



ClimSA

INTRA-ACP CLIMATE SERVICES AND RELATED APPLICATIONS PROGRAMME



An initiative of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States funded by the European Union



Jamaica: Key Stakeholders Trained in Participatory Agriculture Climate Services Approach

From February 27 to March 3, 15 Agriculture Extension Officers and other key stakeholders in the agriculture sector gathered in St. Catherine, Jamaica, to take part in the Participatory Integrated Climate Services for Agriculture (PICSA) training workshop. Its aim was to focus on the enhancement of agricultural extension practices in an effort to improve decision making on farms.

As part of the ClimSA Programme in the Caribbean region, the initiative was a collaboration between the European Union (EU), the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH), the Jamaica Meteorological Service (JMS), the Jamaica Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MoAF), and the University of Reading.

The workshop comes one month after a preparatory scoping exercise was conducted for stakeholders, which outlined the project and its aims, the PICSA approach and its proposed adaptation and implementation in Jamaica.

During the 5-day workshop participants explored the link between climate services and agricultural extension. Workshop attendees shared current farming and livelihoods practices and participated in exercises on identifying and selecting suitable crops, varieties, and crop practices; crop management, livestock, and livelihood options; understanding and using short term and seasonal forecasts; and the role of facilitators in empowering farmers to make informed decisions about which practices work best in their context. In a field exercise, participants had the opportunity to test the PICSA approach when working with farmers' groups in the parish of St. Catherine. The training workshop concluded with a closing ceremony during which certificates of completion were presented to participants by Gabrio Marinozzi of the European Union Delegation in Kingston and Mr. Courtney Cole, Chief Technical Director in the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Jamaica.

Gabrio Marinozzi of the European Union Delegation in Kingston, commented on the longstanding partnership between the European Union (EU) and Jamaica. He also congratulated CIMH and commended the ongoing work by the Institute to strengthen capacities to address the impact of climate change. He remarked on how these efforts build on other ongoing collaborations in the region between the organization and the EU in building national and regional level climate resilience.

Winston Simpson acting Chief Executive Officer of the Rural Agricultural Development Authority, in his remarks acknowledged that climate change is an issue with significant implications for the agricultural sector which is an important contributor to Jamaica's economy. He indicated that the training programme which focused on climate data for decision making in agriculture was an important step towards building the capacity of officers to use these tools effectively. Simpson applauded participants for embracing the skills and knowledge necessary to work with farmers to address the challenges posed by climate change. He also commended the European Union for supporting this training initiative.

Further implementation of the Participatory Integrated Climate Services for Agriculture approach in Jamaica will be directed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries through its Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA). Using a train the trainer model, the Agency will organize structured information sharing and training sessions led by Agriculture Extension Officers and other workshop participants. Through these sessions the PICSA approach and lessons learned will be shared with farmers and other key beneficiaries to empower them with the requisite knowledge and skills to make informed decisions reduce risk and build resilience on their farms.

Support for the Caribbean Intra-ACP ClimSA Programme is provided by the global Intra-ACP ClimSA Programme, an initiative funded by the European Union (EU). The programme aims to improve the production, access to and use of climate information, services, and applications to support evidence-based decision-making across African, Caribbean, and Pacific states.

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