



June 2015 Issue: Updates and News Alert

1. Towards the development of a Practical Guide for Scaling up Climate Smart Agriculture in Africa

A group of climate smart agriculture (CSA) experts met in South Africa in May 2015 to deliberate on the development of a Climate Smart agriculture practical guide. Spearheaded by NEPAD, the guide is divided into three-four segments. It will consist of a set of tools, which will help users to determine which farming techniques, when practiced individually or in combinations, leads to improved adaptation and resilience of the farming systems to the effects of climate change. The intended purpose of the guide is to help users to facilitate the adaptation and adoption of CSA practices and technologies by farmers based on the farmers' own agro-ecosystems.



Dr Tobias Takavarasha, FAO Representative for SA opening the CSA Best Practices Guide workshop

The meeting discussions focused on the purpose and scope of the practical Guide. The different



Arnesen Odd - Senior Advisor, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation closing the workshop

segments were led by key organizations thus: Segment 1: Community profiling of climatic risks to agriculture by ACT; Segment 2 on Climate smart farming technologies and practices led by CIMMYT; Segment 3 on Participatory selection of climate smart farming technologies and practices by CGIAR; and Segment 4 on Methodologies and approaches for CSA extension by FAO.

A roadmap was developed that would see the operationalization of the Guide, as well as the monitoring and tracking of Climate

Smart Agriculture uptake.

For **more information** on this guide go to: www.nepad.org or <http://tinyurl.com/actnewsupdate>

2. The Value of Integrating Cover Crops and Livestock

According to [Drovers Cattle Network](#) (*June issue of Cow/Calf Producer*), while incorporation of cover crops into crop rotation plans is becoming increasingly popular, many growers still wonder whether the practice represents a trend or a fad. They have heard how planting non-commodity cover crops, within an optimal cropping system, can boost farm profitability by improving soil health, increasing plant nutrient availability and reducing crop pests. They have heard how the ultimate payoff comes through reduced inputs and increased yields from subsequent cash crops. They have heard, too, that returns on investment in cover crops can be variable and typically come slowly, over a period of years. Of course, some



growers do realize near-term returns from planting cover crops. While seeking the same long-term soil-building benefits, they also use cover crops as forage for cattle. Typically, cover crops yield forage during periods that these cattle producers need it most to extend the grazing season and reduce or even eliminate their dependence on harvested feed, says Drovers Cattle Network.

For **more information:**

http://www.cattlenetwork.com/advice-and-tips/cowcalf-producer/cover-crops-and-cattle?ss=advice_and_tips.cow/calf_producer or

<http://www.no-tillfarmer.com/articles/4817-the-value-of-integrating-cover-crops-and-livestock>

3. African Development Bank Launches Payments for Ecosystem Services Report



9th June 2015: The African Development Bank (AfDB) has released the first report, titled 'Payment for Environmental Services (PES): A promising tool for natural resources management in Africa,' of an AfDB-Climate Investment Funds (CIF) knowledge series that will gather and share initial lessons in implementing and financing green and inclusive growth projects in Africa.

During the launch event of the report, Kurt Lonsway, Manager of the Environment and Climate Change Division of the AfDB, stated that, while PES is still in its infancy on the continent, “it is crucial to gather and share the lessons learned and build an agenda for PES development in Africa.” Among their recommendations, the report's authors highlight the need to encourage project developers to delegate PES activities to local communities, noting it helps lower transaction costs and strengthens the sustainability of the mechanism. They also stress the need to ensure that PES schemes contribute to Africa's sustainable development agenda by being “explicitly designed to bring benefits to the poor” and making the “necessary investments to make local livelihood systems compatible with conservation objectives.

For more information: <http://nr.iisd.org/news/african-development-bank-launches-payments-for-ecosystem-services-report>

The publication can be accessed via:

http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/Payment_for_Environmental_Services_-_A_promising_tool_for_natural_resources_management_in_Africa_-_06_2015.pdf

4. Conservation agriculture vital in tackling climate change effects

“**Zambia is Getting it Right**” According to Zambia Daily Mail, June 29th 2015, The Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Given Lubinda says Conservation Agriculture (CA) is a strategic approach in mitigating effects of climate change, preserving soil, and water resources by farmers.

Mr Lubinda said Government recognises the funding provided by the European Union (EU) in the CA Scaling Up (CASU) programme, and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), under the climate change adaptation in the Eastern and Southern Africa, in the promotion of the agriculture sector in Zambia. He said this during the National CA Task

Force (NACTF) general meeting that there is need for stakeholders to support initiatives that help increase agricultural production, income, and addresses food insecurities.

Government has attached great importance to the agriculture sector and will continue to support initiatives of this nature that target the improvement of small-scale rural farmers' livelihood. "I, therefore, urge Zambian farmers to adopt CA to enjoy the various benefits that come with this technology, such as increased yields, improvement of soil fertility, and moisture retention, among others," Mr Lubinda said

Read More on: <https://www.daily-mail.co.zm/?p=34797>

Other related news: <https://www.daily-mail.co.zm/?p=31943>

5. Conservation Agriculture takes centre stage in Namibia

According to Namibia Economists on Friday, 12th June, 2015 by MELBA CHIPEPO, The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF) has launched its Comprehensive Conservation Agriculture Programme for Namibia 2015 to 2019.



