

REPORT OF THE AFRICA ECOSYSTEM BASED ADAPTATION FOR FOOD SECURITY CONFERENCE, UNEP NAIROBI, KENYA 30TH-31ST JULY 2015

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Conference theme *'Re-imagining Africa's Food Security through Harnessing Ecosystem Based Adaptation Approaches Now and Into the Future under Climate Change'*

Conference declaration:

Nairobi Action Agenda on EBA for Food Security notes that: EBA is critical for climate resilience, ecosystem productivity and food security, spurning growth and job creation; pointed the need for ecosystem restoration and investing in EBA. The declaration appreciated the role of states as main drivers for EBA scaling up through policies and incentives; and emphasized on the role of agriculture in employment creation and poverty reduction.

Africa Union plays important role in agriculture development and food security in Africa and UNEA June 2014 resolution on ecosystem based adaptation which tasked member states to mainstream EBA in development planning and decision making.

The conference led to formation of the Africa Ecosystem Based Adaptation for Food Security Assemble (EBAFOSA) for policy framework, ecosystem productivity, job creation and poverty reduction, value addition and sustainable industrial development. The Assembly will be funded by trust fund and hosted

tentatively by ACTS. The conference further called on AMCEN to recognize establishment of EBAFOSA and outcome of the conference while it calls for UNEP, AU and AMCEN to recognize the Assembly as the leader for EBA policies and action in Africa.

The conference urged creation of technologically enabling environments for public investment and promotion of EBA driven agriculture. Resource mobilization and management to spur innovation financing and business models for EBA- driven agriculture. Called for scientific and evidence based policy studies for effective policy formulation and actions at local and regional levels.

The conference called for empowerment of youth, women and persons living with disabilities for innovation and value addition in agriculture growth.

Policy initiatives for achieving food security in Africa

Maputo Declaration called on all Africa states to commit 10% of the total GDP to agricultural production but review reports indicates only one country is committing such budgetary allocation to agriculture. Africa Union Agenda 2063 strategic framework for optimizing use of Africa's natural resources aimed at achieving socioeconomic transformation of the region. Food security has received much attention in Africa particularly AU leadership role in several frameworks and strategies like 2004 Sirte Declaration; 2007 Abuja Summit; and 2009 Sirte Declaration and Malabo Declaration 2014.

Challenges facing agriculture in Africa

The conference among other things noted the persistent inability of Africa failure to feed itself centuries after agrarian revolution. There is sufficient technology in Africa to achieve food

security yet political will and funding misplaced priorities continue hampering food security in the region.

Climate change impacts in the region continue to exacerbate food insecurity complicates agricultural production scaling up. Climate smart agriculture/ ecological based agricultural systems offer the continent. The conference noted the huge opportunity presented by Ecosystem Based Opportunity in achieving the Malabo Declaration on Agriculture and Post-Harvest losses that continue to hit different parts of the continent owing to poor storage techniques and facilitates.

Majority of Africa farmers are small scale and subsistence agriculture in highly practiced in the region. EBA approaches can shield these households from adverse impacts of climate change. Such households play key role in agricultural transformation and attaining food security in the region. Access to quality drought resistant seeds, funding opportunities; market access, low adaptive capacity; limited funding for women and youth; water scarcity; land and environmental degradation; erratic rains; increase in pests and diseases for animal and crops; Lack of human capacity and infrastructure: government not investing in extension services via funding and personnel management for use of climate information among small scale farmers; Isolated responses- e.g. pest and disease increase hence farmers buy chemicals to curb the menace without factoring other relevant players like climate change and environmental conditions.

Agricultural systems should be transformed to make them more climate resilient through approaches such as EBA, sustainable land management and remuneration/payments for ecosystems services. Noting that Africa may not start progress on SDG's without addressing climate change and food security policies and strategies there is need for Africa states to:

- Prioritize research and development gaps and incorporate IK
- Build capacity of national institutions working with farmer groups
- Demonstration and integration into national development and adaptation plans

- Transform entire land scale of agri-systems to climate resilience and environmental sustainability-EBA approaches; healthy farming systems, sustainable land and water management systems, biodiversity conservation E.t.c.
- Fisheries and aquaculture, conservation agriculture, pest and diseases management e.t.c.- work with nature to help farmers adapt to climate change
- Sustainable and innovative mechanism
- Technology
- Markets
- Mitigate climate impacts
- Sustainably adapt to achieve continental security and improve livelihoods
- EBA: assessment and knowledge management.

Youth and Agriculture in Africa

Role played by youth in agricultural transformation and food security in the region cannot be overstated. The conference noted the importance of developing strategies that enables youths to lead in farming and agricultural development; use of ICT; focus on youth in extension services, institutions and policies so as to shift youths perception on the potential of agriculture as business ventures; funding youths mechanisms development to promote agribusiness, access to land by reforming existing policies. Land access to women and youth through implementation of policy framework such as provided in the FAO voluntary Guidelines and the CAADP.

