



Terms of Reference for a Consultancy to facilitate the Africa Biennial CSA Conference 2022

Expert in Conference Facilitation (NKE 2.4, Cat I)

A. BACKGROUND

The DeSIRA programme, is funded by the European Commission (DG INTPA), it seeks to enhance an inclusive, sustainable and climate-relevant transformation of rural areas and of agri-food systems, by linking better agricultural innovation with research for more developmental impact. It supports actions in low- and middle-income countries to strengthen the resilience of their agri-food systems, the relevance of the national and regional research and innovation systems, and the coherence and efficiency of their agricultural public research and extension services related to climate change challenges.

DeSIRA-LIFT is a service project (June 2021 – May 2024) to the European Commission (EC), Directorate General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) with the main objective to enhance the impact of the DeSIRA Initiative by providing (on-demand) services to DeSIRA project holders and partners. DeSIRA-LIFT includes three service areas aligned to the three DeSIRA Pillars: *Service Area 1* supports country-led DeSIRA projects to enhance their impacts on climate-oriented innovation systems in line with more sustainable food system transitions. *Service Area 2* supports the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) ex-pillar IV organizations in their Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) related roles. *Service Area 3* supports policy makers on themes related to agricultural research for development (AR4D) and innovation policies and programming.

This assignment is part of *Service Area 2: Sub-service area 2.2*. The consultant will directly support FARA in its preparations and facilitation of the CSA Biennial Conference (14-16 September 2022 in Accra, Ghana).

B. RATIONALE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

Climate change is a significant problem confronting our world; its cause and effects are linked to all walks of life, ranging from essential endeavors such as agriculture, food processing, and industrial actions. The science behind climate change is carbon chemistry and greenhouse gas emission. It is known that since the 20th century and its industrial revolution and use of fossil fuel, the atmospheric concentration of greenhouse gases has increased by more than 45% leading to the warming up of the globe. This has led to the changes in the different weather variables and responses that are different from what has been known and experienced over the decades. The agricultural sector has been pinpointed as a critical contributor to climate change as it operates on land and soil, which is the source and sink of carbon in the terrestrial space.

The world's response to the cause and control of climate change spans over three decades. The efforts are more geared towards finding solutions that can mitigate the effect of the changes and control the factors contributing to them than adaptation. Efforts are also geared toward developing an adaptation mechanism to create a new normal for human survival. Climate change and extreme weather events disproportionately affected vulnerable communities in less developed areas who contribute the least to greenhouse gas emissions.

The Conference of Parties (CoP) on climate change has been one of the key global conferences to address issues in climate change at the global level. It is convened under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The UNFCCC has about 176 member countries as parties in its convention. The conventions hold the member countries to act in the interest of humanity. The ultimate objective of the UNFCCC Convention is “to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic (human induced) interference with the climate system. It states that “such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, ensure that food production is not threatened, and enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner”. (UNFCCC.int). The CoPs held annually for the last 27 years give the different sectors, regions, and stakeholder groups an opportunity to dialogue and proffer solutions to climate change issues.

It is noteworthy that Africa has participated in all the CoPs; the CoPs that were held in Africa was CoP 17 ten years ago in Durban, South Africa (28th November – 9th December 2011). The next CoP is proposed to take place in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, between 7th – 18th November 2022. It will be necessary for the African partners to take advantage of hindsight to review and document the progress made on the continent related to its actions on climate change and prepare a foresight intelligence on plausible futures. Significant attention needs to be given to African agriculture, which engages most of the workforce on the continent. Efforts at mitigating and adapting to climate change in Africa have followed the Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) framework defined by FAO. Since 2020, FARA and its partners, the SROs and AFAAS, have documented the different CSA initiatives on the continent. An interactive portal was developed to collate information and analytics to generate valuable data for analysis and inferencing for policy and technical actions.

