

Global Environmental Change and Food Systems (GECAFS) 2001-11

Reflections on Stakeholder Engagement

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GECAFS Objective

“To determine strategies to cope with the impacts of GEC on food systems and to assess the environmental and socioeconomic consequences of adaptive responses aimed at improving food security.”

- ✓ Solution orientated targeting policy and management
- ✓ Maps onto stakeholder interests

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“Initial Questions”

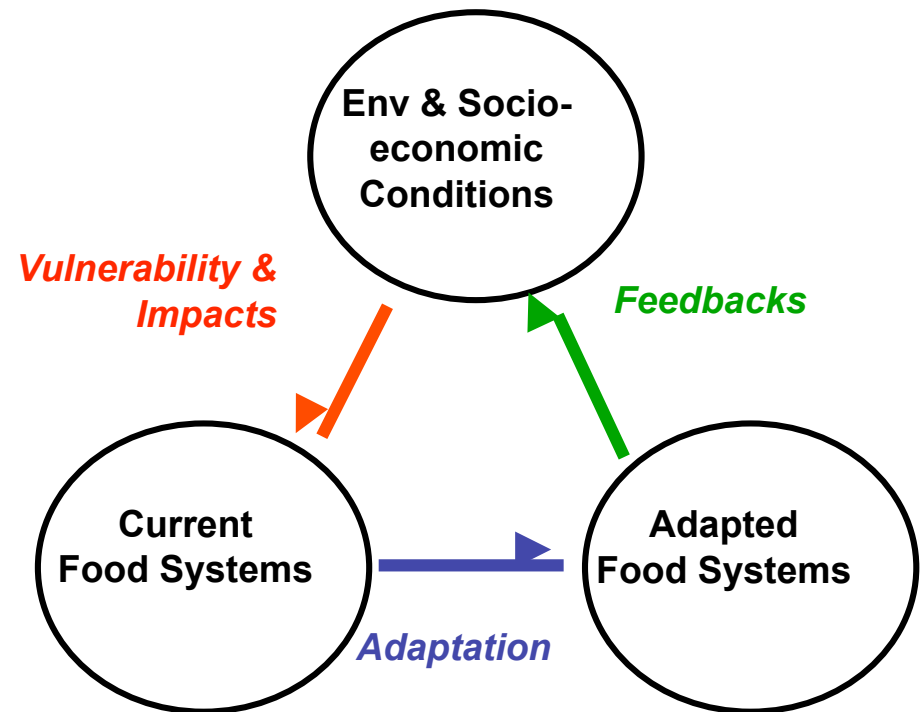
- How will GEC affect our ability to feed ourselves?
[impacts]
- What do we do about it?
[adaptation]
- What will be the consequences of different actions?
[feedbacks]

✓ Simple language welcomes broad community by avoiding disciplinary ‘spin’

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“Fundamental Questions”

- How will GEC affect the vulnerability of food systems in different regions?
- How might food systems be adapted to cope with GEC so as to enhance food security?
- What would be the consequences of adaptation options for environmental and socioeconomic conditions?



- ✓ Fundamental Qs provide frame for more detailed Qs suited to particular stakeholders' interests
- ✓ ID what stakeholders want to know, rather than what researchers have been doing

