

EXPO COP 22

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Agriculture at the heart of climate negotiations for the very first time

In the framework of COP22, which took place in Marrakech from November 7th to 18th, the initiative for the Adaptation of African Agriculture, a coalition of 28 countries has contributed to placing agriculture at the forefront of discussions and negotiations.

The Adaptation of African Agriculture, a theme which imposed itself as a priority in COP22 discussions

Put forward by a community of scientists and a coalition of 28 African countries, the initiative for the Adaptation of African Agriculture was considered as a priority in COP22 debates by His Majesty the King Mohammed VI. In his speech on November 15th, 2016, His Majesty the King declared: “We have proposed a series of initiatives in the framework of the implementation of the Paris Agreement, particularly with regard to adaptation and funding, including the initiative for the Adaptation of African Agriculture”.

Ban-Ki Moon, Secretary General of the United Nations insisted upon the importance of adaptation efforts, particularly on the African continent. “Adaptation is not a luxury. It is a cautious investment in our future” he declared in his speech on November 17th, adding that the AAA initiative will contribute “to creating more resistant food systems on the continent and to advancing the sustainable development goals (SDG)”.

A historical mention of agriculture in the text resulting from climate negotiations to take action

For the first time, agriculture and adaptation were at the heart of climate negotiations. As such, agriculture is present in the Marrakech Action Proclamation, approved on November 17th by all of the parties present at COP22. This Proclamation namely calls for all parties to “support and strengthen the efforts to eradicate poverty, ensure food security, and to take stringent actions to deal with climate change challenges in agriculture.”

For example, to take action, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries of Morocco, signed a memorandum of understanding on November 17th, as part of the AAA initiative, with the “Land



Degradation Neutrality (LDN) Fund”, launched by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the responsible investing firm, Mirova. This agreement, which aims to help small farmers restore degraded land and avoid further degradation of fertile soil in Africa, will make it possible for the future LDN fund to identify potential investments via the AAA initiative.

Mr. Aziz Akhannouch, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries of Morocco declared: “I am particularly proud to have put forward the AAA initiative, which has contributed to placing agriculture in a historical manner in climate negotiations. We must now focus on the continuation of the initiative, and help new countries adopt it throughout COP22, which remains under Moroccan presidency until COP23. I invite all African and European ministers to continue to support this action to ensure great benefits for African populations”.

The AAA initiative at the heart of COP22

Tens of thousands of citizens on social media, and many prominent personalities provided their support to the initiative throughout the COP in Marrakech, like Graziano Da Silva, Director General of the FAO, Stéphane Le Foll, French Minister of Agriculture, Nicolas Hulot, head of the FNH, or Karmenu Vella the European Commissioner for the Environment.

To set out to meet COP22 visitors, the AAA initiative equipped itself with a major events program through a space that attracted more than 8000 visitors. “Netizens” from all over the world were able to support the cause through the interactive wall connected to social media with the #WeAAAre. Conferences to unravel the issues of the AAA were also held throughout COP22, and the side-events agenda was enhanced with a high level panel in the blue zone on November 16th, the day that was dedicated to agriculture.