



Country Update

The UNFCCC Paris Agreement and the Way Forward

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Introduction

The Paris agreement requires each country to reassess its carbon reduction commitment every five years, where there will be an issuance of new greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets in five year cycles, beginning in 2020. In the Agreement it was agreed to “set a new collective quantified goal from a floor of USD 100 billion per year” before the 2025 climate change conference to be mobilized from developed to developing countries. The stated goal of climate change mitigation has been to limit global average temperature rise to 2 degrees Celsius. However it was also successfully agreed to insert 1.5 degrees Celsius as the limit necessary for a balanced global ecosystem.

The main points defended by the East African Community (EAC) when negotiating the Paris Agreement were equality between mitigation and adaptation; recognizing the increased burden for adaptation in developing countries due to inadequate aggregate mitigation efforts

and also fully recognizing and consolidating the adaptation efforts made by those countries in the context of National Adaptation Programs of Action (NAPAs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs). In addition issues such as full operationalization of the Warsaw International Mechanism for “Loss and Damage” and enabling African countries to deal with loss and damages associated with climate change impacts and minimizing the negative socio-economic consequences; and country ownership of programs and projects with respect to both adaptation and mitigation and ensuring transparency in the provisions of financial, technology transfer and other forms of support including capacity building which should be customized to specific needs of beneficiary countries were raised.

In regards to the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs), Tanzania put in place adaptation and mitigation contributions; the adaptation contributions include embarking on a climate resilient development pathway. In doing so the adaptation contributions will reduce climate

related disasters from 70% to 50%, and significantly reduce the impacts of declining rainfall, frequent droughts and floods which have long term implications to the agricultural sector. Access to clean and safe water will be increased from 60% to 75%. The mitigation contributions include reducing greenhouse gas emissions economy wide between 10-20% by 2030. The emissions reduction is subject to review after the first Biennial Update Report (BUR).

Main Outcomes Relevant to Developing Countries and Least Developed Countries (LDCs)

The intended contributions in the sectors of agriculture, energy, transport, forestry and waste management will enable the country to achieve low emission growth pathway while achieving the desired sustainable development. These sectors are among the top contributors towards economic development in Tanzania. Complementary to the expected positive impacts of the INDCs, the decision taken in Paris will provide Africa with a better chance of leading the way insofar as production and utilization of renewable energy is concerned.

After a discussion that took place in a conference attended by distinguished participants from the EAC it was agreed that, from an African perspective, the climate change is not solely a negative problem or a cost, but is also a commercial opportunity for the continent. This opportunity can be found in making

renewable energy sources such as solar, geothermal, biogas, wind energy production among others, to become the solution to the huge deficit of energy on the continent.

The Paris Agreement will benefit developing countries by building capacity and shaping up climate resilience for marginalized people. One way of which capacity-building was showcased was through the agreement recognizing that developed countries need to peak their emissions before developing countries and thereafter undertake rapid reductions in order to keep rising global temperatures below 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The deal indicates that it is a requirement of all parties to cooperate in building capacity of developing countries whereby it should be country-driven, based on and responsive to national needs, and foster country ownership. This will help in tracking progress and assessing impacts made by the country while implementing its adaptation and mitigation actions.

In addition to the above, in the years before 2025, the deal commits to finance developing countries in order for them to address climate change and its impacts since these countries do not have sufficient financial resources to address such issues. This is because Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDs) are the countries that are most vulnerable and have contributed the least in climate change. Despite the fact that it is not a legally binding agreement it has opened the door for LDCs and SIDs to obtain resources

mobilized from more developed countries.

