



**Environmental Framework Structure and Policies  
for the  
FORUM FOR AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH IN AFRICA  
(FARA)**

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# FARA'S ENVIRONMENTAL FRAMEWORK STRUCTURE AND POLICIES

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) is the apex organization for advancing agricultural research in Africa by assisting in the coordination and dissemination of such research. Its mission to contribute to the creation of broad-based improvements in agricultural productivity, competitiveness and markets by supporting Africa's sub-regional agricultural research organisations (SROs) in strengthening the capacity for agricultural innovation on the continent. FARA does not carry out research. As its name implies, FARA is a forum of stakeholders in agricultural research and development in Africa. The stakeholders comprise of research institutions, research systems, farmers groups, private sector and government institutions, non government organisations and donors.

FARA is mandated by the African Union Commission and the African Union's New Partnership for Africa's Development (AU-NEPAD) to serve as the lead institution responsible for coordinating Pillar IV of the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP). The CAADP articulates African leaders' collective vision for agricultural development on the continent. It sets an ambitious target of 6% annual agricultural growth rate, which African countries must sustain in order to reverse the decline in food production and increase incomes of the rural poor. Pillar IV of the CAADP constitutes AU-NEPAD's strategy for revitalizing, expanding and reforming Africa's agricultural research, technology dissemination and adoption efforts<sup>1</sup>.

FARA's primary role as CAADP Pillar IV lead institution is to develop and support the implementation of a framework for guiding the interventions required to achieve Pillar IV goals. FARA successfully led the consultative development of the frame work for Pillar IV, that is, the Framework for African Agricultural Productivity (FAAP), which was endorsed by African Heads of States and Governments in July 2006. In supporting the achievement of Pillar IV goals, FARA works in collaboration with SROs, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the Consultative Group for International agricultural Research (CGIAR) system and relevant national institutions to:

- (a) employ the FAAP in providing guidance to Pillar IV programs, policies, and institutions;
- (b) ensure effective integration of the agricultural research (science and technology, extension, and education and training agendas (i.e. CAADP Pillar IV) into the CAADP national and regional roundtable process and compact development;

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<sup>1</sup> CAADP's first three pillars include: Pillar I - Sustainable Land and Water Management; Pillar II - Development of Infrastructure, Access to and Effectiveness of Agricultural Markets; Pillar III - Increased Food Supply, Reduced Hunger, and Improved Response to Food Crises.

- (c) facilitate and support the design and implementation of the Pillar IV components of the country and regional compacts; and
- (d) support the mobilization of resources from internal and external sources for implementation of Pillar IV components and promote adherence with FAAP guidelines and principles in their implementation.

FARA's Strategic Plan (2007-2016) serves as the reference for guiding FARA's activities over the next decade. The Strategic Plan lays out FARA's objective, namely, to contribute to the sustainable improvement of broad-based agricultural productivity, competitiveness and markets. The achievement of FARA's objective entails the delivery of the following five results:

1. Appropriate institutional and organisational arrangements for regional agricultural research and development established
2. Broad-based stakeholders (including women and women's organizations) have access to knowledge and technology necessary for innovation in a gender sensitive manner
3. Strategic decision making options for policy, institutions and markets developed in a gender sensitive manner
4. Human, institutional and organizational capacity for agricultural innovation developed
5. Platforms for agricultural innovation supported

FARA will deliver the above results through the provision of networking support to the SROs, relevant national institutions, CGIAR centers and numerous other actors involved in agricultural research and development (ARD) at national, sub-regional and continental level in Africa. It has accordingly structured the activities leading to the five results into the following five networking support functions (NSFs).

1. **Advocacy and resource mobilisation.** This NSF supports FARA constituents (the SROs, National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS), and other regional and continental agricultural research and development stakeholders) in establishing appropriate institutional and organisational arrangements for regional agricultural research and development. It responds to calls by CAADP and FAAP for increased and better harmonized investments in agricultural research and development by national governments and regional and international development agencies/partners.
2. **Access to knowledge and technologies.** This NSF seeks to empower researchers and end users through access to information, learning opportunities, and new technologies by facilitating information exchange and increasing access by users to tools for transforming information into knowledge for innovation.

3. **Regional policies and markets.** This NSF seeks to enhance strategic agricultural policy formulation by providing policy makers with evidence-based policy options. It also provides information and supports development of skills that will empower Africa's policy makers and their delegates involved in international trade and environmental treaty negotiations. Furthermore, it aims to improve the performance of broad-based inter and intra-regional markets.
4. **Capacity strengthening.** This NSF supports efforts aimed at ensuring that Africa has relevant as well as qualitatively and quantitatively sufficient human and institutional capacity for agricultural innovation to achieve broad-based agricultural productivity, competitiveness and markets.
5. **Partnerships and strategic alliances.** This NSF facilitates the establishment of mutually beneficial partnerships that draw on the resources and expertise of all FARA stakeholders. Such partnerships create a capacity for agricultural innovation that, together with the other support functions, will bring about the required improvements in the efficacy and impact of African agricultural research and development.