Formal, Strategic Stakeholder Partnerships from outset



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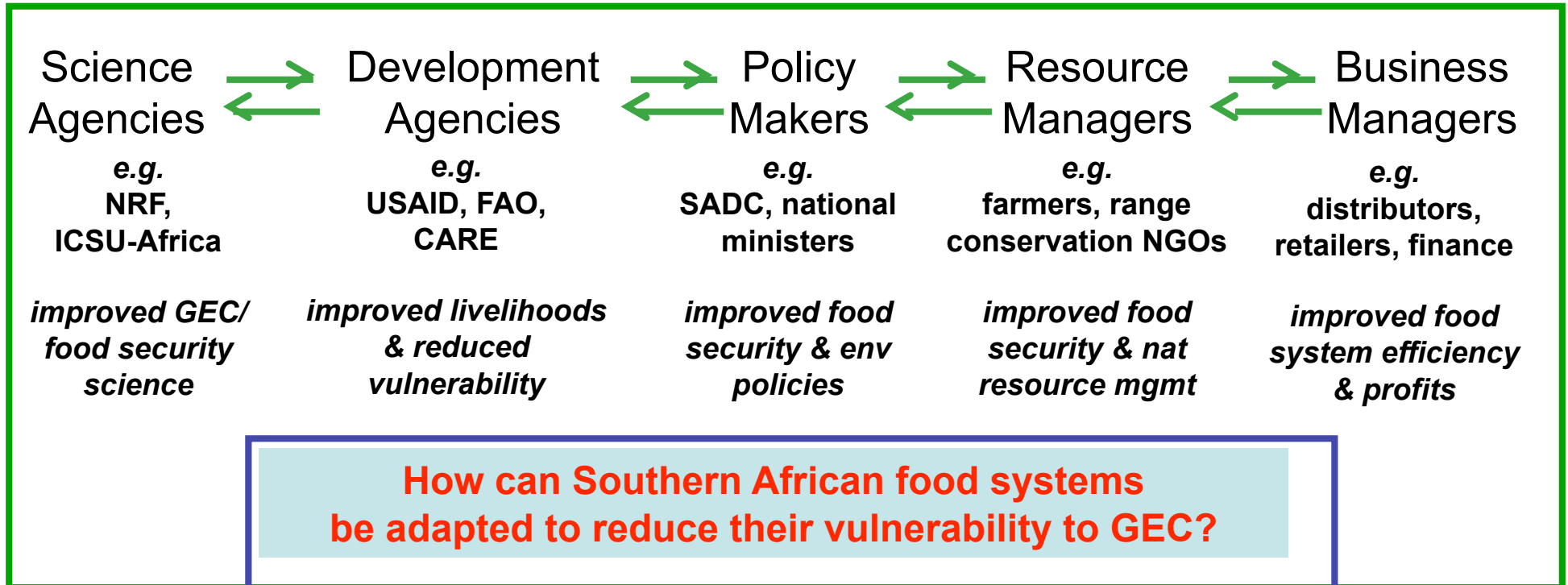


**MoUs with key
development partners:**



- ✓ Helped visibility on international stage
- ✓ Helped bridge science and development agendas
- ✓ Helped pave the way for uptake of results
- ✓ Fundamental inputs to early planning and throughout project

Who are the 'stakeholders'?



Science Questions

- ✓ Need to identify, and work with, the “clients”
- ✓ Workshops, informal 1-to-1 meetings, consultancies and reviews
- ✓ Participatory scenario exercises
- ✓ Needed ‘boundary organisation’ (FANRPAN) as key regional partner

Conceptual & Regional research planned and developed iteratively over time

I. Conceptual & methodological research on generic topics

- Food Systems Concepts
- Vulnerability Concepts
- Scenario Methods
- Decision Support Concepts

based on science and policy issues identified in regional discussions



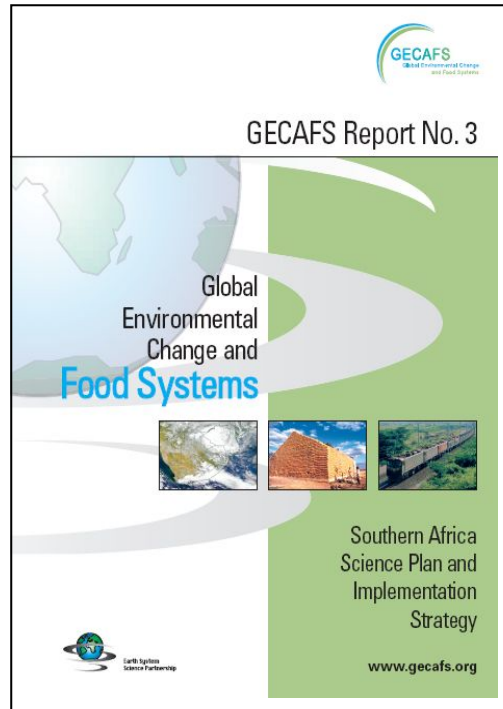
II. Policy-relevant research at regional-level on impacts, adaptation and feedbacks

