Driving Progress in Climate Action: The Critical Need for Transparency in Reporting within Kenya's Agriculture Sector

ICAT Initiative for Climate Action Transparency

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Thematic Brief

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Agriculture and related land management practices and systems have gained prominence in international climate change dialogues as areas with great potential for climate actions that deliver multiple adaptation and mitigation benefits. Given that agriculture is responsible for approximately one-fifth of global greenhouse gas (GHG) and that the agricultural sector has the potential to contribute significantly to GHG emission reductions, with a global mitigation potential ranging from 5.5 to 6 gigatonnes of CO^2 equivalent per year by 2030, which in turn ranges from 5% to 20% of total CO^2 emissions by 2030, the sector plays a significant role in both climate adaptation and mitigation.

Kenya seeks to undertake an ambitious contribution to the Paris Agreement by pledging to abate GHG emissions by 32% by 2030, prevent a temperature rise of 2°c and the agriculture sector commits to implement the Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) to achieve the objective. To guide the implementation and adoption of CSA, the sector developed Kenya Climate Smart Agriculture Strategy (KCSAS) 2017-2026 and the Kenya Climate Smart Agriculture Implementation Framework (KCSAIF) 2018-2017. To facilitate the successful implementation of the Kenya Climate Smart Agriculture Strategy (KCSAS) and the Kenya Climate Smart Agriculture Investment Framework (KCSAIF), a comprehensive and robust Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (M&EF) was necessary. In 2021, the Kenya Climate Smart Agriculture Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (KCSAMEF) was developed to promote the transformation of the agricultural sector towards low-carbon, resilient development. The primary objective of the framework is to monitor the implementation of KCSAIF objectives, outcomes, and outputs, thereby ensuring that the sector's transformation is on track as planned. This fosters optimal planning and efficiency in the utilization of resources.

On a global level transparency of mitigation and adaptation actions will help Kenya communicate its NDCs in a transparent and reliable manner, it will also help the country communicate any support it needs or has received and show how the support was utilized to meet its NDCs. On a national level transparency of mitigation and adaptation actions in Kenya’s agricultural sector will act as a management tool for planning and implementation by the government at different levels by corporates and organizations, having information available on greenhouse gas emissions levels and information related to climate change impacts and adaptation allows the country to prioritize mitigation and adaption efforts aligned with the national development priorities and its NDCs. As a party to the Paris Agreement, Kenya is committed to establishing robust arrangements for implementing the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) established by the Agreement to ensure transparency in reporting and reviewing mitigation, adaptation actions, and support measures for addressing climate change.

In Kenya, the ICAT Adaptation project has been instrumental in supporting the country's efforts towards enhancing transparency in reporting climate actions in the agriculture sector. The project has undertaken various focus areas aimed at strengthening governance and coordination mechanisms for adaptation reporting, establishing a framework for assessing adaptation and resilience, and increasing reporting capacity. One of the key focus areas has been evaluating existing monitoring and evaluation systems for adaptation based on national, regional, and sectoral adaptation goals and policies. This has helped to identify gaps in the existing systems and develop strategies to address them. Another focus area has been the establishment of a framework for assessing adaptation and resilience, which involves identifying measurable adaptation indicators. This has helped to ensure that the progress of adaptation initiatives in the agriculture sector can be accurately tracked and evaluated.

The ICAT Adaptation project has also developed tools that comprehensively address agriculture sector adaptation initiatives at various levels and scales. These tools are designed to help stakeholders at all levels of the agriculture sector to better understand the impact of their actions on climate change and to make informed decisions.

To increase adaptation reporting capacity, the project has been involved in training and capacity building initiatives for various stakeholders in the agriculture sector. This has helped to ensure that there is a pool of skilled professionals capable of monitoring and evaluating climate actions in the sector. Finally, the project has been involved in integrating the monitoring and evaluation systems on adaptation on regional and national levels. This has helped to ensure that the reporting and review process is streamlined and that all stakeholders are working towards a common goal

A Multi stakeholder Approach to Achieving Transparency in Climate Action within the Agriculture Sector

The Paris Agreement of 2015 under the United Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) ushered in a new era of global cooperation in the fight against climate change, as countries agreed to collaborate to limit global warming to below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. Governments, non-governmental organizations, civil societies, the private sector, corporations, and individuals must therefore collaborate to ensure progress toward this objective.

Non-state actors represent a variety of public, private, and civil society interests and discourses, offering a unique perspective on the challenge posed by climate change, and their activities occur at various levels, from local to global. As they have a vast array of tools at their disposal to drive climate action, they contribute significantly to the fulfillment of the Paris Agreement's commitments, and the UNFCCC has been working to foster greater coordination among all stakeholders involved in the process, recognizing their roles in providing technical and financial support to developing countries. Therefore, to make real progress, it is essential that these stakeholders continue to collaborate and focus on specific, measurable goals that outline a clear path to achieving the stated goal of the Paris Agreement. This cooperation can be achieved through Multi-Stakeholder Platforms (MSPs).

