AFSA

ALLIANCE FOR FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IN AFRICA

ADAPTATION, RESILIENCE AND MITIGATION THROUGH AGROECOLOGY

POLICY BRIEF

Enhancing climate adaptation and resilience through agroecology

United Nations Climate Change

COP30 BRASIL AMAZÔNIA BELÉM 2025

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Introduction

The Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA) is a broad coalition of over 40 network organizations representing over 200 million small scale food producers, pastoralists and indigenous people, youth, women, fisherfolk, faith-based organisations and the broader civil society, across 50 African countries and advocating for food sovereignty, climate justice, and agroecology. AFSA's engagement at the 30th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP30) which will take place from 10th – 21st November 2025 in Belem, Brazil builds on its sustained advocacy across recent UNFCCC sessions, including SB62 and COP29, where it pushed for the institutionalization of agroecology in the Sharm el-Sheikh Joint Work on Agriculture (SJWA), the inclusion of agroecology within adaptation and NDC frameworks, and accessible, grant-based climate finance for locally led action. At COP30, AFSA aims to influence decision-making in thematic areas such as Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), SJWA, National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), Just Transition, and Climate Finance including the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG), ensuring that agroecology is recognised as a key approach to climate change resilience in the different thematic areas.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns that Africa's food systems are among the most vulnerable globally, with rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, and extreme weather events already undermining livelihoods and pushing communities into deeper poverty (IPCC, 2023). Agriculture, which employs over 60% of Africa's workforce, remains predominantly rain-fed and highly exposed to climate shocks. This underscores the urgency of embedding robust, locally driven adaptation strategies in global climate frameworks.

In this context, the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA) advocates for the recognition and integration of agroecology as a holistic, people-centered, and scientifically grounded solution for climate adaptation, resilience, and mitigation in Africa's food and agriculture systems. Agroecology enhances soil fertility, boosts biodiversity, reduces reliance on external inputs, and strengthens community resilience by combining traditional knowledge with scientific innovation (FAO, 2018; IPCC, 2023; Biovision Foundation, 2022). It offers a transformative pathway that responds to Africa's specific climate vulnerabilities while advancing food sovereignty and sustainable livelihoods.

This policy brief therefore outlines AFSA's strategic positions, policy recommendations, and advocacy priorities for COP30, drawing on the outcomes of SB62, evolving negotiations, and Africa's climate adaptation realities. It calls on Parties to move from commitments to implementation, ensuring that agroecology is institutionalized within the global climate framework as a central strategy for resilience, adaptation, and mitigation.

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(FAO, 2018; IPCC, 2023; Biovision Foundation, 2022)

AFSA's Climate Intervention and Position

AFSA's climate agenda is anchored in the belief that agroecology must be fully integrated into global and national climate policies and decisions, focusing on adaptation, agriculture, and climate finance as a pathway for adaptation, resilience, and mitigation, particularly for Africa's vulnerable food systems (FAO, 2018; IPCC, 2023; AFSA, 2024). This integration involves blending Indigenous and local knowledge systems with science to build resilient agroecosystems that sustain livelihoods and biodiversity

Agroecology promotes diversification, transitions away from synthetic inputs, strengthens territorial markets, and fosters community-led resilience through farmer networks, seed systems, and inclusive governance (AFSA, 2019; PELUM Uganda, 2021).

At COP30, AFSA's intervention aligns with negotiation streams including the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) whose indicator framework provides an opportunity to recognize agroecology as a measurable adaptation outcome, linking local practices to global targets, the SJWA work which should institutionalize agroecology as a core pillar of agricultural adaptation. The Just Transition Work Programme which offers a chance to embed agroecological transitions in decarbonization strategies while protecting livelihoods especially under just transition in agriculture. As well as climate finance including the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) which must deliver grant-based, accessible finance for community-led agroecological action.

AFSA has laid the groundwork for this positioning through campaigns like Agroecology for Climate Action (A4CA) and multi-stakeholder consultations that have influenced national agroecology strategies in several African countries. At COP30, AFSA will advocate for inclusive governance, context-specific indicators, and direct financing to grassroots actors, ensuring that agroecology is recognized and operationalized as a central pillar of Africa's climate response.

Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA)

The Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) was established under Article 7.1 of the Paris Agreement to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience, and reduce vulnerability to climate change thereby contributing to sustainable development and ensuring an adequate adaptation response in the context of the 1.5°C goal. Its operational framework was advanced through the Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme (2021–2023) and the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience adopted at COP28, which introduced 11 thematic targets and a roadmap for developing a set of global indicators. The UAE–Belem Work Programme (2024–2026) is now driving the consolidation of approximately 100 proposed indicators and methodologies to measure adaptation progress.

At COP30, Parties are expected to move from options to decisions on the GGA indicator framework as well as finalizing this list, methodological rules, responsibilities for review, and operationalization. During the negotiations, a strong debate on integrating means of implementation (finance, capacity building, technology transfer) into the GGA versus treating them separately is highly expected.

AFSA calls on parties to;

- Adopt agroecology as a key enabler of target 9(b) within the GGA indicators framework, recognizing its measurable contributions to attaining climate-resilient food and agricultural production and supply and distribution of food, as well as increasing sustainable and regenerative production and equitable access to adequate food and nutrition for all.
- Ensure equitable, locally led adaptation approaches that reflect local contexts and are tracked through participatory, context-relevant indicators.

Sharm el-Sheikh Joint Work on Agriculture (SJWA)

The Sharm el-Sheikh Joint

Work on Implementation of Climate Action on Agriculture and Food Security was established at COP27 through Decision 3/CP.27, setting out a four-year work programme (2023–2026) to advance climate action in agriculture and food systems. At SB60 (June 2024), parties agreed on a road map from 2024–2026, outlining annual in-session workshops, synthesis reports, and the development of the Sharm el-Sheikh online portal as a key knowledge-sharing and coordination tool. These activities are now underway, with the first in-session workshop held in June 2025 during the SB62.

COP30 is expected to review progress and provide further guidance on the continuation and institutionalization of the SJWA beyond 2026, including decisions on governance arrangements, modalities for technical support, regional collaboration hubs, and stronger linkages to NDCs and NAPs. Also, expected is review of the report on the first in-session workshop of the SJWA on "Systemic and holistic approaches to implementation of climate action on agriculture, food systems and food security, that was held at the SB62

AFSA therefore urges parties to;

- Embed agroecology as a central pillar within the SJWA process and any future work programme beyond 2026.
- Adopt the workshop's recommendations into the formal SJWA decision, with agroecology clearly recognized as a holistic and systemic approach to climate action on agriculture.
- Fully operationalize the online portal as a dynamic, active and inclusive knowledge sharing and coordination platform, not just a static repository for documents.

National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)

The National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process, established under Decision 5/CP.17 (2011 Cancun Agreements), enables developing countries to identify and address medium to long-term adaptation needs within national development planning. It is central to achieving the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), providing the operational framework through which countries translate global climate commitments into actionable, country-driven resilience strategies. According to the UNFCCC report on the progress of the NAPs (FCCC/SBI/2025/17) released on 21 October 2025, 144 countries have initiated NAPs where 67 developing countries including 20 from Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Togo, Uganda, and Zambia) have formally submitted them. While most have advanced from planning to partial implementation, there is still persistent gaps in finance, monitoring, and institutional coordination, particularly in low-income African states.

At COP30, negotiations are expected to revolve around strengthening the means of implementation for NAPs with developing countries pushing for grant-based financing via the GCF and GEF, enhancing monitoring frameworks aligned with the GGA indicators, and promoting coherence with NDCs and Just Transition frameworks.

AFSA calls for;

- Mainstreaming agroecological adaptation actions within national adaptation efforts, including farmer-led strategies on soil health, biodiversity restoration, water management, and seed systems.
- Ensuring adaptation finance is prioritized for local implementation through simplified, grant-based mechanisms.

Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are the central instruments through which Parties to the Paris Agreement outline their national climate commitments on mitigation, adaptation, and means of implementation. Under Article 4 of the Paris Agreement, countries are required to submit progressively more ambitious NDCs every five years. Following the first Global Stocktake (2023), the current NDC 3.0 cycle sets new or enhanced targets for 2035, marking a crucial opportunity to align national efforts with the 1.5 °C goal and to embed stronger adaptation and food system resilience components. According to the UNFCCC NDC Registry only about 50 countries have submitted their NDC 3.0, including 10 African countries, Angola, Ethiopia, Liberia, Mauritius, Morocco, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Eswatini, Somalia, and Tunisia.

At COP30, discussions are most likely to focus on linking NDC 3.0 ambition to means of implementation (finance, technology transfer, and capacity-building support), while ensuring coherence with National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA).