- Indo-Gangetic Plain
- Caribbean
- Southern Africa
- Europe [ESF/COST]

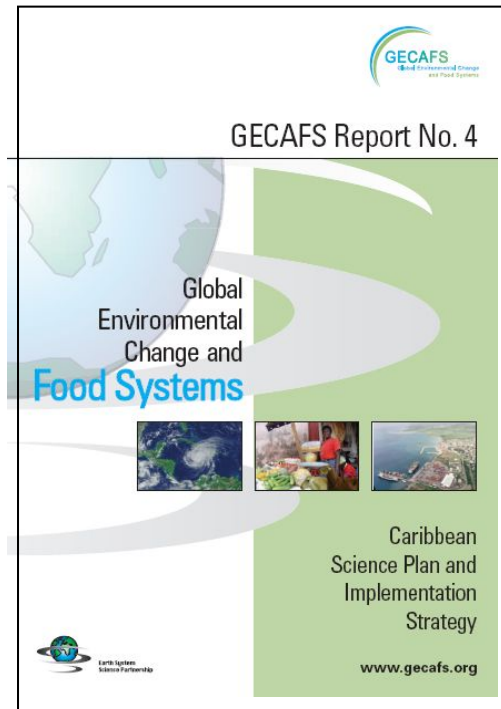
based on improved conceptual understanding and methods

- ✓ Both advanced science and addressed regional stakeholder interests
- ✓ Helped link international GEC science agenda with regional issues

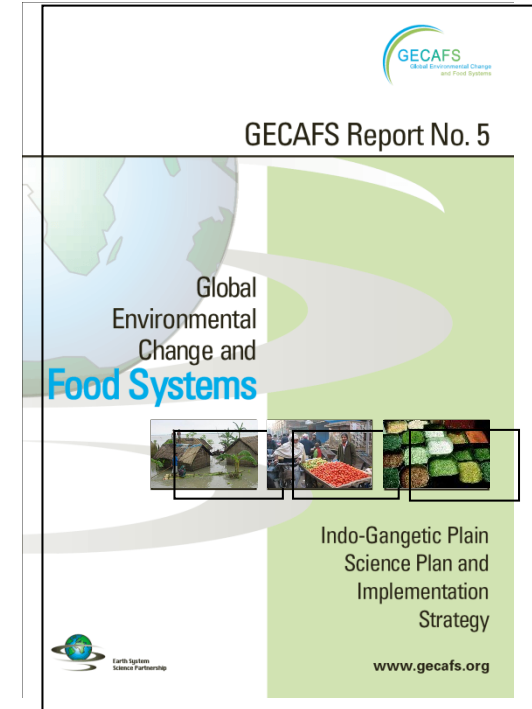
GECAFS Regional Science Plans & Implementation Strategies



