

ABUJA STATEMENT ON ACCELERATING AGRICULTURAL ADAPTATION IN AFRICA

*ADVANCING POLITICAL LEADERSHIP, MULTI-SECTORAL
APPROACHES AND CLIMATE FINANCING FOR A
RESILIENT AGRICULTURE IN AFRICA IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE
CRISIS*

ABUJA, NIGERIA-OCTOBER 18,2023



In partnership with the National Climate Change Council of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Africa Adaptation Initiative, and various Civil Society and Non-Governmental Organizations, the Pan

African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA) organized the Inaugural Conference on Accelerating Agricultural Adaptation in Abuja, Nigeria, from October 16 – 18, 2023.

The Conference aimed to assess the state of the agriculture sector in Africa amidst climate change and

devise strategies and approaches to accelerate political commitment and action to strengthen the adaptive capacities and resilience of Africa's agriculture sector.

After three days of expert presentations, experience sharing, and candid discussions, the participants:

1. Noted the 6th Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which states that the world is not on track to keep within reach the 1.5°C limit agreed in Paris. 2. Were alarmed by the potential implications of growing emissions as a result of the observed relapse to dirty energy and inadequate action, especially by the high-emitting industrialized north on agriculture and other economic sectors.

3. Noted the findings of the IPCC Reports AR4 and AR6 that are conclusive on the reality of climate change impacts and assert that Africa will be impacted by climate change under all emission scenarios and projections the region to experience more frequent and intense heatwaves, droughts, floods, storms, and wildfires under all emission scenarios.

4. Reflected on the economic costs that are already piling up, with the IPCC estimates pointing to Africa as having incurred annual losses of \$7 billion due to climate change between 2010 and 2019, which could rise to \$50 billion by 2040 under a high-emissions scenario and reduce gross domestic product (GDP) growth in Africa by 2-4% per year by 2040 and by 10-25% by 2100.

5. Drew on the IPCC report that aptly points to the need for changes in the manner in which we undertake agriculture and offers a useful thought to the framing – a shift from commercial to agroecology-based production systems, a framing that is consistent with the AU Strategy Climate Change Response Strategy 2022 – 2032 that aspires for Climate Resilient production systems, driven by people-centered nature-based solutions to climate change.

6. Reaffirmed that adaptation to climate change is a priority, a matter of survival for Africa which also brings co-benefits for development, and the agricultural sector is core to the adaptation agenda of the continent.

7. Elevated the discourse on climate, health, Environment, and Agriculture and delved into the nexus between these sectors, the impact of climate change on the fragile health systems in Africa, the role of meteorological data in health and agriculture systems, Africa's common position on climate and health and the need for Africa to adopt a holistic adaptation approach in COP negotiations.

8. We are conscious that climate change is impacting people, ecosystems, and economies and is potentially expected to push 122 million more people, mainly farmers from Africa, who are ill-equipped both in capacity and financing to pursue the uncertain transitional pathways out of extreme poverty by 2030.

9. Introspected on the implementation of Africa's agricultural sector blueprints, notably the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the Malabo Declaration, and the critical pillars that anchor climate action in agriculture in these broad-based policy frameworks.

10. Recalled that previous efforts in reforming African agriculture as informed by externalized 'revolutionary' approaches have been largely unsuccessful in transforming the sector. This failure is also linked to weak political visions of the agriculture sector of African leadership.

11. We are concerned that the North has dictated decisions on the transition pathways in advancing commercialization and privatization to 'feed the bulging global population' with little participation in decisions by African farmers.

12. We're aware of the climate-triggered insecurities and migrations that are threatening African People, Economies, and Ecosystems are impacting agricultural practices, decent employment for young people, and resulting in an increased burden for women both in the care economy and in sustaining agricultural productivity.

13. We are further aware that the agriculture sector is largely rain-fed and therefore vulnerable to climate vagaries and that the continent has not invested in the water sector to support its transformation and responsiveness to emerging climate challenges.

14. We are conscious of the contribution of agriculture to carbon emissions, with one-quarter of greenhouse gas emissions emanating from agriculture, forestry, and other land use options mainly from the global north, and the need to strengthen and sustain green, low-carbon agricultural practices in Africa.

15. Were disturbed by an increasing number of false solutions being peddled both as solutions to the challenges facing African Agriculture and as global climate solutions all over the world.

