Policy Brief on Safeguarding Tenure in Smallholder Agriculture in South Africa

The document is for discussion purposes

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1. Introduction

This Policy Brief was prepared on behalf of and for the National Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP) on Land Governance in South Africa, with the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in order to develop capacity in land governance monitoring, policy dialogues and engagement on responsible tenure governance in the context of agricultural and rural development in line with the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security.

The development of the Policy Brief was managed by the Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA) in its capacity as Co-Chair of the MSP, and in its capacity as the Secretariat for LandNNES, the Land Network National Engagement Strategy of South Africa and the Civil Society arm of the MSP.

The National Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP) was established in September 2017, with the FAO playing a catalysing role. The MSP is co-chaired by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) and Civil Society, currently represented by the Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA).

LandNNES is a broad civil society platform bringing together over 26 civil society formations (who are members) with a common medium-to-long term vision around strengthening people-centred land governance, especially for marginalised and vulnerable groups. LandNNES is supported by the International Land Coalition (ILC), and is concerned with both the policy and implementation dimensions of land governance.

2. Terms of Reference:

The Policy Brief will serve as input to future multi-stakeholder meetings and policy dialogue. It provides strong, contextual mapping, critique and analysis of the complexities around smallholder agriculture in South Africa, tenure, business development, access to markets etc. as well as agro-ecology, and proposes recommendations for the multi-stakeholder dialogue between Government, Civil Society and United Nations Agencies.

The Policy Brief includes:

- A brief analysis of the role of smallholder agriculture in South Africa
- A brief analysis of the challenges of the sector in terms of tenure, business development, access to market, access to credit, extensions availability, climate change etc..
- An overview of existing agroecology projects in South Africa which are worthy to gain visibility and be scaled up.
- A set of incremental, concrete and actionable recommendations of how to safeguard tenure in smallholder agriculture and enhance agro-ecological practices to improve resilience to climate change. These recommendations will constitute the essential inputs for discussions in the future multistakeholder meetings and will be the base to develop an action plan/road map on the issue.
The brief is aimed at supporting multi-stakeholder dialogues with Government, Civil Society Organisations and United Nations Agencies with the aim of developing national policies in line with the FAO’s Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGTs, 2012). The emphasis is on strengthening policies, management and institutional frameworks at national and community levels. The recommendations will constitute the essential inputs for discussions in the future multi-stakeholder meetings and will be the base from which to develop an action plan/road map on the issue.

3. The current situation in brief

Climate change is the greatest threat facing humankind in modern times. If temperatures rise above 1.5°C, development gains will be reversed to preindustrial levels (Intergovernmental Panel Special Report on Global Warming, October 2018). South Africa is currently heading towards a 3.0°C warming in the eastern regions with escalating water challenges across the country. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2019 Special Report on Climate Change and Land, food systems are responsible for 21-37% of global greenhouse gases and contribute significantly to deforestation, biodiversity loss and declining water tables (Mbow et al, 2019). The lowest contributors to carbon emissions are the most vulnerable, and climate change induced flash floods, fires, and extended droughts have had a devastating effect on smallholder farmers, the poor in rural and urban spaces, with a particularly heavy burden on women and children (RSA, 2019). Understanding the pathways that link climate change, farming and food is critical for ensuring future food security and poverty reduction. “Our ability to manage trade-offs at a landscape scale will ultimately decide the future of land resources – soil, water, and biodiversity – and determine success or failure in delivering poverty reduction, food and water security, and climate change mitigation and adaptation” (RSA, 2019).

Poor land reform implementation, incomplete policy shifts, dwindling budgets, institutional weaknesses, corruption and climate change led to recommendations for a new Land Redistribution Bill, reflecting the VGGTs, to replace Act 126 of 1993. The May 2019 report of the Presidential Advisory Panel on Land Reform Advisory Panel warns that climate change and land reform policies must be considered simultaneously to prevent negative outcomes for both. “If the two issues are addressed collectively, the prospects of successful outcomes are greatly increased and the risks reduced.” (RSA, 2019). Urban agriculture is neglected in policy and practice.

The global food system is not only a key driver of climate change, but is significantly shaped by climate change patterns across varying scales (Fanzo et al, 2018). The corporatized structure of South Africa’s food system is underpinned and shaped by massive processes of concentration and consolidation not only in farming but in upstream and downstream segments of agricultural value chains. These include: increasing dominance of international investors (genetic stock in seed and livestock; agrochemicals, processing and retail); declining numbers of farming units (only 1.5% or 673 of these farms are responsible for a third of total gross commercial farm income); increased farm mechanisation and rapidly declining permanent farm employment (13.5% decline between 2002 and 2007); and collusive pricing practices in basic foods (poultry, bread and maize) exposed by the Competition Commission in 2011. Although primary agriculture’s share of GDP declined from 4.2% in 1996 to 2.4% in 2018, the sector grew by 3.1% p/a over the past two decades, and when secondary agriculture is added (up and downstream industries), the sector accounts of 15-20% of GDP.
(AgriSA, 2019). It thus remains a vital economic sector, but primary farm production is extremely competitive and retail agri-business has engaged in collusive practices that have driven up the cost of food staples.

