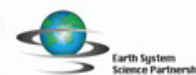




## THE Commission on Sustainable Agriculture AND Climate Change



### CCAFS Commission on Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Change

*Identifying policy changes to secure food security, poverty reduction and climate change adaptation and mitigation*

#### Meeting Summary

15<sup>th</sup> February 2011, Brookings Institution, Washington DC

#### Commission guidance

- The focus of the Commission will be on food security in the context of climate change adaptation and mitigation, with attention to water, land use, biodiversity and other sectoral issues, emphasizing developed and developing countries.
- The Commission will send a clear signal that responsibility for action lies everywhere and will direct its work toward the UNFCCC, the Rio+20 Earth Summit, the G-20 and, opportunistically, other policy venues.
- To move beyond 'silos,' the Commission will look for synergies across policy processes.
- In delivering its findings, the Commission will not hesitate to be policy prescriptive, framing recommendations in terms of consequences of action and inaction in both the short and long term.
- In its early work, the Secretariat should:
  - develop a policy map with an emphasis on time-path, and
  - synthesize findings from relevant meta-analyses with a focus on identifying points of consensus and unassailable evidence by: (1) evaluating what's worked in specific locations; (2) triangulating across major studies.
- Subsequently, the Secretariat should propose small, targeted sub-studies to supplement synthesis work.

#### Next Steps

- Once all Commissioners are confirmed, CCAFS will send out a press release to announce the launch of the Commission (update: Commissioners from Vietnam and Ethiopia have been confirmed). A complete contact list will be distributed to Commissioners.
- The Coordinator will plan a structured interview with each Commissioner to elicit insights on the headline questions as well as areas of specific expertise.

- The Secretariat will adapt and begin implementing the communications and policy engagement strategy and initiate planning for the next Commission meeting.
- The Coordinator will draft a proposed work plan and lay the foundation for the synthesis of meta-analyses.

## Meeting Summary

### 1. Welcoming the Commission to the Brookings Institution.

Sir John Beddington opened the meeting by inviting Mr Homi Kharas, Deputy Director for the Global Economy and Development at the Brookings Institution, to share some information about Brookings. Sir John thanked Mr Kharas as well as Kathy Sierra, Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, for their hospitality. (*See list of meeting participants below.*)

### 2. Introduction to the Meeting and Commissioners

Sir John explained the meeting agenda. Commissioners introduced themselves, described their relevant experience, mentioning interests in: quantifying environmental services, food security legislation, agricultural issues (water management, subsidies), biodiversity, institutional effectiveness and knowledge infrastructure, integrated science and policy processes, and GHG inventories. Other participants introduced themselves and indicated interests in evidence-based advocacy for agriculture and knowledge-sharing.

Sir John thanked the Commissioners for committing their time to such an important cause – achieving a food secure world – and thanked Dr Mohammed Asaduzzaman for agreeing to serve as Deputy Chair for the Commission. He reported that three additional Commissioners from Vietnam, Ethiopia and Brazil are likely to be confirmed shortly.

Noting the Issues Paper that provides further background on the Commission, Sir John indicated that the Commission should base its findings on scientific evidence, aim to reach consensus and deliver findings to inform / change policy. He then opened discussion about the focus and mode of operation of the Commission. Commissioners highlighted the importance of:

- Addressing food security in the context of climate change, rather than the reverse, recognizing that agriculture and food security are issues in their own right that have potential to push climate mitigation off the agenda as crises occur.
- Attention to key issues including: agricultural productivity, land use (ie, water and soil loss, biodiversity, managing whole landscapes), trade issues, genomics and technologies for addressing poverty dynamics.
- Focus on different forms of agriculture (eg, both smallholder and industrial).
- Being policy prescriptive, where appropriate, rather than simply delivering options.
- Framing findings in terms of consequences for specific actions and inactions in both the short and long term and achieving relevance for global, regional and national scales.
- Understanding whether the Commission will fill knowledge gaps or reduce confusion about existing knowledge, as well as which policy makers it seeks to mobilize into action.

Sir John invited Professor Scholes and Dr Asaduzzaman to work with the Secretariat on strategies for achieving an appropriate level of regional disaggregation.

