

Global Research Alliance Charter

1. Underlining the need for food security, and to promote synergies between adaptation and mitigation efforts, the Members set forth the following Charter for the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases (“the Alliance”). The Alliance provides a framework for voluntary action to increase cooperation and investment in research activities to help reduce the emissions intensity of agricultural production systems and increase their potential for soil carbon sequestration, and improve their efficiency, productivity, resilience and adaptive capacity, thereby contributing in a sustainable way to overall mitigation efforts, while still helping meet food security objectives.
2. Agriculture plays a vital role in achieving food security, poverty reduction and sustainable development.
3. The agricultural sector is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and faces significant challenges in meeting a dramatic increase in global food demand while reducing its contribution to global greenhouse emissions.
4. The agricultural sector has many opportunities to contribute to emissions reductions and carbon sequestration while still helping meet food security objectives.
5. There are opportunities to reduce agricultural greenhouse gas emissions and increase carbon sequestration by improving efficiency and productivity of agricultural systems through improved management practices and technologies. This can also help to build the resilience and adaptive capacity of agricultural systems and help to meet the increasing demand for food in a sustainable manner.
6. There is a need to increase research cooperation and investment in mitigation practices and technologies in order to develop more efficient and productive agricultural systems.

7. The Alliance will seek to increase international cooperation, collaboration and investment in both public and private research activities to:
 - a. improve knowledge sharing, access to and application by farmers of mitigation and carbon sequestration practices and technologies, which can also enhance productivity and resilience;
 - b. promote synergies between adaptation and mitigation efforts;
 - c. develop the science and technology needed to improve the measurement and estimation of greenhouse gas emissions and carbon sequestration in different agricultural systems;
 - d. develop consistent methodological approaches for the measurement and estimation of greenhouse gas emissions and carbon sequestration to improve research coherence and the domestic monitoring of mitigation efforts, taking into account the differences between agricultural systems and Members' specific environmental, social and economic contexts;
 - e. facilitate the exchange of information;
 - f. help scientists gain expertise in mitigation knowledge and technologies, through developing new partnerships and exchange opportunities; and
 - g. develop partnerships with farmers and farmer organisations, the private sector, international and regional research institutions, foundations and non-governmental organisations, to facilitate and enhance the coordination of research activities and sharing of good practices and technologies.

INSTITUTIONS AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

8. The Alliance is a voluntary initiative and does not create any legally binding rights or obligations between or among its Members or any other entities under domestic or international law.
9. An Alliance Council, Research Groups, Cross-cutting Groups, and a Secretariat will be established by the Members.

Alliance Council

10. The Alliance Council ("the Council") will establish and govern the overall framework, procedures and activities of the Alliance.

11. Each Member will have one (1) seat on the Council.
12. The Council will meet at least once a year, unless otherwise determined by the Council, at times and places to be determined by the Council.
13. A simple majority of Members is required to be present in order for a meeting of the Council to proceed, and will constitute a quorum for all Council meetings, except for the provisions outlined in paragraph 48.
14. Decisions of Council meetings will be by consensus of Members present.
15. Council meetings will be chaired by the Member hosting the meeting, assisted by a vice-chair from the Member that will host the next meeting. The chair and vice-chair will continue in their respective capacities until the opening of the next meeting. The role of the chair and vice-chair of the Council is to facilitate the Council meetings, provide guidance to the Secretariat and bring issues to the Council for decision between meetings as requested by any Member(s).
16. When Council decisions are required in the period between Council meetings, the Council chair will propose a decision, on which the Secretariat will seek Members' views electronically. If no objections are received within one (1) calendar month from the date of the electronic notification, the decision will be confirmed.
17. The Council may invite non-Members to attend Council meetings, or part of a Council meeting, as appropriate. The Council will decide how non-Members may participate in Council meetings.
18. The number and focus of Research Groups and Cross-cutting Groups may be amended by a decision of the Council.
19. The Council may at any time establish any other permanent or temporary entities it considers necessary to carry out the work of the Alliance.

Research Groups

20. The Research Groups will facilitate Alliance activities within the framework and procedures established by the Council, and will be assisted by the Secretariat.
21. Any Member may participate in any or all of the Research Groups. Members each nominate one (1) contact point for each Research Group in which they participate.

22. Each Research Group will develop and implement an action plan to promote and facilitate activities consistent with the objectives of the Alliance and the specific scope of the Research Group concerned. The activities of the Research Groups will be considered by the Council.
23. Each Research Group will report its activities to the Secretariat in a standard format every six (6) months for dissemination to the Council and other Research Groups, in accordance with the Alliance communication policy.
24. In undertaking their work, Research Groups may, inter alia:
 - a. establish sub-groups, led by a Member or Members of that Research Group, to carry out work on specific areas of research within the Research Group;
 - b. promote an active network of individual scientists and experts in relevant fields;
 - c. encourage regional networks;
 - d. develop partnerships and scientific collaborations relevant to the work of the Group and to facilitate this may decide to invite institutions or individual scientists relevant to the work of the activities of the Research Group;
 - e. work with the Secretariat to assemble information on scholarships, fellowships and exchange opportunities relevant to the work of the Research Group; and
 - f. utilise Internet-based and e-networking tools to coordinate the Research Group's activities.
25. The Research Groups and their specific focus will be listed on the Alliance website.
26. The decisions of the Research Groups will be made by consensus of the Members participating in the Research Group concerned.
27. Each Research Group will be chaired by a Member or Members selected by the relevant Research Group by consensus and confirmed by the Council. Any modifications to the chairing arrangements of any of the Research Groups are to be made by the Research Group in question, and confirmed by the Council. The Research Group chair(s) will be proactive in facilitating

the work of the Research Group and may take decisions on behalf of the Group when authorised to do so by the Group.

