



Joint Meeting of GIAHS Steering and Scientific Committee
14-15 December 2015, Rome, Italy
FAO, German Room (C-269)

Agenda Item 2: Discussion of Guidelines on the Processes for the Designation and Certification of GIAHS (GIAHS/STSC/15/2 rev.1)

The Background Information on the need to elaborate “Draft Guidelines on the Processes for the Designation and Certification of GIAHS”

The Scientific Committee may recall that the suggestions have been raised in the previously held meetings that procedures and criteria must be discussed, revised and establish, as soon as possible to strengthen the scientific evaluation function in the GIAHS designation process. It can be conceivable, however, that much work needs to be done to completely make systematic and sophisticated technical protocols required for GIAHS site selection. Therefore, the most realistic approach would be to make a clear and concise guidance document, as the first step and a basis for future development, which specifies the roles to be played and the procedures to be followed by main actors in the GIAHS designation process.

It should be also noted that GIAHS status has changed from an initiative relying on voluntary contributions to a FAO programme as a result of the 39th FAO Conference decision to allocate regular budget to support GIAHS Secretariat. In this context, the inquiries raised by member countries in the recent FAO meetings as to the governance of GIAHS needs to be responded appropriately.

Given this background, the GIAHS Secretariat feels an urgent need to elaborate “Guidelines on the Processes for the Designation and Certification of Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS)”. The draft document is now proposed in the attachment of this background note. This proposal is made by incorporating the texts and materials which have been used operationally in the current GIAHS designation process and contains several paragraphs which can provide a basis for further elaboration of additional technical guidance.

There are two annexes attached to the main text, one is the GIAHS Proposal Template and the other is GIAHS designation criteria, which are drawn from the GIAHS website with slight modifications. The Secretariat would like to focus the discussion on the main text in the forthcoming Joint Meeting of Steering and Scientific Committees in December but comments are open to all texts including Annexes. In order to facilitate consensus making in the December meeting, pre-meeting discussion mechanisms will be established and start work as soon as possible.

The guidelines could be expected to provide clear guidance for all the bodies involved in GIAHS designation process and would be the basis for further development of technical protocols required for performing peer and rigorous scientific review of GIAHS sites.

Draft Guidelines on the Processes for the Designation and Certification of Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS)

1. Preparation and Submission of GIAHS proposals

- 1.1 A member country or other parties/stakeholders can consult at any time during the year with the GIAHS Secretariat to seek guidance on the procedures and ask for comments on the potential site(s) when developing the proposal for nomination.
- 1.2 A proposal to nominate GIAHS sites (GIAHS proposal) should be developed in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders including local communities in the site.
- 1.3 A member country can also seek opinions and views on the potential qualification of the potential site to the Scientific Advisory Group¹ (SAG) which can respond to this inquiry only when the site deem to have no possibility to be GIAHS².
- 1.4 GIAHS proposal should be submitted from a member country to GIAHS Secretariat through the appropriate ministry with all required information provided in the GIAHS Proposal Template (Annex 1) in accordance with the timetable as indicated in paragraph 6.
- 1.5 The GIAHS proposal must explain clearly unique and specific features of agricultural practices and systems that exhibit remarkable characteristics in the proposed site, i.e.;
 - i) Food and livelihood security;
 - ii) High levels of agricultural biodiversity and associated biodiversity features;
 - iii) Knowledge systems and adapted technologies;
 - iv) Agri-culture (cultures, value systems and social organizations);
 - v) Remarkable landscapes.
- 1.6 The GIAHS proposal must include an action plan for dynamic conservation of the nominated GIAHS site.

2 Acceptance of GIAHS Proposals

- 2.1 The GIAHS Secretariat reviews the proposal to verify that the proposal fulfils the requirements in paragraph 1. If it is not the case, GIAHS Secretariat can request the proposing country to revise its GIAHS proposal to comply with the requirements.
- 2.2 Once the proposal is acknowledged as complying with paragraph 1, the GIAHS Secretariat sends acknowledgement to the proposing country and forwards the proposal to the Scientific Advisory Committee for its evaluation.

