

UNFCCC

Submission to SBSTA by the government of the Republic of South Africa on views related to Agriculture 05 March 2012

1. Background

This submission is made pursuant to paragraphs 75 and 76 of COP17 LCA Outcome.

Context

South Africa recognises that there are significant synergies possible between adaptation and mitigation in the agricultural sector. Therefore, an integrated, holistic approach to climate resilience issues needs to be mainstreamed into agriculture, sustainable food production and development priorities. However, it is South Africa's view that adaptation of agriculture sector to climate change remains a priority. Consistent with this view, in the context of UNFCCC, South Africa suggests that there should be three (3) programmes of work on agriculture based on different commitments by different Parties to the Convention. (i) SBSTA work on Agriculture which will focus on Adaptation issues and provide a scientific basis for the work that will be carried out under the Adaptation Framework; (ii) Mitigation under LCA (1b (iv)) which focuses on mitigation actions in the agriculture sector in developed countries, at the conclusion of the LCA in 2012 we would expect to see this work being transferred to the SBSTA; and (iii) SBSTA work on mitigation under REDD+ which considers agriculture as one of the key drivers of deforestation.

Therefore, it is South Africa's view that this submission will indicate issues that will form the technical basis of the work that will be carried out by the Adaptation Framework.

2. Work programme elements

Based on the above, the government of the republic of South Africa proposes that considerations by SBSTA, on issues relating to agriculture, at its 36th session should include the following issues:

2.1 Agricultural Adaptation

- a) The SBSTA would consider country-specific and regional case studies that indicate linkages between food security, poverty and climate change prepared by governments, research and scientific organization and the need for them to be considered synergistically.

- b) Identify appropriate and relevant research and technology developments that are needed at country and regional scale on pertinent aspects related to climate change and its effect on commercial and small scale agriculture needs. This should include protection, rights and livelihoods of smallholder and subsistence farmers, youth, women and indigenous people in a sustainable manner. This work could be done with the view to make recommendations to the Adaptation Committee.
- c) Identify early actions necessary to scale up proven country-specific and regional best practices, as well as build capacity and experience and identify priorities for further action. This could include partnerships and integrating local or indigenous knowledge with scientific knowledge, for example prediction of rainfall and the sustainable use of plant and animal resources.
- d) Suggest and recommend activities that promote capacity building and awareness at all levels, including change in behavior, mindset and attitude, of the multiple advantages of an integrated approach to agriculture against the background of climate change.
- e) Provide case studies and recommendations on channels of communication between all spheres of government, the scientific community and other stakeholders that need to be established and strengthened to ensure the success of converting scientific research and technology development into information dissemination programmes.
- f) Identify possible sources of support and access to those possible sources of funding for developing countries, to promote climate-resilient development and generally to support climate change adaptation, and make recommendations to the Adaptation Framework.
- g) Creation of platforms to ensure the management of risks, predictive trends, tools for monitoring and evaluation.
- h) Suggest scenarios on how to achieve universal food security for a growing world population, including building resilience of the agriculture sector against impacts on “extreme events”, in the context of climate change.
- i) Identify and recommend increased efficiencies in agricultural practices.
- j) Invitation to research and scientific organizations active in research on agriculture, including the IPCC, other inter-governmental organizations, governmental research institutions, non-government organizations and others, to submit information to the SBSTA for its consideration. Request the Secretariat to compile such information into miscellaneous documents, grouped by theme.
- k) Arrangement of workshops by the secretariat to further inform the development of a relevant work programme on agriculture.