The structural transformation of South Africa’s commercial agricultural sector has been shaped by the patterns of consolidation, growing concentration and mechanisation and the application of technology on larger parcels of land. However, while these transformations generally mimic agricultural development trends mapped out by other middle income economies, the South African context is characterised by a different logic that has resulted in massive job losses (Simbi and Aliber 2000). According to Aliber (forthcoming), the shift towards extensive farming systems, despite high the cost of imported inputs, is informed chiefly by non-economic considerations among the predominantly white class of large-scale commercial farmers. Firstly, fear of loss of land to farmworkers among farm owners under the post-apartheid legislative framework, which recognises the rights of farm workers and dwellers has led farmers to shed jobs and invest in mechanised production. Secondly, greater regulation including the introduction of a minimum wage in agriculture in 2003 and farm owner’s unwillingness to comply with labour law, resulting in a larger proportion of temporary, casual and seasonal labour in the sector. Lastly, farmers are responding to the ‘cost price squeeze,’ which reduces the marginal rate of return per unit area by boosting their areas through input intensification as opposed to labour.

Primary agriculture is now dominated by fewer farms, the agriculture sector produces surplus food and has recorded an increase in productivity. However, much like in other African countries, the more dynamic agricultural subsectors such as wine; deciduous fruit; subtropical fruit and wool, for example, generally target export markets that fetch higher earnings while local food demand among the country’s poorer households, which make up the majority of households, is met through the imports of cheap foods such as wheat and wheat flour, frozen chicken pieces, palm oil and rice (Aliber, forthcoming). This highlights one of the many contradictions that characterise South Africa’s food system as South African farmers give priority to products for distant markets instead of increasing the supply of food to meet domestic demand. Since the sector produces enough food to feed the population, food insecurity in South Africa only exits at the household level as a direct result of poverty and unemployment (PACSA, 2018). Hence social grants play a critical role in helping households push back poverty and improve their food security as South Africans are net food buyers (ibid). Aliber (forthcoming) argues that although government expenditure on social grants represents one of the largest subsidies to the country’s agricultural sector and associated agro-food networks, only a small portion of this is captured by black commercial farmers. This demonstrates yet another contradiction in the structure of South Africa’s food system In fact, at present, current government agricultural support policies and strategies do not identify or support public sector procurement from small producers and traders. Beyond market forces, the lack of transformation in South Africa’s food systems is reinforced by a lack of policy coherence and poor governance of resources. Economic policies aimed at driving growth and attracting investment perpetuate a dichotomous food system that marginalises and largely excludes small producers and traders. Its worth noting that the 2018 draft National Policy on Comprehensive Producer Development Support does not include household food security among its key objectives and only cites ‘food and nutrition for all’ as one the envisaged long-term impacts of the policy (CPDS:2018).

De-agrarianisation is occurring across large areas of the countryside and is visible in shifts from field to garden cultivation and increasingly few households owning larger herds of livestock (Shackleton et al, 2019; Beinart and Delius, 2018). This is the result of massive rural-urban migration and increasing differentiation amongst
smallholders, as those who can invest in productive assets begin to expand and those who can’t, drop out of farming (Cousins et al, 2018). Explanations include discriminatory water allocations, household labour shortages, decline in patriarchal authority over the labour of women and children (Beinart and Delius 2018), and cash constraints as a result of rising structural unemployment. Food insecurity (the absence of available, accessible and nutritious food) exists in 41.6% of rural (including farm worker) and 59.4% of urban households, who now purchase most of their food from retailers (Stats SA, 2017) and prioritise cheaper low protein high carbohydrate foods, which affects human health and nutrition security and causes an increase in obesity.

4. Brief analysis of the role of smallholder agriculture in South Africa

It is often claimed that smallholders produce most of the world’s food and are thus key to global food security. A survey of definitions found that most countries use land to measure farm size. The High-Level Panel of Experts of the Committee on Food Security (HLPE, 2013) found that 85% of farms in 81 countries are smaller than two hectares. Using this definition of small farms, Lowder et al (2016) show that these small farms make use of only 12% of the world’s agricultural land, making claims about the relative share of food they produce improbable. This is confirmed by Ricciardi et al (2018) who show that farmers using less than two hectares produce 30-34% of all food supplied on 24% of the world’s agricultural land. They also observe that small farms are more productive than big farms, produce a greater diversity of crops and funnel less food into feed and processing (ibid). It is only in those countries and regions where small farms use a larger share of land that they are likely to produce the larger share of the food consumed in that region or country (Lowder et al, 2016). In South Africa, because of our history, small plot holders use significantly less than 13% of the land, while approximately 5% of commercial farmers produce most of the country’s food.

