

Consultative Meeting on Climate-Smart Agriculture

18—20 June, 2014, Hanoi, Vietnam

GFAR Statement, Harry Palmier, Senior Partnerships Advisor

Your Excellency, Minister Cao Duc Phat, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, of Viet Nam, Dr. Hans Hoogeveen, Vice Minister for Agriculture, the Netherlands, Representatives of International Organizations, Ambassadors, Ladies, and Gentlemen

It is with great pleasure that I am representing the Global Forum on Agricultural Research for Development (GFAR) at this important Consultation.

The process for building an Alliance on Climate-Smart Agriculture was boosted in Johannesburg, in December last year, at the 3rd Conference on Food Security and Climate Change with the powerful address of the UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon delivered to the Conference by his special envoy, David Nabarro. We have an exciting deadline which coincides with the Climate Summit next September in New York.

I was among those, in Johannesburg who welcome this galvanizing speech. We, in the Global Forum on Agricultural Research for Development, welcomed this leadership that the international community needed to come together to address the daunting challenges of feeding a population estimated at 9 billion by 2050, in the face of Climate Change.

GFAR stakeholders, including the CGIAR, the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development, FAO, IFAD, international farmers organizations, Regional Fora (like APAARI active in this Region), have been at the forefront of actions to raise awareness of the potential of agricultural systems in adapting and mitigating to climate change.

We have contributed to the participation of farmer and civil society representatives from around the world into high-level processes – including the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) meetings since the first meeting of that category in Poznan, through the process of Agriculture and Rural Development Days (ARDD) co-organized by the CGIAR from Copenhagen, to Cancun, Durban and Rio+20 (Landscape Day

Already, in 2012, GFAR-sponsored representatives urged negotiators at UNFCCC in Cancun to recognize agriculture's vital role in climate change adaptation and mitigation. They endorsed the proposed target of cutting greenhouse gas emissions to avoid a temperature increase of more than 2 degree C, stressing that reducing greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture is essential for achieving this target.

We have also sponsored and helped the Regional Fora implementing the 2010 GCARD Roadmap to develop climate change strategies for AR4D-related issues. This was done for the Asia-Pacific region in supporting the formulation of a regional Climate Change Strategy by APAARI in 2008.

But we have to face it, the challenges around the mobilization of all potential actors, and coherent coordinated initiatives in this domain at national, regional and international level, are enormous, not to mention those of implementation. We thought time was ripe for organizing a Coalition n AR4D against climate change at the Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD2) in Punta Del Este, in November 2012. But CCAFs and WMO which co-chaired a special session with this objective certainly remember vividly that despite the excitement of the preparatory work and the quality of the dialogue in sharing experiences, it didn't materialize.

Many of us left Punta Del Este quite disappointed. So we were re-invigorated by the conference in Johannesburg and the call for building the Climate-Smart Agriculture Alliance and we decided to put all efforts in supporting the ACSA process putting into practice GFAR principles of inclusiveness and equitable partnerships. This explain our support to the Dialogue on Scaling up CSA in Africa lead by NEPAD, COMESA, FARA and National agricultural systems as well as CCAFs.

This also explains our support primarily to the participation of Farmers Organizations and Civil Society Organizations alongside NARS and government representatives in the Consultative meeting in Hanoi. We trust that the opportunity to get direct views and perspectives from the regions: from policy makers as well as scientists and farmers, NGOs and the private sector will enrich the contents and legitimacy of the Alliance.

To meet climate challenge challenges, substantial additional financing and investment will be needed across the entire rural value chain. These investments must also be accessible to all stakeholders, including researchers, farmers, civil society, and locally-owned private sector.

We believe that international agricultural research had already offered, and has certainly much more to offer to CSA in raising food systems productivity and sustainability, if it is responsive to the needs and priorities expressed at country and regional level.

GFAR is playing and will continue to play an active and catalytic role in the building of the Alliance helping to catalyzing partners inputs in the interim Action Groups on “Enabling Environment” and “Knowledge”, alongside CCAFS, FAO, IFAD, WFP and WMO, investing our own resources when necessary like for the Hanoi consultation to bring the discussion at regional and national levels.

Our central objective within the ACSA process was to support inclusive partners’ involvement at these levels and across sectors to nurture the CSA Alliance. After its launch it would remain targeted to engaging stakeholders from outside the UN system, and opening the process of implementation to wider discussion among partners, bringing their perspectives into the formulation of an impact-oriented Action Plan, that we may not have finalized by September. We believe that this is a condition for a legitimate and effective Alliance on CSA and for it to success.

In closing, I will recall that for GFAR like many partners the launching of the ACSA next September is not the objective, but will be only a major step forward towards an Action-oriented, inclusive and effective ACSA entrusted to develop a responsive Action plan for CSA composed of coherent initiatives at national, regional and international levels.

Thank you for your attention.