

Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture
(GACSA)

Final Minutes

11th STRATEGIC COMMITTEE Meeting

Held on Zoom

7th October 2021

1. Welcome remarks by the co-Chair

H.E. Dr. Hans Hoogeveen (GACSA co-Chair) welcomed the members of the SC (see appendix for list of attendees). He excused the absence of the co-Chair, Prof Lindiwe Sibanda Majele who joined later.

Simon Leiva (GACSA Coordinator) mentioned that the meeting was being recorded for internal purposes only, to assist the Facilitation Unit in taking notes and capturing actions from this meeting.

Discussion Point:

H.E. Dr. Hans Hoogeveen provided a brief opening to set up the scene with the following remarks:

- We are facing challenges in the food system
- We need to involve all stakeholders for action on the ground
- Food system starts with the farmers
- How can GACSA improve?

2. Review and adoption of the draft agenda:

Decision: *Draft agenda approved*

3. GACSA Strategic Plan (2018-2022) Implementation (Presented by Simon Leiva)

3.1. Key Highlights

Simon Leiva provided key highlights and progress made in the implementation of the GACSA 2018-2022 Strategic Plan.

Discussion Point:

- Participants acknowledged the efforts that GACSA have done in advancing CSA and highlighting its contributions.
- SC Members registered their appreciation for the Facilitation Unit (FU) and the work done carried out despite the COVID interruptions. The FU was thanked for catching up on work that was outstanding since years.
- The GACSA work in supporting partner engagements, i.e., CSAYN and youth engagements, ASEAN CRN, etc should be applauded and pushed forward
- The work we have seen from GACSA, and the upcoming engagements underscores the importance of the Alliance especially with COP and the UN Food Systems Summit. There are plenty of opportunities for GACSA in the future.
- GACSA to continue to support regional initiatives, through its work, there has been regional and national CSA alliances that have been established

Decision: *SC members welcomed the report back by the Facilitation Unit*

3.2. Action Groups (AGs leaders)

The GACSA Action Group conveners (knowledge, investment and enabling environment) provided updates on their actions highlighting key activities and achievements. This included:

Knowledge Action Group (presented by Allison Chatrchyan from Cornell University):

- Developed and conducted a [Member Survey](#) to better understand the information needs, enabling policies, and investments to increase farmers' adoption of CSA practices globally. The results of survey [were presented](#) to members, and additional inputs received during AG workshops, informed the aspirational activities of all AGs.
- DRAFT Case study on **agroecology and CSA**
- DRAFT Climate-smart agriculture **youth curriculum**
- Facilitation Unit: organized webinars to share knowledge about CSA from members; sharing CSA
- Facilitation Unit: Knowledge sharing platform – [LinkedIn Group](#)

Investment (presented by Tony Siantonas from WBCSD):

- [CFS High-Level Special Event](#) (co-conveners CSIRO and WBCSD participated as panelists)
- Hosted a live discussion [webinar](#) to discuss with the IAG's members priorities and opportunities for this group. This included:
 - **Increase literacy** of GACSA members so that they can access financing for CSA projects;
 - Matchmaking: facilitate **public/private partnerships** to fund CSA (connecting, capacity building, sharing best practices)
 - Increase coherence between **lending requirements** and CSA practices
 - Enhance **national funding initiatives** for CSA (with Enabling Environment)

Enabling Environment (presented by Wiebe Smit from CCAFS)

- Co-organised six Climate Security webinars series
- Hosted a live discussion [webinar](#) to discuss with the IAG's members priorities and opportunities for this group. This included:
 - Initiate discussions with **member governments** and their **CSA agenda**
 - Develop CSA case studies to help countries to **implement NDCs under the Paris Agreement**
 - Work with members to increase access to **climate and weather services** (engaging **Youth**)
 - Tackling the lack of **funding for farmers**
 - **Increase CSA capacity building**

Discussion Point:

- SC members stressed the importance of Action Group partnership and collaboration, particularly in engaging the youth.
- Participants further highlight the need for Action Groups to make linkages with other on the ground members on their different initiatives.
- Recommendations for all Action Groups were tabled
 - Need better coordination for all GACSA members and prioritization of activities
 - Review and Revise Structure of Action Groups: clarify mandates
 - Voluntary Nature of AG Co-Leads isn't sustainable – need funds to support time
 - Operational support at the Facilitation Unit to support the Action Groups Co-Leads:

- organizing meetings, supporting AG communication
- Allocated funds for Action Groups for projects/publications/meetings/events
- Seed money for Special Topics (innovation/transformation, farmer-centric approaches)
- There is need to explore learnings and lessons from local to inform policies at national and regional level
- Explore how to enhance the farmers contribution in the Action Groups – farmer driven initiatives

Decision:

- i. SC members welcomed the report by the three GACSA Action Groups*
- ii. SC Members proposed that current co-leads of the Action Groups work together on developing a proposal to review and revise the Action Groups (based on the recommendations) to help achieve the long-term mission. The proposal to be presented at the next SC meeting.*

