



December 2014

COP20 - From Lima to Paris

An urgent call for action to take advantage of “the window of opportunity” in the run-up to Paris 2015 set the scene for the 20th session of the Conference of Parties (COP20) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held from 1-12 December in Lima, Peru. This rallying call from the United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon also asked for “all hands on deck” from the private and public sector, as well as civil society. Another pointed message during the high-level opening was that there is no place for neutrality or denial when it comes to climate change – as humanity is facing the biggest moral crisis of all time.

With much of the technical negotiations on agriculture off the agenda until SBSTA42 in June 2015, many participants from the farmers’ constituency expressed concern that agriculture risk being left out of the new agreement (to replace the Kyoto Protocol) that will be concluded at COP21 in Paris next year.

As result the constituency resolved to vigorously push for inclusion of agriculture in the Durban Platform which is handling negotiations for the new agreement. Inclusion of agriculture at that level of the Convention would not only provide an overarching framework for inclusion of the sector, but also the necessary impetus to on-going technical negotiations.

With only a day of negotiations left it was clear that the talks on the new agreement were not going to be plain-sailing. The scope of issues to be cover and pledges from countries on their commitments to reduce emissions remain major areas of point of contention. Whether Parties have made sufficient progress at Lima to enable them to reach agreement in Paris next year remains to be seen.

Addressing the Ministerial Dialogue on the Durban Platform for enhanced action, SACAU President, Dr Theo de Jager, emphasized that no constituency is more vulnerable to climate change than the world’s farmers. “And no constituency can do more towards mitigation and

adaptation to climate change in a shorter space of time than farmers of the world. And yet on our way to Paris, agriculture is still not part of a legally binding agreement,” he said.

Among the cacophony of voices in a battle for the hearts and minds were some island countries who warned that their populations face extinction if nothing is done. According to Katrin Glatzel, from Agriculture for Impact, the developed world will not be the ones to feel the most severe impacts of climate change – rather it will be the countries in the developing world that have done the least to cause this chaos. New research has discovered that 39 of the 50 countries least prepared to deal with climate change are in Africa. From 2049, in some areas, production of crops could fall by up to 50 percent.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) more than 3 billion people, that is almost half of the current total global population, live in rural areas and rely on agriculture for their livelihoods. Therefore a functioning agriculture sector is crucial in creating income-generating opportunities that are key to eradicating extreme poverty in developing countries

Green Climate Fund open for business

The Secretariat of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) announced that the fund is now open for business during the recently concluded COP20 in Lima, Peru. Speaking at a side-event hosted by the fund, Director of Country Programming Mr Ousseynou Nakoulima announced that all operational and governance policies have now been agreed and the fund is moving into full operation. “By November 30, 2014 the GCF had mobilised \$9.7 billion. The fund will be equally divided between mitigation and adaptation support,” said Nakoulima.

He added that the fund will allocate 50% of its resources to Africa, Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs). The remaining 50% will be allocated to other developing countries. Other guiding principles to be used include geographical balance and private sector involvement. The Green Climate Fund will assess programmes based on impact potential, paradigm shift potential, country ownership, efficiency and effectiveness, and sustainable development potential among other criteria.

The fund will start by prioritising readiness programmes meant to support countries to engage with the fund and identify interventions that will add value. Countries will engage with the fund through Nationally Designated Agencies (NDAs) or National Focal Points. These need to apply for accreditation with the GCF before they can be recognised.

Other organisations such as international, regional, national and sub-national and private entities can also apply for accreditation with the fund through either the Direct Access track or the International Access track (for regional and international organisations). Details of the accreditation process and required supporting documents are available on the GCF website: <http://www.gcfund.org>.

The position of farmers on climate talks

With the impacts of climate change being felt on food systems around the world, agriculture is one of the issues at the heart of climate change concerns. In December 2014 at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP20) in Peru, farmers' organisations called on governments at the climate to put agriculture on the table for the Paris 2015 climate agreement.

Climate change poses a myriad of threats to agriculture, including the reduction of agricultural productivity, production stability and negative effects on farmers' incomes. The three farmers' organisations, the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), World Farmers' Organisation (WFO), and SACAU strongly believe that agriculture has the potential to be part of the solution, through the mitigation of a significant amount of global emissions. The world's food and farming systems are now facing multiple threats and the ecosystem functions that underpin them are increasingly unstable and subject to more and more unpredictable weather conditions. It is not only the food security and livelihoods of farmers in the developing world that are under threat, it is the agriculture sector everywhere.

"The climate is changing more rapidly than expected, challenging the capability and capacity of agriculture to adapt. This reality must be addressed. Since ever, farmers have been developing resilient actions to adapt to the changing climate, as such, agriculture has the potential to be part of the solution, through the implementation of measures that can enhance farmers' adaptation capacity to climate change effects," stated Marco Marzano, Executive Director of the World Farmers' Organisation. "Despite their important role in climate change adaptation processes, farmers' involvement in global discussions on climate change are often very limited; and the voice of farmers' is not always considered in decision-making processes that directly affect their work and lives."

Although family farmers produce the lion's share of all global agricultural production, half of them are still among the world's hungry. The IFOAM assures that sustainable farming techniques including organic agriculture in soil, water and biodiversity conservation, as well as integrated and sustainable farm management help small farmers be productive, achieve family food security and climate resilience. "Unless family farmers are given the agro-ecological technologies they need to meet challenges posed by climate change, impacts on food production will be devastating, pushing millions into poverty." – declares IFOAM President André Leu.

De Jager, who is also president of the Pan African Farmers' Organisations (PAFO) says that farmers cannot change their circumstances alone and that agriculture must get the attention and support it deserves. "Prosperity in agriculture In Africa can transform the lives of millions of households," he said. "As parties work towards a new climate agreement in Paris next year, we urge them to acknowledge that farmers are particularly vulnerable to climate change and without support their livelihoods and global food security is at great risk. Parties need to urgently agree on a framework for ambitious and far-reaching actions to support adaptation and mitigation in agriculture," the farmers' leaders concluded.