AFRICAN CONSERVATION TILLAGE NETWORK
Partnering for Economic Growth, Improved Food Security and a Better Environment

02
February 2018

Updates & News Alert

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Editor's view: Introducing the February, 2018 CA Alert

In this February issue of the ACT News Alert, we remind our readers not to miss the Second Africa Congress on Conservation Agriculture (2ACCA) to be held 9-12 October 2018 in Johannesburg South Africa. With an expected attendance of more than 600 participants, the 2ACCA initiative will bring together expert knowledge, information, and insights from practitioners from across different sectors and interests groups from the public, private and civil society sectors.

The congress process ensures there is something of interest, something to learn, and something to contribute for every participant by characterising it with the following elements:

- Plenary High Level panel discussions and Thematic Sessions (including Agenda 2063, SDGs COP 21 & 22, and Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization (SAM).
- Special Farmers' Session
- Special session on Reporting Progress on First Africa Congress on Conservation Agriculture (1ACCA)
- Case Studies and special working groups (thematic parallel sessions)
- Self-organized meetings around key CA-related issues (side-events)
- Exhibition Booths and Poster Sessions
- Equipment and machinery displays
- Field visits to CA practicing farmers, CA equipment manufacturers, etc.
- Awards and Gala Dinner
- Optional Tours

The event is organised by ACT in collaboration with the Government of South Africa, African Union Commission, the NEPAD Agency, Regional Economic Communities, International NGOs, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), European Union

(EU), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN and various bilateral and multilateral partners.

For an Early Bird registration or more information about the 2ACCA, go to the congress website www.africacacongress.org or write to us at info@africacacongress.org.

The 29 top experts in Conservation Agriculture, top educators in agriculture and natural resource management sciences, and in curriculum development from 11 countries concluded that CA is ecosystem-based agriculture that is both productive and climate smart. **They were however surprised that despite these good attributes, CA is hardly taught in Africa.** Their deliberations and aspirations are captured in the proceedings that are part of this alert.

The alert does also feature a publication and guidelines on management of Fall Armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda* (J E Smith)) (FAW) in maize. Faced with the relentless spread of FAW across most of Africa and the infestation of millions of hectares of maize, most in the hands of smallholder farmers, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and partners launched comprehensive guide on the integrated pest management of the FAW.

Similarly, CIMMYT have launched a comprehensive integrated pest management (IPM)-based technical guide, and the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (icipe) has made a publication on climate-adapted push-pull system as an effective control to FAW.

However, some of the well-written hands-on advice provided by the guides, advocate for practices (such as burning of crop residues or tillage) which can reduce soil cover and organic matter, aspects that can further reduce productivity and production. Readers are encouraged to digest and share their views on the shared guides/advice.

The alert also features an article by Prof. Amir Kassam (Chairperson, International Advisory Panel for Africa - ICAAP-Africa) on the alarming rate of land degradation Worldwide and the efforts of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

The concept of land degradation neutrality (LDN) introduced by the UNCCD is intended to halt the ongoing loss of healthy land through land degradation, combined with measures to reverse past degradation. The article presents scientific and empirical evidence clearly showing that the root causes of soil degradation in agricultural land use and decreasing productivity are closely related to the soil life disrupting agricultural paradigm based on mechanical soil tillage.

The article put forward the notion that agricultural land use based on Conservation Agriculture (CA) systems appears to be one of the best solutions for any size farmer to contribute to the objectives of LDN to combat degradation and desertification, pursue sustainable agriculture intensification, and harness a wide range of ecosystem services from agricultural landscapes.

This month's issue covers articles from the green highlighted countries of Africa.

The February 2018 news alert does also feature CA publications and upcoming events. ACT acknowledges the various sources, authors, reporters, organizations and practitioners whose articles appear in this February 2018 issue. We encourage you to share your CA views and articles capturing the status and extent of adaptation and adoption of CA in any Country in Africa or beyond for sharing with others. Please submit articles, links or views to kim@act-africa.org. Use the **#conservationagriculture, #africamechanize** to share links on articles, journals, news on CA and tag us on twitter **@ACTillage.**

Apologies for any cross posting of some articles.

Article sources by country for the February 2018 CA News Alert

Strengthening Education and Innovation in Conservation Agriculture for Improved livelihoods in Africa

Conservation Agriculture (CA) is a venerable, old age practice by farmers worldwide that rests on three pillars, namely minimum mechanical soil disturbance, continuous soil cover and crop rotation (diversification). There are many global efforts and activities to research, assemble and share knowledge on CA. There are also many successful stories on CA and current indications are that it ranks high as one of the ways of adapting agriculture to climate change. It is considered as an essential component of the recently coined Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA). Ultimately, CA is the sure way of achieving zero hunger and can propel the achievement of food security goals in the world. The CA adoption rate in the world is currently growing at an estimated 10 million ha annually worldwide.

In Africa, ACT has been at the forefront in championing the adoption of Conservation Agriculture and is the leading institution in developing, synthesizing and sharing knowledge on Conservation Agriculture. In partnership with Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education (ANAFE), a workshop on "Strengthening Education and Innovation in Conservation Agriculture for Improved livelihoods in Africa" was organised on 4th – 6th December 2017. The focus of the workshop was on Conservation Agriculture in Africa whose main goal was to come up with a curriculum on Conservation Agriculture.

A total of 29 participants from 11 countries were specially selected to ensure the presence of top experts in Conservation Agriculture (CA), top educators in agriculture and natural resource management sciences, and in curriculum development.

Workshop participants agreed on the need to provide CA education at different levels, starting with educators in Agriculture and Natural Resource sciences, relevant policy makers, farmers, extensionists and entrepreneurs. To achieve this, participants initiated a process for the development of a model curriculum on Conservation Agriculture that would be adapted to the different needs at different scales. The model curriculum will be available by March 2018.

Further, participants developed the outline of a teaching manual and launched a competitive process for prospective authors to develop the contents. It was agreed that the manual would be based on existing knowledge and would be available in 2018. Another key outcome of the workshop was a decision of the participants to form the Education Chapter of Conservation Agriculture and therefore actively support ACT and ANAFE in their efforts to advance knowledge and learning through research and practice.

The workshop was the first of its kind. The thirst to learn more about CA and the enthusiasm to take it into the classroom was great. The new curriculum and learning resources will be available for use in 2018. For more information on the proceedings Read More

"The thirst to learn more about Conservation Agriculture and the enthusiasm to take it into the classroom was great. The new curriculum and learning resources will be available for use in 2018."

Tackling Fall Armyworm in Africa head-on

Fighting FAW in an integrated, ecological and sustainable way

Faced with the infestation of millions of hectares of maize, most in the hands of smallholder farmers, and the relentless spread of Fall Armyworm (FAW) across most of Africa, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) launched today a comprehensive guide on the integrated pest management of the FAW on maize.

The guide was developed with a host of partners: International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE), Lancaster University, Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International (CABI), Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária (EMBRAPA), Colegio de la Frontera Sur (ECOSUR) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

It will help smallholder farmers and frontline agricultural staff to manage FAW more effectively amidst fears that FAW may push more people into hunger. Central and Southern Africa are particularly on high alert, as the main maize growing season is currently underway in these regions. Based on a learning-by-doing approach and designed for Farmers Field Schools, the guide is packed with hands-on advice. It provides support for a correct identification of this new foe for African farmers, and offers options to manage it in an integrated, ecological and sustainable way.

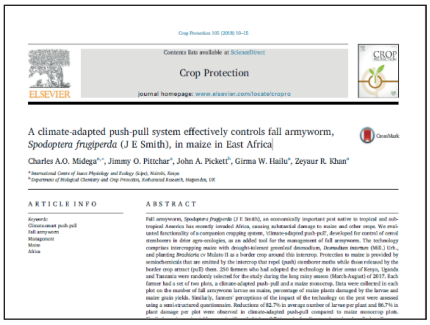
"We know that farmer education and community action are critical in best managing FAW, and curbing its spread as much as possible," said Maria Helena Semedo, FAO Deputy Director-General.

"The guide builds on the experiences of farmers and researchers from the Americas who have been dealing with the pest for centuries as well on new technology and lessons learnt so far in Africa. It gives African farmers and frontline agricultural workers the practical advice they need to tackle FAW head-on," added Semedo.

