



International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas

Research Prospectus Workshop

and

**Sustainable Land Management Research Project Review and
Monitoring Meeting**

Proceedings

**8-9 February, 2008
Tashkent, Uzbekistan**

ICARDA-CAC Regional Office

Tashkent, Uzbekistan

PROCEEDINGS OF THE WORKSHOP ON SLMR RESEARCH PROSPECTUS

Venue: Hotel Shodlik, Tashkent

February 8, 2008

Research Prospectus Workshop was organized on **8 February, 2008** in hotel Shodlik, Tashkent and attended by 38 participants. The participants included the Heads of the CACILM National Secretariats, UNCCD Focal points and their representatives from Central Asian countries, Heads of NARS and of the MSEK (CACILM), national coordinators of the SLMR project in Central Asia and scientists from the SLMR sites' teams and ICARDA staff from Head Qrs. in Aleppo, Syria and Regional office for Central Asia and the Caucasus in Tashkent. The list of the Participants is attached in Annex I.

Dr. Christopher Martius, Regional Coordinator, ICARDA-CAC and Head, PFU-CGIAR, welcomed all the participants and remarked that the objective of the Workshop is to develop a common vision and unanimity on strategy and approaches to the implementation of the Research Prospectus on sustainable land management for Central Asia. It was also emphasized that the Prospectus needed to be finalized soon enough by the partners to keep with the momentum of the SLMR project. It was indicated that releases of the funds depend on submission of this document.

Prof. R. Tillaev, Chief Scientific Secretary of the Scientific Production Center, in his remarks, pointed that land resources of Central Asia are limited and the annual increase of the population is estimated to be equal to 400,000 people. Therefore, the efficient use of land and water resources will become increasingly more important for feeding the additional population. He also mentioned that land degradation is emerging as a major issue for national food security of the nations. It was observed that >62% of the lands have become salinized to various intensities in Khorezm and Syrdarya provinces of Uzbekistan. It is causing concerns as land productivity is declining.

Mr. J. Patterson, Head, MSEK, CACILM, welcomed all the participants and stated that SLMR is a lead project of the CACILM and has made some impressive progress inspite of initial bottlenecks and some very interesting on-farm research trials have been initiated to test the SLM technologies. He stated that stakeholders should express themselves freely on the Research Prospectus so that all the right questions and issues find a record in the document for any future funding. He hoped that ICARDA team will feel doubly reassured on the contents of the Research Prospectus at the end of the workshop. It was agreed that any written observation on the Research Prospectus should be sent to Dr. Raj Gupta before February 18, 2008 for consideration of the drafting team so as to finalize the document as soon as possible.

Dr. Raj Gupta, Project Manager, SLMR Project, spoke about his expectations of the workshop and finalizations of the Agreements with National partners and their vetting by the ADB.

National coordinators comprised of Drs. A. Saparov (Kazakhstan), M. Bekenov (Kyrgyzstan), S. Sanginov (Tajikistan), M. Nepesov (Turkmenistan) and R. Ikramov (Uzbekistan) in their presentations highlighted the issues as under:

- Land degradation is a complex issue linked to both biophysical and socio-economic and policy environments, and it should be monitored in a dynamic manner.
- Crop and their cultivars to fit into crop rotation to adapt to climate change, diversification and profitability.
- Seed chain issues;
- Amelioration and rehabilitation of degraded irrigated and pasture / range lands
Rehabilitation of the pasture lands and integration of the livestock and plant production (new methods of grazing for improving traditional pasture lands productivity);
- Mechanism for transfer of technologies and their adaptation under local natural and climatic conditions is possible.
- Conservation technologies (zero tillage, raised bed planting and etc.) represent the best platform for SLM.
- Development and use of the mountain territory has great socio-economic benefits, especially for the poor rural people who depend on agriculture for their livelihoods on the limited land resources. Rationale land use plans for enhancing productivity of degraded sloping lands in low and high rainfall regions to be developed.
- Conjunctive use of the fresh and drainage water
- Small scale mechanization of agriculture and promotion of prototypes to promote Conservation Agriculture (CA)
- Use GIS and remote sensing technology for mapping degraded soils and then prioritize them for treatment.
- Training and dissemination of the innovations;
- Strengthen the national socio-economic and policy research capacities for better analysis.

