

**Technical Expert Meeting on
Cross Cutting issues in Urban Environment and Land use**

**8 May 2017, United Nations Framework Convention on
Climate Change Headquarters, Bonn Germany**

**Statement on behalf of the Food and Agricultural
organization of the United Nations (FAO)**

Excellences,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am delivering this key note address on behalf of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Let me say at the outset that FAO highly appreciates the opportunity to participate in this very important event.

1. Climate change is a fundamental global concern and represents an urgent threat to society and humankind. Its negative impacts will be felt by all countries and most severely in developing countries. This is particularly true for agriculture where we, at roughly one centigrade temperature increase, already see severe impact on agricultural production and livelihoods. These impacts are expected to intensify over time. Without decisive action, they will threaten global food security, increase poverty and will undermine efforts to achieve the sustainable development goals.
2. The landmark Paris Agreement recognized with serious concern the significant gap between the mitigation pledges for 2030 and what is needed to be consistent with the global objective to stay below 2 degrees Celsius and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius.
3. The Technical Examination Process on Mitigation - and this Expert Meeting on Cross Cutting issues in urban environment and land use - focus on pre 2020 action. This is timely and pivotal to identify actionable high potential mitigation policies, practices and technologies. The solutions we will be discussing over the next days are central to achieving significant mitigation ambition pre 2020 and, at the same time, to achieving sustainable development. FAO believes that these goals can only be achieved through enhanced engagement and cooperation among Parties, Convention bodies, international organizations and non-Party stakeholders.

4. The focus on cross cutting issues in urban environment and land use is particularly welcome:
5. Agriculture and land use are the second biggest source of emissions after energy. Emissions from land use and agriculture, however, are very different - and need very different means of action - than emissions from energy production.
6. With increasing urbanization, mainly in developing countries and especially in Africa, the relation between cities and rural areas will radically change from now to 2050. Land use and city planning as well as changing food systems will have a considerable incidence on emissions of both cities and agriculture for a long time. The way we frame now our cities and our food systems will frame their emissions after 2030.
7. We need to be mindful in our discussions, that there are conflicting demands on land: to produce more food and more feed, more renewable energy, and at the same time, stock more carbon in soils and biomass. But land is also central to ecosystem services, regulation of water, protection of biodiversity - just to name a few.
8. Agricultural sectors - crops, livestock, fisheries, aquaculture and forestry, are a key driver of sustainable development. Particularly in less developed countries, they are providing employment, economic development and are central to reduce hunger and poverty and to sustainably managing natural resources.
9. Therefore, there is a need to optimize the use of land and water, to maximize benefits and synergies and to reduce trade offs.
10. Representing FAO, I want to highlight Food security and nutrition as a priority. The four dimensions of food and nutrition security: availability of food, access to it, physically and economically, utilization, covering nutrition, cooking, water quality, and the stability of these can help understand what needs to be done, prioritize and organize our actions.
11. The agricultural sectors are inherently different from other human activity. They involve natural processes, profoundly embedded in natural environment and in human societies, with numerous potential consequences on ecosystems, agricultural systems and people.
12. The sector is also different because of the sheer number of people involved. A staggering third of the global population depends on the agricultural sectors for their livelihoods. Mobilizing all these actors, giving them the means to change their practices, access to markets, services, training can bring transformational change. But it takes a transformational change in how we address the sectors. And - it takes time.
13. It simply takes time to grow or restore a forest, to restore degraded land and to breed more efficient and resilient livestock and plants.
14. For all these reasons action is urgently needed *before* 2020 to enable the agriculture sectors to realize their potential, while improving food security and nutrition which is at the very basis of sustainable development.

15. FAO promotes and supports integrated landscape and value chain approaches and interventions, which addresses climate change mitigation and adaptation challenges. In doing so we need to take into consideration social, economic and environmental constraints but also opportunities - within the landscape and through the entire value chains.
16. FAO has actively contributed to the UNFCCC in the understanding that the food and agricultural sectors are fundamental for human development and therefore play a significant role in the global response to climate change.
17. The Agriculture, forestry and other land use sector (AFOLU) is the largest emitting sector after the energy sector. The agriculture and the food sector at large have an important role to play in climate change mitigation. With appropriate mitigation interventions it is possible to increase both agricultural productivity and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Well-designed interventions in the agricultural sectors cut across the usual distinction between climate change adaptation and mitigation.
18. Climate Smart Agriculture for example, provides an inclusive conceptual framework for a wide range of agricultural interventions in diverse contexts. It helps guide actions needed to transform and reorient agricultural systems to effectively support development and ensure food security in a changing climate.

It is an approach for practitioners and decision makers to assess a range of options and identify context-appropriate solutions at farm, landscape and national levels that maximize benefits, pursuing synergies and managing trade-offs with a view to three objectives:

- i) Sustainably increase agricultural productivity and incomes
 - ii) Adapt and build resilience to climate change
 - iii) Reduce and/or remove greenhouse gas emissions
19. Finally, an analysis of the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions shows that Member Nations see the agricultural sectors as being central to their response to climate change and 89 percent of countries include agriculture and/or land use, land use change and forestry as a sector in their mitigation and/or adaptation contributions.
 20. FAO therefore stands ready to work collaboratively with partners to support countries in realizing the significant opportunities offered by the food and agriculture sectors in achieving the aim of the pre 2020 agenda, responding to climate change and achieving sustainable development.

I thank you!