

# 3 ACCA

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



## THE SLOW ADOPTION OF CONSERVATION AGRICULTURE IN EUROPE :

## AN EXAMPLE NOT TO BE FOLLOWED BY FARMERS OF AFRICA

LAURENT LORRE  
GERARD RASS

Theme:

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



# Conventional

Conventional (95 % of annual crops in Europe)




95 % of annual crops are made with tillage

- deep with Moldboard plow
- surface tillage (named “CA” )  
1/3 to 2/3 depending on region



# History of CA in France

1. 1960's to 1980's : No-Till + Gramoxone 
2. 1979 to 2007 : from No-Till + Roundup to Min-Till + Roundup
3. Min-Till with specific machinery Horsch, Dutzi... THE MISTAKE
4. 2007 : APAD decides to go only to strict ZERO-TILL CA with Cover Crops  
= definition by CA-COP of FAO, 1WCCA Madrid 2001  
ECAAF in Dresden GA (Rolf Derpsch)

Conservation Agriculture (4 % annual crops in Europe)



# Conservation Agriculture

APAD farmers practice and promote true CA,  
Zero Tillage, Rotations, Full Cover  
(ref CA-COP)

= Agriculture de Conservation  
DES SOLS

= ACS

# Farmers like CA when they see

- High Yielding Crops
- Labour productivity
- Profit for their family

# Farmers need

- To see CA working well on farm
- Know-How transmitted by their colleagues
- Answers to technical questions
  
- Access to Land and Water (dry areas)
- Access to Machinery, Seeds, Fertilizers, Pesticides...
- Freedom to innovate and adapt (low bureaucracy)

**FARMERS ASSOCIATIONS**

**POLICIES**



# Europe : CAP Green Deal Farm To Fork does not support CA, bans pesticides & fertilizers, wants only Organic

**Farmers get subsidies for this  
(conventional or organic)**

Conventional (95 % of annual crops in Europe)



**No support for CA, ban of glyphosate**

Conservation Agriculture (4 % annual crops in Europe)







# Rolf Derpsch KEY MESSAGES

( ECAF GA Dresden + NOW )

- GET CHAMPIONS FARMERS in each country
- BE STRICT ON CA PRINCIPLES  
no-tillage is zero tillage, cover and rotations mandatory
- BRING THE RESULTS TO POLICY MAKERS
- THE FARMERS ARE SPOKESMEN
- EXPERTS SUPPORT
- OPERATE A GLOBAL CONSISTENT NETWORK







# The 4/1000 International Initiative







# COP22 Marrakech





# GCAN COP22

## Here is what our members had to say...

A HIGHLIGHT at COP22 in Marrakesh was the GCAN conference on Conservation Agriculture and the Climate. GCAN members presented the principles of CA, the advantages of CA for the climate and environment, CA's advantages for society, the needs of farmers and farmers' organisations, and public policies needed to encourage this change in our agricultural system.



**"CA is also a tool to prevent hunger and poverty by increasing food security."**

- Saidi Mkomwa, Executive Secretary African Conservation



**"CA has given me greater yield stability and levels of organic matter twice as high as twenty years ago. But changing practices is not easy, people need to be assisted to avoid mistakes."**

- Miguel Barnuevo, farmer in Spain



**"It is only thanks to CA that I have managed to maintain my yields in my farm with the decreases in rain fall by better using water reserves."**

- Aziz Zine El Abidine, farmer in Morocco



**"Ambitious programmes to encourage CA have shown encouraging results on water quality in Brazil. This example could be adopted around the world."**

- Marie Bartz, Universidade Positivo, FE (Brazil)

**"Tilled soil emits up to 10 times more carbon than a CA field."**

- Emilio González, General Secretary ECAF



**"It's not easy to get farmers to completely change their system of farming. The steps needed have been identified by farmers, politicians now need to put it into action : incentive for farmers, insurance during the transition period, training on soil, working with researchers and farmers, payments for ecosystem services or carbon payments etc..."**

- Benoît Lavier, farmer and President of APAD (France)



**"Conventional agriculture has destroyed over 500 million hectares of land. It can not continue."**

- Amir Kassam, Moderator Global CA-CoP, FAO

**"There are examples of public policies in a number of countries which have positive results: creation of a CA committee, carbon programmes, ecosystem services payments, farmer exchanges, involvement of private sector, even the banning of tillage in China!"**

- Tom Goddard, Senior Advisor, Government of Alberta (Canada)



**"We need first of all to recognise farmers' know-how, involve them in the decisions and governance, from which they are all too often absent."**

- Maria-Beatriz Giraudo, AAPRESID (Argentina)



