



INITIATIVE ON

Low-Emission
Food Systems



Survey of submissions on the Sharm El-Sheik joint work on implementation on agriculture and food security

The four-year Sharm El-Sheik joint work on implementation on agriculture and food security (SSJW) was **adopted at COP27** of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It takes off from the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture (KJWA), which was established in 2017 at COP23 held in Bonn, Germany. This new work program is under both the Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technological Advice and Subsidiary Body on Implementation and will undertake work to support the implementation of the outcomes of the KJWA and other activities that have previously taken place in relation to agriculture, as well as identify future workshop topics to be organized by the UNFCCC. In this context, a call for submissions was made by the Parties, requesting views on the elements of the joint work, including views on possible topics for workshops.

In response to this call, 41 submissions were sent into the UNFCCC Secretariat. Of these submissions, 12 were from parties, 4 from UN System entities, 1 from an intergovernmental organization, and 24 from non-governmental organizations. This document provides an overview of the submissions on the possible elements of the joint work and future workshop topics. It is meant to assist and support negotiators and stakeholders as this next phase of work on agriculture commences within the UNFCCC.

Elements of the Joint Work

Submissions on possible elements of the SSJW tend to converge around food systems, multi-stakeholder involvement, and knowledge sharing and best practices. The concept of food systems appears to be a common element across numerous submissions, although the scope and definitions of food systems vary. Multi-stakeholder involvement is a staple as well, with submissions referring to inclusive and participatory approaches that should meaningfully include vulnerable and other interest groups. This joint work program is also poised to serve as a valuable space for the sharing of knowledge and best practices on numerous areas of work related to agriculture and food security.

Food systems

Many of the submissions identify how climate change is already having a devastating impact on agricultural and food systems around the world; they emphasize the importance of a food systems approach¹ as a systemic approach to implement climate action, including addressing demand and

1 See submissions of Canada, Fiji on behalf of SIDS, Sweden and the EC on behalf of EU, South Africa, FAO, IFAD, WHO, UNDP, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Compassion in World Farming International (CWF), Agroecology Coalition, World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAOD), Farmers' Constituency, Climate Action Network (CAN), World Animal Protection (WAP), and International Fertilizer Association (IFA).

consumption measures.² Various reasons are put forward for this, including that such an approach is important to achieving multiple commitments across the three Rio Conventions,³ and as a way of addressing climate change together with global hunger and food security.⁴ A holistic food systems approach is suggested⁵ to tackle the food systems' triple challenge: food security and nutrition; inclusive livelihoods; and environmental sustainability. On behalf of the small island developing states, Fiji proposes an approach examining the food systems from farm to fork and the use of integrated climate-resilient agriculture approaches.

The submissions also identify different approaches to "food systems." The International Fund for Agriculture and Development (IFAD), for example, proposes the adoption of a "comprehensive food systems approach," and the UN Development Programme proposes a "food and agricultural systems approach." The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends focusing on the food system in its six dimensions: availability, access, utilization, stability, agency, and sustainability. These submissions suggest a need for harmonization and enhanced coordination on the subject of "food systems."

Inclusive, participatory multi-stakeholder engagement

Overall, the submissions make it clear that an inclusive, participatory and multistakeholder approach⁶ is required for the ongoing work. Submissions from country parties, such as Australia, Canada, and Uruguay on behalf of Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, Paraguay and the

Dominican Republic recommend adopting (1) a holistic and inclusive approach while giving priority to food security and (2) a bottom-up approach to ensure sustainable, gender-equitable and resilient approaches in national to sub-national levels.

Submissions concerning participation propose that civil society⁷; the scientific community⁸; local communities⁹; farmers¹⁰; indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups⁹; and the private sector¹¹ are all included in a way that ensures the different perspectives are considered and is necessary to facilitate a just transition¹¹ in agriculture and land use.

Knowledge sharing and best practices

Several submissions raised the importance of the SSJW as a space for the sharing of knowledge and best practices¹² that can be replicated¹¹ or upscaled¹³ based on the best available science. And that the ongoing work of the SSJW should align with international commitments,⁴ and support the implementation of the Paris Agreement¹⁴. The joint submission of CGIAR describes the need to leverage the knowledge and technical expertise held by other UN bodies and conventions to support the implementation of the joint work.

Areas of emphasis include both adaptation and mitigation¹⁵, innovations, circular economy, circular food systems and multi-hazard early warning systems¹⁵, traditional knowledge and practices¹⁵, and loss and damage¹⁵. Identification of barriers and solutions to adopting best practices is also mentioned¹⁶.

2 See submissions of Brighter Green on behalf of ProVeg International, 50by40, WWF, CWFI, Mercy for Animals (MFA), Humane Society International (HSI), World Federation for Animals (WFA), Four Paws International (4Paws), A Well-Fed World (AWFW), Real Food Systems (RFS), Aquatic Life Institute (ALI), World Animal Protection (WAP), Feedback and Partners.

