

Statement by Argentina in the SBSTA workshop on the assessment of risk and vulnerability of agricultural systems to different climate change scenarios at regional, national and local levels, including but not limited to pests and diseases – 3 June 2015, Bonn

Argentina associates itself to the statement delivered by Egypt, on behalf of G77 and China, and thanks the presenters and speakers that gave interesting insights during this workshop.

Our country reaffirms the view that the Group has contributed positively during SBSTA-40 in paving the way for conducting these in-session workshops that will be held consecutively in SBSTA-42 and SBSTA-44 according to COP-20 decision. As the G77 and China, Argentina is willing to engage constructively on the SBSTA-42 technical and scientific discussions in the two workshops mandated for these sessions, taking into account the conclusions of SBSTA 38, and towards the consideration at SBSTA 43 of the reports of both workshops. In this sense, as mentioned by the G77 and China, the reports need to be comprehensive and to capture the views of developing country parties.

We welcome the celebration of the workshop on the area of assessments of risk and vulnerability of agricultural systems, taking into consideration the particular vulnerability of agriculture to climate change impacts and that there is an urgent need to increase the adaptive capacity of agriculture to deal with the adverse effects of climate change. This continues to be the key priority for developing countries, taking into account the relationship of the agricultural sector with the livelihood of millions, food security and poverty eradication.

As we have seen yesterday and today, there is enough evidence to support that climate change is increasing the frequency and intensity of adverse climatic events, such as torrential rains, floods, long droughts, frost, and hail, among others, threatening seriously the future development of the agricultural production systems, according to conditions of each country or local area.

Thus, extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and more severe, threatening stability, productivity and yields in agriculture, exacerbating already extreme levels of poverty, and reinforcing persistent inequity and chronic under-nutrition, and endangering the first priority of the international community, that is safeguarding food security. There is scientific knowledge of climate change impacts on agriculture that have not yet been assessed, developed, and/or modelled either due to data limitations or shortcomings in conceptualizing the problem.

In this context, risk and vulnerability assessments are necessary to identify risks and design appropriate measures to prevent or reduce the negative effects of climate change. In this respect, developing countries face challenges in terms of undertaking these assessments.

As noted yesterday, Argentina's territory faces the increase of average annual precipitations, leading to intense floods, as well as of droughts. Besides that, there have been increases in

temperature, and all of these factors have significantly affected the livestock and agricultural systems, particularly yields of crops.

These phenomena could induce situations that will not allow us to go back to previous production conditions. Important challenges make it necessary to produce more food in different climatic conditions, which will require increasing the adaptive capacity of the sector, through strengthening national capacities and fostering international cooperation, including for risk and vulnerability assessments to address the specific challenges faced by developing countries.

Regarding Argentina's experience in risk and vulnerability assessments, we would like to reiterate what we mentioned yesterday, in terms of the implementation at the national level of two specific projects that include elements related to this area and that have been approved by the UN Climate Change Adaptation Fund of the Kyoto Protocol. Those two projects are: The Unit for Rural Change project (UCAR) and the Project "Increasing climatic resilience and improvement of sustainable land management in the southwest of the Buenos Aires province".

In this context, and in addition to the specific work undertaken by Argentina that has been presented in yesterday's workshop on early warning systems and contingency plans, we would like to mention that in relation to risk and vulnerability assessments, Argentina is undertaking measures such as the implementation of agricultural practices that reduce vulnerabilities, including through silvo-pastoral systems, improvement of the grazing systems and pastoral systems.

Moreover, from the technological point of view, Argentina is developing improved seed varieties to optimize performance, which are adapted to new agro-climatic conditions, for example adapted to thermal/water stress or to different pests (that are prone to appear due to the increase of precipitations). Also, our country is working in the establishment of weather forecasting and early warning systems through satellite images and historical records and has applied "risk maps of agricultural flooding" to define a risk map based on the frequency of floods.

In terms of risk and vulnerability assessments, it is also worth mentioning the work done in Argentina by the National Service of Agrifood Health (SENASA). SENASA is working in vulnerability assessments in terms of pests and in control programmes, in a context in which the increase of temperatures is generating favorable conditions for the proliferation and outbreak of pests and diseases that will make agriculture productive systems even more vulnerable.

All these initiatives contribute to national decision making process and to improve the planning capacity of farmers, thereby stabilizing and increasing yields and contributing to food security.

In this context, in relation to the SBSTA work, the SBSTA could address the following issues in order to assist developing countries in this area, taking into account the diversity of their agricultural systems, the differences in scale, the short, medium and long-term challenges and that agriculture is fundamental for poverty eradication and food security in developing countries:

- Provide access to scientific and technical information and means of implementation for risk and vulnerability assessments

- Identify technologies and practices appropriate to reduce risk and vulnerabilities, in accordance with national, local and regional specific conditions and needs;

- Recognise the importance of rural and poor people, especially women and the youth, in the assessment of risk and vulnerability of agricultural systems to different climate change scenarios at regional, national and local level;

- Provide means of implementation to developing countries in the assessment of risk and vulnerability of agricultural systems to different climate change scenarios at regional, national and local level, taking into consideration that developed countries should play a key role in technology transfer and capacity building for developing countries on adaptation;

- Support research in addressing risk and vulnerability assessments, including in terms of potential economic impacts, for example in terms of impact to agricultural production

- Share information on tools and experiences to assess the risks and vulnerabilities of agricultural systems at regional, national, and local levels; according to different national and/or regional characteristics

- Develop risk vulnerability maps for extreme weather events.

Due to the aforementioned, Argentina believes there is a wide space for collaboration among parties in relation to risk and vulnerability assessments, adapted to the local national and regional circumstances. Developed countries can play a very positive role in providing the necessary means of implementation to developing countries, for addressing adaptation.

Echoing what was said by Egypt on behalf of the G77, we remain on the position to undertake scientific and technical work under SBSTA on impacts of climate change on agriculture consistent with SBSTA agreed mandate in SBSTA 38 and 40 and respecting consensus already reached, following Art.9 and taking into account the commitments in articles 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 of the Convention.