



GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR  
CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE

**Workshop Report:**  
**International Workshop of the**  
**Knowledge Action Group of the Global**  
**Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture**

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**March 15, 2015**

**Federica Matteoli, Melanie Mason, Dhanush Dinesh**



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



RESEARCH PROGRAM ON  
Climate Change,  
Agriculture and  
Food Security



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# International Workshop of the Knowledge Action Group

Workshop Report

CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture  
and Food Security (CCAFS)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
(FAO)

French Agricultural Research Centre for International  
Development (CIRAD)

Federica Matteoli, Melanie Mason, Dhanush Dinesh

**Publishing date:** 15 March 2015

**Published by**

CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD)

**Contact:**

CCAFS Coordinating Unit - Faculty of Science, Department of Plant and Environmental Sciences,  
University of Copenhagen, Rolighedsvej 21, DK-1958 Frederiksberg C, Denmark. Tel: +45 35331046;  
Email: ccafs@cgiar.org

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Viale delle Terme di Caracalla

00153 Rome, Italy

Tel: +39 06 57051

Email :FAO-HQ@fao.org

French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD)

Avenue Agropolis, 34398 Montpellier Cedex 5

France

Tel.: +33 4 67 61 58 00

Email: dgd\_rs@cirad.fr

**More information about the Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture Knowledge Action Group**  
at <http://www.fao.org/gacsa/>

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## Abstract

This report summarizes the proceedings of the “International Workshop of the Knowledge Action Group,” held in Montpellier, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015, organized by CCAFS, FAO, and CIRAD. The workshop brought together participants from Governments, research institutions, farmer organizations, civil society organizations, and the private sector to determine the knowledge priorities for Climate-Smart Agriculture and partnerships to make these priorities possible. The priorities and outputs identified at the workshop formed inputs into the Knowledge Action Group’s work plan for its inception year.

The workshop provided background on the role that the Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture plays in developing a knowledge base for Climate-Smart Agriculture, and provided participants insights into how the Knowledge Action Group of the Alliance is governed and its activities to date. Discussions at workshop focused on the five priority work areas of the Knowledge Action Group (1. technical interventions and practices in CSA; 2. evidence base of CSA; 3. support, services and extension for CSA; 4. inclusive knowledge systems for CSA, and 5. integrated planning and monitoring for CSA). Participants identified the priority outputs for the inception year and partnerships to achieve these outputs. The workshop provided a platform for participants to share ideas, knowledge, approaches and resources, fostering stronger partnerships between organizations.

### Keywords

Climate Smart Agriculture; Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture, Knowledge

Priorities

## About the authors

**Federica Matteoli** is Natural Resources Officer (Climate Change) at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

**Melanie Mason** is Student Research Assistant at the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS).

**Dhanush Dinesh** is Global Policy Engagement Manager at the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS).

## Acknowledgements

The International Workshop of the Knowledge Action Group, held in Montpellier, March 15th, 2015, was jointly organized by the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD). The organizers gratefully acknowledge the support of Agropolis International in hosting this workshop.

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## Acronyms

CCAFS	CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security
CIRAD	French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development
CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GACSA	Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture
KAG	Knowledge Action Group



## Introduction

The Action Groups (AGs) of the Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture (GACSA), Knowledge, Enabling Environment and Investment, are formed by members of the Alliance and other interested stakeholders and have the purpose to facilitate implementation and achievement of the objectives of the Alliance. In particular support members in the realization of regional and thematic programmes.

The Knowledge Action Group (KAG) was established during the 3rd Global Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change, in Johannesburg in December 2013, based on the proposition made by several institutions, organizations and governments.

In September 2014, GACSA was launched at the Climate Summit in New York, hosted by the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to engage leaders and advance climate action and ambition. It was confirmed that the work of the Alliance will focus on three initial action areas: knowledge, investment and enabling environment.

GACSA members have identified in the Framework document that the objectives of the KAG should be: Increasing and promoting knowledge, research and development into technologies, practices, and policy approaches for climate-smart agriculture; practices and technology sharing and cooperation; improving communication and information sharing among participants; and outreach, extension, and technical assistance.

