



Environmental Framework Structure and Policies

for

**the Association for Strengthening Agricultural
Research in Eastern and Central Africa**

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Introduction

The mission of the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) is to enhance regional collective action in agricultural research for development, extension, and agricultural training and education to promote economic growth, fight poverty, eradicate hunger and enhance sustainable use of resources in Eastern and Central Africa.

ASARECA is also committed to the implementation of the African Union's New Partnerships for African Development (AU-NEPAD) Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) in line with the principles of the Framework for African Agricultural Productivity (FAAP) as developed by the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA). CAADP sets an ambitious goal of 6% per annum growth for the sector. A key component of the vision calls for improving agricultural productivity through enabling and accelerating innovation. CAADP Pillar IV constitutes NEPAD's strategy for revitalizing, expanding and reforming Africa's agricultural research, technology dissemination and adoption efforts, and this fits with the overall objectives of ASARECA.

In this context ASARECA adds value to the work of the National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) of the ten member countries through supporting the following activities:

- The identification of shared goals and the promotion of economies of scale and scope through collaboration, specialization and sharing of results
- The identification of sub-regional public goods that would be under-produced in the absence of shared goals and a sub-regional mechanism and
- Sharing of knowledge and experiences with institutional innovation for more effective agricultural research for development (AR4D), Extension and Agricultural Training and Education in Eastern and Central Africa.
- Making efficient use of innovation spillovers from outside sources across the sub-region rather than on a country-to-country basis.

ASARECA has a clear role in enabling and supporting the development of an Agricultural Research for Development (AR4D) system characterized by institutional diversity, and that generates the required scientific knowledge and information appropriate to the demands of the sector across the sub-region. The lack of capacity to implement technology transfer, effective extension services, and to identify the bottlenecks in information systems for innovation are leading challenges to technological development, especially at the sub-regional level. In such a setting the system needs to be well coordinated and multidimensional to ensure appropriate

allocation of scarce resources to high-priority issues and areas. This calls for better orchestration of the NARS to facilitate the involvement of a large number of actors, and the efficient implementation of policies, financing, and program execution by the various specialized institutions.

ASARECA has developed a Strategic Plan which has as its purpose the sustainable competitiveness of Eastern and Central Africa agricultural systems through support to prioritized areas of research for development. It has also developed a five year Operational Plan (2008/9 – 2012/13) which details the implementation of the strategy including research programs as well as the key changes to research, management and governance structures necessary for delivery. At the core of the Plan is a program-based approach for regional agricultural research.

The activities of ASARECA have expended substantially over the years, and continue to do so. For example, in addition to coordinating AR4D, its mandate has been expanded to include agricultural extension, education and training, making it a significant player in the development of the agricultural sector in the ECA sub-region.

As a response to this growth, ASARECA's development partners have created a Multi Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) under the administration of the World Bank and open to multiple donor contributions, thus offering a coordinated and harmonized approach to investments in AR4D in the ASARECA sub-region. It is anticipated that, taken together, contributions from contributing donors to the MDTF would reach approximately US\$55 Million for the 2008-2013 period. Given this level of resources, there is no doubt that ASARECA's footprint in the sub-region will be significant.

Therefore, given its commitment to enhance sustainable management of natural resources, it is essential that ASARECA develops a set of environmental safeguards that will guide the implementation of its programme by its various units, as well as its partners to prevent possible negative impacts to the natural environment and to vulnerable communities in the sub-region.

The structural elements indicated below constitute the Environmental Management Framework of ASARECA, and as such, will have to be observed by all ASARECA programmes and/or activities implemented by the Association and/or its partners.

The following are the elements of the ASARECA 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.

I. Negative List

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

- 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;
- activities that would damage physical cultural property.

II. Policies

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

1. Environmental Assessment of Construction and Civil Works

If ASARECA 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.

2. Resettlement

ASARECA 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.

3. Natural Habitats

ASARECA 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:
 - 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
 - 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. Forests

ASARECA 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.

ASARECA 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 ASARECA must include measures to prevent the introduction of invasive species that threaten biodiversity.

ASARECA 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.

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

- (i) 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
- (ii) agreed to adhere to a time-bound phased action plan to achieve such a standard.

5. Pest Management

ASARECA 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.¹

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

- 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.

Any pesticide financed by ASARECA must be manufactured, packaged, labeled, handled, stored, disposed of, and applied according to standards that, at a minimum, comply with the FAO's *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), and *Guidelines on personal protection when using pesticides in hot climates* (FAO, 1990).

ASARECA will not finance formulated products that fall in WHO classes IA and IB, or formulations of products in Class II, if (a) the 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.

ASARECA will not finance any pesticide products which contain active ingredients that are listed on Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention (on Prior Informed Consent

¹ International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides (Revised Version), FAO, 2002, and supporting guidelines. See <http://www.fao.org/ag/AGP/AGPP/Pesticid/a.htm>

Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade), unless the Country has taken explicit legal or administrative measures to consent to import and use of that active ingredient.

ASARECA 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.

6. Genetically Modified Organisms

ASARECA supports research in Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) only when the proposals demonstrate consistency with the national biosafety framework in 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';² or a functional equivalent).

Prior to the approval of proposals involving confined field trials of transgenic crops, ASARECA 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.

III. Processes and Responsibilities

All project proposals (whether solicited or unsolicited) submitted to ASARECA for funding have to undergo a review process to assess their merit in addressing regional problems and to produce regional solutions in a cost effective manner. The reviews are undertaken either by ASARECA's technical staff or by persons known to be specialists in the subject matter. The review reports are submitted to the ASARECA Board of Directors which determines on the basis of the review recommendations whether or not to approve the funding.

² <http://hdl.handle.net/1805/777>

Any proposed activity submitted to ASARECA 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. However, if it is envisaged that one or more of the provisions of this EMF will be contravened, the proponent(s) of the activity will be obliged to undertake one or more of the following before ASARECA 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 ASARECA 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.

ASARECA through the Office of the Deputy Executive Director will undertake the following:

- Review and clear winning proposals from partners for compliance with the EMF before they are submitted to the BoD 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

IV. Capacity Building

Presently, ASARECA 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 ASARECA partners also do not have the capacity to decipher environmental impacts and to determine environmental mitigation measures.

ASARECA will organize annual EIA capacity building activities for its Programme Managers and managers of programme support units to equip them with the knowledge and skills for reviewing EIA reports and for monitoring compliance with the ASARECA EMF. This activity will be part and parcel of the Secretariat's annual work plan and budget.

In addition, similar training will be organized for principal investigators of ASARECA funded projects to impart to them the knowledge and relevance of environmental considerations, and to equip them with the skills necessary to comply with the ASARECA EMF.

Suitable consultant 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 for programmes.

V. Monitoring

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

ASARECA annual reports are distributed to all stakeholders, including development partners – AfDB, CIDA, DFID, EU, IFAD, SIDA, USAID and World Bank; NARS; Ministries of Agriculture; Regional Economic Commissions; AU; FARA; Sub-Regional Research Organizations; the CGIAR system, and key scientists in Africa and beyond.

ASARECA commits itself to independent assessment of the adequacy and implementation of the EMF at two or three year intervals.