

SACAU News

SOUTHERN AFRICAN CONFEDERATION OF AGRICULTURAL UNIONS



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Farmers want agriculture in COP21 Deal

SACAU has joined global calls for agriculture to be fully recognized in the new climate Agreement ahead of the critical COP21 gathering with an online social media campaign demanding #IncludeAgriCOP21.

World leaders gather in Paris from November 29 to December 11 to draft a new legally binding climate agreement to replace the Kyoto protocol. The draft text published early in November did not include specific reference to agriculture.

"This agreement will guide a global response to climate change," said SACAU CEO Ishmael Sunga.

"While many of the clauses are still open to further negotiation in Paris, the battle lines are already drawn as the farming community feels agriculture risks being locked out of the global agreement," he added.

Farmers believe the sector faces unique vulnerabilities that require direct action. "At the very least Parties should agree to approach the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) to seek wisdom and gather scientific data in order to guide a global climate strategy for

agriculture," said SACAU President Dr Theo de Jager who is also President of the Pan African Farmers Organization (PAFO).

"If a constituency as diverse as our members, ranging from small holders to industrial scale farming operations, from pastoralists to foresters, dairy to cropping, horticulture to aquaculture, can have a unanimous demand for such a research program to inform decisions, surely political parties and governments around the negotiation table should be able to follow suit?" said Dr de Jager.

"It simply makes no sense to exclude agriculture from a new agreement," said Dr de Jager.

SACAU has called on its 17 National member organisations in 12 countries, its partners, sponsors and sympathizers to actively participate in the **#IncludeAgriCOP21** campaign.

It also seeks to partner with the Pan African Farmers' organization (PAFO), the World Farmers' Organization (WFO), as well as NGOs, CSOs and other stakeholders in the climate smart agriculture alliance, to support, promote and drive the campaign.



CEO LETTER

World leaders are gathering at COP 21 in Paris to deliberate on a future binding climate change agreement - right at the start of the agricultural season in southern Africa.

It is a time for farmers to begin a new cycle of growth. We wish farmers a good season with the hope that there is a state of preparedness with the ready availability of seeds, inputs and other services. This is critical as we live in time when the planting margins are getting narrower: A day's delay can result in significant losses.

It means that in these times of uncertainty, farmers need to align their farming enterprises with expected weather conditions. To do so, farmers in southern Africa need good data and intelligence. We call on the meteorological services in all countries to provide timely, localised information that will enable farmers to manage the climate vulnerabilities better. This also means that public sector investment allocated towards managing this potential calamity of climate change is sufficient. We know that if we don't deal with it now, we will pay the high cost in future.

It's therefore essential that world leaders at COP 21 plant fresh seeds to tackle the issue. To do so, agriculture must be included in the final agreement. Without farmers, the deal falls short of what the world needs.

Join us as we call for them to **#IncludeAgriCOP21**.

Ishmael Sunga
CEO

Play the game to save the world

Imagine a world in which food is running out. Imagine you had to make life and death decisions. Food security, one of the most important global issues in the coming decade is hardly a game. But for some, playing the game can help chart a more secure future.

SACA CEO Ishmael Sunga travelled to Washington DC in November to participate in Food Chain Reaction: A Global Food Security Game. This 'game' is a simulation and role-playing exercise intended to improve understanding of how governments, institutions, and private sector interests might interact to address a crisis in the global food system.

The scenario is set five years from today in a world where population growth, rapid urbanization, extreme weather and political crises combine to threaten global food security.

The game's players — high-level decision makers representing nations, international institutions, and the private sector—will collaborate, negotiate, make decisions, and confront tradeoffs while dealing with a chain reaction of consequences resulting from their actions.

By simulating a disruption in the global food system, Food Chain Reaction is designed to help high-level decision makers better understand the interdependencies within that system and the cascading effects of our decisions and actions. Through the game, they hope to elevate player's awareness about these complex relationships, so they can ultimately discover new knowledge and tactics to reduce future global food security risks.