Dr. Margulya Baekenova, Head, NSEK, Kazakhstan, remarked that the Research Prospectus is the basis of our work under CACILM. We can see that the main goal is the generation of incomes and improving the livelihoods of the people who depend on natural resources. In particular, Kazakhstan has presented suggestions regarding socio-economic researches with specific emphasis on institutional networking and strengthening of the infrastructure and technical competence of the scientists. In Kazakhstan about 190 million hectares are occupied by pastures. Though these pastures have water supply provisions, we do not know exactly who will manage them and look after their rehabilitation. She also drew attention to the energy crisis in dry lands and suggested that the Research Prospectus should address issues related with harnessing the various renewable energy

sources (biogas, micro-hydro-turbines, solar and wind) so that tree felling could be minimized in the dry lands. **Dr. H. Ahmadov**, President, Tajik Academy of Agricultural Sciences, and Head, NSEK, CACILM, remarked that forestry and energy issues should be reflected in the otherwise well documented Research Prospectus. **Dr. Gulchekhra Khasankhanova**, Evaluation and Monitoring Expert, NSEK, Uzbekistan, remarked that CAC Drought Management Center started its operation in Tashkent. Main issues of this Center are related to climate and drought. The Center's work suffers due to lack of specialists, especially young scientists. **Dr. K. Kulov**, Head, NSEK, Kyrgyzstan, remarked that the basic question is to increase efficiency of the irrigated lands and pastures. The most important question is the production, processing and marketing of the crops. Some of these problems are stated within the Prospectus. Socio-economic issues should be defined more explicitly by country and areas of pasturelands lost due to degradation should be mentioned for attracting investments. We should help create agro-information services in each country to facilitate the information sharing and to help farmers to market their produce. **Dr. K. Kasymov**, UNCCD Focal Point, Kyrgyzstan, remarked that good diagnosis of the land degradation problems and understanding of the cause-effect relationship is crucial for SLM. We should strive to have better and detailed information on soils in each country to target appropriate technologies accordingly. He also indicated that reform process has led to loss/migration of potential farmers out of agriculture. The new generation of farmers have to be trained, which is a gigantic challenge in view of the virtual absence of extension services. Also he pointed out the necessity of organizing the professional training for technicians in CAC.

Dr. N. Korpeyev, Head, NSEK, Turkmenistan, remarked that development of Research Prospectus by team led by ICARDA is a significant work. It focuses on production at lesser costs, enhancing factor productivity and total system productivity, and aimed to reduce land degradation for improved livelihoods. It is high time to attract donors' investment to conduct research to fine-tune agronomic and crop management practices to meet challenges of the changing climate at national and regional levels. Donor support can be attracted for introducing issues of renewable energy sources. National and regional representatives have to work on successful implementation of SLM. **Dr. Gulchekhra Khasankhanova**, remarked that deliberation on the Research Prospectus will generate confidence in pursuing our goal of improved livelihoods and sustainable land management under the aegis of the CACILM project for the decade to come. The team of national scientists led by ICADRA has done a good job by putting together all the relevant ideas and issues and provide an integrated strategy of research for development using resource-conserving technologies / conservation agriculture as the vehicle for change. **Dr. S. Sanginov**, SLMR National Coordinator, Tajikistan, remarked that good work has been done by the National Coordinators and said that the document can be used by other donors as well.