16. Were concerned by the expected impact that carbon market solutions, particularly the expansion of forest land, would have on agricultural production and food security in Africa.

17. We are aware of the meager resources that developing countries receive for adaptation, estimated at 34% of the total share of climate finance, and with data on what goes on to the agriculture sector largely missing.

18. Were disturbed by the consistent failure of the rich and developed countries responsible for the climate catastrophe to provide adequate and prompt support to developing countries to adapt to climate change.

The conference marked an important step in the fight against climate change in the agriculture sector. The insights and reflections shared by the participants offer valuable guidance for policymakers and stakeholders to take prompt and decisive action to tackle the threats of climate change and ensure the well-being of Africa's people, ecosystems, and economies.

In this light, the attendees called upon African governments, Parties to the UNFCCC, and other stakeholders to prioritize locally-led adaptation in agriculture and related sectors by taking the following actions:

A. Securing locally-led adaptation

1. Advocate for the finalization of the framework for the Global Goal on Adaptation under the Paris Agreement. This will enhance our adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience, and reduce vulnerability to climate change. The impact of these efforts should be measurable, reportable, and verifiable.
2. Prioritizing greater decentralization and locally led climate actions in the agriculture sector, which centers the interests of women producers, young people, fisher folks, pastoralists, and other frontline communities affected by the climate crisis. This would involve adopting the principles of Locally Led Climate Adaptation, especially in terms of devolving decision-making to the lowest appropriate level and investing in local capabilities.
3. Embedding Locally-led Led Adaptation principles in the policy and regional program designs of key African and other policy institutions to build resilience for smallholder agricultural producers in Africa.
4. Scale up ambitions in investments in the water sector to secure agricultural production in changing climate, strengthening value chain approaches, and accelerating agricultural adaptation in Africa.
5. Establishing and strengthening a community of practice that draws on all stakeholders, including African researchers, policymakers, smallholder farmers, and others. Together, they can assess the challenges and come up with standard solutions for sustainable agriculture in a changing climate. Their approach should be people-centered and bottom-up, based on Locally Led Adaptation Principles.
6. Delivering more support for technical, financial, and technological needs for Adaptation support. The global north needs to increase its ambition in this area to address the urgent needs of those impacted by climate change.
7. Strengthening existing African adaptation strategies for the health sector, including aligning them with their NAP framework.