Through the NSFs, the FARA secretariat mobilizes FARA's constituents to:

- collectively identify regional agricultural and natural resource management science and technology priorities,
- design regional intervention options/programs, and
- mobilize necessary resources to support the implementation of the regional programs

The portfolio of activities carried out under each NSF includes: (a) the essential continuing functions (ECFs) and time bound activities (regional projects). The ECFs are the core set of activities that each NSF must undertake to realize its outputs and subsequently the MTOP's results and CAADP Pillar IV objectives. They involve the establishment of knowledge hubs for the respective NSF's areas of concern and support for the functioning of these hubs.

Regional projects encapsulate time bound activities with demonstrable efficiency gains or added value when implemented and coordinated from a continental platform. They are hosted and coordinated by the FARA Secretariat. The implementation of NSF activities is guided by the Subsidiarity Principle described in the FAAP whereby action and decision making is devolved to the lowest level depending on the operational competencies required, and the efficient and diligent use of resources. FARA's application of Subsidiarity seeks to safeguard against the likely loss of spill over benefits to higher levels.

FARA has developed a five-year (2008-2012) Medium Term Operational Plan (MTOP) which details the implementation of the strategy including the results to be delivered by each NSF and

the required investment as well as the management and governance structures necessary for the delivery of the stated results.

The implementation of FARA's MTOP requires an investment of US\$113 million over the five years from 2008 to 2012. FARA's development partners have pledged to make available most of the required funding. They have also agreed to fund the NSF's essential continuing functions and the Secretariat's operations in a harmonized and programmatic manner. To this end they have proposed the establishment of a recipient-executed Multi Donor Trust Fund (MDTF)<sup>2</sup> at the World Bank. It is anticipated that contributions to the MDTF will be in the order of US\$ 48 Million over the MTOP period (2008-2012)– this figure could become larger as additional contributors emerge.

The portfolio of activities that will be financed by the magnitude of resources pledged to FARA to implement its MTOP is likely to bear a significant environmental footprint. In accordance with FARA's commitment to enhance sustainable management of natural resources, it has developed an environmental policy and a set of environmental safeguards to guide the implementation of its MTOP by its NSFs and partners, to prevent possible negative impacts to the natural environment and to vulnerable communities in Africa.

The structural elements indicated below constitute the Environmental Management Framework (EMF) of FARA, and as such, will have to be observed by all FARA's NSFs and partners involved in the implementation of FARA's MTOP.

## **2 ELEMENTS OF FARA'S ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**

The following are the elements of FARA's Environmental Management Framework (EMF):

- i) **Negative list** – list of activities, or characteristics of activities, that cannot be supported;
- ii) **Policies** – minimum environmental management policies and standards to be incorporated based on World Bank safeguard policy requirements.
- iii) **Processes and responsibilities** – description of the processes to be followed in implementing the EMF, and assignment of responsibilities for these processes;
- iv) **Capacity building** – training and technical assistance that will be provided to build capacity so that EMF responsibilities may be successfully fulfilled;
- v) **Monitoring** – measures that will be taken to monitor, report and strengthen implementation of the EMF.

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<sup>2</sup> Funding for regional projects will not be channelled through the MDTF

### 3 NEGATIVE LIST

The following activities, or activities with the following characteristics, cannot be financed by FARA:

- activities inside protected areas or other critical natural habitats;
- activities requiring involuntary resettlement;
- dams more than ten meters in height;
- activities involving logging in natural forests, or processing of timber other than from plantations; and
- activities that would damage physical cultural property.

### 4 POLICIES

The policies described below are applied to all activities supported by FARA:

#### 4.1 Environmental Assessment of Construction and Civil Works

If FARA's resources are to be used to finance construction or civil works, an Environmental Assessment (EA) must be produced in compliance with both World Bank OP 4.01 and any applicable national legislation. This includes compliance with the requirements of OP 4.01 for consultation and the disclosure of information.

#### 4.2 Resettlement

FARA's resources cannot be used for any activity that would require involuntary resettlement. If land or property is to be acquired, it must be on the basis of a willing buyer/willing seller, and must be documented as such.