3 See submission of the United Kingdom (UK).

4 See submission of Australia.

5 See submission of the OECD.

6 See submissions from Fiji on behalf of SIDS and UNDP.

7 See submission of WAP.

8 See submission of French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD).

9 See submission of GIZ.

10 See submission of Institut national de la recherche pour l'agriculture, l'alimentation et l'environnement (INRAE) on behalf of the Members of the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases (GRA) and the Farmers' Constituency.

11 See submission of UNDP.

12 See submissions from Australia, South Africa, CWFI, INRAE on behalf of GRA, CAOD, CGIAR, and World Farmers' Organisation (WFO) on knowledge sharing and best practices.

13 See submission of South Africa, FAO, and CWFI.

14 Submission of WFO.

15 See submission of Fiji on behalf of SIDS.

16 See submission of INRAE on behalf of GRA.

Proposed workshop topics

In the submissions, workshops are generally perceived as an opportunity to share experiences, lessons learned from implementation, and build capacity¹⁷ among the parties as well as a broad and diverse range of stakeholders. Themes proposed in the submissions include:

Food systems: integrated, holistic¹⁸ and systematic approaches¹⁹, landscape approaches, safeguarding and improving livestock production systems and circular economy,¹⁵ food loss and waste²⁰; key elements and shared understanding of food systems and climate change²¹; fairness and transparent supply chains¹⁸; unsustainable agriculture as the main cause of deforestation and impacts on deforestation and biodiversity loss²²; financial needs for food systems transformation²³; redirecting harmful subsidies within food systems²³; enhanced support for local leadership small-scale food producers²³; transformation of agri-food systems⁹; synergies and linkages between the Rio Conventions⁹.

Agroecology: agroecosystems to strengthen food security strategies²⁴; role and effectiveness in enhancing resilience²⁵; agroecology as an integrated approach²⁶; to build capacities and share knowledge challenges and experiences¹¹; implementation of agroecological practices²⁷; financial support for agroecology²⁵; improving gender equality; dignified income and living conditions²⁸; the role of agroecology in preventing erosion of biodiversity, land degradation, loss of soil carbon, environmental pollution, and water scarcity²⁹; healthy diets²⁸; enhanced recognition of agroecology within the

UNFCCC⁸; how agroecological practices can increase food production, whilst tackling climate change³⁰; and should ensure and facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experience among different stakeholders, especially small-scale food producers and indigenous peoples³¹.

Inclusion of underrepresented groups: inclusion of women, indigenous peoples, and youth in agriculture systems³²; emphasis on gender and women's rights³³, and enhancing bottom-up approaches that are gender-just rights-based and community-led³⁴; policies and actions on the ground that support the needs and priorities of women small-scale food producers³¹.

Climate finance: many of the submissions support workshops about climate finance³⁵ and agriculture, including related to finance to support agroecological approaches³⁶; redirecting public financing to agricultural practices³⁷; access to, and scaling up of finance³⁸; channeling existing scaled-up climate finance to support small-scale food producers³⁹; the integrative potential of soil organic carbon and related commitments across multiple conventions.

17 Submissions of Fiji on behalf of SIDS and South Africa.

18 Submission of Farmers Constituency.

19 See submission of Canada, Nigeria, and Care about Climate (CAC) on behalf of the Children and Youth Constituency of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (YOUNGO).

20 Submission of Ghana, Sweden and the EC on behalf of the EU, South Africa, UNDP, WWF, World Resources Institute (WRI) on behalf of the WRI, Food and Land Use Coalition, UNEP, WWF, CGIAR, Food Systems for the Future, Champions 12.3, GIZ, and CAN.

21 Submission of WWF.

22 Submission of LIFE Education Sustainability Equality (LESE) on behalf of the Women and Gender Constituency (WGC).

23 Submission of CAOD.

24 See submission of Switzerland for EIG, Ghana.

25 Submission of Nigeria.

26 Submission of Senegal on behalf of LDCs.

27 Submission of CAOD, LESE on behalf of WGC, and CAC on behalf of YOUNGO.

28 Submission of Agroecology Coalition.

29 Submission of Biovision.

30 Submission of CAC on behalf of YOUNGO.

31 Submission of CAOD and CAN.

32 Submissions of Canada, Fiji on behalf of SIDS, Sweden and the EC on behalf of the EU, and CAC on behalf of YOUNGO.

33 Submissions of South Africa, LESE on behalf of WGC, CAN, and CAC on behalf of YOUNGO.

34 Submissions of South Africa and LESE on behalf of WGC.

35 Submissions of Farmers Constituency, CAOD, and WAP.

36 Submissions of WAP, Agroecology Coalition, LESE on behalf of WGC, and CAN.

37 Submission of LESE on behalf of WGC.

38 Submissions of Australia and the UK.

39 Submission of CAN.

Data accessibility and holistic measuring, reporting and verification (MRV): harmonized MRV⁸, and maximizing the use of sources and information already available, such as the MRV platform for agriculture⁹.

