



# Submission by World Animal Protection to the Sharm El-Sheikh joint work on implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security, for consideration at SB58

March 2023

**Submission regarding the elements of the joint work referred to in paragraphs 14–15 of FCCC/CP/2022/L.4, including views on topics for the workshops referred to in paragraph 15(b) above**

1. World Animal Protection is pleased to submit its inputs for the elements and workshops for the Sharm El-Sheikh joint work on implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security.
2. The relationship between agriculture and climate change has been written into the foundations of the climate accord. The preamble of the Convention states that greenhouse gas concentrations should be stabilised “within a time frame sufficient... to ensure that food production is not threatened.” Yet this goal has not yet been accomplished.
3. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the combined emissions from agriculture, forestry and other land use account for about 22% of global anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions<sup>1</sup> and growing. When emissions from the whole food system are included, the percentage of emissions from these sectors rises to more than a third of total global emissions.<sup>2</sup> At the same time agriculture is extremely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as the growing frequency and intensity of extreme weather and slow onset events and their consequences.
4. The IPCC AR6 mitigation report also states that “even if fossil fuel emissions were eliminated immediately, food system emissions alone would jeopardise the achievement of the 1.5°C target and threaten the 2°C target.” Without transformation of food systems, the Paris Agreement goals are

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<sup>1</sup> IPCC. Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change. [Link](#)

<sup>2</sup> Crippa, M., Solazzo, E., Guizzardi, D. et al. Food systems are responsible for a third of global anthropogenic GHG emissions. Nat Food 2, 198–209 (2021). [Link](#)

unattainable. Several solutions have been laid out<sup>3</sup> but these continue to be largely absent in climate commitments and actions, despite the urgent need to tackle emissions from this sector in order to meet the Paris agreement goals. For many years, agriculture has not had a significant presence in national and international climate processes.

5. The latest IPCC AR6 Synthesis report highlights with high confidence that climate action options in agriculture, forestry and land use yield adaptation and mitigation benefits that could be upscaled across regions. It also recognises that whilst climate policies have improved more generally, coverage of agriculture in policy commitments remains limited. This policy gap fails to reflect the IPCC's findings that the current global food system is unsustainable.
6. We therefore welcome the agreement to address the agriculture agenda through the four-year Sharm El-Sheikh joint work on implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security. This new joint work provides an opportunity for governments to step up action to cut greenhouse gas emissions and, where necessary, adapt to climate change in the agriculture sector. To achieve the 1.5°C target set in the Paris Agreement and avoid catastrophic consequences, the new joint work should lead in making food systems a priority for stronger climate commitments and actions among Governments as we approach the end of this decade.
7. We call on the joint work on implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security to consider the following:
  - a. The joint work should take a holistic approach to addressing agriculture and food security in the context of climate change. Food systems<sup>4</sup> are critical to achieving multiple Sustainable Development Goals. They are critical to ensuring food security and nutrition, as well as to achieving poverty reduction, gender equality, health and biodiversity conservation. A holistic food systems approach can help to achieve these interrelated goals and support a more sustainable and equitable future.
  - b. The joint work should employ a food systems approach, addressing not only agricultural production, but also the strong impacts of demand and consumption-based measures.

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<sup>3</sup> According to the IPCC's Mitigation report in 2022, realising the full mitigation potential from the food system requires change at all stages from producer to consumer and waste management, which can be facilitated through integrated policy packages. Some solutions cited in the report include: the need for a food systems approach, shifting to balanced, sustainable healthy diets, a transition to a sustainable agriculture and food system, and emerging food technologies.

