



Climate and Agriculture

CANCÚN 2010

Following Civil Society's Lead on Climate Solutions

In 2009, when IATP published its first climate series prior to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) meeting in Copenhagen, there was genuine hope that governments would make significant progress towards a global response to climate change. That progress never materialized, and cynicism has grown about the effectiveness of the UNFCCC. Wide divisions between governments remain on commitments to greenhouse gas emission reductions, a system of climate finance and verification measures to hold countries accountable. Despite these divisions, and low expectations for the upcoming Conference of the Parties (COP) 16 in Cancún, Mexico, the challenges that climate change poses to agriculture, food, water, energy and the economy remain as urgent as ever.

As national governments struggle to find agreement, civil society organizations are moving ahead with new approaches. The World Peoples' Agreement on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth, decided in Cochabamba, demonstrates how civil society organizations from around the world can come together and develop meaningful responses to climate change. At the national, local and community level, civil society organizations are applying solutions to climate change that integrate social and economic equity, and democratic participation.

If governments are to achieve progress in Cancún, they must follow the lead and urgency of civil society organizations. On agriculture, governments need to listen to farmers, workers and especially women, who make up most of the world's farmers. This year, IATP launched a new video-based website, Voices of Climate and Agriculture (climateandagriculture.org), where people can share first-hand experience from the field in dealing

with the effects of climate change. IATP has also produced a new series of papers on climate change emphasizing the unique role agriculture plays in the world. IATP's climate series (available on iatp.org/climate) includes the following papers:

AGRICULTURE IN THE CLIMATE TALKS: LOOKING BEYOND CANCUN, BY SHEFALI SHARMA – Details where agriculture falls within the UNFCCC negotiations and future concerns.

FINANCING AGRICULTURAL ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE: A MODEST BEGINNING, BY STEVE SUPPAN – Proposes concrete and short-term options for financing climate change adaptation in developing countries.

WOMEN AT THE CENTER OF CLIMATE-FRIENDLY APPROACHES TO AGRICULTURE AND WATER, BY SHINEY VARGHESE – Profiles farming by the Tamilnadu Women's Collective in India which both mitigates and adapts to climate change.

GRAIN RESERVES: A SMART CLIMATE ADAPTATION POLICY, BY SOPHIA MURPHY – Makes the connection between efforts to ensure global food security and climate change adaptation.

A FARM BILL FOR A COOLER PLANET, BY JULIA OLMSTEAD AND JIM KLEINSCHMIT – Examines how the U.S. Farm Bill could help farmers both mitigate and adapt to climate change.

THE NEW CLIMATE DEBT: CARBON TRADING WRAPPED IN A GREEN BOND PROPOSAL, BY STEVE SUPPAN – Analyzes an International Emissions Trading Association climate finance proposal that would enrich global carbon traders.

IATP CLIMATE AND AGRICULTURE PRINCIPLES

1. All agricultural systems are not equal. Addressing climate change in the agricultural sector requires recognition of historical differences in agriculture, and different country contributions to the problem of climate change.
2. In its historical role as a leading GHG emitter, the U.S. has a special responsibility and obligation to play a positive role in meeting necessary reduction targets.
3. Climate mitigation and adaptation efforts must complement—not impede—the production of a safe and healthy food system.
4. Agriculture must not be used as a “dumping ground” for other sectors to avoid addressing their climate change obligations.
5. Climate policy must adopt an integrated approach that supports the importance of sustainable agriculture to long-term development and viable, healthy rural livelihoods.
6. Climate policy must include a transparent and inclusive process where all stakeholders are allowed an equal voice, including the perspectives of farmers, women and Indigenous peoples.
7. Climate change is not just an environmental problem, but one of social equity that must be addressed within proposed solutions.



INSTITUTE FOR AGRICULTURE AND TRADE POLICY

FOR MORE, SEE IATP'S CLIMATE AND AGRICULTURE WEBSITE:
IATP.ORG/CLIMATE

WATCH VIDEOS AT IATP'S VOICES OF AGRICULTURE AND CLIMATE WEBSITE:
CLIMATEANDAGRICULTURE.ORG