



Climate Action Network

Policy Position: Agriculture and the UNFCCC – elements to consider post-Paris

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Climate Action Network (CAN) is the world's largest network of civil society organizations working together to promote government action to address the climate crisis, with more than 950 members in over 110 countries.

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Summary of Key Points

Agriculture, as a source of livelihood and income for over three billion people, a contributor to nutrition and health, and the foundation of identity and food security, requires special consideration under the Paris Agreement. Parties need to approach actions holistically in line with the principles of the Paris Agreement.

CAN has looked at the Paris Agreement to identify opportunities where agriculture could be better integrated. Below some key considerations for specific areas of the APA as well as SBI and SBSTA where considering agriculture will be important in the future. This is not an exhaustive list. There might be other areas where agriculture and work on agriculture might become beneficial in the future, such as the work program on response measures, capacity building and others.

Information requirements and features of INDCS (APA Agenda Item 3(b), Decision 1/CP.21, para. 28)

When discussing information requirements and features of INDCs in the APA, and when countries are looking to update their INDCs, they should be mindful of the following key elements:

- Actions in the land sector should prioritise: 1) protecting and restoring ecosystems, and 2) reducing total non-CO₂ emissions from agriculture, while allowing for a “food security threshold” for countries with low per capita non-CO₂ emissions.
- Actions and processes to ensure full and effective participation of populations affected by actions in the land sector, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities;
- Actions which respect the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities, and take into account relevant international obligations;
- Actions, including finance, that support APA principles, including sustainable development co-benefits such as poverty eradication, food security, gender equity, animal welfare and biodiversity and ecosystem integrity, while avoiding negative tradeoffs;
- Actions addressing mitigation along the entire value chain, including storage, transport and processing and distribution;

- Actions to address sustainable production as well as consumption, especially high-impact foods such as animal products and food waste;
- Actions and related finance that reflect adaptation principles (Paris Agreement Article 7.5).

Transparency framework (APA Agenda Item 5, Paris Agreement Article 13, para. 13))

The APA should ensure that transparency guidelines follow the principles of the Paris Agreement by requiring information on sustainable development, including: how Parties' actions have protected and promoted human rights, food security, indigenous rights, gender equity, animal welfare, participation, biodiversity and ecosystems.

Work Programme on Climate and Food Security (SBI/SBSTA)

The COP should establish a new Work Programme on Climate and Food Security to further the subsidiary body work on agriculture. This program should inform and identify knowledge gaps, as well as encourage and enhance adaptation and mitigation actions toward improving and ensuring food security and other sustainable development goals.

Introduction

Agriculture is more than a sector to reduce emissions: it is a source of livelihood and income for over three billion people, a contributor to nutrition and health, and the foundation of identity and food security. Yet it is well recognized that climate change will impact all aspects of food security – from production to consumption, including availability, access, utilization and stability of food supplies. While food security and agriculture will be impacted by climate change, agriculture is also a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions.

The land sector as a whole is crucially important in terms of climate change adaptation as well as ambitious action to keep global warming to 1.5 degrees. Actions in the land sector should be undertaken in addition to ambition in phasing out fossil fuel emissions, to achieve maximum emission reductions across all sectors.

In the Paris Agreement Parties made the priority of safeguarding food security and ending hunger clear. Thus, as Parties explore next steps in the agriculture negotiations and as they undertake the work of the APA, including the development of further guidance on (I)NDCs, they have an opportunity to ensure a comprehensive examination of the issues at hand.

In this paper CAN explores how the UNFCCC can promote INDC agricultural activities that **promote and protect social and environmental integrity and take into account the priority of rights, including indigenous peoples' rights, food security, poverty reduction, equity, gender equality, animal welfare, biodiversity, and sustainable development**. The ongoing discussions under the APA on information requirements and features of INDCs and the transparency framework are a good space to highlight the importance of these principles again.

CAN also believes that it would be beneficial to further clarify how climate change and policy efforts potentially impact food security, and how action in the land sector and agriculture can best contribute to meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement without undermining food security and rights, through a dedicated **Work Programme on Climate and Food Security**.