In the inception year, the KAG is facilitated by a group of 10 facilitators, The Agricultural Model Intercomparison and Improvement Project (AgMIP), Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA), CGIAR research program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS), French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD), Colorado State University, Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Co-operation (CTA), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Government of Nigeria, the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR), UK-China Sustainable Agriculture Innovation Network (SAIN), co-convened by FAO and CCAFS.

The KAG develops its work plans under the guidance of the Strategic Committee of the GACSA, with inputs from GACSA members and interested stakeholders. Through extensive consultations in 2014 which included two online surveys and a regional consultation in Asia, a set of priority work areas and outputs

were identified, based on the inputs of over 800 stakeholders. This workshop was designed to organize the work on knowledge priorities for CSA and promote partnerships to make these priorities possible. Through greater collaboration, there is potential for research institutions, country governments, international organizations, civil society organizations, farmer organizations, and the private sector to address the knowledge gaps in CSA implementation.

## Opening Session

The KAG meeting was organized in Montpellier, France, on 15 March 2015, as a back-to-back event to the Third Global Science conference on Climate-Smart Agriculture, organized from 16 to 18 March 2015 at the Corum Convention Centre, Montpellier. The opening session was initiated by Eric Fargeas, Director, Agropolis International, which hosted the workshop. He welcomed participants to Agropolis, a unique coalition of agricultural research institutions in France.

This was followed by François Houllier, President, French National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA) orating a keynote speech which indicated the crucial role that the GACSA plays in developing a knowledge base for CSA, and expressed INRA's intention to join the Alliance.

Bruce Campbell, Program Director, CCAFS, explained to the participants how the KAG is governed, noting that process development must be inclusive. Campbell called for greater representation of non-research actors including farmer organizations and the private sector within the KAG, to ensure that KAG produces knowledge relevant to its user groups and stimulates innovation.

Federica Matteoli, Natural Resources Officer, FAO shared with participants the major findings from the KAG's consultations in 2014. Two online consultations were conducted; the first in April 2014 which received 491 responses and identified the major knowledge priorities and areas of work. In order to validate these priorities, CCAFS and FAO organized a regional consultation for Asia in Hanoi in June 2014, which reaffirmed the priorities identified. The second consultation in September/October 2014 received 437 responses and identified the key outputs under priority areas and the provided respondents' insights into the proposed outputs.

Leslie Lipper, Senior Environmental Economist, FAO outlined the next steps for the priority work areas and outputs identified in these consultations. Lipper noted that this workshop is key to agree on outputs and products and shape a common agenda for CSA knowledge systems.

The session closed with participants posing questions or making comments on KAG, these focused on:

- Involving non-research actors including farmer organizations and the private sector
- The need to focus on farmer priorities and tapping into indigenous knowledge, and linking farmers to the scientific community
- The need to look beyond knowledge products and addressing knowledge gaps in innovative ways

- Building partnerships, including at the regional levels
- The need to avoid duplication with ongoing initiatives
- Providing instructional guidance to practitioners
- Greater clarity on the conceptual framing of CSA
- The need to achieve balance between sectors such as crops, livestock, fisheries etc.

## Sub-group discussions

### Background

Through the consultations in 2014, the following priority work areas and corresponding outputs or knowledge products were identified. Five sub-groups were formed in order to have discussions structured around these priority work areas. Throughout discussions, participants were able to indicate priority outputs for the coming years, and were able to indicate areas where they wished to make meaningful contributions.

Priority work area	Corresponding knowledge product(s)
1. Technical interventions and practices in CSA	Implementation guidelines/practice briefs to inform policymakers and investors about (i) technical interventions and methodologies for successful CSA implementation; (ii) approaches to help create an enabling environment for CSA.
2. Evidence base for CSA	Compilation of case studies which (i) provides an inventory of CSA case studies; (ii) documents the implementation of CSA interventions on the ground.
3. Support, services and extension for CSA	Extension products or tools to communicate technical information on CSA.
4. Integrated planning and monitoring for CSA	A methodology of indicators and metrics to help: (i) assess the climate vulnerability of farming systems; (ii) measure the impact of CSA interventions across the three pillars of CSA.
5. Inclusive knowledge systems for CSA	Guidelines on inclusive knowledge systems for CSA such as: (i) a series of products which ensures active participation in CSA initiatives; (ii) a knowledge portal for CSA

### Sub-Group 1: Technical Interventions and Practices in CSA

This sub-group was led by Leslie Lipper of FAO and Kevin Henry of Colorado State University. Sub-group participants recognized the need for clear, overall conceptual framing of CSA and sustainable intensification as a key issue in developing technical interventions and practices. Participants agreed that the key output

under this priority work area would be CSA practice briefs to provide practical and operational information to help guide CSA action.

