Country Update

Dealing with Agricultural issues after the Paris Agreement: views on the EAC INDCs and the way forward

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Southern and Eastern African Trade, Information and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI), Uganda
www.seatiniuganda.org

Introduction

Agriculture is the mainstay for many African countries including Uganda. It remains the backbone of Uganda's economy as it is the source of food at both national and household level. Livelihood and employment for over 60% of the population; it contributes over 60% of the export earnings and provides the bulk of the raw materials for the industries. Uganda's agriculture is dominated by small scale subsistence farmers, rain fed and the usage of rudimentary implements. Therefore Uganda's agriculture is highly vulnerable to the vagaries climate change.

As pointed out in her "Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC)" Uganda has contributed least to the potentially catastrophic build - up of the human-derived Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) in the atmosphere and yet the country is most vulnerable to global warming and climate change impacts. Therefore the way the issue of agriculture is covered in the UNFCCC in general and in the Paris Agreement in particular is of paramount importance to Uganda. This paper will give an overview of how agriculture is taken into account in the UNFCCC system and in the Paris Agreement; and also provide recommendations to policy makers and climate negotiators on the way forward in the UNFCC in the context of the implementation of the INDC. A stakeholder perspective will also be provided on these issues.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is an international environmental Treaty negotiated at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), informally known as the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992. The objective of the treaty is to "stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system". Therefore by broadly setting out to address the issue of climate change, the UNFCCC has great relevance to agriculture. Specifically, the UNFCCC Treaty, in its stated objectives and commitments, makes reference to agriculture, food production and the protection of ecosystems. The stated ultimate objective of the Convention is …" to achieve, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention, stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system…... Such a level should be achieved within a time frame sufficient to allow **ecosystems** to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that **food production** is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner". In Article 4, the Convention commits its members to " Promote and cooperate in the development, application and diffusion, including transfer, of technologies, practices and processes that control, reduce or prevent anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol in all relevant sectors, including the energy, transport, industry, **agriculture,** forestry and waste management sectors"; and also to " Cooperate in preparing for adaptation to the impacts of climate change; develop and elaborate appropriate and integrated plans for coastal zone management, water resources and **agriculture**, and for the protection and rehabilitation of areas, particularly in Africa, affected by drought and desertification, as well as floods".[1] The Paris Agreement also recognizes "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" . Therefore both the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement recognizes the issue of agriculture; however the challenge is how to ensure that these objectives and commitments are operationalized.

Agriculture in Uganda's INDC

As a signatory to the UNFCCC , Uganda submitted its INDC in compliance with Decision 1/CP.19 (Further advancing the Durban Platform: and in particular Paragraph 1 (b & c)) and as elaborated in Decision 1/CP.20 (Lima Call for Climate Action and in particular paragraph 11) premised on the Convention and guided by its principles. Uganda's INDCs recognises the importance of climate Change and the urgent need to address this issue. The economy of Uganda is highly depended on her natural resources, making the country vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Uganda is experiencing significant impacts of climate change, which include changing weather patterns, drops in water levels, and increased frequency of extreme weather events.

Uganda's priority is to reduce the vulnerability of its population, environment and economy by implementing adaptation actions. Uganda also intends to "implement strategies, plans and actions for low greenhouse gas emission development" in the context of its development goals.[2] Uganda identified the following priority sectors in its INDC i.e. agriculture and livestock, forestry, infrastructure (with an emphasis on human settlements, social infrastructure and transport), water, energy, health and disaster risk management. Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) are to be scaled up to increase resilience at the grassroots level. Under Agriculture , the priority adaptation actions identified in the INDC include the expansion of extension services, climate information and early warning systems, Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA, diversification

[1] The UNFCCC Treaty

[2] Uganda's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC)

of crops and livestock Expanding value addition, post-harvest handling and storage and access to markets, including micro-finances Expanding rangeland management; small scale water infrastructure; and research on climate resilient crops and animal breeds. The Forestry sector is also closely related to agriculture. The key priority action in the forestry sector include the intensification and sustaining of forest restoration efforts , promotion of biodiversity and watershed conservation , encouragement of agro-forestry and efficient biomass energy production and utilization of technologies. Other additional priority actions include improving water efficiency and ensuring water supply to key economic sectors, especially agriculture, water harvesting and storage, managing water resource systems, including wetlands, particularly in cities, in such a way that floods are prevented and existing resources conserved.

Uganda has also planned to develop and implement a number of policies and measures as a contribution to its mitigation contributions. Under the agriculture sector, these include the introduction of Climate Smart Agriculture techniques for cropping. According to the estimates provided in the INDC, the expected emission reduction potential of this measure is expected to be about 2.7 Million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per year (MtCO2 eq/yr). Uganda also intends to undertake livestock and research and manure management practices. The cumulative impact of the policies and measures from the mitigation contribution is expected to result in approximately 22% reduction of overall national GHG emissions in 2030.[3]

Stakeholder perspectives on the issue of agriculture in the INDC

Most stakeholders interviewed , especially from the agriculture sector welcomed the fact that Uganda is playing its role in addressing climate change , despite the fact that Uganda contribution to the catastrophic build up of the GHG in the atmosphere has been minimal. One Mr. Semakula, a programme officer working with small scale farmers cited how they (small scale farmers) have suffered with the climate volatility. That there are either prolonged flooding or droughts which has pushed many small scale farmers at the edge of extinction. He is also happy with the priority adaptation actions indicated in the INDC most especially the expansion of extension services, small scale water infrastructure and research on climate resilient crops and animal breeds.

