CCD Land Day
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Panel Session 3

SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT LAND IN CLIMATE CHANGE FRAMEWORKS

Beyond the Copenhagen agreement: Options and mechanism needed for the inclusion of soils in mitigation.

- In the context of the Climate Chance Framework Convention land issues are being considered in two main areas, mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

- I will focus mainly on mitigation as requested, but it is important to take into account as you considered in a previous panel, that adaptation under the expected Copenhagen agreed outcome also opens a wide range of opportunities for enhanced land management.

Mitigation

As several speakers have already mentioned:

- **Agriculture has a large mitigation potential**.

- Depending on national circumstances, this potential lies mostly in the **sequestration of carbon in agricultural soils.** The **most prominent mitigation options** include:

    - improved crop and grazing land management (improved agronomic practices, nutrient use, tillage, and residue management),
    - restoration of degraded lands,
    - restoration of organic soils

For example, recently Swaziland on behalf of other 11 African Parties submitted their views to the Convention highlighting the potential importance of soils, and including some practices to increase the carbon in soils like the use of biochar as a possible mitigation practice to be considered.

Other mitigation options broadly recommended are relating to land management, for example:

- set asides
- land use change (e.g, conversion of cropland to grassland)
- agro-forestry.

- At global level and country level the 4AR of the IPCCC and the Technical paper prepared by the UNFCCC Secretariat for the AWG LCA, contained in document FCCC/TP/2008/8, the following can be highlighted on the potential role of soils in mitigation:

- Different land types have associated different best practices and potentials to mitigate climate change. Same can be said from the different carbon pools.
- Uncertainties are particularly high when dealing with estimations of carbon stock changes in soils.
- There are important challenges that need to be resolve in order to successfully incorporate mitigation in soils in the mitigation portfolios.

- The technical paper also provides information on relative mitigation potential by unit of production, methodologies to estimated emissions (including relevant elements to measure, report and verification of emissions), challenges/barriers (related to policies, poverty, knowledge and extension), opportunities (feasibility, cost-effectiveness, synergy and with adaptation) and potential co-benefits and contribution to sustainable development). This information is summarized in its Table 30.

- It also presents information on future mitigation practices: gaps and future needs, including their relative mitigation potential, information gaps and needs, as well as, on relevant issues on research and development, and on required technological cooperation. This information is summarized in its Table 31.

- While considering the role of particular mitigation options, such as practices to enhance carbon in soils it is important to take into account that there is no one size fitting all. Each country would have to decide on key issues for its mitigation strategy portfolio, recognizing its national environmental, social and economic circumstances.

- Synergy between climate change mitigation and adaptation policies, sustainable development and improvement of environmental quality

would provide additional incentives to promoting and realizing the mitigation potential of policies and measures in agriculture.

- To achieve the best combination/portfolio of practices in a particular land area to realize its mitigation potential should be the goal. However we have to keep in mind that the "best portfolio" does not necessary mean more carbon to be stored, but look for a sustainable land management while enhancing carbon sequestration. Lands fulfil more functions than sequestering carbon, it is up to the countries, local communities and all stakeholders to seek for the best possible fulfilments of those functions.

- Such activities could help inhabitants of drylands cope better with the effects of desertification, land degradation and drought, and is synonymous with sustainable development efforts, climate change adaptation response measures and emission reductions.

- In the workshop on opportunities and challenges for mitigation in the agriculture sector, organized under the LCA, Parties noted that:

    - in many cases mitigation and adaptation get intertwined and must be addressed simultaneously.

    - A combination of different existing and new sources of financing, including carbon market instruments and investments, technology transfer and deployment, and capacity building are needed also for the agricultural sector and to help farmers at the local level engage in agricultural practices. Key requirements for delivering finance to agriculture include aggregation capacity across a large number of farmers; flexible and innovative payment schemes/institutions that address risks, investment and cash flow needs; supportive policies and institutions and recognition of indigenous people and community rights; and simplified rules and transaction costs.

    - Parties expressed a need to upgrade North-South as well as South-South cooperation in order to realize the potential of the opportunities for mitigation in agriculture. South-South cooperation, including on sharing information on mitigation practices, was mentioned as particularly important for developing countries with similar circumstances. In this regard, Parties also need to develop national strategies for mitigation in agriculture,

taking into account national circumstances and links with regional and global actions.

Towards Copenhagen and beyond.

- **As the Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, Mr. Yvo de Boer, mentioned earlier today, the scope and scale of developing countries' nationally appropriate mitigation actions - or NAMAs - has not yet been defined by the negotiations**. But judging from Parties proposals, they could include anything from **REDD actions to mitigation in agriculture** to boosting energy efficiency, provided that international support is available and the **additional mitigation benefit can be measured, reported and verified.**

- NAMAs could be a mechanism to enhance the implementation of the relevant provisions of the Climate Change Convention by facilitating and identification, mobilization and matching support required to implement NAMAs by developing country Parties.

- Parties for which the enhancement of the potentials of soils in sequestering carbon specifically in drylands could constitute an important option to address climate change should follow the negotiations related to National Appropriate Mitigation Actions by developing countries under the Ad-hoc Working Group on Long Term Cooperative Action..

- Possibly the issue is not to mention specific practices or technologies to be included in the text. This has not been the practice used by most Parties in their submission and therefore, you can not see these details in the current negotiation text prepared by the Chair LCA contained in document FCCC/AWLCA/2009/8.

- Possibly the most important issue is to ensure that Parties may select their own NAMAs, and that those that will benefit for international support could be measured, reported and verified. This may be a challenge for many land management practices and it would be essential for Parties and the relevant international cooperation to focus efforts on these matters. MRV of actual emission reduction or limitation.

- Speaking on land management we should mention the close relation it has with forestry. In this context it is important that developing

country Parties follow closely the ongoing negotiations under the UNFCCC related to policy approached and positive incentives relating toe reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries.

- Actions under the so called REDD plus may ensure significant emission reductions and collateral adaptation benefits, that under a meaningful outcome of the negotiations and sound implementation could also bring significant benefits to many developing countries and significant parts of their most vulnerable population. Soils are one of the pools that may need to be considered in the context of REDD.

- This is especially important also for REDD, to develop robust and cost-effective methodologies and forest monitoring systems for measuring actual emission reductions, with international support, as decision 2/CP.13 call for.

- Finally, the international community is working hard within the UNFCCC and supported by many other relevant processes, to conclude an ambitious deal in Copenhagen this year.

- It is expected that in addition to significant reductions of emissions to address climate change by developed countries and appropriate mitigation actions by developing countries, the deal will include the provision of significant, additional and predictable financial support for adaptation and mitigation to developing countries.

- Developing countries with arid and semi-arid areas or areas liable to floods, drought and desertification are among those that could benefit more of the expected agreed outcome for a climate change deal post 2012.