FAO also calls on those African countries likely to be affected soon, given the current distribution of FAW in Africa, to get prepared by re-enforcing early warning systems at community level, raising awareness among farmers, and using available materials, such as the guide. The guide can be accessed here.

Similarly, CIMMYT have also launched a comprehensive integrated pest management (IPM)-based technical guide produced by international experts will help scientists, extension agents and farmers to tackle the fall armyworm. The guide titled " Fall Armyworm in Africa: A Guide for Integrated Pest Management", jointly produced by Feed the Future, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT) and the CGIAR Research Program on Maize (MAIZE), provides tips on fall armyworm identification as well as technologies and practices for effective control. It is intended as a comprehensive, expert-approved, IPM-based technical guide that can be used as an up-to-date decision support tool for sustainable management of the pest, especially in maize-based cropping systems. The development of the manual was identified as one of the high-priority interventions by an action plan that emerged out of the Stakeholders Consultation Workshop on Fall Armyworm, organized jointly by CIMMYT, the Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in Nairobi, Kenya (April 27-28, 2017). Download the guide here.

Further, research carried out by ICIPE (Midega *et al.*, 2018), with the title ***"A climate-adapted push-pull system effectively controls fall armyworm,***


Crop Protection

A climate-adapted push-pull system effectively controls fall armyworm, *Spodoptera frugiperda* (J E Smith), in maize in East Africa

Charles A.O. Midega[a,*], Jimmy O. Pittchar[a], John A. Pickett[b], Girma W. Hailu[a], Zeyaur R. Khan[a]

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Spodoptera frugiperda (J E Smith), in maize in East Africa" indicate effective reduction of infestation by fall armyworm with the climate-adapted push-pull system, results in significantly lower damage levels on maize in the East African country trials. The study demonstrates that climate-adapted push-pull technology developed for control of cereal stem borers and striga weed (Khan et al., 2010) effectively controls fall armyworm in smallholder farming systems in East Africa. The technology thus has potential for expansion in the African continent to manage key pests affecting cereal production in the continent. The ability of the technology to manage such a devastating pest, together with the positive perceptions of the smallholder farmers, where it was already implemented for stem borer and striga control, indicate its stability and resilience, and confirms that it is an ecologically sustainable and socially acceptable approach to pest management. Read More

In light of the above developments, ACT and FAO are organising for the Conservation Agriculture Regional Working Group (CARWG) training and exposure tour to CA, push-pull and smallholder mechanisation sites in Kenya. Participants are expected to learn more on FAW management with push-pull and CA, and use of smallholder mechanisation (two wheel tractors) for CA. For more information on the training visit: https://goo.gl/KFPfGB

Can Conservation Agriculture Contribute to Implementation of Land Degradation Neutrality?

Prof. Amir Kassam shares on the alarming rate of land degradation Worldwide and the efforts of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). The concept of land degradation neutrality (LDN) introduced by the UNCCD is intended to halt the ongoing loss of healthy land through land degradation, combined with measures to reverse past degradation. The article presents scientific and empirical evidence clearly showing that the root causes of soil degradation in agricultural land use and decreasing productivity are closely related to the soil life disrupting agricultural paradigm based on mechanical soil tillage.

For the most part agricultural soils worldwide have been mechanically de-structured, agricultural landscapes are kept exposed and unprotected, and soil life is starved of organic matter, thus reduced in biological activity, and is deprived of habitat. The loss of soil biodiversity, damaged soil structure and its self-recuperating capacity or resilience, increased compaction of topsoil and sub-soil, poor infiltration and increased water runoff and wind and water erosion, and greater infestation by insect pests, pathogens and weeds indicates the current poor state of the health of most agricultural soils.

