



FROM AMBITION TO IMPLEMENTATION:

MAKING CLIMATE ACTION WORK FOR FARMERS AND FOOD SYSTEMS

Solidaridad

In the decade since the Paris Agreement was adopted, we have learned more about what needs to be done and what climate action can look like in practice. The challenge now is implementing solutions at the scale and pace required, while learning from experience to strengthen and adapt what works. At COP31, we need to see agriculture and food systems more firmly embedded in climate action and negotiations, alongside greater focus on unlocking the finance, partnerships and enabling conditions needed to turn climate commitments and plans into action on the ground. At COP31, we call for stronger recognition of agriculture and food systems in climate negotiations and outcomes, building on the Sharm el-Sheikh Joint Work on Agriculture and Food Security as it reaches the end of its four-year mandate. This must be accompanied by greater efforts to unlock the finance, partnerships and support needed to translate climate

commitments into tangible action for small-scale farmers and agricultural value chains. Small-scale farmers and agricultural value chains have an important role to play in mitigation, adaptation, food security and the circular economy, but implementation must also create tangible value for farmers.

Climate implementation will succeed only if it works for the people producing our food.

Drawing on practical experience across agricultural value chains, Solidaridad calls for climate action that strengthens farmer resilience and livelihoods; accelerates the transition towards circular and low-carbon value chains; creates opportunities for young people; and directs finance toward local actors and solutions that deliver demonstrable impact on the ground.

OUR FIVE PRIORITIES FOR COP31

1. ACCELERATE THE TRANSITION TO CLIMATE-RESILIENT AGRICULTURE

Adaptation, agricultural productivity and viable rural livelihoods are closely connected. Climate risks affect yields, water availability and incomes, while dependence on a single crop or income source can increase farmers' vulnerability to shocks. Climate-resilient and context-specific regenerative practices can help farmers manage these risks by diversifying production and income, strengthening soil and water resilience and improving the long-term productivity of farming systems. Building more resilient and viable farming systems can therefore strengthen farmers' livelihoods while contributing to food security and nutrition.

Across its programmes, Solidaridad works with farmers and communities to strengthen agricultural resilience in different contexts. Together, these examples illustrate how climate-resilient agriculture can respond to different risks and farming realities while strengthening productivity, livelihoods and food security.

[In Nicaragua](#), the Asómbate programme is working with 12,500 coffee and cocoa farmers to strengthen climate-resilient agriculture and agroforestry, restore degraded soils and diversify rural incomes.

[In Zambia](#), climate-resilient horticulture is helping small-scale farmers diversify from reliance on seasonal cotton into year-round vegetable production, strengthening incomes while increasing access to diverse and nutritious food.

For farmers in the coastal region [of Bangladesh](#), water has long been a complex puzzle. Community-led management of more than 80 micro-watersheds has improved water access for over 90,000 farming households, alongside regenerative practices and climate-resilient crop varieties that are helping increase cropping intensity, yields and household incomes.

[Across West Africa](#), Solidaridad is working with small-scale farmers to combine agroforestry, forest and landscape restoration, water protection and more sustainable production. These efforts demonstrate how resilience depends not only on what happens on individual farms but also on the health of the landscapes and natural resources on which farming depends.

At COP31, we call on governments, donors and businesses to:



- ▶ Build on the outcomes of the Sharm el-Sheikh Joint Work on Agriculture and Food Security to ensure continued attention to agriculture and food security in UNFCCC negotiations and work programmes beyond COP31, while accelerating the translation of commitments into action on the ground.
- ▶ Scale finance for diversified, regenerative and climate-resilient agriculture that responds to farmers' needs and local contexts.
- ▶ Strengthen simplified and direct access to adaptation finance for small-scale producers.
- ▶ Invest in water management, soil health, agroforestry and other ecosystem-based approaches alongside agricultural productivity.
- ▶ Support diversification of production and livelihoods as a strategy for reducing farmers' vulnerability to climate and economic shocks.
- ▶ Put locally-led adaptation into practice by enabling small-scale farmers and communities to shape adaptation priorities, decisions and investments based on their own needs and local contexts.
- ▶ Strengthen synergies across the three Rio Conventions (UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD), translating shared priorities into coordinated action and financing that advances climate resilience, biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management while supporting farmers and rural livelihoods.



2. DECARBONIZE SUPPLY CHAINS WHILE STRENGTHENING FARMER RESILIENCE

Small-scale farmers are central to agricultural supply chains and their mitigation potential, while the resilience of those supply chains increasingly depends on farmers' ability to adapt to growing climate risks. Agrifood companies need to strengthen both the ambition and implementation of Scope 3 action. More companies need credible commitments, while existing commitments need to translate into investment and action across supply chains, including at farm level.

