

Sustainable land management and
agricultural practices in Africa:
Bridging the gap between research and farmers

Expert group meeting
Environment for Development – United Nations
Goteborg, April 16-17, 2009

Introduction – Division for Sustainable
Development

Outline

- Context: CSD
- Why focus on extension?
- Framework
- Objectives
- Expected outcomes

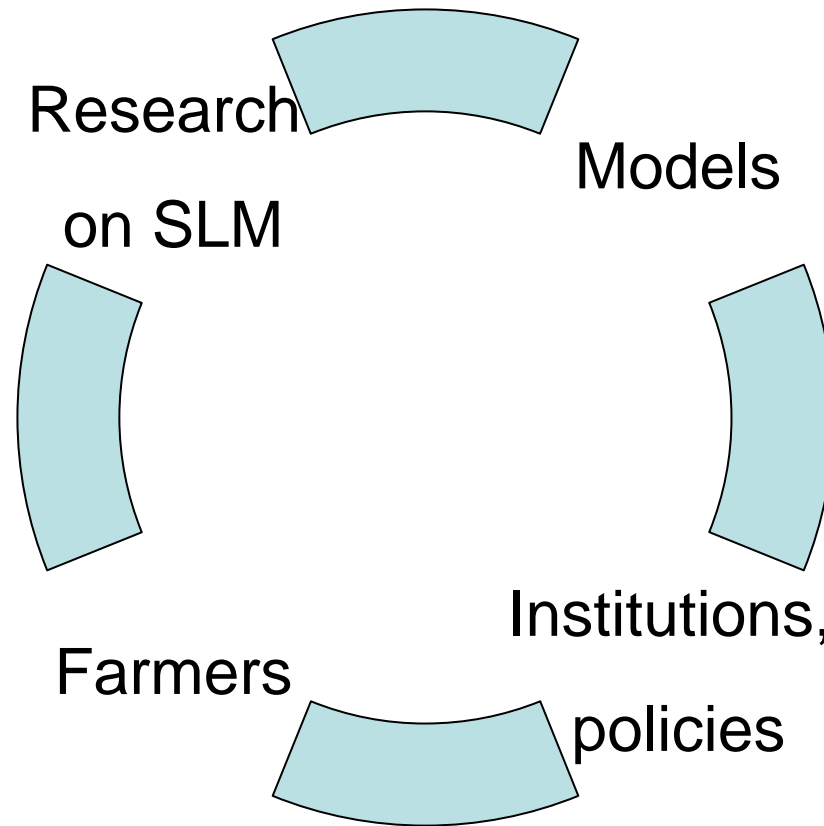
Context: CSD

- CSD established by the UN General Assembly in December 1992 to ensure effective follow-up of the Earth Summit.
 - reviewing progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration;
 - providing policy guidance to follow up the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation at the local, national, regional and international levels.
- CSD works in 2-year cycles
 - first year : review year,
 - second year: policy year (negotiations)
- Current cycle (2008-2009): **agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification, Africa**
- Next cycle (2010-2011): transport, chemicals, waste management, mining, and
- A Ten Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP)
 - Sustainable agriculture: priority for DCs

Why focus on extension?

- Sustainable agriculture at the center stage
- Critical element for sustainable development, especially in developing countries
- Sustainable practices
 - Work
 - Success has been documented
 - More and more people convinced
 - BUT: why uptake so low / slow?
- Some clues
 - WBI in SRI presentation material : “Main obstacle to adoption of new agricultural practices is resistance by farmers”
 - Linda Nghatsane, farmer from South Africa, at Windhoek UN intersessional meeting: “ I have to teach extension officers about our practices, because they don’t know what I’m doing”
- Conclusion: missing (2-way) bridge between research and farmers !!

Framework of the meeting



Objectives of the meeting

- Answer 2 questions:
 - How to incorporate the accumulated scientific knowledge on what works and what doesn't into models to improve agricultural productivity?
 - How to design practical tools for decision-makers and planners to help farmers on the ground?
 - Implementation
 - Policy support
- Allow people working on the same topics to meet
- Foster research projects, collaboration and partnerships on these issues.

Expected outcomes

- Fill some of the gaps in the circle
 - What do we know? What do we need to know?
- Sense of who does what
- What are the main priorities?
 - applied research
 - policies
 - institution building
- Remaining gaps?
 - Who is best placed to cover them?
 - How to collaborate efficiently?

