

Project Evaluation Series

[03/2023](#)

Evaluation of the project “International Alliance on Climate-Smart Agriculture”

Project code: GCP/GLO/534/ITA

Follow-up report

| Evaluation of the project "International Alliance on Climate-Smart Agriculture" - Follow-up report | | | | | 03/2024 |
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| Evaluation recommendation | Management response Accepted, Partially accepted or Rejected | Management plan | | | |
| | | Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection | Description of actions actually taken, or reasons for actions not taken | MAR Score | Impact of, or changes resulted from taken actions |
| <p>Recommendation 1.</p> <p>FAO should consolidate its thought-leadership position on Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) through strengthening its work on CSA, both in knowledge management and in field projects.</p> <p>(Findings 2, 3, 6, 10, 20, 22; Conclusions 2, 5, 8, 10). The IACSA project, its support to establish GACSA and several field-projects consolidated FAO's position as a thought-leader on CSA. However, over the last few years, the prominence of FAO's position has decreased and other organizations have filled the niche. Therefore, to consolidate its position as thought-leader on CSA, FAO should strengthen its work on the thematic area through:</p> <p>Consolidation of a CSA technical team within OCB, who represents FAO in global debates on CSA, oversees knowledge generation and management, develops initiatives on CSA and maintains coordination with GACSA.</p> <p>Consolidation of an internal CSA team among staff of different divisions at HQ and in the field offices. This could include staff working on similar initiatives such as agroecology, nature-based solutions and landscape restoration.</p> <p>Develop new initiatives to fulfill the coordination and knowledge management niche left by IACSA. If possible, ensure involvement of human talent that has been trained in the IACSA project.</p> | Accepted | It is in the interest of FAO to consolidate its leadership on CSA through knowledge management and field projects. The project has led CSA activities in FAO for years and continuing this leadership depends on the possibility of its extension. FAO is engaging in discussions with the donor, Italy, to continue activities for knowledge sharing and at the field level. | Although the project has not received a funded extension, work on the CSA approach continues at the corporate level through other activities such as: 1. supporting member countries that require technical support to develop strategies; 2. developing a new CSA strategy called CSA+ | Advancing | |

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| Align global work on CSA by mapping and reaching out to large CSA initiatives from other development partners and connect these in a community of practice. Better connect CSA work with cross-cutting development issues such as gender equity and social inclusion, strengthening of IP groups, youth and rural poor. Support the development of field projects that implement CSA practice in countries and regions. | | | | | |
| Recommendation 2. FAO should ensure the insights and knowledge generated by IACSA are mainstreamed in the new FAO climate change strategy. (Finding 3; Conclusions 2, 7). The new FAO strategic framework considers climate change as a main challenge and has an outcome area directly related to CSA. FAO is now discussing a new institutional climate change strategy. The current draft version ¹ of this strategy includes a series of principles, including an agrifood systems approach; putting farmers, fishers, foresters, pastoralists and vulnerable people at the centre; embrace innovations; seek strategic and innovative partnerships; mainstream gender equality and social inclusiveness and support participatory multistakeholder approaches. All these principles are fully aligned with the CSA approach and the work of IACSA and GACSA. Therefore, it can be a lost | Partially accepted | The new Strategy on Climate Change was approved by the Council in June 2022, and it already includes the knowledge generated by IACSA. It is in the interest of FAO to continue knowledge production to support the Strategy on Climate Change at the global and local levels. However, financial support is needed to share this knowledge at both levels. It is important to note that both projects, IACSA and GACSA, are autonomous as their future activities. Any future collaboration would depend on the availability of financial resources for both projects and should be separated due to the different donors. | Knowledge on CSA is continuing through different projects such as GACSA and at corporate level. A new analysis on CSA and technologies is under elaboration. In addition, after a long analysis it was decided to maintain the web page on CSA (https://www.fao.org/climate-smart-agriculture/en/) to avoid it getting lost in the web page on climate change. However, a clear reference to the CSA page has been maintained in the one on climate change. Unfortunately, the CSA page is not kept updated due to lack of staff. | Advancing | |

¹ The consulted version was presented in draft at the Regional FAO Conference for Africa, 11-14 April 2022.

