



Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN)
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Press Release

TISA Consortium convene CSA Policy Dialogue

10th March 2023 – The *Transforming Smallholder Irrigation in Southern Africa* (TISA) consortium in collaboration with the FANRPAN Node Hosting Institution in South Africa – the National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC), the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development of South Africa, Agriculture Research Council (ARC) South Africa, Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA), the SADC Groundwater Management Institute (GMI); the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR); the International Water Resources Association (IWRA); International Water Management Institute (IWMI); the Water Research Commission (WRC) of South Africa, the Wine Industry of South Africa, Human Research Council of South Africa (HSRC), the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP) and the African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF) have come together to convene a CSA Policy Dialogue ahead of the United Nations (UN) 2023 Water Conference. The multi-partner CSA Policy Dialogue provides an opportunity for stakeholders from Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) to jointly reflect and craft messages that will feed into the UN Water Conference deliberations.

The dialogue will take place at Future Africa, University of Pretoria, South Africa from 13th to 15th March 2023.

Whilst SSA is already battling with climate change, its impacts are set to intensify in the medium term. Higher temperatures, changing rainfall patterns, and more frequent and extreme droughts and floods are projected. This has major implications for Africa's smallholder farmers who support their households and local markets through produce from plots less than three hectares in size. Nearly 93% of agriculture in Africa south of the Sahara is currently rainfed, with the majority of the rural population's efforts at crop and livestock production being subjected to climate vagaries. Yields for both crops and livestock have stagnated or grown slowly for decades, leading to a rapid increase in imports of basic staples in line with growing populations, and are projected to continue.

Many studies have found that, compared to historic climate scenarios, climate change will lead to changes in yield and area growth, with overall lower yield growth and therefore larger expansion, higher food prices, and therefore undermine affordability of food, reduced calorie availability, and growing childhood undernutrition in Africa south of the Sahara. Without solutions, falling crop yields will push more people into poverty. An estimated 43 million people in Africa alone could fall below the poverty line by 2030 as a result. The food security



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challenge will only become more difficult, as the continent will need to produce about 70 percent more food by 2050 to feed an estimated 2.5 billion people.

Substantial adaptation investments will be required to maintain current yields and achieve production and food quality increases to meet demand. Climate-smart agriculture (CSA) is an integrated approach to managing landscapes—cropland, livestock, forests, and fisheries—that addresses the interlinked challenges of food security and climate change. CSA aims to simultaneously achieve three outcomes of (i) increased productivity; (2) enhanced resilience, and (3) reduced emissions.

While built on existing knowledge, technologies, and principles of sustainable agriculture, CSA is distinct in that it explicitly focuses on addressing climate change. Second, CSA systematically considers the synergies and trade-offs between productivity, adaptation, and mitigation. Practices that are potentially climate-smart in a wide range of contexts include improved water management. Irrigation is a particularly robust climate-smart agricultural (CSA) technology in the semi-arid and arid areas of SSA and is often essential to the deployment of any other CSA technology. Across Africa, there are research and development projects working to help farmers adapt to climate change challenges.

The objectives of the Policy Dialogue are to:

1. Share empirical evidence on the importance of climate-smart agriculture in transitioning to resilient farming communities in SSA
2. Develop recommendations on how to build climate-smart and resilient farming systems in SSA at scale
3. Networking, and promoting partnerships and action

For more information click here:

<https://dialogue.fanrpan.org/>

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