

FOREWORD

The "Trees, Agroforestry and Climate Change in Dryland Africa (TACCDA)" was a one-year project that started in December 2002 and consisted mainly of an E-discussion, the TACCDA workshop itself, held in Hyytiälä, Finland in June – July 2003, and participation in the Tropical Savannah and Seasonally Dry Forest Conference held in Edinburgh, Scotland in September 2003. The project was financed by the Fifth Framework of the European Commission (Contract No: ICA4-2002-50014) and the implementing organisations were the Viikki Tropical Resources Institute (VITRI) of the University of Helsinki in collaboration with European Tropical Forestry Research Network (ETFRN) and the International Union of Forestry Research Organisations' Special Programme for Developing Countries (IUFRO-SPDC).

The original idea of TACCDA came up during discussions between ETFRN, VITRI and the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) of Edinburgh in late 2001. It was at that time conceived as an opportunity to link the international Drylands Rehabilitation Research workshops organised by VITRI in Khartoum, 2000 and in Hyytiälä, 2002, together with a major international conference on Tropical Savannas and Seasonally Dry Forests to be held in Edinburgh in September 2003. A proposal for the TACCDA was submitted to the European Commission in March 2003. During the autumn of 2002 the CEH informed the EC, ETFRN and VITRI that due to personnel changes in CEH it was not able to lead the TACCDA project, which was by that time under contract negotiation with the EC. At that stage VITRI took over the leading role for the project with technical and financial support from ETFRN, and IUFRO-SPDC was invited to join TACCDA. IUFRO-SPDC, which had already set up its own GFIS-Africa project aiming at a synthesis of forest research in humid and sub-humid as well as dryland Africa, accepted the invitation.

The original planned venue and date for the TACCDA workshop were Nairobi, Kenya in early June with the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) and the Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI) as the host organisations. However, due to terrorist threats in May 2003 the organisers decided at the last minute to postpone the workshop and to change the venue to the Forestry Field Station of the University of Helsinki in Hyytiälä, Finland. During the summer further warnings of terrorist attacks were given for Nairobi, so most workshop participants conceived the change of venue as positive.

Early on in the project it was decided that TACCDA and GFIS-Africa should organise jointly both the E-discussion and the foreseen workshop. The Project Manager of VITRI carried out a project planning trip to ETFRN in the Netherlands and to ICRAF and KEFRI in Nairobi, Kenya where KEFRI also represented GFIS-Africa. Plans on how to synchronize the TACCDA and the GFIS-Africa and an initial list of E-discussion and workshop moderators was prepared. In February another TACCDA/GFIS-Africa meeting was held in Brussels, where many African and European representatives of the two projects were concurrently attending another meeting. At this third meeting the appointment of many of the moderators was decided and the dates for the E-discussion and the workshop settled.

The joint E-discussion was carried out jointly between TACCDA and GFIS-Africa on the ETFRN website during 17 March to 25 April 2003. The discussion was open to all and had 125 participants from 37 countries of which 53 participants were from Africa, 54 from Europe, 5 from North America and finally 13 from Asia. The E-discussion results provided

the TACCDA/GFIS-Africa organisers with an overview of the dryland, sub-humid and humid research problems as identified by the participants, which were then taken into consideration when planning the actual contents of the workshop.

For the TACCDA/GFIS-Africa workshop which was eventually held in Hyytiälä, Finland from 30 June to 4 July 2003 the same E-discussion themes were expanded by asking moderators to make their workshop articles and presentations as forward looking as possible in relation to the dryland research needs. After 3 days of plenary presentations the participants were divided into working groups charged with the further development of the four main TACCDA themes and after the workshop a smaller group of persons worked out an EU Drylands Research Agenda based upon these four TACCDA group outputs. The GFIS-Africa had its own working group.

The TACCDA/GFIS-Africa workshop had 50 participants from 19 countries in Africa and Europe. Among the participants were several directors of African forestry research institutes, high level forestry department authorities, several UN research organisations, the European Commission, as well as senior and junior researchers.

We deeply appreciate the technical and practical assistance during the meeting that was provided by the staff of the Hyytiälä Forestry Field Station and by students and assistants of the University of Helsinki. The workshop organizers further thank all the moderators and the participants for their contributions to the E-discussion, the actual workshop and to these proceedings. Special thanks are also extended to Peter Wood for all his technical expertise, which we utilized in developing the TACCDA concept into concrete themes and structure and for editing of these proceedings.

Jörn Laxén
TACCDA Project Manager and
VITRI Project Director