The following topics in two areas were identified for the development of CSA practice briefs.

**i. Focus areas for improved CSA practice**

In this area, participants identified the following topics for CSA practice briefs:

- a. Soil health, soil nutrient management, fertilizer efficiency
- b. Water management, water use efficiency
- c. Livestock (e.g. manure management)
- d. Post-harvest loss reduction management
- e. Climate information services
- f. Crop diversification (including inter-cropping and crop rotation)
- g. Agro-forestry
- h. Systemic approaches (e.g. crop-livestock interactions)
- i. Land use, landscape scale, reversing land degradation
- j. Finance instruments to support CSA (credit, insurance, etc.)
- k. Participatory approach (private sector, civil society, farmers' organizations)
- l. Stability of systems (reduced variability and down-side risk)

**ii. Tools and enabling environment to support countries in adopting CSA**

In this area, participants identified the following topics for CSA practice briefs:

- a. Formal and informal institutions
- b. Conditions for policy and regulatory coherence
- c. Decision-support tools and stakeholder process at global, national, local
- d. Information to underpin CSA financing
- e. Research collaboration

For each of these topics, participants indicated their willingness to coordinate/contribute to development efforts, which would allow diverse stakeholder groups to make knowledge inputs.

## **Sub-Group 2: Support, services and extension for CSA**

This sub-group was led by Simone Sala of Swansea University and Jimmy Adegoko, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Agricultural Resilience in Nigeria (ACARN). In KAG consultations in 2014, 57.9% of the respondents indicated the need to raise capacity of extension services to share CSA knowledge to be of

importance. The first online consultation noted that extension support was most urgently needed by farmers and governments.

With regards to the identification of a possible strategy for product development, the opportunity to focus on the development of ad hoc guidelines was discussed. Specifically, it was proposed to develop guidelines helping extensionists to develop knowledge products on each relevant topic for farmers and governments according to the best medium selected by CSA experts – e.g. guidelines for developing early warning systems for farmers through mobile phone technology. The workshop participants, though, highlighted that extension services has a strong regional/local context – the idea of developing global products was then too wide in its scope. Moreover, extension and advisory services have very different conditions across the world – being structured in each country in very different ways. Participants thus advised to identify target areas where extension services are weakest and where intervention could have large payoff.

The participants also underlined the importance of leveraging transferrable insights from developed to developing countries and vice-versa, not just focusing on top-down technology transfer but also identifying bottom-up and peer-to-peer data/information/knowledge services that can benefit the extension sector. Indeed, stakeholders that can contribute with data, information and knowledge are various – and the extension sector can encompass different strategies to share knowledge across different networks according to the specific local priority and context. To this aim, participants stressed the need to aggregate all stakeholders producing relevant data and information to support CSA – building on an “information value chain” concept.

The need for open-access to data that can improve the provision of extension services, as well as a broader democratization of weather information was invoked by participants – with the suggestion that the KAG should aim towards promoting it in the longer term. Finally, the participants suggested leveraging existing tools and institutional capabilities to make the product development efforts more effective.

They key outputs identified by this sub-group include:

- Map existing extension, support and adaptation tools as well as knowledge media to support extension services, and consult among users to identify farmer data and knowledge needs
- Identify and leverage existing knowledge platforms
- Identify existing examples of successful index-based insurance for scaling up

### **Sub-Group 3: Evidence base for CSA**

This sub-group was led by Oluyede Ajayi of CTA and Armine Avagyan of FAO. The sub-group identified an inventory of CSA case studies documenting the implementation of CSA interventions on the ground to be the overarching priority. Case studies should present CSA initiatives which have used a number of practices and/or technologies (i.e. the interventions described in the CSA practice briefs) in a specific context, sharing information on successes and challenges.