APA: Guidance for (I) NDC information and transparency (APA Agenda Items 3(b) and 5)

In Lima countries agreed that “the information to be provided by Parties communicating their intended nationally determined contributions, in order to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding, may include, as appropriate, inter alia, quantifiable information on the reference point (including, as appropriate, a base year), time frames and/or periods for implementation, scope and coverage, planning processes, assumptions and methodological approaches including those for estimating and accounting for anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and, as appropriate, removals, and how the Party considers that its intended nationally determined contribution is fair and ambitious, in light of its national circumstances, and how it contributes towards achieving the objective of the Convention as set out in its Article 2” (Lima, COP decision para 14).

In the post-Paris era and with the adoption of under the new Sustainable Development Goals, it is even more important to link the environment, rights, gender equality, poverty, food security, responsible consumption and production and other aspects of sustainable development. It is critical that (I)NDCs reflect a holistic approach to addressing climate change, protecting and promoting social and environmental development concerns, as CAN has elaborated in the past.¹

CAN believes that, in addition to the agreed criteria, to enhance transparency and comparability, as well as to promote social and environmental integrity, countries should aim to enhance the information they provide on how they deal with agriculture.

Below CAN provides suggestion on specific information that countries should provide.

Information to be provided by Parties in order to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding of nationally determined contributions (Decision 1/CP.21, para. 28; APA Agenda Item 3(b))

Guidance on the information to be provided in NDCs should include national governance structures related to land and the process through which Parties have identified and will implement priority actions, including how that process: 6

- Enables the full and effective participation of affected populations, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities; and
- Respects the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities and takes into account relevant international obligations.

Similarly, information should also be provided on how sustainable development, poverty eradication, food security, gender equality, animal welfare, biodiversity and ecosystem integrity (and other principles of the Paris Agreement) are taken into account, protected, and promoted through actions to be undertaken.

Information on finance and other support provided should also include how such holistic principles are to be taken into account, protected, and promoted, and how support a Party provides will adhere to good governance processes outlined above.

¹ Climate Action Network. 2012. Submission by CAN-International: general approaches to address agriculture in the UNFCCC. http://climatenetwork.org/sites/default/files/CAN_Agriculture_UNFCCC_submission_Mar2012.pdf.

Further, Parties should provide information on mitigation action within food systems and along the value chain, such as those from storage, transport, and processing. Building small-scale food providers' resilience and encouraging government policies that support domestic food security can help reduce emissions from transport and food waste.

The Paris Agreement also makes the need for Parties to address sustainable consumption, as well as production, clear. This is particularly important for agriculture, wherein certain products, especially animal source foods, carry an outsized environmental and social impact.² Countries should, as part of a holistic approach to the goals of the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development goals, take into account and address the role of food systems in promoting sustainable - and nutritious - consumption, as well as positive health outcomes, and share information on such actions.

Finally, NDCs may include information related to adaptation as well as mitigation and finance. Agriculture and the land sector are relevant for all, and the Paris Agreement already makes clear that adaptation actions should "follow a country-driven, gender-responsive, participatory and fully transparent approach, taking into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems, and should be based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional knowledge, knowledge of indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems" (Paris Agreement Article 7.5). It is also recognized that adaptation actions are dependent on access to sufficient finance. Thus, parties should provide information on how adaptation actions adhere to these principles and how related finance will support their implementation.

Modalities, procedures, and guidelines for transparency (Paris Agreement Article 13, para. 13; APA Agenda Item 5)

The modalities, procedures, and guidelines for transparency should include a call for information from Parties on steps taken to ensure the principles of the Paris Agreement were taken into account, including food security and sustainable development. Specifically, this would include protecting and promoting human rights, food security, indigenous peoples' rights, gender equality, animal welfare, biodiversity and ecosystems, among others. Information should also address the results of participatory processes undertaken and mitigation actions implemented, including results on food security, biodiversity, and the other important areas for sustainable development.

In this way, guidance ensures inclusion of information on and promotes consideration of the principles of the Paris Agreement *before* actions are undertaken, and guidance promotes transparency *after* actions are implemented or finance provided regarding the impact on the principles of the Paris Agreement, biodiversity, and affected communities and indigenous peoples.

