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## **Launch of the “Qinisa Initiative”: Strengthening agricultural greenhouse gas research in Southern Africa**

The highly anticipated **Qinisa Initiative**, a flagship programme under the ARUA Centre of Excellence in Sustainable Food Systems (ARUA-SFS), hosted at Future Africa (University of Pretoria), in partnership with the Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA) and the Global Research Alliance for Agricultural Greenhouse Gases (GRA), was launched on the 27<sup>th</sup> of August 2024, at the Sheraton Hotel, Pretoria, South Africa. The launch of the Qinisa marks a significant step towards strengthening institutional collaboration and enhancing the capacity to capture agricultural greenhouse gas (AGHG) emissions data, enabling more accurate reporting of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) in Southern African countries that are signatories to the Paris Agreement.

The Qinisa Initiative was launched by Prof. Lindiwe Majele Sibanda of the University of Pretoria, who also serves as policy advisor to numerous African governments and global institutions and is the CGIAR System Board Chair. In her address, Prof. Sibanda emphasised the importance of “strengthening collaboration and partnerships, but most importantly, delivering on a common cause regionally.” She highlighted the critical role that regional data plays in developing innovative technologies for adapting to and mitigating GHG emissions, calling on all agricultural value chain stakeholders to engage in the initiative.

H.E. Philip Hewitt, New Zealand High Commissioner, reaffirmed the initiative's significance, stating, “The Qinisa Initiative represents a crucial step forward in addressing the pressing challenges of agricultural climate change sustainability and food security. It is a cause worth supporting.”

Mr. Joel Mamabolo from the Department of Agriculture, South Africa, underscored the importance of accurate AGHG data and the region’s need to “speak with one voice on climate change.” Similarly, Dr. Majola Mabuza of CCARDESA stressed the need for timely data and scientific evidence to help farmers adopt sustainable practices. Dr Sepo Hachigonta, Director of the National Research Foundation (NRF), echoed the value of quality data, a point further reinforced by Dr Lewis Hove of the FAO and Prof. Tafadzwanashe Mabhaudhi from the University of Pretoria.

Dr Ackim Mwape, GRA Africa Programme Lead, underscored the Qinisa Initiative’s transition from conceptualisation to action, emphasising the need for stakeholder collaboration and a practical approach to achieving transformative results in Africa’s agricultural landscape. He stated that “Qinisa is not just about ideas; it is about execution. We began with a vision of what is possible, but we will not stop there—we are committed to building, testing, and scaling that vision. We are now bringing together



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diverse talents and perspectives to turn the vision into reality. By engaging stakeholders, fostering community involvement, and committing to real change, we are making that vision come to life."

Through Qinisa, aligned agricultural GHG research agendas will enable governments to set, monitor, and track NDC targets while facilitating access to international climate finance by providing validated GHG data. This support will aid in evidence-based policy development, benefiting research and academic institutions by establishing a common GHG research agenda, sharing resources and infrastructure, and coordinating responses to research calls. Additionally, the private sector will have opportunities to invest, access regional and international markets supported by validated GHG footprint data, and attract innovators and new investments. At the heart of it all, consumers will benefit from making more informed, evidence-based decisions about the environmental footprint of their food choices.

If you wish to find out more about Qinisa or partner with us, contact Dr Ackim Mwape at [Ackim.Mwape@nzagrc.org.nz](mailto:Ackim.Mwape@nzagrc.org.nz) or Dr Pamela Pophiwa at [pamela.pophiwa@up.ac.za](mailto:pamela.pophiwa@up.ac.za)



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[Qinisa - YouTube](#)