The article puts forward the notion that agricultural land use based on Conservation Agriculture (CA) systems appears to be one of the best solutions for any size farmer to contribute to the objectives of LDN to combat degradation and desertification, pursue sustainable agriculture intensification, and harness a wide range of ecosystem services from agricultural landscapes. Read More or Download Copy

Adesina urges America to support African agriculture as a business

The President of the African Development Bank, Dr. Akinwumi Adesina has made a strong case for increased American and global investments to help unlock Africa's agriculture potential.
He made the remarks as the Distinguished Guest Speaker, at the USDA's 94th Agriculture Outlook Forum in Virginia on the theme "***The Roots of Prosperity"***.
According to Adesina, "For too long, Agriculture has been associated with what I call the three Ps - Pain, Penury, and Poverty. The fact though is that agriculture is a huge wealth-creating sector that is primed to unleash new economic opportunities that will lift hundreds of millions of people out of poverty." Read More

Malabo Declaration Biennial Review and Africa Agriculture Transformation Scorecard

In June 2014, African Union Heads of State and Government adopted the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for shared Prosperity and improved Livelihoods. Among other commitments of the Declaration, the Assembly specifically committed to mutual accountability for results and actions by conducting a biennial review that involves tracking, monitoring and reporting on the implementation progress in achieving the provisions of the Malabo Declaration. The inaugural report and the Africa Agriculture Transformation Scorecard, tracking progress of the implementation of the Malabo Declaration, will be presented to the Assembly. The Biennial Report and Africa Agriculture Transformation Scorecard comprise individual country performance scores on progress made for implementing goals set in the Malabo commitments.

Objectives:

- Create increased awareness at the highest level on the Biennial Review mechanism and the outcomes of the Africa Agriculture Transformation Scorecard;
- Discuss the best ways of positioning agriculture to secure the required investments to move the agenda forward;
- Discussing the best way of sustaining high-level engagement with Heads of State and Government on the status of agriculture using the scorecard for action and impact.

Event Outcome / Report:

- Report of Malabo Declaration Biennial Review -En
- Report of Malabo Declaration Biennial Review -Fr
- Report of Malabo Declaration Biennial Review -Ar
- Report of Malabo Declaration Biennial Review -Po

Draft conservation agriculture policy

The South Africa Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), Hon. Senzeni Zokwana approved the draft Conservation Agriculture (CA) policy for purposes of public consultation and to obtain inputs from the farming community and public. Nine provincial and one national workshops have been arranged to offer the citizens of South Africa an opportunity to provide inputs and comments on the draft CA policy. Attached is the schedule of planned workshops, the draft CA policy and a template to be used for capturing inputs and comments. He also announced that consultative workshops will be held between February and April 2018. The workshops for KwaZulu Natal will be held in the Analytical Boardroom of the Cedara Agricultural College outside Pietermaritzburg on 22 March. Any enquiries can be directed to the Directorate: Land Use and Soil Management. Read More

Science Can Reverse 'New Normal' of Hunger and Climate Disaster

For the first time in a decade, world hunger has also risen once more to affect an estimated 815 million people. Regions facing conflict in combination with the impact of droughts and floods fared the worst in parts of Africa and Asia. This, coupled with the lingering impacts of the El Niño phenomenon in 2015, has resulted in sub-Saharan Africa becoming the only region where the number of undernourished people has consistently increased since the beginning of the decade. Currently, over 30 percent of children under five are stunted – the highest rate in the world.

Nevertheless, there are signs of hope from science. Across eastern and southern Africa, investments in research for development by the Australian Centre for Agriculture Research (ACIAR) through the SIMLESA program are reducing farmers' risks and increasing the yields of maize and legumes by three and four times.

SIMLESA is promoting conservation agriculture practices that can simultaneously reduce land degradation and labour costs, improve soil fertility, and increase farmers' capacity to adapt to climate variability and change. The secret to its success has been SIMLESA's efforts in helping over 235,000 poorly resourced and highly vulnerable farmers test more productive and resilient practices that best fit their own circumstance and investment capacity. Read More

Centre aims to bridge gaps in climate smart agriculture

Africa Centre of Excellence for Climate Smart Agriculture and Biodiversity Conservation (Climate SABC) hosted by Haramaya University is aiming to train efficient agricultural and climate change experts in Africa. The Centre financed by the World Bank came to be operational in 2017 and is currently teaching 51 students drawn from Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Malawi, Tanzania and Zimbabwe in various fields of agriculture and biodiversity.

The major objective of the Centre is to produce well trained manpower that can help curb and withstand the challenges the agriculture sector faces due to climate change, says Centre leader Prof. Niguse Dechasa. Africa's agriculture is highly prone to impacts of climate change and it requires a lots of hand-work and expertise knowledge to tackle the problem. In this regard, the Centre would play an essential role in building the capacity of professionals working in the area, he adds. Read More

What's driving the growth of agricultural mechanization in Africa

Figure 1: A mechanic fixes a farm tractor in Ghana.

