



## Climate Policy Needs to Address the Urgency of Ensuring Sustainable, Equitable, and Climate-Compatible Food and Agriculture Systems\*

Brighter Green welcomes the opportunity to submit input to the COP 24 Talanoa Dialogue process and to the essential tasks of taking stock of progress, and increasing ambition. The Paris Agreement is a significant milestone on the pathway toward a stable climate. But the Agreement and Conference of the Parties (COP) summits have largely ignored a crucial fact: what the world eats and how it produces its food are extremely important factors in addressing climate change, more than most governments and their citizens generally recognize. Without targeting food and agriculture emissions more effectively and directly, the Paris targets cannot be met. The ongoing expansion of animal agriculture and the need to drastically reduce GHGs contradict one another.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's special report includes four scenarios to achieve a 1.5°C increase in atmospheric warming and paint a stark reality. GHG emissions from agriculture — principally through the production of animal-based foods — must be curtailed as we also transform our energy sector to renewables and protect, vastly expand, and restore the world's forested areas. Brighter Green's submission is intended to suggest ways to shift policy, practice, and public education within the framework of the UNFCCC, SBSTA, the KJWA, the finalization of the next NDCs, and global, national, and sub-national climate policy. We welcome feedback from and interest in further dialogue and collaboration with parties, observers, and other stakeholders.

### KEY POINTS

- Without addressing food and agriculture emissions more forcefully, the Paris targets and the goal of limiting atmospheric warming to 1.5°C cannot be met
- Non-CO<sub>2</sub> GHGs in the agriculture and land sector, as well as other sectors, should be addressed more directly
- Including comprehensive food and agriculture policy measures in NDCs offers an opportunity to reduce GHGs and promote food security
- Multi-stakeholder collaboration is needed in both the short and long terms, including within the UNFCCC and national and sub-national climate policy-making processes
- Policies that shift consumption as well as production patterns, especially in populations with historically high consumption of animal products, have many co-benefits for public health, forests and other ecosystems, biodiversity, livelihoods, and more
- Public procurement and the emerging new protein economy offer excellent opportunities to test out bold policies and practices

\*To download the full text, visit <http://brightergreen.org/td>

## ACTIONS

*A multi-pronged approach by governments, cooperating with researchers, civil society organizations, educational institutions, and other stakeholders is most likely to succeed by including:*

- **Public education** campaigns to raise awareness of the climate consequences of meat and other animal-based foods production and consumption that are joined to efforts to inform people about the health and other co-benefits of plant-centered diets.
- **National guidelines for sustainable and healthful diets** that lay out the links between what we eat, natural resources like water and energy, GHGs, and long-term food security; and encouraging and supporting individuals and institutions to purchase and consume more plant-based foods and less meat and other animal-based foods.
- **Procurement to encourage and demonstrate low GHG pathways.** Governments are often the largest buyers of food products, for example for schools, state institutions like hospitals and government ministries, and militaries. They should put priority on purchasing low GHG foods (mainly vegetables, fruits, legumes, and grains) and by doing so, help transform national and global food supply chains and priorities.
- **Governments taking bold steps to internalize the costs of meat production,** including to the global climate, and ending tax and other incentives for growing feed crops. Governments should identify and remove or redirect subsidies and fiscal policies for practices that threaten the Paris Agreement and that have negative effects on forests, other ecosystems, soils, water, and overall resilience to the effects of global warming.
- **Governments holding industry accountable to reform current business models.** They can also work with the private sector to develop labels that clearly identify low-GHG, food products; encourage investment in development of alternatives to animal-based protein, including plant-based proteins and cellular meat; and create a regulatory environment to support such innovation.
- **The UNFCCC providing technical assistance** for parties to integrate food and agriculture into NDCs, guided by the stark realities and opportunities for large-scale action laid out in the IPCC 1.5°C report.
- **Global climate and development policies in tandem promoting sustainable diets and systems of food production** to achieve accelerated emissions reductions and the SDGs, specifically Goals 2 (zero hunger), 3 (good health and wellbeing), 12 (responsible production and consumption), 13 (combat climate change and its impacts), and 15 (life on land).

Given the potential, and the benefits, why wouldn't reducing GHGs from meat and other animal-based foods consumption and production become a priority for parties? Stabilizing the global climate – and ensuring the protection of public health, forests and other ecosystems, biodiversity, livelihoods, the lives of billions of animals (both domesticated and wild) – requires no less.