Participants mapped out ongoing efforts to map CSA case studies, including those led by FAO, CCAFS, SNV, CTA, and Climate KC, and suggested the development of an online portal for sharing these case studies with a map for existing and new case studies. Participants identified the lack of a common template for case studies to be a key issue, and suggested the development of a common case study template for GACSA. This would ensure that case studies have a uniform template and that CSA technologies, practices, services etc. are appropriately classified.

### **Sub-Group 4: Inclusive knowledge systems for CSA**

This sub-group was led by Sir Gordon Conway of Agriculture for Impact and Emmanuel Torquebiau of CIRAD. During the first online consultation, priorities for improving knowledge systems for effective CSA were identified. The top three priorities were to: 1. Strengthen farmers' inclusion and leadership in CSA knowledge systems (with a special focus on women farmers); 2. Give greatest support to local and indigenous knowledge systems; 3. Maximize cross-country learning, particularly 'south-south' exchange. Building on these priorities' identified, participants prioritized ensuring that inclusivity embraces knowledge from various actors, including farmers, scientific community, and private sector. Exchanging new approaches to inclusivity for gradual and transformational change and addressing inclusivity while documenting examples of analogue situations for severe climate events were also identified as priorities.

Participants identified the following outputs:

- Guidelines for inclusivity based on examples, not only for farms but for private and retail sector
- Case studies on experiences and methodology of tackling extreme events

### **Sub-Group 5: Integrated planning and monitoring for CSA**

This sub-group was led by Sonja Vermeulen of CCAFS and Janie Rioux of FAO. The sub-group discussions focused on a methodology of indicators and metrics to help: (a) assess the climate vulnerability of a farming



system; and (b) measure the impact of CSA interventions. In discussions, participants indicated interest in metrics for larger scale outcomes i.e. food security, rural development, job creation. Participants also indicated that CSA elements need to be better defined in order to support integrating planning. Issues related to monitoring (including data, indicators, methods, models) were also discussed. The need to consider different scales (temporal, spatial, and governance) was also identified as a priority, together with addressing trade-offs at different levels. Assessing costs and benefits, in different contexts and for different was also a key issue.

Participants felt that the value added that GACSA brought was in providing a platform for greater cooperation and networking, promoting sharing of data and tools, and exchange of learning. Through GACSA, practitioners can improve the momentum and quality of work in this area while responding to user needs and supporting scaling up.

The sub-group identified the following key outputs:

- A multi-donor process on indicators, to develop a plan for an inclusive process on metrics development.
- An action plan for two-way benefits, to improve data quality, quantity, demand driven models, integrated models
- Compendium of farm-level practices
- Compendium of institutional practices
- Compendium of decision tools
- Online community of practice that builds on existing MICCA and AgLinks communities

## Discussions and closing session

After sub-group discussions, plenary discussions were held to prioritize KAG actions and outputs further. In these discussions, participants suggested that KAG outputs should be more targeted to its user groups. Participants also felt that there is a need for greater clarity on GACSA governance and funding mechanisms in order to fully realise the potential of the KAG.

Development of a communications strategy, KAG role in revision of national agricultural investment plans, and facilitating multi-agency coordination in countries were other opportunities identified. It was strongly recognized and agreed that the KAG has to adopt an inclusive approach (involving farmers, consumers, private sector, civil society, researchers). Particular attention should be given to what farmers are already doing on the ground and what is already working, so that this feeds back to knowledge on CSA. Value chain aspects should also be considered in order to ensure that CSA options remain economically viable. The need to identify real mechanisms that allow and encourage scientists to work along the “knowledge value chain” (from the labs to the farm level) was also recognized.

Through discussions, the following expectations were identified for the inception year:

- Define GACSA governance structure
- Develop an agenda for KAG funding
- Develop an agenda for scaling up and scaling out research efforts to support implementation
- Creation of a knowledge platform to support communication and enhance collaboration
- Agree on commitments from the GACSA members

## Closing session

In the closing session, Mark Manis of USDA spoke about how the KAG’s work is crucial to the work of the other action groups, namely the Investment Action Group, and the Enabling Environment Action Group, and that cross action group coordination is a priority for the GACSA Strategic Committee.