¹ Scientific Advisory Group is a group of experts who have expertise to evaluate GIAHS site.

² Newly added on December 3.

3 Evaluation by the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC)

- 3.1 The SAC can conduct a preliminary consultation with member countries as is stipulated in 1.3³.
- 3.2 The SAC reviews the GIAHS proposals and provides scientific advice to the Steering Committee (SC) and GIAHS Secretariat based on GIAHS selection criteria (Annex 2) in the form of an evaluation report.
- 3.3 The evaluation report should be made taking into account the outcomes of the field visit as described in 3.3.
- 3.4 Field visit should be conducted by the expert(s) selected from or entrusted by the SAC to evaluate the proposed site.
- 3.5 Where necessary, the SAC may require additional information to a member country, GIAHS Secretariat or other relevant sources to clarify substantial points in the proposal document.
- 3.6 The SAC provides advice and its assessment to the Secretariat and can invite a physical/electronic meeting when necessary to facilitate evaluation process.
- 3.7 The SAC can make the following three types of recommendations as to the final decision: i) the proposed site should be designated as GIAHS site, ii) more information is required for the future consideration, iii) the site does not fulfil the criteria for designation.
- 3.8 The SAC can adopt and amend its own rule of procedures, the detailed arrangement for field visit, the format of evaluation report and specific methodology for evaluation and other rules as required which are to be attached to the guidelines as Annex.

4 Designation of GIAHS sites

- 4.1 The Steering Committee (SC) reviews the evaluation report submitted by the SAC and makes its decisions on GIAHS designation. The decision for designation should be based on the GIAHS selection criteria as provided for in paragraph 3.1.

5 Certification and Registration

- 5.1 The formal designation of a GIAHS site shall be officially recognised/confirmed by the award of a designation certificate, issued by the FAO Director-General, certifying the site as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System for present and future generations.
- 5.2 The designation shall also be recorded in the GIAHS Registry and published on the GIAHS website maintained by the Secretariat.

³ Newly added on December 3.

6 Timetable

6.1 Timetable of an annual cycle of the calendar year, from submission of GIAHS proposals to the final designation of GIAHS sites, would be as follows.

- By January 31: GIAHS proposals must be submitted to FAO.
- By the end of February: GIAHS proposals are sent to the SAC for scientific review.
- By September 30: The SAC makes an evaluation report taking into account of the field visit conducted during this period.
- By October 15: The evaluation report made by the SAC is distributed through GIAHS Secretariat to Steering Committee members for their consideration.
- December: SC designates new GIAHS sites in Joint Meeting of SC and SAG.

7 Monitoring and Evaluation

7.1 Member countries whose proposed GIAHS site is approved should monitor and evaluate progress of implementation of the action plans for dynamic conservation of the GIAHS sites. They also should make a periodic report to GIAHS Secretariat on the outcomes of the monitoring and evaluation.

7.2 The guidelines for monitoring and evaluation should be established by the SAC taking into account the capacity and feasibility in developing countries.

7.3 The results of periodic monitoring and evaluation will be provided to the SC and SAC.

8 Final clauses

8.1 Amendments to the guidelines including the Annexes should be made by the SAC to the SC for consideration and final endorsement.

SUMMARY INFORMATION

Name/Title of the Agricultural Heritage System:**Requesting Agency/Organization:**

Endorsing Ministry (for the Government):

Location of the site:
*please annex maps and geographical coordinates of the site

Accessibility of the site to capital city or major cities:

Approximate Surface Area:

Agro-Ecological Zone/s:

Topographic features:

Climate Type:

Approximate Population (Beneficiary):

Ethnicity/Indigenous population:

Main Source of Livelihoods:

Summary Information of the Agricultural Heritage System (about 200-300 words) :

DESCRIPTION OF THE AGRICULTURE HERITAGE SYSTEM

I. Characteristics of the proposed GIAHS

Global (or national) importance

Global (or national) importance is a composite criterion, under which the overall value is established of a traditional/historic agricultural system, represented by a particular site, as a heritage of human kind (or a country). The site aggregates overall Global (or National/Local) “Public Goods” values encompassed under the five criteria. By combining the five criteria in complex relationships, the *positive connectivity* and *linkages* between the system’s elements are integrated as a holistic system.