Agricultural mechanization—the use of machine and animal power for plowing, threshing, harvesting, and other tasks—is playing an increasingly important role in Africa's rural transformation. Rapid urbanization puts African farming systems under pressure to produce more with less labor, as more people migrate to cities or engage in rural non-farm work. In response, farmers in many parts of Africa have exhibited increased demand for mechanization. Our recent research in Ghana addresses the relationship of agricultural mechanization and economic transformation and suggests how government policies can support this process.

Several factors are behind this emerging demand for mechanization:

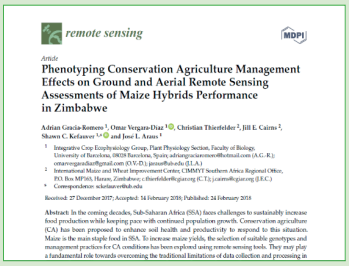
- **Rapid urbanization** leads to increased market demand for agricultural products such as cereals, which require more labour than other crops.
- **Growth of medium-sized farms**. Large farmers in Africa have historically used tractors for land preparation; now tractor ownership among medium-scale farmers has started to emerge. Tractors not only allow these farmers to expand the size of their farms, but also to provide ploughing services for nearby farmers.
- **Rising rural wages and seasonal labour shortages** have driven up demand for mechanization among smallholders. The availability of tractor ploughing services enables many small farmers to plant their crops on time.

The rising demand for mechanization and the increased number of medium-scale farmers owning tractors have created a private mechanization hiring market in Ghana and increasingly in other countries in Africa south of the Sahara, which allows tractor owners to fully utilize their machines while providing services to farmers who cannot afford their own tractors. Recent evidence from Africa and elsewhere suggests that such a market is the most efficient mechanism for supplying mechanization.

However, the mechanization market in much of Africa is still at an early stage of development, and the inevitable market failures require government action. For example, the up-front cost of purchasing a tractor is prohibitively high for many potential owners where credit markets are thin or absent. Private banks are often reluctant to lend to farmers for machinery investment, as many land tenure systems make registering collateral difficult. Likewise, tractor owners may not have enough knowledge and information to connect with potential consumers, which increases the risk of investment in a tractor. Read More

Publications

Phenotyping Conservation Agriculture Management Effects on Ground and Aerial Remote Sensing Assessments of Maize Hybrids Performance in Zimbabwe



remote sensing

MDPI

Article

Phenotyping Conservation Agriculture Management Effects on Ground and Aerial Remote Sensing Assessments of Maize Hybrids Performance in Zimbabwe

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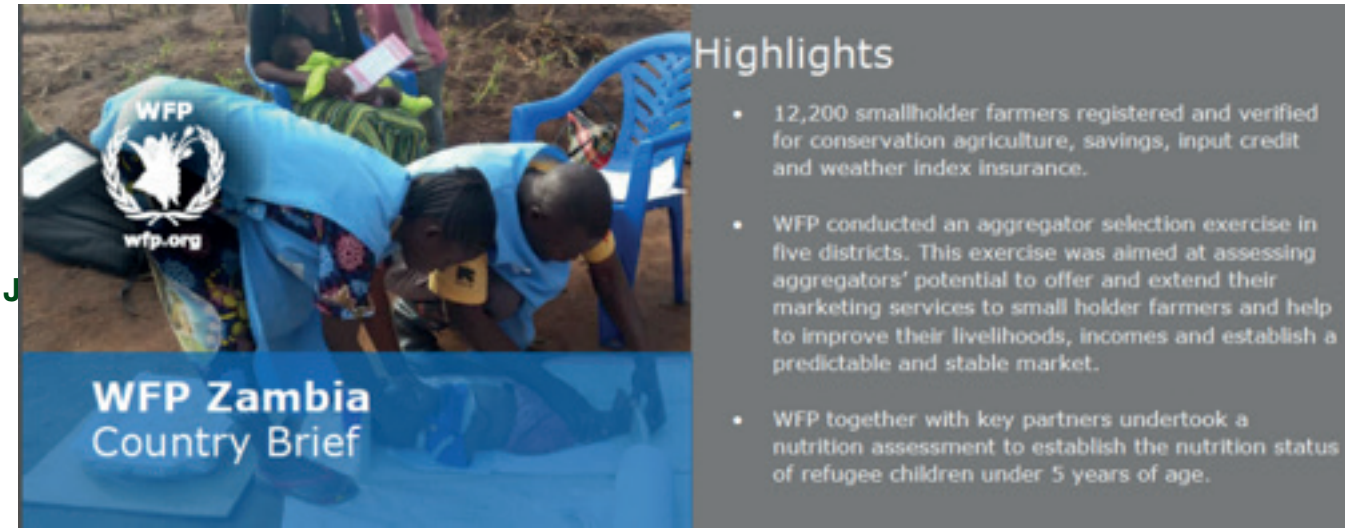
Abstract: In the coming decades, Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) faces challenges to sustainably increase food production while keeping pace with continued population growth. Conservation agriculture (CA) has been proposed to enhance soil health and productivity to respond to this situation. Maize is the main staple food in SSA. To increase maize yields, the selection of suitable genotypes and management practices for CA conditions has been explored using remote sensing tools. They may play a fundamental role towards overcoming the traditional limitations of data collection and processing in