<sup>4</sup> "A food system gathers all the elements (environment, people, inputs, processes, infrastructures, institutions, etc.) and activities that relate to the production, processing, distribution, preparation and consumption of food, and the output of these activities, including socio-economic and environmental outcomes" (HLPE Definition) [Link](#)

- c. The new joint work should encourage a transition towards humane, sustainable, regenerative and agroecological agricultural practices that promote soil health and biodiversity and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This includes reducing synthetic inputs such as fertilisers and pesticides, promoting agroforestry, conservation agriculture, and ensuring livestock are part of agroecosystems. These practices would also ensure farm animal welfare, allowing animals to experience a good life with predominantly positive experiences, with opportunities to make choices and to express their natural behaviours. A transition towards agroecological practices is also consistent with the needs and rights of smallholders.
- d. A just transition must be farmer-focused. Food systems actors, including farmers and smallholders, Indigenous Peoples, food producers and consumers, are essential stakeholders in implementing climate solutions in the food system. These actors have valuable knowledge and experience in developing and implementing sustainable agricultural practices and are key players in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and building resilience in food systems. They can help to ensure that policies and practices take into account the needs and challenges of these stakeholders, and that food security is maintained in the face of climate change.
- e. The process must elevate representation from civil society and include smallholder farmers, farm and supply-chain workers, youth, Indigenous Peoples and labour groups, and experts in nutrition, public health, environment, circular economy, human and gender rights, and animal welfare.
- f. The predominant global system of food production needs to be transitioned away from factory farming to one of high welfare, sustainable farming and significant protein diversification to achieve food security in a time of climate change. The vision is to have no new factory farms within this critical decade and ensure that smaller numbers of farmed animals are produced, and they are raised in high welfare systems. Sustainable, equitable and resilient food systems must include sustainable food production, nutrition and dietary shifts towards less resource intensive food production and consumption. A just, humane and sustainable transition includes:
  - i. A shift to plant-based diets: There is strong evidence that plant-based diets have a lower carbon footprint than animal-based diets. According to the IPCC, a shift to plant-based diets has significant mitigation potential. More plant-based diets, with only a moderate intake of animal-source food, can lead to substantial decreases in

greenhouse gas emissions. While the goal is set to keep the protein sector within planetary boundaries for the good of all, it should be achieved via an approach of common but differentiated responsibilities, taking into account the nutritional needs of developing countries. Countries with high animal protein consumption bear particular responsibility to reduce their consumption.

- ii. Constraining the growth of industrial animal agriculture to ensure food security: The industrial production of animal products relies heavily on the use of human-edible food as animal feed. This practice of feeding human-edible cereals to animals farmed for meat and dairy is inherently inefficient. Food security is undermined as land is diverted to crops to feed animals destined for consumption, rather than humans. Addressing the climate emergency requires a transformation of food systems towards more sustainable, low-carbon, and resilient models. UNEP calculates that if the cereals that, on a business-as-usual basis, will be fed to animals by 2050 were instead used for direct human consumption, an extra 3.5 billion people could be fed annually.<sup>5</sup>
  
- g. The new joint work must promote food sovereignty, which is the right of people to control their own food systems. This includes supporting small-scale farmers, promoting local food systems, and ensuring that agricultural policies prioritise the needs of local communities and the environment. This also involves addressing corporate consolidation in food systems, particularly within intensive animal agriculture systems, putting food workers, indigenous communities and small-scale farmers at risk, and it increases vertical integration, further hurting farmers' ability to compete.
  
- h. It must address social justice issues in the agricultural sector, including land rights, access to resources, and labour rights. This can be achieved through policies that promote fair trade, support small-scale farmers, and protect the rights of agricultural workers.
  
- i. It should support research and development of sustainable agricultural practices, including agroecology and agroforestry, conservation agriculture, and regenerative agriculture. This can help to promote the adoption of sustainable practices and improve the resilience of agricultural systems in the face of climate change.

