

FARMER AND FOREST PRODUCERS' ORGANIZATIONS DECLARATION

For COP27 and Beyond



Regional Workshop on Pathways to Climate Change

21–22 October 2022 | Pasay City, Philippines



We, the representatives of 19 small-scale, fishers, Indigenous Peoples, and pastoralists organizations from 12 countries who took part in the Regional Workshop organized by the Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA), Pambansang Kilusan ng mga Samahang Magsasaka (PAKISAMA)/National Confederation of Small Farmers' and Fishers' Organizations, and the Non-Timber Forest Products Exchange Programme (NTFP-EP), call on COP27 and other regional and global processes for climate actions to:

Recognize our vulnerability and the threats of climate change to our lives and livelihoods

Support our sustainable agriculture practices that contribute to mitigating climate change, protecting and regenerating our natural resources

Strengthen Forest and Farm Producer Organizations (FFPOs), Fishers' and Indigenous Peoples' Organizations

Foster balanced representation in governance, genuine collaboration, and participatory research and innovation for resilience building

Endorse direct financing of small-scale farmers and food producers organizations and cooperatives for climate actions



Recognize our vulnerability and the threats of climate change to our lives and livelihoods

As small-scale food producers, we face multiple challenges ranging from agrarian and natural resource tenure issues, environmental degradation, poor agricultural infrastructure, including irrigation systems, and increasing costs of seeds, labour, fertilizer, and fuel, coupled with low farm gate prices of our products. The Covid-19 pandemic and the Ukraine-Russia war have further aggravated our existing plight. All of these have made it difficult for us to earn an income that would allow us to overcome poverty and build resilience in the context of a changing climate.

The Asia region has relied on small-scale food producers for diverse diets. However, despite our multidimensional contributions, many of us living in rural areas remain food insecure and continue to suffer inequality and marginalization.

Even though we are not the biggest emitter of GHGs causing climate change, our livelihoods are among the most affected and exposed to climate change effects such as unpredictable weather patterns, prolonged droughts and winters, extreme rains. In addition, we face climate hazards, such as tropical cyclones and severe storms, which affect farms on a regular basis. Our agricultural productivity is increasingly variable from year to year due to unusual temperatures, the spread of pests, diseases, and the proliferation of invasive weed species.

We see that climate change is affecting men, women, and young farmers differently, with women, Indigenous Peoples, and people with disability in a more disadvantaged position due to lack of resource tenure security, social protection measures, structural conditions, and cultural norms.



Support our sustainable agriculture practices that contribute to climate change mitigation, protection and regeneration of our natural resources

For centuries, we, the small-scale food producers, forest dwellers, and Indigenous Peoples, have developed sustainable, agroecological food systems and practices, which are testaments to our role as custodians of our country's agrobiodiversity and caretakers of the environment.

Our communities are also repositories of diverse, traditional, and indigenous foods and knowledge, which are testaments to our role as custodians of our country's agrobiodiversity and caretakers of the environment.

Through our organic, integrated, agroecological, and regenerative agriculture practices, land and soil are restored, biodiversity is protected, pollination is promoted, and habitats are preserved. These are solutions to adapt to climate change and transition to a healthier food system. Thus, we call on our governments to secure our rights and control over our lands, waters, and forests.

Several of our practices have helped us cope with climate-related impacts and other external shocks. We believe these practices can also help mitigate climate change.

• Our practices include:

- Agroecological farming approaches, such as organic and regenerative agriculture, diversified and integrated farming, agroforestry, and community-based forest management, leading to the availability of safe and nutritious food, protection of agrobiodiversity, soil health improvement, and carbon sequestration
- Improved livestock management, such as sustainable grazing management
- Use of manure, compost, and recycling leads to reduced use of chemical fertilizers and helps store carbon in the soil and restore soil health
- Traditional food systems that are resilient and promote the recycling of nutrients
- Sustainable collection and use of wild food plants
- Community-based seed banks
- Community-managed irrigation systems
- Indigenous knowledge transfer and capacity building of our young farmers
- Protection of agricultural lands from encroachment/intrusion of industries

We are part of the solution. We expect massive scaling up and scaling out of agroecological farming and forest management practices, in partnership with our organizations, through policy measures, investment, proper incentives, and support in capacity building such as participatory research and technology development, farmer-to-farmer exchanges, relevant training programmes, and use of appropriate digital technologies.

Strengthen Forest and Farm Producer Organizations (FFPOs), Fishers' and Indigenous Peoples' Organizations

Our organizations and cooperatives are a fundamental part of building our climate resilience. Our organizations have been providing economic services to us; have helped us improve our livelihoods; provided support during crises; have helped to facilitate our access to land and other natural resources; offered access to markets, information, technology, training, and extension services; helped to build partnerships with other stakeholders, operated as intermediaries to represent our interests, and helped to raise our awareness of our key roles in the policy-making processes at all levels.

By enacting policies that would promote our rights to organize and recognize the potential of our organizations, our organizations can become more sustainable and effective conduits of government programmes and partners in tackling food insecurity, poverty, gender inequalities, and promoting resilient food systems and climate actions.

Provide direct financing of small-scale farmers and food producers organizations and cooperatives for climate actions

Public capital must be used to tackle the differentiated climate change impacts. We believe our access to finance is central to a financial transformation agenda. Without appropriate support, there is no chance of achieving climate resilience in agriculture.

Given the diversity and the varied capacity of our organizations, financial interventions need to be properly customized. Access to funding mechanisms is usually difficult, especially for young farmers or women who, in many cases, are often excluded from the right to the land and other collaterals.

- **We call for the establishment of farmers' resiliency trust funds and farmers' empowerment funds.** Adequate financing directed to us through our organizations and cooperatives is necessary so that our organizations are empowered to be able to respond effectively and quickly to the needs of our members in accessing land and natural resource, in innovation and extension, in pre-and post-harvest systems, climate information and early warning systems (EWS), in capacity building, and in providing the needed capital to transition to agroecological farming systems.
-

Foster balanced representation in governance, genuine collaboration, and participatory research and innovation for resilience building

Towards adaptation and resilience building, we need the support of our governments in terms of policies, investments, and incentives, of research institutions in terms of participatory research and innovation, and of the civil society organizations (CSOs) in terms of capacity building and technical assistance.

The United Nations has declared 2019–2028 as the UN Decade of Family Farming (UNDIFF). This decade is extremely important to us due to the mounting challenges we are facing and for those of us who lose almost everything due to extreme climate-related events. The UNDIFF Global Action Plan recognizes the multidimensionality of Family Farming and posits that when effective policies and programmes are enacted, family farmers' organizations are professionalized, strengthened, and supported with functional partnership mechanisms, and family farmers can provide the utmost contribution to climate actions and food systems transformation.

At the local level, our participation in policy and programme development is imperative to ensure these programmes build on our existing capacity and resources, and are informed by the climate change impacts we are experiencing, which vary from community to community. We need the support of public research institutions to enhance our existing practices through participatory research. Collaborate with us and our organizations in developing solutions to related:

- production, cultivation, processing, and marketing of our farm and forest products, especially indigenous foods/neglected and underutilized species, without creating damage to the environment
 - promotion of local fruits and vegetables instead of ultra-processed foods
 - enhancements of indigenous knowledge through participatory action research and farmer-led research
 - surface water and rainwater harvesting systems
 - early warning systems
 - eco-friendly technologies and those that rely on renewable energy
- We call on COP27 to include our recommendations in the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture Roadmap and priorities and facilitate our participation in the implementation of the actions at the national and local levels. •

The Regional Workshop was funded by the Strategic Collaborative Fund (Phase2), which is administered by the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI).