

Policy Recommendations for the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI 44), Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA 44), and Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement (APA 1)
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
16-26 May 2016, Bonn, Germany

In December 2015, Parties to the UNFCCC finalized a new international climate accord—the Paris Agreement—to guide nations as they deliver on global goals for climate action. In Paris, countries agreed to global targets on both mitigation and adaptation. Although much work remains, this agreement represents historic collective commitment for addressing climate change, with buy-in from nearly every country.

Countries must maintain the momentum realized at the Twenty-first Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 21) by ramping up meaningful action on climate change in the lead-up to 2020 and beyond, as well as by making sound decisions to accelerate implementation of the Paris Agreement as soon as it enters into force. Nature-based solutions are an essential component of the global response to combat climate change and must be strongly supported in the outcomes from SBI/SBSTA 44 and APA 1.

Conservation International believes that the success of the new climate agreement will require harnessing the full potential of nature-based solutions to mitigate and help people adapt to climate change. These measures, such as REDD+, climate-smart agriculture, coastal carbon and ecosystem-based adaptation, make financial sense, provide multiple benefits beyond mitigation and adaptation, and are critical to sustaining and increasing collective ambition.

Conservation International recommends that SBI/SBSTA 44 and APA 1:

- Encourage countries to reduce emissions from all sectors as part of their nationally determined contributions (NDCs), including the land sector (e.g., agriculture and forest land) and, if applicable, coastal zones;
- In instances of voluntary cooperation on implementation of national commitments, encourage transfers from high-quality mitigation activities across all sectors, with strong provisions for transparency and accounting to ensure environmental integrity and prevent double claiming of reductions;
- Include additional activities in the Nairobi Work Programme modalities of work to enhance knowledge sharing on adaptation in support of the Paris Agreement, such as provision of guidance for sectoral integration of shared adaptation goals, identification of concrete opportunities to disseminate and apply lessons learned, and cultivation of strategic partnerships with organizations operating at various scales;
- Recognize the important role of ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) approaches for improving farmers' resilience to climate change while also providing environmental and socio-economic benefits;

- Ensure that increased flows of climate finance are provided and mobilized for nature-based solutions to climate change, in proportion to the benefits that these solutions provide;
- Ensure that the modalities, procedures and guidelines regarding transparency fully recognize the potential and challenges of emission reductions from forests and other ecosystems, and are designed to promote improvements in mitigation actions in the land sector over time; and
- To enhance pre-2020 climate action, agree on concrete mechanisms for increased funding that prioritize ready-to-deploy activities such as REDD+, climate-smart agriculture, coastal carbon, ecosystem-based adaptation and other nature-based solutions with high mitigation and adaptation benefits.

AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON THE PARIS AGREEMENT (APA 1)

The Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement (APA), meeting for its first session in May, will prepare essential elements for the entry into force and implementation of this landmark agreement. The APA will complete its work by the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 1). Conservation International urges the APA to make swift progress on developing the modalities for the implementation of the Paris Agreement, as the Agreement may enter into force before 2020.

MITIGATION

At COP 21, countries agreed to limit warming to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit temperature increase to 1.5°C. This global goal for mitigation was one of the most significant elements of the Agreement, setting a benchmark for all implementation efforts and reinforcing the importance of ambitious and immediate action to prevent the most harmful impacts of climate change.

Nationally Determined Contributions

Countries' commitments to reduce national carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions, as outlined in their intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs), will serve as the main vehicle for delivering the objectives of the Paris Agreement. As countries ratify the Paris Agreement, their INDCs will convert to NDCs. The collective ambition and implementation of NDCs will determine the progress toward delivering on the goals of the Paris Agreement. At COP 21, countries agreed to periodically take stock of NDC implementation to inform updating and enhancing of future actions.

At its first session, the APA will discuss "Further guidance relating to nationally determined contributions referred to in Article 4 of the Paris Agreement." **Conservation International strongly believes that this guidance should encourage countries to reduce emissions from all sectors as part of their NDCs, including climate action that addresses emissions from the land sector (e.g., agriculture and forest land) and, if applicable, coastal zones.** Furthermore, emission reductions and sequestration from the land sector, as long as they meet safeguards and

follow appropriate accounting rules, should be considered fungible with other sectors and recognized globally. **The APA should also provide guidance on how to facilitate adaptation implementation with strong linkages to the national adaptation plan (NAP) process and means of implementation, so as to enhance predictability of action and support.**

Internationally Transferred Mitigation Outcomes

The Agreement also recognized that some countries may choose to meet at least part of their national commitments to reduce emissions by cooperating with other countries through investment in mitigation activities abroad, as indicated in a number of NDCs. The Agreement acknowledged that such cooperation may increase ambition while promoting sustainable development and environmental integrity. The Agreement specified that countries shall apply robust accounting rules and avoid the double counting of internationally transferred mitigation outcomes. **In its guidance regarding the transfers of international mitigation outcomes, the SBSTA should encourage transfers from high-quality mitigation activities across all sectors, with strong provisions for transparency and accounting to ensure environmental integrity and prevent double claiming of reductions.**

ADAPTATION

The Paris Agreement included language that underscored the importance of adaptation and corrected a historical imbalance between mitigation and adaptation, both in terms of the political importance given to adaptation as well as the amount of finance and other means of implementation provided to support implementation of adaptation in developing countries. The Paris Agreement established a global goal for adaptation that seeks to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change.

