

# COP17 must focus on agriculture

By [Nthambeleni Gabara](#)

14 Sep 2011

JOHANNESBURG: While food security debates at the upcoming COP 17 should take climate change into account, negotiations should also strongly focus on agriculture.

"Millions of hungry and starving individuals have their hopes invested in us. Despite our serious challenges, we still have hope," Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Minister, Tina Joemat-Pettersson, said at a two-day African Ministerial conference on climate-smart agriculture.

"We need your support to elevate agriculture to achieve global climate change goals - the triple win of enhanced agricultural productivity and incomes, climate resilience and carbon sequestration.

"It is vital to take account of agriculture, food security and land in the climate change negotiations," she said.

Climate-smart agriculture includes proven techniques such as agro-forestry, improved grazing, zero tillage and intercropping to mention but a few.

The conference brings together African ministers responsible for agriculture to deal with agriculture and climate change in unity and to adopt a declaration which will also be put on the table at the COP 17 in Durban later this year.

United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation assistant director-general, Alexander Muller, said the gathering leads the way forward for the African continent.

"With this conference, you have taken the global lead in bringing together agriculture and climate change. It is a signal of utmost importance that Africa has put climate-smart agriculture high on the political agenda," he said.

Today, the world is facing multiple challenges such as food security, the impacts of climate change, increasing scarcity of natural resources and widespread poverty.

What is needed, according to Muller, is a transition towards climate-smart agriculture, whose three pillars address these threats, a strong support to sustainable development and food security goals.

His sentiments were echoed by Limpopo MEC for Agriculture, Letsatsi Duba, who emphasised the need to increase the productivity and income in agriculture within the continent.

"We are already faced with deforestation soil erosion, desertification and drought and what is needed now is adaptation and resilience of both livelihoods and natural ecosystems," she said.

**For more:**

- Bizcommunity Search: [COP17](#)
- Google News Search: [United Nations Climate Change Conference](#)
- Twitter: [@COP17CMP7Durban](#)
- Twitter Search: [COP17](#)
- Facebook: [COP17/CMP7 - Durban, South Africa](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>