



International Centre for Trade
and Sustainable Development

International
Food & Agricultural Trade
Policy Council



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May 26, 2009

A Copenhagen Agreement Should Consider Agriculture

ICTSD-IPC Platform on Climate Change, Agriculture and Trade Statement and Recommendations

Ahead of the June 1-12 Climate Change Talks taking place in Bonn, the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) and the International Food & Agricultural Trade Policy Council (IPC) are releasing the following statement and recommendations on the need to incorporate agriculture in a new international climate change regime. ICTSD and IPC are doing so on behalf of the Platform on Climate Change, Agriculture and Trade, which convenes climate change, agricultural trade and development experts in order to promote policy coherence on international climate change, agricultural trade and development policies.

The agricultural sector will be profoundly impacted by long-term, slow onset climate change as well as increased climatic variability, including extreme events. Adaptation efforts for this climate-sensitive sector will be a priority. At the same time, the agricultural sector contributes some 14% of global greenhouse gas emissions but also offers relatively low cost mitigation potential. With global food demand expected to double by 2050 and some 70% of the world's poor living in rural areas, the agricultural sector also plays a vital role in food security and economic development. The sector therefore requires a special emphasis in a Copenhagen Agreement across the four areas of the Bali Action Plan: mitigation, adaptation, technology and financing. Given the sector's importance, attention must also be paid to potential unintended spillover effects of climate change policies.

Mitigation

- An improved policy framework is required to provide incentives for mitigation in the agricultural sector, in particular for developing countries, which have the highest (and rising) agricultural greenhouse gas emissions.
- Emphasis must be placed on incentivizing mitigation activities which can also contribute to sustainable development, food security and adaptation.

Adaptation

- More country-specific research on the likely impacts of climate change on national agricultural production - and by extension - specific adaptation needs is required.
- Emphasis must be placed on strengthening adaptive capacities in developing countries, also with an eye towards promoting socio-economic development and food security.

Technology

- Scaled up research and development of new mitigation and adaptation technologies and practices will be required.
- Yet the adoption of already *existing* technologies and agricultural practices could significantly reduce emissions *and* improve agricultural productivity, in particular in developing countries, and should be disseminated more broadly.

Financing

- New and additional climate change resources for mitigation, adaptation and technology transfer should also be explicitly channeled to the agricultural sector, given the positive correlation between climate change response measures in the sector and important development co-benefits.
- Greater coherence should be sought with other funds provided to the agricultural sector both by developing country governments, donors and multilateral financial institutions.
- Market mechanisms should be adapted to incentivize mitigation in the agricultural sector, and also aim to reach agricultural producers in developing countries

Spillover Effects

- The agricultural sector can and should contribute to climate change mitigation, but we must also be mindful of unintended consequences, such as lower agricultural output as a result of emission reduction commitments or of higher prices for agricultural inputs, and be prepared to address them in order not to jeopardize global food security and rural poverty alleviation.
- Although the climate change negotiations are not directly concerned with the global trading system, they should seek to avoid actions with the potential to restrict trade flows. An open trade system leads to more efficient and sustainable global production patterns and international trade of food and agricultural products is a small but critical element of global food security.

About the Platform

In 2008 the International Food & Agricultural Trade Policy Council (IPC) and the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) launched The ICTSD-IPC Platform on Climate Change, Agriculture and Trade: Promoting Policy Coherence. This interdisciplinary platform of climate change, agricultural and trade experts will promote increased policy coherence to ensure effective climate change mitigation and adaptation, food security and a more open and equitable global food system. For more information, see http://www.agritrade.org/events/ClimateChangePlatform_000.html

About the Organizations

***The International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development** was established in Geneva in September 1996 to contribute to a better understanding of development and environment concerns in the context of international trade. As an independent non-profit and non-governmental organization, ICTSD engages a broad range of actors in ongoing dialogue about trade and sustainable development. With a wide network of governmental, non-governmental and inter-governmental partners, ICTSD plays a unique systemic role as a provider of original, non-partisan reporting and facilitation services at the intersection of international trade and sustainable development. More information is available at www.ictsd.net.*

***The International Food & Agricultural Trade Policy Council** promotes a more open and equitable global food system by pursuing pragmatic trade and development policies in food and agriculture to meet the world's growing needs. IPC convenes influential policymakers, agribusiness executives, farm leaders, and academics from developed and developing countries to clarify complex issues, build consensus, and advocate policies to decision-makers. More information on the organization and its membership can be found on our website: www.agritrade.org.*