However, the term “smallholder” is often disputed, particularly when it refers to land size. An alternate characterisation of smallholder is the idea of the family farm in which the central common definition is the use of family labour and family management of the farm. The United Nations Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028, for instance, puts forward the notion of “family farms”, referring to all family-based agricultural production where the family is the organising structure and production relies mainly on family labour. Embedded in the UN concept is the idea that the family and the farm co-evolve and combine economic, environmental, social and cultural functions. (FAO and IFAD, 2019: 9). Census data on family versus hired permanent and seasonal labour at a global scale is, however, scarce; but in the 30 countries that report on both labour sources, family labour exceeded permanent hired labour by 20:1. Extrapolating from this, Lowder et al (2016) conclude that more than 90% of the world’s farms are family farms and that they operate on about 75% of the world’s land. This implies that family farms are likely to be responsible for most of the world’s agricultural and food production. However, they caution that family farms are a diverse group which include farms of all sizes, and thus policies for agricultural development need to distinguish among different types of family farms.

South Africa’s draft National Policy on Comprehensive Producer Development Support (CPDS: 2018) categorises farmers into five groups with turnover and purpose of production as the defining criteria. Government expects that the support it provides to different categories of farmers should facilitate a movement through scales of farming from household consumption to farming for export purposes. A slightly adapted version of the CPDS’s farmer categories, which depicts the emergence continuum, is shown in
Diagram 1 below and includes examples of the type of financial services Government could consider providing.

**Figure 1: Farmer categories on an emergence continuum**

However, a number of NGOs question the assumption that Government support should be geared at facilitating movement along the continuum arguing that each farmer category requires ring-fenced support, with the bulk of state resources being spent on the lower three categories.

Using annual farm income rather than land size, and focussing on the agricultural sector in South Africa, Vink and Van Rooyen (2013) confirm Lowder et al’s (2016) conclusion that farming is highly differentiated. The majority of farmers recognised by StatsSA as commercial farmers earn below R300,000 per annum.

**Table 1. Commercial farms disaggregated by income**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farm income (R per year)</th>
<th>Number of farms</th>
<th>Percentages of Gross farm income (R000 per year)</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td>Cumulative</td>
<td>Actual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;10 m</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>17,850,383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 m – 9,999,999</td>
<td>1,675</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>10,330,424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 m – 3,999,999</td>
<td>3,041</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>5,056,986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 m – 1,999,999</td>
<td>5,214</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>7,351,291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300,000 – 999,999</td>
<td>11,805</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>5,335,646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; R300,000</td>
<td>23,428</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>7,404,322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total?</td>
<td>45,818</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>53,329,052</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Vink and Van Rooyen (in Bernstein, 2013)

These figures exclude households and individuals farming on land in social tenure systems, who are also a highly differentiated group. They comprise 150 000 “commercially-oriented” smallholders and 2,6 million “subsistence-orientated” households. The commercial smallholders grew by 29% between 2002 and 2010, contributed R5,3 billion to rural incomes and employed in the region of 10% of agricultural workers nationally (Aliber et al, 2013: 15).
Vink and Van Rooyen, like the CPDS, make no reference to labour or to levels of productive capital (finance, mechanisation etc). Cousins and Chikazunga (2013) factor these differences into a typology of smallholders which uses labour source, purpose of production, proportion of marketed output, capital intensity and mechanisation to differentiate farmers and farming scales. The typology makes it possible to target groups for particular policy interventions.

Table 2. Typology of smallholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives of production</th>
<th>Subsistence oriented smallholders</th>
<th>Market oriented smallholders in loose value chains</th>
<th>Market oriented smallholders in tight value chains</th>
<th>Small-scale capitalist farmers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of marketed output</td>
<td>Household consumption</td>
<td>Household consumption + cash income</td>
<td>Cash income and some household consumption</td>
<td>Profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of marketed output</td>
<td>50% or more</td>
<td>75% or more</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to household income</td>
<td>Reduces expenditure on food</td>
<td>Variable: from small to significant</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>Very significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources of labour</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Family + some hired</td>
<td>Family + significant numbers hired</td>
<td>Hired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanisation</td>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium to high</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital intensity</td>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium to high</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to finance</td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>Very significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numbers in SA</td>
<td>2-2.5 million HH</td>
<td>200-250 000 HH</td>
<td>5000?</td>
<td>5000?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Cousins and Chikazunga (2013)

This typology has been taken up and/or adapted in various ways in South Africa’s agricultural policy environment. Khulisa Management Services (2016; who Government contracted to critique agricultural policy and make recommendations), who draw on the typology, note that government’s targeting of interventions is currently weak. Intervention targeting also neglects explanations for why some smallholders grow, employ labour and engage in formal markets, while others maintain stable production levels, and still others fall out of production forcing family members to migrate to find wage work in order to survive.