AFSA calls on parties to;

- Integrate agroecology into NDCs as a dual adaptation and mitigation strategy that restores soil carbon, enhances biodiversity, and strengthens food system resilience.
- Provide grant-based and accessible financing for farmer- and community-led initiatives that translate NDC commitments into concrete, locally driven climate actions.
- Ensure coherence and accountability by aligning NDCs with NAPs and Just Transition frameworks, using measurable indicators that reflect food sovereignty and ecosystem restoration outcomes.

Just Transition

In 2022, COP27 adopted Decision 3/CMA.4, which established the Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP) to promote pathways that integrate social and economic justice into climate action across all sectors not only energy, but also agriculture, food systems, and land use. The JTWP aims to develop shared understanding, best practices, and support mechanisms for equitable transitions, particularly for developing countries where livelihoods remain highly climate-sensitive.

Under the Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP) of the UNFCCC, parties are negotiating a roadmap that links "just transition" to the core climate instruments such as NDCs, NAPs and sectoral plans. According to a recent analysis, at June 2025 SB62 climate talks in Bonn negotiators achieved significant movement where a consolidated draft decision and informal note were agreed for the first time, outlining support for finance, technology transfer and participatory governance of just transitions.

With only a short window before the 2026 review deadline of the JTWP, COP30 in Belém is set to decide how the programme will be institutionalized, whether through a global platform, technical assistance network, or other mechanism, and how to anchor just transition principles into implementation across sectors.

At COP30, negotiators aim to adopt a formal decision on the Just Transition Work Programme, defining its scope, sectors, processes, and financial mechanisms.

AFSA therefore calls on parties to;

- Adopt a just transition in agriculture which centers on smallholder farmers, women, youth, and Indigenous Peoples as well as on agroecology which offers pathways for decarbonizing food systems while ensuring livelihoods and social protection.

Climate Finance

COP30 is expected to formally adopt the NCQG which was adopted at the COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, setting the successor to the USD 100 billion target that was set at COP21 in Paris under the Paris agreement. Negotiations will most likely address baseline figures, component shares, modalities (grants vs loans), and tracking mechanisms. For this thematic stream, developing countries are pushing for more adaptation finance and guaranteed concessionality.

AFSA calls for;

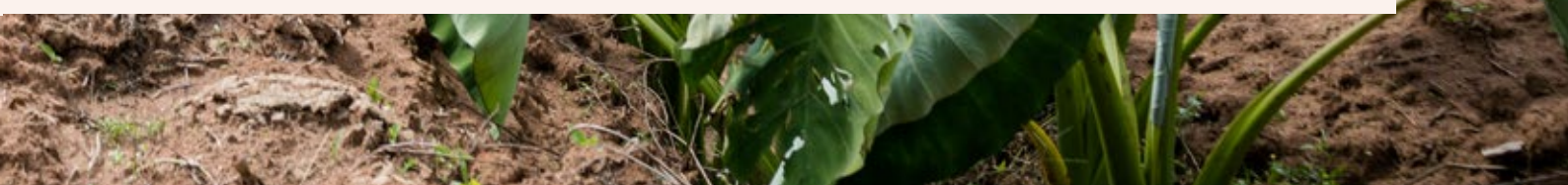
- Scaled-up, predictable, grant-based climate finance for agroecology and locally led adaptation.
- Dedicated financial streams for community-driven agriculture and food system transitions, ensuring accessibility to women, indigenous Peoples, and youth.
- Clear accountability mechanisms to track the localization and effectiveness of climate finance flows.

Key Recommendations

AFSA urges parties at COP30 to;

- Recognize and support agroecology as a central pathway for achieving climate-resilient, just, and sustainable food systems.
- Adopt and operationalize GGA indicators that reflect holistic, context-specific, and inclusive approaches, with agroecology as a key adaptation metric.
- Fulfil and expand climate finance commitments, ensuring funding is delivered as grants, localized, and directly accessible to grassroots actors.
- Institutionalize participation of smallholder farmers, indigenous Peoples, women, and youth in climate governance structures.
- Integrate agroecological transitions into NAPs, NDCs, and Just Transition frameworks to ensure coherence and transformative action.
- Establish transparent accountability mechanisms for finance and adaptation tracking that prioritize the needs of vulnerable communities.

In light of the above, AFSA emphasizes parties to move beyond rhetoric and institutionalize agroecology in global climate architecture, ensuring that climate action is equitable, community-driven, and effective.