He also commended government for the additional policies and measures for the mitigation contribution. However he is worried if government will walk the talk i.e. provide budgetary funding for these proposed actions. An official from the Ministry of Water and Environment also expressed the same doubts. He pointed out that Uganda's agriculture has remained significantly rain fed. Despite the glaring effects of climate change, and despite the availability of water sources all over the country, Uganda has not invested strategically in irrigation. Access to appropriate technologies for irrigation among smallholder has remained a challenge as major focus is given to large scale irrigation schemes that can only serve farmers in proximity. The Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG)[4] position paper on the agriculture budget, points out that there is no performance recorded for the number of

[3] Uganda's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) ; Ministry of Water and Environment; pg 11

[4] Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG) Position Paper on the Agriculture sector FY 2016/17

small scale irrigation demonstrations constructed and the number of new crop based irrigation schemes designed. This makes the scaling up of irrigation to the people that need it difficult. Out of the UGX 3bn (about US$1m) that was allocated in the FY 2015/16 for construction of irrigation schemes, no money was spent by the end of September. Although UGX 34.107bn (about US$ 11.3 m) was proposed for the FY 2016/17, it is still limited given the task at hand. In any case there is no certainty that these funds will be released. It their statement CSBAG advocated for more investments in water projects (irrigation schemes, valley tanks, valley dams). They also proposed that the Department of Farm Development (DFD) within the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal industry and Fisheries be revitalized in order for it to spearhead sustainable agriculture through the provision of guidance and strategies in, among others, irrigation, drainage and water harvesting. Again the biggest challenge is the limited budget outlay to the agriculture sector which has stagnated at 3% despite the Maputo Declaration where African government committed themselves to provide at least 10% of their budget to agriculture. The Official from the Ministry of Water and Environment pointed out that the Uganda INDC conditioned the implementation of the adaptation and mitigation measures on the "receipt of sufficient international support, provided in the form of finance, technology and capacity building. Possible support could be accessed through various climate finance instruments and international market mechanisms".[5] The priority sectors and actions in the Uganda INDC are indeed broad, requiring massive resources. In addition to the agriculture sector, other priority sectors include forestry, water, infrastructure (including human settlements, social infrastructure and transport), energy, health and Risk management (especially in urban areas) . In addition there are policies and measures to be put in place. As another official in the Ministry of Water and environment pointed out, this is a very ambitious plan which will require international support.

General recommendations to policy makers and climate negotiators

In order for Uganda to successfully implement its commitments indicated in the INDC, international support is imperative. Therefore the Climate negotiators should prioritise the issue of climate financing especially in terms of ensuring that there is a mutually agreed on robust accounting and reporting framework. During the Cancun COP meeting, the UNFCCC member states formally agreed that the developed nations would provide "scaled up, new and additional, predictable and adequate funding; with a goal of mobilizing jointly $100 billion per year by 2020 to address the needs of developing countries; and also assist them in dealing with the impacts of climate change. There are claims and counter claims regarding the amount of funds mobilised so far towards achieving the US$100 billion target, with the OECD claiming that total climate finance from rich nations had risen from US$ 52bn in 2013 to US$ 62 bn in 2014.[6] On the other hand, the India Finance Minister, in a report released in November 2015, claimed that "the OECD report is deeply flawed and unacceptable… It repeats a previous experience we had of double-counting, mislabeling and misreporting when rich countries provided exaggerated claims of 'fast-start climate financing'… "…we are very far from the goal of US$100 billion… the credibility gap is too big. We have to have more credible facts, from a careful and continuous

[5] Ibid INDC , pg 9

[6] www.oecd.org/env/cc , OECD-CPI-Climate Finance-Report

collaboration."[7] Therefore the issue of arriving at a credible accounting climate finance framework should be of paramount importance for the negotiators in the UNFCCC Standing Committee on Finance. The Climate negotiators should work closely with the Ministry of Finance to ascertain the dynamics of climate finance flows into the country. This will enable the negotiators to negotiate from an informed point of view.

Another critical issue for the implementation of INDC is that of technology. The Paris Agreement Article 6(8) recognizes " the importance of integrated, holistic and balanced non-market approaches being available to Parties to assist in the implementation of their nationally determined contributions, in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, in a coordinated and effective manner, including through, inter alia, mitigation, adaptation, finance, *technology transfer* and capacity-building, as appropriate". The UNFCCC, since its inception, has also recognized the importance of technology transfer in achieving the stabilization of global emissions. However, so far the success of the UNFCCC process in promoting technology transfer has been limited as the mechanisms created have failed to create actual technology transfer. The Negotiators should increase their participation in the Technology Mechanism which was put in place in 2010 to enhance clean technology development and diffusion. The negotiators should address the issue of clear measurement of the volume and effectiveness of technology transfer. At national level the negotiators together with the relevant ministries, should work on ensuring an enabling environment that will encourage private low-carbon investment and technology transfer.

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[7] "Climate Change Finance ; Analysis of a Recent OECD Report : Some Credible facts needed",; Discussion paper ; Ministry of Finance, Government of India.

References

1. The Paris Agreement 2015

2. “Climate Change Finance; Analysis of a Recent OECD Report : Some Credible facts needed”,; Discussion paper ; Ministry of Finance, Government of India.

3. Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG) Position Paper on the Agriculture sector FY 2016/17

4. Uganda’s Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) ; Ministry of Water and Environment

5. www.oecd.org/env/cc, OECD-CPI-Climate Finance-Report

6. UNFCC Treaty

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37-39, Rue de Vermont, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland
geneva@cuts.org ● www.cuts-geneva.org
Ph: +41 (0) 22 734 60 80 | Fax:+41 (0) 22 734 39 14 | Skype: cuts.grc

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