Limited corporate commitment widens this finance gap: only 15% of companies have set a supply-chain Scope 3 target (BCG and CDP, cited in Solidaridad and ORF, *Far from the Factory Gate*, 2026). This transition also needs to strengthen farmer resilience and livelihoods, creating tangible benefits for small-scale producers. Farmers should not bear the costs and risks of corporate decarbonization commitments they did not set. At the same time, supply-chain decarbonization efforts must also address farmers' growing exposure to drought, heat, flooding and other climate-related hazards to strengthen long-term resilience.

[Solidaridad's Carbon Barometer](#), based on disclosures from 138 agribusiness and agriculture linked companies, shows that many companies have elements of Scope 3 action in place, but these do not yet consistently add up to coherent strategies

that connect targets with governance, procurement, supplier engagement, investment and verification. Half of the 138 companies score below the index midpoint, and few strategies yet include or reward smallholder farmers, an important source of agrifood Scope 3 emissions (Solidaridad and ORF, 2026). Closing this implementation gap requires more than setting targets or measuring emissions. Companies need to invest in the transition, align procurement and incentives with climate objectives, support farmers with finance and technical assistance, and strengthen credible and practical farm-level data and MRV.

Efforts to reduce agricultural emissions can also create opportunities for farmers to access new sources of finance, including through carbon markets and incentives from companies seeking to reduce emissions in their supply chains. However, these opportunities are not always accessible or financially worthwhile for small-scale farmers. Complex requirements, high costs of measuring emissions reductions and uncertain financial returns can limit their participation and benefits. Making these opportunities viable requires [approaches designed around smallholder realities](#), with simplified requirements, fair benefit-sharing and safeguards. Initiatives such as [Solidaridad's biochar project in Zambia](#) illustrate the potential to combine carbon credit revenues with wider benefits for farmers, including improved soil health and crop productivity.

At COP31, we call on governments, donors and businesses to:



- ▶ Ensure that carbon market and supply chain inseting mechanisms are accessible and beneficial to small-scale farmers, with attention to reducing administrative and transaction costs, and ensuring fair benefit-sharing, proportionate monitoring and verification requirements and robust environmental and social safeguards.
- ▶ Increase the ambition and coverage of credible Scope 3 commitments across agrifood value chains and accelerate their implementation.
- ▶ Translate decarbonization commitments into sustained investment and action at farm level.
- ▶ Integrate climate risk and farmer resilience into supply chain decarbonization strategies, ensuring that mitigation investments also contribute to farmers' capacity to adapt to climate impacts.
- ▶ Back farm level transitions with finance, technical support, incentives and purchasing practices that make change viable and beneficial for farmers.
- ▶ Invest in credible and practical data and MRV systems without creating excessive costs or reporting burdens for farmers.

3. MAKE CLIMATE FINANCE WORK

COP29 established a new collective quantified goal of at least USD 300 billion annually in climate finance for developing countries by 2035, alongside a broader goal of scaling finance from public and private sources to at least USD 1.3 trillion per year, supported by the [Baku-to-Belém Roadmap](#). As these commitments move towards implementation, a critical question is how to ensure that more finance reaches underserved sectors and actors.

The scale of this challenge is illustrated by [Climate Policy Initiative](#) data showing that, in 2019–2020, just 0.8% of global climate finance went to small-scale agrifood systems. Solidaridad's [Small Farmer Atlas](#), drawing on interviews with nearly 10,000 farmers across 18 countries, further found that nearly two-thirds lacked sufficient financial resources to adapt to climate change. Beyond the overall climate finance gap, small-scale farmers and other local actors face significant barriers to accessing and benefiting from climate finance, including complex application requirements, high transaction costs and financing terms that do not reflect local realities and needs.

Climate finance needs to be accessible, affordable, appropriate and responsive to local realities. Applying locally led adaptation principles means not only getting more finance to the local level, but enabling farmers, communities and local institutions to shape priorities and decisions about how adaptation finance is used.

Different needs also require different forms of finance. Some investments can generate revenues and support commercial finance, while adaptation, ecosystem restoration and other activities that generate significant public benefits may require grants, concessional finance or other forms of public and catalytic support.

COP31's focus on bridging the gap between climate ambition and implementation provides an opportunity to focus on what ultimately reaches farmers and enables action on the ground. This also means learning from implementation. Experience across Solidaridad's carbon market programmes shows that carbon revenues can provide an additional benefit from climate-resilient agricultural practices.