Smallholders in South Africa invest in multiple, diversified livelihoods, including social grants; part-time, seasonal and wage work and small enterprises (e.g. selling airtime) (Cousins et al, 2013; Mtero 2014; Dubb 2014). However, diversified livelihoods require time and skill to manage and come at a cost of the labour available for farming and domestic work. The households most likely to sustain or expand their farm
production are those able to combine incomes from diversified sources, including wage earners who remit a significant portion of income back to the rural home, the elderly who receive old age Government pensions, and those who have retired with private pensions and who can use some of this income to hire in (part-time) labour where the household has a labour scarcity, or to fund inputs, consumption or ceremonies. However, remittances have been declining in frequency and amounts over the past 25 years largely because of the expansion of social grants since 1994 and the rise in structural unemployment since 2008 (Francis, 2002).

Three new social features that characterise South Africa’s rural environments today have compounded the historical social dynamics.

- The massive oscillatory rural-urban migration of young adults (men and women) in search of elusive employment has left rural households with labour and capital shortages that have curtailed their ability to engage in agriculture.
- Rising structural unemployment has increased the decline in marriage as young men struggle to accumulate the savings necessary for them to form their own households. As a consequence, the flow of resources (remittances, cash, food) between the urban and rural poles of the same household is disappearing, generating new levels of rural vulnerability and hunger.
- So called “formal” and “informal” markets increasingly intersect at many points: smallholders purchase seeds from multi-national corporations; big food retailers supply rural spaza shops. These value chains need to be analysed from the perspective of those who have the least power to determine who benefits from transactions.

The HLP (2018: 54-55) and Hall and Kepe (2017) caution that recent shifts in land reform policy and budget allocations no longer focus on changing the structure of the agrarian economy to include those who were marginalised in past and to address structural drivers of inequality in ownership and control over land (HLP, 2018: 54-55, Hall and Kepe, 2017). Instead, land reform has been captured by elites who have political connections, which has the effect of locking poor people out of land reform (Mtero et al, 2019). Analysing current agricultural policies leads to similar conclusions on the outcomes of these policies and their shortcomings in effectively transforming the agricultural sector and integrating smallholder farmers.

Farmer support in South Africa has been dominated by a neoliberal development model that promotes large-scale commercial agriculture, the integration of farmers into corporate value chains and a narrow approach to small-scale agriculture that is focused on farmer’s ability to ‘graduate’ to ever larger scales of production. The flagship smallholder development programmes under the Agricultural Policy Action Plan (APAP) 2015-2019 include the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) and the Recapitalisation and Development Programme (RADP), which provide wide-ranging forms of support to subsistence, smallholder and black commercial farmers for selected priority crops and commodities including the supply of production inputs and small production equipment, training and advisory services, access to financial support and credit. While some black commercial farmers have benefited from these state-led farmer support programmes, these programmes have failed to deliver on the targets set out for smallholder farmers specifically. Without going into great detail, in terms of agricultural production measured by area cultivated, the CASP has only contributed to a small increase in the area cultivated for the priority crops and commodities that the programme supports while the land area cultivated on land reform farms under the

\[1\] APAP 2014–2019 identifies the following priority commodities, poultry/soya/maize integrated value chain; red meat; wheat; fruit and vegetables; wine; biofuels; forestry; fishing and aquaculture (DAFF, 2014)
RADP has actually decreased (DPME, 2015; FFC, 2016). Furthermore, efforts to smallholder farmers into corporate value chains that they have no influence or control over highlights a lack of regard and understanding of the challenges that smallholders face in tightly integrated tight value chains (Greenberg, 2018; Olofsson, 2019). Smallholder commercial farmers have been able to access markets successfully and grow by supplying informal traders and participating in loose value chains with less stringent requirements than those imposed by supermarkets and formal markets (Cousins, 2015). In addition, terms of incorporation into value chains are different across commodities and generally involve the introduction of new financial and non-financial costs of production linked to the buyers’ requirements in terms of volume, consistency, quality and certification systems (Ponte, 2005; du Toit, 2009).

