

THE NEED TO TRANSFORM FOOD SYSTEMS: A JOINT STATEMENT ON THE NEXUS BETWEEN CLIMATE CHANGE AND ANIMAL AGRICULTURE, 2022

19th October 2022

Introduction and background

We are a coalition of Civil Society Organizations in Africa working towards humane, sustainable, and resilient food systems that are safe for animals, people, and our planet. We seek to change how these systems work by ending industrial livestock farming and reorienting support mechanisms to agroecological and regenerative systems.

We welcome the sixth assessment report by IPCC¹ that calls for decarbonization in all sectors including food systems in mitigating climate change, and equally take cognizance of the forthcoming UNFCCC COP 27 meeting² to be held in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from animal agriculture are estimated at 14.5%³, majorly coming from industrial production systems dominated in developed nations. These systems not only contribute to climate change but also place a substantial public health risk, increase resource use inefficiencies and environmental damage, and causing marginalization of small-scale farmers.

We demand that COP 27 and governments put equal attention to transforming food systems to holistically tackle climate change

We cannot tackle climate change without addressing food systems. GHG emissions from industrial farms in the Global North have worsened the climate change crisis, while the Global South, where the poorest of the poor live, is the most vulnerable, and continue to be disproportionately affected by the climate crisis.

Although Africa contributes the smallest share of global GHG emissions, it remains the most challenged to withstand the erratic weather events caused by climate change, especially on the rural communities and small-scale farmers who depend largely on natural resources for food production and livelihood.

It is therefore imperative to find alternative ways to achieve food and nutrition security sustainably without further expansion of industrial agriculture that inefficiently use the limited natural resources while negatively impacting on the planetary health. Access to humane, sustainable, and resilient food systems will play a key role in ensuring food security to the growing global population.

Empowering of the small-scale farmers who have high integration of crop and livestock farming will play a significant role in reducing global warming and making Africa more climate resilient, animal welfare compliant and food and nutrition secure. Additionally, this will help safeguard the livelihood of the world's most vulnerable populations and preserve their heritage.

Our Call to Action

We call on COP 27 to recognize the critical role that African traditional food systems (small-scale farmers) play in sustainable and climate smart agriculture that provide food and protects our environment and ensure a climate-safe future.

We call on the Global North to desist from exporting practices that are climate unfriendly, and African governments to discourage such entrenchment; and instead, promote inherent African traditional food systems that are built on principles of nutrient circularity and agroecology.

We call upon climate financiers to redirect much needed finances to boost the indigenous small-scale farmers that play a critical role in providing affordable food and livelihood to the local communities.

¹ IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis (<https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/>))

² UN Climate Change Conference 2022 (UNFCCC COP 27) 7 – 18 November 2022 Sharm el-Sheikh, South Sinai, Egypt (<https://unfccc.int/cop27>)

³ Gerber, P.J.; Steinfeld, H.; Henderson, B.; Mottet, A.; Opio, C.; Dijkman, J.; Faluccci, A.; Tempio, G. (2013) *Tackling Climate Change Through Livestock—A Global Assessment of Emissions and Mitigation Opportunities*. Food and Agricultural Organization, Rome.

Please contact PatrickMuinde@worldanimalprotection.org for any follow-up, questions, or clarification.

This statement is endorsed by the following Civil Society Organizations in Africa.

1. World Animal Protection (<https://www.worldanimalprotection.org/ke/>)
2. Brighter Green (<https://brightergreen.org/>)
3. Africa Network for Animal Welfare (<https://www.anaw.org/>)
4. Kenya Youth Biodiversity Network (<https://youth4biodiversity.org/>)
5. Action for Protection of Animals Africa (<https://www.actionprotectionanimalsafrica.org/>)
6. Farming Systems Kenya (<https://farmingssystemskkenya.org/>)
7. Green Town Initiative (<https://www.greentownsinitiative.org/>)
8. Coalition for Africa Animal Welfare Organization (<https://caawo.org/>)
9. Open Wing Alliance (<https://openwingalliance.org/>)
10. Rwanda Animal Welfare Organization (<http://www.rawo.org.rw/>)
11. Education for Africans Animals Welfare (<http://www.animalwelfareafrica.org/>)
12. Ghana Society for the Protection and Care of Animals (<https://www.ghanaspca.org/>)
13. Biovision Africa Trust (<https://biovisionafricatrust.org/>)
14. Pan Africa Network for Laboratory Animal Science and Ethics
15. WTG Welttierschutz-gesellschaft e.V (<https://welttierschutz.org/>)
16. WTS Welttierschutz-stiftung (<https://welttierschutz.org/stiftung/>)
17. Lilongwe Society for Protection and Care of Animals (<http://lilongwespc.org/>)
18. National Council of SPCAs (South Africa) (<https://nspca.co.za/>)
19. Compassion in World Farming (South Africa) (<https://www.animalvoice.org/>)
20. Nature-Based.Education (<https://www.naturebased.education/>)
21. Slow Food Kenya (<https://slowfoodkenya.org/>)
22. Zimbabwe Youth Biodiversity Network (<https://zybn.org/>)
23. Africa's Voices Foundation (<https://www.africasvoices.org/>)
24. Healthier Hens (<https://www.healthierhens.com/>)
25. Animal Law Reform South Africa (<https://www.animallawreform.org/>)
26. Lawyers for Animal Protection in Africa (<https://lapa.africa/>)