The Kenya Climate Smart Agriculture Multi-Stakeholder Platform (CSA MSP) is one such platform whose main agenda is to coordinate stakeholders working on climate actions in the agriculture sector. The platform's formation is anchored on Kenya's commitment to implement Climate Smart Agriculture approach to address the impacts of climate change and to meet her obligations to the Paris Agreement in reducing emissions, as stipulated in its NDC. It provides a forum through which organizations create awareness, report achievements, identify opportunities for investments, share knowledge, experiences and information, and establish partnerships with other stakeholders. Furthermore, it promotes an inclusive institutional framework for coordination and harmonization of climate actions implementation in the agriculture sector while fostering an enabling environment for the realization of CSA objectives with particular attention to the most vulnerable to climate change impacts like women, persons with disabilities and marginalized communities. This facilitates partnerships among state and non-state actors at both national and county levels in areas of CSA research-extension-farmer liaison and funding, policy prioritization and advocacy, programmatic planning and implementation, institutional capacities development as well as data collection, information management and dissemination.

The Climate Smart Agriculture Multi-Stakeholder Platform (CSA MSP) is a crucial stakeholder in Kenya's efforts to combat climate change, and the ICAT project has recognized its importance. As part of its efforts to build stakeholder capacity, the ICAT Adaptation project in Kenya has effectively engaged a diverse group of national and subnational stakeholders from this platform. Through this engagement, these stakeholders have been able to provide essential information and collaborate in the development of tools and methodologies related to current national and global policy frameworks on transparency reporting requirements in the agriculture sector.

The CSA MSP has also played a particularly significant role in capacity building efforts to enhance effective reporting in the agriculture sector. The involvement of multiple stakeholders from various sectors is essential to promote inclusivity and bridge the participation gap. This approach ensures that all parties relevant to climate change and agriculture have a voice, including critical voices (e.g. indigenous peoples) that may have been overlooked in the past. This, in turn, enhances transparency and improves the quality of outcomes. Moreover, collaborating with diverse groups of stakeholders facilitates knowledge transfer, as each participant brings unique expertise and experience. The CSA MSP is effective in tackling complex development challenges and can help scale-up innovations that may not have been possible otherwise. It also addresses resource gaps by pooling together the necessary competencies and resources required for success.

Moreover, these partnerships are instrumental in overcoming knowledge gaps by promoting social interaction between actors from different sectors, leading to the creation of new practices and technologies. Additionally, MSPs help address regulatory gaps that may have been overlooked by governments, companies, or non-state actors acting alone, thus promoting effective governance and the achievement of policy objectives. Robust engagement of multiple stakeholders ensures that the transparency reporting system encompasses a diverse range of perspectives and sources, leading to the gathering of reliable and relevant data. This, in turn, enables evidence-based decision-making and the production of accurate reports. Through strong multi-stakeholder engagement, a transparent reporting system can reach a broad range of stakeholders, ensuring that its outputs inform their decision-making processes, scaling efforts or resource allocation.

Policy lessons

Policy lessons identified while developing the CSA monitoring and evaluation framework and operationalizing the CSA reporting tool through the Kenya CSA Multi stakeholder include:

- Transparent reporting of climate actions in the agriculture sector is crucial for tracking progress towards meeting national and international climate goals.

- A monitoring and evaluation framework that integrates climate-smart agriculture (CSA) practices and includes multiple stakeholder perspectives can facilitate transparency and accountability in reporting.
- Developing a reporting tool that is user-friendly, comprehensive, and flexible can help ensure that different stakeholders can easily report on their climate actions and contribute to a more complete picture of the sector's progress.
- Ongoing capacity building and stakeholder engagement are essential for ensuring that the tool is effectively utilized and that all stakeholders understand their roles in reporting.
- There is need to prioritize the establishment of hosting agreements for online tools, validation at different levels, and extensive training with different groups of people to ensure the proper use and maintenance of reporting tools.
- Transparent reporting should consider the social and environmental impacts of climate actions, particularly the inclusion of vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and marginalized communities.
- Partnerships and collaborations between different actors, including state and non-state actors, can enhance efficiency, transparency and accountability in the reporting of climate actions in the agriculture sector.
- Transparency in reporting mitigation and adaptation actions is essential for policymakers to make informed decisions at all stages of policy design and implementation and also provides the necessary data to guide strategic planning to design and implement programs and projects thus strategically channeling the available public funds.