

Healthy, natural ecosystems are crucial for a stable climate—the world’s forests currently store more carbon than is in the entire atmosphere.¹ Yet deforestation contributes 11 percent of global anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions, more than all passenger cars combined.² Halting tropical deforestation and degradation and allowing tropical forests to continue sequestering carbon and regrowing at current rates can provide at least 30 percent of all mitigation action needed to limit global warming to 2°C.³ To harness this potential, our response to climate change must recognize the role of natural ecosystems in mitigating emissions. Natural ecosystems are also among the most readily available and cost-effective tools for adapting to a changing climate. They provide critical ecosystem services, such as climate-resilient food sources, and buffer against severe weather impacts. Measures must be taken to prevent the loss of our natural defenses to the impacts of climate change.

At COP 22, the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement (APA) will discuss “further guidance relating to nationally determined contributions referred to in Article 4 of the Paris Agreement.” **Building on previous guidance for NDCs (1/CP.20)⁴, the APA should provide guidance to countries to:**

- **Aim to include mitigation and adaptation efforts across all sectors, addressing, in particular, those sectors with high emissions and taking advantage of the potential for removals in land and coastal activities (such as REDD+, climate-smart agriculture and coastal carbon) that also generate adaptation and socioeconomic co-benefits;**
- **Encourage landscape-level actions to mainstream mitigation and adaptation efforts into their low emission development strategies; and**
- **Encourage use of participatory processes to ensure meaningful contributions and involvement from all actors, both men and women, in developing NDCs and associated action plans, particularly indigenous peoples and local communities.**

Internationally Transferred Mitigation Outcomes

APA, Agenda Item 3

Relevant Documents: [FCCC/APA/2016/INF.1](https://www.unfccc.int/documents/1366292), [FCCC/APA/2016/INF.1/Add.1](https://www.unfccc.int/documents/1366293)

The Paris Agreement re-affirms⁵ that countries can cooperate to meet their mitigation goals as efficiently as possible, including through transferring emission reductions between countries. Article 6 of the Agreement establishes a broad framework for voluntary cooperation among Parties in the implementation

¹ Atmosphere contains ~720 Gt C (Falkowski, P. et al. 2000. The Global Carbon Cycle: A Test of Our Knowledge of Earth as a System. *Science* 290:291-296.); Forests contain 861 +/- 66 Gt C (Pan, Y. et al. 2011. A Large and Persistent Carbon Sink in the World’s Forests. *Science* 333:988-993.).

² Goodman, R.C. and Herold, M. 2014. Why Maintaining Tropical Forests Is Essential and Urgent for a Stable Climate. Center for Global Development working paper No. 385.

³ (a) McKinsey & Company. 2009. Pathways to a low-carbon economy. McKinsey & Company.

(b) Le Quere, C., et al. 2013. Global Carbon Budget 2013. *Earth Syst. Sci. Data Discuss.*, 6, 689–760 (averaged for 2003–2012);

(c) Grace, J., et al. 2014. Perturbations in the carbon budget of the tropics. *Global Change Biology* (data from 2005–2010);

(d) Houghton, R.A. 2013. The emissions of carbon from deforestation and degradation in the tropics: past trends and future potential (data from 2000–2005). *Carbon Management*

⁴ COP decision 1/CP.20 specifies that the information to be provided by Parties communicating their intended nationally determined contributions may include, as appropriate, inter alia, quantifiable information on the reference point (including, as appropriate, a base year), time frames and/or periods for implementation, scope and coverage, planning processes, assumptions and methodological approaches including those for estimating and accounting for anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and, as appropriate, removals, and how the Party considers that its intended nationally determined contribution is fair and ambitious, in light of its national circumstances, and how it contributes towards achieving the objective of the Convention as set out in its Article 2.

⁵ See, for example, Articles 3, 4, and 12 of the Convention.

of their NDCs. Article 6.2, in particular, reflects widespread support for the use of “cooperative approaches” to reduce emissions through voluntary bilateral transfers of “mitigation outcomes” between Parties, which may take the form of a carbon market. In Marrakech, the APA will discuss the development of detailed guidance on how these “Internationally Transferred Mitigation Outcomes” (ITMOs) should be structured, governed and counted.

