

# 3 ACCA

THIRD AFRICA CONGRESS ON  
CONSERVATION AGRICULTURE  
5-8 June 2023 | Rabat, Morocco



## CONCEPT NOTE

**Theme:**  
**Building a Resilient Future in Africa  
through Conservation Agriculture  
and Sustainable Mechanization**



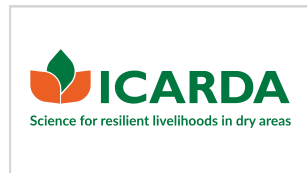
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# Introduction

Africa is facing several challenges and opportunities as it pursues a more sustainable future, despite adopting ambitious development agendas such as the Africa Unions Agenda 2063 and its Ten-Year Implementation Plan and the UN 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). African leaders have also committed to the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), to help African countries eliminate hunger and reduce poverty by raising economic growth through agriculture-led development. Through CAADP, African governments agreed to allocate at least 10% of national budgets to agriculture and rural development, and to achieve agricultural growth rates of at least 6% per annum. Underlying these main national targets is the need to increase agricultural productivity and farm incomes based on sustainable agriculture as an integral part of diversified economic growth.

Africa is the region of the world most at risk of food insecurity given its stagnant agricultural productivity and current dependence on cereal imports thus raising questions as to whether it can feed itself. The prevalence of undernourishment in Africa rose from 17.6% of the population in 2014 to 19.1% in 2019, more than twice the world average and highest of all regions of the world. By 2030, sub-Saharan Africa's population will rise from its current 1.07 billion to 1.40 billion. It is known that African countries need a transformation in agrifood systems based on sustainable agricultural development and natural resource management to meet food demands. The need for modernization is most pronounced in commercial and mechanized agriculture, irrigation and post-harvest handling, value chains, services, finances, inputs and equipment.

The chain of global events of the 2020s seems endless. Climate change, COVID-19 pandemic, the Ukraine-Russia conflict, and severe inflationary pressures around the world are linked to the surge in global food and energy prices. The early impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic include economic downturns for many African countries, rapid increase in food prices and shortages of food supplies around the world in 2022. The World Bank estimates that the COVID-19 pandemic will shrink global GDP by 5.2% in 2020, the worst since World War II and nearly three times as steep as the 2009 global recession. In addition to the immediate health concerns, the pandemic is affecting

food systems globally and has negative impacts on all four pillars of food security and nutrition: availability, access, utilisation, and stability. Given the strong positive correlation between economic recession and food insecurity in Africa, COVID-19 threatens access to food mainly through losses of income and assets, thereby jeopardizing the possibilities and capacities to buy food. Impacts are also felt through disruptions to availability; shifts in consumer demand toward cheaper, less nutritious foods; and food price instability. With at least 50% of the African population dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods and access to food, any trade-related distortions threaten their food security and progress towards attaining the UN-SDGs.

To address the food insecurity and malnutrition in SSA as well as the recent global energy and climate crises, Africa needs to scale for its millions of small-holder farmers, sustainable production systems and practices that are efficient and resilient to climate change, natural hazards and geopolitical disruptions.

In recent years, there has been a move towards a promising approach to sustainable and profitable agriculture to deliver a better environment, a better nutrition and health, and a better quality of life. Such agriculture is built upon improving farm power, mechanization and value chains based on Conservation Agriculture (CA). Also, capitalizing the advantage of information and communication technologies (ICTs), functioning and efficiency of the supply chain management can be increased extensively. For instance, digital technologies, satellite and drone technologies can allow remote sensing for crop growth developments and soil moisture. Computing techniques can allow digital tools like artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), and deep learning to process large amounts of data in a short time for an efficient supply chain.

Conservation Agriculture is an agroecosystem approach to sustainable and regenerative agriculture and soil management. This includes CA's role in: enhancing sustainable agricultural productivity and profitability, adapting to and mitigating climate change, strengthening environmental and social resilience, and fostering efforts to provide for food security and nutrition as well as livelihoods and economic opportunities, especially for rural communities, including youth and women.



Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization (SAM) in Africa remains to be an urgent imperative and an indispensable pillar for attaining the Malabo Declaration: Zero Hunger Vision by 2025, SDG 2 and the African Unions Agenda 2063, the Prosperous Africa We Want. Doubling agricultural productivity and eliminating hunger and malnutrition in Africa by 2025 will not be realized unless mechanization along the food value chain is accorded utmost priority. SAM is also recognised as an important enabler in accelerating widespread practicing of CA and attainment of the Malabo Declarations Vision 25 x 25 and the Agenda 2063.

## Objective

Amid the existing global challenges such as climate change, soil degradation, pandemics, geopolitical disruptions and escalating food prices, CA and SAM provide a unique opportunity for contributing to addressing these threats. Implementation of both the short-term emergency response and the long-term solutions for these threats to food security in Africa and beyond, must be pursued by African countries now. Action in these areas would go a long way to stem the tide of rising food prices, induce food self-sufficiency and reduce the threat of hunger and poverty. From one angle on sustainable agricultural production, CA and SAM can be promoted to solve some of the challenges associated with the problems facing Africa now.