Patrick Caron of CIRAD, spoke about the need for the KAG to not just focus on existing knowledge, but also on the creation of new knowledge, by developing elements of a research agenda on CSA, building upon the CSA Science Conference in Montpellier and forthcoming CSA Science Conferences. Caron also called for linkages with the higher education sector, to ensure that CSA knowledge is mainstreamed in higher education curricula.

Anette Friis of CCAFS thanked participants for their inputs and assured that inputs will be incorporated into the work plan. Friis noted several recurring points of discussion including, the need to include more actors (farmers, civil society, private sector) in identifying and filling knowledge priorities, ensuring a balance between various sectors, and ensuring that knowledge outputs are context specific, and foster innovation.

Leslie Lipper of FAO noted that the discussions had been very productive, and outlined the next steps in delivering knowledge outputs. These included the creation of a draft plan based on the results of the workshop which will be shared with the participants and KAG facilitators.

## Appendix 1: Workshop Agenda

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<b>8:30-9:00</b>	Registration
<b>9:00-9:05</b>	Introduction of speakers and agenda <i>(Samantha Wade, Workshop facilitator)</i>
<b>9:05-9:15</b>	Welcome remarks <i>(Eric Fargeas, Director, AGROPOLIS International)</i>
<b>9:15-9:20</b>	Welcome remarks <i>(François Houllier, President, INRA)</i>
<b>9:20-9:30</b>	Knowledge Action Group, its scope, functions, and governance <i>(Bruce Campbell, Program Director, CCAFS)</i>
<b>9:30-9:40</b>	Major findings from the Knowledge Action Group's online consultations in 2014 <i>(Federica Matteoli, Natural Resources Officer, FAO)</i>
<b>9:40-10:00</b>	Priority work areas/products identified in the consultations and next steps for the KAG action plan <i>(Leslie Lipper, Senior Environmental Economist, FAO)</i>
<b>10:00-10:30</b>	Facilitated discussion <i>(Facilitator: Samantha Wade, Rapporteur: Anne Mottet, FAO)</i>
<b>10:30-11:00</b>	Coffee break
<b>11:00-12:30</b>	Facilitated discussions in 5 sub-groups on priority work areas identified Sub-group 1: Technical interventions and practices in CSA (e.g. practice briefs) Sub-group 2: Support, services and extension for CSA (e.g. extension products) Sub-group 3: Evidence base for CSA (e.g. case studies on CSA) Sub-group 4: Inclusive knowledge systems for CSA (e.g. guidelines on inclusive knowledge systems) Sub-group 5: Integrated planning and monitoring for CSA (e.g. metrics for CSA)
<b>12:30-14:00</b>	Lunch
<b>14:00-15:00</b>	Report back from sub-groups (Report back from each of the 5 rapporteurs)
<b>15:00-15:30</b>	Discussion / Q&A <i>(Facilitator: Samantha Wade, Rapporteur: Adriana Paolantonio, FAO)</i>
<b>15:30-16:00</b>	Coffee break
<b>16:00-16:30</b>	Closing remarks and outlook <i>Mark Manis, USDA</i> <i>Patrick Caron, Director General for Research and Strategy, CIRAD</i> <i>Anette Friis, Head of Program Coordination, CCAFS</i> <i>Leslie Lipper, Senior Environmental Economist, FAO</i>

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## Appendix 2: Participant List

