



Climate Policy Must Support Sustainable, Equitable, and Climate-Compatible Food and Agriculture

Policy Recommendations for COP25, Madrid

As we enter the 2020s the nations of the planet are at a decisive juncture. Three recent UN reports and the findings of the EAT–Lancet Commission all agree. Warming of the Earth’s atmosphere cannot be kept to 1.5 degrees Celsius, massive biodiversity decline cannot be stopped, and we cannot feed the 9 or 10 billion people who will be alive later this century if we do not change the food system. According to the 100 scientists who contributed to the IPCC “land” report, food security around the world is at risk and agriculture has caused significant damage to Earth’s forests and soils. Among the report’s specific recommendations are to cut the shocking one-third of food that’s wasted and to shift diets away from meat and dairy products and toward plant-based foods.

Brighter Green makes the following policy recommendations to UNFCCC delegates and technical bodies in the context of COP25, the KJWA process, 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:

- To meet the Paris agreement targets, GHGs from food and agriculture must be addressed on a basis of urgency.
- Non-CO₂ GHGs in the agriculture and land sector like methane and nitrous oxide should be accorded the attention their warming impacts merit.
- Including comprehensive food and agriculture policy measures in NDCs offers an opportunity to reduce GHGs and promote food security.

(See over)

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- 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, eg. for public health, forests and other ecosystems, biodiversity, livelihoods, and animal welfare.
- Public procurement and the emerging new protein economy offer excellent opportunities to test out and scale up bold policies and practices to reduce GHGs and support climate-compatible food systems.

We know that food is deeply embedded in culture, family, and community. But recent IPCC and IPBES reports and a growing body of other evidence underline the fact that food is no longer just a personal matter. Instead, food and agriculture must be central to climate policy. Ongoing expansion of animal agriculture and the need to drastically reduce GHGs contradict one another. GHG emissions from agriculture — principally through the production animal-based foods — must be curtailed as we also transform our energy sector to renewables, and protect, vastly expand, and restore the world’s forests and ecosystems.



Brighter Green is a public policy action tank that works to raise awareness of and encourage policy action on issues that span the environment, animals, and sustainability. Based in New York, Brighter Green works in the U.S. and internationally with a focus on the countries of the global South and a strong commitment to ensuring and expanding equity and rights.



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