The focus on a smallholder development pathway that seeks to produce a new class of black commercial farms that resemble the white owned large commercial farms is problematic because it diminishes the complex set of structural factors and social dynamics that shape farmer’s ability to ‘graduate’ and progress along a linear growth trajectory. Although government recognises the the diversity of smallholder farmers as a group, multiple studies have shown that farmer’s ability to sustain their farming and/or accumulate is in fact informed by non-agricultural activities including salaried work, remittances and social transfers (Neves & Du Toit, 2013; Olofsson, 2018). For example, despite claims that social transfers act as a disincentive for market-oriented smallholder production because the grants benefit so-called ‘undeserving’ household members and reduce their reliance on agriculture for income (Sinyolo et al 2017); there is strong evidence that shows the critical role that social transfers play in rural households, particularly for women and children, even though the majority of social grant recipients are concentrated in urban and peri-urban centres. As one of the few or only sources of predictable income for rural households, social transfers are used to subsidise investment in agriculture and other informal entrepreneurial activities (du Toit and Neves, 2009; Olofsson, 2019). Therefore, beyond the need for capital, policies relating to smallholder development need to recognise and reflect the significance of the interdependent and diverse rural non-farm livelihoods that influence small-scale agriculture. Moreover, targeted interventions need to consider the implications of these diverse livelihood trajectories for other production factors including labour and land. Worth mentioning here, the draft National Policy proposes farmer support that involves blended financing consisting of a grant and an interest bearing private sector loan and lists the requirement of a ‘bankable business plan’ and producer contributions among the conditions for accessing support.

5. Agroecology

There are two broad categories of agricultural innovations aiming to respond to the food security threats posed by climate change: (i) sustainable intensification (which includes climate-smart agriculture, nutrition-sensitive agriculture and sustainable food value chains); and (ii) agroecology (which includes organic agriculture, agroforestry and permaculture). Some literature includes agroecology as a form of sustainable intensification although it is not premised on increasing yield, as is implied by intensification (HLPE, 2019). Given Government’s emphasis on “graduating” small farmers to ever larger scales of farming and questions around food security for an increasingly urban population, this is a useful distinction in the South African context. Key questions that arise are: can smallholders produce sufficient food for cities using agro-ecological farming systems? Is there political support for permanently maintaining and supporting a smallholder sector that practices agroecology? If not, what does this imply for smallholder resilience in the face of climate change? How does smallholder vulnerability to climate change impact on the tenure security of rural dwellers?
It is argued that the resource stewardship involved in multi-generational family farming systems is likely to ensure food security and improve livelihoods while providing better management of natural resources and protection of the environment. Promoting family farming is thus an opportunity to achieve sustainable development, particularly in rural areas (FAO and IFAD, 2019). Agroecology as an integrated approach that applies “ecological and social concepts and principles to the design and management of food and agricultural systems” (FAO, undated: 2) is consistent with this understanding of family farming. Agroecology “seeks to optimize the interactions between plants, animals, humans and the environment while taking into consideration the social aspects that need to be addressed for a sustainable and fair food system.” (ibid). It draws together ten interdependent elements from a combination of bio-physical and socio-economic aspects that constitute the social, economic and environmental components of sustainable development.

A number of NGOs in South Africa have attempted to develop principles from practices around these elements (see Appendix B also summarises some CSO initiatives). Key amongst these are (taken from ACB, 2015):

- The right to food includes the right to define context-specific production practices and policies in line with agro-ecological principles. Agroecology involves the radical transformation of agriculture guided by the idea that ecological change in agriculture cannot be achieved without changing the social, political, economic and cultural contexts in which agriculture is embedded.
- The focus must therefore be on the entire food chain, including land distribution, water access, extension support, finance, wages and living conditions for different social categories (eg. women and youth), national and international trade policies.
- Struggles for the right to food furthermore involve promoting alternative economic models that create sustainable patterns of production, consumption and living. This means that food should be produced in a socially just and environmentally sound manner and should be healthy, of sufficient variety and available and affordable to all.
- Government has a number of policies that support small scale producers, recognise the problems in the food system and the need for climate adaptation, such as the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme, the Strategic Plan for Smallholder Support, the Landcare programme, the National Agroecology Strategy, the National Extension Policy, the National Organic Policy and the National Strategy for Indigenous Food Crops. Despite awareness that a key objective of these strategies and programmes is to support small-scale producers to increase their food security and stake in the agricultural economy, very little transformation has taken place. The policies tend to replicate inappropriate commercial farming models, and have failed in practice to provide support to smallholders.
- Farmer groups and other civil society organisations have extensive experience in engaging with these strategies and programmes, and can share learnings arising from these engagements.