<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Adegoke	Jimmy	Federal Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development, Nigeria
Ajayi	Oluyede	Technical Centre for Ag and Rural Cooperation
Andrew	Dale	Independent consultant; formerly with OECD
Avagyan	Armine	FAO
Balde	Alpha Bocar	Africa Rice Center
Berger	Violaine	WBCSD
Bernier	Quinn	IFPRI
Bolaños-Benavides	Martha Marina	CORPOICA
Bonilla-Findji	Osana	CCAFS
Bouroncle Seoane	Claudia Maria	CATIE
Campbell	Bruce	CCAFS
Carlsson	Georg	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences
Caron	Patrick	CIRAD
Chotte	Jean-luc, Yves	IRD, France
Clark	Harry	NZAGRC
Collin	Anne	INRA France (Poultry Research Unit)
Conway	Gordon	Agricultural for Impact
Corner-Dolloff	Caitlin	CIAT/CCAFS
De Pinto	Alessandro	International Food Policy Research Institute
Delerce	Sylvain Jean	CIAT
Di Virgilio	Nicola	CNR-IBIMET
Diakhate	Sidy	IRD/ISRA
Dinesh	Dhanush	CCAFS
Friis	Anette Englund	CCAFS
Gebreeyesus	Kinfe Asayehegn	CIRAD
Henry	Kevin	Colorado State University
Hooper	Matthew	New Zealand Embassy, Rome
Houllier	Francois	INRA
Jackson	Louise	University of California Davis
Jarvis	Andrew	CCAFS/CIAT
Johansson	Tino	International Center of Insect Physiology and Ecology
Karbo	Naaminong	CSIR-Animal Research Institute
Kitinya	Kirina	SNV Cambodia
Kpadonou	Rivaldo	ACPC
Laderach	Peter	CIAT
Lamanna	Christine	ICRAF
Larbodiére	Ludovic	Ministry of Agriculture, France
Lesser	Caroline	INRA
Lewis	Josephine	University of California, Davis
Lipper	Leslie	FAO
Manis	Mark	USDA
Martinez Baron	Deissy	CCAFS
Matteoli	Federica	FAO
McCarthy	Nancy	LEAD Analytics
Meadu	Vanessa	CCAFS

Meijer	Jantiene	CABI
Mercado de Guanchez	Leyda	Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center
Morrill-Chatrchyan	Allison	Cornell University
Mottet	Anne	FAO
Murakami	Shimpei	Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development
NASIM	WAJID	CIHEAM-IAMM France and CIIT-Pakistan
Neufeldt	Henry	ICRAF
Ngugi	Moffatt	USAID
Nidumolu	Uday Bhaskar	CSIRO, Australia
Olivier	Alain	Université Laval, Quebec
Paolantonio	Adriana	FAO
Peou	Rathana	CCAFS-IRRI
Pillot	Didier	Montpellier SupAgro
Plassmann	Barabara Katharina	Yara International ASA
Porter	Cheryl	University of Florida
Rakotovao	Harisoa Narindra	Laboratoire des Radioisotopes (Madagascar)-UMR Eco&Sols
Reisinger	Andreas	New Zealand Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Research Centre
Rice	Charles	Kansas State University
Rioux	Janie	FAO
Robert	Habib	INRA
Roesch	Katia	Agronomes et Vétérinaires sans frontières
Ron	Seligmann	Haifa Chemicals Ltd
Rosenzweig	Cynthia	NASA GISS & Columbia University
Saj	Stephane	CIRAD
Sala	Simone	Swansea University
Schreeg	Laura	USAID
Sehgal	Vinay Kumar	Indian Agricultural Research Institute
Shaw	Mary Rebecca	Environmental Defense Fund
Sikka	Alok	Indian Council of Agricultural Research
Soto Golcher	Cynthia	Wageningen University
Soussana	Jean Francois	INRA
Stormyr	Bernhard Mauritz	Yara International ASA
Theivaslgamani	Parthasarathi	Tamil Nadu Agricultural University
Torquebiau	Emmanuel	CIRAD
Trolard	Fabienne	INRA
Turin Canchaya	Cecilia	International Potato Center
Uphoff	Norman Thomas	Cornell University
van der Mheen	Hendrik	Wageningen UR
van Etten	Jacob	Bioversity International
Vasileiou	Ioannis	IFPRI/ CCAFS
Veeger	Marieke	University for International Cooperation
Vermeulen	Sonja	CCAFS
Wade	Samantha	Facilitator
Walsh	Margaret	USDA Climate Change Program Office
Whitbread	Anthony	Resilient Dryland Systems (RDS)
Winograd	Manuel	Alterra/WUR
Yenumula	Gerard Prasad	ICAR
Zehetmeier	Monika	TUM
Zundel	Christine	Federal Office for Agriculture FOAG, Switzerland