



AFRICAN CONSERVATION TILLAGE NETWORK

Partnering for improved food security, a better environment and regional development

DECEMBER ISSUE, 2013

SEASON'S GREETINGS AND NEWS

From ACT Executive secretary's desk

As we come to the close of the year, we take this opportunity to thank you for your continued engagement and support within and across ACT in your various capacities. This has been a very hectic but rewarding year witnessed by, amongst others, the launching of the new 2013-2022 ACT Strategic Plan, new Partners and Partnerships, and setting the ground for the upcoming First Africa Congress on Conservation Agriculture to be held in Lusaka Zambia from 18th to 21st March 2014.

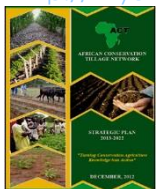
All accomplishment by ACT, the Network, would not have been possible without your support and desires to lift the millions of smallholder farmers out of poverty through sustainable farming practices. Your patronage is sincerely appreciated.

Finally, I take this opportunity to wish you, your families and friends a very Happy Holiday Season, a Merry Christmas and the very best of the New Year!

2013 Highlights

ACT Launches New Strategic Plan and CA Knowledge hub

ACT launched its new (2013-2017) Strategic Plan (available at <http://tinyurl.com/qd4wf8z>) at the



Maasai Lodge in Nairobi Kenya following approval by the Board of Directors. The February 2013 full board meeting was attended by all members' including invited specialist

presenters: Mr Kinyanjui Njau and Advocates, and Dr Jill Clapperton, visiting soil expert and CA farmer Rhizoterra Inc.

Through the new strategic plan, ACT endeavours to foster and strengthen vibrant networks of stakeholders in Conservation Agriculture as a means of accelerating spread and adoption in Africa. As a first step, ACT in collaboration with stakeholders are establishing global-spanning Communities of Practice

6th ACT Board Meeting

The 6th ACT Board Meeting was held 29-30 November 2013, Dar Es Salaam Tanzania during which the New ACT Constitution which seeks for stronger participation of sub-regions was approved.

CA Equipment manufacturer's Workshop - Tanzania

Conservation Agriculture Equipment Manufacturers and Inputs Suppliers Workshop held at the Courtyard Protea Hotel; Dar es salaam Tanzania; 28-29 November 2013; organized in collaboration with COMESA and NORAD. For more: <http://www.act-africa.org/news.php?com=68&com2=6&item=162#.UqhG3-l21KE>

ACT shares South-South partnership experiences at the GSDD Expo 2013

The ACT Executive Director shared a successful South-South conservation agriculture (CA) partnership to the Global South – South Expo 2013 organised by UNEP in October 2013. Brazilian-born CA equipment innovations were linked to East Africa. <http://www.act-africa.org/news.php?com=68&com2=6&item=163#.UqhJAel21KE>

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ABACO mid-term global workshop: Can Africa Feed Itself?

The EU funded agro-ecology based aggradation-conservation agriculture: targeting innovations to combat soil degradation and food insecurity in semi-arid Africa project (ABACO: <http://abaco.act-africa.org>) held its mid-term global workshop and steering committee meeting from 26th – 28th February 2013 at Palm Beach hotel, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. Research findings were presented and shared amongst the 33 participants from all 9 south-south and north-south project partners. The event culminated into the international debate on Whether Africa Can Feed Itself, attended by 70 participants including politicians, farmers, rural development practitioners, academia, and scientists, concluded that Africa can indeed and must feed itself.

The six panellists, including the Minister of Agriculture and Food Security of Burkina Faso, Honourable Mahama Zoungrana, summed it up that this is only possible by developing and implementing elaborate, adequate and comprehensive policies and programs that ensure sustainable growth in the agricultural sector. That there is need for a more urgent campaign to change the way farming is done in Africa; and the Green Revolution for Africa will be centred on Conservation Agriculture.

CA Stakeholders Meeting – Nairobi, Kenya

The one day workshop preceded by a day of field visits, was attended by 60 multi-stakeholder participants from nine countries. The objective was sharing lessons and experiences on resilience to climate change and increased productivity drawn from the experiences of on-going CA initiatives. It was organized in collaboration with the EU delegation in Kenya. Proceeding will be posted on ACT website in early January.