The HLPE (2019: 60) recognises that agroecology is one of a number of climate adaptation strategies that may be adopted at various scales. It provides an example of a continuum (see below) of innovative sustainable approaches, in which the poles of a strategy are delineated.
Table 3. The continuum of response options of small-scale farmers to climate change
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Spectrum of values for each characteristic between two polar opposites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Regenerative production, recycling and efficiency | **Pole 1:** Eliminate external inputs, rely on only natural processes and have closed resource cycles  
**Intermediate 1:** Minimize purchased inputs, favour natural processes and try to close resource cycles  
**Intermediate 2:** Deliberately use purchased inputs to make efficient use of natural processes and resource cycles  
**Pole 2:** Use purchased inputs to intensify production per unit land while keeping leakage to a minimum                                                                                                                                               |
| Biodiversity, synergy and integration        | **Pole 1:** Deliberate management of biological diversity and interactions among components within production systems to enhance complementarity and achieve synergy, including between production and conservation objectives across field, farm and landscape scales (land sharing)  
**Intermediate 1:** Manage interactions among selected components within production systems without trying to maintain diversity beyond that necessary for production  
**Intermediate 2:** Neutral with respect to integrating or segregating components within production systems  
**Pole 2:** Intensify production on higher potential land thereby leaving other land for meeting conservation objectives (land sparing)                                                                                                                                 |
| Economic diversification versus specialization | **Pole 1:** Strive for greater economic diversity of production systems  
**Intermediate 1:** Manage economic diversity of production systems around functional themes to maintain ecosystem services and economic resilience  
**Intermediate 2:** Neutral with respect to diversification or specialization  
**Pole 2:** Specialize in a few components within production systems to simplify management and supply market requirements                                                                                                                                 |
| Climate adaptation and mitigation            | **Pole 1:** Explicitly aim to design and use practices that contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation  
**Intermediate 1:** Significant adaptation and mitigation co-benefits  
**Intermediate 2:** Significant adaptation or mitigation co-benefits  
**Pole 2:** No explicit attempt to contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Knowledge generation and dissemination       | **Pole 1:** Emphasizes support to local innovation and farmer-to-farmer knowledge exchange  
**Intermediate 1:** Emphasizes co-learning and the combination of local and global scientific knowledge  
**Intermediate 2:** Emphasizes widespread dissemination of innovations from participatory research  
**Pole 2:** Emphasizes widespread dissemination of innovation from state and privately-funded formal research                                                                                                                                 |
| Human and social values: Equity              | **Pole 1:** Recognizes inequality within food systems as a major problem constraining achievement of FSN  
**Intermediate 1:** Recognizes specific inequalities within food systems (e.g. in relation to gender and socio-economic status)  
**Intermediate 2:** Does not focus on issues of equality  
**Pole 2:** Considers that market forces will iron out inequalities                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Human and social values: Labour versus capital intensification | **Pole 1:** Emphasis on labour intensification, fairness and dignity of work for all  
**Intermediate 1:** Emphasis on labour productivity while retaining smallholder farming  
**Intermediate 2:** Neutral on intensification dimensions  
**Pole 2:** Emphasis on capital intensification                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Connectivity (value chains/circular economies) versus globalization | **Pole 1** Emphasis on local markets, connectivity of producers and consumers, circular economy  
**Intermediate 1:** Blended market approach combining access to national markets where appropriate with stimulating function of local markets  
**Intermediate 2:** Neutral with respect to marketing or value chain structure  
**Pole 2:** Emphasis on efficiency of large markets and global value chains                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Governance: rights, democratization and participation | **Pole 1:** Starts by asserting basic rights and works on from that to how food systems should be transformed; strives for greater agency – i.e. participation of civil society in decision-making about how food is produced, processed, stored, transported and consumed  
**Intermediate 1:** Acknowledges that rights, including rights to accurate information, are an important part of food system transformation and includes consideration of them  
**Intermediate 2:** Neutral regarding rights  
**Pole 2:** Does not explicitly recognize rights as fundamental to food security and nutrition; participation is shaped through market forces                                                                                                                                 |
6. Improving Smallholder resilience to climate change

The HLPE (2019) continuum is useful because smallholders in South Africa are a diverse group who require targeted but flexible interventions to support their farming activities and to help them build resilience to climate change. Their diversity is the result of dynamic social and economic processes that play out at the household level, and which can cause a household’s livelihood trajectory to diversify and become more resilient or to narrow and become more vulnerable. As a result, it is possible to observe the following dynamics at play in rural households:

- Households are unable to sustain agricultural livelihoods and drop out of production. They are extremely vulnerable, heavily reliant on social grants, are often headed by women and have a large number of dependent children in them. They drop out of agriculture when they struggle to recover from livelihood shocks (death of a pensioner or wage earner, retrenchment, drought or floods, livestock predation of crops or diseases) and do not have the resources to reinvest in agricultural production.
- Households creep back into production. These are often women-headed households who use social grants to slowly and incrementally reinvest in small scale production, usually for cash sales or consumption or a mixture of both. Droughts, floods and other shocks can easily reverse the investments they make.
- Households maintain static levels of production, neither dropping out nor expanding. The purpose of production is often mixed, with subsistence geared at reducing food consumption costs and sales of surplus aimed at increasing household incomes. These households are vulnerable to livelihood shocks and are heavily reliant on social grants.
- Households step out of farming. They use multiple income sources, including grants and farm income to invest in assets and futures outside of agriculture (tertiary education for adult children, or purchasing a bakkie to use for trading are examples). As a result, the importance of agriculture in their livelihood portfolio declines over time.
- Households expand their farm production. These households often combine multiple income sources (wages, pensions and other social grants and farm income) to invest in employing labour or purchasing agricultural technologies that allow them to expand their farm production.

The table below creates a set of proposals for discussion based on the close links between these socio-economic processes of differentiation and the continuum of response options for smallholders to climate adaptation presented in table 3 above. Useful discussion points would include:

- Do the pathways adequately capture the dynamics driving changes amongst smallholders?
- Are these dynamics important for understanding how to target interventions? In what ways?
- Describe examples from real case studies to build the profiles of each of the categories?
- Are the climate adaptation intervention proposals from the HLPE’s continuum of innovations likely to be supported by a range of stakeholders?
- What are the roles of each stakeholder in relation to providing the interventions proposed?
- Which policies/laws provide instruments for these interventions? Do they require amendments?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pathways</th>
<th>Profile and central dynamics</th>
<th>Key interventions</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Dropping out      | Reliant on government social grants, often child grants, and intermittent casual labour; Household labour shortages due to youth migration and education, and compromised authority of women-headed households; Cash constraints and ceremonial needs during “shocks” (death of wage earner, retrenchment) result in heavy extractions from farming (use and sale of livestock); Chronic drought depletes livestock and food production from gardens and fields; Tenure security over gardens, fields, water sources and rangelands at risk from extractive industry interests | National policy:<br>- Household records to enable leasing-out of land in social and communal property tenure systems;  
- Social protection guarantees critical<br>Local government/NGO:<br>- Extension support and grants to establish solidarity agri-stockvels with closed resource systems – local savings, recycling of natural ‘waste’, seed preservation;<br>- Prioritize household food gardens, small livestock, micro water systems, soil preservation and fertility for farmer-to-farmer knowledge;<br>- Facilitate local “swop/share/lend” economy (ukunana and ukusisa); |
| Extremely vulnerable, food insecure households     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Creeping back     | Use mainly government old age pensions to make small incremental investments in farming; Household labour with part-time, seasonal, hired-in youth labour; Local market is a “debt market” linked to social grant receipts, requiring unique skills; Drought, heat and floods put investments at risk; Tenure security at risk from extractive industry interests (eg. mining, plantations) and concentration of livestock in fewer households who dominate communal rangelands. | National policy:<br>- Household records to facilitate leased-in land in social and CPA tenure systems;  
- Social protection guarantees critical<br>State subsidized youth labour for agricultural expansion projects (extending fields, small irrigation systems, livestock housing)<br>Local gov /NGO /Commodity Org:<br>- Research and farmer exchanges on managing “debt” markets<br>- Subsidized micro credit schemes/stockvel saving schemes<br>- Limited external inputs to address specific issues (eg. lime for acidic soils)<br>- Diverse farming systems to reduce drought risks |
| Small, incremental steps to diversify household income and consumption |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Hanging in        | Incomes from multiple sources (grants, wages, farming) limit consumption off-take from farming; Household labour plus part-time, seasonal, hired-in youth labour; Limited communal rangeland area constrains livestock diversification or expansion; | National policy:<br>- Household records to facilitate leased-in land in social and CPA tenure systems;  
- Social protection guarantees critical<br>- State subsidized youth labour for agricultural technical support or expansion projects (community vets, field extensions, small irrigation systems, livestock housing) |
| Protecting welfare levels with low-input farming system |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Tenure security at risk from extractive industry interests (eg. mining, plantations) and concentration of livestock in fewer households who dominate communal rangelands. | - Include as beneficiary criteria for land redistribution access in CPA systems as CPAs can improve agricultural input support  
**Local gov/NGO Commodity Org:**  
- Subsidies for limited strategic inputs to maximize production and crop/livestock resilience (eg. liming, breed conversions)  
- Subsidies to convert to climate resilient and sustainable practices in terms of water, energy and soil usage  
- Facilitate diversification through farmer-to-farmer exchanges  
- Support learning exchanges around local market diversification, including closer producer/consumer links  
- Provide access to technical research on climate resilient crops and livestock and local adaptation measures |
| --- | --- |