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<sup>5</sup> Nellemann, C., MacDevette, M., Manders, T., Eickhout, B., Svihus, B., Prins, A. G., Kaltenborn, B. P. (Eds). February 2009. The environmental food crisis - The environment's role in averting future food crises. A UNEP rapid response assessment. United Nations Environment Programme, GRID-Arendal. [Link](#)

- j. To enable action, there is a need to now move beyond the agreed science and practice towards building consensus and policy coherence amongst institutions mandated to tackle biodiversity protection, climate change and food systems transformation.
8. In view of the above, we propose the following topics which take forward elements of Paragraph 14 Decision -/CP.27:
- a. **Workshop on agroecological and regenerative approaches to agriculture.** Agroecological systems and practices and regenerative agriculture are increasingly considered as possible alternatives to the industrial model of agricultural production, representing concrete transition pathways towards sustainable food systems that enhance food security and nutrition. With high confidence, the IPCC recognised that agroecological practices, and other agricultural approaches that work with natural processes, support food security, health and well-being, biodiversity and ecosystem services.<sup>6</sup> The IPCC recommended that policies and practices supporting agroecology should be scaled up and integrated into broader sustainable land management strategies.<sup>7</sup>
- b. **Workshop on just livestock transition.** Livestock is the world’s largest user of land resources, with pasture and arable land dedicated to the production of feed representing almost 80 percent of the total agricultural land. One-third of global arable land is used to grow feed, while 26 percent of the Earth’s ice-free terrestrial surface is used for grazing.<sup>8</sup> A just livestock transition aims to ensure that the transition to sustainable and equitable livestock systems takes into account the needs and rights of all stakeholders, including farmers, workers, consumers, and animals. This workshop should focus on supporting government towards developing national roadmaps towards a just livestock transition prioritising animal welfare, biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, and social justice. This will involve discussions on transitioning from industrial livestock production to more agroecological and regenerative livestock systems that are based on local knowledge, community participation, and ecosystem-based management. It can also include demand-side solutions such as diet shifts towards plant-based proteins or cultured meat.
- c. **Workshop on Scope 3 emissions and the role of the private sector in the mitigation agenda.** Earlier this year, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres addressed participants at the World Economic Forum and said that “our climate goals need the full engagement of the

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<sup>6</sup> IPCC. Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability [Link](#)

<sup>7</sup> IPCC. Special Report on Climate Change and Land. [Link](#)

<sup>8</sup> FAO (November 2018), Animal production [Link](#)

private sector.” He recognised that whilst more and more businesses are making net zero commitments, “benchmarks and criteria are often dubious or murky.” He furthered that this can mislead consumers, investors and regulators with false narratives creating “a culture of climate misinformation and confusion, and leaves the door open to greenwashing.” In the agriculture sector, the private sector plays a significant role in driving GHG emissions from animals, as it is responsible for producing and marketing animal-based products, such as meat, dairy, and eggs, which are major sources of agricultural GHG emissions. Despite net zero commitments, the growth of industrial animal agriculture has continued. A workshop to discuss how member states can work with the private sector to ensure they implement their commitments is needed. It can potentially cover best practices for measuring and reporting Scope 3 emissions; strategies for reducing Scope 3 emissions, such as sustainable supply chain management, circular economy approaches, and renewable energy sourcing; Case studies of companies that have successfully achieved absolute reduction in Scope 3 emissions; and defining policy frameworks that support private sector action on Scope 3 emissions.

- d. **Workshop on climate finance to support agroecological approaches.** It is necessary to redirect public financing from multilateral development banks (MDBs) and national governments towards the transition from industrialised agriculture to humane, sustainable, regenerative and agroecological practices. Consistent with the call to reform the financial architecture particularly of MDBs, a transformation of the financing of agriculture is needed to truly support sustainable development. Despite evidence of the benefits of a shift towards agroecological practices, this remains to be underfunded. MDBs must lead in enabling more investments in humane and sustainable food systems. In addition, this financing must prioritise smallholders, who often lack access to finance and are unable to invest in scaling up their good practices. Climate finance can provide the necessary funding to support them in adapting to the climate emergency.

9. Finally, this new joint work must take all the lessons from the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture and use the discussions and recommendations as a foundation for the next four years to move Governments and the private sector to action. Reiterating the strong call to action from the IPCC AR6 Report launch “...keeping warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels requires deep, rapid and sustained greenhouse gas emissions reductions in all sectors.” Further, “Political commitment, coordinated policies, international cooperation, ecosystem stewardship and inclusive governance are all important for effective and equitable climate action.”