

CMIA submission in response to 17 LCA Outcome on Agriculture

Views on the issues related to agriculture that will be considered by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice at its thirty-sixth session

March 2012

The Climate Markets and Investor Association (CMIA) welcomes the recent decision by the Conference of the Parties (COP) to place Agriculture on the agenda of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The CMIA is responding to the invitation to provide views on the issues related to agriculture that will be considered by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice at its thirty-sixth session.

It is clear that there is plenty of opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in agriculture. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has reported that agriculture is responsible for over a quarter of total global GHG emissions. Agriculture is highly GHG intensive. Under the cooperative and agriculture-specific actions the SBSTA should explore and exchange views of innovative agricultural practices and technologies that can play a role in climate change, both for mitigation of GHG emissions and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

Further with regard to the need to promote resilience and adaptation, without appropriate action climate change is predicted to threaten agriculture in large parts of the world. We have now started to see some of the impacts on agriculture and food production caused by severe weather events. Therefore in our view it is of paramount importance to view agriculture in the context of mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

Existing practices and technologies can form part of the solution as well as new and innovative approaches. With this in mind and the development and diffusion of new approaches parties should discuss what policies and institutional changes are needed to encourage the innovation and diffusion of these practices and technologies. The diffusion of new agricultural practices and technologies will largely shape how and how well farmers mitigate and adapt to climate change, with clear implications for regional and global foods supplies and regional and global stability. In addition it is suggested that Parties discuss innovative mechanisms that may help farmers meet the up-front investment cost of new practices and technologies.

Given the current circumstances and lack of ambition from governments to reduce GHG emission resilience of the agriculture sector should be one of the priorities. Adaptive capacity will be key. Cooperative approaches may enhance the ways of collecting and sharing information. These will be important to create awareness of the potential stresses and solutions in an adequate timeframe and to promote an understanding of how different actions affect agriculture in differing contexts.

Although deforestation, clearing of vegetation, draining of wetlands and over-tilling have an impact on watersheds, agriculture also puts more pressure on scarce water resources. Water is the first resource that will be affected by climate change. Water scarcity is one of the greatest threats to agriculture production in some of the most populous parts of the world. In many of these areas the threat will be enhanced by climate change. Unsustainable water use is already leading to falls in agricultural production. We suggest the issue of agricultural production and scarce water resources is also prioritised by SBSTA so that experiences, cooperation and sector-specific actions can be identified.

Finally we would like to suggest some principles for the consideration of the parties when examining approaches to the agricultural sector.

1. As with all issues touching on issues of land rights, use and ownership, central to any solution that will attract the right kind of investment, is the full and effective involvement of stakeholders, including indigenous peoples, smallholders and local communities, and use of their traditional knowledge, in the design and implementation of activities
2. Taking into account the differences between agricultural systems and countries:
 - a. Guidelines, expanded methodologies and procedures for the establishment of individual country reference levels, taking into account national factors
3. Take into account non-permanence and leakage risks in agriculture and modalities/procedures for dealing with them
4. Special attention to quantifying, preserving and potentially increasing carbon stock in soils
5. The cost effectiveness of approaches to be where appropriate independently monitored and verified in order to ensure best practice and the best use of available capital.

For further information on this submission,

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About the Climate Markets and Investment Association

The Climate Markets & Investment Association (CMIA) is an international trade association representing firms that finance, invest in, and provide enabling support to activities that reduce emissions. CMIA's membership account for 75 per cent of the global carbon market .

Composed of businesses at the cutting edge of the services sector that work to reduce emissions through the market mechanisms of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol, CMIA was created to ensure that the progressive business voice is heard, and to promote market friendly climate change policy. Our members provide highly-skilled jobs and add value to the economy through services to, and capital injections into, the growing global carbon market.

CMIA's membership comprises over 60 companies including financial institutions, asset managers, investment and carbon funds, project developers, lawyers, accountants, verifiers, emissions brokers, and IT firms.

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