aim to achieve three related objectives: i) sustainably increase agricultural productivity and incomes, ii) build resilience of food systems and farming livelihoods, and iii) reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with agriculture.
- Widespread adoption of CSA practices in SSA has a positive effect on crop yields and production and induces a reduction in prices and a decrease in the number of those at risk of hunger and the number of undernourished children under five years.
- Adoption of CSA significantly increases both agricultural yields and net exports, which highlights the potential role of CSA in mitigating climate-induced risks in agricultural production and food security.
- Since the effectiveness of CSA practices depends on how widely they are adopted, it is essential to address barriers to adoption and introduce policies and incentives to overcome the barriers.
- Moreover, the effectiveness of CSA practices will require going beyond agricultural production at the farm level to consider entire value chains and relationships with other carbon-rich environments such as agroforestry.
- There are no silver bullets: climate smartness is highly dependent on local context and therefore broad-brush targeting of CSA interventions will not work.
- Analysis shows an inverse relationship (*unholy cross*) between profitability and adoption of CSA soil fertility management practices. Undoing the “*unholy cross*” will require increasing adoption of CSA by increasing the capacity of extension agents to provide advisory services on CSA, providing smallholder farmers with marketing advisory services, and improving farmers’ access to markets.
- “Blind farming,” i.e. farming without soil knowledge, is highly inefficient and exacerbates the challenges of addressing climate change. Thus, precision agriculture including soil analysis should be a key part of agricultural development and any risk management toolbox.



- Formal weather insurance can help smallholder farmers overcome barriers to CSA adoption by reducing risk and uncertainty associated with extreme weather events. The private sector has a role to play in scaling up formal insurance for farmers.
- It is essential to consider synergies and trade-offs among gender, nutrition, and climate change in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of CSA approaches. This will help to ensure gender equality in the adoption of CSA and improve the effectiveness of CSA by maximizing the contribution of both men and women and considering implications of CSA practices for nutrition.
- Ecosystem-based adaptation and CSA approaches should not be viewed as silo climate resilience strategies but rather as part of an integrated solution for maximizing productivity of agricultural and food systems in order to achieve socioeconomic transformation in Africa.
- AUC/NPCA noted that findings of the 2016 ATOR provide a solid evidence-base on CSA for informing the current design of national agriculture investment plans (NAIPs).

PROGRESS ON CAADP IMPLEMENTATION

- CAADP processes have been widely implemented across the continent. Moreover, countries that started implementing CAADP early have implemented most of the processes which are considered to safeguard success.
- Most CAADP indicators have trended in the expected direction since 2003. General improvements over time have been observed in agricultural productivity and value-added growth, intra-African agricultural trade, and reduction of poverty, child malnutrition, and adult undernourishment.
- Only a handful of countries achieved the 10 percent CAADP budget share target in 2008-2016. The absolute level of public agricultural expenditures declined during 2008-2016 due in part to the global financial crisis in 2008.
- ReSAKSS and IFPRI have been providing countries with a technical assistance package for next generation NAIP formulation that includes i) a NAIP toolkit document; ii) training of over 200 local experts to provide analysis on various Malabo Declaration themes; and iii) analytical support to establish baselines and examine required targets to meet Malabo agricultural growth and poverty reduction goals.
- Thus, AUC/NPCA will meet with RECs following the conference to come up with a NAIP roadmap with clear objectives and timelines that can align well with country processes. A key goal of the AUC/NPCA will be to ensure that by the next Biennial Review (BR) all countries have refreshed or formulated next generation NAIPs.
- Cross-country learning during NAIP formulation is important for example in learning how other countries are bringing in the private sector to support NAIP implementation, addressing Malabo/CAADP targets, and ensuring that the process is inclusive and country owned.
- The coordination role played by RECs was important in helping to move the BR process across countries. Moreover, the process was a collective effort involving many stakeholders starting with key leadership from AUC/NPCA working in collaboration with RECs, member states, and several technical partners.



- The role of non-state actors, especially civil society and the private sector, should be broadened during the next BR cycle and non-state actors should be more proactive in supporting the process, playing an advocacy role, and helping to reduce any disconnect between technical and political actors.
- There is need to strengthen data collection and analysis systems in countries and promote country ownership of the process including through countries having dedicated budget lines to finance the BR process. There is also need to enhance donor alignment and coordination mechanisms like agriculture joint sector reviews and agriculture sector working groups.
- Mobilization of local expertise is necessary to help bridge the research and policy divide by linking the supply of data, knowledge, and analytical capacities to policymaking.
- The setting up of a local analytical network as part of Senegal's Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (SAKSS) underscored the need for a well-coordinated process starting from the selection of members based on experiences and expertise to the signing of a collaboration contract. Other key ingredients for success include frequent engagement with members to build their ownership of the network and adequate budget and human resources to operationalize the network.

