



## Effective Regulation of bio-fertilizers in Tanzania

### Investing in Functional Institutional Frameworks

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#### Setting the stage

In Tanzania, the fertilizer Act No. 9 of 2009 establishes the Tanzania Fertilizer Regulatory Authority as a body mandated to enforce laws/policies/regulations governing the manufacturing, importation and use of and trade in fertilizers, or fertilizer supplements, e.g. growth stimulators and regulators and similar products.

The Act also provides for fertilizer quality control and requires fertilizer dealers to ensure that fertilizer or fertilizer supplements are packed and labeled in the manner prescribed in the regulations. It prohibits the sale or distribution of adulterated or substandard fertilizer or fertilizer supplements. Under this act, fertilizer regulations were established.

In 2012 the Tanzanian Fertilizer Regulatory Authority (TFRA) with the facilitation from COMPRO II project examined the existing policy and regulatory environment for bio fertilizers in Tanzania. Several gaps and challenges affecting the implementation of Fertilizer Regulations of 2012 were identified and action strategies were proposed.



Source: TFRA (2011)

#### The main Challenges

- ❖ Limited human resource capacity at the Tanzania Fertilizer Regulatory Authority (TFRA).
- ❖ Lenient penalties on bio-fertilizer dealers who violate the law
- ❖ High field validation costs.
- ❖ Inadequately manned porous borders which allow infiltration of substandard and unregistered bio-fertilizer products into Tanzanian market.
- ❖ Over-lapping mandates among agencies (TFRI, TAEC TBS) and chief chemist creates confusion and jeopardizes effective enforcement of bio-fertilizer laws.
- ❖ Lack of Bio-fertilizer Standards to prescribe handling, storage, minimum required quantities of active ingredients, directions for use and packaging.
- ❖ Lack of accredited microbiological laboratories for testing bio-fertilizer products in the Tanzanian market.

## What is needed now

-  Development of bio fertilizer registration guidelines, and standard operating procedures (SOPS) for sampling, lab and field testing of bio-fertilizers.
-  Ensuring provisions in the law to clarify and distinguish roles among the four national regulatory agencies in the regulation of bio fertilizers in the Tanzanian market.

## Current Efforts

-  In 2014, TFRA, spearheaded a process of development and launch of national registration guidelines. The guidelines:
-  Stipulate the processes involved in registering, distributing, monitoring of a bio-fertilizer products.
-  Spell out enforcement mechanisms including stiff penalties in case of noncompliance, and the roles played by the different enforcement agencies.
-  Establishes quality requirements of bio-fertilizer products that are allowable in the Tanzanian market.

## Way Forward

- Conduct public awareness campaigns on the implications of the new guidelines to ensure that all actors, are aware and are able to participate in ensuring that only quality and approved bio-fertilizer products are in the market.
- Develop a concise policy for Bio-fertilizer, bio-pesticides and agro-chemical inputs so as to be able to accommodate current development in the sector and promote good practices that will boost agricultural productivity.
- Amend the fertilizer Act (2009) so that TFRA has the power to enforce stringent penalties where applicable, to ensure that only quality bio-fertilizer products are in the market.
- Identify potential border points which act as entry points for bio-fertilizers so as to eliminate proliferation of unregistered poor quality bio-fertilizers.

## Capacity Implications

### To achieve the above reforms:

- It will be necessary to review the staffing needs of TFRA, to allow for more inspectors to man the additional border points and increase market surveillance.
- There is need for accreditation and approval of laboratories to enable easier and faster inspection and testing of samples of bio-fertilizers to ensure quality is maintained in the market.

1. African Agricultural Technology Foundation, is the lead agency in charge of regulatory strengthening activities in the COMPROII project.
2. Tanzania Fertilizer Regulatory Authority, is Tanzania's lead institution mandated with regulating the fertilizer sector in Tanzania.
3. International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) is the lead institution that manages the COMPROII project.
4. CAB International, is the lead institution in communication and information sharing on the COMPROII project.

The COMPRO II project is managed by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and currently covers Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda in East Africa Ghana and Nigeria in West Africa). Objective 3 of the project aims to institutionalize and strengthen regulatory environments for commercial products including bio-fertilizers and bio-pesticides. This objective is led by African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF). The project is supported by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.