In the coming decades, Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) faces challenges to sustainably increase food production while keeping pace with continued population growth. Conservation agriculture (CA) has been proposed to enhance soil health and productivity to respond to this situation. Maize is the main staple food in SSA. To increase maize yields, the selection of suitable genotypes and management practices for CA conditions has been explored using remote sensing tools. They may play a fundamental role towards overcoming the traditional limitations of data collection and processing in large-scale phenotyping studies. We present the result of a study in which Red-Green-Blue (RGB) and multispectral indexes were evaluated for assessing maize performance under conventional ploughing (CP) and CA practices. Eight hybrids under different planting densities and tillage practices were tested. The measurements were conducted on seedlings at ground level (0.8 m) and from an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) platform (30 m), causing a platform proximity effect on the images resolution that did not have any negative impact on the performance of the indexes. Most of the calculated indexes (Green Area (GA) and Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI)) were significantly affected by tillage conditions, increasing their values from CP to CA. Indexes derived from the RGB-images related to canopy greenness performed better at assessing yield differences, potentially due to the greater resolution of the RGB compared with the multispectral data, although this performance was more precise for CP than CA. The correlations of the multispectral indexes with yield were improved by applying a soil-mask derived from a NDVI threshold with the aim of corresponding pixels with vegetation. The results of this study highlight the applicability of remote sensing approaches based on RGB images to the assessment of crop performance and hybrid choice. [Read More]

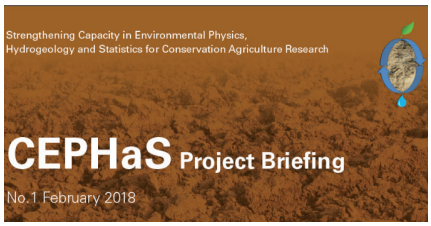
WFP Zambia Country Brief



The Rural Resilience Initiative (R4) component targets poor and food insecure households especially those cultivating less than two hectares of land who are capable of raising their productivity with improved access to yield -enhancing technologies. Half of the assisted households are run by women. Using the R4 approach, WFP providessmallholder farmers (SHFs) with access to conservation agriculture activities supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) 'Conservation Agriculture Scale Up' programme. SHFs are also given access to risk management services such as drought insurance, credit, and savings.

12,200 smallholder farmers registered and verified for conservation agriculture, savings, input credit and weather index insurance. [Read More]

Strengthening Capacity in Environmental Physics, Hydrology and Statistics for Conservation Agriculture Research (CEPHaS)



WHAT IS CEPHaS?