28. Each Research Group will meet at least once a year at places and times to be determined by the Research Group concerned.

Cross-cutting Groups

29. Each Research Group will cooperate with other Research Groups on crosscutting issues and may make recommendations to the Council to establish Cross-cutting Groups to facilitate, coordinate, and/or lead work on cross-cutting issues when it is deemed necessary and beneficial to the Research Groups and identified as having a high priority for the Alliance.
30. Cross-cutting Groups will facilitate Alliance activities within the framework and procedures established by the Council, and will be assisted by the Secretariat.
31. Cross-cutting Groups will be chaired by a Member or Members selected by the relevant Research Groups by consensus and confirmed by the Council.
32. Cross-cutting Groups will report their activities to the Secretariat in a standard format every six (6) months for dissemination to the Council and Research Groups, in accordance with the Alliance communication policy.

Alliance Secretariat

33. The focus of the Secretariat will be administrative. The Secretariat, within available resources, will:
 - a. organise and provide administrative support for the meetings of the Alliance Council;
 - b. maintain a website for the Alliance;
 - c. report to the Council on the activities of the Research Groups and Cross-cutting Groups;
 - d. maintain a database of Member contacts;
 - e. facilitate Alliance communications;
 - f. facilitate outreach activities as directed by the Council;

- g. provide assistance to the Research Groups and Cross-cutting Groups as requested by their chair/s and within the Secretariat's mandate as set by the Council; and
 - h. perform other tasks and duties as directed by the Alliance Council.
34. Any personnel employed by the Members and whose services are made available to the Secretariat will continue to be remunerated by their respective employers and will remain subject to their employers' conditions of employment.
35. The Council will determine which Member will be the host of the Secretariat. The hosting of the Secretariat will be periodically reviewed by the Council. Any change made to the host of the Secretariat will be done in a manner that ensures continuity of Secretariat function.

MEMBERSHIP

36. Membership of the Alliance is open to any State represented by their competent authority.
37. The Alliance Members ("the Members") are those that sign this Charter at the Alliance Ministerial Summit in Rome, as well as those that formally notify the Secretariat of their intention to participate as a Member of the Alliance in accordance with this Charter.
38. Participation in the Alliance is on a voluntary basis. Each Member individually determines the nature and extent of its participation in any Alliance activities.

ALLIANCE PARTNERS

39. The Council may decide to extend Alliance Partner status to organisations. Alliance Partners will be identified on the Alliance website. The Council will decide how Partners may participate in the Alliance.

COMMUNICATION

40. Members are encouraged to raise awareness of their activities by communicating research results, strategies, technologies and other information through new and existing networks, and on the Alliance website.

41. External communications made on behalf of the Alliance will be approved by the Council, in accordance with the Alliance communication policy as developed by the Council.

RESOURCE CONTRIBUTIONS

42. Any Member may, at its own discretion and subject to its relevant domestic laws and regulations, voluntarily contribute funds, personnel and/or other resources such as to support Alliance activities, including to assist the participation of Members with different capacities.
43. In the interests of transparency, effectiveness, and efficiency, resource contributions notified to the Secretariat will be compiled and reported by the Secretariat to the Council on an annual basis.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

44. The research and development fostered by the Alliance should be conducted in a manner that ensures the widest possible benefit.
45. All matters related to intellectual property and the treatment thereof arising from cooperative activities of the Alliance will be addressed, at the appropriate time, on a case-by-case basis within the specific context in which they arise, and bearing in mind the activities of the Alliance.

REVIEW

46. The Council will periodically review the activities undertaken by the Alliance and take appropriate action.

COMMENCEMENT, MODIFICATION, CESSATION, AND WITHDRAWAL

47. The terms of this Charter will commence on the first signature, or on receipt of formal notification by the Member hosting the Secretariat consistent with paragraph 37 of this Charter, as appropriate.
48. The terms of this Charter may be modified or ceased in their entirety by a decision of the Council. For such decisions a 2/3 majority of Members will constitute a quorum.
49. Any Member may withdraw from its membership of the Alliance by formally notifying the Member hosting the Secretariat.

50. Notification of a Member's withdrawal from the Alliance will be communicated to the Council and Research Groups by the Secretariat, and updated on the Alliance website on receipt of formal notification of a Member's withdrawal by the Member hosting the Secretariat.

Signed at Rome, this 24th day of June 2011