**"The three pillars of CA are: no disturbance of the soil, permanent crop cover and crop rotation. We need to think with a systematic approach if we want to achieve results."**

- Rachid Mrabet, INRA Morocco and Member of the COP22 Scientific Committee



**"The preservation of soil is a big challenge. Farmers have a fundamental role in bringing this practice from the few to the many to result in a true change in practices. They need to be assisted with national action plans involving all stakeholders, public and private, and of course farmers."**

- Alexandre Meybeck, Senior Policy Advisor, FAO



**"CA is a way to rediscover the pleasure of farming. It's an agronomic practice where farmers are proud of their work and which has societal benefits. We must stop looking for excuses to not make the change. There are examples of CA success all over the world on every continent."**

- Sarah Singla, farmer, Vice-President of APAD





# Saving Our Soil



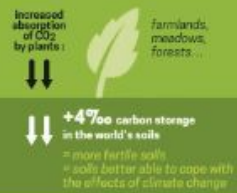
**G** CAN members attended the 4 per 1000 event during which conservation agriculture was positioned as a tool which can assist in increasing carbon content in soils by 0.4 per cent per year, and prevent increases in CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere.

Philippe Maugin, President of INRA, identified conservation agriculture specifically as a practice which should be encouraged in order to increase carbon content in soils.



M. Le Fol, French minister of Agriculture, with GCAN members at COP22

If we increase by 4% (0.4%) a year the quantity of carbon contained in soils, we can halt the annual increase in CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere, which is a major contributor to the greenhouse effect and climate change



During the 4 per 1000 event, the importance of involving farmers in the programmes and actions was emphasised a number of times.

This was noted as the only way in which those who practice conservation agriculture could bring about the change desired by 4 per 1000.

## WHAT IS 4 PER 1000?

A 4% annual growth rate of the soil carbon stock would make it possible to stop the present increase in atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>. This growth rate is not a normative target for every country, but is intended to show that even a small increase in the soil carbon stock (agricultural soils, notably grasslands and pastures, and forest soils) is crucial to improve soils fertility and agricultural production and to contribute to achieving the long-term objective of limiting the temperature increase to +1,5/2°C, threshold beyond which the IPCC indicates that the effects of climate change are significant. This initiative is intended to complement the necessary efforts to comprehensively reduce global greenhouse gas emissions.



THE official negotiations may have kicked back any decisions or actions on adapting to and mitigating against climate change, but GCAN and our partners put forward a solution which steps up to the challenge and which ensures that agriculture is more resilient, while still ensuring greater

food security and sustainability in all climatic conditions. There is no doubt that COP22 has been an important step in increasing awareness of CA and ensuring adoption of public policy measures to support it. Now we must continue this important work.

## MEMBERS GCAN's members include farming organisations, researchers and policymakers

- European Conservation Agriculture Federation, ECAF
- Association pour la Promotion d'une Agriculture Durable, APAD (France)
- African Conservation Tillage Network, ACT
- South Asian Conservation Agriculture Network, SACAN
- Conservation Tillage Research Centre, CTRC (China)
- Conservation Agriculture Australia

- Western Australian No-Tillage Farmers Association, WANTFA
- Confederation of American Associations for the Production of Sustainable Agriculture, CAAPAS
- Fundação Agrisus (Brazil)
- Federação Brasileira de Plantio Direto e Irrigação, (Brazil)
- Asociación Uruguaya de Siembra Directa, AUSID (Uruguay)
- Federación Paraguaya de Siembra Directa

- para una Agricultura Sustentable, Fepasidias (Paraguay)
- Asociación Argentina de Productores en Siembra Directa, AAPRESID (Argentina)
- Sequoia Farm Foundation (USA)
- Ohio No-till Council
- Carbon Management and Sequestration Center, C-MASC, (Ohio State Univ)
- Agronomy Dept of Universidade Estadual de Londrina, (UEL, Brazil)

## PARTNERS

WHO WE ARE

We are a network of conservation agriculture supporters from around the world



**Everybody tells us we do well !!**





A photograph of a green tractor with a red implement, likely a plow or harrow, in a cornfield. The tractor is positioned in the middle ground, partially obscured by the tall corn plants. The background shows a blue sky with scattered white clouds and a line of trees in the distance. The overall scene is bright and sunny.

