WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM THE CLIMATE CHANGE M&E SYSTEM OF AFOLU?

The information that shall be available from the climate change M&E system of AFOLU will benefit:

(a) Government departments that have the responsibility to craft land management policies, climate change responses and/or actions that support climate change resilience of communities and also affect GHG emissions from managed lands;

(b) Provinces and metros that are implementing climate change responses and/or actions that support climate change resilience of communities and also affect GHG emissions from managed lands;

(c) Research institutions and state agencies that have an impact in the AFOLU sector;

(d) Agricultural farmers, subsistence and commercial tree growers;

(e) Civil society organisations that have interests in the socio-economic co-benefits of the AFOLU sector.

a) Support the on-going GHG inventory improvement programme;

b) Provide a platform for effective communication with stakeholders, including through co-coordinating and profiling of climate change responses in the AFOLU sector;

c) Mandate mapping of key role players/stakeholders;

d) Identification of indicators to be monitored by the Climate Change M&E system of AFOLU.
RATIONALE FOR THE M&E SYSTEM OF AFOLU IN SOUTH AFRICA

CONTEXT

The mandate for the development of a national Climate Change Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system is outlined in Sections 6.1 and 12, of the National Climate Change Response Policy (NCCRP). The work on the climate change M&E system of the AFOLU sector is a component of the development of the national climate change M&E system whose overarching objective is to track and document South Africa’s transition to a lower carbon economy and climate resilient society, consistent with the global efforts of stabilising atmospheric greenhouse gas emissions whilst realising competitive socio-economic growth and development. Alongside this overarching objective, there are three key cross-cutting objectives of:

- ensuring communication and learning;
- tracking the needs, flows and impacts of national and international climate finance support to mitigation and adaptation activities;
- develop, monitor, report and verify key indicators for the AFOLU sector, as well as the communication of the deliverables.

VISION AND MISSION OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE M&E SYSTEM OF AFOLU

In order to meet the needs for the M&E system of AFOLU in South Africa, the following vision and mission statements for this work are.

Vision: To establish a comprehensive, credible and expanding evidence base of anthropogenic, natural and climate change impacts on sinks and sources of GHG emissions on land.

Mission: To support capacity building (human and institutional), enhance co-ordination, and effective communication of climate change/climate change related responses across managed lands of South Africa.

WHY DOES SOUTH AFRICA NEED AN M&E SYSTEM OF AFOLU?

It is acknowledged that there are country-specific needs and challenges such as the land restitution, and actions in the AFOLU sector that could change the dynamics of sinks and sources of greenhouse gases (GHGs), whilst addressing conflicts in the food-feed-fibre-fuel discourse. Some of those actions could influence the design and implementation of adaptation and mitigation responses in view of the positive and negative effects of climate change. However, most land management actions were not designed to respond effectively to the effects of climate change, but they could still affect the GHG sink-source balance and capacity on land. The AFOLU sector is unique in that while it is key to emissions profiles, it also contributes towards reducing emissions as a sink therefore contributing to both mitigation actions and adaptation strategies.

Despite the relatively lower (less than 10%) net emissions from the AFOLU sector, there is great potential for South Africa as a developing country, to contribute to the global stabilisation of emissions through the sequestration and storage capacity of the grasslands (below ground) and other woody biomes such as thickets which rival rainforests in terms of carbon storage per hectare. This sector is the most complex across all the sectors in the GHG inventory and hence need a dedicated attention due to the diversity of stakeholders and emission sources. There is a high interest in the sector across many stakeholder, however there is a huge lack of quality data and high uncertainties in existing information to compile a GHG inventory. Despite all these factors, the sector has been identified among those that will contribute to carbon tax offset mechanism.

There are projects and programmes across different parts of the country which focus on socio-economic growth and development objectives; these include the clearing of invasive alien vegetation and quantifying the terrestrial sink capacity for GHGs. Nevertheless, such initiatives lack of long-term monitoring of such interventions towards the evaluation of the efficacy and impact of the responses.

How is the M&E system of AFOLU different from the GHG inventory system of AFOLU?

The NCCRP mandates the DEA to produce two parallel systems within two years of the publication of the policy since 2011. Traditionally, a GHG inventory only indicates and estimates base level sources of GHG emissions and focuses on areas of mitigation potential, while excluding or not explicitly including information about the costs, impacts and outcomes of the interventions to reduce emissions, in concert with adaptation scenarios. A GHG inventory only estimates sectoral emissions levels and does not specify the drivers for the increases and/or reductions of GHGs, whilst a climate change M&E system affords the land use stakeholder to ascertain the reasons for the changes in emission projections. Finally, the climate change M&E system also reflects the co-benefits (i.e. non GHG benefits) of tracking and reducing the GHG emissions through adaptation and mitigation interventions (Table 1).

WHAT WILL THE CLIMATE CHANGE M&E SYSTEM OF AFOLU DO?

The climate change M&E system of AFOLU will monitor and evaluate:

(a) The effectiveness, including cost-effectiveness, of mitigation and adaptation responses taking place in managed lands that enhance climate change resilience of communities and reduce emissions from those lands.

(b) The impacts of climate change on the agriculture and forest sectors – with focus on those impacts that affect the sources and sinks of GHG emissions;

(c) The changes in land management that affect the sources and sinks of GHG emissions;

(d) The system will also provide a platform for communication between different stakeholders whose actions affect the sinks and sources of GHG emissions from the land sector.

| Table 1: Differences between a climate change M&E system and a GHG inventory system |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Scale                                | M&E system     | GHG inventory |
| Response measures                   |                 | Economy and sector wide |
| Scope                                | Cost, impacts and outcome | Emissions only |
| Scope                                | Mitigation and adaptation | Mitigation only |
| Does it show causality?             | Yes             | No         |
| Does it show implementation?        | Yes             | No         |
| Does it track co-benefits?          | Yes             | No         |