

Thematic Day on Climate Action

AGRICULTURE ACTION DAY – Friday, 10 November

Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems and Climate Change

Lead responsibility: Yoshihide Endo, GIAHS Coordinator, FAO

Background

Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) are remarkable land use systems and landscapes which are rich in biological diversity evolving from the co-adaptation of a rural community with its environment and its needs and aspirations for sustainable development. GIAHS have been formed in harsh geographic and environmental conditions and transferred from generation to generation. Designation of GIAHS is based on the five criteria, such contribution to food security and livelihood, maintenance of agrobiodiversity, traditional knowledge, cultures and landscapes.

Therefore, traditional agricultural practices in the GIAHS sites are important examples of adaptation to difficult environmental conditions and of the low energy inputs agricultural models which have high potentials to exert resilience against the impacts from climate change and can achieve appropriate adjustments to severe and harsh environment.

This session is to learn the experiences in specific GIAHS sites of having addressed negative impacts arising from harsh climate conditions and how they have adapted to such impacts. The session also seeks options for combating climate change using wisdom of traditional knowledge developed and transferred by local farmers.

Chair: of the session: Professor Agnoletti, Chair of GIAHS Scientific Advisory Group

Speakers:

- Mr. Rene Castro, Assistant Director General of Climate, Biodiversity, Land and Water Department, FAO
"Agricultural heritage systems and climate change"
- Professor Mauro Agnoletti, University of Firenze, Italy
"Italian historical rural landscapes: lesson learnt for adaptation and mitigation of climate change"
- Professor Min Qing Wen, Center for Natural and Cultural Heritage Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Science, China
"Learning from the past for the future: Experiences of Hani Rice Terraces System in coping with extreme drought"
- Dr Rachid Moussadek, Head of the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources, National Institute of Agronomic Research (INRA), Morocco
"GIAHS in Moroccan oasis Landscapes: Balancing conservation, climate change adaptation and socio-economic development"
- Ms. Elisangela Aquino, a farmer from Minas Gerais region, Brazil (through Skype)
"The use of traditional agriculture and locally adapted germplasm in facing climate change: experiences of CAAS in Norte de Minas Gerais, Brazil".

Agenda

TIME	(All GCA events under the Action Days are 90 minutes in length)
16:15-16:20	Welcome remarks by Mr. Castro
16:20-16:30	Introductory Presentation Mr. Castro
16:30-17:10	Presentations by 4 Speakers (10 minutes presentation by each)
17:10-17:30	Panel Discussion
17:30-17:40	Q&A
17:40-17:45	Concluding Remarks by Professor Professor Agoletti

Event outcomes

Agricultural practices, technology and landscape management observed in GIAHS sites can demonstrate resilience to the negative impacts caused by extreme climate conditions such as flood, drought and the way to lower environmental burdens. These practices and technology could be disseminated to other agricultural areas with similar climate and agricultural environment, suggesting solutions to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

On the other hand, although the mitigation effects of the GIAHS sites can theoretically assumed to be high due to their nature of agricultural system which have achieved harmonisation with natural environment, research is needed to transfer this knowledge into science.