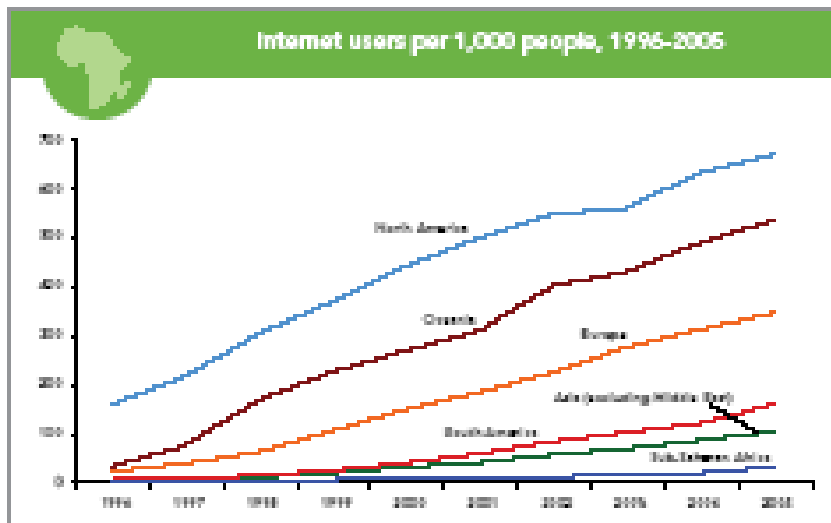
Thank you !

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UN-DESA, Division for Sustainable
Development

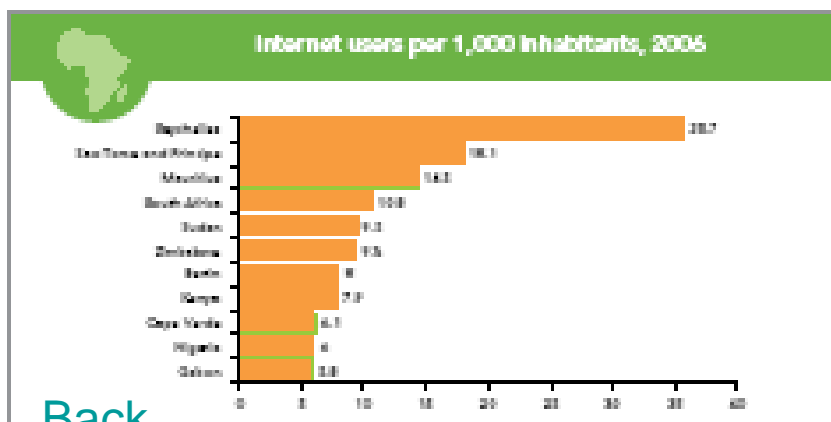
<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/index.html>



Source: ITU, 2007.

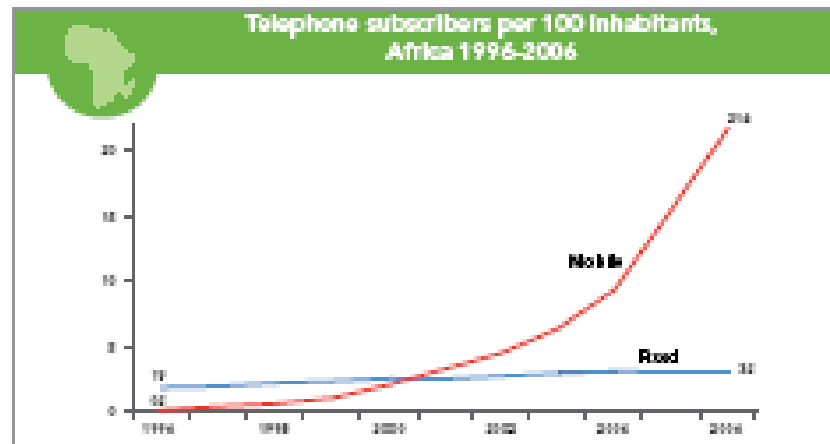
Access to information and communication technologies (ICT) is low but increasing rapidly.

In terms of access to ICT, sub-Saharan Africa has lagged behind the trends observed in other regions. Internet access rates are much lower in sub-Saharan Africa (1.3 subscriber per 1,000 people in 2006) than in Asia (4.8) and Oceania (29.3).²¹



Source: ITU, 2007.

[Back](#)



Source: ITU, 2007.

Mobile phones have taken off rapidly.

While telephone access is lower than in other parts of the world, with no countries registering more than 2 fixed telephone connections per 10 people, the landscape in ICT is changing quite rapidly in many countries, due to the extraordinarily fast uptake of mobile phones. The continent has the highest ratio of mobile to total telephone subscribers of any region and the highest mobile cellular growth rate. Growth over the past 5 years averaged around 50 per cent year on year. In Nigeria, the opening of the mobile market in 2001 has resulted in a massive increase in the number of subscribers, from 25,000 in 1999 to 32.3 million in 2006.²² With mobile phones are associated innovative services like remote banking and other financial services as well as Internet access. This development of mobile phones represents one promising opportunity for development, mainly by allowing development of new business models to reach poor communities more efficiently.

