

Farmers request inclusion of agriculture in COP 21

Southern African farmers and farmer's organisations are shocked by the absence of an agricultural proposal in the draft text for an agreement among parties in the COP-process to replace the Kyoto Protocol.



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The farmers' constituency has been intensely involved in the climate debate both inside and outside the COP-process over the last decade. Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU) and other stakeholders in the public and private sector have persistently demanded that negotiators include agriculture in the global agreement on how to adapt to and mitigate climate change.

"At the very least parties should agree to approach the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) to seek wisdom and gather scientific data in order to guide a global climate strategy for agriculture," said SACAU president Dr Theo de Jager who is also president of the Pan African Farmers Organization (PAFO).

"If a constituency as diverse as our members, ranging from small holders to industrial-scale farming operations, from pastoralists to foresters, dairy to cropping, horticulture to aquaculture, can have a unanimous demand for such a research programme to inform decisions, surely political parties and governments around the negotiation table should be able to follow suit?" said de Jager.

Frustrated farmers

SACAU believes farmers are the most vulnerable to climate change. "No fraternity in the world is more vulnerable to the impact of climate change than farmers. No industry in the global economy can do more in a shorter space of time to adapt to, and even mitigate climate change, than farmers. It simply makes no sense to exclude agriculture from a new agreement. A very frustrated farmers' delegation will represent farmers' voices at COP 21 in Paris from 30 November to 11 December 2015, to air our frustrations and mount pressure on negotiators to include agriculture in the new agreement" said de Jager.

SACAU has launched a massive twitter campaign, #includeagriCOP21 to demand a commitment by the Paris agreement to support farmers. SACAU has called on its 17 national member organisations in 12 countries, its partners, sponsors and sympathizers to actively participate in the #includeagriCOP21 campaign. It also seeks to partner with the Pan African Farmers' organization (PAFO), the World Farmers' Organization (WFO), as well as NGOs, CSOs and other stakeholders in the climate smart agriculture alliance, to support, promote and drive the campaign.

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