Responding to the different comments/observations of the participants, **Dr. Gupta** thanked all parties for their contributions and stated that farmers are often interested in immediate gains and quick solutions whereas researchers are interested in longer term sustainable gains and improvement in soil health. RCTs importantly provide immediate relief to farmers by cutting-back production costs and provide platforms for improvement

in soil health and environmental quality. He explained that the drainage system installed at huge costs is now in a dilapidated state and is possibly a consequence of drainage planning in Central Asia wherein system wide and deep. It not only increases the requirement of irrigation water but also increases the volume of drainage volumes for disposal. Therefore, we need to re-visit the strategies which facilitate irrigation water application uniformly, salt leaching more efficiently and help manage root zone salinity, save irrigation water and reduce drainage loads for disposal. Therefore, a good approach is the effective use of water through precision land leveling. Only in Kazakhstan, to some extent benefits of laser land leveling are being realized which should receive greater attention in the other countries. He indicated that RCTs are divisible in application and therefore easy to fine-tune them according to resource endowment of the farmers in diverse production systems. Evidences are that RCTs when practiced with residue management strategies can meet the challenge connected with climate change. The key issue is to train farmers on how to plant crops in standing crops and plant in presence of loose crop residues. *After the long discussions, Chairperson reminded participants to submit their written comments to Raj Gupta on or before Feb 18, 2007.*

Dr. Eddy De Pauw, Head, GIS Unit, ICARDA, made a presentation on Agro-ecologies of Central Asia and domains for upscaling the SLM technical innovations. In his presentation, he covered the progress on CACLM benchmark sites, their characterization and out-scaling. He informed that the work was conducted in accordance with the Inception Workshop of the CACILM Project held in July, 2007 where the necessity of formal inclusion of GIS and agro-ecological characterization activities in the SLMR project were underlined. He stated that regional database have been created for developing the site similarity maps. He indicated that he has some major difficulties in getting soil data and indicated that some of the problem is associated with soil classification scheme used in Central Asia. It requires a major effort to re-classify soils according to internationally accepted criteria.

Socio-economic perspectives for SLM Research Prospectus were provided by **Dr. K. Shideed**, Director, SEPR Program ICARDA, and **A. Mirzabaev**, Socioeconomist, ICARDA-CAC. In their presentation, they emphasized the importance of the socio-economic and policy research in CAC countries. They mentioned about the Expert Consultation of Regional Research Needs Assessment in CAC (7-9 March 2007) which defined the following priority areas:

- Genetic resources management
- Natural resources management
- Socioeconomic, policy and capacity building
 - Livelihoods and poverty analysis (including gender research)
 - Adoption and impact assessment
 - Enabling policy options
 - Land tenure
 - Local institutions
 - Marketing, competitiveness and trade
 - Impact of climate change.

Then they presented information on the status of SEP activities under SLMR and indicated that (i) Partnerships for conducting the SLMR SEP activities in the countries have been identified; (ii) Pre-survey instrument has been developed and pre-tested and data collection is ongoing; (iii) literature/information review is being finalized; (iv) survey questionnaire is being fine-tuned and (v) full scale surveys are expected to be launched in March, 2008. It was agreed that the SEP research issues should be included in the Research Prospectus if already not there and that it is good idea to link the SLMR activities to the ADB funded project on Enabling policies for Combating Land Degradation in Central Asia.

Dr. G. Khasankhanova enquired about how GIS technologies will be connected with the Multi-country programs and how space images will be procured and training on the manpower for the specialists of ICARDA and CACILM projects been planed. **Dr. K. Kulov** remarked that information system of the CACILM could be connected to GIS maps and suggested that satellite images including topographical map for research sites should be provided. **Dr. M. Nepesov**, SLMR National Coordinator, Turkmenistan, enquired if ICARDA can carry out all the socio-economic research in other projects.