Financing EBA in Africa

For Africa to adequately adapt to climate change and attain food security scaled-up innovative financing solutions and policy frameworks need to be adopted. Small scale farmers in the region are disadvantaged by the existing financing frameworks including government financing. Partnering with lending institutions such as banks and IFAD, AGRA and government agencies while strengthening cooperative societies for risk sharing and understanding of small scale

conditions. Policy incentives to encourage private sector investment into agriculture financing was echoed at the conference.

Education, ICT in EBA in Africa

Mainstreaming EBA into the education system beginning with the primary levels to tertiary levels, curricula revision and update to tackle present day agricultural, environmental degradation and climate change challenges and establishing EBA clubs in schools. ICT can play significant role in EBA scaling up, open up ICT access in rural areas, social media integration, offering internships in rural areas and games that stimulate EBA farming experiences. ICT helps in networking, marketing and information sharing.

Cooperation in Harnessing EBA for Food Security

South-south cooperation featured highly in the conference in terms of exchange of research information which need to be enhanced at grassroots levels between farmer to farmer. Water, governance and leadership, and energy sectors were highlighted as main thematic areas that require south-south cooperation while underscoring the importance of understating local contexts rather than one size fit all. Cooperation should also focus on management of natural resources and EBA approaches.

Climate change and resilience through EBA

Climate change and population growth in Africa poses serious threat to food security. This calls for adoption of new EBA tools and strategies. Aligning climate processes and frameworks; expansion of local markets; minimize agricultural land conversion for other uses; integrate indigenous knowledge in agricultural practices; introduce social safe nets such as insurance against climate impacts; incentives to encourage consumption of locally produced goods; communication of climate change information to farmers while highlighting the role of ecosystem based adaptation; promotion of land use policies and tenure systems that incentivize small scale holder investments in agriculture; research and identify policy interlinks; packaging climate information for different recipients in mind; continuous monitoring and evaluation of EBA approaches at local ecosystem levels.

Farming system in ecofriendly environment and sustainable: research and extension institutions.

Climate smart agricultural practices; diversification of agro-systems; creates employment and income; comprehensive agriculture model: conservation agriculture- watershed conservation; research and cooperation with extension services; market and value chain addition; Implementation of EBA in rural areas; education and extension services to educate farmers on EBA; Boosting agriculture: policy and technology;- agronomy practices and food processing ; women participation; organizing farmers into cooperatives; balanced fertilizer use

Translational research- solutions and interventions useful to farmers- Evidence based research: for development of policy, and its implementation; Climate smart agriculture; mitigation and reduction of GHG; Timely information dissemination; Funding of extension services; Increased stakeholder information; Training of agricultural personnel- crop production, livestock, forestry,- multidisciplinary approach; Criteria for accepting EBA approach and impacts of employing EBA approach; Communicating climate information to policy makers; Implementation of policy agreements and political involvement; Move from problem identification to solutions; clear communication to local governments, capacity building ; Integrate EBA together with technological advances

Policy for EBA in Africa

Agricultural policies in Africa exist but their implementation is too weak for any tangible effect. Need for budgetary allocation for policy formulation and implementation is critical for food security in Africa instead of relying on donor aid which is unpredictable and is conditioned. Civil societies role in holding governments accountable in terms of policy implementation and transparency. Naming and shaming institutional failure charged with policy formulation and implementation while at the same time community empowerment for monitoring public policy implementation.

Policy coherence in Africa remains a huge challenge hampering food security efforts. Enhanced inter-governmental coordination, targeted and improved stakeholder communication packaged in ways the locals would understand, minimize production costs and low market prices for small scale farmers; policies that stimulate local food production and processing, removing barriers to government allocations to youth and women. Education reforms and vocational training to provide skills such as project management and business, promote safe investments in EBA and integration of ecosystem based land use planning and encourage diaspora investments in local agriculture.

Way forward for EBA in Africa

The conference underscored the following:

- Research and evidence based policy formulation to achieve EBA and encourage entrepreneurship/agribusiness.
- Build political will and fill policy gaps for EBA in agriculture and food security
- Build local trust in government implementation of existing policies
- Mainstream EBA across all levels and coordination between and engagement with multiple government ministries and civil societies.
- Need for stronger AU leadership and institutionalization of EBA, harmonization of national and regional EBA related policies including AU Agenda 2063, support national implementation, and monitoring and implementation.
- Combine indigenous knowledge with innovation and modern agricultural practices.

The conference adopted creation of Ecosystem based adaptation for food security assembly EBAFOSA mandated with the following task:

- **promote environmentally friendly approaches to food production;**
- **promote value addition for all EBA products by efficient technologies;**
- **and develop a regional monitoring instrument and evaluation instruments on EBA.**

