

AFSA

ALLIANCE FOR FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IN AFRICA

Policy Brief

ADAPTATION, RESILIENCE AND MITIGATION THROUGH AGROECOLOGY

AFSA MEMBERS



ADAPTATION, RESILIENCE AND MITIGATION THROUGH AGROECOLOGY

A policy brief for enhancing climate adaptation and resilience through agroecology

This policy brief details the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa's (AFSA) <https://afsafira.org/> vision and priorities for agriculture, adaptation, loss and damage and Finance at the upcoming 60th meeting of the Subsidiary Bodies of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

AFSA's Climate Change intervention focuses on integrating agroecology into climate policies and negotiations. Our position is backed by policy research conducted in more than 10 African countries and at the regional level, national consultations of key stakeholders across the continent, over 100 case studies

(<https://afsafira.org/case-studies-agroecology/>) on agroecology documented across the African continent, scientific studies from international climate science bodies and engagements with African governments and climate negotiators.

With Africa's agriculture predominantly dependent on rain-fed farming, hundreds of millions do not have the same safety net afforded those in wealthier, industrialised nations. More than any other region, climate change has reduced agricultural productivity growth by 34% since 1961 and future warming is predicted to negatively affect food systems in Africa by shortening growing seasons and increasing water stress with global warming above 2°C resulting in yield reductions for staple crops across most of Africa (https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/outreach/IPCC_AR6_WGII_FactSheet_Africa.pdf).

As a matter of concern, the IPCC findings show that extreme weather events will increase food insecurity

risks, food price rises, reduced food diversity, and reduced income for agricultural and fishers' livelihoods, preventing Africa from achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2 by 2030.

AFSA's Climate Intervention

AFSA's climate goal is to strengthen Africa's resilience to climate change by integrating agroecology into climate change decisions and policies. In this, we prioritise adaptation actions that put small-scale food producers and indigenous communities at the centre of climate solutions, blending local and indigenous knowledge with cutting-edge science without threatening biodiversity and food security.

We strongly promote agroecology, which encompasses a model of agriculture based on diversifying farms and farming landscapes, transitioning from chemical inputs to bio-inputs, optimising biodiversity and stimulating interactions between different species as part of holistic strategies to build long-term healthy and climate-resilient agroecosystems, promote territorial markets and secure livelihoods.

The IPCC Summary report for policymakers with high confidence recognises the importance of Agroecological principles and practices, ecosystem-based management in fisheries and aquaculture, and other approaches that work with natural processes, support food security, nutrition, health and well-being, livelihoods and biodiversity, sustainability, and ecosystem services (IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf).



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AFSA's position

Agriculture

Recognising Decision 3 CP/27 (https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cp2022_10a01_adv.pdf#page=16) adopting the Sharm El Shiek Joint Work Programme on Agriculture and Food Security, It is of great concern that the parties have reached no significant agreement with almost one and a half years down the road. The SB58 as well as the COP28 sessions ended in a deadlock, with no progress on the negotiations. Without a clear

way forward and dedication to make progress from all parties, it is of concern that an agreement may still not be reached at the forthcoming SB60 in Bonn, Germany. To the millions of vulnerable communities, a continued deadlock is failing to make any progress towards enhancing climate actions for food security.

The current draft text on agriculture includes a topic on sustainable agriculture approaches, including agroecology as one of many. It is of concern, however, that much of what is included as sustainable approaches are undefined concepts and false solutions such as Nature Based Solutions and Carbon trading, which have not been proven to contribute sustainably to climate action on agriculture and food security.

Based on hundreds of case studies (<https://afsafrica.org/case-studies-agroecology/>), agroecology has been established to ensure healthy diets, food security, improved livelihoods, and the overall adaptation and mitigation of the impacts of climate change while working in harmony with nature. It builds on traditional agricultural practices using research, technology and indigenous knowledge while ensuring that farmers control all aspects of food production. Notably, some African countries (Kenya, Senegal, Togo, Uganda) are also taking steps towards developing agroecological strategies. This further emphasises the need to move from the predominant industrial agriculture models and adopt agroecology as a stand-alone topic in the decision.