Examples from [East Africa](#) and [Latin America](#) reinforce an important lesson: these revenues should complement rather than underpin the farmer business case, which must first deliver value through stronger productivity, resilience and livelihoods.

Innovative mechanisms, including carbon and ecosystem service markets, can help mobilize additional finance and create new revenue streams for farmers. Their success, however, should be assessed not only by the finance mobilized, but also by their accessibility, transaction costs and risks, and the net value and wider benefits that ultimately reach farmers. Ultimately, climate finance should be judged by whether it enables farmers and local actors to invest in the solutions they need and delivers tangible climate, resilience and livelihood benefits on the ground.



At COP31, we call on governments, donors and businesses to:



- ▶ Prioritize and scale predictable grant and concessional finance for adaptation, particularly where investments generate public benefits but limited financial returns, and use appropriate risk-sharing mechanisms to mobilize additional investment.
- ▶ Advance implementation of the Global Goal on Adaptation, ensuring that adaptation efforts deliver meaningful improvements in the resilience of small-scale farmers, their livelihoods and the agricultural systems on which they depend, supported by robust and context-sensitive indicators to track progress.
- ▶ Build on efforts to expand direct access and locally led adaptation finance, ensuring that funding mechanisms are accessible to farmers, producer organizations and local institutions through proportionate requirements, simplified procedures and appropriate financial instruments.
- ▶ Develop financing instruments that reflect agricultural realities, including smaller investment sizes, seasonal incomes, longer payback periods and higher perceived risks.
- ▶ Strengthen local financial institutions and intermediaries so that international climate finance can translate into investment at farm and landscape level.
- ▶ Measure climate finance not only by capital mobilized, but by how much reaches local actors and the tangible resilience, livelihood and climate benefits it delivers.
- ▶ Ensure that the second Global Stocktake looks beyond aggregate measures of progress to assess whether climate action and finance are delivering tangible benefits for small-scale farmers, including improvements in resilience, livelihoods and access to appropriate finance.

4. FROM WASTE TO VALUE: UNLOCK CIRCULAR OPPORTUNITIES IN AGRICULTURAL VALUE CHAINS

Agricultural value chains offer opportunities to reduce methane and other greenhouse gas emissions, enhance carbon removals and make more efficient use of resources. These include improved livestock and manure management, biochar production, as well as addressing organic residues, wastewater and by-products that can be converted into new products, inputs or energy rather than treated as waste. Circular approaches can reduce waste and pollution, improve water and resource efficiency, lower costs and create new economic opportunities. These solutions also need to work beyond large industrial facilities and be affordable and appropriate for small-scale farmers, processors, cooperatives and SMEs.

Solidaridad is already testing circular approaches across agricultural value chains. These experiences can help identify which solutions are technically and economically viable, and how they can be adapted and scaled to benefit small-scale producers, producer organizations and businesses.

[In coffee production in Peru](#), examples include low-cost wastewater filtration, converting coffee residues into pellets for energy and more efficient stoves, as well as turning agricultural residues into biochar for soil improvement and durable carbon storage.

[In Indonesia](#), a farmer collective is working with local palm oil mills to turn processing by-products into organic compost, creating a village-scale circular business model that supports soil health, agricultural productivity and additional income opportunities.

[In India](#), Solidaridad's sugarcane programmes demonstrate how practices such as crop-residue mulching can return organic materials to productive use.

At COP31, we call on governments, donors and businesses to:



- ▶ Scale investment in decentralized circular and [waste-to-value solutions](#) that turn agricultural residues and by-products into useful inputs, energy and products.
- ▶ Make proven technologies and financing accessible to small-scale farmers, processors, cooperatives and SMEs, not only large industrial actors.
- ▶ Support the testing, adoption, and scale of solutions where technologies need to be tailored to different commodities and local contexts.
- ▶ [Cut methane](#) and other greenhouse gas emissions across agricultural value chains by unlocking opportunities related to livestock, organic waste and agricultural processing.
- ▶ Ensure that circular business models create economic value for producers and local enterprises as well as environmental benefits.

5. INVEST IN YOUTH-LED CLIMATE ACTION

Long-term transformation of agriculture is impossible if young people cannot see viable futures in farming and rural economies. Climate action can create opportunities not only for young people to become farmers, but also to build businesses and provide the services, technologies and skills needed for more climate-resilient and low-carbon agricultural value chains. Youth engagement therefore needs to go beyond participation in climate dialogues. Young people need access to practical skills, finance, productive assets, markets and mentorship that enable them to build viable livelihoods as farmers, entrepreneurs, innovators and service providers. This includes opportunities in climate-resilient production, circular and waste-to-value enterprises, renewable energy, digital agricultural services, value addition and marketing.

