

# VITAL SIGNS

## Vital Signs Ethiopia Stakeholders Workshop

Radisson Blu Hotel, Addis Ababa

25 February 2013

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Report

The Vital Signs monitoring system was launched in 2012 with a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Vital Signs provides decision-makers with integrated information on agriculture, ecosystem services and human well-being, and monitors changes in vital ecosystem services upon which agricultural production and farmers' livelihoods depend.

The monitoring system is initially launching in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Ghana. In Addis Ababa on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013, Vital Signs held a stakeholders workshop for Ethiopia.

### Workshop objectives:

- Present the goals and design of the monitoring system and engage with Ethiopian stakeholders, beneficiaries and potential Vital Signs partners;
- Receive stakeholders' input on data and decision support needs;
- Learn about existing monitoring efforts in Ethiopia; and
- Gather information on potential geographies for monitoring efforts in Ethiopia.

The workshop was organized with assistance from **H.E. Ato Sileshi Getahun**, State Minister for Natural Resources, and **Ato Tigistu Gebremeskel**, Director of the Rural Land Administration & Use Directorate. The meeting was led by **Dr. Sandy Andelman**, Executive Director, Vital Signs (Conservation International), **Dr. Cheryl Palm**, Deputy Director, Vital Signs (Earth Institute, Columbia University) and **Dr. Bob Scholes**, Deputy Director, Vital Signs (CSIR, South Africa). Vital Signs Coordinator Sara Barbour and Postdoctoral Research Scholar Dr. Mark Musumba also attended as part of the Vital Signs team.

### Participants:

Yoseph	Ayalew	Sustainable Land Use Forum (SLUF)
Tsegaye	Bekele	Wondo Genet College
Wondimu	Chirfa	Population Health Education (PHE)

Gemedo	Dalle	Institute of Biodiversity Conservation
Belay	Demisse	International Water Management Institute (IWMI)
Woldeyohanes	Fantu	Forest Research Center, Ethiopian Institute of Agriculture (Forestry)
Tigistu	Gebreemeskel	Ministry of Agriculture
Karen	Laurenson	Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA), Frankfurt Zoological Society
Sultan	Mohammed	Ethiopian Mapping Agency (EMA)
Betru	Nedessa	MERET Program, Ministry of Agriculture
Kristen	Stelljes	David and Lucile Packard Foundation
Zelalem	Tefera	Frankfurt Zoological Society
Negash	Teklu	Population Health Education (PHE)
Zewditu	Tessema	Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society (EWNHS)
Biratu	Yigezu	Central Statistical Agency (CSA)
Gete	Zelege	Land and Water Center (WLRC)

**Invited, not attending:**

Girma	Amente	Haramaya University
Mezgebu	Amha	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
Solomon	Assefa	Ethiopian Agriculture Research Institute
Mr. Ewnetu	Blata	Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority
Sam	Gameda	Agricultural Transformation Agency
Nigist	Haile	Agricultural Transformation Agency

Tekalign	Mamo	Ministry of Agriculture
Dessalegn	Mesfin	Environmental Protection Agency
Leonard	Oruko	Agricultural Transformation Agency
Samuel	Seyoum	Plan and Programming Directorate – Ministry of Agriculture
Haddis	Tadesse	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Tefera	Tadesse	Natural Resource Management Directorate – Ministry of Agriculture
Alemayehu	Tsadik	Central Statistical Agency
Tsegay	Wolde-Georgis	Agricultural Transformation Agency
Samia	Zekaria	Central Statistical Agency

#### **Introductions:**

**H.E. Ato Mitiku Kassa**, State Minister for Disaster Risk Management and Food Security, Ministry of Agriculture, delivered the opening remarks for the meeting. He emphasized the following points:

- Vital Signs addresses Ethiopia’s need for integrated information, and the Ministry of Agriculture expresses appreciation for this effort.
- Ethiopia is an agrarian country, and its fast-increasing population is putting pressure on natural resources.
- The Government is committed to a climate resilient economy, and has taken steps to address sustainability like the Climate Resilient Green Economy strategy.
- Vital Signs can support Ethiopia by providing policy makers with indicators of sustainability for a green economy, and the Ministry of Agriculture is happy to have these indicators aligned with national indicators already in place.
- The Ministry looks forward to a strategic plan for the monitoring system in Ethiopia, and welcomes participants’ recommendations to achieve this and further enable sustainability.

**Dr. Sandy Andelman** gave the introductory presentation of Vital Signs, after which the following questions for discussion were introduced:

- How are decisions pertaining to agricultural sustainability in Ethiopia currently made, what information is used to inform agricultural development and conservation policies, and what information is needed but is currently lacking?
- What institutions currently collect the relevant data that would feed into Vital Signs indicators and decision support threads?
- Where in Ethiopia should Vital Signs begin working?

Key issues brought up by participants in the course of the discussion confirmed that:

- One challenge in Ethiopia is data sharing and communication: there are agencies responsible for collecting different types of data, but it is often difficult to link between these agencies.
- There is a need for quantitative baseline data, and, as a first step, Vital Signs can contribute by compiling this baseline.
- A project like this needs multisector participation, including government agencies, NGOs and universities; a multisectoral committee would provide a mechanism for ensuring that Vital Signs information feeds into policy making to support the CRGE.
- One key advantage of a multisectoral approach is that it promotes coordination, communication, integration and data sharing among ministries and sectors.

### **Major areas of consensus:**

#### ***Information gaps***

- There is inadequate quantitative data in several areas:
  - Soils
  - Land use systems (e.g. percent forest cover)
  - Water availability
  - Climate variability, especially at landscape levels
  - Land degradation hotspots
  - Farming systems
  - Biodiversity and wildlife
  - Social empowerment
  - Social equity
- Better decision-making tools are needed to measure the impact of interventions; for example, in land rehabilitation programs changes may be visible on the ground, but there are insufficient quantitative data and tools to measure the effectiveness of these efforts.
- Environmental data that makes linkages between wildlife indicators, ecosystem integrity and land degradation are needed.

#### ***Where should Vital Signs work in Ethiopia?***

- Watersheds are a key organizational framework for both policy and management in Ethiopia, so Vital Signs needs to operate within watersheds.
- The highlands (Afromontane) has high population density and is targeted for agricultural intensification.
- Lowlands are also important.
- Ideally choose an area that includes highlands, midlands and lowlands to enable inference about the country's key areas for development.

### ***Stakeholders***

- Key agencies and ministries not present, that should be consulted:
  - Agricultural Transformation Agency (ATA)
  - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
  - Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED)
  - Ministry of Water
  - National Meteorology Agency

### ***Data Sources***

- To further identify data sources, and to ensure that Vital Signs builds on and is complimentary to existing data collection activities, Vital Signs will circulate the set of metrics and indicators presented during the meeting to the workshop participants, who will provide information about which institutions are collecting data relevant to each indicator.

### **Expressions of support:**

The participants were unanimous that this initiative presents an important opportunity for providing quantitative data in support of the Climate Resilient Green Economy and for enhancing monitoring capacity in the country.