In his response, **Dr. Eddy De Pauw** said that Multi-country component systems based on CACILM sites could fit into information systems for the whole Central Asia. Layers were generated by ICARDA and linked with each other. Number of research sites is limited. For characterization of benchmark sites a lot of equipment is required as well as the detailed data. The novelty of our work is represented by the approaches, linkages and site characterization. Due to the shortages of funds, we are restricted in purchasing equipment. He also mentioned that research site teams need to collect more information (GPS coordinates) for the experimental areas so that the sites are not point observations but represent a farm or block. Such information will prove helpful in extending the technologies / information at district and province level. Given availability of more funds in other projects, satellite images can be procured and analyzed to extract any additional information. **Dr. Shideed** remarked that all the issues related with policy and livelihood mapping for all the research sites cannot be covered under the current to SLMR project for obvious shortage of funds. He informed that they would approach donor organizations (ADB) based on the priorities to finance policy research projects. In March-April, 2008, policy research project including 5 countries will be initiated and linked to the SLMR Project. **Dr. S. Sanginov** remarked that investment projects should make use of the GIS technologies. He indicated that soil map can only be developed only if the soil classification was done in accordance with the International FAO classification and matched with Russian Soil Classification. Can ICARDA/FAO help the NARS to do it? **Dr. A. Akramhanov** enquired if the existing soil information can be used to develop soil maps in GIS framework for Central Asia. It was indicated that the soil classification systems used in different countries are very different and at variance from the widely used Soil Taxonomy system of the USDA and or FAO. Hence it is difficult to re-designate soil classes according to an international system from the Russian soil classification system. It will need significant amount of ground truthing and resources. It will require mounting a study for the purpose of developing reliable soil information base. It is necessary to compare soil maps with other maps in order to refine GIS data.

Dr. H. Ahmadov suggested that it will be in order if the institutional options for carrying out the GIS activities could be worked out, as the capacity in the region seems rather limited. He suggested developing a wider network for the purpose so that the team of local experts could be trained in GIS/ remote sensing. We are interested in capacity building concerning GIS technologies. During the deliberation it was agreed that the site research teams will be requested to provide farm levels geographic coordinates of the benchmark sites and also list technologies and outcomes as well. As for the socio-economic research issues such as constitution of teams and their linkage with technology testing teams need to be addressed when the new projects are put in place. **Dr. Nepesov**, SLMR National Coordinator, Turkmenistan, suggested that research results of all other investment projects should be also used in SLMR project.

Dr. Gupta presented the SLM Research Prospectus for Central Asia which was circulated in advance for critical reviews. The Prospectus followed the Oasis approach and provided an elaboration on activities under each priority area. After the presentation, in-depth discussions, there was a virtual question-answer like long session.

Mr. Patterson then solicited several rounds of suggestions on the Research questions flagged in the Research Prospectus which followed the Oasis approach. In conclusion, decisions as under were taken:

- *Prospectus should also include the UNCCD definition of the land degradation.*
- *Training of national partners should be an overarching issue in all the studies that are commissioned to answer the Oasis questions.*
- *How to evaluate the value of ecosystem services is a key question and use of some empirical approaches will be vital and crucial for any analysis of trade-off effects. It requires special attention on training of staff who will be involved in this type of work.*
- *Presentation on socio-economic analysis should be integrated into the research prospectus.*
- *Prospectus should be strengthened for management of pasture/ rangeland lands and the sloping lands.*
- *Although, there are about 2 dozen zones but the initial results show that 3 ecologies cover the major parts of Central Asia. As additional data becomes available the agroecological zones may be further refined.*
- *Research Prospectus has to be linked to SLM-IS and Capacity building components of the CACILM. Trainings at the farmer level will be crucial in view of the virtual absence of extension services.*
- *Research Prospectus should also be submitted as a reference to the GEF-CACILM.*
- *Draft of the Research Prospectus was found acceptable by the collegiate review. The Chairman hoped that suggestions received on the RP, when appropriately incorporated, will further improve its quality and will be used extensively by all the stakeholders.*

Mr. John Patterson thanked the ICARDA team for organizing the workshop and remarked that this RP workshop has also provided the participants an opportunity to review the SLMR program as a whole and also provided additional opportunities to site coordinators to elaborate SLMR Work Plans. He also expressed his satisfaction that actual field scientists, site teams, national coordinators and CACILM National Secretariats have actively participated in the meeting, which will undoubtedly help the CACILM move forward as one team.