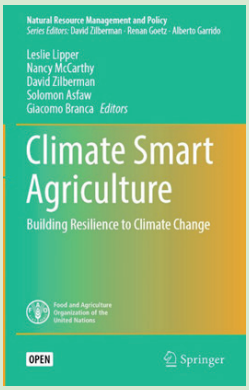
It is essential to improve the productivity of agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa while protecting land and water resources, and this is increasingly challenging in the face of climate change. There is evidence that reduced tillage, returning crop residues to the soil (for protection and to increase its carbon status) and increased crop diversity can make cropping more resilient to dry conditions. This is known as Conservation Agriculture (CA). Our understanding of the soil under CA is limited, which makes it hard to predict when and where CA will be successful. For example, how do CA practices change the soil's structure and the behaviour of soil water? Does this improve storage of water in the soil? What are the implications for groundwater resources under CA?

CEPHaS is a project to build research capacity to answer these questions. We shall use modern methods in soil physics and hydrogeology to examine soil and groundwater under CA experiments in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe, and so develop our experience and capacity as a network to answer these and similar questions on behalf of farmers, their advisers and policy makers. Read More

Foresight Africa: Top priorities for the continent in 2018

In this year's Foresight Africa, AGI scholars and invited experts delve deeply into six overarching themes that highlight areas in which African countries and their citizens are taking the lead to achieve inclusive growth. In a world where China and other emerging economies are ascendant, where cooperation on global governance is under challenge, and where free trade faces headwinds, Africa needs its own institutions to play a more assertive role in advancing the continent's agenda. The potential for a more unified Africa to create never-before-seen opportunities for trade and economic prosperity is gaining traction. Through our exploration, we hope to emphasize that Africa's future lies in its own hands and that it already has the power to reach its goals. Read More

Climate Smart Agriculture: Building Resilience to Climate Change



The climate-smart agriculture (CSA) concept is gaining considerable traction at international and national levels to meet the challenges of addressing agricultural planning under climate change. CSA is a concept that calls for integration of the need for adaptation and the possibility of mitigation in agricultural growth strategies to support food security. Several countries around the world have expressed intent to adopt CSA approach to managing their agricultural sectors. However, there is considerable confusion about what the CSA concept and approach actually involve, and wide variation in how the term is used. It is critical to build a more formal basis for the CSA concept and methodology and at the same time providing illustrations of how the concept can be applied across a range of conditions.

This book expand and formalize the conceptual foundations of CSA drawing upon theory and concepts from agricultural development, institutional and resource economics. The book is also devoted to a set of country level case studies illustrating the economic basis of CSA in terms of reducing vulnerability, increasing adaptive capacity and ex-post risk coping. It also addresses policy issues related to climate change focusing on the implications of the empirical findings for devising effective strategies and policies to support resilience and the implications for agriculture and climate change policy at national, regional and international levels. The book provide development agencies and practitioners, policymakers, civil society, research and academia as well as private sector with tested good practices and innovative approaches of promoting CSA system at country level. Read More

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- SDG Indicator 5.a.2 - Ensuring women's legal rights to land ownership and/or control
- SDG Indicator 6.4.2 - Level of water stress
- SDG Indicator 14.b.1 - Securing sustainable small-scale fisheries

Maano – Year 1 – Zambia: Pilot Project Report (2017)

Maano is a new WFP app that aims to help rural smallholder farmers sell their produce at more equitable prices. It has been piloted in Zambia with support from the government of Germany and WFP's Innovation Accelerator.

Download the app here: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.wfp.maano

To find out more, visit the Link

2018 Events

The Africa Climate Smart Agriculture Congress 6th – 7th March 2018

The inaugural Africa Climate Smart Agriculture Congress will take place on 6-7 March 2018 in Nairobi, Kenya. Organised by the Aid & International Development Forum (AIDF), the Congress brings together senior representatives from ministries of agriculture, heads of key Agri-related public institutions, UN agencies, agricultural firms, NGOs, farm associations, agriculture research and development institutes, investors, donors and the private sector.

The agenda will cover technological innovations, capacity building, innovative financing, partnerships and the use of big data to advance climate-smart agriculture practices across East Africa. The participants will discover how to secure financial investment for CSA initiatives, improve agricultural productivity and scale adoption of technological innovations in agricultural systems. Other prominent topics include ICT for agri and mAgri innovations and supporting farmers through technology, data collection and sharing. For more information: https://reliefweb.int/report/kenya/africa-climate-smart-agriculture-congress-innovations-partnerships-and-financing

The Southern Africa Conservation Agriculture Regional Working Group (CARWG) Meeting, Kenya, 19th - 22nd March 2018

The Southern Africa Conservation Agriculture Regional Working Group (CARWG) http://carwg.act-africa.org/ was established in 2007 to coordinate the activities of organisations working to promote the introduction of Conservation Agriculture (CA) in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region. CARWG works with a network of National CA Task Forces (NCATF), which coordinates stakeholders in the individual 13 SADC countries. The African Conservation Tillage Network (ACT) is the current Chair of CARWG.

