

# IMPROVING FARMER AND FOOD SYSTEM RESILIENCE THROUGH CLIMATE- SMART AGRICULTURE



Photo: Fara Coffee

## INCREASED SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION

A key aspect of climate-smart agriculture (CSA) is helping farmers to improve farm productivity, and thus achieve higher incomes and improved standard of living.

Increased productivity contributes to:

- **Food security and nutrition** for both farmers and consumers.
- **Reduced need to clear forests for farm expansion.** As climate-smart farmlands are more productive per unit cultivated, the carbon footprint of the crop is often reduced.
- **Increased resilience to climate change.** Better income due to productivity can, in turn, allow for more investment in adaptation measures.

To address the world's ballooning food needs amid a worsening climate crisis and growing population, we must dramatically scale up CSA<sup>1</sup>. However, for the level of implementation required, it is critical to have massive stakeholder engagement and cooperation, capacity building, enabling policies and institutional frameworks, and investment on every level.



Photo: Kyagalanyi Coffee

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/11/why-we-must-scale-up-climate-smart-agriculture-csa-climate-hunger-population-resilience/>

## OUR INTERVENTIONS

The Rainforest Alliance is working to solve some of the most urgent environmental and social challenges of our day, from deforestation and the climate crisis, to entrenched poverty and human rights violations among rural communities. We're implementing proven and scalable solutions on the ground while testing innovative ways to drive change.

Our four main interconnected areas of work have been designed to drive sustainability in the sectors and landscapes where we believe we can make the biggest difference for people and nature:

- **Certification Program:** an evolved certification program based on the principles of shared responsibility and sustainability that includes CSA, is a journey of continuous, data-informed improvement.
- **Landscape Management:** long-term conservation and community development programs (including CSA) in several critically important tropical landscapes where commodity production threatens ecosystem health and the well-being of rural communities.
- **Tailored Supply Chain Services:** customized support to help companies define and achieve their sustainability commitments within certification and beyond.
- **Advocacy:** advancing far-reaching policies that support rural producers who make significant investments of time, resources, and labor in sustainability transformation.

## CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE AND ITS PROVEN IMPACTS

Life on Earth is a delicately balanced web of interdependence. Therefore, for people and nature to thrive in harmony, we work on many fronts to ensure a better future.

At the Rainforest Alliance, we recognize that CSA has a critical role to play in global sustainability and the interconnectedness of forests and biodiversity, climate, rural livelihoods, and human rights.



**2.3 MILLION+**

farmers participating in the Rainforest Alliance or UTZ certification programs



**6.8 MILLION+**

hectares of farmland certified against the Rainforest Alliance or UTZ certification standards

Therefore, the Rainforest Alliance’s 2020 Certification Program includes CSA approaches throughout our standard. In 2020, more than 6.8 million hectares of farmland were certified against the Rainforest Alliance or UTZ standards and more than 2.3 million farmers participated in the Rainforest Alliance or UTZ certification programs. With such numbers, our certification program is an effective tool in a suite of approaches for broad implementation of CSA.

As part of our landscape and communities interventions, the Rainforest Alliance has worked with several partners (including the International Center for Tropical Agriculture, the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, and the World Cocoa Foundation) to advance the science of CSA and promote its uptake in several countries, such as Ghana, Peru, Kenya, Côte D’Ivoire, and Indonesia. Methods for furthering CSA include publishing manuals, conducting capacity trainings, developing project pilots, and advocating for policy changes.

In Ghana, under a UK Aid-funded Partnership for Forests project, 2,661 farmers were initially trained in CSA techniques and the approach has since had strong uptake throughout wider communities. According to one sample survey in the project landscape, around 4,000 farmers in Ghana have adopted CSA practices and report better productivity as a result.

In Sulawesi Province, Indonesia, where the Rainforest Alliance worked with farmers on adopting CSA practices, a 2019 survey of farmers found that cocoa yields increased by approximately 11% relative to the prior harvest year without an increase in land cultivated under cocoa. Farmers attributed this improvement mainly to their adoption of CSA practices.



Photo: Will Crosse

**Inclusion and Equity**

Longstanding production systems rooted in structural inequities affect access to resources for communities and households. Societal norms such as gender roles shape production and capacity, and as a result, CSA approaches and outcomes. Therefore, the Rainforest Alliance, in partnership with the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (with funding from the International Center for Tropical Agriculture), undertook a diagnostic study to deepen insight on the implications of CSA for women in the cocoa sector. Using these findings, the Rainforest Alliance is advocating for transformations that will further CSA without perpetuating social inequities.

**WHERE DO WE WANT TO TAKE CSA?**

The Rainforest Alliance will continue to work with farmers on capacity building and training, focusing especially on including youth and women in CSA approaches. Widespread adoption of CSA practices, and the improved health and yield they provide, will make its benefits evident to diverse communities. We envision a future where CSA makes farming more appealing to young people, inspiring new generations to become farmers themselves.

The Rainforest Alliance is poised to contribute to implementing policies and frameworks for advancing CSA, including within nationally determined contributions and national adaptation plans. An enabling environment is critical to the potential that CSA has in contributing to the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Our goal is for entire supply chains to be invested in CSA and therefore engaged in a coordinated process involving multiple stakeholders, from governments to private sector actors and other NGOs. This also includes increased public-private finance for CSA.

The Rainforest Alliance will continue to work to develop more risk maps for commodities and regions and build on training manuals and tools. We are open to partnerships to share findings, develop tools, and implement projects together to further the positive impact CSA has on climate resilience.

For more information, please visit our website: [rainforest-alliance.org](https://rainforest-alliance.org)



The Rainforest Alliance is creating a more sustainable world by using social and market forces to protect nature and improve the lives of farmers and forest communities.

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