The description furnishes information on the global importance of the individual characteristics of the system/site, with its intrinsic resilience and capacity to strike a social-environmental balance and by its historic and contemporary relevance for human development. The description highlights why the site is a unique or outstanding example of the agricultural system it represents and serves as a living, dynamic testimonial to an agricultural tradition in comparison with similar systems and sites.

1. Food and livelihood security

The proposed agriculture system should contribute to food and livelihood security of local communities (often indigenous), representing the majority of their livelihood. This includes provisioning and exchange among local communities to create a relatively stable and resilient food and livelihood system.

2. Biodiversity and ecosystem functions associated with agricultural systems

The description is given of the agricultural biodiversity and genetic resources (species, varieties and breeds), as well as other biodiversity such as wild relatives, pollinators and wildlife associated with the agricultural system and landscape. The system/site should be endowed with globally (or nationally) significant biodiversity and genetic resources for food and agriculture (e.g. endemic, rare, endangered species of crops and animals).

3. Knowledge systems and adapted technologies

The site maintains invaluable knowledge, ingenious technology and management systems of natural resources, including biota, land, water; and social organisations and institutions, including customary institutions for agro-ecological management, normative arrangements for resource access and benefit sharing, etc.

4. Cultures, value systems and social organisations (Agri-Culture)

The system has a cosmo-vision, value systems and agri-cultural practices associated with the environment and agricultural calendar; festivities and rituals function as knowledge transfer. Local institutions play a critical role in balancing environmental and socio-economic objectives, in creating resilience and in the reproduction of all elements and processes critical to the functioning of the agricultural system. Some may ensure conservation of and promote equity in the use and access to natural resources; some transmit traditional knowledge systems and critical values that promote custodianship of biodiversity, land and water; some facilitate planning, cooperation and innovation/adaptation. Such institutions may take the form of: ceremonial and religious beliefs and practices, including taboos, ceremonies and festivities; customary law and

conflict resolution, including on resource tenure; kinship, marriage and inheritance systems; forms of leadership, decision-making and cooperation; of oral and written traditions; games and other forms of education and instruction; division of roles and distribution of labour, including gender roles and specialized functions; etc (intangibles).

5. Remarkable landscapes, land and water resources management features

The system exemplifies landscape features resulting from human management, that provide particularly ingenious or practical solutions to environmental or social constraints, such as land use mosaics, irrigation/water management systems, terraces, particular ecosystem adaptive architecture. These might provide for resource conservation/efficiency or provide habitats for valued biodiversity, recreational values, and collective or non-commercial valuable uses (aesthetic, artistic, educational, spiritual, and/or scientific values of ecosystems).

II. Other social and cultural characteristics pertinent to the management of the agricultural system (optional)

- Relevant physical structures: these values might have particular social or ecological functions in the management of the site. They might include environmentally sustainable and resource efficient housing; architecture of ceremonial/social significance to the management of the agricultural system or with particular functions such as seed storage, stables or others (tangible/intangible)
- Sacred/ceremonial sites (tangible/intangible)
- Tools and technologies (material culture – tangible/intangible)
- Associated forms of cultural values (intangible)

III. Historic relevance

The contribution of the agricultural system/site to the domestication and development of agricultural biodiversity, the creation of valuable landscapes, the development of agricultural knowledge and technologies over generations, and to human, social and cultural development in general, constitutes its historic relevance. Additionally, the historic relevance is determined by whether the system/site has remained sustainable and has shown its resilience in the face of environmental and socio-economic changes over time.

