



**Sustainable Agriculture of the Americas Pavilion
at UNFCCC COP27
Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, 6-18 November 2022**

COP27 Pavilion Side Event

Event Title: Digital Solutions and Information for a Climate Resilient Agriculture Sector (DSI-CRA)

Date: 15th November 2022

Time: 2:30 – 3:30pm (Eastern European Time)

Type of Event: Hybrid

Highlight: The State of Digital Agriculture in the Commonwealth

1.0 Introduction and Purpose of the Workshop

Digitalization is seen as a game-changer for accelerating and scaling-up innovative ideas and actions for strengthening climate resilience and food and nutrition security in the Americas. This is so, because digitalization is changing the way we collect, access, analyse, share, and use data and information to inform decision-making, research, and trade in agriculture. Despite the potential net positive impact of digitalization, there are some “teething” issues that must be addressed to optimise the access and benefits of digital innovations to a wider cross section of stakeholders in agriculture. The Commonwealth Secretariat defines digitalisation of agriculture to include 4 components – digital innovations, data infrastructure, business development and the enabling environment for digitalisation. In this light, a major issue to be addressed is the digital divide among agriculture stakeholders, particularly for small-holder farmers, who are highly vulnerable to climate change and require timely and accurate information. For the unequal access and use gap to digital innovations by agricultural stakeholders to be reduced, all the 4 components of digital agriculture must be considered.

The objectives of the event include:

- i. Highlight the importance of digital innovations – technologies, solutions, and information for building a climate resilient agriculture sector
- ii. Discuss the successful use of digital technologies, solutions, and information (early warning systems, smart irrigation systems) for decision making along the agriculture value chain

- iii. Discuss national policy designs and actions for reducing the digital divide among small-holder farmers

2.0 Importance of digital technologies, solutions, and information for building a climate resilient agriculture sector

Building climate resilience for the agricultural sector includes enabling access to drought resistance and short season seed varieties; engaging in precision farming to reduce the negative impact of agro-chemicals on soils/land; increasing access to index-based insurance services to cushion farmers against flood, drought, pest, and diseases; utilising alternative credit scoring solutions based on big data and analytics to facilitate access to financial services, among others. Digital innovations are enablers to these traditional services, and with the right approach, significant results can be realised.

3.0 Success stories on the use of digital solutions and information (early warning systems, smart irrigation systems) for decision making along the agriculture value chain

There are hundreds of successful cases of digital innovations impacting the agricultural sector across the Commonwealth:

- **AgrInfo** in Tanzania using drones to capture data to provide precision advisory services to farmers
- The government of Bangladesh through the **A2i initiative** is facilitating access to information for researchers, extension officers and farmers
- The case of **Farm Credibly** in Jamaica enabling access to loans and credits by farmers through alternative credit system using blockchains
- **TraSeable Solutions** in Fiji providing traceable solutions for fisheries and agriculture.

Despite these isolated successful cases, it is difficult to document massive impacts of digitalisation at country level to disrupt the traditional smallholder agricultural production and trade. The panellists will be requested to share and discuss case studies at the local and national level and comment on how these case studies could be used to improve impact.

4.0 National Policy Designs and Actions for Limiting the Digital Divide among Small-holder farmers

A holistic approach to digitalisation of the agricultural sector is needed. This is beyond the promotion of digital technologies, solutions, and information. National, regional, and international policy actions are needed on all the 4 components of digital agriculture to ensure the most vulnerable stakeholder groups such as the smallholder farmers access the enormous benefit of digital innovations.

Digital Solutions and Information for a Climate Resilient Agriculture Sector
COP27 – 15th November 2022

AGENDA

| Time (EET) | Item |
|--|---|
| ITEM I: OPENING CEREMONY (20 minutes) | |
| 2:30 – 2:50pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. Curt Delice, Special Affairs Coordinator for the Caribbean Region/ IICA Representative for Suriname • Remarks and launching of 'The State of Digital Agriculture in the Commonwealth' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hon. Patricia Scotland, Secretary General, Commonwealth |
| ITEM II: AGRICULTURE & FISHERIES DATA INFRASTRUCTURE (30 Minutes) | |
| 2:50 – 3:20 | <p><u>Chair:</u> Dr. Curt Delice, Special Affairs Coordinator for the Caribbean Region/ IICA Representative for Suriname</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. Benjamin Kwasi Addom, Adviser, Commonwealth Secretariat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why are digital solutions important for building a climate resilient agriculture sector? ○ Mr. Ryan Deosaran, Programme Manager, MRV-Hub <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Please share examples of tools, systems, and data services that have/can be used by farmers and decision-makers to improve climate resilience in the agriculture sector. ○ Ms. Mariana Vasconcelos, Co-founder and CEO, Agrosmart <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Please tell us about the initiative on digital technology in irrigation systems to inform decision making of over 500K smallholder farmers in South America ○ Dr. Benjamin Kwasi Addom, Adviser, Commonwealth Secretariat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What sort of national policy and enable actions can be designed to limit the digital divide among Small-holder farmers? |
| ITEM III: DISCUSSION AND THE WAY FORWARD (10 Minutes) | |
| 3:20 – 3:30pm | <p>Wrap up: Dr. Federico Bert, Digital Agriculture Specialist/Manager, Agrifood Digitalization Program, IICA</p> <p>Closing: Dr. Curt Delice, Special Affairs Coordinator for the Caribbean Region/ IICA Representative for Suriname</p> |
| END | |