

PRESS RELEASE

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Farmers' Position on Climate Talks - WFO, IFOAM, & SACAU, Cop20 Lima-

With the impacts of climate change being felt on food systems around the world, agriculture is one of the issues at the heart of climate change concerns. The three Farmers' Organizations - World Farmers' Organisation (WFO), International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), and Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU) are united in their call to governments at the United Nations climate conference (COP20 Lima) to put agriculture on the table for the Paris climate agreement.

Climate change poses a myriad of threats to agriculture, including the reduction of agricultural productivity, production stability and negative effects on farmers' incomes. The Farmers' Organizations - WFO, IFOAM, and SACAU - strongly believe that agriculture has the potential to be part of the solution, through the mitigation of a significant amount of global emissions. The world's food and farming systems are now facing multiple threats and the ecosystem functions that underpin them are increasingly unstable and subject to more and more unpredictable weather conditions. It is not only the food security and livelihoods of farmers in the developing world that are under threat, but also the agriculture sector everywhere.

"The climate is changing more rapidly than expected, challenging the capability and capacity of agriculture to adapt. This reality must be addressed. Throughout history farmers have been developing resilient actions to adapt to the changing climate, as such, agriculture has the potential to be part of the solution, through the implementation of measures that can enhance farmers' adaptation capacity to climate change effects," stated Marco Marzano, Executive Director of the World Farmers' Organisation. "Despite their important role in climate change adaptation processes, farmers' involvement in global discussions on climate change are often very limited; and the voice of farmers' is not always considered in decision-making processes that directly affect their work and lives."

Although family farmers produce the lion's share of all global agricultural production, half of them are still amongst the world's hungry. The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) assures that sustainable farming techniques including organic agriculture in soil, water and biodiversity conservation, as well as integrated and sustainable farm management help small farmers be productive, achieve family food security and climate resilience. *"Unless family farmers are given the agro-*

ecological technologies they need to meet the challenges posed by climate change, impacts on food production will be devastating, pushing millions into poverty,” declared André Leu, IFOAM President.

“No constituency is more vulnerable to climate change than the world’s farmers. And no constituency can do more towards mitigation and adaptation to climate change in a shorter space of time than farmers of the world. Yet agriculture is still not part of a legally binding agreement,” pointed out SACAU President, Dr Theo de Jager.

De Jager, who is also president of the Pan African Farmers’ Organisations (PAFO) says that farmers cannot change their circumstances alone and that agriculture must get the attention and support it deserves. *“A large part of the population in Africa relies on agriculture for their livelihood - they are the poorest people in the world, yet the continent has huge potential to be the bread-basket of the world. Prosperity in agriculture on the continent can transform the lives of millions of households,”* he emphasized.

“As parties work towards a new climate agreement in Paris next year, we urge them to acknowledge that farmers are particularly vulnerable to climate change and without support their livelihoods and global food security is at great risk. Parties need to urgently agree on a framework for ambitious and far-reaching actions to support adaptation and mitigation in agriculture,” concluded the three farmers’ leaders.

Further Information and Contacts:

IFOAM is the international umbrella organization of the organic world dedicated to taking organic agriculture to the mainstream. IFOAM unites, leads and assists the organic movement in its full diversity, while providing a common voice on relevant organic issues. IFOAM implements the will of its broad-based constituency, with 800 Affiliates in more than 114 countries and is governed by a World Board originating from all continents.

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World Farmers’ Organisation (WFO) is an international organisation whose members are national farmer organisations of small, medium, and large-scale, from all over the world. As of today, WFO counts around 70 members from about 50 countries. WFO mandate is to facilitate the inclusion of farmers’ organisations and agricultural cooperatives in the global policy process on agriculture-related issues, in particular on climate change, food security, and value chain, in the promotion of cross-cutting issues like innovation, gender, youth and livestock.

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Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU) is a membership based regional farmers’ organisation whose members are the national farmers’ organisations in Southern Africa. Currently SACAU has 17 members from 12 countries.

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