### 3. Why is a new Commission needed?

Sir John invited Ms Douglas to address why the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (GDPRD) is supporting the Commission and to provide some background on GDPRD. Ms Douglas explained that GDPRD is a joint donor initiative that supports the agriculture and rural development community's efforts to mainstream climate change in their programmes and policies, and promotes understanding of the synergies between food security, pro-poor development and agricultural mitigation and adaptation. The GDPRD is working in three areas: (1) addressing aid effectiveness; (2) neutral convening and consensus building around critical or emerging issues, and (3) adding value through evidence-based advocacy and knowledge exchange. Ms Douglas expressed the GDPRD's support for the Commission and encouraged Commissioners to identify clear parameters to achieve high impact.

Sir John invited Professor Rosswall to introduce the objectives and unique role of the Commission, summarize the Commission's terms of reference and provide background on the CGIAR Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security program (CAAFS). In addressing the need for the Commission, Professor Rosswall pointed out that although major reports have underlined the importance of agriculture for global prosperity and sustainability, they have not led to needed changes in the policies and investments. A clear set of evidence-based policy recommendations, delivered in a timely manner by a body of eminent scientists from around the world, is needed to break through confusion and inaction and avoid unintended consequences and higher costs to society. CCAFS consulted widely on setting up the Commission and received widespread endorsement (including mention in the action plan from The Hague Conference on Climate Change and Agriculture).

Professor Rosswall explained the aim of the Commission to identify policy actions to achieve sustainable agriculture that contributes to food security and poverty reduction, and helps respond to climate change adaptation and mitigation goals. Commissioners, serving in their personal capacity, will marshal existing evidence to answer four headline questions:

1. What are the main challenges confronting agriculture as a result of climate change, in particular for vulnerable farmers in developing countries and in helping achieve food security, and how do these relate to other challenges facing agriculture?
2. What are the costs of action relative to inaction, particularly in relation to mitigation and adaptation in agriculture systems?
3. What approaches to agricultural development should be scaled up to meet the growing demand for food while addressing global and local environment and poverty objectives?
4. What are the main changes and policy actions needed to promote these more sustainable approaches?

A final Commission report will present high-level policy messages targeted to climate change, agriculture and sustainability policy processes and will complement and inform CCAFS and other scientific initiatives. Supported by the Secretariat and completing its work by December 2011, the Commission will meet virtually and in-person, review interim and final reports and promote the use of report findings to inform policy. Contact points will be set up with other major initiatives on agriculture and climate change. In follow-on discussion, there was general agreement that the objectives and unique role of the Commission were clear.

#### **4. Context and need for action**

Sir John delivered a presentation on the major issues facing agriculture and climate change and why action is urgently needed. Noting that the Commission will consider all other relevant evidence, he shared the headline messages from the UK Foresight report on the Future of Food and Farming which called for radical redesign of the global food system and pointed out that inaction on policies and decisions inside and outside of the food system is not an option. The five challenges identified in the Foresight report include: (1) balancing future demand and supply sustainably, (2) ending hunger, (3) meeting the challenges of a low emissions world, (4) addressing the threat of future volatility in the food system, and (5) maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem services while feeding the world. Sir John shared analysis demonstrating the unsustainability of the global food system and the need for improved "food literacy." Pointing to interactive drivers of food price volatility, he emphasized that policies and negotiations on climate change mitigation must take full account of potential impacts on the global food system.

In the subsequent discussion, key points included:

- While we do not have the scientific capacity to predict regional or decadal patterns of climate change, we do know that climate will change and climate variability is likely to increase with additional extremes events.

- The Commission should focus on strategies for sustainably improving productivity and livelihoods while seeking co-benefits for climate change adaptation and mitigation, and acknowledge that while global agriculture will continue to be a net source of GHGs, significant gains can be made in decreasing GHG emissions from agricultural production.

Sir John noted that the Foresight team at the UK Chief Scientist's Office will be available to support Commission activities and pointed to the Pretty et al (Int. J. Agr. Sustainability 8:219-236, 2010) paper on the top 100 questions of importance to the future of global agriculture as a valuable resource.

## **5. What are the policy targets and questions the Commission should ask?**

Sir John explained that, to catalyze real change, the Commission needs to be strategic in directing its efforts and clear on the main policy processes which it targets for its findings and the priority questions it will ask. He invited Mr Howlett to deliver a presentation on policy processes and targets, and entry points and links to these.