3.3. Finance Update

Simon Leiva provided a detailed financial report to the SC members and presented GACSA's financial status and commitments. Simon acknowledged and thanked the financial contributions received from the following donors since 2014:

- The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- The Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality of The Netherlands
- The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine of Ireland
- The Federal Office for Agriculture of Switzerland
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture

Discussion Point:

- Participants stressed the need to broaden and diversify GACSA's funding base
- SC Members observed there is a balance of funds projected in 2022 that could fund Action Group activities
- SC Members highlighted the need to be very strategic on private funding, including philanthropic entities
- Members recommended that GACSA needs to be formally registered as a body
- The FU has developed a matchmaking concept; however, to fully deliver this service the Secretariat is faced with financial capacity and HR constraints, and still exploring other avenues
- We must acknowledge there are new buzz words that GACSA will need to compete with i.e., nature-based solutions, agroecology etc. Hence, the need to promote CSA and make it a centre piece.

Decision:

- i. SC members welcomed the report by Simon Leiva on GACSA financial situation*
- ii. Create a strategic nucleus fund-raising team to put resource mobilization ideas together and explore funding opportunities (Ernie and Marcel to lead)*

4. GACSA's Future : "GACSA 2030 and beyond" (Hans Hoogeveen)

Simon Leiva provided an update on the preparation of the revised GACSA strategic plan 2022-2032. A discussion paper – "GACSA 2030 and Beyond" has been developed by the Facilitation Unit. The discussion paper aims to inform the development of the GACSA Strategic Plan 2022-2032 to be presented at the Annual Forum 2021.

Discussion Point:

- Participants highlighted the need to make a case that is compelling for our constituency this will aid the resource mobilisation efforts – i.e., the issue of food system. The issues highlighted in the paper should not just be buzz words but what would attract partners
- Need to look at where NDCs implementation structures are in place and how does GACSA become useful to the implementation of the NDCs
- Building the grass root systems – how do we continue to build the front-line players. GACSA needs boots on the ground and accompanying people on what are the priorities and issues.
- There is need to look at the organizational structure, we need to decentralize into different regions for maximum impact.
- Delineate CSA as a concept and focus on the strategy of CSA – being more need for CSA
- The paper takes a boarder approach taking into account the food systems angle and how CSA can facilitate / support
- The farmer smart, should be more on its implementation and not the core focus of the strategy
- It is heavily focused on activities to get GACSA at 2030, we are however missing an opportunity on a complete value add of CSA on SDG attainment. If agriculture is not successful, we won't be successful with SDG attainment.
- Need to embed GACSA's value proposition strategically in positioning CSA to be needed, to be mandated, to be a tool to achieve countries' commitments to Paris Agreement and their NDCs requirements.
- SC members highlighted that a lot of work has gone into building GACSA's global recognition and support for Climate Smart Agriculture. Participants recommended that we do not rebrand the Alliances movement as Farmer Smart but CSA with farmers at the heart of discussions and decisions.
- The Facilitation Unit received written feedback from two GACSA members between 7 October 2021 and 12 October 2021. Their feedback and the feedback above was incorporated in the GACSA 2030 and beyond discussion paper in tracked changes.

Decision:

- SC members recommended re-examining the discussion paper based on the discussion points. Facilitation Unit to have a revised version by Tuesday 12.10.2021 next week to be discussed during the next SC meeting on Thursday 14.10.2021*
- Members are encouraged to send feedback and comments via email to GACSA-Facilitation-Unit@fao.org*

5. Governance (Lindiwe and Hans)

5.1. Composition of the Strategic Committee

The current Strategic Plan 2018-2022 that refers to the Alliance's strategic focus and a new set-up for the Strategic Committee. The current GACSA Strategic Committee comprises over 150 members. To facilitate SC convenings, a recommendation was made out of the Strategic Plan 2018-22 at the GACSA 2018 Annual Forum to revise the SC membership up to a 24 member committee:

- co-Chairs (2),
- co-conveners of the three Action Groups (6),
- up to two (2) representatives of each of the six constituencies (12).
- Other GACSA members can participate as observers on issues of interest, upon invitation or request.

Discussion Point:

- GACSA's membership has grown significantly in the last years. Given the role of SC members in GACSA's structure, is it wise to have a SC that is open to anyone who shows up? Open nomination process, e.g. with a form, may be helpful to identify what potential SC members can contribute.
- Participants agreed having a streamlined list is of benefit
- Need to consider geographical representation
- GACSA constituencies and stakeholder groupings: governments, businesses, farmers' organizations, civil society groups, research bodies and intergovernmental entities. SC Members recommended to merge farmer's organizations and producer organizations groups into one.
- FU to share full list of Members under each constituency to facilitate selection of members
- Support for proposal to let constituencies choose their own representatives (based on SC list).
- Other options are to stay with the current structure or have representations by regional alliances.

