E-discussion on:
Data collection and reporting of greenhouse gas emissions and removals in the agriculture, forestry and other land use (AFOLU) sector

A summary of the FAO Transparency in agriculture and land use sectors network members' contributions

Introduction

From March to May 2021, the FAO Transparency in agriculture and land use sectors network held a discussion on "Data collection and reporting of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and removals in the AFOLU sector". The discussion was divided into two parts:

1. The main challenges countries faced in reporting GHG emissions in the AFOLU sector
2. Best practices and solutions to the main challenges in data collection and reporting

The full contributions are available in the Transparency network's Dgroup library for consultation and future reference. This document provides a summary of members' contributions to the discussion.

Part 1: identifying challenges

Members were asked to identify the **main challenges** they encountered with regards to the **production of GHG inventories**; and to prioritize the most pressing ones to tackle to improve **reporting**. The responses received, mainly from members from Africa, Central Asia and Europe, identified the most common challenges as a lack of:

- effective institutional arrangements;
- data;
- capacity in using methodologies and tools; and
- information on data uncertainty.

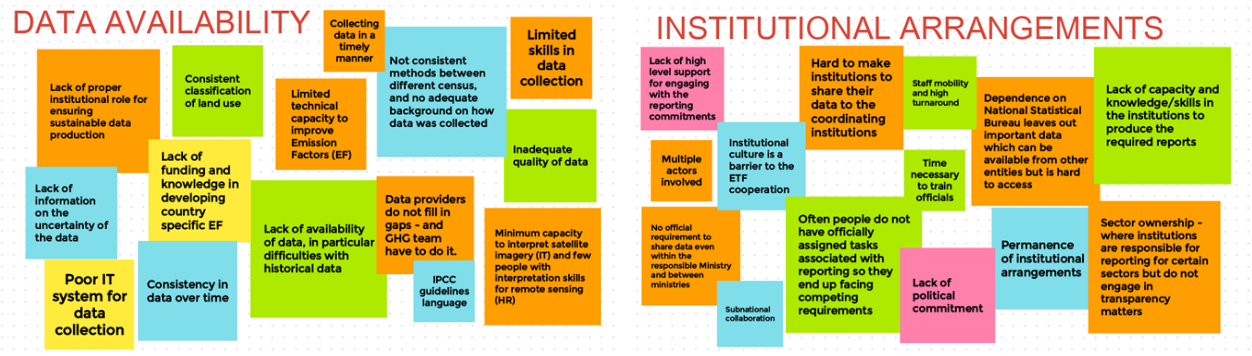

Figure 1. Challenges related to data availability and institutional arrangements identified during previous FAO-PATPA workshops which served as the basis for the first part of the discussion.

Second part: best practices and solutions

In the second part of the discussion, members were asked to reflect on **best practices and tools** to improve national GHG inventories in the AFOLU sector; and to share their **recommendations** with the network. This second part saw the participation of members mainly from Africa and Asia.

To overcome challenges related to data collection and ensuring better reporting of national GHG inventories, members recommended setting up **Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs)** or other types of **legal agreements with data providers.** These were the most effective ways to ensure the flow of the required information. Other suggestions included setting up systems to better track emission sources; and improving data collection and classification on specific sources such as livestock.

FAO experts' additional suggestions for improving and making GHG inventories sustainable focused on:

- securing data archives;
- performing key category analysis for potential improvements;
- ensuring the quality control, quality assurance and verification of methodologies applied, data used and resulting GHG estimates;
- developing the uncertainty analysis; and
- designing an improvement plan (drawing upon the results of the steps above).

With regards to the tools, members indicated the **IPCC Inventory software** as one of the most useful tools **for estimating emissions**. FAO is providing inputs for the continuous improvement of the IPCC software: as well as technical training in using it. Members also highlighted the importance of **remote sensing** and **geographical information systems** tools for assessing land-related emissions and removals. FAO has developed several remote sensing tools and is training people in using them.

Members also recommended:

- strengthening institutional arrangements by engaging different stakeholders, for example through a national task force to enhance coordination;
- promoting the substantial technical expertise of the GHG inventory team;
- setting up a robust measuring, reporting and verification (MRV) system, based on existing country capacity;
- improving data collection on different categories; and
- collaborating with academia and research centers.

FAO experts highlighted that good MRV systems rely on solid institutional arrangements; and substantial technical expertise in GHG inventory teams. Technical expertise remains a fundamental issue in many countries where there are insufficient resources for the GHG inventory system. This results in high staff turnover which prevents sustainability.

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