Mr. Howlett emphasized that the success of the Commission will not only depend upon the quality of its findings, but on whether its findings inform and influence change particularly on policy and investments. Of the many policies the Commission could potentially focus on, each has its own context and set of outstanding questions. He noted that capacity, resources and time require that commissioned studies are limited in size and scope. In determining priorities, he asked the Commission to decide how it will focus its efforts on the following dimensions:

- Solely on international policies and agreements or regional and national policies as well?
- Solely on agriculture and climate change policies or other sectors and areas (eg, WTO)?
- Degree of emphasis on UNFCCC and post 2012 agreements
- High impact on policy events and decisions over the next 2-3 years
- Comparative advantages of Commissioners and sponsors

In the subsequent discussion, key points included:

- To inform the September G-20 meeting in France, it would be useful for the Commission to address the disruptive effects of climate change on food prices.
- To inform the Rio+20 Earth Summit, it may be useful for the Commission to link to regional input processes.
- The Commission should have both a policy engagement strategy focused on specific individuals as well as a communications strategy to reach a broader set of stakeholders (including region-specific messages).
- Specific suggestions for Commission focus:
  - mapping agro-geography (ecology, economics) onto scaled processes
  - financing issues (eg, Climate Green Fund, recommendations relevant to finance ministers and heads of state)
  - tracking countries that are currently developing food programs
  - the full set of contributors to food insecurity including agriculture, forestry, water, land use, biodiversity and socio-economics (as well as energy as an important aspect of climate change mitigation)
  - delivery frameworks for science at regional and national levels
- The Commission should include regional perspectives (but be cautious about focusing its analysis on only one region) and frame its findings in terms of risk management.

It was agreed that the Commission would direct its primary attention to the UNFCCC, the Rio+20 Earth Summit, the G-20 and, opportunistically, other policy venues while sending a clear signal that responsibility for action lies everywhere. It was decided that the focus of the Commission will be on food security in the context of climate change adaptation and mitigation, with attention to water, land use, biodiversity and other sectoral issues.

Sir John invited Dr Negra to deliver a presentation on the questions for the Commission to ask and the approaches it should use. Dr Negra emphasized that, to avoid generic recommendations and deliver concrete actions, the Commission needs to answer a set of focused questions. To guide the questions to be answered by the Commission report, she proposed that the Commission:

- begin by mapping key policy processes and identifying high-priority outcomes (eg, specific policy mechanisms, financial resource allocations)
- then move on to determining the necessary interim effects (eg, Commission findings taken up in specific venues) that could be achieved by marshaling evidence and engaging key groups.

Dr Negra requested guidance from the Commission on how synthesis of existing evidence should be conducted to best support the Commission's objectives. She presented three options with different emphasis on secondary analysis, consultation, targeted studies and compilation of evidence and policy proposals. A list of 12 major reports was also shared.

Commissioners highlighted the importance of:

- Moving beyond 'silos' and looking for synergies (as well as institutional barriers) among policy processes (ie, food security, agriculture, climate change) and desired outcomes
- Learning from specific countries that have made progress on food security (eg, China, Mexico, Brazil), recognizing that lessons may be difficult to apply generically
- Focusing on robust rather than precise policy solutions and basing recommendations on up-to-date data
- Creating an international forum to bring together economists and scientists to model the food system (as articulated in Godfray et al, Science Express 27 January: 1-3, 2011)
- Focusing on essential outcomes before addressing financing options

It was decided that the Commission should look for points of consensus among major meta-analyses for the four headline questions and identify a body of unassailable evidence that stretches across individual studies (noting that many studies draw upon the same underlying data). A triangulation approach should be used to interrogate major studies for common conclusions (eg, top-down / bottom-up studies; economically / biophysically based studies). A policy map should be developed with an emphasis on time-path.

## **6. Communication**

Sir John invited Mr Timmermann to summarize the communication strategy for the Commission and roles for Commissioners in delivering the strategy, emphasizing that the success of the Commission requires that it communicates its findings in the right format, at the right time, and to the right people. Mr Timmermann outlined the objectives as ensuring: (1) key decision makers and stakeholders are aware of the Commission and what makes it unique, (2) engagement with stakeholders raises awareness of the Commission's work and facilitates their input, and (3) the Commission's findings and recommendations are disseminated in a well-targeted manner and used to inform and influence policy. Noting that CCAFS and a contracted media firm will support Commissioners, he proposed roles for Commissioners to take on including:

- Responding to media and stakeholder questions during the life of the Commission
- Taking part in launch events to promote the report and associated media initiatives
- Promoting the use of the Commission's findings through their own networks

Mr Timmermann asked Mr Davis to explain the support that Burness Communications can provide to the Commission. Mr Davis emphasized the importance of ensuring that policy recommendations aren't lost in debate by failing to summarize evidence for the relationship between food security and climate change.

