

Country Update

Dealing with agricultural issues after the Paris Agreement: Views on the EAC INDCS & the way forward

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Brief introduction on Agriculture in the UNFCCC system and in the universal Paris Agreement

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) revealed that agriculture sector is contributing to increase the concentration of GHG emissions through different ways including agricultural inputs like fertilizers. On the other hand, Agriculture sector is one of the sectors which are mostly affected by climate change impacts including droughts, floods, and landslides to name few.

The Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth session (COP17), held in Durban in 2011 which is also an outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention

requested the Subsidiary Board for Scientific and Technological Advisory (SBSTA) to consider issues relating to agriculture, with the aim of exchanging views through climate change negotiations.

The SBSTA, recalling Article 9 of the Convention, on the basis of the objective, principles and provisions of the Convention, in accordance with decision 2/CP.17, paragraph 75, continued discussions and concluded that it would undertake scientific and technical work, taking into account the conclusions of SBSTA 38, in the following areas:

- Development of early warning systems and contingency plans in relation to extreme weather events and its effects such as desertification, drought, floods, landslides, storm surge, soil erosion, and saline water intrusion;
- Assessment of risk and vulnerability of agricultural systems to different climate change scenarios at regional, national

and local levels, including but not limited to pests and diseases;

- Identification of adaptation measures, taking into account the diversity of the agricultural systems, indigenous knowledge systems and the differences in scale as well as possible co-benefits and sharing experiences in research and development and on the ground activities, including socioeconomic, environmental and gender aspects;
- Identification and assessment of agricultural practices and technologies to enhance productivity in a sustainable manner, food security and resilience, considering the differences in agro-ecological zones and farming systems, such as different grassland and cropland practices and systems.

In addition, Paris Agreement and collective outcomes of COP21 offer many opportunities for action on food and farming beneficial to the global agriculture community.

The preamble of the Paris Agreement makes specific reference to “the fundamental priority of safeguarding food security and ending hunger, and the particular vulnerabilities of food production systems to the adverse impacts of climate change”.

The preamble also refers to human rights, gender, ecosystems and biodiversity, all issues that are central to agriculture. The preamble also “recognizes the importance of the conservation and enhancement, as appropriate of sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases referred to in the convention” which makes mitigation in agriculture possible.

Article 2.1 of the agreement outlines its “aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty”. This includes actions for “increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate

change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production”.

Overview of how your country INDC deals with agriculture

What are the actions/ways mentioned in your country INDC that will directly impact agriculture in your country / region?

Rwanda is highly vulnerable to climate change, as it is strongly reliant on rain-fed agriculture both for rural livelihoods and exports of tea and coffee. According to the fourth population census, Rwandan population is projected to increase from 10.5 million in 2012 to 16.9 million (high scenario) to 16.3 million (medium scenario) or 15.4 million (low scenario) by 2032.

Rwanda developed and submitted its Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) well in advance before the 21st session of Conference of the parties (COP21) which took place in Paris in December 2015. INDC for Rwanda was informed by the Green Growth and climate resilience strategy in Rwanda which was developed and approved in 2011.

INDCs for Rwanda outlines different programmes of action which are reducing vulnerability of agriculture sector in Rwanda but also reducing emissions from agriculture at the same time. The following are the programmes of action related to Agriculture as well as the planned actions:

1. Sustainable intensification of agriculture

1.1 Mainstreaming agro ecology techniques using spatial plant stacking as in agro forestry, kitchen gardens, nutrient recycling, and water

conservation to maximise sustainable food production. This action reduces GHG emissions from land use change as well.

1.2 Utilising resource recovery and reuse through organic waste composting and wastewater irrigation. This also reduces methane emissions from landfills as mitigation contribution.

1.3 Using fertiliser enriched compost. This action also contribute to mitigation by reducing GHG emissions from fertilizer manufacturing processes and their application in the field.

1.4 Mainstreaming sustainable pest management techniques to control plant parasites and pathogens. It reduces GHG emissions from enteric fermentation.

1.5 Soil conservation and land husbandry. It reduces GHG emissions from farm land and increased carbon sink through agro forestry practices

1.6 Irrigation and water management. Efficient use of irrigation water reduce nitrogen losses including nitrous oxide emissions as mitigation contribution.

2. Agricultural diversity in local and export markets

2.1 Add value to agricultural products through processing to meet its own market demand for food stuffs. This action reduces GHG emissions as a result of using low carbon energy sources and reduced transport distance.

Summary of various stakeholder perspectives on their INDCs and the ways Agriculture is dealt with in this national plan

Do you consider their country INDC as a positive outcome for your country's agriculture?

Most of the respondents agree that Rwanda's INDC is a positive outcome for Rwanda's agriculture and below are some statements from different stakeholders in the field of climate change and Agriculture:

Dr Denis Rugege, climate change consultant asserted that "INDC for Rwanda is reflecting well the needs of Rwanda's agriculture sector since INDC formulation was informed by and aligned with fourteen programmes of action stipulated in Rwanda Green Growth and climate Resilience strategy".