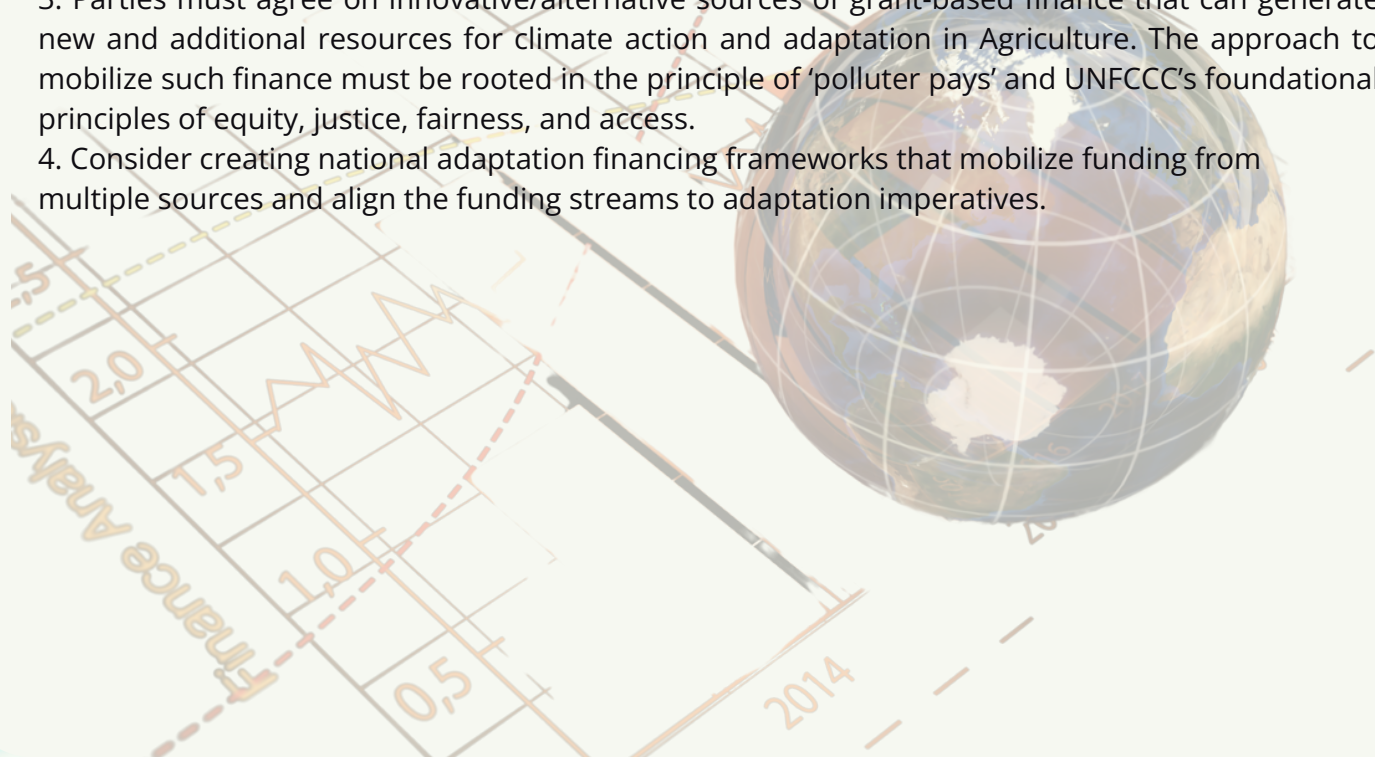


B. Securing Land & Natural Resource Rights for resilience

1. It is crucial to ensure safeguards for communities that are at the forefront of the climate crisis. This includes protecting their rights, security of tenure on land and natural resources, livelihoods, and agricultural systems against any decisions on land-based investments that are likely to impact them.
2. Private investments in Africa must undertake the necessary due diligence to reduce the potential losses and damages inflicted by such investments by embedding just transition principles to address and not exacerbate injustice.
3. Governments in Africa must implement comprehensive and coherent policy and legal reforms that advance landscape approaches in environment, land use, and natural resource governance for enhanced resilience. The formulation and implementation of the policies should be an inclusive and participatory way to reflect the views of communities impacted by climate change.
4. Policy and program actions must take into consideration the disadvantaged women and youth in terms of access to land and other natural resources. Their property rights must be secured as a basis for building sustainable and nature-based production systems.

C. Accelerating access to Climate Finance

1. Accelerating access to climate finance is crucial for African countries to combat the adverse effects of climate change. In this regard, African countries and regions must work together in sharing best practices, knowledge, and experiences and mobilizing climate funds to scale, advancing cross-border programs, promoting renewable energy, strengthening early warning systems, and building resilient infrastructure using nature-based solutions.
2. We urge African countries to prioritize and anchor adaptation imperatives for the agriculture sector when reviewing their National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). To ensure priority funding for the agriculture sector, we encourage the demonstration of its adaptation and mitigation co-benefits and draw on funding from both mitigation and adaptation baskets to implement holistic actions in the sector.
3. Parties must agree on innovative/alternative sources of grant-based finance that can generate new and additional resources for climate action and adaptation in Agriculture. The approach to mobilize such finance must be rooted in the principle of 'polluter pays' and UNFCCC's foundational principles of equity, justice, fairness, and access.
4. Consider creating national adaptation financing frameworks that mobilize funding from multiple sources and align the funding streams to adaptation imperatives.



D. Negotiation process

1. To increase investments and enhance action in adaptation in agriculture and related sectors, we urge all African governments to review their National Adaptation Plans and their Nationally Determined Contributions to ensure they incorporate key priorities and actions on agriculture and align their negotiation ambition to their NDCs.
2. We strongly urge parties to the UNFCCC to accelerate the implementation of the recommendations of the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture. Adequate financing and technology transfer in the agricultural sector is essential for this process.
3. African leaders must prioritize the adaptation agenda in agriculture and amplify their voices to ensure that agriculture is recognized as critical to the adaptation agenda. This should be highlighted in COP28 and in subsequent UNFCCC processes.
4. We advocate for an approach to the implementation of technological transfers in agriculture that supports local initiatives and co-creates innovations with farmers in their local settings for relevance and practical applicability. This will strengthen local ownership and benefits for farmers, advance low-carbon transitions, including agroecology, and enhance value addition and market access.
5. Elevate health at COP negotiations considering implications of climate change to ecosystems, new and emerging patterns of plant and animal diseases, and its overall implications on food and nutrition security and human health.
6. The position of agriculture in the Global Stocktake process should be secured to facilitate sustained assessments and course correction in the implementation of transformative actions in the agriculture and related sectors.

