

Global Climate Smart Practices Assessment

Key Dates

Full Application Receipt Open: October 6, 2021 at 12:00 PM ET

Full Applications Due: November 3, 2021 at 5:00 PM ET

Award Notification: Early 2022

Anticipated Project Start Date: Early 2022

Strengthening resilience and reducing emissions in the agriculture sector are fundamental to the global climate response. However, while a range of farming practices, inputs and technologies produce climate-smart and economic benefits, smallholder adoption of Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) practices has been low. Farmer uptake is typically limited by a set of unique constraints. These include the type of CSA technology, knowledge of and access to the technology and how to use it, local context and farmer profile. There are also more general challenges affecting adoption, such as an inability to take risks, an unclear or insufficient short-term value proposition, and poor financing mechanisms to support CSA adoption.

The wider enabling environment – including national policies and regulations – can play a critical role in promoting CSA practices and shifting the value proposition for farmers. Policy instruments include countries' Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), as well as other measures like smart subsidies, eVoucher programs with public incentives for new technology uptake, policy support for innovative financing solutions and creating market incentives. However, a number of challenges typically remain, including **(i)** poor coordination between public institutions on CSA policies and support needed for their effective implementation, **(ii)** insufficient evidence about what would incentivize farmer behavior change and how to alter that behavior through policies, especially where market incentives and information are limited, and, **(iii)** too few private and public investments in agricultural value chains that specifically seek to drive CSA adoption, e.g. a lack of financial mechanisms that remunerate adoption.

The Foundation for Food & Agriculture Research (FFAR) and Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture (SFSA) invite qualified *institutions* to submit a written proposal to provide a series of analyses that address the research objectives, which are to increase understanding of the Climate Smart Agriculture policy ecosystem and implementation across the developing world, and key CSA trends, as well as to collect and share country case studies on CSA incentive mechanisms and how they work in practice. We outline the research approach and scope of work below.

Research Approach

Designing CSA solutions requires a highly context-specific approach, as the impact of climate change on agriculture (and vice versa) differs according to region, crop type, farming system, infrastructure and other factors. For example, the impacts of drought depend on their frequency, the degree to which the country depends on rainfed agriculture, and the ability of farmers to prepare for and adapt to drought conditions. In addition, segmentation by farmer type plays an important role, as risk perceptions and CSA adoption rates are likely to differ substantially across groups. The most vulnerable smallholders are typically those who can least afford to adapt new practices. Others with higher savings and better market linkages may be more willing to take on short-term risks to adopt, for example, new crop rotations that replenish soil health.

This research focuses on three countries: **India, Kenya, and Bangladesh** FFAR and SFSA is currently seeking proposals to address **Research Area 1** covering the three countries of focus. If the work on Research Area 1 is satisfactory, negotiations may follow to expand the work to applied research.

| Research Area 1 | Focus |
|--|------------------------------|
| Trends and case study analyses | India, Kenya, and Bangladesh |
| Analysis of key trends around CSA and the incentive mechanisms | Comparative |
| Analysis of CSA policy ecosystem & case studies | Country- level |

Research Questions, Objectives and Expected Output

The table below provides an overview of the expected outputs, objectives, and potential research questions for Research Area 1.

| | Comparative analysis of CSA trends | In-country CSA case studies & policy ecosystem |
|------------------|--|--|
| Output | Comparative report, outlining longer-term trends around CSA topics of interest (e.g. climate / carbon financing, value chain incentives, water management) from a perspective of how they affect smallholders | Country report, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSA policy ecosystem; analysis of specific policy/solution • Case studies on CSA incentive mechanisms and how they work in practice |
| Objective | Provide input into strategic direction for FFAR, SFSA and partners on long-term trends in the agriculture / climate space. | Improve stakeholder understanding of CSA ecosystem in-country; highlight gaps and opportunities; provide examples & best practices around “what makes incentives work or not”. |
| Questions | <p>1. What are the latest trends in climate financing, globally and in the three countries?</p> <p>What are the implications for agriculture, given increasing global & national climate pledges? Focus areas could include resource pricing (e.g. carbon, water), role of emission trading agreements, perspectives on adaptation financing for agriculture, etc. Given these trends, what would inclusive and equitable carbon finance for smallholder farmers look like? This could include both large scale financing schemes</p> | <p>1. What are the key success factors or constraints in the country case studies of CSA uptake?</p> <p>Collection of case studies in the three countries. Potential focus areas: public sector CSA mechanisms and incentives, risk- or profit-sharing models (to improve uptake of CSA practices/technologies), examples where companies have invested, examples of CSA entrepreneurship models and scaling.</p> <p>2. What has been the impact of 3 specific (public policy and/or private scheme)</p> |