Southern Africa



Caribbean

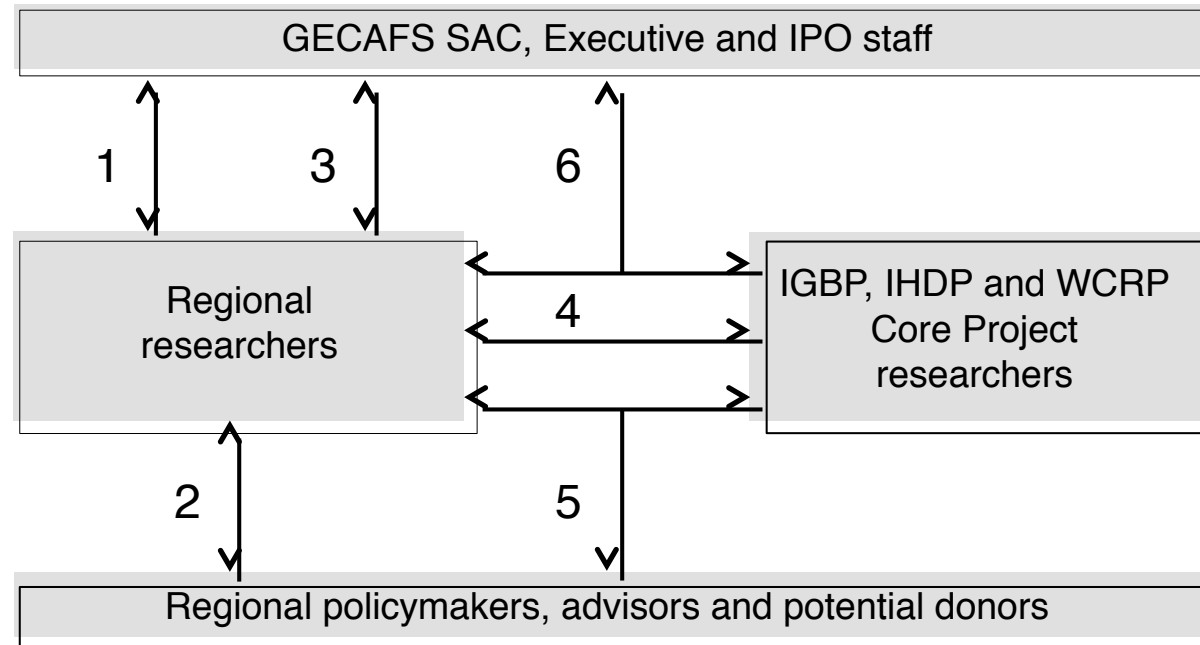


Indo-Gangetic Plain

- ✓ Plans had to be developed by the regional partners to ensure relevance
- ✓ Need to get Plans endorsed by key regional bodies
- ✓ “Implementation Strategy” of more interest to many stakeholders than “Science Plan”

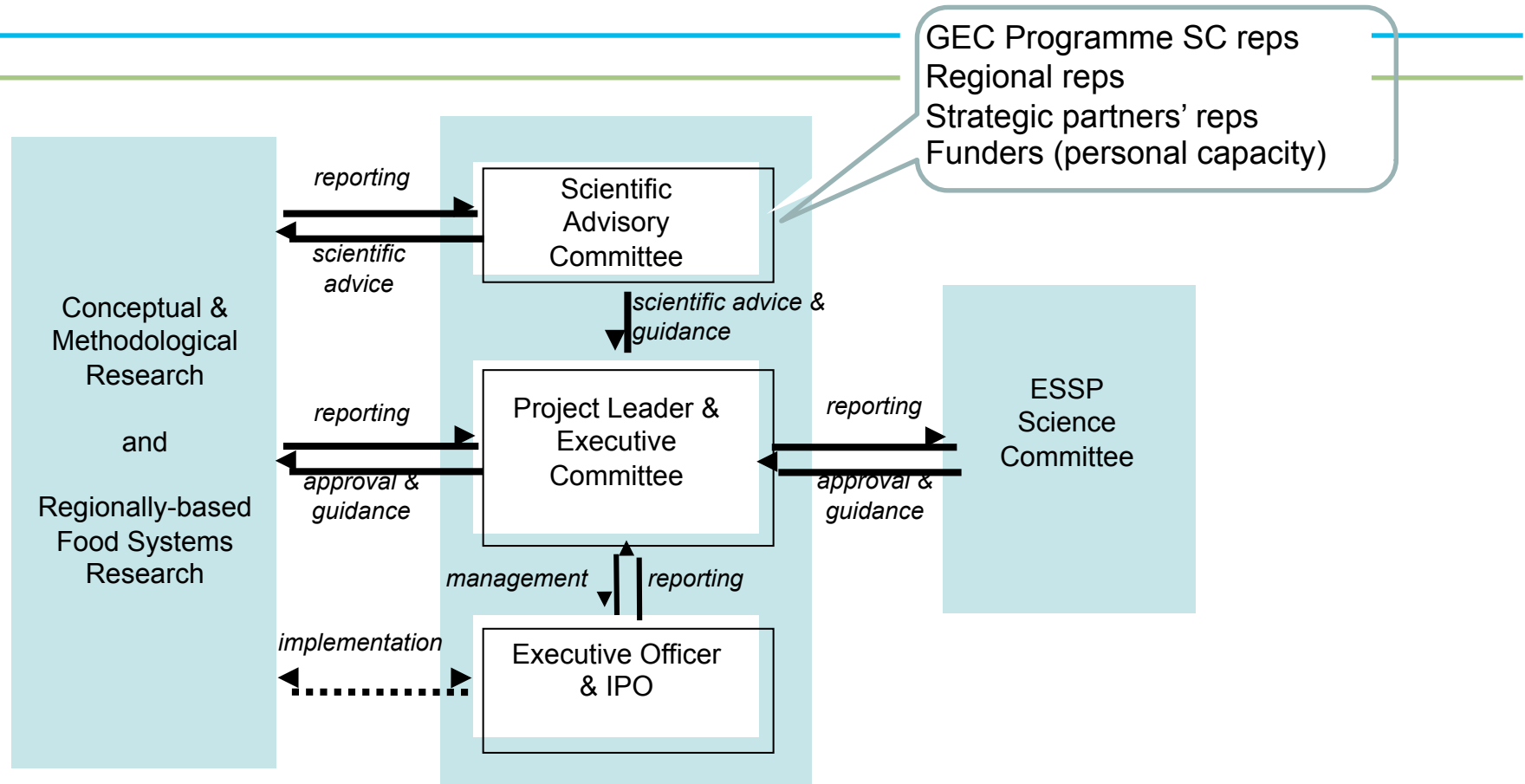
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Regional Project development