With the outbreak of the FAW in the region, there have been new revelations by research Institutions that suggest

that use of cover crops in the push-pull approach appears to reduce damage by the FAW. It is important for CARWG members to interact with ICIPE researchers to learn and exchange experiences on the management of the FAW without use of anti-CA practices (such as residue burning, heavy applications of pesticides or deep tillage) as advocated for by some stakeholders.

It is in this context that ACT in collaborating with FAO to organise a meeting in Kenya to enable some 30 CARWG members from the 13 SADC countries to be exposed through trainings and a field tour on the application of FAW management with push-pull, and use of smallholder mechanisation two-wheel tractors for CA. The proposed dates for the training and the field missions are 19-22 March 2018. The proposed venues for the Training and Tour are Nairobi, Njoro Nakuru (KALRO CA CoE), and ICIPE Mbita. Read more at: https://goo.gl/KFPfGB

The 2nd Kenya National Conservation Agriculture conference 17-19 April 2018

The European Union (EU), FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation are organizing the Second National Conservation Agriculture Conference to be held at the Safari Park Hotel from **17-19 April 2018**. This is a follow-up of the First National Conservation Agriculture Conference held in May 2016 that brought together professionals and policy makers. The conference concluded with a pledge by the Government of Kenya, EU and FAO to organize a follow-up meeting. The conference also follows in the wake of the President's announcement of his 'big 4' targets over the next 5 years; two of which (food security and manufacturing) are related to the agriculture sector. The theme of the conference is "***Scaling up Conservation Agriculture to sustainably contribute to 100% food, feed and nutrition security by 2022***". The focus will be on institutionalization process of CA that will enhance commitment of government institutions and non-state actors in overseeing the implementation of CA policy to facilitate scale up of CA adoption by over 10% of the farming population in Kenya. The conference brings together over 500 professionals and policy makers representing Government (both national and county), development partners, private sector and academia. For more information, get in touch through CA-Conference-kenya@fao.org

The Second Africa Congress on Conservation Agriculture (2ACCA) 9th -12th October 2018

The aim of 2ACCA is to bring together expert knowledge, information, and insights from practitioners from across different sectors and interests groups at all levels of agriculture development in the public, private and civil sectors. This diversity of knowledge and stakeholders is essential:

- to enable the desired multi-disciplinary and cross-sectoral development of CA as a core production component of climate-smart agriculture; and
- for the sustained mobilization of policy, institutional and community support to accelerate the widespread adoption and management of CA as a core element of the expanding climate-smart food and agriculture systems in Africa.

This is in line with the Malabo Declaration, AU's Agenda 2063 and the SDGs. The purpose of the 2ACCA initiative is to facilitate diverse and open sharing of experiences and information on CA thereby fostering learning and widespread awareness and interest in the uptake and spread of CA. This includes CA's role in enhancing sustainable agricultural productivity, strengthening environmental and social resilience, and fostering efforts to provide for food and nutrition security as well as jobs and economic opportunities, especially for rural communities, including youth and women. The 2ACCA initiative provides "neutral space" for networking, collaboration and partnership to support the scaling-up of CA systems as the sustainable basis for CSA development across Africa.

The 2ACCA initiative brings together expert knowledge, information, and insights from practitioners from across different sectors and interests groups at all levels of agriculture development from the public, private and civil sectors. This diversity enables the desired multi-disciplinary and cross-sector "treatment"

Early Bird Registration for the second Africa congress on Conservation Agriculture opens 1st February 2018. For more information visit: Second Africa Conference on Conservation Agriculture

ACT programs, projects and initiatives are firmly anchored towards achieving the 2030 SDGs.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Goal 1:
End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Goal 5:
Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Goal 2:
End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Goal 13:
Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

For more information, please contact: Executive Secretary | African Conservation Tillage Network
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