Sunga found the biggest lesson was that how food security was discussed had changed. "When people are talking about food security, they are no longer talking about food in the table - they are talking about security in its broader sense," he said.

"Normally as farmers we think of food security as producing food and gaining access to food but it is much more than that."

What SACA could gain from this game is not only the shift in how food security is viewed but also how it is planned for: "One needs to have long range planning and scenarios. You need to look at what investments you need to make in order to make that future less vulnerable."

Sunga emphasises that to know that means also knowing what the different interests are.

During the game, participants were divided into eight teams representing high level decision makers: America, China, Europe, Brazil, India, multi-lateral organisations, business and Africa (which Sunga was a part of).

"The point of the matter is that there are so many interests that need to be balanced that we need to converge in the short and long term and just that awareness may give you the idea of wanting to manage it. If you are not conscious to what the conflicting interests are it is very difficult to be able to do something about it."

The game tested what scenarios could come out of a food security crisis including food refugees.

"When people are insecure food wise, they may resort to all manner of dangerous activities including wars," he said.

Top-level study visit reviews agricultural mechanisation

SACAU President Dr Theo de Jager led a top-level delegation to Germany in November 2015 to review approaches used by German farmers' in agricultural mechanisation.

SACAU's delegates included Dr de Jager, Vice President Mrs Jane Ngulube, Board member Mr Berean Mukwende as well as Economics and Policy analyst Dr Manyewu Mutamba. They attended a four-day study trip to review "Efficient Machinery Concept Approaches".

The study trip also took delegates to the world's biggest agricultural exhibition, Agritechnica, in Hannover, Germany. The delegates were given a guided tour of the fair, learning about latest mechanised options for both smallholder and large-scale farms.

"It was very interesting - it is unlike the farming done in Africa," said SACAU Vice President Ngulube. "It is neat and clean."

Ngulube noted that in her home country of Malawi farming was seen as dirty and young people were not interested in pursuing it.

"If everyone could have those machines, although they are expensive, if they came to Malawi then everyone could farm - even



the graduates would leave their offices".

Delegates also attended a workshop on the planning processes that led to pooling of machinery by German farmers. Issues such as threats to management, understanding key drivers for mechanisation and best practices were discussed.

Modernise and commercialise

For Dr de Jager, the trip reinforced his belief that Africa needs to mechanise. More than half the population of Africa makes their living in agriculture but the most common farming implement is the hand hoe: "It is impossible to produce products competitively with a hand hoe," he said. "We need to kill the dragon of poverty; we need to mechanise, modernise and commercialise agriculture."

Although the machines they saw were not affordable for the average African farmer, De Jager points to the management model

they witnessed in Germany as a viable option. "About 200 or 300 people together can afford these machines and what that requires is a lot of organisation, that is what we are about," he said.

Mutamba was impressed by the level of professionalism exhibited by German farmers. Anyone who wants to farm on land bigger than five hectares needs to go through a mandatory

three-year professional farmer training programme before they can be allowed to run a farm.

This program ensures that everyone on the land knows exactly what to do with the resources they have.

Some of the farmers visited by the tour group have invested in clean energy and are supplying power to nearby villages as well as feeding into the national grid.

The event was funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development (BMZ) as well as the Andreas Hermes Academy (AHA) project. The project aims to support farmer organizations (FO) in 15 countries in Africa and in India.

It provides support in the form of agricultural experts and practitioners. The academy is a leading training institution of the German agriculture and food industry

Farmers meet ahead of COP 21

African farmers gathering in Durban, South Africa, on the eve of COP21 resolved to demand the inclusion of Agriculture in the climate change agreement being negotiated in Paris, France.

Delegates at the third Pan African Farmer's Organisation (PAFO) continental briefing at the end of November also committed themselves to climate smart agriculture even as world leaders were gathering in Paris to thrash out a new climate change agreement to replace the Kyoto Protocol.

The Durban briefing was jointly organised by PAFO and the ACP-EU Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and took place on the eve of the Global Forum for Innovations in Agriculture (GFIA) meeting from December 1 - 2. This is the first time that the GFIA took place in Africa.

The Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU) joined other regional farmers' organizations such as EAFF, PROPAC, ROPPA and UMNAGRI as well as national farmer's organisations, policy-makers, civil society groups, research networks, development practitioners, and international organisations.

The briefing objectives include highlighting the key opportunities in agribusiness development favourable to the farmers' organisations; promoting sustainable and inclusive PPPs in support of agribusiness development; and identifying new opportunities in data and ICTs in support of agribusiness and agricultural development on the continent.

The meeting comes as Africa's leaders have renewed their



Transforming Agriculture... PAFO president Dr Theo de Jager address the gathering of African farmers

commitment to transforming agriculture as a driver of job creation, improved incomes, and access to nutritious food.

Improved Livelihoods

The Heads of State and Government of the African Union met at the 23rd Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, from 26-27 June 2014, on the Theme of the African Year of Agriculture and Food Security: "Transforming Africa's Agriculture for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods through Harnessing Opportunities for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development, also marking the tenth Anniversary of the Adoption of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)".

"Agriculture is best placed to help stimulate growth on the continent," said SACAU CEO

Ishmael Sunga. "To do so, we need to transform African agribusiness and bring on board small-scale farmers. We need investment at all levels of the food chain."

Among the issues being reviewed are innovative business models, data-driven farming, and ways of harnessing the ICT revolution in agriculture.

"We recognise the need to improve access to reliable and timely information," said Sunga.

The meeting presents an ideal opportunity for African farmers to send a united message to COP 21 to ensure that agriculture is in the final agreement.

"We cannot allow agriculture to be marginalised and we want to ensure that world leaders understand that we cannot progress if the concerns of farmers are not dealt with in the final agreement," Sunga added.

#INCLUDEAGRICOP21

SACAU has started a global social media campaign to call on world leaders to include agriculture in the COP21 agreement. You can join by using the hashtag #IncludeAgriCOP21 and following us on Twitter @Sacau_Media and on Facebook. Show us your support by following SACAU vice president Jane Ngulube's example and post a selfie with this poster on your Facebook or Twitter account.

Make your voice count! Tell policy makers to #IncludeAgriCOP21!

Facebook: www.facebook.com/sacau.org/

Twitter: @SACAU_media



'Manage the seeds not weeds'

Farmers suffer huge financial losses annually from poor control of weeds in crop fields. Results of studies comparing the effects of weeds and fertilizer on yield reveal that poor weed control reduces yields more than a lack of fertilizer. Not only do weeds compete with crops for water and nutrients, they also release allelopathic chemicals that interfere with crops.

At a recent conference on No-Till Conservation Agriculture, farmers were advised to adopt a long-term approach to weed control that focuses on managing the seeds instead of the weeds. Seeds from just one season are enough to produce 7 years of weeds. Preventing weeds from seeding each season is therefore a key part of weed management. Late germinating weeds are particularly problematic. After harvesting farmers often neglect the weeds which then mature, producing seed that will cause problems for many years to come.

Herbicide use is central to a robust weed control program. Applications at pre-planting, pre-emergence and at post-emergence stages are usually enough to progressively reduce weed pressure over a few years. The aim should be to prevent weeds from germinating as much as possible.

In cases where weeds manage to germinate, they should be knocked down as early as possible. Correctly-used herbicides are also most effective at this early stage. Herbicide-resistance for key products such as glyphosate is becoming a major problem in some countries. Diversifying herbicides to include products with different modes of action and crop

rotation are a key part of the strategy to avoid resistance.

A nation that destroys its soil destroys itself – it's not possible to take out of the soil more than you put in. Soil degradation is a major threat to food security and economic progress worldwide. The major causes of soil degradation include erosion, compacting, crusting, reduced infiltration, loss of soil organic matter and reduced biological activity. Determining soil health is complex but a few indicators can be used to assess the status of soil – e.g. pH, Soil Organic Matter (SOM), surface crusting, ponding, compaction, carbon-clay ratios. Some of the best approaches to building soil health include reduced or zero tillage, increasing organic matter, keeping the soil covered, crop rotations and controlling traffic on the land. In livestock systems, maintaining a balance between optimum use of forage while avoiding overgrazing is a key objective.