Encouraging the transfer of high-quality emission reductions generated in all sectors, including the land sector, can drive needed flows of finance to mitigation actions addressing both sources and sinks, in particular in developing countries. The development and implementation of market-based approaches can also assist countries in improving their accounting and reporting systems, in turn facilitating increased clarity and understanding of progress toward meeting the Paris Agreement’s objectives. International cooperation via transfers of mitigation outcomes allows Parties to reduce emissions at lower cost through investment in mitigation activities abroad.

The guidance to be adopted under Article 6.2 by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement should:

- **Ensure adequate information is available to fully assess the integrity of a “mitigation outcome” used toward a Party’s nationally determined contribution, including its linkage to national inventories and measurement, reporting and verification systems;**
- **Provide guidance on how to apply robust accounting, including on how to avoid double counting of emission units; and**
- **Consider the important role that the enhanced transparency framework under Article 13 can play in ensuring environmental integrity.⁶**

ADAPTATION

Adaptation Communications

APA, Agenda Item 4

Relevant Documents: [FCCC/APA/2016/INF.2](https://unfccc.int/files/parties_observers/submissions_from_observers/application/pdf/687.pdf)

The Paris Agreement establishes a global goal for adaptation that seeks to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change. At COP 22, one of the main issues that will be discussed is guidance for how countries will reflect their adaptation priorities, needs, plans, actions and/or contributions. The adaptation communication is intended to be a component of or function in conjunction with other reporting processes such as NDCs, national communications or national adaptation plans (NAPs).

Ecosystem based adaptation (EbA), the use of biodiversity and ecosystem services as part of an overall strategy to help people adapt to the adverse effects of climate change, can be an effective, readily available and affordable approach to adaptation efforts. For example, EbA approaches can increase the

⁶ Conservation International, Environmental Defense Fund, Forest Trends, IETA and The Nature Conservancy. 2016. UNFCCC Joint Submission regarding views on the guidance referred to in Article 6, paragraph 2, of the Paris Agreement. http://unfccc.int/files/parties_observers/submissions_from_observers/application/pdf/687.pdf.

climate resilience of coastal communities by improving the health of coral reefs, which buffer against coastal erosion, and which provide the habitat for near-shore fisheries—a primary source of food and livelihoods. These approaches should be encouraged in national adaptation priorities and plans.

Further guidance on adaptation communications should:

- **Specify common elements of adaptation goals and planned actions that all countries should include in their communications, including metrics for measuring progress towards adaptation goals and needs for implementation support; and**
- **Encourage countries to include adaptation efforts from all sectors, in particular addressing those approaches that leverage ecosystem-based adaptation, which deliver significant socioeconomic and mitigation co-benefits.**

Agriculture and Adaptation

SBSTA 45, Agenda Item 7

Relevant Documents: [FCCC/SBSTA/2016/INF.5](#), [FCCC/SBSTA/2016/INF.6](#)

At the request of the COP, the SBSTA gathered inputs from countries and stakeholders and held two in-session workshops to identify the relationship between adaptation and agriculture. The results of these workshops will be discussed at SBSTA 45 in Marrakech to determine any appropriate further action and work.

In considering further actions and the role of the Convention in facilitating the identification of adaptation measures in agriculture, Parties at SBSTA 45 should:

- **Recognize the important role of ecosystems for improving farmers' resilience to climate change while also providing environmental and socioeconomic benefits;**
- **Support efforts to advance scientific evidence and replicable models for EbA measures for agricultural systems at multiple scales;**
- **Encourage the widespread adoption of EbA practices by smallholder farmers by integrating them into their national climate actions and agricultural development strategies and providing financial and technical support;**
- **Recognize and promote the ways in which indigenous knowledge systems foster climate-resilient agricultural systems;**
- **Encourage use of ecosystem valuation and accounting (EVA), which can identify agricultural dependencies on ecosystems and ecosystem services to inform sustainable and ecosystem-based practices in agricultural systems; and**
- **Include examples of actions to improve the resilience of agriculture into any global knowledge hub to be developed, including examples of ecosystem-based adaptation or actions drawn from indigenous knowledge and supporting policies, technical resources and funding.**

There are numerous reasons why EbA is appropriate for farmers and can help support sustainable farm and landscape management.⁷ Specifically, EbA practices can help to:

