Fertilizer Association of Malawi

Climate Change Policy

Introduction

Climate change poses an immense challenge for African agriculture because it can disrupt food availability, reduce access to food, and affect food quality. The majority of the crops that form the foundation of African diets, such as maize, sorghum and millet would struggle to survive rising temperatures. With just an increase of 2ºC, yields across Sub-Saharan Africa would fall by as much as 10%. Over time, the cropping areas for these crops would become unsuitable and this would severely affect Africa's food security.

Climate Change **Impact on Malawi**

Given that Malawi is predominantly agro-based and largely rain-dependent, it is very vulnerable to climate change. Since the 1970s, the agricultural sector in Malawi has increasingly experienced extreme weather conditions such as droughts, prolonged dry spells, intense rainfall and floods resulting in acute crop failure, hunger, malnutrition, loss of human life and property. Undoubtedly, agriculture suffers the greatest losses and the ensuing food shortages leave many Malawians food insecure. Climate shocks therefore have a potentially profound direct effect on the agriculture sector, while indirectly affecting other economic sectors and non-farm households through price, production and supply distortion.

Having recognized the increasing impact of climate change, Malawi published the National Climate Change Management Policy (NCCMP) in 2016 and it seeks to ***"promote climate change adaptation, mitigation, technology development and transfer and capacity building for sustainable livelihoods through green economy measures for Malawi".***

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Given that fertilizer forms a key component of the agricultural industry, The Fertilizer Association of Malawi (FAM) has recognized the need to have a Climate change policy that encourages fertilizer producers, suppliers and retailers under FAM to contribute to the mitigation of climate change. This is especially important in the context of limited land resources and a growing population which will have an increasing demand for food that cannot be satisfied without the efficient use of fertilizers.

***Policy Goal:** Promote the adoption of sustainable best practices in the production, distribution and use of fertilizer that contribute to the mitigation of climate change by increasing soil health, reducing pollution and reducing harm to the environment.*

This policy is guided by the NCCMP (2016), The National Fertilizer Policy (2021) and the International Fertilizer Association (IFA) Sustainability principles which include Climate Change mitigation.

Core Principles

FAM fully endorses the concept of Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA), as defined by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO):
"Agriculture that sustainably increases productivity, enhances resilience, reduces/ removes greenhouse gas emissions where possible, and enhances achievement of national food security and development goals".

FAM intends to promote and support the climate-smart principles below:

01

The 4R Global Framework

The 4R approach entails using the Right Nutrient Source, at the Right Rate, at the Right Time, in the Right Place. The correct and balanced use of plant nutrients is a core component of Climate-Smart Agriculture. Correct fertilization also helps to boost the resilience of crops and therefore plays an important role in climate change adaptation.

02

Soil Health Management

The integration of organic and inorganic sources of nutrients should be seen in the context of overall crop production. This integration entails, among others, starting with on-farm organic sources of nutrients and then supplementing them with manufactured fertilizers. This leads to maximum carbon sequestration from the air into soil organic matter which improves soil health and will subsequently increase yields in a sustainable way.

03

The Development and Adoption of Soil-Specific and Crop-Specific Fertilizers

Soil and crop specific fertilizer products developed through agronomic research will enable farmers to maximize economic and environmental benefits. The nutrients are tailored to address soil deficiencies and the specific needs of the crops which maximizes the efficiency of the fertilizer while the losses and negative environmental effects of over/under or misuse of fertilizers are minimized.

04

The research into & development of climate-smart fertilizer products/solutions

FAM aims to be actively involved in supporting and promoting the development of climate-smart fertilizer products/solutions. This includes being present at relevant knowledge sharing events such as workshops/conferences etc., disseminating information about climate-smart fertilizer products/ solutions to FAM members, industry stakeholders and the public, and assisting research bodies with information or resources in relevant research efforts.

05

The use of climate friendly fertilizer production processes

FAM aims to be actively involved in supporting and promoting fertilizer production processes that are climate and eco-friendly. This includes being present at relevant knowledge sharing events such as workshops/conferences etc., disseminating information about “green” production processes to FAM members, industry stakeholders and the public, and assisting research bodies with information or resources in relevant research efforts.

06

The use of high-quality climate resistant seeds in crop production

It is well known that inorganic fertilizer plays an important role in the increase of crop yields, however, the quality of a crop is dependent on the quality of seed planted. Therefore, if farmers continue to use poor quality low yielding seeds that are vulnerable to climate shocks, all the invested time, labor, and finances go to waste whenever climatic shifts happen. Climate resilient seeds are seeds which can withstand extreme climatic conditions brought about by climate change. These can be drought resilient seeds, flood resilient seeds and disease and pest resistant seeds. When the climate resilient seeds are used with the correct fertilizer products, it ensures unnecessary yield losses are avoided.

07

The adoption of climate-smart and eco-friendly technologies along the fertilizer supply chain

FAM aims to encourage FAM members to adopt various climate-smart technologies along the fertilizer supply chain that may or may not directly correlate to the production, distribution and use of fertilizer, but would also contribute to climate-change mitigation. Examples of this could include installing a solar power source for offices or reducing environmental pollution by selling fertilizer in recyclable bags.

FAM will focus the 7 principles outlined above in order to ensure the local fertilizer industry plays its role in the mitigation of the negative impact that climate change has had and continues to have on Malawi's agricultural sector.

The Fertilizer Association of Malawi
Feeding the soil, feeding Malawi

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