Adaptive multi-paddock, high density grazing systems, with short grazing periods produce significant ecosystem benefits that improve the key cycles such as water, energy and minerals. This improves the densities of perennial grasses with robust well-developed root systems. These are better able to survive droughts and grazing pressure. Long recovery periods are important. While 10 paddocks can help avoid overgrazing, decent performance is achievable with 14 to 16 paddocks.

For more information contact Dr Manyewu Mutamba, Analyst for Economics and Policy at SACAU. Email: mmutamba@sacau.org

Drought dampens agriculture's

The current drought currently ravaging several sub-Saharan Africa has resulted in crop damage which will adversely affect the region.

Absa Agribusiness hosted a Media Roundtable on 18 November 2015 where they launched their Agricultural Outlook for 2016 and shared the latest trends and forecasts for the agricultural industry

Absa Agribusiness outlook also warned that, since South Africa produces and exports the largest crop in Southern Africa, neighboring countries will be hard hit.

The region has faced several challenges over the past year including severe dry conditions ravaging the western regions of southern Africa, specifically Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia and South Africa. The eastern coast of South Africa, Mozambique and Malawi were hit by a tropical cyclone which aggravated seasonal rains and caused floods.

Cull the national herd

On the upside, however, was the depreciation of the Namibian dollar, which is pegged to the South African rand and has increased the opportunity for Namibia to increase its exports, especially in beef.

This has been timely as the severe drought experienced in the country has necessitated producers to proactively market their stock and thus cull the national herd, supporting its move to become the first African country to export bone-in beef to China as of August this year.

The drought has affected the maize outlook for a number of countries, with Zimbabwe expecting a shortfall of 700 000 tonnes of maize following a 49%

lower maize harvest year-on-year.

This shortage was compounded by numerous producers switching to tobacco production which saw higher profitability as a result of the export market in 2013 and 2014.

Available opportunities

Going into 2016, Zimbabwe will depend on maize imports to feed its people, amidst the high transport costs and poor border controls.

The resultant high feed prices will particularly affect poultry farmers who have already been taking strain from the low anti-dumping import tariff of USD 1.50/kg and have thus been struggling to compete with the influx of chicken imports. The trend of farmers disinvesting from poultry production in the country is expected to continue.

Botswana received 70% less rain this year and naturally, the grain and beef producers have taken strain from the drought since the beginning of this year, following the drought of 2013.

Sorghum producers, however, have been fortunate as they have harvested sufficient yields as a result of the crop's drought-resistant attributes.

The outlook on maize production and beef prices is projected to improve, should producers receive adequate rainfall in the next season.



Given the dry conditions persisting in Zambia's neighbouring countries, maize production is expected to grow into 2016, supported by high maize prices.

Zambia will thus have an opportunity to export even more maize, while foreign investment is anticipated to grow; improving infrastructure and local production capacity.

Low water levels

Due to low levels of water in the Kariba dam, Zambia along with Zimbabwe, have been experiencing power deficits which have negatively affected the agricultural industry. The industries expected to be most hard hit include dairy processing, milling and crushing plants.

A limiting factor facing maize farmers in the country, however, is the Zambian government bans on exports of maize.

Owing to the serious storage inefficiencies Zambian producers' experience, farmers are unlikely to increase production of maize in the new season.

Continued on page 6

2016 outlook

Technology is expected to reshape businesses as well as countries globally. While this is no new phenomenon, this trend is anticipated to narrow the education gap that exists in populations across the globe and positively contribute to the size of the middle class, which is believed to exceed 3.5 billion people in 2050. The demand shift from the West to the East is the second most prevalent trend. This development has had a growing impact on the nature of business conducted globally with implications on macroeconomic factors.