SBI/SBSTA Work Programme on Climate and Food Security

Since COP17, Parties have been exploring issues related to agriculture in a series of SBSTA workshops, with a focus on adaptation. Parties have had the opportunity to exchange views on the topic, to share

² Springmann M, Godfray H CJ, Rayner M, and Scarborough P. 2016. Analysis and valuation of the health and climate change cobenefits of dietary change. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America 113(15):4146-4151.

their national experience, and to explore the role of the UNFCCC in supporting Parties to address the challenges in agriculture in the face of climate change. Parties now must determine next steps.

A joint SBI/SBSTA Work Programme on Climate and Food Security would enable Parties to continue to come together, with active civil society participation, to explore emerging issues and address gaps in knowledge and support. A work programme would also provide opportunity to exchange views on how to incentivize co-benefits, manage potential trade-offs among objectives and ensure respect for rights. Such a work programme would inform actions from national to global level to ensure those actions contribute to the mitigation and adaptation goals and the principles of the Paris Agreement.

Purpose:

- Enhance adaptation and build resilience in agriculture, particularly in developing countries, to contribute to enhancing food security.
- Encourage mitigation actions that are ambitious enough to achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreement, including to limit warming to 1.5°C, yet reflective of the principles of the Paris Agreement. Such actions should provide sustainable development co-benefits and avoid trade-offs, thus ensuring that such actions promote and do not threaten food security, gender equality, indigenous peoples' rights, and animal welfare. All mitigation actions should be undertaken on the basis of equity, which in the agricultural sector will mean differentiation between agricultural models.

Goals:

- Inform the priorities of related Convention bodies and provide guidance to the APA, financial mechanism, and national level efforts to enhance implementation of the Paris Agreement, based on its objectives and principles; and
- Identify and catalyze action to address gaps in learning, research, action, and support.

Under a Work Programme, Parties can agree to a long term agenda that ensures a balanced examination of adaptation and mitigation in agriculture and exploration of emerging or yet unexamined issues in the food security-climate change nexus. For instance, the Work Programme might initially focus on examining and enhancing understanding of:

- How climate change will impact other aspects of food security, beyond production, such as nutrition, access (economic and social), and food prices;
- How climate change will impact different food producer/provider groups, including those that raise farm animals, rely on fisheries, etc.;
- The meaning of sustainable consumption in the context of climate change and food security;
- Social and environmental aspects of food security, including human rights, indigenous peoples' rights, inequality, particularly in access to resources and food, & climate vulnerability, animal welfare, and the role of biodiversity and ecosystem services;
- Gender and agriculture and how challenges and actions impact women and men differently;
- The potential for permanent reductions in total non-CO₂ emissions in agriculture; and
- The definition and application of a "food security threshold", to enable countries with high levels of food insecurity and low per-capita non-co₂ emissions in agriculture to prioritize and balance development and climate objectives.

A Work Programme agenda might also include concrete deliverables that inform the work of other Convention Bodies and negotiations. The Work Programme on Climate and Food Security might contribute to identifying:

- Necessary characteristics for agriculture to deliver on all three aspects of “sustainability” – environmental, economic, and social; and
- Criteria, principles, or guidelines to ensure environmental and social integrity of action or finance related to climate and agriculture.

The Work Programme should include and facilitate further collaboration with other Convention bodies, e.g. the Adaptation Committee, Nairobi Work Programme, Technology Mechanism, Standing Finance Committee, Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage, Least Developed Countries Expert Group, Paris Committee on Capacity Building, and/or the financial mechanism, as well as with other official/UN-mandated non-Convention processes related to agriculture and food security, e.g. the Committee on World Food Security, UNCCD, SDGs. Such collaboration inside and outside the Convention will facilitate much-needed policy coherence.

Any new Work Programme must also enable robust engagement with and participation of civil society, from small-scale food producers and women’s groups to social movements and NGOs partnering with food insecure communities. Civil society organizations bring not only the perspective of populations who may not have a seat at the table; they also bring a wealth of experience working with vulnerable, chronically hungry populations and small-scale food producers on the front lines of climate change.

The agenda of the Work Programme may entail a variety of mechanisms, including further global or regional workshops, submissions, or interactive dialogues that provide ample space for civil society to share their experience and promote fruitful discussions among and between Parties and civil society. Ending hunger and tackling climate change will require action and learning by all, and civil society will be a critical partner in these efforts.