

Climate smart agriculture blog

So what is 'climate smart agriculture' and why does it matter?

The term 'climate smart agriculture' was promoted by the FAO at the 2010 Hague Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change. The underlying idea is to increase agricultural production to feed a growing population but in a way that is both less environmentally-damaging (i.e. does not contribute to further climate change) and is better adapted to the more extreme weather associated with current trends in global warming (such as the increasing risk of drought in some parts of the world). According to the FAO, climate-smart agriculture is one that 'sustainable increases productivity, enhances resilience (adaptation), reduces/removes greenhouse gases (mitigation), and enhances achievement of national food security and development goals' (<http://www.fao.org/climate-smart-agriculture/en/>).

Since 2010 the concept it has become a major focus for discussion and research. Major events this year include the conferences 'Our Common Future under Climate Change' held in July 2015 (<https://ccafs.cgiar.org/our-common-future-under-climate-change-science-conference>) and 'Climate Smart Agriculture 2015: Third Global Science Conference' due in September 2015 (<http://csa2015.cirad.fr>). These will culminate in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP21) which will try to achieve a new international agreement to tackle climate change. This will be held in Paris in November-December 2015 (<http://www.cop21.gouv.fr/en/>).

The cultivation of crops such as maize or wheat has been associated with a range of environmental impacts such as the level of water, energy and chemical (e.g. fertiliser) use, which increases the crops' carbon footprint, run-off which causes pollution, and the impact of more intensive methods of cultivation on soil quality, erosion and biodiversity. Ways of tackling these challenges to make agriculture more sustainable will be a major theme in the forthcoming Burleigh Dodds Science Publishing programme of titles on the sustainable cultivation of key crops.

A version of this blog with supporting references can be found [here](#).

References and further reading

FAO, *Climate Smart Agriculture Sourcebook*, 2013.

FAO, *FAO Success Stories on Climate Smart Agriculture*, 2013.