

UNFCCC – SBSTA 42

In-session workshop on the development of early warning systems and contingency plans in relation to extreme weather events and its effects such as desertification, drought, floods, landslides, storm surge, soil erosion, and saline water intrusion

June 2, 2015 – 15:00-18:00

Bonn, Germany

Question 1: What experience does your country have with the development of early warning systems and contingency plans in relation to extreme weather events and its various effects in the context of agriculture?

Each panelist will be given the opportunity to make a prepared oral statement of 3-5 minutes.

Madame Chair, Fellow Panelists, Colleagues,

Canada welcomes the opportunity to share some of its experience with the development of early warning systems and contingency plans in relation to extreme weather events in the context of agriculture.

Canada has a wide diversity of agricultural landscapes capable of growing and supporting a large assortment of crops and livestock. Our food production systems are as varied as our geography.

Agricultural policy in Canada is guided by *Growing Forward 2*, a five-year framework (which began in 2013 and going until 2018), signed by the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, which focuses on innovation, competitiveness, and market development.

The Government of Canada works to provide the agriculture sector with access to the best available information on climatic factors affecting agricultural production. Open access to daily and free agroclimatic and yield information enables producers to make well-informed decisions to manage weather and climate-related production risks.

Despite its short national history, Canada has gained a relatively long experience over the years in helping farmers prevent, mitigate, cope and recover from extreme weather events, most notably from events like droughts and floods.

Such experience has led us to the current suite of tools and programs available to Canadian farmers under *Growing Forward 2*.

Let me briefly highlight some of these tools and programs:

The Drought Watch web site provides timely information captured in maps based on readings from more than two thousands weather stations across the country. These maps highlight current and historical weather and climatic conditions, differences from normal conditions, and value-added information such as growing degree days. Drought Watch also contains information specifically targeted

to producers to help them learn how to anticipate, mitigate and adapt to the impacts of weather and climate.

Drought monitoring is also integrated between Canada, the United States and Mexico through the North American Drought Monitor. The North American Drought Monitor is a collaborative product that provides an ongoing monthly assessment of the extent and intensity of drought in all three North American countries.

The Agroclimate Impact Reporter is an online spatial tool for crowdsourcing information capturing the nature and extent of impacts from weather and climatic events. The Agroclimate Impact Reporter network counts three hundreds volunteer reporters primarily comprised of producers and industry partners. Reports from the volunteers' network provide an on-the-ground perspective on the impacts of weather and climatic events and are complementary to information available via Drought Watch.

Another component of Canada's early warning system is the Crop Condition Assessment Program which is a weekly interactive information package using earth observation data that produces timely, quantitative and objective information on crop and pasture conditions at various spatial resolutions from national to local.

Providing business risk management tools, supporting adoption of beneficial management practices, investing in innovation (e.g. in crop breeding) and making information and decision support tools accessible, including weather forecasting and early warning systems, are all key elements of Canada's approach in developing climate resilience in its agriculture sector.

When natural disasters occur, the core business risk management tools are, in part, designed to help producers deal with the income and production losses they experience while a disaster relief framework – in other words a contingency plan named AgriRecovery – is designed to complement the core business risk management tools to help agricultural producers recover from natural disasters.

AgriRecovery is intended to respond in situations where producers do not have the capacity to cover the extraordinary costs they have to incur to mitigate the impacts of a disaster and/or resume farming operations as quickly as possible following a disaster.

Canada also supports contingency planning to prepare the agriculture sector to respond to extreme weather events through research, development and appropriate use of safe and science-based agricultural technology and products (e.g. heat and drought-resistant crop varieties).

In Canada's view, a key objective of the SBSTA work on agriculture should be the sharing and development of sound scientific and technical information that will help Parties make informed decisions on approaches to and actions in agriculture that can increase food security and promote within a sustainable development framework synergies between agriculture productivity, adaptation and mitigation objectives.

Canada looks forward to the discussion during the two in-session workshops with the hope that these activities along with the additional workshops scheduled for June of next year will help build momentum towards a more formal programme of work on agriculture under the SBSTA.

Thank you,