Mr Charles Mugabo, agricultural expert and consultant also confirmed that "this INDC is a positive outcome for Agriculture sector since it was developed in the consultative manner where all experts from various sectors including agriculture contributed to its development and approval".

Mr Patrick, climate change adaptation officer also confirmed that this INDC took into consideration Agriculture priority since it was built from the vulnerability assessment which was done in line with development of National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA, 2006). The results of NAPA clearly showed that Rwanda is divided into two parts including one part prone to drought (East and southern part of the country) and another part prone to floods and landslides due to the heavy rains.

Do you think the implementation of your country INDC will directly impact your organization/business? In what ways?

Majority of respondents from private sector confirmed that the implementation of Rwanda INDCs presents several opportunities to the agriculture practitioners as well as people who invested in the agriculture related business like

trading of coffee, tea, vegetables and so on. For example Mr Rugamba and Nzigamasabo entrepreneurs trading vegetables inside and outside of the country confirmed that “in the using fertiliser enriched compost will reduce the carbon footprint of their products and this will make their products marketable at international level”. Another example is the statement made by Mrs Sylvie, managing a project on land husbandry in Bugesera District confirmed that “Soil conservation and land husbandry which not only reduces erosion and loss of their crops but also creating green jobs while putting terraces on hillside”. Indeed irrigation and water management is an asset to their business since it will increase their production and minimise the cost of water since they will put in place different facilities to help them in rain water harvesting said Mr Rutayisire a maize grower in Kayonza District, one of the water stressed part of Rwanda.

How could your INDC be implemented or revised in a way that is beneficial to your country’s agriculture?

Most of the respondents from Government and research institutions believe that the best way of implementing or revising Rwanda INDC to maximize the agriculture benefits is to break down again the stipulated actions in the INDC and have targets of every five years until 2030. In addition, Mr Paulin a journalist submitted that “translation of this INDC in Kinyarwanda can help to outreach all actions planned to be implemented since majority of farmers understands well Kinyarwanda than other Languages”.

Are you ready to adopt new ways of producing/trading that is more climate-aware? If yes what will be the main challenges and opportunities?

Most of respondents confirmed that this shift towards green economy has many long term and short term benefits and opportunities. This will facilitate new innovation and increasing of sustainability of all they are doing. Indeed it will expand the market and knowledge in the field of agriculture which will facilitate and promote inter trade among different countries.

On another hand, shifting from business as usual to resilient plans poses different challenges including lack of technical capacity to implement some of adaptation and mitigation measures in Agriculture. In addition, financial resources still a main challenges since the more you invest sustainably the more you gain more.

General recommendations to policy makers and climate negotiators on the way forward in the UNFCCC

- *What are the positions/actions to be taken by your UNFCCC negotiator(s), especially in the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement (APA), to ensure an implementation of EAC INDCs that will be beneficial for your organization/business and your country/region? Which measures should be prioritized?*

Most of the respondents submitted that climate negotiators from Rwanda and other least developed countries need to take into consideration following red lines in APA work:

1. They need to make sure that APA is fostering a balanced text in all their decisions with reference to the convention principle of common but differentiated responsibilities

(CBDR).

2. They need to make sure that adaptation is on the heart of all the decisions related to implementation of Paris Agreement.

3. They need to engage more the Non state actors and the farming communities in the design of detailed indicators of INDCs and their implementation

4. They need to make sure that means of implementation including finance, technology and capacity building are guarantee since most of INDCs from developing countries are conditional which means that they cannot be implemented without external financial and technological support.

5. They have to make sure that food security and agriculture in general is at the heart of the discussions to forge the way forward on implementation of Paris Agreement.

6. Last but not least, they need to make sure that loss and damage capture the attention it deserves in the implementation of Paris agreement since this will enable countries to enhance their early warning and contingency plans in case of disasters.

● *General recommendations to policy makers and climate negotiators on the way forward in the UNFCCC, especially in the context of the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the INDCs.*

There are many recommendations to policy makers and climate negotiators on the way forward and implementation of Paris agreement but find below the main ones:

1. We are requesting Rwanda to ratify among the first this Paris Agreement which will be effective from 2020 since This Agreement shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the date on which at least 55 Parties to the Convention accounting in total for at least an estimated 55 per cent of the total global

greenhouse gas emissions have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

2. Negotiators must pay attention on issues related to Agriculture in APA so that it will facilitate the implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions.

3. Parties need to make sure that the global stocktake provided after every five years is taking into consideration the principle of equity and common but differentiated capabilities.

4. Policy makers must create a conducive structure permitting to access climate funds from Green Climate Fund and other UNFCCC financing mechanisms.

5. Policy makers must be proactive and benefit from UNFCCC technology transfer scheme through Climate Technology Center and Network (CTCN).

6. Climate Negotiators must ensure transparency on climate financing issues by adopting an MRV system (measuring, Reporting, and verification). This can help developing countries to know how far developed countries are in honouring their obligations within UNFCCC.

7. Negotiators must insist on effectiveness and accountability of all UNFCCC mechanisms and bodies in place to avoid redundancy within the system.

8. Decision makers and Negotiators need to strengthen communication and involve many stakeholders before and after all climate negotiation sessions.

9. Building capacity of our negotiators is highly recommended



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