

SUBMISSION BY DENMARK AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS MEMBER STATES

This submission is supported by Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey

Copenhagen, 5 March 2012

Subject: Submission on enhanced action on mitigation, cooperative sectoral approaches and sector specific actions, in order to enhance the implementation of Article 4, paragraph 1(c), of the Convention:
- Views from Parties on the issues related to agriculture referred to in paragraph 75¹ of decision [-/CP 17] Outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention.

General remarks

The EU welcomes this opportunity to address issues related to agriculture for the exchange of views in the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) at its thirty-sixth session and for future work on agriculture under UNFCCC.

Agriculture has to address new global challenges: increasing the global food supply in a sustainable way in order to feed the expected 9 billion people in 2050 and at the same time inter alia facing the adverse impacts of climate change which will threaten food production systems. These challenges require the sector to adapt to climate change. In parallel to the need to address adaptation, mitigation potential exists in the sector at global level if sustainable practices that are more efficient in terms of greenhouse gas emissions or carbon sequestration replace business as usual. Therefore the EU considers that agriculture, as the basis for food production, food security, livelihoods and rural development, needs to be adequately considered in relation to climate change under the UNFCCC.

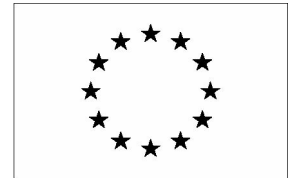
Actions on adaptation and mitigation in agriculture are already being implemented worldwide, and the EU is contributing significantly to these, both internally and in cooperation with developed and developing country partners. The EU believes that there is a need to go further on the issues highlighted below under the UNFCCC framework.

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Paragraph 75 of Decision -/CP.17:

"The Conference of the Parties,

75. Requests the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice to consider issues related to agriculture at its thirty-sixth session, with the aim of exchanging views and the Conference of the Parties adopting a decision on this matter at its eighteenth session".



Agriculture under the UNFCCC to date

The EU recognises that some work on agriculture has been carried out to date under the UNFCCC. Mitigation options in agriculture were previously considered under the SBSTA agenda item "Scientific, technical and socio-economic aspects of mitigation of climate change". A workshop was held during SBSTA 24 in 2006. A technical paper "Challenges and opportunities for mitigation in the agricultural sector" was published in November 2008, at the request of several Parties and a further intersessional workshop was held during the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA) 5 in 2009 to discuss this paper. Discussions under the AWG-LCA began in 2009 under the agenda item "Cooperative sectoral approaches and sector-specific actions", paragraph 1 (b) (iv), under the section "Enhanced action on mitigation" of the Bali Action Plan, with recognition that adaptation is of critical importance for the sector. These discussions reflected significant interest in further work on agriculture under the UNFCCC.

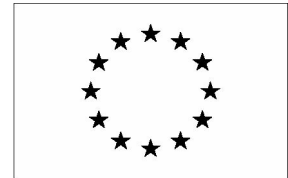
Relevance of further work on agriculture under the UNFCCC

Agriculture is an important sector in global climate change efforts as it is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change and at the same time represents a significant part of the global emissions. Including further work on agriculture under the UNFCCC should contribute to reaching the objective of the Convention, which includes ensuring that food production is not threatened (Article 2). Climate finance could contribute to mobilizing the investments needed in the sector.

It is necessary to increase agricultural production and its efficiency in the context of decreasing availability and declining quality of natural resources, often exacerbated by climate change. Production must increase in a sustainable way, taking into account in an integrated vision all the environmental challenges (e.g. deforestation, biodiversity, soil, air, water), while safeguarding livelihoods for people in rural areas.

The wide diversity of agricultural systems worldwide, as well as specific national and regional development priorities, objectives and circumstances mean that a one size fits all approach does not apply for agriculture in relation to climate change.

Further addressing and improving understanding of the scientific, technical and socio-economic issues around adaptation, mitigation and the synergies and trade-offs between them can enhance the contribution of the sector to many critical objectives, including sustainable development, poverty alleviation, preservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services as well as contributing to achieving the 2°C objective.



Of particular importance in the agricultural sector is the critical link between adaptation and mitigation actions. Many mitigation actions (e.g. improved protection and enhancement of soil organic matter, restoring degraded land, improving efficiency and productivity of agricultural systems in a sustainable manner) can at the same time build resilience to climate change impacts. Certain trade-offs may be necessary, but these should be minimized or avoided wherever possible. There is a need to advance a common and scientific understanding of the best ways to address vulnerabilities, impacts, adaptation needs and the contribution of agriculture to mitigation while contributing to safeguarding food security and livelihoods.

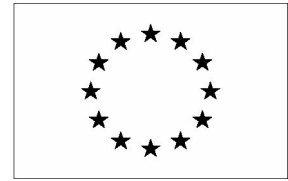
Climate related agricultural initiatives are being implemented across a range of countries and food production systems. A significant body of work by international organisations is contributing to understanding the links between agriculture and climate change. Scientific knowledge and experiences already exist and can be more widely adopted into agricultural practices. There is a need to further enhance cooperation between Parties in sharing knowledge in order to learn from past and current experiences, further identify climate relevant technologies, practices and processes, and enhance understanding of their deployment and effects. It is also necessary to enhance research and development cooperation, and to further catalyse relevant activities of international organisations and relevant stakeholders. There is also a great opportunity for synergistic work between all three Rio Conventions in agriculture, and common approaches should be encouraged and promoted at all levels.

Issues related to agriculture for consideration under SBSTA

It is appropriate to reinforce the work mentioned above under the UNFCCC with the objective to assist Parties in their efforts to, on a voluntary basis, implement measures to increase adaptation capacities, reduce emissions, or enhance and protect soil organic matter. SBSTA provides the forum to progress this. There is potentially significant value added to both climate objectives and the core task of the agriculture sector which is to produce food in a sustainable manner.

The EU supports a COP decision to launch a SBSTA work programme on adaptation and mitigation in agriculture with the content and scope to be agreed by Parties. In the EU's view, the issues related to agriculture that SBSTA should consider at its thirty-sixth session and beyond include:

- The state of scientific knowledge on the impacts of climate change on agriculture and food security and associated vulnerabilities;
- The state of scientific knowledge on the measurement and estimation of greenhouse gas emissions and removals in the agriculture sector;
- Scientific, technical, environmental and socio-economic aspects of adaptation and mitigation in agriculture and their synergies and trade-offs, including identification of barriers for the implementation of adaptation and mitigation actions, and approaches to overcoming these;



- The identification of efficient and sustainable agricultural technologies, practices, processes and know-how for adaptation and mitigation;
- The identification of ways and means of promoting and supporting their development, implementation and/or transfer to farm level;
- Approaches to enhance international cooperation in research and development related to climate change, as well as ways and means to support capacity-building, information sharing, education and training of all relevant stakeholders, and particularly farmers, on adaptation and mitigation in agriculture.

This work should build upon existing knowledge, tools and processes on:

- Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+), including the SBSTA work programme on how to address the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation;
- Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF), including on-going and future SBSTA work programmes on this issue;
- Adaptation, including the Nairobi Work Programme, National Adaptation Programmes of Action, National Adaptation Plans;
- Mitigation;
- Measurement, reporting and verification;
- Technologies, including the Technology Mechanism;
- Capacity building;
- Finance, including the Green Climate Fund, the Adaptation Fund, the LDC Fund;
- And other relevant processes ongoing or foreseen outside the UNFCCC framework, including work by Parties, international organisations and other Conventions.