Summary of various stakeholder perspectives on the UNFCCC Paris Agreement and the way forward

The general objective of this note was to obtain the views of various stakeholders on their take from the “Paris Climate Agreement”, and the extent to which it fulfilled their expectations, as well as the road ahead. The stakeholders’ perspectives were drawn through surveys and electronic communications from civil society organizations, agro-industry businesses, livestock keepers, traders and government ministries.

i. As the agreement reaffirms the goal of keeping average warming below 2 degrees Celsius, while also urging parties to “pursue efforts” to limit it to 1.5 degrees, which is a top priority for developing countries highly vulnerable to climate impacts, Tanzania’s economy is more vulnerable to climate-change adverse impacts due to its dependency on climate-change sensitive activity. As climate change affects a number of sectors including agriculture, water, livestock-keeping, manufacturing sectors and energy sectors, among others; this results to adverse impacts on a country’s economy.

“This is a positive step for loss and damage to be included in the agreement however it will be an even bigger accomplishment if the Paris Agreement in the near future fully commits to financing the LDCs since these countries do not have surplus to accumulate and reserve for unplanned extreme weather events. The developing countries must lobby for developed countries to honor their commitment to finance the climate change initiatives by LDCs.”

ii. Some stakeholders expressed concern as to why the agreement has no mention of food

security and agriculture in the main text of the agreement.

“It is a pity that the agreement shied away from mentioning food security and agriculture in the main text of the climate agreement forged in Paris. The absence of food and agriculture being mentioned in the text is seen as a gap between country level priorities.”

However even if agriculture is not explicitly mentioned in the agreement, that does not necessarily prevent farmers, companies, and research groups from taking action to adopt the mitigation and adaptation strategies outlined in countries’ INDCs. The challenge will arise when it comes to finding money for funding the strategies. In order for the developing countries to benefit, the parties in agreement need to place more emphasis and clarity on how it plans to assist in building capacity of the developing countries in addressing challenges faced by the agriculture sector due to climate changes

iii. It has also been observed that the Paris agreement would be more beneficial especially to developing countries like Tanzania if there is a use of more obligatory and binding text rather than using simple texts, carrying no penalties and being utterly voluntary.

“Having the INDCs in place is one thing, but living upto them is another. All players, including the International community must meet their commitments so as to achieve the desired goals. In Tanzania, National policy on agriculture sector should put more emphasis in subsidized agriculture as most farmers are poor. Farmers who have difficulty adapting to climatic change may become less vulnerable to drought-related food shortages if they engage in increased irrigation and mechanization”

iv. The implementation of the identified INDCs will strongly depend on how the international community meets its commitments in terms of financial and technological support.

General recommendations to

policy makers and climate negotiators

i. One of the ways forward is to navigate the numerous multidisciplinary processes and that Africa needs to own the process by ensuring that politicians, lawyers, policy makers, business leaders, the private market and NGOs bring climate change knowledge and awareness to the forefront.

ii. Tanzania must mobilize its own internal resources and effectively utilize them in addressing challenges arising from climate change in the country. This can be done by increasing efforts to involve Local Government Authorities (LGAs) and private sector in resource mobilization. Resource mobilization can be done through eradication of tax evasion and increase revenue collections from other economic activities. There is also a need to further strengthen the efficiency and accuracy of the early warning and disaster preparedness system to increase reliance on the given information, to reduce and even to avoid major losses and damages.

iii. The corporates in Tanzania and within the EAC region should adopt science-based GHG emissions reductions targets, while taking into consideration the objective of reaching a

1.5°C goal. Equally important is for companies to face up to the reality of the scale of challenges of adaptation and resilience. Priority should be given on how to address challenges faced by the sectors of energy, manufacturing, finance and most importantly, the agricultural sector.

iv. The Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) should make efforts to advocate implementation of targets to be achieved as per the Paris agreement but they should also rally to achieve a higher set of targets beyond the agreement. The goals set in the agreement may be used as a baseline to campaign for action by the government and private sectors.

v. Lastly each individual citizen must be aware and responsible of his or her actions in addressing climate change. They should adjust their lifestyle in a way that would bring positive impact and meet the goals of the Paris Agreement. Lifestyle initiatives taken by citizens may include transitioning from the use of fossil fuels to the use of renewable energy. Individuals must also question and hold governments and the private sector accountable of their actions in addressing climate change and their efforts in implementing the INDCs.

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