#### 4.3 Natural Habitats

FARA resources cannot be used for activities that involve a significant conversion or degradation of critical natural habitats. In applying this policy, the following definitions apply:

- **Significant conversion** is the elimination or severe diminution of the integrity of a critical or other natural habitat caused by a major, long-term change in land or water use. Significant conversion may include, for example, land clearing; replacement of natural vegetation (e.g., by crops or tree plantations); permanent flooding (e.g. by a reservoir); drainage, dredging, filling, or channelization of wetlands;
- **Degradation** is a modification that substantially reduces the habitat's ability to maintain viable populations of its native species;

- **Critical natural habitats** are:
  - a) existing protected areas and areas officially proposed by governments as protected areas (e.g. reserves that meet the criteria of the World Conservation Union [IUCN] classifications), areas initially recognized as protected by traditional local communities (e.g. sacred groves), and sites that maintain conditions vital for the viability of these protected areas; or
  - b) sites identified on supplementary lists prepared by an authoritative source. Such sites may include areas recognized by traditional local communities; areas with known high suitability for bio-diversity conservation; and sites that are critical for rare, vulnerable, migratory, or endangered species. Listings are based on systematic evaluations of such factors as species richness; the degree of endemism, rarity, and vulnerability of component species; representativeness; and integrity of ecosystem processes.

#### **4.4 Forests**

FARA's resources cannot be used for activities that involve significant conversion or degradation of forest areas that qualify as critical natural habitats, or for activities associated with forest plantations that involve any conversion or degradation of critical natural habitats.

FARA resources will support activities related to forest plantations only when such plantations are established on un-forested sites or lands already converted.

Forestry activities supported by FARA must include measures to prevent the introduction of invasive species that threaten biodiversity.

FARA resources may only finance activities related to industrial-scale commercial forest operations when these include support for an independent forest certification system that requires:

- compliance with relevant laws;
- recognition of and respect for any legally documented or customary land tenure and use rights as well as the rights of indigenous peoples and workers;
- measures to maintain or enhance sound and effective community relations;
- conservation of biological diversity and ecological functions;
- measures to maintain or enhance environmentally sound multiple benefits accruing from the forest;
- prevention or minimization of the adverse environmental impacts from forest use;
- effective forest management planning;
- active monitoring and assessment of relevant forest management areas; and

- the maintenance of critical forest areas and other critical natural habitats affected by the operation;
- independent, third-party assessment of forest management performance.

The forest certification system's standards must be developed with the meaningful participation of local people and communities; indigenous peoples; non-governmental organizations representing consumer, producer, and conservation interests; and other members of civil society, including the private sector.

FARA's resources may only finance activities associated with forest harvesting operations by small-scale landholders or local communities when these have either:

- a. achieved a standard of forest management, developed with the meaningful participation of locally affected communities, which is consistent with the principles and criteria of responsible forest management outlined above; or
- b. agreed to adhere to a time-bound phased action plan to achieve such a standard.

#### **4.5 Pest Management**

FARA's resources will only support activities that require the use of pesticides when these activities include:

- the application of integrated pest management (IPM) practices, incorporating the promotion of biological and environmental control methods over chemical pesticides where possible;
- the application and promotion of pesticide management practices outlined in the guidelines of the International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides<sup>3</sup>

The following criteria apply to the selection and use of pesticides in activities financed by FARA:

- they must have negligible adverse human health effects;
- they must be shown to be effective against the target species;
- they must have minimal effect on non-target species and the natural environment. The methods, timing, and frequency of pesticide application must be aimed to minimize damage to natural enemies; and,
- their use must take into account the need to prevent the development of resistance in pests.

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<sup>3</sup> International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides (Revised Version), FAO, 2003, and supporting guidelines. See <http://www.fao.org/docrep/005/y4544e/y4544e00.htm> (accessed on 20 November 2008)

Any pesticide financed by FARA must be manufactured, packaged, labeled, handled, stored, disposed of, and applied according to standards that, at a minimum, comply with the following FAO guidelines:

- *Pesticide storage and stock control manual (FAO, 1996).*
- *Revised guidelines on good labeling practice for pesticides (FAO, 1995).*
- *Guidelines for the management of small quantities of unwanted and obsolete pesticides (FAO, 1999).*
- *Guidelines on Management Options for Empty Pesticide Containers (FAO, 2008).*
- *Guidelines on personal protection when using pesticides in hot climates (FAO, 1990).*

FARA will not finance formulated products that fall in WHO classes IA and IB, or formulations of products in Class II, if:

- (a) the recipient country lacks restrictions on their distribution and use; or
- (b) they are likely to be used by, or be accessible to, lay personnel, farmers, or others without training, equipment, and facilities to handle, store, and apply these products properly.

FARA will not finance any pesticide products which contain active ingredients that are listed on Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention (on Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade), unless the Country has taken explicit legal or administrative measures to consent to the import and use of that active ingredient.

FARA will not finance any pesticide products which contain active ingredients that are listed on Annex A & B of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, unless for an acceptable purpose as defined by the Convention, or if an exemption has been obtained by the Country under this Convention.

#### **4.6 Genetically Modified Organisms**

FARA supports research in Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) only when the proposals demonstrate consistency with the continental Biosafety framework and the national Biosafety framework of the country concerned.