In the subsequent discussion, Commissioners spoke to the importance of:

- Planning a follow-up strategy in 2012 if the Commission report is released at UNFCCC COP-17 (December 2011).
- Gathering input from stakeholders and operating transparently
- Translating materials into other major languages
- Rigorously stating where there is scientific uncertainty and publishing findings in a peer-reviewed journal
- Addressing food security issues in both developed and developing countries

## 7. Next steps for Commissioners

Dr Negra provided a recap of Commission guidance from earlier discussions and proposed next steps. She outlined two main areas of Secretariat activity:

- Develop meta-analysis of existing evidence (ie, identify evidence sources, key initiatives and events, craft a research plan, design, manage and synthesize sub-studies, prepare draft findings and final report)
- Engage the Commission, CCAFS, GDPRP and other major initiatives (ie, convene input and manage Commission meetings, interact with individual Commissioners and others, link research to communications, identify and use partnerships and leverage points)

Dr Negra presented a draft timeline for the Commission's activities:

By the end of:	
February	Commission & work plan finalized
March	Sub-studies commissioned & underway
May	Interim reports; virtual or actual meeting
July	Sub-studies completed
August	Sub-studies synthesized; virtual meeting
September	Preliminary findings; Commission review
October	Final draft report; Commission meeting
November	Final report; communications
December	Final communications; evaluation

Commissioners agreed on the following:

- The first step should be implementing a synthesis of meta-analyses followed by targeted sub-studies as needed. Sub-studies will, by necessity, be of limited scope.
- The work plan should be based on a report launch at COP-17.
- External engagement should be used to elicit input on preliminary findings.
- Commissioners can provide names of people to serve as peer reviewers.

It was decided that the Coordinator will plan a structured telephone interview with each Commissioner in the next 1-2 weeks that will include a set of general topics and questions specific to Commissioners' individual interests and capability to support Secretariat work and Commission activities. As the final Commissioners are confirmed, the Coordinator will provide comprehensive telephone briefings.

It was further decided that the Commission should meet again in person in late April or early May to review progress on synthesis of meta-analyses (see Section 5), decide on further work (eg, targeted sub-studies) and plan for implementation of the communication strategy. Meeting location will be decided off-line.

## 8. Wrap Up

Sir John closed the meeting by thanking the Commissioners and acknowledging his appreciation of their expertise and commitment to the effort. He noted that the Commission will seek to achieve consensus on final recommendations, but where this is elusive, divergent views will be acknowledged.

## Meeting participants

### **Commissioners via video or phone link:**

Professor Lin Erda in Beijing

Professor Bob Scholes in Pretoria

Dr Rita Sharma in New Delhi

Dr. Adrian Fernández Bremanutz in Mexico City

(Due to time differences some remote Commissioners could not join in for the entire meeting.)

### **Commissioners present:**

Professor Sir John Beddington, United Kingdom (Chair)

Dr Megan Clark, Australia

Dr Marion Guillon, France

Dr Judi Wakhungu, Kenya

Dr Mohammed Asaduzzaman, Bangladesh

Professor Molly Jahn, United States

### **CCAFS, GDPRD, Secretariat and other staff present:**

Professor em. Thomas Rosswall, Chair of CCAFS Steering Committee

Ms Fionna Douglas, Program Manager at the World Bank representing the GDPRD

Ms Marjory-Anne Bromhead, Natural Resources Adviser at the World Bank representing the GDPRD

Mr David Howlett, Adviser to Commission Secretariat and Senior Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Leeds

Dr Christine Negra, Commission Coordinator and Program Director at The Heinz Center for Science, Economics and the Environment

Mr Torben Timmermann, CCAFS Head of Program Coordination and Communications

Mr Matthew Davis, Burness Communications

Dr Joanna Dally, Private Secretary to Sir John Beddington