

Questions, Answers and Comments from the EU GCCA+ Regional Workshop on Climate Change for Asia and the Pacific

Climate Smart Agriculture

Questions for Kinlay Tshering, Ministry of Agriculture, Director, Department of Agriculture, Bhutan

Q: Most of the farmers want quick results so use chemical fertilizer and pesticide and ignore long term hazards. How is Bhutan motivating farmers for organic farming?

A: A majority of Bhutanese farmers practice subsistence farming with low inputs of chemical fertilizers and pesticides so the change from subsistence low input farming to organic agriculture is easier than pushing commercial farms to organic farming. Further, lots of awareness program on organic farming focusing on key principles of organic farming such as ecology, health, fairness and care encouraged farmers to see other benefits. Further, Government's support on HH level production of organic inputs like compost shed, bio-digester tank, etc was effective. Last, channeling the chemical inputs was effective in encouraging OF.

Q: How does the weather forecast and agro-advisory reach remote parts of the country?

A: A digital platform called 'niceSSM' is allowing a two way connect between farmers using their cell phones and State Agric Univs Providing the advisories

Questions for Rajeev Ahal, Director for Natural Resource Management & Agro-Ecology / Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resource Management Program , and Hanna Reuter, Head of Project "Promoting climate-smart agriculture across ASEAN and India"

Q: I can see a strong link between the actions that you presented and a disaster risk reduction framework. Hence, are these actions integrated in national or regional disaster risk reduction plans?

A: There is indeed a direct and strong link with disaster risk reduction. We have just completed a study with NIDM identifying historic disaster prone areas and projecting future disaster vulnerability, to focus the social protection and safety net programmes. As part of our water security planning process we are also looking at climate scenarios to inform the design and implementation - which is a strong vulnerability as you would agree.

There is definitely a strong link between the different environmental framework, but on the policy level this is often not yet sufficiently reflected. In ASEAN, silo-mentality is still very strong. However, through the ASEAN-CRN for example there are efforts to strengthen dialog between agriculture stakeholders and actors working on climate change and disaster management and emergency response.

Q: What are the top three digital technologies that should be used in CSA?

A: 1. sustainable agricultural practice knowledge sharing platform (including weather and market inputs) between key stakeholders 2. Virtual marketplaces to strengthen price discovery and integrate fragmented markets 3. Capacity building of farmers and their organisations using MOOCs, e-course, peer to peer sharing and learning etc.

Within ASEAN specifically, ASEAN is currently developing the ASEAN Guideline on the Utilization of Digital Technologies for ASEAN Food and Agricultural Sector, supported by ERIA. GIZ is also assessing opportunities for supporting ASEAN related to digital CSA.

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Q: How do you consider the mechanization of agriculture and carbon emissions when using the fossil fuels in the context of CSA?

A: As part of Indo German cooperation, we are just about to start a national project on 'Support to Agroecological Transformations in India' with the Ministry of Agric and three big states. I find this connect with EU priority on agroecology very relevant and worth exploring further.

Question for Florent Tivet CIRAD Cambodia

Q: What is in his view the viability and scalability of zero till systems with what he called « inter row fruit trees »?

A: On "inter-row management", we are at the beginning of the process and basically during the juvenile/immature stage farmers practice intercropping with maize and cassava under plough-based management with negative impacts on root systems of the trees (+ soil erosion, SOC depletion). The objective here is to maintain this intercropping under a CA management. The scalability of this short-term inter-row management (3 first years, depend on fruit tree species) is at this stage based on the availability of NT planters, seeds of cover crops, and technical support.

We also have activities that refer to permanent living cover crops on the inter-row of rubber and fruit tree plantations. Scalability varies based on farm/plantation size with reducing the production costs of conventional management + fertilizer for large plantation to reducing the cost and burden of weeds management under small-scale Farmers. Other kinds of legume cover crops are tested and promoted mainly *Stylosanthes guianensis* and *Arachis repens*.

Comment from Anshuman Das, Welthungerhilfe: More details report of Sustainable Integrated Farming Systems are available at https://welthungerhilfeindia.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Sustainable-Integrated-Farming-System-Approach-and-Impact-20181_compressed_reduce-1.pdf

Sustainable Cities

Questions to Ms Giorgia Rambelli, Coordinator Global Regional Coherence and Partnership Global Covenant of Mayors

Q : Are there any examples of cities going into food production linked to vegetalisation ? What about composting of organic waste ? Land planning incorporating small fields/gardens, etc?