Dr. C. Martius, Regional Coordinator and Head, PFU/CGIAR-CAC, thanked all participants for their contributions and remarked that the Workshop was able to achieve its stated goal and all useful inputs will be taken into account for finalizing the Research Prospectus. He reminded all the National Coordinators, NSEKs and National CACILM Councils, and UNCCD focal points and their representatives and all other participants to send their inputs on RP in writing within ten days (18th Feb 2008) so that this document could be submitted to ADB to release the designated funds.

SLMR Project Review and Monitoring Meeting, 9th February 2008 (10:30-14:00)

Participants: MSEC, Heads of NSECs, National Coordinators of SLMR in Central Asia, SLMR Site Coordinators and ICARDA staff and UNCCD national representatives. In total 17 participants took part in the review and monitoring meeting of the SLMR.

The agenda of the meeting was set up in consultation with the Multi-country Secretariat, CACILM. The one day meeting was organized to brief the SLMR stakeholders about the status of the project, review the progress and solicit suggestions for any mid-course corrections in the technical program and or implementation arrangements. This occasion also provided an opportunity for the SLMR Project Steering committee members to review and guide the project activities till the next meeting of the committee. Ms. Jamal Made a presentation to describe the

Mr. J. Patterson welcomed all participants and informed that SLMR agreements between ICARDA and national participating institutions signed earlier should reviewed to comply with the ADB guidelines. Dr. C. Martius informed that the agreements between ICARDA and NARS will be soon revised and submitted to ADB for review. The signing of the agreement is crucial for smooth flow of funds for further field works.

Ms. J. Annaklycheva made a presentation on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of SLM Components of the CACILM under the CMPF and NPF. Preliminary conceptual M&E guidelines were presented. The final version will be worked out again on the basis of the inputs received during the Workshop.

Ms. Annaklycheva, in her presentation, provided details on the objectives and roles of stakeholders in the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of the CACILM, scalar nature of monitoring at the Program level in the National Programming Framework. She suggested that the results of other National Projects should be used to prepare consolidated M&E Report such as to facilitate an exchange of information. It was pointed out that M&E

should be based on the specific project log-frames and the Workplans. The CACILM Guidelines should include the Guidelines on Coordination and Monitoring and Evaluation and who will do what. It was stated that National Coordinators of the Project should be responsible for the timely implementation, effectiveness and relevance of the activities mentioned under the Workplan as well as for timely submission of progress reports to SLM-R Project Manager who in turn will make available the half yearly and annual reports for the project to the National Secretariats. It was clarified that the NSEKs will receive the reports after ICARDA's review. Then the respective National Secretariats will prepare summary reports based on the data stated within the report reviewed by ICARDA and will submit it to the National Councils for analysis of contribution of results to NPF implementation. The SLMR National Coordinators will ensure NSEC participation in the project events in the countries (meetings, field trips, demonstrations, etc). Raj Gupta, presented the Status of SLMR project, tabled the SLMR Workplans (circulated earlier) and requested focused discussions on the Agreements, and Reporting mechanisms for the SLMR project.

It was suggested that NSEC should be responsible for the monitoring and compilation of all the good experiences accumulated during the Project for onward communication to MSEC. While ICARDA and MSEC, at the regional level, should be responsible for monitoring the outputs 1 and 2, outputs 3 and 4 represent the monitoring priorities for NSECs.

It was also suggested that NSECs should make efforts to visit benchmark sites once or twice a year under the CACILM Projects. NSEC should also prepare a short report to the CACILM Steering Committee Meetings. **Dr. Ahmadov** enquired if the NSECs should also monitor projects that are not under their control.

Mr. A. Mirzabaev stated that NSEC should not only receive outcome from projects but also should make its active contributions to the success of the projects. **Dr. Eddy De Pauw** stated that cartography is the responsibility of ICARDA and NARS. Workplan contains technical details. **Dr. C. Martius** suggested that implementation of the Workplan activities and report preparation should actively involve students as well for building young research capacity in the countries. It was agreed that National Coordinators should soon review the outputs and indicators written into the Workplan carefully so that the targets could be effectively and efficiently met.