ANNEX 1

Why **agroecology** is holistic and systemic in building resilience to African agriculture against climate change

Agroecology is **a science, a practice and a social movement** that draws on ecological principles such as diversity, synergy, recycling, and many others to establish sustainable and resilient agriculture and food systems. According to the High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE, 2019), agroecology which is endorsed by international bodies including the FAO through its Scaling up Agroecology Initiative (FAO, 2018) and acknowledged by the International Panel of experts on Climate Change (IPCC) enhances the capacity of farming systems to withstand shocks and adapt to changing environmental conditions and has potential to mitigate emissions and enhance climate resilience. Unlike industrial agricultural systems, it regenerates soil health, boosts agricultural biodiversity, strengthens community and grassroots movements, and reduces dependence on synthetic inputs.

Policy momentum

A growing number of African governments are slowly but steadily recognising agroecology as a vital approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation, which has seen countries like Kenya, Botswana, Benin, Burkina Faso Togo develop and launch National Agroecology Strategies, where as Senegal, Mali, Togo, Zimbabwe, and Uganda are in advanced stages of developing their national agroecology strategies.

AFSA has played a catalytic role in facilitating multi-stakeholder consultations that have informed these strategies for example, the Agroecology for Climate Action (A4CA) campaign, involving over 10 African countries, has seen the continued engagement of and collaboration between non state actors and governments to adopt and institutionalise Agroecology as a vehicle for climate change adaptation and mitigation in agriculture policies across Africa.

Strong social movements and community resilience

Agroecology fosters strong community networks among farmers, enhancing their collective resilience and cohesion in the face of climate shocks. Agroecology strengthens the cohesiveness of farmer groups by fostering community-based knowledge sharing, reciprocal practices, and mutual support systems in the face of climate shocks. After Cyclone Idai hit Zimbabwe in 2019, agroecological farmers in eastern and southern

regions quickly mobilized and demonstrated remarkable solidarity by engaging in widespread seed exchanges. Through these relationships, communities exchanged local seeds and knowledge, enabling rapid restoration of food production and demonstrating the social resilience embedded in agroecological systems (Chikukwa et al., 2023).

Practical evidence on ground

Drawing on comprehensive research conducted across more than ten African countries, national-level consultations with diverse stakeholders, and over 100 documented case studies on agroecology, it is critical to recognize the transformative potential of agroecology in addressing the continent's escalating climate vulnerabilities. These findings are reinforced by global scientific consensus, including reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which show that extreme weather events will increase food insecurity risks, food price rises, reduced food diversity, and reduced income for agricultural and fishers' livelihoods

Agroecological practices such as composting, mulching, crop rotation, and the use of green manure significantly enhance soil fertility. Studies from Malawi show that agroecological techniques like legume intercropping restore nitrogen levels in the soil, reducing the need for expensive synthetic fertilizers (Snapp et al., 2010). In Tanzania, farmers reported access to more than 30 different food crops annually, enhancing nutrition and food sovereignty (Biovision Foundation, 2022).

Agroecology minimizes dependence on external inputs like synthetic fertilizers and pesticides. In Senegal, farmers reduced their production costs by up to 60% after switching to agroecological practices, allowing them to reinvest in local savings and cooperatives.

As the climate crisis continues to threaten pollinators, reducing agricultural production, agroecological landscapes support pollinators, pest predators, and microbial biodiversity. A study in Burkina Faso recorded a 25% increase in bee populations and native flora after farmers integrated agroforestry and organic farming techniques (IFOAM, 2020).

Agroecology emphasizes inclusive, community-led development where African women play a central role in seed saving, local food markets, and household nutrition. In Uganda, female-led agroecology groups documented improved access to land and decision-making at village level (PELUM Uganda, 2021).

With Africa being a continent with the highest unemployment rates, agroecology provides economic viability and accessibility to markets for the youthful continent through agroecological entrepreneurship. In Zimbabwe, farmers practicing agroecology have better access to territorial markets that favour organic, indigenous, and healthy agricultural and food products. This ensures minimal food miles, waste reduction, and shorter value chains (AFSA, 2023).

Knowledge sharing is critical for Africa and agroecology integrates traditional agricultural knowledge that has sustained communities for generations. In Sahelian countries, knowledge of drought-resistant crops and soil restoration techniques has been successfully integrated into agroecological programs (Practical Action, 2019).

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