The objective of the 3rd Africa Congress on Conservation Agriculture (3ACCA) is to enable experts, practitioners, and policy makers across different sectors and interest groups at all levels of agriculture development from the public, private and civil society sectors to share best practices and exchange knowledge, and information that expand the Africa-wide adoption of CA and SAM as basis for building resilience to climate change amid the increasing food and energy prices and disruptions in distribution systems. They should come with more effective and coherent action to help the most vulnerable populations cope with the

drastic hikes in food bills, negative impacts of climate change and assist African countries with strategies to increase agricultural productivity in the implementation of the Malabo Declarations Vision 25 x 25 and the Agenda 2063. In addition, the 3ACCA aims to consolidate the African position on CA and SAM and enhance the effective participation at the 9th World Congress on Conservation Agriculture (9WCCA) to be held in South Africa in July 2024.

## Theme

Building a Resilient Future in Africa through Conservation Agriculture and Sustainable Mechanization

## Sub-Themes

**Sub-Theme 1.** Promoting CA and SAM knowledge, research and innovation system management.

**Sub-Theme 2.** Strengthening effective pan-African national and regional networks, partnerships and co-operation mechanisms.

**Sub-Theme 3.** Mobilizing green developmental private sector investments for prioritised CA and SAM for women and youth..

**Sub-Theme 4.** Enhancing public sector investments and the creation of an enabling environment.



## Sub-Theme Narratives

### Congress methodology and approach

**Building on the experience of organizing the first and the second Congresses in 2014 and 2018 respectively, the Organising Committee hopes to realise a Congress that will, in both content and process:**

- i. Showcase proven and sustainable adoption of SAM & CA, their impact on the environment and peoples livelihoods. Highlight eventual challenges of SAM & CA application, focus on and bring out practical issues and lessons to accelerate adoption as well as the associated input support service system.
- ii. Bring out new knowledge on CA, SAM and agriculture, in general; i.e. the outputs of the congress are expected to be more than just proceedings, but applicable knowledge.
- iii. Have significant and active representation of farmers, policy/decision makers, and private sector from across all the regions and sectors.
- iv. Be attractive and worth-the-while not just to the CA & SAM faithful, but other players and interest groups/organisations with important roles for enhanced CA & SAM development and scaling.
- v. Be interactive, allowing active participation and discussions, e.g. thematic working groups, open space (videos, theatre, demonstrations and or training materials).

**The followings elements will characterise the Congress process:**

- i. Opening session with national and international institutions
- ii. Special Farmers Session (Forum)
- iii. Special meetings or side events around key issues/ groupings
- iv. Plenary Sessions
- v. Case Studies & special working groups (thematic parallel session e.g. successful commercial interventions; etc.)
- vi. Field Visits
- vii. Poster/video sessions
- viii. Open time and information kiosks

## Expected outputs

- i. Strong cases of shared CA & SAM experiences and lessons highlighting opportunities and pathways for scaling providing critical **tools and incentives for decision makers to invest in development of CA & SAM** strategies and programmes. (Resources hosted/established in four sub-regional research networks, the Africa-Mechanize and 3ACCA platforms).
- ii. Stakeholders consensus on **strengthening effective pan-African national and regional networks, partnerships and cooperation mechanisms** to harness economies of scale in scaling of CA and SAM and ensure their long-term sustainability with support from regional development finance and research institutions including AfDB and FARA.
- iii. **Public and private sector investors consensus** on the role of CA and SAM in enhancing productivity, efficient use of inputs, labour saving, timeliness of operations, biological nitrogen fixation, climate change adaptability and mitigation, poverty alleviation, as well as in humanitarian strategies for targeted emergency access support to CA and SAM inputs and services for the most vulnerable farmers in the unfolding food crisis amidst the pandemics and conflicts.
- iv. **Regional flagship projects operationalizing the F-SAMA** anchored on affirmative action thematic areas and/or value chains (e.g. mechanization service providers, agro-processing and value addition entrepreneurs) initiated (At least four flagship projects one in each sub-region).
- v. Building on the host countrys (Morocco) target and investments to reach 1 million hectares of mechanized CA by 2030, **obtain commitments from other African Governments on their pledges to operationalize the Malabo Declarations Vision 25 x 25 with CA and SAM at the core of sustainable agriculture development.**



## The roadmap

ACT Secretariat will coordinate implementation of the following activities between August 2022 and June 2023.

1. ACT Secretariat develops the TOR for the 3ACCA committees such as: Steering Committee, Scientific committee and National/Local organizing committee **(By September 2022)**
2. Invitation to submit bids to host 3ACCA **(By September 2022)**
3. Appoint members to the committee **(By November 2022)**
4. Development of 3ACCA website, Announcement, Call for Condensed Papers - including templates, guidelines and deadlines - **(By February 2023)**
5. Preparation of guidelines for field trips **(By February 2023)**
6. Prepare agenda for 3ACCA **(By February 2023)**
7. Prepare Daily calendar of events **(By March 2023)**
8. Prepare Pavilion calendar/ Exhibitions **(By March 2023)**
9. Prepare List and confirmation of Speakers **(By March 2023)**
10. Others **(To Be Determined)**

## Target participants

The Congress invites interested stakeholders from Africa and the international community. Particularly the 3ACCA stakeholders, players and Interest groups including the African Union and its agencies, Regional Economic Communities in Africa, National Governments, Policy Makers, Farmers and Farmer Organisations, Private sector, Development Partners (both bilateral and multilateral), Research Institutions and the academia, Non-Governmental Organisations, and the Media.

## Contact information

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