

Partner Event Report - Excellence in Agronomy 2030

Partner Event Number, Date and Time:
Monday 7 September; 15:00 – 17:00 CET
Partner Event Title and Organizers:
<p>Excellence in Agronomy 2030 – Launching event.</p> <p>Organized by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) with support from AfricaRice Center, Big Data Platform, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), International Potato Center (CIP), International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), World Agroforestry Center (ICRAF)</p>
Key speakers/presenters:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Martin Kropff (Director General, CIMMYT and co-convenor of the Technical Advisory Group 2 on the research strategy of the One CGIAR) • Dr. Christian Witt (Senior Program Officer, Agricultural Development, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation) • Dr. Bernard Vanlauwe (Facilitator EiA 2030 development and R4D Director for Central Africa & Natural Resource Management, IITA) • Dr. Kazuki Saito (Principal Scientist, Africa Rice Center) • Dr. Tilahun Amede (Principal Scientist, Natural Resources and Systems Agronomy, ICRISAT) • Dr. Andrew McDonald (Associate Professor in the Soil and Crop Sciences Section, School of Integrative Plant Science, Cornell University) • Dr. Meklit Chernet (Data Scientist, IITA) • Dr. Pieter Pypers (Senior Agronomist, IITA) • Dr. Medha Devare (Senior Research Fellow, IFPRI, CGIAR Big Data Platform) • Dr. Asseta Diallo (Acting Head of the Soil Fertility and Fertilizer Systems Unit, Program Innovation and Delivery Division, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)) • Dr. Achim Dobermann (Chief Scientist, International Fertilizer Association (IFA)) • Mr. Michael Tsan (Partner, Dalberg Advisors) • Dr. Alan Tollervey (Head of Agricultural Research, UK Foreign Commonwealth Development Office) • Dr. Robert Bertram (Chief scientist, United States Agency for International Development (USAID))
Main themes/issues discussed
<p>The discussions revolved under the following main themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The One CGIAR and agronomy R&D • Key ingredients of successful agronomy at scale • Excellence in Agronomy 2030: A new CGIAR-wide initiative to deliver agronomy solutions at scale • Example of agronomy at scale R&D: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Site-specific nutrient management (SSNM) for cereal crops



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2. Improving agronomic efficiency of fertilizers in Ethiopia
 3. Leveraging ex ante assessment methods for intervention priority setting
 4. AKILIMO – a toolbox to guide agronomy at scale
- FAIR data and Turnkey Solutions as core content of EiA 2030
 - Panel discussion on linkages between EiA 2030 and other stakeholder communities
 1. Public sector view on EiA 2030
 2. Digital advisory sector view on EiA 2030
 3. Agro-input industry view on EiA 2030
 - Comments from the donor community

Summary of key points

The CGIAR is evolving and becoming more united in consolidating its partnership, knowledge and assets. Sustainable intensification, agronomy and agro-ecology are proposed as one of the key science domains in the new One CGIAR strategy. The demand for agronomy has increased sustainability over the past decade from private and public sectors partners. These demands are diversified with a focus on productivity to broader impact goals such as; climate change adaptation, mitigation and sustainable intensification, these longer term outcomes cannot be delivered by multiple time limited and dispersed projects, it requires a longer term and better coordinated effort. Furthermore, demand driven impact at scale through targeting of context specific and integrated interventions are key to achieve larger impact at scale and prioritize the developed investments. EiA 2030 is proposed as a central channel to answer these demands and bring coherence in global efforts to address the challenges of agricultural productivity. Agronomy has evolved in the last decade with the availability of technology such as data science, remote sensing, geo-spatial analytics and decision support tools etc. EiA 2030 is suited to champion this new era of agronomy based on data driven approaches and tools applicable at scale in the global south.

Call to Action Key Points

- The 'One-CGIAR' reform process provides the opportunity for an agronomy initiative to address the productivity, climate, and environmental challenges in the Global South while enhancing smallholder farmer's livelihoods.
- The tagline of the Excellence in Agronomy 2030 (EiA 2030) initiative is '*Delivering agronomic gain at scale for the Sustainable Intensification of smallholder farming systems in the Global South*'.
- EiA 2030 will position its R&D agenda in the context of specific public/private demand and develop solutions in partnership with scaling partners and national agricultural research institutes.
- EiA 2030 implementation will require prioritization efforts, based on meaningful ex-ante analytics.
- Key is also a better understanding of food production systems to overcome adoption barriers and enable the application at scale of R&D for sustainable agriculture.
- Site-specific variability across diverse farming systems is a major challenge and tackling this will require evidence on what works where for whom and why.
- In conclusion: (i) EiA 2030 is demand-driven and will respond to verified demand for agronomy solutions; (ii) EiA 2030 is a partnership program and will co-create science solutions with partners; and (iii) EiA 2030 is under development and your advice on how to further develop EiA 2030 is welcome!