Minister of Agriculture Water and Forestry Hon. John Mutorwa

The current food security situation in Namibia serves as a reminder that CA is an essential crop production system base for enhancing the production of crops and livestock, livelihoods and the quality of life of farmers across Namibia. "The agriculture sector in Namibia ideally needs to grow or is expected to grow by 4% a year, to meet the food requirements for the country's growing population. However, the expansion of cultivated areas to compensate for low yields, the exploitation of low nutrients status soils, without restoration of soil fertility, changing climate patterns, including low, unpredictable and erratic rainfalls, and lack of well-adopted technologies, have been long identified, as some of the major challenges of soil fertility management in Namibia," said Minister of Agriculture Water and Forestry, Honourable John Mutorwa. The programme aims to increase awareness and knowledge of CA among stakeholders, including farmers, extension workers, researchers and policy as well as decision makers; increase farmers' and extension worker's skills of practising CA; to ensure that farmers have sustained access to CA equipment, inputs, markets and services, to develop standards, then monitor and evaluate adoption and impact of the programme.

For more information: <http://www.economist.com.na/2011-12-07-11-05-31/agriculture/7879-conservation-agriculture-takes-centre-stage>

6. Are you an ACT alumnus? If yes, contribute to the impact study for ACT trainings on Conservation Agriculture in Africa

Capacity building is one of the thematic focus areas of ACT in its thrust to promote Conservation Agriculture in Africa. Over the past 16 years, ACT has directly trained about 1,000 research and

extension workers and some 100,000 farmers in collaboration with partners. The geographical coverage is some 20 Africa countries spanning from Eastern, Southern and West Africa.



The Network is desirous to know how these training courses have made impacts on trainees and communities and use the feedback to develop more response courses over more inclusive target groups. If it happens you have been involved in any our CA training or knowledge based activities, ACT wishes to seek your opinion on how you have used the knowledge and skills gained from the training or the CA- based activity you participated in through the online survey available in the link ([structured questionnaire](#)).

Your views will be used solely for the purpose of improving the CA training and promotional programs to enhance effective promotion of the technology.

Online questionnaire is available on: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1_PE-yh8h8v77pdK4fBXSM5PX4g7VKt9L-GtDvOFbJmk/viewform?c=0&w=1 (as in the link above)

Thank you very much for taking off your valuable time to respond to this questionnaire.

7. Upcoming Events

a) 2nd Africa Ecosystem Based Adaptation for Food Security Conference 2015 (EBAFOSC 2)

Taking place under the theme, 'Re-imagining Africa's Food Security Now and into the Future under a Changing Climate,' this conference will convene a number of round-tables, discussions and plenary sessions to discuss how ecosystem based adaptation (EBA) can be used to improve food security across the continent. Sessions will address: building scalable and inclusive business models for EBA-driven agriculture; innovative financing models for EBA-driven agriculture; the role of youth, women, and information technology in EBA-driven agriculture; the roles of education, the private sector and South-South cooperation in advancing EBA; innovations to reduce post-harvest food loss; and climate change and resilience through EBA as well as policy frameworks and implementation.

Dates: 30-31 July 2015 **Venue:** UN Complex **Location:** Nairobi, Kenya

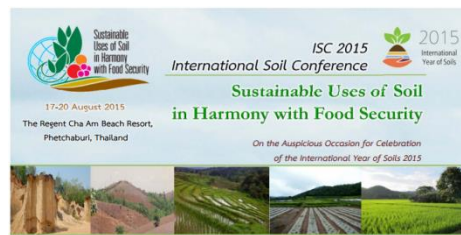
E-mail: afsac2015@aknet.org **www:** <http://www.afsac2.aknet.org/>

For more information: <http://climate-l.iisd.org/events/2nd-africa-ecosystem-based-adaptation-for-food-security-conference-2015-ebafosc-2/>

b) International Soil Conference on Sustainable Uses of Soil in Harmony with Food Security on 18-20 August 2015 at Cha Am, Thailand

Land Development Department (LDD), Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives Thailand, in collaboration with International Union of Soil Sciences, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Institut de recherche pour le developement, Asian Development Bank, Soil and Fertilizer Society of Thailand, Soil and Water Conservation Society of Thailand and

Kasetsart University organize and will host the International Soil Conference on Sustainable Uses of Soil in Harmony with Food Security on **18-21 August, 2015** at The Regent Cha Am Beach Resort Phetchaburi, Thailand.



For more information about the conference and importance dates:

- ☞ <http://www.act-africa.org/events.php?com=67&item=251#.VUcUw9Kqqko>
- ☞ <http://www.apaari.org/events/isc2015.html>; http://www.ldd.go.th/WEB_ISC2015/Index.html

c) No-Till Conservation Agriculture Conference 2015



No-Till Club in its pursue to actively promote and facilitate environmentally friendly, economically sustainable conservation farming, for the benefit of all is proud to present another conference to assist you in your pursuit of a more sustainable farming enterprise! To be held on 1st to

3rd September 2015 at ATKV Drakensville, near Bergville with the theme “*Reap the Results of a Responsible Attitude in Agriculture*”



For more information and **registration**:

<http://notillclub.com/index.php/events/icalrepeat.detail/2015/09/01/12/-/no-till-club-conference-2015> or contact SANDRA 082 472 5987 | 033 330 2062 | ntcsandra@gmail.com | Fax: 086 579 6926

d) Reminder: Resource links for updates

- ⇒ Be checking on this link for constant updates: <http://www.act-africa.org/news.php?com=68&com2=6&com3=>
- ⇒ You can join the CA Community of Practice (CA-CoP)- moderated by Amir Kassam http://www.fao.org/ag/ca/CA_CoP.html
- ⇒ See May 2015 CA-CoP postings: <https://listserv.fao.org/cgi-bin/wa?A1=ind1505&L=CA-Cop-L>

..... *And for much more visit our website www.act-africa.org/newsroom*

Eng. Saidi Mkomwa

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African Conservation Tillage Network

Conservation Agriculture for Improved Livelihoods and a Better Environment

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