A: I would suggest a few examples of action from the City-food network: https://iclei.org/en/CITYFOOD_Network.html and the Milan Food Policy Pact: <https://www.milanurbanfoodpolicypact.org/>

Comments

Learn more about innovate for cities: <https://www.globalcovenantofmayors.org/city-climate-finance/> and join us at the Innovate4Cities 2021 Conference during the week of October 11-15 2021

For more information on the GAP Fund and GCoM's work to accelerate access to climate finance, visit: <https://www.globalcovenantofmayors.org/research-innovation/> and <http://www.citygapfund.org/>

You can find more information and register for the City GAP Fund webinars here: City Climate Finance Gap Fund Regional Webinars <https://www.citiesclimatefinance.org/2021/04/city-climate-finance-gap-fund-regional-webinars/>



Question to Monhammad Shariful Islam, Chief Engineer Rajshahi City Corporation-RCC-, Bangladesh

Q: Your city reached an amazing result in less than 20 years: you started a tree-planting campaign more than 15 years ago and now you have a zero -oil programme in your city, how did you manage to sensitize your citizens on the importance to change their approach to climate change?

A: The people in Rajshahi city are very respectful of the decisions taken by City Mayor and support the corporation during any implementation of any kind of climate change and city development activity such as tree plantation, green vegetation, solar installation, water bodies conservation and zero soil program etc. Moreover, the city mayor sometime arranges press conference, TV and radio programme and seminars with university professors, local level leaders, city councilors, community people to discuss about climate change, health education, tree planting, solid waste management and other related different issues. In this way city corporation is able to the community people and other professions aware on regular basis.

Q: What are the benefits of the “zero soil programme” for your future generation and how do you expect to guarantee sustainability to the actions of this programme?

A: The aim of the zero soil program is to cover every uncovered topsoil with green vegetation and tree plantation. During the summer season, this city is facing excessive heat, which produces a huge amount of dust from dried out topsoil. This dust is harmful to air quality as well as the health of the citizens. If the green cover is increasing through this project, it will improve the biodiversity of the city, reduce the heat waves and ensure the environmental sustainability of Rajshahi city.

Q: How have you managed to cope with the limited financial budget available for cities to work with climate change and the need to integrate climate change topics into your city priorities?

A: We have a very limited budget in the climate change field and face difficulties in implementing climate change-related projects in the city. Due to the lack of budget, we cannot properly build support for the most sensitive climate change-related projects. We need support from the international donor agencies to implement more climate change-oriented projects in Rajshahi city. A larger financial budget would allow us to integrate climate change-related topics into even more city priorities.

Additional links provided by Antonio Ressano, Senior Urban Development Specialist, Asia Development Bank:

ASEAN Australia Smart Cities Trust Fund (AASCTF)

<https://www.adb.org/what-we-do/funds/asean-australia-smart-cities-fund>

Creating Investable Cities in a Post-COVID-19 Asia and the Pacific — Enhancing Competitiveness and Resilience through Quality Infrastructure

<https://www.adb.org/projects/54036-001/main>

Asia Pacific Regional Hub on Domestic Resource Mobilization and International Tax Cooperation

<https://www.adb.org/projects/54454-001/main>

ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility (ACGF) <https://www.adb.org/what-we-do/funds/asean-catalytic-green-finance-facility/overview>

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Coastal Zone Management

Question for panel: Is it true that seagrass can be damaging if it is in the same zone as coral as they don't let the sun go through that corals need to be healthy?

A: Dr. Peter Bridgewater, Former whale Commission Director and member of UN decade Science for Oceans: No this is not true. What is a problem is algae taking over from corals especially where the coastal waters become polluted.

A Dr. Gilianne Brodie That sounds more like a macroalgae (seaweed) problem than seagrass. These two types of marine plants are totally different.

Additional resources provided by Dr. Robert Duncan McIntosh, Oceanography Officer, SPREP

Regional OA Vulnerability Assessment:

<https://www.sprep.org/attachments/Publications/CC/ocean-acidification.pdf>

Vulnerability Assessment of Pelagic Fisheries

<https://www.wcpfc.int/node/29559>

Mainstreaming Ocean Acidification into National Policies: A Handbook for Pacific Islands

<https://www.sprep.org/publications/mainstreaming-ocean-acidification-into-national-policies-a-handbook-for-pacific-islands>

Other resources shared:

www.peump.dev

https://png-data.sprep.org/system/files/NATIONAL_OCEANS_POLICY_2020-2030%20copy.pdf