Decision:

- FU to provide 3 proposals for the next SC meeting on Thursday 14th October including the [original framework](#) document for the ToRs of the SC . These 3 proposals include:*

Proposal 1)

The SC structure remains the same. The SC is open to anyone who shows interest and attend the SC meetings

- *Action required if this proposal is endorsed: none*

Proposal 2) Recommendation from Strategic Plan 2018-2022

SC membership up to a 24 member committee: co-Chairs (2), co-conveners of the three Action Groups (6), up to two (2) representatives of each of the six constituencies (i.e. governments, businesses, farmers' organizations, civil society groups, research bodies and intergovernmental entities) (12). Other GACSA members can participate as observers on issues of interest, upon invitation or request.

- *Action required if this proposal is endorsed: SC members to nominate two representatives from each constituency (i.e. governments, businesses, farmers' organizations, civil society groups, research bodies and intergovernmental entities).*

Proposal 3)

SC is represented by GACSA's Regional CSA Alliances (two representatives from each Regional Alliance; currently there are seven (7) Regional Alliances), the co-Chairs (2), co-conveners of the three Action

Groups (6). Other GACSA members can participate as observers on issues of interest, upon invitation or request.

- *Action required if this proposal is endorsed:
Each Regional Alliance to appoint two representative to the SC (currently there are seven GACSA Regional Alliances: Africa CSA Alliance (ACSAA), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN-CRN), East Africa CSA Alliance (EACSAA), North America CSA Alliance (NACSAA), Pacific CSA Alliance, Southern Africa CSA Alliance (SACSAA), West Africa CSA Alliance (WACSAA)*

ii. FU to provide the list of SC members by Tuesday 12.10.2021 divided by constituencies to support the decision.

5.2. Establishment of a GACSA Bureau

Simon Leiva provided background on the establishment of a GACSA Bureau as per the current Strategic Plan 2018-2022.

The Bureau would create strong political commitment and foster high level engagement, to advocate for GACSA and CSA, to help mobilize resources and enable financial sustainability including through financial oversight, and to provide advice on high-level strategic policy issues and proposals in the implementation of the Strategic Plan. The Bureau will be composed of ten (10) high-level members appointed in their personal capacity, through nomination by the Co-chairs and endorsement by the Strategic Committee for a two-year term:

- co-chairs (2);
- FAO Deputy Director-General as host (1);
- donor countries (3);
- developing countries (2), which can rotate on an annual basis;
- other non-state constituencies (2).

Discussion Point:

- Participants supported the proposal of a champions group to support the SC, however members expressed concerns of duplication of efforts with the SC, co-Chairs and Bureau
- Members highlighted to prioritize establishment of the SC, consolidate efforts and then move onto the Bureau.
- Participants suggested to postpone the establishment of the Bureau for 1 year (i.e. until the next SC meeting) and focus efforts on the composition of the SC.

Decision:

- Recommendation for SC members to consolidate efforts on prioritizing the SC and revisit the Bureau after a year.

5.3. Co-Chair election

Item to be discussed on 14th October during the follow-up meeting.

6. GACSA Annual Forum

Item to be discussed on 14th October during the follow-up meeting.

7. Any Other Business and Closing

Item to be discussed on 14th October during the follow-up meeting.

Appendix

Attendees (in alphabetical order):

Alvarado Abigali	The Platform for Climate Action in Agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean (PLACA)
Bacudo Imelda	ASEAN-CRN
Beukeboom Marcel	Permanent Representation (The Netherlands) to the UN in Rome
Bigda-Peyton Hope	USDA
Bwalya Martin	NEPAD
Casey Jonnathan	CABI
Chatrchyan Allison	Cornell University
Crammond Dale	Ireland
De Groot Maarten	Canada
Du Pré Lucas	The Netherlands
Fatiaki Fuatino	SPC-Pacific
Hale Francis	FANRPAN
Hoogeveen Hans	GACSA co-Chair
Giuliodori Arianna	WFO
Kanshik Sagar	UPL Ltd.
Majele Sibanda Lindiwe	GACSA Co-Chair
Matteoli Federica	FAO
Mutamba Manyewu	NEPAD
Mutter Carolyn	AgMip
Ntiokam Divine	CSAYN Global
Ould-Dada Zitouni	FAO
Shea Ernest	SfL
Shelat Kirit	NCCSD
Smit Wiebe	CCAFS
Stormy Bernhard	YARA
Tysdal Kjetil	Norway
van Nijnatten Marcel	The Netherlands
Zvaita Justice	SACSAA

Secretariat:

Kessl Christiane	GACSA Facilitation Unit
Leiva Simon	GACSA Facilitation Unit
Mwamakamba Lufingo	GACSA Facilitation Unit
Stankova Jana	GACSA Facilitation Unit
van Dijk Nadine	GACSA Facilitation Unit