- Ensure the continued provision of key ecosystem services (e.g., water provision, food provision, nutrient regulation, pest control and pollination) on which agriculture depends, which is in contrast to non-EbA adaptation measures (e.g., the construction of dams for water irrigation or the increased use of agrochemicals) that confer adaptation benefits but may negatively impact the provision of ecosystem services and may have additional negative environmental off-site effects (e.g., loss of biodiversity or contamination of streams) and socioeconomic impacts;
- Diversify production systems and sources of income generation, providing more stability to smallholder farmers and helping improve farmer food security directly and indirectly;
- Mitigate climate change by either reducing the amount of greenhouse gases emitted from agricultural systems or by increasing the overall farm biomass. EbA can be implemented at the farm scale through the use of agricultural practices at the farm level, or at the landscape or regional scale through the protection and restoration of ecosystems (e.g., tropical, riparian and cloud forests) that provide important services (e.g., water provision for crop production or pollination by native bees) to farmers and other livelihood groups; and
- Provide mitigation and adaptation benefits from the farm to the landscape level if they are designed and managed appropriately.

TRANSPARENCY

APA 2, Agenda Item 5

Relevant Documents: [FCCC/APA/2016/INF.3](https://unfccc.int/apa/2016/inf.3)

Article 13 of the Paris Agreement establishes an enhanced transparency framework for action and support to allow for ease in tracking how countries are progressing towards their commitments under the Agreement. In Marrakech, the APA will develop recommendations for modalities, procedures and guidelines for this enhanced transparency framework.

Given the significant potential of emission reductions and adaptation results from forests and other ecosystems, but also in light of the challenges of measuring such results in a comparable manner, **we encourage Parties in their recommendations to:**

- **Recognize the potential for emission reductions from the Agriculture Forestry and Land Use (AFOLU) sector as well as the challenges in establishing robust systems for monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) of emission reductions from AFOLU activities;**
- **Call for developing standard MRV approaches for AFOLU activities based on existing methodological approaches from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), past COP decisions and building on lessons learned from efforts to develop MRV systems for REDD+;**
- **Provide technical and financial support to countries to develop domestic capacities and systems for the MRV of AFOLU activities; and**

⁷ Conservation International. 2016. UNFCCC Submission on issues related to adaptation and agriculture, as requested in the conclusions of SBSTA 40 (FCCC/SBSTA/2014/2, Item 8, Paragraph 85(c and d)). http://unfccc.int/files/documentation/submissions_from_non-party_stakeholders/application/pdf/592.pdf.

- **Encourage Parties to use existing accounting frameworks, such as the System of Environmental-Economic Accounts (SEEA) developed by the UN Statistical Division for tracking the interactions between the environment and the economy to identify the impact of reducing emissions from AFOLU on the country's economy.**

PARTICIPATION AND RIGHTS

In Paris, Parties agreed to create a platform for the exchange of experiences and sharing of best practices (1/CP.21, para 135). **The details of this platform will be decided by the COP at a future date, at which point Conservation International recommends that:**

- **The platform be developed based on principles of inclusion and Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) in order to ensure the recognition and inclusion of potential contributions of indigenous peoples' knowledge;**
- **Parties ensure sufficient funding for such a participatory process; and**
- **In-session working groups and expert meetings with the participation of indigenous peoples and government delegates be established as needed as part of the thematic groups for global climate action.**

CONCLUSION

At the same time as they develop the mechanisms and modalities for full implementation of the Paris Agreement, it is crucial that countries maintain the momentum from COP 21 and ramp up their climate action between now and the start of implementation.

- **It is essential that levels of climate finance continue to increase in the lead-up to full implementation of the Paris Agreement, especially levels of finance for adaptation measures in proportion to overall climate finance.**
- **In particular, countries should agree on concrete mechanisms for increased funding, both pre- and post-2020, that prioritizes ready-to-deploy activities such as REDD+, climate-smart agriculture, coastal carbon, ecosystem-based adaptation and other nature-based solutions with high mitigation and adaptation benefits.**
- **Parties should continue to encourage commitments from non-state actors as well as the implementation of these pledges, including through the Action Agenda, private sector partnerships and other channels.**