Proposals involving contained laboratory research must verify that the proposing institute has in place institutional guidelines for conducting recombinant DNA research and a mechanism for internal approval and monitoring and risk management of such research. These guidelines need to be of international standard (e.g. Adapted from “*NIH guidelines for research involving recombinant DNA molecules*”<sup>4</sup> or a functional equivalent”).

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<sup>4</sup> [http://oba.od.nih.gov/oba/rac/guidelines\\_02/NIH\\_Gdlnes\\_Ink\\_2002z.pdf](http://oba.od.nih.gov/oba/rac/guidelines_02/NIH_Gdlnes_Ink_2002z.pdf) (accessed on 20 November 2008)

Prior to the approval of proposals involving confined field trials of transgenic crops, FARA requires that the sections of the proposal covering risk assessment and management, description of the conduct of the field trial, and post trial monitoring measures, are subject to a third party expert review. Such third party review will also determine whether there is a risk of transboundary movement of any GMOs.

#### **4.7 Projects on International Waterways (IW)**

FARA's resources will not be used to finance any works or detailed engineering designs involving international waterways. However, should these resources be used to finance any water resource surveys or feasibility studies of activities on or involving IW, the terms of reference for these studies will be required to include an examination of any potential riparian issues.

### **5 PROCESSES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

All project proposals (whether solicited or unsolicited) submitted to FARA for funding have to undergo a review process to assess their merit in addressing regional (continental) problems and to produce regional solutions in a cost effective manner. The reviews are undertaken either by FARA's technical staff or by persons known to be specialists in the subject matter. The review reports are submitted to FARA's Executive Director who makes recommendations to the Programme sub-committee of FARA's executive Board on whether or not to approve funding for project proposals.

Any proposed activity submitted to FARA for possible funding will be required to make a declaration ascertaining that none of its activities will infringe any of the provisions of this EMF. If the proposed activity poses a risk that any of the provisions of the EMF may be contravened, the proponent(s) of the activity will be obliged to undertake one or more of the following before FARA can accept their proposal:

- If the nature and level of impact are known, propose mitigation measures that will be undertaken to minimize the environmental impact of the activity.
- If the nature and level of impact are not known, commission an independent Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) whose report must clearly define the scale of the environmental impact and recommend mitigation measures.
- In case of the above, the proponent(s) will meet the costs of both the EIA and mitigation measures.

Applications to FARA must indicate whether any of the following activities will be financed or required in the course of implementing the proposal:

- Construction or civil works
- Voluntary resettlement

- Interference with critical natural habitats
- Commercial forestry exploitation
- Pest management

Wherever any of these activities is involved, the application must clearly describe the scale and scope of the activity, and a description of what measures will be adopted to ensure compliance with the policies laid out in Section II of this EMF. Where significant potential environmental impacts may occur, the applicant should include an Environmental Impact Assessment. The proponent (s) will meet the cost of both the EIA and mitigation measures.

FARA through the Office of the Executive Director will undertake the following:

- Review and clear winning proposals from partners for compliance with the EMF before they are submitted to the Executive Board for final approval for funding
- Request proponents of non-compliant proposals to revise them accordingly
- Review EIA reports and to ensure that environmental mitigation measures recommended are of acceptable standards
- Monitor the implementation of the mitigation measures

## **6 CAPACITY BUILDING**

Presently, FARA has limited capacity to review proposals for compliance with the provisions of the EMF, and to review EIA reports to assess the quality and relevance of the recommendations arising from the reports. Similarly, most of FARA partners also do not have the capacity to decipher environmental impacts and to determine environmental mitigation measures.

FARA will organize annual EIA capacity building activities for its NSF directors, Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) officer and Project officers to equip them with the knowledge and skills for reviewing EIA reports and for monitoring compliance with FARA's EMF. This activity will be part and parcel of the Secretariat's annual work plan and budget.

Coordinators of FARA funded projects will participate in the above training events, or depending on the cost-effectiveness, separate trainings will be organized to impart to them the knowledge and relevance of environmental considerations, and to equip them with the skills necessary to comply with the FARA's EMF.

Suitable consultants will be contracted to provide the necessary training; and the necessary budget will be provided for annually by the office of the Deputy Executive Director.

## **7 MONITORING**

FARA will undertake periodic reviews to monitor compliance with this EMF. Should there be an activity in which there are indications of serious breaches of the EMF, FARA will undertake a special study to determine the true extent of the breaches and to determine the way forward. In extreme instances, FARA reserves the right to terminate the project concerned.

FARA's annual reports are distributed to all stakeholders, and will include a section reviewing compliance with the EMF, and the measures taken to ensure its effective implementation.. FARA commits itself to independent assessment of the adequacy and implementation of the EMF at two or three year intervals.