Across its programmes, Solidaridad works with young people in different roles across agricultural value chains.

For example, [in South Africa](#), more than 1,700 unemployed young people are gaining hands-on experience across agricultural value chains through work-based learning, combining practical agricultural skills with enterprise development and mentorship. Some former participants have gone on to establish or expand their own farming businesses and access formal markets.

[In Colombia](#), Solidaridad and Nestlé's School of Young Entrepreneurs has worked with more than 897 young coffee farmers since 2019, combining leadership and business development with mentorship and connections to potential funders.

These examples illustrate how skills development can be connected to the assets, finance, markets and opportunities young people need to build viable livelihoods.



At COP31, we call on governments, donors and businesses to:



- ▶ Connect climate and agricultural skills development with concrete employment, enterprise and livelihood opportunities for young people.
- ▶ Increase young people's access to climate and agricultural finance, productive assets and markets, addressing structural barriers that limit their opportunities to build viable livelihoods and contribute to climate-resilient agriculture and food systems.
- ▶ Support youth-led enterprises and service providers in areas such as circularity, renewable energy, digital agriculture, value addition and climate-resilient production.
- ▶ Invest in the digital and technical skills needed for increasingly climate-resilient and low-carbon agricultural value chains.
- ▶ Promote a just transition in agriculture that strengthens decent work, livelihood security and appropriate social protection, particularly for farmers and workers facing heightened vulnerability to climate and economic shocks.

CROSS-CUTTING: A JUST TRANSITION MEANS NO FARMER GETS LEFT BEHIND

Climate action in agriculture will only be sustainable if farmers and communities can shape and benefit from the transition. This means ensuring that solutions recognize producers as rights-holders, are locally led and inclusive, and that the costs, risks and benefits of climate action are fairly shared. Particular attention is needed to ensure that the design and operationalization of the Belém-Antalya Mechanism ensures women, young people and groups that face barriers to participation can access resources, opportunities and decision making.

This matters as climate action increasingly translates into changes at farm level. New production requirements, decarbonization commitments, adaptation measures and emerging markets can create opportunities, but they can also introduce

new costs and risks. Farmers therefore need access to inclusive, context-appropriate technical assistance that responds to their priorities, capacities and circumstances.

[In Honduras](#), Solidaridad is combining training and tailored technical support to help coffee farmers adopt climate-resilient practices and navigate new sustainability requirements, alongside broader efforts to strengthen [gender equality](#) and women's participation in the sector.

A just transition means ensuring farmers have a meaningful role in shaping change and can benefit from it, rather than carrying a disproportionate share of its costs and risks.

At COP31, we call on governments, donors and businesses to:



- ▶ Embed locally-led, gender-equitable, and inclusive approaches in the implementation of NDCs and NAPs
- ▶ Ensure women, young people and other groups facing barriers to participation have meaningful access to climate finance, inclusive and locally appropriate technical assistance, and opportunities to shape decisions.
- ▶ Assess and address how the costs, risks and benefits of climate policies and value chain transitions are distributed at farm level.

CLOSING: FIVE PRIORITIES FOR COP31, GROUNDED IN A JUST TRANSITION

At COP31, Solidaridad calls for:

COP31 must turn climate ambition into implementation, with a just transition at its core. For food systems, that means putting the people who produce our food at the heart of the transition, and ensuring climate action strengthens their resilience, livelihoods and opportunities for the future.



1. Accelerate the transition to climate-resilient agriculture.

Invest in locally led, diversified and regenerative approaches that strengthen resilience, productivity and livelihoods, while contributing to food and water security.



2. Make supply-chain decarbonization work for farmers.

Translate Scope 3 commitments into farm-level investment while strengthening resilience and ensuring farmers benefit from the transition.



3. Make climate finance work on the ground.

Mobilize more finance, use instruments suited to different needs, and judge success by what reaches local actors and the climate, resilience and livelihood benefits it delivers.



4. Unlock circular opportunities across agricultural value chains.

Turn waste and by-products into resources, energy and economic opportunities, with solutions that work for smaller producers and enterprises.



5. Create viable opportunities for the next generation.

Connect climate action with the skills, finance, productive assets and markets young people need to access decent work, build enterprises and secure viable livelihoods in agriculture and rural economies.

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