Mr. J. Patterson explained that there are projects under the following categories, namely (i) CACILM projects financed by ADB that are to be monitored by NSECs; (ii) the GEF-UNDP Projects which are implemented in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan which have their own monitoring mechanisms and hence would not require NSEC monitoring. The NSECs are, however, encouraged to familiarize themselves with the GEF project reports. (iii) the third category includes projects financed out of the State Budgets of respective countries and donor funds, some of which are related to sustainable land management practices.

Mr. J. Patterson then concluded as under:

- SLMR workplans should form the basis of monitoring and evaluation for the SLMR specific activities from January, 2008 onwards.
- NSECs should contribute to the activity level monitoring
- MSEC would focus on monitoring the regional multi-country components of the SLMR project.
- The flow of SLMR reporting is from ICARDA to MSEC for the whole project.
- The first Half Yearly report (July – December, 07) as tabled in the workshop on Feb 8-9, 2007 was accepted.
- Any changes in the Workplan should be mutually agreed by National Lead Institutions and SLMR Project Manager to reflect them appropriately for the rest of the project period.
- ICARDA will revise and draft a new agreement and provide the advance draft for review of CACILM for any additional suggestion before finalizing the contract.
- MSEC will draft an agreement to be completed between the NSECs and the national institutions to clarify their relationships and collaborations of both parties.
- National teams may communicate the project results to NSEKs after ICARDA's review, who will contribute in out-scaling them widely in other programs, including GEF and investment projects.
- NSECs were involved in identification of research sites in all the countries.
- ICARDA team can easily delineate the GEF project areas within the SLMR GIS-mapping system when the site teams would provide that information to ICARDA GIS team for agro-ecological classification, similarity mapping and scaling up and out of the SLM options.

Dr. C. Martius remarked that updated formats of agreements between ICARDA and NARS will be sent in Russian and English to National Coordinators/National Lead Institutions soon. It is important that these agreements are attended by the partners on priority and returned to ICARDA as soon as possible so as to ensure smooth funding for project activities from the ADB.

WORKSHOP ON SLMR RESEARCH PROSPECTUS
ICARDA-CAC, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
Program Schedule, February 8-9, 2008

Venue: Hotel Shodlik, Tashkent

Time	Presentations	Speakers
0900-0930	Inaugural Session	
	Welcome	Raj Gupta
	Initial remarks on workshop	Christopher Martius
	Remarks of Multi-country Secretariat	John Patterson
	Opening remarks of the Chair	Theib Oweis
Technical session-I		
0930-1200	- National Issues for inclusion in the Development of Regional SLM Research Prospectus	
	- Kazakhstan (15 minutes)	A. Saparov
	- Kyrgyzstan (15 minutes)	M. Bekenov
	- Tajikistan (15 minutes)	S. Sanginboy
1030-1100	Tea break	
	- Turkmenistan (15 minutes)	M. Nepesov
	- Uzbekistan (15 minutes)	R. Ikramov
1100-1200	Discussions and any left over issues	
1200-1300	Lunch Break	
Technical Session –II		
1300-1745	Discussions on SLM Research Prospectus	
1300-1340	Agro ecologies and their domains for upscaling technical innovations -SLM Research Prospectus	Eddy-dePauw
1340-1420	Socio-economic Perspectives for SLM Research Prospectus	K. Shideed
1420-1500	Tea Break	
1500-1540	SLM Research Prospectus for Central Asia	Raj Gupta
1540-1645	General discussions	
1645-1700	Any Remarks from Heads of NSEKs	
1700-1715	Any Remarks from UNCCD Country Representatives	
1715-1730	Remarks of MSK, CACILM	
1730-1745	Closing remarks from the Chair	
19:00	Reception Dinner	
9th Feb	Discussions on Monitoring of the SLMR	
0900-1400	CACILM-ICARDA discussions (internal)	
1000-1130	Concept of Monitoring and Evaluation of the SLMR	Ms. Jamal Annaklycheva
1130-1400	Discussions on the status of the SLMR project, Agreements, and WorkPlans and reporting mechanisms	Raj Gupta

Research Prospectus Workshop
February 8-9, 2008
Shodlik Hotel, Tashkent

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