

Environmental Change and Sustainable Agricultural Systems

A Workshop at 11th ESA Congress, Montpellier Friday 3 September
Campus de La Gaillarde

Organised by

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Sponsored by INRA Paris

The Climate Congress and Agriculture Day in Copenhagen in March 2009 demonstrated the importance of agriculture from the perspectives of the foundation of food security, the interactions between food, energy and water securities for human societies, and its role both as a source and mitigating agent of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. However, the agricultural research community is currently poorly coordinated in making its voice heard in these international discussions.

A small group met in London in February 2010 to determine whether there was any scope for an international programme to increase the visibility of agricultural issues in relation to the current debates about environmental change and food security. The meeting agreed the need for such a programme and that it should focus on sustainable agricultural systems in the developed world, thereby complementing the work to be carried out by the CGIAR Mega Program "Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security" (CAAFS) in the developing world. The two endeavours would be closely coordinated. The new programme would address specific challenges that would form part of the developed world's contribution to the global food challenge, and the transfer of research and knowledge to developing countries would be an important component of any work carried out.

The purpose of this Montpellier Workshop is to identify the research areas that might form the core of this new programme. Suggestions to date include:

- Methods to describe sustainable agricultural system and the tradeoffs needed to secure them.
- Scenarios work, in close coordination with CCAFS which is developing similar tools.
- Issues of mitigating GHG emissions in agriculture with the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural GHGs as a key component.
- Determine guidelines that aid adaptation.
- Test out different adaptation options and design agricultural systems that are better at coping with different vulnerability, economic situations, etc.
- Ascertain how crop modelling projects can be used to pursue sustainable agricultural systems.
- Ideotyping.
- Europe wide study into innovative/transformative farming practice already in use that would be of interest to scientists and wider community.

Details of the workshop programme will be available in June. The workshop format will allow the participation of 50 persons drawn from the group which met in London and from the 2-page papers submitted to Agro2010 which are relevant for the topic.

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