

HOW AGRICULTURE CAN HELP ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE AND INCREASE FOOD SECURITY

Last year we called upon the leaders of COP21 to support a strong agreement to address climate change in a real and meaningful way. The Paris Agreement and the speed at which it was ratified was an incredible testament to the urgency of this perilous reality. As COP22 addresses implementation of the Paris Agreement, we are grateful that the nexus between agriculture, food security and climate is being incorporated into the roadmap to successfully addressing climate change.

The global food system is under pressure like never before. How do we feed the world's growing population – estimated to exceed 9 billion by 2050 – while at the same managing agriculture and land-use change, which account for almost a quarter of greenhouse gas emissions? Unchecked, agricultural emissions will outstrip reductions from decarbonizing the economy elsewhere, pushing us beyond the 2-degree Celsius limit. Agriculture-related emissions could take up the entire global greenhouse gas emissions budget by 2050¹.

A food system already under pressure will become destabilized, placing livelihoods, farming communities, agricultural supply chains and consumers at risk. Food price shocks will increase as climate impact on yields become more acute.

As the Food and Agriculture Organization's latest report² confirms, "Meeting the goals of eradicating hunger and poverty by 2030, while addressing the threat of climate change, will require a profound transformation of food and agriculture systems worldwide."

Last year we made a number of commitments to support the global effort to address climate change, but it is clear that we need to make a step change in the way we produce food.

Specifically:

- Through better management of soils we can further sequester carbon dioxide to help achieve bringing carbon dioxide levels down
- Through reclaiming degraded land we can increase food production and improve the lives of farmers
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- Through halving food loss and waste we can reduce emissions and improve incomes through the value chain while providing more food for all
- Through elimination of deforestation and the land use pressure that drives it

Systemic interventions in these challenges will deliver a triple win: a win for the environment, a win for the economy, and a win for people to create an agricultural system that is more climate resilient.

¹ <http://www.foodsecurity.ac.uk/blog/2016/04/where-was-food-in-the-cop21-paris-agreement/>

² <http://www.fao.org/publications/sofa/sofa2016/en/>

The clock is ticking and it is time to make real and lasting changes to how we do business. As some of the world's largest food companies, we have the scale to make a difference. We will do our part and we ask that governments and civil society continue to work with us in achieving both food and climate security.

Each of our companies have made public commitments in these interlinked areas necessary to bring about systemic change:

- Reducing the environmental impact of agriculture
- Improving the livelihoods and resilience of smallholder farmers and in particular women farmers
- Cutting food loss and waste
- Promoting better nutrition and sustainable diets

Today we pledge to the leaders of COP22 and to the rest of the world to re-double our efforts in each of the areas identified above and to support the ongoing implementation of the Paris Agreement.

Finally, we invite feedback on how we can improve our practices in the months and years ahead.



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