

Concept Note

A study on integrating Agroecology within the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) in Africa

BACKGROUND

The impact of climate change is no longer deniable. The climate crisis affects Africa and the rest of the world in many ways. For Africa, it most significantly undermines all aspects of food systems, causing devastating effects on production systems, storage, distribution, and market systems. Extreme weather devastates crops and livestock and destabilises water cycles. Overall, it is predicted that the impacts of climate change on agricultural production, supply chains and labour productivity in climate-sensitive sectors will influence both food prices and incomes, strongly affecting people's ability to purchase food¹.

For Africa, therefore, the climate crisis is also a food crisis. The continent will need more food to cope with a growing population. Still, it is estimated that global warming could cause a 10-20% reduction in Africa's overall food production. If nothing is done to reverse course, Africa's food imports will triple by 2025, reaching over \$110 billion². The UN predicts that Africa may only produce just 13% of its food needs by 2050.

Based on that background, African climate and agriculture policies are responding to the climate question by strongly focusing on increasing food production at whatever cost. Climate Smart Agriculture, Nature-Based Solutions, and carbon farming are some proposed solutions. These are open to the use of more chemical inputs on the soil, the acquisition of farmers and community lands, and, in the long run, increasing the impacts of climate change. On the other hand, a few African governments are gradually recognising the role of agroecology as a viable practice and science towards transforming our food systems to cope with the impacts of climate change.

¹ IPCC AR6 WG II ,2022 Special Report for Policy Makers

² https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/publication/2023-africa-agriculture-status-report---empowering-africa-s-food-systems-future_en

RATIONALE

In 2019, the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA) launched the campaign on Agroecology for Climate Action in Accra, Ghana and undertook a comprehensive strategy development in Thies, Senegal. In the last three years, the campaign has taken shape in more than 12 African countries,³ starting with policy research that has informed policy advocacy, country mobilisation and movement building at the national and regional levels. Engagements have also been strengthened with government leaders and climate negotiators at the international level.

As part of ongoing United Nations negotiations towards combating the effects of climate change, during the 16th Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the process for formulating and implementing National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) was established. This is to enable the Least Developed Country (LDC) Parties to identify medium—and long-term adaptation needs and develop and implement strategies and programmes to address those needs. Other developing country Parties are also invited to employ the modalities formulated to support NAPs. As of May 2023, less than half of the African countries had yet to submit an NAP. All African LDCs that submitted their NAPs listed agriculture and forestry as priority sector areas (Source: *UNFCCC NAP Central*).

In 2015, the Paris Agreement came into force and called for each country to outline and communicate its post-2020 climate actions, known as its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Together, these climate actions determine whether the world achieves the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement, which are to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as soon as possible and undertake rapid reductions thereafter. It is understood that the peaking of emissions will take longer for developing country Parties and that emission reductions are undertaken based on equity and in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, which are critical development priorities for many developing countries.

As of 11 November 2023, 49 countries had developed their NAPs and submitted them on NAP Central (Source: *UNFCCC NAP Central*).

Countries are by COP30 expected to have submitted their second round of NDCs.

As part of its continued advocacy efforts and in light of the above, AFSA is looking to conduct a study to provide compelling evidence on why agroecology should be prioritized within these critical climate policy frameworks.

³ Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Ethiopia, Togo, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Malawi, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

MAIN OBJECTIVE

The study will seek to assess and demonstrate the immense potential of agroecology as a climate solution, advocating for its integration into the NAPs and NDCs of African countries.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- The study will gather evidence on the potential impact of agroecology practices on climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts in Africa, underscoring the significance of these findings.
- The study will analyse the current level of agroecology appreciation and integration in climate policy spaces at different levels.
- The study will develop policy recommendations for adopting agroecology in NAPs and NDCs.

METHODOLOGY

AFSA will put out a call for eligible consultants to express their interest in undertaking the study with reference to a comprehensive Terms of Reference. A committee will carefully select the most suitable consultant and the study will be commissioned. The study will last a month (30 days) in order to allow for collection of enough field data.

GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE

The study will be conducted at the continental level (Africa).