- ✓ Start with ascertaining regional information needs (1 & 2)
- ✓ Develop GEC science agenda in consultation with CPs and SAC (3 & 4)
- ✓ Reiterations with regional policy, donors and SAC (5 & 6)
- ✓ Regional ownership paramount => political buy-in ('clients')
- ✓ Don't assume CPs will/are able to engage

Embedded Stakeholders in Management



- ✓ SAC from wide range of stakeholders, not dominated by “GEC science”
- ✓ SAC advises and Exec/IPO implements: avoids SSC trying to do both

Stakeholder engagement should be an integral to both the conceptualization and the life of the project.

- ✓ articulates the outcomes sought by the different stakeholders at the project outset
- ✓ brings different actors towards a new understanding of the challenges and intervention options, and to identify innovative strategies to achieve them
- ✓ gives interested parties a tangible stake in the outcome
- ✓ provides a social support function that helps all stakeholders feel involved and heard by building social capital
- ✓ addresses the information needs of the intended beneficiaries

Challenges for Future Earth Stakeholder Engagement

1. New space, not directly aligned with any GEC Programme/
Core Project's stakeholder strategies
2. New agenda is 'trans-disciplinary' but needs to interact with/
build on disciplinary resource base *and* other stakeholders
(Mode 1 => Mode 2 research).
3. Requires science and development agencies to work
together more synergistically in ensuring stakeholder
engagement.

Challenges for Future Earth Stakeholder Engagement

4. Research on GEC and any ‘societal-level issue’ is highly complex and full of uncertainties; “high risk” investment by all stakeholders.

5. A ‘champion’ organisation to ‘host’ regional effort is required
 - ✓ needs a regional mandate
 - ✓ ability to lobby donors and other regional strategic stakeholders

Opportunities for Future Earth Stakeholder Engagement

- ✓ Promoting visionary, but attainable goals of interest to all stakeholders
- ✓ Enhancing policy/development/science collaboration
- ✓ Involving other stakeholders from earliest stages, especially private sector
- ✓ Scenarios exercises can help all stakeholders communicate, think about the future and understand the uncertainties