E. On securing just transitions to low carbon, climate resilient pathway in agriculture for Africa.

1. Securing a just transition to a low-carbon and climate-resilient pathway in agriculture for Africa is crucial. To achieve this, African leadership should prioritize global diplomacy in climate change that focuses on policy options and program actions centered on just transitions in the sector. This transition should be structured in a purposeful manner that allows agriculture to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, consistent with the AU Climate Response Strategy.
2. A just transition in agriculture should address several important dimensions, including the carbon footprint, human rights, socio-economic and ecological benefits, health implications, inclusivity, and sustainability considerations. It should focus on how food is produced globally and promote safer, people-centred, and ecologically sustainable production models.
3. At COP28, global north countries should be urged to repurpose global food subsidies to major commercial producers for agroecology, food systems, and market reforms and make these funds available to smallholder farmers to advance sustainable systems of food production.
4. The energy and agriculture nexus should be carefully guided by well-developed programs that promote accessible and decentralized energy systems. Control of energy systems should be centred in communities, and systems such as biomass that promote a circular economy at the farm level should be promoted. Micro-processing plants and value addition in villages should also be encouraged.

F. Response Measures

1. We call for effective implementation of the Katowice Committee of Experts on Implementation of Response Measures (KCI) workplan by fast-tracking the conclusion of the midterm review so that Africa can undertake the new proposed activities for implementation in the context of its national circumstances.
2. The urgent need to provide the needed support to enhance African countries' capacities to carry out their sectoral assessments and analyze the impacts of response measures, including cross-border impacts, just transition, and impacts on trade, and competitiveness, among others.
3. Urgent need to identify and assess the European Union Green Deal on Africa's economic sectors.
4. Enhance the capacities of African countries in the development of tools and methodologies in undertaking projects on just transitions.

G . Just Transition

1. Adoption of an ambitious decision under the work program on just transition pathways that operationalize equity in the pathways for mitigation, adaptation, and finance under the Paris Agreement and is cognizant of the continent's unique needs and circumstances. This should ensure a fair and equitable shift to a low-carbon and climate-resilient development.
2. The need for just transition pathways to consider divergent yet key intersectoral linkages (energy, transport, agriculture, waste management, health) that offer unique opportunities for ensuring and maintaining just transitions of the workforces and creation of decent and green jobs, leveraging the power of youth and future generations towards securing a sustainable and equitable future for all.
3. Emphasize that a just and equitable transition encompasses pathways that include energy, socioeconomic, workforce, and other dimensions, all of which must be based on nationally defined development priorities and included social protection to mitigate potential impacts associated with the transition and highlight the important role of the instruments related to social solidarity and protection in mitigating the impacts of measures taken.

H. Accelerating people-centred innovations

1. Innovations in Agriculture should be grounded in local realities. Engaging communities, including smallholder farmers directly in the process of developing, testing, and learning from innovations can help to reduce risks and enable them to articulate what is working and what is not in line with their unique challenges and contexts.
2. Adaptation finance channels must be reformed to increase the allocation and access to support agricultural innovations at the local level. Financial inclusion and the promotion of access to flexible finance and affordable credit facilities are crucial in helping innovators (including smallholder farmers and youth) to take part in climate action including developing relevant solutions to address climate challenges.
3. We call for coordinated action among sectors and strengthening platforms for participatory dialogue among the diverse range of stakeholders and decision-makers, to develop new partnerships and business models that involve the public and private sectors, civil society, research, extension, and farmer organizations in advancing innovation.
4. We call for adequate investment in youth-led innovations in agriculture which is an essential driver of economic development and job creation by harnessing opportunities in agribusiness entrepreneurship and innovations, including in ICT innovations, along all value chains.