

Africa-wide Civil Society Climate Change Initiative
for Policy Dialogues
- ACCID -



The Position of African Civil Society

FANRPAN
Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network



A service (1-18 December 2009) alerting readers to key policy documents and perspectives, with a special emphasis on agriculture and climate change, brought to you by Mr Sindiso Ngwenya, Secretary General, COMESA and Chairman of FANRPAN Board of Governors

Alert: COP15 - 7 December 2009

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Saturday's alert:
[African perspectives on climate change](#)

Tomorrow's alert:
[The economics of climate change](#)

Copenhagen: 'A deal without agriculture, is no deal'

The spate of new reports analysing aspects of the impact of climate change on agriculture continues. This alert profiles three reports - two explicitly written to shape discussions at COP15 and on Agriculture and Rural Development Day. Joachim von Braun's essay has little to say about climate change as such, but it provides a reminder of the wider context to Copenhagen debates.

[Agriculture and Copenhagen](#)

Platform Issue Paper 8

[Agriculture and climate change: real problems false solutions](#)

Helena Paul et al.

[Food security risks must be comprehensively addressed](#)

Joachim von Braun

Readers should also be interested in a proposal for an international network on food security and climate change in Sub-Saharan Africa. Further details, [here](#)

Agriculture and Copenhagen

Platform Issue Paper 8, December 2009

Agriculture has a unique place in climate change and human development. Agriculture will be seriously affected by climate change impacts, whilst holding possibilities for substantial mitigation. Agriculture also provides livelihoods for many poor people and is fundamental to the food security and nutrition of the world's population. The November World Food Summit recognised this in its declaration "to proactively face the challenges of climate change to food security and the need for adaptation of, and mitigation in agriculture... with particular attention to small agricultural producers and vulnerable populations."

However, these links are not being made strongly enough in climate change and agriculture debates. Copenhagen provides a major opportunity to strengthen and deepen these links, and to move towards more sustainable agriculture. This paper focuses on the main issues of how agriculture and climate change that need to be considered in Copenhagen. A detailed analysis of the latest text and non-papers is given in a separate Appendix.

Key messages

Agriculture, food security and climate change have not been well integrated at the global level beyond UNFCCC negotiations. This is changing and climate change negotiations have begun to address agriculture directly and indirectly, with some substantive text proposed. However, with many non-papers for discussion, and with little progress in choosing between alternative texts, there is a risk that agriculture may be lost as text is streamlined in Copenhagen. Integration of climate change and food security is important, applying the Paris Declaration and Accra Principles of Aid Effectiveness.

Priority issues for the final Copenhagen outcome include:

- a **shared vision** that recognises agriculture as integral to food production, food security and to the resilience of ecosystems, and that climate change is a major threat;
- a COP decision on a **work programme for agriculture** on mitigation and its integration with adaptation, including pro-poor perspective;
- **co-operative sectoral approaches** include measures on mitigation that support food security and adaptation objectives, and benefit the poor.

Desirable issues for the final Copenhagen outcome include:

- NAMAs include explicit mention of agriculture;
- synergies between NAMAs and NAPAs are recognised in institutional and financing mechanisms;
- REDD includes agriculture, forestry and other land uses;
- LULUCF comes up with a new accounting rule system that is favourable to agriculture.

[Full report](#)

Agriculture and climate change: real problems, false solutions

Helena Paul, Almuth Ernsting, Stella Semino, Susanne Gura & Antje Lorch
EcoNexus, Biofuelwatch, Grupo de Reflexion Rural, NOAH - Friends of the Earth Denmark, and The Development Fund Norway
Copenhagen, December 2009

The report looks at current carbon trading proposals for agriculture, especially soils.

Some of the false solutions being proposed for climate change mitigation and adaptation in agriculture are analysed, including what is behind them and who is promoting them. A chapter on no-till agriculture, focusing on Argentina, casts doubt on the claims being made for carbon sequestration in the millions of hectares of chemical, no-till systems that would yield additional windfall profits from herbicide-tolerant GM seed. Claims that biochar, both large- and small-scale, can add to the soil's capacity to be a carbon sink and also improve it, are compared with the lack of supporting evidence to date and the area of plantations that would be required.

Intensifying industrial livestock production is being proposed as a way to address its emissions, yet it is clear that rapidly reducing intensive production and consumption would have immediate climate benefits. New GM crops, trees and micro-organisms are being promised as the answer to environmental stresses arising from climate change and the efficient conversion of cellulose to energy. However, even if they could be developed, what would be the consequences for biodiversity, ecosystems forests and local communities?

"Marginal land" is currently proposed as an answer to potential conflicts between food and "renewable energy" production from plants and trees - but who uses this land and what would be the consequences of allowing the current spate of land-grabbing to intensify? Finally, the seeds and knowledge of small farmers is being lost at accelerating pace in the name of "modernising" agriculture or "increasing yields", yet small farmers, most of whom are women, should be at the centre of research into the ways in which multifunctional agriculture can play a major role in both adaptation and mitigation. The report concludes that agriculture, particularly soils, must not be put into the carbon market, but should be a major focus in responding to climate change.

[Full report](#)

Food security risks must be comprehensively addressed

Joachim von Braun

IFPRI 2008-2009 Annual Report Essay

Extract: Are food-security risks for poor people on the rise?

Recent food-price and economic shocks have further jeopardized the food security of developing countries and poor people, pushing the estimated number of undernourished people over one billion. Known and unknown food-security risks appear to be on the rise. Increasing uncertainties raise critical questions about how to quickly, viably, and sustainably manage familiar risks and emerging new ones. The poor, particularly those who depend on food purchases, both in rural and urban areas, are highly vulnerable to market risks such as high and volatile agricultural prices, which peaked in 2007-08. In many low-income countries, the food crisis is far from over as prices remain stubbornly high and income and employment opportunities are reduced. In response to the high food prices, which are not matched by equivalent increases in income, poor households are forced to consume less food and to shift to even less-balanced diets. Households also spend less on other goods and services, such as clean water, sanitation, education, and healthcare, which are essential for their short- and long-run welfare. Within households, women tend to be disproportionately hurt.

The global financial crisis and economic recession place additional stresses on the poor in a number of developing countries, where the result is decreased economic growth, reduced inflow of foreign direct investment (FDI), and reduced remittances. The economic recession leads to declining real incomes and human capital investment through reduced opportunities for education, employment, and capital. Policy shocks, such as ill-informed trade policies and harmful taxation policies, also have severe impacts on many of the poor, as do political and social instability caused by war, civil conflict, and civil unrest. In addition to covariate risks (shocks that simultaneously affect many people in the same location), idiosyncratic risks (illnesses, accidents and disability, death of a household member, and loss of property) acutely affect particular households or individuals in the community. Susceptibility to such idiosyncratic risks is often linked to factors such as gender, age, social status, occupation, and geographic location.

The global and national food systems are complex systems, which are typically characterized by non-linear and difficult-to-predict changes with sudden disruptions and tipping points that may be passed suddenly. Poor people are the least able to predict most of the risks in complex food systems and therefore, are also the most affected by their combined occurrences. Public policy must focus on preventing these risks.

Further analysis follows on:

- Familiar and unfamiliar risk patterns
- Dealing with risks: household, communal, public, and private strategies
- Addressing food security risks with a comprehensive approach
- Toward a “risk-reduction revolution” for the poor


[Full report](#)

Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN)

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