



## Agriculture and Rural Development Day at the Cancún Climate Change Conference



Agriculture and Rural Development Day (ARDD) was held for the second time during the Sixteenth Conference of the Parties (COP16) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) which took place earlier this month at Cancún, Mexico. The day-long event, which drew hundreds of participants including policy makers, farmers, scientists and journalists, aimed to put agriculture on this year's climate change agenda. In her opening speech, Inger Andersen, CGIAR Fund Council Chair and Vice President of Sustainable Development, World Bank talked about the intersection of agricultural development, food security and climate. She proposed agriculture as a solution that was a triple win of increased food security, resilience and reduction of emissions. The success of the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) in promoting the spread of Evergreen Agriculture in Africa was cited as an example of a climate-smart agricultural technique that can both increase crop yields and help to reduce carbon emissions.

In support of such initiatives, the organizers of ARDD 2010 called for much more local action to help the rural poor adapt to climate change impacts and the use of climate finance to realize agriculture's substantial potential for capturing carbon and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In presenting the official summary of the day, Lindiwe Sibanda, Chief Executive Officer of the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network, appealed to climate change negotiators to recognize explicitly the critical links between agriculture and forestry and to create an agricultural work program under the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) as a first step toward meaningful inclusion of food security in any post-2012 agreement.

By the end of COP16, the collective push for including agriculture in a climate change deal had achieved small but important successes. The Cancún Agreements recognize agriculture and food security as areas deserving priority consideration in a footnote to the 'Outcome of the Work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention'. Unfortunately there was no decision on a work program on agriculture on the SBSTA, proving correct fears that it would be held hostage by the uncertain state of broader negotiations and by a number of small technicalities at the 11th hour. The Cancún Agreements did, however, call for a SBSTA work program on REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation) that addresses drivers and methodologies, as well as exploration of REDD+ financing options under the Ad hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action. The links between agriculture and deforestation are such that this decision ensures some support for continued work on agriculture in the climate change context. Indeed, participants at Forest Day 4 (FD4), proposed several options to increase agricultural intensification whilst reducing net annual rates of deforestation including: increasing production efficiencies; promoting multifunctional landscapes; directing REDD+ financing to increase efficiencies in agronomic practices; and shifting extensive production systems to low carbon landscapes.

The thorny issue of agricultural intensification and its effect on deforestation was addressed at an official COP16 side event held jointly by the organizers of ARDD 2010 together with those of FD4. It was concluded that efforts to produce more food from less land must form part of an integrated package of interventions (including practices such as conservation agriculture, agroforestry and integrated pest management) aimed at achieving multiple benefits in rural landscapes. To pursue such an approach in spirit and in practice, it was suggested that the forestry and agriculture sectors should perhaps organize a 'Landscape Weekend' rather than two separate events at COP17 in South Africa.

For more details of ARDD 2010, see <http://www.agricultureday.org/>

For more details of Forest Day 4, see <http://www.forestclimatechange.org>

For details of the first Agriculture and Rural Development Day (ARDD 2009) held at COP15, see <http://bit.ly/hAon9j>

ARDD was convened through the collective action of over 19 leading organizations from the UN, governments and development agencies, civil society, farmers groups, research community, private sector and the media. The day was hosted by the Mexican Ministry for Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Rural Development and Food; the Climate Change Agriculture and Food Security Program (CCAFS); and the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (GDPRD). Key representatives from Eastern and Southern Africa included Lindiwe Majele Sibanda, Chief Executive Officer, Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN), South Africa and Dyborn Chibonga, Chief Executive Officer, National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi.

## Newsbyte

### Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS): The launch of a new CGIAR Program

The CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS) is a new 10-year research initiative launched by the CGIAR and the Earth System Science Partnership. CCAFS seeks to overcome the threats to agriculture and food security in a changing climate, by exploring new ways of helping vulnerable rural communities adjust to global changes in climate. Much of the work on the ground will begin in 2011 with an initial focus on East and West Africa and the agricultural regions of south Asia known as the Indo-Gangetic Plain. CCAFS partners will identify and test climate change adaptation and mitigation practices, technologies, and policies that are suitable for poor smallholder farmers and other stakeholders affected by climate change.

"The CGIAR centers have always worked to help farmers in poor countries cope with challenging conditions by providing drought-tolerant crops or better soil and water management strategies," said Bruce Campbell, CCAFS Director. "But climate change threatens to alter growing conditions so rapidly and dramatically as to require an intensive effort that draws on the combined talents of all of our centers and partners. We want to bring a sense of urgency to finding and implementing solutions and attracting more support for this effort."



<http://www.ccafs.cgiar.org/>

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Newsletter team:  
Kate Longley, Paul Stapleton, Evelyn Katingi, Reagan Siengo and Yvonne Otieno

Questions, comments, feedback? Please email:  
[Y.Otieno@cgiar.org](mailto:Y.Otieno@cgiar.org)

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