



**YOUNGO**  
Dated: May 05, 2019

## **Views on elements to be included in Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture**

The official Youth Constituency to the UNFCCC (known as 'YOUNGO') is pleased to offer this submission on its views for Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture. This submission concerning the views includes several recommendations from YOUNGO to promote this pillar under the Paris Agreement.

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**On behalf of YOUNGO - the Youth Constituency to UNFCCC.**

## Introduction

With reference to Decision –CP/23, which invited Parties and observers to submit their views on elements to be included in the joint SBSTA-SBI work that is now known as the ‘Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture’ (KJWA), YOUNGO hereby gives its inputs, for the workshops to be held at SB 50 on topics 2 (b) and 2 (c). Topic 2 (b) includes, ‘Methods and approaches for assessing adaptation, adaptation co-benefits and resilience.’ Topic 2 (c) includes, ‘Improved soil carbon, soil health and soil fertility under grassland and cropland as well as integrated systems, including water management’.

**YOUNGO recommends that the following issues be focused upon:**

### General observations

First of all, YOUNGO would like to give certain suggestions regarding the workshops’ format:

1. We suggest a format for this year's workshop that will give more place to local non-state actors (not considering parties as ‘local actors’).
2. We suggest getting inspired by initiatives such as those submitted to the recent call for contributions by YOUNGO to the FAO.
3. We suggest giving more space to a Q&A between participants, and less to presentations where very little information is added in comparison to a simple written document.
4. To make the Q&A more efficient, we suggest that institutions, bodies and actors send reports and/or answers to questions beforehand so that there is more time for a Q&A session, with **all types of actors** actively involved, which is really the additional value of having all parties and non-party stakeholders along with constituted bodies at the workshop.
5. Whilst we acknowledge the importance of diplomatic etiquette and speaking procedures during negotiations, we also suggest that the workshop should really be considered as a working place. In consequence, in order to accelerate the process and make efficient use of the restricted time we have during sessions, we suggest limiting parties and observers interventions to the minimum, as we would do in a normal working session.
6. Organising round tables with some parties, constituted bodies representatives’ and non-party stakeholders in each round table would be a great opportunity for effective discussion, during workshop. In this respect, we also want to acknowledge the fact that at the last workshop, observers were allowed to intervene and ask questions before the end of the session, in order to contribute insightfully to the work. This should always be

allowed, sought out and encouraged, and it should be considered as the strict minimum. A more in-depth engagement such as the previous example should be sought.

## **2b: Methods and approaches for assessing adaptation, adaptation co-benefits and resilience**

### ***Our vision***

Adaptation is a key component of climate action, particularly essential for agriculture. As part of our climate justice vision, we support an approach to adaptation that is positively **transformational**, rather than simply incremental. We advocate for **systemic and structural changes within and beyond the agricultural sector**, in order to develop sustainable agricultural and food systems that are environmentally just and socially prosperous. We call for a focus on long-term transformations, designed collectively and democratically that would be developed from a political ecology perspective, to create synergy between adaptation (i.e. National Adaptation Plans) and mitigation (i.e. Nationally Determined Contributions), instead of top-down imposed short-term fixes. We want to push for social, economic and environmental resilience: the holistic improvement in the capacity of agricultural systems to cope with growing threats like natural disasters. We support adaptive action that is flexible, robust and low-regress, making space for uncertainty within decision-making. And, we believe that transformational climate adaptation has many co-benefits for sustainable development as a whole, specially in areas related to agriculture such as food security.

### ***Aspects to consider for assessments***

In order to take the path that would lead to the vision described above, the assessment of adaptation, adaptation co-benefits and resilience, must respect the following aspects:

- Assessments must be **holistic**. In this regard, addressing co-benefits and co-nuisance of climate action regarding adaptation and resilience is mandatory. It must also be multi-dimensional, including the **social, political and environmental** dimensions of plans, activities and initiatives.
- The current state of knowledge offers a **range of adaptation co-benefits assessment methods including**, but not limited to :
  1. Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA);
  2. Cost-Effectiveness Analysis (CEA);
  3. Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA), etc.

Each of these methods has its own benefits and limitations, and thus should be used depending on adaptation objectives that must be decided by all stakeholders, including (national and subnational) government, the private sector, civil society, parliament, scientific communities, etc.

- Assessments **can not only be done through financial and quantitative methods**. Qualitative methodology must be used too, relying on sound and triangulated data. Some realities are imperfectly described in financial or numerical terms - even though we recognize the advantageous simplicity that a financial reference or countable indicator allows. For example, health improvements, protection of patrimonial lands, reduction of land grants, protection of the rights of indigenous people, continual source of food and water, better nutrition and likewise are all indicators that can be hard to quantify but that are to be taken into account in a holistic assessment process.
- Assessments should consider the level of involvement of **civil society**, community based organisations and NGOs or rather consider the principles of co-creation by adopting the Open Government Partnership (OGP), which promote sitting together between the stakeholders instead of the traditional means of pointing fingers on each other. In this respect, the process must be **highly participatory**, collaborative and inclusive in nature. **Participatory Learning and Action approaches and methods** are also encouraged, to incorporate the knowledge of local and community stakeholders at the ground level, as well as to promote their active and meaningful engagement. In particular, the input of small-holder, traditional and/or subsistence farmers, pastoralists, horticulturalists, regenerative agriculturists and permaculturists should be included in consultations and projects.
- Assessments should be **inclusive**, mindful of equality and diversity issues, and particularly considering the involvement of women and youth at different levels.
- Assessments ought to consider both **technical and structural** changes. This includes changes in social, political, economic structures.
- Assessments must also address **cross-sectoral linkages** and clearly establish priorities. For instance, assessments must take into account the relationship between agriculture, water and energy, and provide guidance on options.
- Assessment must be **information-driven**, consistent and adapted within the national and local context.
- Assessments must be an **iterative process** of social, institutional and organizational learning and change for effective climate-resilient agriculture and community.
- Assessment must use **indicators** in order to be result-oriented. Both secondary and primary dataset can be used to inform and track indicators. In addition, **local, indigenous and traditional knowledge and data** should be considered and included in the design of indicators. This would involve **interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches** to research, monitoring and evaluation, including experts from different fields, such as anthropology, geography, environmental science, development, economics, agricultural science and policy, engineering, etc.
- Adequate assessment is key for effective climate action. **Good practices** have already been developed and used in many countries. Governments, international institutions, the