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| | <p>for countries, incentives, sectors, etc. or financing for individual businesses and farmers.</p> <p>2. Creating value and incentives for farmers: What are CSA trends in the global/national food value chain? To what extent are off-takers and national governments creating CSA incentives (e.g. Unilever CSA certifications, regenerative agriculture funding, national incentive schemes (e.g. soil health cards?) What have been the roles of and experiences with CSA certifications, digital enablers and other market financial mechanisms? How could certification/value chain/farming incentives be expanded to tackle climate risks for all food products? Who is investing in CSA uptake by smallholders? What is needed to improve financing flows?</p> | <p>solutions to tackle each country’s climate challenge? e.g. policies and initiatives to stop crop residue burning in India, subsidies for micro-irrigation, national watershed development projects for rainfed areas, eVoucher mechanisms for improved soil health management etc. Based on findings, what are the proposed best practices / lessons in policy and incentives?</p> <p>3. What are the key opportunities and gaps in the CSA enabling environment in each country? What are major existing CSA-related policies and other mechanisms? Who are key stakeholders (gov’t, companies etc.)? How do they (dis)incentivize uptake of CSA technologies? What needs to change to improve impacts on the environment and on smallholders?</p> |
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Types of activities we will not consider

We will not consider activities for

- CSA methodology development and CSA technology landscape review
- CSA practices programmatic implementation

Eligibility

In keeping with FFAR’s goals to reach a broad range of institutions and individuals who participate in its programs, higher education institutions and individuals from diverse backgrounds, including minority groups that are underrepresented in research as well as international organizations and developing country institutions are strongly encouraged to apply for this program.

Award Information

- Anticipated Project duration: 12 months
- Total Amount for this opportunity: up to US \$300,000
- Estimated Number of Awards: up to 3, depending on the quality and budgets of successful proposals.
- Anticipated Award Date: Early 2022

Application Components

Full Proposal

1. Required

- Project Title
- Proposed Total Budget
- Budget Justification
- Key Personnel
- Project Personnel involved in other projects being submitted to FFAR
- Project Summary (up to 500 words)
- Project Description (up to 5,000 words)

Goals and objectives (per period)

- Scope of work and deliverables
- Project timeline (by period)
- Data Management Plan (up to 500 words)
- References Cited
- Organization Assurances
 - Research involving human subjects
 - Research involving vertebrate animals
 - Research involving Recombinant DNA
 - Research involving National Security implications
 - Research involving hazardous materials
 - Research involving human fetal tissue
 - Research involving NEPA review
- Attachments
 - a. Required Attachments (templates and instructions can be found on FFAR's Applicant Forms & Examples website. To access, click [here](https://foundationfar.org/grants-funding/resources/forms-and-examples/) or type <https://foundationfar.org/grants-funding/resources/forms-and-examples/> into a URL browser).
 - Budget Form
 - Current and Pending Support
 - PI and Key Personnel Biosketch: five-page limit.
- Optional attachments to support project description -this section should not be used to circumvent the word limit for the Research Program Plan Section.
 - Graphics, Figures, Equations, and Tables (up to 5 pages) - The textbox for the Research Program Plan does not support equations, tables, graphics, and figures. Applicants may upload a PDF document with graphics, figures, tables, or a list of equations to support the research program plan.
 - Letters of Support - Applicants may provide letters of institutional, collaborator, or stakeholder support for the proposed project. Please combine all letters of support into a single PDF document before uploading as an attachment.

Application Submission Guidelines

Applications must be submitted through FFAR's online [Grant Management System](#). Applications not submitted through this portal will not be considered eligible for evaluation. To be fair to all our applicants, FFAR will not grant an extension to applicants who missed the deadlines posted in the Key Dates section.

If you are a new user, register for an account by clicking the "Create Account" button located under the email address field on the left side of the home page. Once you log in, you may begin working on your application. Please be sure to save your work often by clicking on "Save and Finish Later". To access a saved application, please do so through your [Grant Management Account](#).

Full Proposal Review

Submitted full proposals will undergo a two-stage peer review process: (1) External Peer Review, and (2) Secondary Review. In the first stage, applications will be evaluated by an independent, expert, external peer review panel of scientific experts using the proposal review criteria posted in the RFA. In the second stage, applications judged to be most meritorious by external peer review panels will be evaluated and recommended for funding by A Joint Council of FFAR and Syngenta staff based on comparisons with applications from the same cycle and FFAR's program priorities. All reviewers are required to read and acknowledge acceptance of FFAR's [Conflict of Interest Policy](#) and [Non-Disclosure Agreement](#). We make reasonable efforts to ensure that proposals are not assigned to reviewers with a real or apparent conflict with the applicant or project personnel. Reviewers with a conflict of interests are recused from evaluating or participating in the discussions of proposals with which they have a conflict. Each stage of the review is conducted confidentially.