Finance

The COP28 saw eight donor governments announce new commitments to the Least Developed Countries Fund and Special Climate Change Fund, totalling more than USD 174 million to date (<https://unfccc.int/cop28/5-key-takeaways#:~:text=Eight%20donor%20governments%20announced%20new,Adaptation%20Fund%20at%20COP%2028>), while new pledges, totalling nearly USD 188 million so far, were made to the Adaptation Fund at COP 28.

Developed countries should direct new and accessible climate finance to sustainable climate actions that support the needs of people and local communities. Developed countries should meet the \$100 billion pledge and beyond; this finance should be in grants, not loans.

There's an urgent need to improve and simplify access to existing climate finance funding mechanisms such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF) for local communities and civil society organisations, especially in the Global South.

Parties to the Paris Agreement should fulfil their pledges of doubling adaptation finance by 2025, as agreed at COP26.

Loss and Damage

A decision was reached at COP28, where commitments to address loss and damage were made, totaling to more than USD 600 million to date (<https://unfccc.int/cop28/5-key-takeaways#loss-and-damage>). The agreement builds on the decision made a year earlier at COP 27 where nations agreed to set up a fund to support vulnerable countries and communities already experiencing the adverse impacts of climate change.

Once established, the Loss and Damage fund should not ultimately increase the indebtedness of vulnerable communities and countries. The fund should be easily accessed and specifically highlight and support the implementation of sustainable climate actions such as agroecology.

The World Bank was invited to "operationalize the Fund as a World Bank hosted financial intermediary fund (FIF) for an interim period of four years" (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/funding-for-loss-and-damage#:~:text=The%20role%20of%20the%20World,trustee%20services%20for%20the%20Fund>), subject to a set of conditions to be met by the World Bank. The role of the World Bank will be to host the Fund secretariat, and to provide trustee services for the Fund. This decision, however, is worrying, wrong and inappropriate, especially as this will most probably still bind accessibility to strict loan accessibility guidelines. The fund should have been created under the Convention's financial mechanisms as a stand-alone entity.

Adaptation

UNFCCC decision 1 CP/27 notes with serious concern the existing gap between current levels of adaptation and levels needed to respond to the adverse effects of climate change in line with findings from the contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The recent United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) 2023 report (<https://www.unep.org/resources/adaptation-gap-report-2023>) also emphasises the slow progress on adaptation investments and planning. It concludes that the gap between implementing adaptation actions and the accelerating climate risks is widening.

After slow progress over the years in defining the GGA, countries finally agreed on an overarching framework at the UNFCCC COP28. The framework provides broad global adaptation goals and areas for action. It, however, lacks quantified, indicators and measures to mobilise the means of implementation. The UAE-Belém work programme was launched at COP28 and is expected to be completed by COP30.

With the knowledge that Africa faces the highest climate vulnerability, especially within the agriculture and food security sectors,

There is a need for increased financial commitment to adaptation actions, especially for those that are mostly affected.



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Key Recommendations

The UNFCCC subsidiary body meetings create opportunities for decision-making and a concrete way forward on the implementation of actions in agriculture and food security, adaptation, finance, loss and damage, among others. We call for transitioning from false climate solutions, high-emitting industrial agriculture, corporate monopolies of food systems, and towards agroecology and self-sufficiency for Africa.

We therefore call on parties to,

1. Prioritise agroecology as a standalone topic in the decision on the implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security.
2. Meet finance pledges and beyond and ensure climate finance is accessible through grants, especially for vulnerable communities.
3. Activate the Loss and Damage Fund with easy accessibility to the most vulnerable and give precedence to small scale driven agriculture.
4. Adopt measurable targets and measures to mobilise finance for sustainable adaptations such as agroecology.
5. Reject false climate solutions such as Climate Smart Agriculture, Nature Based Solutions and Carbon Trading.

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