international community and on the ground actors must build on those to have coherent action. In order to strengthen adaptation capacity through site-specific local measures, the **assessment of those adaptation measures** should be done beforehand, and then capacity building should be provided. **Imposing new technology and forcing farmers to apply it, never works!**

- Assessment must also include a **cartography of actors**, taking into account interests and power-relations.

**Suggested criteria to be included in the design of adequate indicators to evaluate climate action**

- Increase in sustainable infrastructure and low-carbon tools/equipment.
- Quantity and quality of research done in a given region or country, as well as the topics studied and the background of the researchers (indigenous, women, youth, rural communities).
- Specificity of practices used in a region - compared to generalized approaches and practices
- Presence or quantity of farmer-friendly **Disaster Risk Reduction Technologies** and early warning systems (like forecasting..) to help farmers adapt to climate related shocks and damage in the agricultural sector. DRR should follow the “Pressure and Release” model approach to vulnerability, looking at the wider causes, pressures and conditions that create risk, and that, combined with hazards, lead to disasters.
- Presence/percentage of given practices like agroforestry, agroecology, sustainable management of agricultural land to store carbon, restoring degraded land and improving soil health, reducing food loss and waste through innovative measures, promoting climate-friendly forest and land use activities, and possibility for women farmers to have access to resources, land and technology.
- Presence of local and traditional adaptation practices.
- Amount of funding from financial mechanisms directed to adaptation for the agricultural sector, and typology of actors accessing it.

**2c : Improved soil carbon, soil health and soil fertility under grassland and cropland as well as integrated systems, including water management**

First, we expect this workshop to lead to increased climate action around soil for adaptation, mitigation, increased resilience and co-benefits. It should also lead to facilitation of good practices by farmers and the community of actors around them.

Second, we expect parties to use a holistic approach in their work during SB 50 as well as regarding the place of soils in their planning documents/NAPs/NDCs. In particular, the mitigation potential of soil should not remain absent from such documents.

Third, regarding funding, prior to the next workshop, YOUNGO suggests having a report written by international funding institutions and parties that would be sent to observers and parties, summarizing:

- the challenges of financing climate action in relation to soil in agriculture
- a summary of sums, regions and type of projects targeted at soil health, soil conservation, carbon absorption and/or soil organic matter

Again, we DO NOT recommend the format used in COP 24: the presentations took up much of the workshop's time and didn't help parties more than a report with pictures and outline drawings would've been able to do.

Fourth, in coherence with such a report, the SB 50 workshops should discuss how funding can be made readily available for projects addressing soils in terms of adaptation and mitigation - including initiatives by local actors. As many parties mentioned previously, small-holder farmers are those most hit by climate change, those having the hardest time accessing funding, yet key for the economy and the livelihoods of people in many of the parties' countries.

In this respect, criteria must be designed during the workshop to support effective action **and to** stop financing projects which aren't efficient, developing action plan and permanent dialogue mechanism for monitoring and evaluation. The criteria must of course be designed with the same holistic approach as suggested previously. In this respect, the negative social impacts of "good for the soil" practices should be carefully studied by independent experts.

Fifth, to orient good practices in the field, we underline the importance of learning from indigenous and traditional practices and knowledge that nurture soil, promote conservation agriculture, make use of compost, and have an integrated approach. Many farmers around the world have developed such expertise that should be shared widely. Hence, as we recognise the fact that technology transfer is needed for some farmers, knowledge and expertise transfer must also be extensively developed and shared, through conferences, trainings, online platforms, co-creation online apps....

Examples of elements that are to be taken into account for a holistic approach and innovation-sharing process, or for the development of indicators regarding point 2c

### **1. 'To be avoided' consequences of 'good for the soil' practices**

Reduction of biodiversity

Threats to food security - especially if planted crop is non-edible, not nutritious or intended for exportation

Violation of human rights - especially vulnerable people and indigenous people

Deterioration of governance and land grabbing

Short-term vision: owners and users must work together with a long-term vision to find the equilibrium between short-term profits and long-term soil health and biodiversity

### **2. Co-benefits of well-managed soils**

Better water dynamics: increased resistance to droughts and flooding

Resilience against erosion and landslides

Increased fertility

Increased adaptation and mitigation - to be taken into account both by parties and by financing institutions

### **3. Good practices**

Using nature-based solutions, such as the restoration of forests, peatlands and mangroves

Promoting the co-benefits of sustainable practices

Promoting conservation agriculture, permaculture, agroecology

Protecting soil and crop diversity: ban on monocrop, on low genetic diversity crops, on pesticides and GMOs. Instead, promoting the co-plantation of flora species in fields

Examples of country-specific good practices:

- Japan: rice cultivation in combination with duck breeding, integrated rice and fish farming and water harvesting techniques.
- Benin: SONGHAI Center. Use of Lavoisier principle and the circular model.
- China, Fiji: Jun Cao Technology