Applications recommended for funding by the Secondary Review will go to the Scientific Program Director and FFAR's Executive Director to consider program priorities set by the Advisory Board, portfolio balance across programs, and available funding.

Review Criteria

Full proposals are evaluated based on scored primary review criteria and unscored secondary review criteria. The bullets under each criterion may serve as a guideline to applicants when writing their proposals, and as a guideline to reviewers on what to consider when judging proposals. The bullets are illustrative and not intended to be comprehensive. Reviewers will evaluate and score each primary criterion. The overall assessment will not be an average score of the individual criterions; rather, it will reflect the reviewers' overall impression of the application. Evaluation of the scientific merit of each application is within the sole discretion of the peer reviewers and they may raise additional factors to consider that are not covered in the bullets for each criterion.

Primary Review Criteria (See Guidelines for Developing Full Proposal Review Criteria)

Primary criteria will evaluate the scientific merit and potential impact of the proposed project. Concerns with any of these criteria potentially indicate a major flaw in the

significance and/or design of the proposed work. Examples of primary review criteria are, Significance and Impact, Research Plan, Scientific Merit, Innovation or Novelty, Qualification of project personnel, and Outcomes.

Secondary Review Criteria (See Guidelines for Developing Full Proposal Review Criteria)

Secondary criteria contribute to the global score assigned to the application. Concerns with these criteria potentially question the feasibility of the proposed research. Examples of secondary review criteria are, Budget, Duration of the project, Research Environment, Scalability and Dissemination, Protections for Human and Animal Subjects, and Previous Project Performance.

Award Administration

Selection Notice

Following the full proposal review, the principal investigator and the authorized organization representative listed on the project will be officially notified by email whether (1) the proposal has been selected for funding pending contract negotiations, or (2) the proposal has not been selected funding. If a proposal is selected for funding, the Foundation for Food & Agriculture Research reserves the right to request additional or clarifying information for any reason deemed necessary, including, but not limited to, matching funds, or other budget information. Potential grantees are free to accept or reject the Grant Agreement as offered.

Award Notice

FFAR notifies applicants of whether they are selected for funding through email. The notice does not constitute an award or obligate funding from FFAR until there is a fully executed Grant Agreement.

Grant Period(s)

Upon receipt of the Grant Agreement, the potential grantee should note the Start Date and the End Date. Grantees may only use FFAR funds on project expenditures on or after the Start Date of the Grant. Charging expenditures to the grant prior to the effective date is strictly prohibited. Likewise, grantees may not use FFAR funds after the End Date except to satisfy obligations to pay allowable project costs committed on or before that date. The expiration date is the last day of a month.

Once the Grant Agreement is fully executed, the Start Date cannot be changed. The End Date may be changed with a written approval of a no-cost extension request by FFAR. If a no-cost-extension request is approved, FFAR will issue an amendment to the Grant Agreement.

If the grantee requires additional time beyond the Grant Period and the established End Date to assure adequate completion of the original scope of work within the funds already made available, the grantee may request a no-cost extension of up to 12 months. The request must be submitted to FFAR at least thirty (30) days prior to the End Date of the grant. The request must explain the need for the extension and include an estimate of the

unobligated funds remaining and a plan for their use. This one-time extension will not be approved merely for using the unexpended funds.

Post-award Management

Reporting Requirements

After a grant is conferred, the grantee shall provide an annual financial report to FFAR showing grant expenditures to date. The grantee shall also provide an annual progress report to FFAR showing activities being carried out under the grant, including but not limited to project accomplishments to date and grant expenditures. Within 90 days of the End Date, the grantee shall provide a final progress report. The final progress report should address the original objectives of the project as identified in the proposal, describe any changes in objectives, describe the final project accomplishments, and include a final project accounting of all grant funds.

Scientific Integrity

FFAR's ability to pursue its mission to build unique partnerships to support innovative science addressing today's food and agriculture challenges depends on the integrity of the science on which it relies. A fundamental purpose of FFAR is to facilitate the advancement of knowledge and the application of the science to address challenges relevant to the FFAR's mission. All FFAR grants must be conducted with the highest standards of scientific integrity.

Grant Terms and Conditions

The Foundation for Food & Agriculture Research expects applicants to have reviewed the [sample Grant Agreement](#) prior to applying to ensure that the applicants are aware of the applicable terms under which the grant is offered. FFAR will only entertain potential modifications to the Grant Agreement under the most exceptional circumstances. Successful applicants are strongly encouraged to sign the Grant Agreement as presented.

Contact Information

All Scientific and Grants Questions must be emailed to grants@foundationfar.org.

FFAR only accept scientific or programmatic, and grants inquiries by email. We strive to respond to inquiries within two business days, but our response time depends on the volume of questions received and the complexity of the questions asked. Please note that we do not monitor this mailbox on evenings, weekends, or federal holidays.