IV. Contemporary relevance

The systems'/sites' contemporary relevance is established by its present and future capacity to provide food and livelihood security, to contribute to human well-being and quality of life, and to generate other local, national and global economic and environmental goods and services to its community and wider society. This criterion therefore relates to the relevance of an agricultural system/site to global or national policy and sustainable development challenges, most prominently achieving food security, human well-being and environmental goals, such as climate adaptation, carbon sequestration, water, land and biodiversity conservation. Under this criterion one should highlight particular lessons learnt or principles that can be derived from the system/site, which might be applied elsewhere.

V. Threats and challenges

Identify and analyse threats and challenges, including social-economic pressures and environmental changes to the continued existence of the system and/or to its sustainability and viability. Identify and analyse the local, national and/or global nature of these threats, paying particular attention to occurrences and trends of economic, social, environmental or political nature. Illustrate the changes

in the human and ecological dynamics of the system and their effects on ecosystem health, resource endowments and human well-being.

VI. Practical considerations

Identify and analyse; a) potentials and opportunities for sustainability and management of GIAHS and b) expected impacts of GIAHS on society and ecology as a basis for establishment of the effective action plan.

VII. Action Plan for Dynamic Conservation

An Action Plan for dynamic conservation of the proposed GIHAS site should be made. The recommended items to be included in the Action Plan would be detailed description of the policies, activities and measures which are already under implementation and/or will be implemented in the area by various relevant stakeholders to promote dynamic conservation of GIAHS with the following supplementary information:

- How these policies, activities, and measures will respond to the threats as described in this proposal
- How policies, activities, and measures of these activities can be used to leverage funding or attract national funding (and international donors, in the case of developing countries)
- Institutional involvement and embeddedness (support and involvement of institutions that carry responsibility or are otherwise involved in this initiative, at local, regional and national levels)
- How monitoring and evaluation of implementation and the effect of the Action Plan should be described.

SUGGESTED ANNEXES:

- Location map of the system/site
- Lists of agricultural biodiversity and associated biodiversity
- Historical and archaeological description of the system or site, as appropriate

Annex 2: GIAHS Selection Criteria

▪ Characteristics of the proposed GIAHS should include global (or national) importance.

Global (or national) importance is a composite criterion, under which the overall value is established of a traditional/historic agricultural system, represented by a particular site, as a heritage of human kind (or a country). It synthesises its overall Global (or National/local) “Public Good” value described under the five subsequent criteria. By summing up/combining the five criteria the complex relationships, and *positive connectivity* and linkages between the system’ elements are integrated as a holistic system.

A summary information of the global importance of the individual characteristics of the system/site, with its intrinsic resilience and capacity to strike a social-environmental balance, by its historic and contemporary relevance for human development and by whether the site is a unique or outstanding example of the agricultural system it represents and a testimonial to an agricultural tradition in comparison with similar systems and sites.

▪ Five Principal Criteria

The outstanding (or unique) features of the system should be summarized in terms of their relevance to global concerns addressing sustainable development and ecosystems management and their *cultural* and *agricultural heritage* value. The Five Principal Criteria for the selection of the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS) represents the totality of the functionalities, goods and services provided by the system. These criteria are, as follows:

1. Food and livelihood security

The proposed agriculture system should contribute to food and livelihood security of local communities (often indigenous), representing the majority of their livelihood provisions. This includes provisioning and exchange among local communities to create a relatively stable and resilient food and livelihood system.

2. Biodiversity and ecosystem function

Agricultural biodiversity and genetic resources (species, varieties & breeds), as well as other biodiversity such as wild relatives, pollinators and wildlife associated with the agricultural system and landscape. The system/ site should be endowed with globally (or nationally) significant biodiversity and genetic resources for food and agriculture (e.g. endemic, rare, endangered species of crops and animals).

3. Knowledge systems and adapted technologies

Maintain invaluable knowledge, ingenious technology and management systems of natural resources, including biota, land, water; and social organisations and institutions, including customary institutions for agro-ecological management, normative arrangements for resource access and benefit sharing, etc.