Just transition: to ensure farmers are central to the transition⁴⁰; include perspectives and needs of vulnerable and marginalized communities to address the deep inequality in food systems³⁹; build a shared understanding of what a “just transition” in agriculture means, and how to deliver it in effective and in socially responsive ways³⁹ and to build just transition pathways²⁵.

Loss and damage and agriculture: to document and promote knowledge and practices on loss and damage in agricultural systems⁴¹; to identify and facilitate financial sources for developing countries and promote gender-just rights-based climate resilience to support climate action in the agriculture sector, including compensation and

redress for loss and damage³⁷; to assist farmers in developing countries in responding to loss and damage caused by climate change through the Loss and Damage Fund¹⁴.

Changes in diet: reducing meat consumption⁴²; healthy diet and sustainable food systems²⁸, policy and nutrition.

Agriculture and trade: to identify land-use change links and trade patterns between geographically separated consumption and production locations³⁷.

Aquaculture: fish farming, aquaculture, and blue economy, and aligned with the momentum of the Ocean Dialogue under the UNFCCC⁴³.

Nature-based solutions (NBS) for climate change mitigation: suitability and benefits of NBS, integration across agriculture for food security, agroecology, climate-smart agriculture, landscape approaches, and food systems¹⁵.

Procedural and structural recommendations

Proposals raised in the submissions concerning next steps, governance, procedure, and structure of the SSJW include a range of considerations intended to support implementation.

Such proposals include the establishment of roadmaps, action plans⁴⁴ and a comprehensive work program on agriculture and food security with clear timelines and milestones, to support the just rural transition. Some propose to place emphasis on adaptation³⁹, and to enhance existing actions in nationally determined contributions and the level and quality of finance³, and to be aligned with the UNFCCC’s Gender Action Plan³⁷.

Measures to assess and evaluate progress are proposed; these include an annual synthesis report or progress reports⁴⁵ including from financial

entities of the UNFCCC. Dedicated follow up and ad-hoc groups or steering committees²³ are also proposed to carry out intersessional work to support implementation⁴⁶ and include countries, experts, and stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and small-scale food producers²³. Other external support groups of experts and platforms are proposed. For example, in its submission by the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (part of the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT), on behalf of the CGIAR, suggested that effectively coordinating and monitoring implementation would require the existence of a dedicated team providing support beyond the negotiations. WWF proposes the establishment of a coordination platform to align engagement on agriculture and good systems within the UNFCCC and with other UN entities.

40 Submissions of Farmers Constituency and WAP.

41 Submissions of Uruguay on behalf of Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, Paraguay, the Dominican Republic and Fiji on behalf of SIDS.

42 Submission of Eurogroup for Animals.

43 Submissions of Nigeria, Senegal on behalf of Least Developed Countries (LDCs), and Fiji on behalf of SIDS.

44 Submissions of CAOD, WWF, and FAO.

45 Submissions of Senegal on behalf of LDCs and CAC on behalf of YOUNGO.

46 Submissions of Senegal on behalf of Least Developed Countries, Uruguay, and Nigeria.

Conclusions

The interest generated by the new joint work program on agriculture is promising, as indicated by the quantity, scope and substance of the submissions sent in response to the question of elements of the work programme, and workshop topics. For consideration at the upcoming 58th meeting of the subsidiary bodies to the UNFCCC, these submissions raise many issues and topics that are familiar to the discussions, and some areas that are new to the discourse.

Food systems are a recurring theme arising from both elements of the joint work and workshop topics. Although not particularly new to discussions related to agriculture at the UNFCCC, food systems now seem to be generating a kind of interest that could lead to more progressive discussions on how this approach can be applied to meet obligations across the UNFCCC and the other Rio Conventions. A first step toward this could be understanding what is meant by “food systems” in general.

Inclusivity and the sharing of knowledge and best practices are also recurring themes across elements and workshop topics. A participatory multi-stakeholder approach that ensures representation

across vulnerable and relevant sectors is seen as key to the success of the joint work. Recognition of the value of the joint work as a space for knowledge sharing and best practices would further cement this.

Work on the implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security would also greatly benefit from exploring interlinkages in relation to climate finance, MRV, trade, just transitions, and loss and damage. Although the provision and mobilization of finance for agriculture is not new to the discourse on agriculture and climate action, more concrete steps toward the actual implementation of the outcomes of previous discussions are critical.

In terms of structure and procedures under the joint work, it is apparent that there is a need to adopt clear plans that would define next steps and lay out the work for the next four years. This includes the possible adoption or establishment of institutional structures that would allow the parties and other stakeholders to meet the objectives of the joint work in an integrated manner. An iterative process must be put in place to ensure that regular reports on the progress of the work are meaningfully addressed throughout the work program.



INITIATIVE ON

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The CGIAR Initiative on Low-Emission Food Systems, also known as Mitigate+, works closely with key actors in the target countries so that they are equipped with the knowledge, information, and tools they need to make robust evidence-based decisions as they confront challenges in food system discourse, policy development, and implementation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

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