With a growth in the consumption of food driven by population growth globally, led by Asia and Africa; there is a growing production opportunity for investors to move their operations to Africa. This is supported by a recent increase in companies moving their production processes out of South Africa and into other sub-Saharan countries.

The availability of land for crop production, the single most important resource in agriculture, is anticipated to be at 1.357 million hectares in Africa in the year 2050. This figure is about double what is forecast for South America and Asia and stresses the potential that Africa holds in feeding the world.

Successful implementation

The projected real GDP growth for the sub-Saharan African countries surpasses that of developed countries, reaffirming the opportunities available on the continent. In addition, the Tripartite Free Trade Agreement between the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC) and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) will support intra-regional trade among the three regional blocks. Successful implementation of the agreement will lead to harmonisation of tariffs between countries, leading to increased opportunities for liberalised trade amongst member countries.

The outlook emphasised the need for producers to increase productivity in order to be competitive amidst declining terms of trade. Farmers are predominantly price takers since they have no control over prices. Their focus should be on how to boost their volumes as well as use their inputs more efficiently in order to benefit from economies of scale. The general sentiment for the industry was therefore positive for the upcoming year, given the challenging start that

sub-Saharan countries have experienced since the beginning of 2015. For more information on the 2016 Agricultural Outlook, please contact Tlale Matseke, Regional Commodity Value Chain Coordinator.

Email:
tmatseke@sacau.org



Agriterra visits SACAU



SACAU's relationship with the Netherlands-based Agriterra was strengthened during the recent visit by Agriterra CEO Kees Blokland. Blokland noted that the visit was productive as they looked at the future of SACAU. "What we did was try to see it from different angles, to see the different options," he said. "It is kind of an ambitious proposal to take advantage of the opportunities of the twenty-first century."

The organisations have been in contact since Blokland met SACAU president Dr Theo de Jager and CEO Ishmael Sunga six years ago and have worked together in various capacities. Agriterra is now SACAU's technical partner. Both Agriterra and SACAU believe in the role of the farmers organisations as very important to the development of both a country and its economy.

Blokland stressed that the organisations needed to adapt to modern developments. "Farmers organisations especially need to take advantage of that development because when they do not they will be left behind and they will not be in the position in the economy and society that they need to have to make countries in Africa beautiful," he said. "That is what we aim for." Agiterra and SACAU are discussing the option of developing an agri-agency. According to Blokland, Agiterra is an agri-agency which means that it is a kind of development institution which works for farmers and on behalf of farmers. Agri-agencies aim to deal with capacity building and information communication. Blokland stresses that the aim of an agri-agency is to offer support to farmers but not to disrupt the advocacy done by farmer organisations. "We can strengthen advocacy but advocacy is a farmer's issue," he said. "We don't want others to talk on behalf of farmers."



SACAU Board... (L-R) Berean Mukwende; Ishmael Sunga; Dr Theo de Jager, President; Jane Ngulube, Vice President; and, Dr Mohlalefi Moteane.

Board meets to close off 2015

The SACAU Board held its last meeting for year on 24th November, 2015. Among others, the Board considered an interim audit report that was presented by SACAU's external auditors, and approved SACAU's annual plan and budget for 2016, and reviewed of progress on resource mobilisation and recommended more investment in this area.

The Board wishes to take this opportunity to wish its members and all farmers in the region a prosperous agricultural season, and a happy festive season.



The Board also agreed to further explore the possibilities of establishing an agri agency as part of the long sustainability plan for organisation. This followed from a Board workshop the previous day which discussed preliminary findings of a quick scan that was undertaken which undertaken by the Managing Director of Agriterra, a leading agri agency based in the

SACAU

Mission

To be the main voice of farmers on regional, continental and global matters, and to promote and ensure strong and effective farmers/ producers' organisations in all countries in southern Africa.

Values

SACAU is founded on the following values and principles: Consultation | Transparency | Accountability | Honesty and integrity | Objectivity | Impartiality | Professionalism | Non-discriminatory | Independence | Subsidiarity and complementarity | Political neutrality

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NEWSLETTER

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