4. Cultures, value systems and social organisations (Agri-Culture)

Cosmo-vision, value systems and agri-cultural practices associated with environment and agricultural calendar; festivities and rituals as knowledge transfer. Local institutions play a critical role in balancing environmental and socio-economic objectives, in creating resilience and in the reproduction of all elements and processes critical to the functioning of the agricultural system. Some may ensure conservation of and promote equity in the use and access to natural resources; some transmit traditional knowledge systems and critical values

that promote custodianship of biodiversity, land and water; some facilitate planning, cooperation and innovation/adaptation. Such institutions may take the form of ceremonial and religious beliefs and practices, including taboos, ceremonies and festivities; of customary law and conflict resolution, including on resource tenure; of kinship, marriage and inheritance systems; of forms of leadership, decision-making and cooperation; of oral and written traditions; of games and other forms of education and instruction; of division of roles and distribution of labour, including gender roles and specialized functions; etc (intangibles).

5. Remarkable landscapes, land and water resources management features

Landscape features resulting from human management, that provide particularly ingenious or practical solutions to environmental or social constraints, such as land use mosaics, irrigation/water management systems, terraces, particular ecosystem adaptive architecture, which might provide for resource conservation/efficiency or provide habitats for valued biodiversity, recreational values collective or non-commercial valuable uses (aesthetic, artistic, educational, spiritual, and/or scientific values of ecosystems).

▪ Other Criteria

1. Other *environmental, economic, social and cultural* characteristics pertinent to the management of the agricultural system (optional)

Other goods and services generated by the system (incl. ecosystems services, climate adaptation and other environmental benefits of global importance or specific features such as archeological/historic value or contribution to political stability).

For each element a range of sub-criteria will be developed. For instance, indicators can be developed for biodiversity on genetic, intra- and inter- species, and endemic diversity; for inter-species dynamics; for ecosystem-diversity and integration; as well as, for the taxonomic groups or systemic categories: plant, animal, microbial and ecosystem. Also, knowledge and cultural heritage endowments will be spelled out more concretely by creating specific categories, with indicators to match. The future development of detailed indicators is considered necessary on these characteristics. A proposed sixth category of the criterion has been added to allow for the description of specific additional benefits that may be of global importance.

Indicators for this criterion include:

- **Benefits Maximisation:** Maximise economic, social, livelihood and environmental benefits.
- **Social Cohesion and cultural expression:** Promote social cohesion, solidarity and sense of belonging and identity, culinary culture, festivities, art and music, etc.
- **Resource endowments and knowledge systems:** Possess remarkable natural resource endowments (especially biodiversity) and intrinsic knowledge systems of global benefit.
- **Social and Cultural Diversity:** Represent diverse social and cultural, institutional and economic approaches to management.
- **Public Goods:** Provide global public goods and heritage which needed economic valuation.
- **Traditional Knowledge:** Maintain invaluable knowledge and technology about landscapes, genetic resources, human cultures, and social organisation and institutions.
- **Relation to the land:** everyday as well as associative values of the landscape and agro-ecosystem for peoples' collective and individual survival and livelihood, their identity and spiritual, religious, philosophical life, and the artistic expressions thereof.

2. Historic relevance

The contribution of the agricultural system/site to the domestication and development of agricultural biodiversity, the creation of valuable landscapes, the development of agricultural knowledge and technologies over generations, and to human, social and cultural development in general, constitutes its historic relevance. Additionally, the historic relevance is determined by whether the system/site has remained sustainable and has shown its resilience in the face of environmental and socio-economic changes over time.

3. Contemporary relevance

The system's/site's contemporary relevance is established by its present and future capacity to provide food and livelihood security, to contribute to human well-being and quality of life, and to generate other local, national and global economic and environmental goods and services to its community and wider society. This criterion therefore relates to the relevance of an agricultural system/site to global or national policy and sustainable development challenges, most prominently achieving food security, human well-being and environmental goals, such as climate adaptation, carbon sequestration, water, land and biodiversity conservation. Under this criterion one should highlight particular lessons learnt or principles that can be derived from the system/site, which might be applied elsewhere.