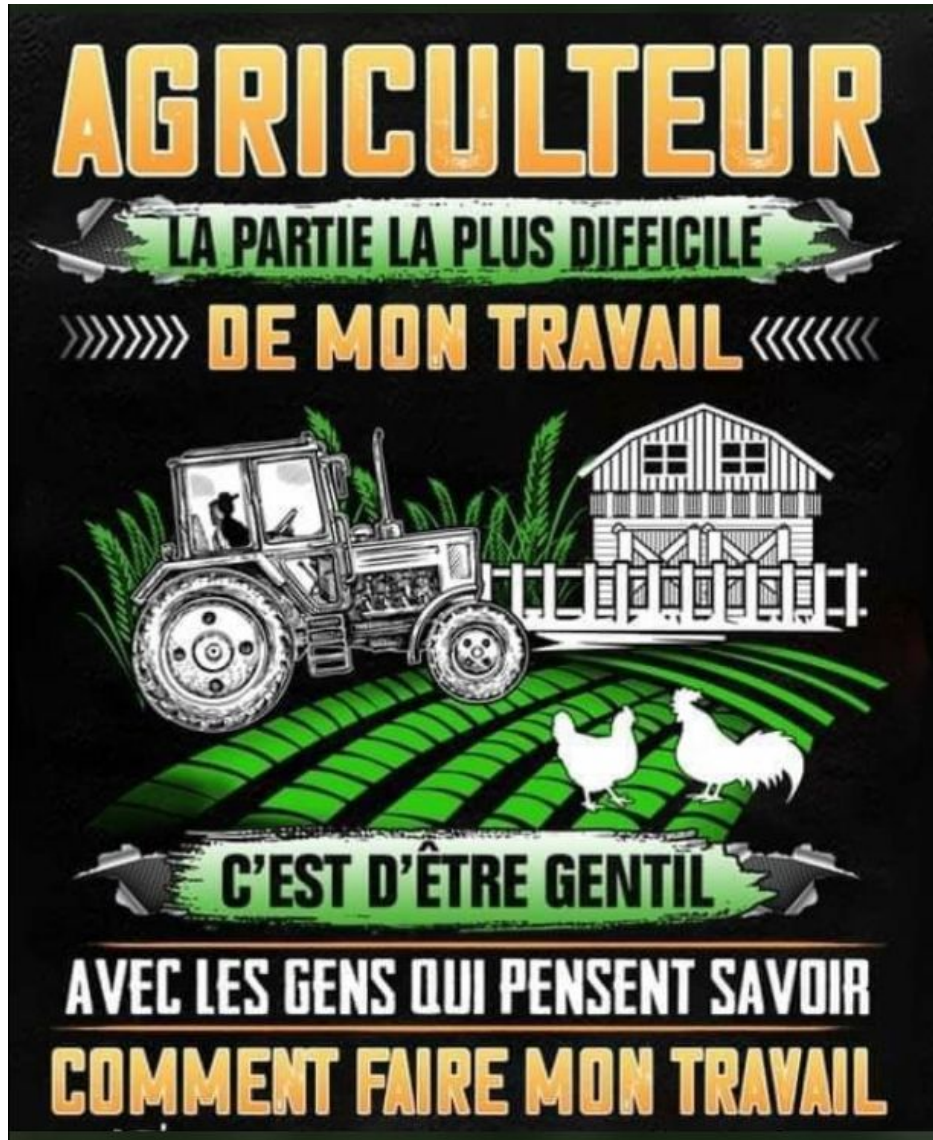
**Everybody tells us we do well !!**

**BUT**

**Who can imagine we can plough  
this green biomass ?  
All Farmers know it is impossible  
All others tell us to use tillage, no herbicide**



# The key issue in modern society



**As a Farmer  
the most difficult part  
of my job**

**comes from people who  
pretend to teach me  
how to improve my  
operations**



# Public policies : enable freedom to operate and responsibility of actors

President of Ghana

Nana Akufo-Addo 2017 :

«Africa is rich enough in natural and human resources to be actor of its own development. People must act as entrepreneurs, stop being dependant on States and donors»







**Thank you to be part  
of this global effort  
to make CA Community  
the leading movement  
for sustainable food production  
for the world**

[Gerard Rass APAD – GCAN](mailto:rass.gerard@icloud.com)

[rass.gerard@icloud.com](mailto:rass.gerard@icloud.com)

+33 6 45 29 16 51

@GerardRass





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Laurent Lorré [airelles1@aol.com](mailto:airelles1@aol.com)

33 6 63 07 03 66

Gérard Rass [rass.gerard@icloud.com](mailto:rass.gerard@icloud.com)

33 6 45 29 16 51

**3ACCA Secretariat**

**African Conservation Tillage Network**

P.O Box 10375, 00100 Nairobi, Kenya.

KALRO - KABETE, Waiyaki Way.

Website: <https://africacacongress.org>

Email: [cacongress@act-africa.org](mailto:cacongress@act-africa.org)