In addition, the Africa Union Commission has given FARA the mandate to lead the operationalization of the [Africa Climate Change Strategy \(2020-2030\)](#). FARA has developed the Africa Climate Smart Framework (ACSAF) as a partnership tool to actualize this mandate to create a ten years implementation plan for the strategy (Decadal Plan). It is planned that the ACSAF and the Decadal plan will be finalized for discussion and validation at the upcoming Biennial Africa Climate Smart Agriculture Conference slated for 14-16th September 2022 in Accra, Ghana. It will then be launched at the CoP 27. Secondly, the proposed study of the progress made in Africa on Climate Change and the different resolutions of CoPs and lessons learned and foresight intelligence on plausible futures and action to achieve them. The report will be discussed and validated for presentation at CoP 27.

This vital agenda requires smart technical contributions of a suitable consultant with requisite knowledge and experience in African climate change and CSA to support the organization of the conference, facilitation of the different sessions, and reporting.

C. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The general objective of the assignment is to contribute to the organization of a successful CSA Biennial Conference.

Specific objectives include:

1. Support the development of the conference themes and identification of authors of lead papers and special studies,
2. Facilitate some discussions at the Biennial conference on science, policy and practice.
3. Contribute to the development of the conference proceedings and other publications (policy briefs, press releases...)

D. SCOPE and SCHEME OF WORK

The consultant will carry out its function virtually, linking up with FARA and DeSIRA-LIFT teams using digital devices for meetings and discussions. The consultant will be physically present at the Biennial CSA Conference in Accra, Ghana for three days.

The consultant will:

- i. Support the identification and engagement of authors of commissioned papers.
- ii. Support the facilitation of different sessions.
- iii. Develop the conference press release, proceedings, policy brief, and other publications from the conference discussions.

The consultant will be guided by FARA and DeSIRA-LIFT teams.

E. OUTPUTS OR DELIVERABLES

The following outputs are expected in an electronic format:

- i. Conference book of abstract.
- ii. Developed conference proceedings.
- iii. Three Policy Briefs on key areas discussed at the conference on climate-smart agriculture and agroecological transitions (guidelines to be provided by FARA and DeSIRA LIFT).
- iv. Press release and support to the promotion of the event.

F. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Expert will report to FARA Senior Technical Cluster Leader / Innovation Systems and DeSIRA-LIFT on a regular basis during the assignment.

The consultant is required to submit an activity report at the end of the assignment together with a financial report (including invoice and supporting evidence in the form of monthly timesheets).

G. DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The duration of this assignment will be 15 consultancy days spread over three months, specifically July-September 2022.

H. LOCATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The consultant will carry out the assignment from its domicile using virtual communications. The consultant will be required to travel to attend the 3-day CSA Biennial Conference in September 2022 in Accra, Ghana.

I. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

The consultant is expected to undertake the services with the highest professionalism and ethics, competence, and integrity. He should be able to deliver the listed assignments in Section C most effectively and efficiently within the period of work stated in Section E.

J. FACILITIES TO BE PROVIDED BY DeSIRA-LIFT

DeSIRA-LIFT will cover the expenses (travel, accommodation and subsistence, and conference fees) of the consultant to attend the CSA Biennial Conference following the EC guidelines.

K. QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE

The following qualifications are required.

Qualifications and skills

- Education at least Master degree in agronomy, agricultural economics, social sciences, or in its absence, equivalent professional experience.

General professional experience

- At least 12 years' professional experience in areas directly relevant to international development, innovation with a social science perspective, knowledge and innovation systems, or likewise.

Specific professional experience

- At least 5 years' professional experience in areas directly relevant to climate change issues in Africa.
- Experience working on supporting conference organizations.
- Experience of participation in CoPs and understanding of the African dynamics with CSA.
- A track record of writing reports evidenced by publication records as books and chapters in books, conference papers, and journal articles.

Soft skills

- Ability to work in a team and in a multicultural context.
- Motivation, self-direction and proactiveness.
- Methodological rigour, priority management and organisational skills.
- Excellent writing and oral presentation skills in English.
- Evidence of knowledge of analytical skills for continental framework and strategies
- Ability to facilitate expert discussion at a high level.

APPLICATIONS

Please send a comprehensive curriculum vitae and short motivation letter to desira.lift@wur.nl. With a copy to ofatunbi@faraafrica.org . Deadline for applications is 13th June 2022 COB.