The Paris Agreement seeks to facilitate cooperation between countries to share experiences on adaptation and strengthen collective knowledge, but also to support adaptation planning, prioritization and implementation for all countries. These actions should create a space for effectively learning and applying lessons from measures like EbA at the regional and transboundary levels. Many of these efforts can be supported by the Nairobi Work Programme (NWP), an existing Convention body that has created a space for practitioners, academia, the private sector and governments to exchange information and experiences to enhance learning and adaptation action. However, despite its potential, the NWP is not well utilized at regional, national or subnational scales.

Conservation International welcomes the report in document FCCC/SBSTA/2016/INF.4, which takes stock of progress to date to inform SBSTA discussions on further elaborating additional activities, particularly to support the NAP process. **Specifically, we invite SBSTA to consider the following additional activities as part of the new and enhanced modalities of work for the NWP:**

- Provide guidance on the means and modalities for the integration of sectors toward shared adaptation goals;

- Identify concrete opportunities to disseminate and apply the lessons learned from previously held workshops and events, or from existing NWP products/reports;
- Collect and curate relevant materials and resources both regionally and thematically to facilitate learning; and
- Cultivate strategic partnerships with organizations operating at various scales to facilitate coordination across the private sector, governments and community/civil society organizations.

Agriculture and Adaptation

At the request of the COP, the SBSTA carried out an analysis to identify the relationship between adaptation and agriculture. Parties and admitted observer organizations were invited to provide inputs to inform SBSTA's draft recommendations.

Conservation International encourages SBSTA to consider the important role of EbA approaches for improving farmers' resilience to climate change while also providing environmental and socio-economic benefits. EbA practices are already well known and already used by farmers, but current financial, political and technical constraints limit widespread adoption of these practices among smallholder farmers. **It is critical that policy makers at all levels recognize and promote the use of EbA approaches in agricultural development, climate change and environmental strategies, and support their widespread adoption through policies, technical support and funding.**

EbA can be used at the farm and at the landscape/regional levels to help smallholder farmers adapt to climate change. Many agricultural systems can provide mitigation and adaptation benefits if they are designed and managed appropriately and if the larger landscape context is considered.

SBSTA is also encouraged to recognize that key dimensions of indigenous knowledge systems foster climate-resilient agricultural systems that can result in climate change adaptation benefits. The multidimensional and multifactorial approach of traditional agriculture can provide additional co-benefits, including increased food security of the families themselves who practice agriculture.

FINANCE

In Paris, developed countries agreed to continue to provide financial support for climate action in developing countries, recognizing the importance of increasing their support and also expanding the sources of funds for climate solutions. The Agreement emphasized the importance of immediate investments for mitigation and adaptation as well as supporting developing countries and, in particular, those most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The Agreement decision called on developed countries to continue to provide financial resources to developing countries and encouraged other Parties to do so on a voluntary basis. In the accompanying decision, countries agreed that developed countries would continue to mobilize finance in line with their existing finance goal of US\$100 billion per year and would discuss setting a new quantified finance goal before 2025. **It is essential that levels of climate finance continue to increase in the lead-up to 2020**

and beyond to maintain the momentum of activities before the Paris Agreement enters into force.

At COP 21, countries requested the SBSTA to develop guidance for measuring and reporting on public sector climate finance. Transparent methodologies for defining, measuring and reporting climate finance provided and mobilized will be extremely important for understanding existing flows, as well as barriers that need to be addressed to unlock additional finance from all sources, including the private sector.

In their efforts to increase flows of climate finance, countries should ensure that sufficient levels of finance are provided and mobilized for nature-based solutions (including REDD+, blue carbon and EbA) to climate change, in proportion to the benefits that these solutions provide. Countries should encourage the creation of enabling environments for climate investments, and outline policy and legal frameworks for delivering increased levels of financial resources from both public and private sources. These frameworks should facilitate the use of innovative finance mechanisms that help ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable management of ecosystems, and ensure their contribution to climate regulation and resilience, as these instruments can incentivize action and accelerate the shift to a low-emission and climate-resilient economy.

TRANSPARENCY

Transparency and accounting rules are essential for ensuring that mitigation and adaptation actions are delivered as promised and consistent with environmental and social priorities. Transparency and strong environmental integrity of the land sector will require that all countries use consistent accounting principles which should be based on previous COP decisions, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) approaches and the best-available science. **The modalities, procedures and guidelines regarding transparency should fully recognize the potential and challenges of emission reductions from forests and other ecosystems, and should be designed to promote improvements in mitigation actions in the land sector over time.**

PRE-2020 ACTION

It is crucial that countries maintain the momentum from COP 21 and ramp up their climate action between now and 2020. **Countries should agree on concrete mechanisms for increased funding that prioritizes ready-to-deploy activities such as REDD+, climate-smart agriculture, coastal carbon, ecosystem-based adaptation and other nature-based solutions with high mitigation and adaptation benefits. Parties should continue to encourage commitments from non-state actors as well as the implementation of these pledges, including through the Action Agenda, private sector partnerships and other channels.**