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| opportunity to only mention climate-smart practices in the outcomes at farm-level, as currently foreseen in the strategy. CSA could be a useful approach at all the three levels of the strategy (global, national and farm) and the insights and knowledge from the IACSA project a welcome contribution to this strategy beyond the field-practice level. | | | | | |
| Recommendation 3. FAO should consolidate its institution-wide support to GACSA and GACSA should engage with all relevant FAO divisions of work, from global-to-local (Findings 6, 9, 14, 20; Conclusion 4). A major achievement of the IACSA project is the support to the creation and operation of GACSA. While GACSA is now more autonomous, the institution-wide support from FAO keeps being fundamental to the success of its functioning. This support can be of technical character, by connecting all FAO divisions that work on CSA to GACSA, especially the field offices that work with local partners who actually perceive little support from the global alliance. | Partially accepted | It is important to note that both projects are autonomous and have different donors. Any future collaboration would depend on the availability of financial resources for both projects and should be separated due to the different donors. The project supported the work of GACSA including developing knowledge products, webinars, and participation to international conferences. However, it is GACSA's prerogative to engage with all relevant FAO divisions and offices, to develop its activities. FAO will develop activities of the project autonomously by GACSA. | As IACSA and GACSA projects didn't receive funds for implementation activities, it was difficult to support GACSA. However, FAO supported GACSA's activities until the end of 2023, end of GACSA TF. | None/poor | |
| Recommendation 4. FAO and GACSA should maintain the communication function of IACSA to update and disseminate its knowledge products. | Partially accepted | Knowledge sharing is an important activity of the IACSA project. However, in order to continue the development of knowledge products including publications and e-learning courses, it | As the project has not received a funded extension, it was difficult to develop any activities related to this recommendation. However, all | None/poor | |

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| (Findings 7, 11, 19, 22; Conclusions 10, 11). Knowledge products, particularly e-learning courses and practice briefs, need to be updated in the medium term (three to five years) to include the rapidly changing context, increased demand and new insights in the area of CSA. Finally, it is recommended that all FAO knowledge products on CSA by different divisions (in headquarters and decentralized) use GACSA as a dissemination channel. | | is fundamental to have financial support. FAO is already working on sharing IACSA knowledge products through its website and GACSA network. However, it is important to note that both projects are autonomous and have different donors. Any future collaboration would depend on the availability of financial resources for both projects and specific objectives from each donor. | knowledge products of IACSA project are in the CSA webpage. | | |
| Recommendation 5. FAO and GACSA should continue the conceptual development of CSA, considering synergies rather than differences in relation to other concepts. (Findings 2, 3, 8, 21 Conclusion 2). On the one hand, ongoing conceptual discussions on CSA have been a strength of IACSA and have helped CSA to be widely adopted globally. On the other hand, within these discussions there has been critique on some (alleged) disadvantages of CSA that caused certain resistance in engagement from stakeholders. At the same time, other concepts have been developed and while these share many elements with CSA, emphasis has been put on their differences in relation to CSA and in a way, they competed for institutional and donor attention. Therefore, continuation of a constructive technical discussion on the synergies and complementariness | Partially accepted | Continuing the dialogue with institutions that supported or created other concepts related to climate change and agri-food systems is a priority for FAO. Conversely, continuing to collaborate with these institutions will further boost dialogue. However, the project needs financial support to continue these activities. In addition, as GACSA and IACSA are two separate and autonomous projects, the collaboration would be explored in relation into the specific objectives set up by the separate donors for each project. | As the project has not received a funded extension, OCB is managing the continuation of a constructive technical discussion on the synergies and complementariness among CSA and other concepts. | Advancing | |

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| among CSA and other concepts, will be of mutual benefit. | | | | | |
| <p>Recommendation 6.</p> <p>FAO should consolidate and scale the project results in Botswana and Ecuador.</p> <p>(Findings 8, 14; Conclusion 5). While CSA considerations are included in the national policy and planning framework, both countries lack tools and means to fully implement these. Therefore, it is important that the country offices in Botswana and Ecuador commit to continue their partnership with the project stakeholders, explore ways to consolidate their work and support public and private agencies in scaling of CSA. This could be done in the format of a (short) exit- and sustainability strategy for the pilot project implementation.</p> | Accepted | <p>Results achieved by the project in Botswana and Ecuador allow to continue working on CSA in both countries.</p> <p>FAO Botswana will build on experiences from the CSA project to upscale them in the forthcoming GEF-7 funded GCP/BOT/012/GFF DSL-IP.</p> <p>FAO Ecuador will look for scaling the project results at a national level through instruments like the second NDC, for example.</p> <p>However, in order to develop new projects, more financial support is needed.</p> | <p>Ecuador: Based on the results of the CSA project, FAO now advises on the formulation of the second NDC that will be valid from 2025-2035.</p> <p>The Ministry of the Environment, thanks to the experience and demonstration of CSA, was able to learn that the inclusion of agroforestry systems contributes to the carbon capture inventory. Although the measurement and monitoring of agroforestry systems still needs to be refined, at least they are already considered in the SAG adaptation sector in II NDC.</p> <p>The measurement and monitoring of other agroforestry systems could be an interesting contribution of a second phase of CSA.</p> <p>Botswana: The 012/GFF project has been formulated and implemented to support increased agricultural production and productivity through environmentally friendly and climate smart practices based on IACSA results.</p> | Good | |

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