<http://www.act-africa.org/news.php?com=68&com2=6&item=158#.UqhlNel21KE>

Capacity Building programs

Under its Capacity Building Program, ACT in partnership with universities in West Africa trained 21 BSc, MSc and PhD interns/graduates. Undergraduates and Graduate students were trained under the IFAD financed Smallholder Conservation Agriculture Promotion project (SCAP) and the EU supported Agro-ecology based aggradation-conservation Agriculture (ABACO) project.

Feeding the Soil or Feeding the cow; A documentary on where and how Conservation Agriculture works in Africa.

How can CA make part of a solution to myriads problems faced by smallholder farmers in Africa? ACT and other partners under the EU funded ABACO (<http://abaco.act-africa.org>) and CA2Africa projects commissioned Greendocs to develop a documentary on the status of CA in Africa. Watch the documentary at: <http://act-africa.org/videos.php?com=60&vid=31>

Partnerships and collaborations in 2013

ACT partnerships and collaborations have continued to grow stronger with most of it strengthened through implementation of Multi-stakeholder projects. The new projects include:

FACASI: The Farm Mechanisation and Conservation Agriculture for sustainable Intensification-The overall goal of the project is to improve access to mechanization, reduce labour drudgery, and minimize biomass trade-offs in Eastern and Southern Africa, through accelerated delivery and adoption of 2WT-based technologies by smallholder



Conservation Agriculture for Resilient Food Security and Profitability in Machakos and Laikipia Counties of Kenya

This project is implemented in collaboration with KARI and supported by AGRA. The overall goal is to improve food and income security by building the resilience of smallholder farmers in Machakos and Laikipia counties of Kenya through enhancing the adoption of conservation agriculture practices.

Partnerships

- Consortia for implementation of various projects and programmes. The main consortia are for the ABACO, FACASI, and CA4CC projects. The main members for the ABACO consortium are SOFECSA, CIRDES, FOFIFA, CIRAD, Wageningen University, Natural Resource Institute, Yellow Window (Division of EADC) and EMBRAPA.
- In Burkina Faso, we have an ongoing partnership with CRS with an orientation towards action research on assessment of the potential and application modality for CA in the Boucle du Mouhoun Region and also with the Ministry of Agriculture.
- Partnerships have also been built with National Conservation Agriculture Task Forces in Southern and Eastern Africa.

Exhibitions

ACT participated in numerous exhibitions showing CA products and services

The Nairobi International trade fair was from 30th September to 6th October 2013.

ACT set up a CA demonstration plot in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture at the Ministries demonstration farm. The theme for the ACT exhibition was "Promoting Conservation Agriculture for Food Security and National Development". For more information, visit:

<http://www.act-africa.org/news.php?com=68&com2=6&item=142#.Uqhvhl21KE>

Exhibitions continued

**World Food Day celebrations in Nakuru County
on 16th October, 2013**



**DEMONSTRATION OF THE 2WT DIRECT PLANTER
AND MOTORIZED SHALLOW WEEDER**



**CA DEMONSTRATION PLOT AT THE
EXHIBITION**

Upcoming Events

1st Africa Congress on Conservation Agriculture, Lusaka- Zambia 18th to 21st March, 2014

More details can be got at: <http://www.act-africa.org/events.php?com=67&item=109&size=small#.Uqgrbel21KF>
For Registration: http://www.act-africa.org/events_register.php?com=67&item=109&size=small

6th World Congress on Conservation Agriculture, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. June 22-26th 2014.

Learn more at www.ctic.org/WCCA.

Direct your inquiries to: Karen A. Scanlon; Conservation Technology Information Centre; Tel: 765-494-2238;

Email: scanlon@ctic.org

Regional Conference in Conservation Agriculture for Smallholders is planned for 7-11 December 2014 at the Bangladesh Agricultural University, Mymensingh, Bangladesh.

Please visit <http://www.scac2014.org/> for detail.

Contact: Dr Richard W. Bell, Chairman of the Organizing Committee and copy

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How does CA work for hand hoe farmers?