### Stepping out

**Accumulating assets that allow switches to new activities outside agriculture**

Income from diversified livelihoods and capital from farming support investments in education, housing and social networks; Unrecorded/unrecognised household rights to fields limits leasing out of land; Land reform beneficiaries in CPIs cannot alienate or transfer their land benefits.  
**National policy:**  
- Household records to facilitate leased-out land in social and CPA tenure systems;  
- Social protection guarantees required  
- CPA amendments to allow transfer/alienation of benefits  
**Local gov/NGO:**  
- Information and support to access (peri) urban settlement nodes  
- Credit access and training to develop small businesses (hawkers, bakkie traders)

### Stepping up

**Investing in agricultural assets, and purchasing at least some inputs or services**

Wages/ small businesses (eg. taxi) provide initial capital for farming investment, thereafter profits fund farm expansion; Limited communal rangeland for livestock expansion; Land redistribution and water access constrains expansion and policies are unclear about beneficiary selection processes; Transport to, quantity and quality requirements of formal markets are difficult to negotiate and achieve; Significant employer of agricultural workers but wage bill + government policies shift incentives to mechanisation; Communal tenure limits credit access; Land reform tenure: PLAS policy criteria for lease-to-ownership conversions  
**National policy:**  
- Targeted prioritised beneficiaries for land redistribution (emerging farmers in communal areas or labour tenants/farm dwellers living on commercial farms);  
- Clear, applied criteria for transitioning from lease to ownership of redistributed land (PLAS);  
- Household records to facilitate leased-in land in social and CPA tenure systems;  
- CPA amendments to facilitate exiting CPI’s (including leasing out, selling, straddling);  
- Water policies redistribute percentage of available water to emerging farmers
| uncertain; CPA members lack instruments to transfer fixed investments out of groups or to straddle CPA and PLAS policies | - State subsidized youth labour for agricultural technical support or expansion projects (community vets, field extensions, small irrigation systems, livestock housing)

**Local gov/ NGO Commodity Org:**
- Digital platforms to support extension services, climate risks and local shifts (cropping patterns, diseases etc), market information for commodities, credit, labour policies, producer-consumer links
- Subsidies to facilitate transitions to low use irrigation (drip), soil preservation (low till) practices and sustainable energy (biogas, solar);
- Appropriate farm insurance and credit options developed with clear, consistently applied criteria for access
- Facilitate climate resilient diversification through farmer-to-farmer exchanges
- Support learning exchanges around local market diversification, including closer producer/consumer links
- Provide access to technical research on climate resilient crops and livestock and local adaptation measures
- Learning exchanges with retailers and other consumer organisations on formal market requirements |
7. Recommendations

The diversity of smallholders in South Africa means that a range of climate adaptation measures are likely to be adopted at local levels. Using the Cousins and Chikazunga (2013) typology, climate adaptation strategies should be designed for different farmers as follows:

**Subsistence oriented smallholders**, who use mainly family labour, low input systems and low levels of mechanisation, to produce food for household consumption and to reduce food expenditure, are most likely to adopt agroecology methods. These smallholders make up over 2 million households and would benefit from learning from practice, policy and research geared at agroecology adaptations, including water conservation, organic soil fertility, locally managed seed banks, grant finance for infrastructure (particularly micro water systems) and state provision of basic services, including land for settlement.

**Market-oriented smallholders** in loose value chains use mainly family and small numbers of hired labour to produce for household consumption and local markets. These farmers make up nearly a quarter of a million households, and as cash-constrained households, they are likely to adopt low input farming systems. They would benefit from learning from practice, policy and research geared at supporting agroecology and climate smart adaptations (in soil, water and energy), strategies to strengthen local markets, access to commonage and micro-water systems and accessible blended financial services.

**Market oriented smallholders in tight value chains** who use combinations of family and hired-in labour, and **small scale capitalist farmers who use mainly hired labour** both face fierce competition from bigger farmers who benefit from economies of scale and labour-substituting mechanisation. **Policy priorities are that these smallholders are primary beneficiaries of land redistribution, are supported through a mix of blended and subsidised financial services to make no-cost conversions to climate-adapting technologies (such as mixed farming systems, drip irrigation, no till, renewable energy sources and climate information updates), and that digital platforms are developed to link producers to local markets, climate information, extension support. These would build resilience as well as improve the ability of these farmers to compete.**

**Bigger, commercially-oriented farmers who are at risk of dropping out** of agriculture could either have their farms redistributed to emerging farmers, or be supported with low interest finance to make conversions to climate adaptive technologies, like those described above.

**Large-scale commercially-oriented farmers** who use most of the country’s farmland and produce most of the food supplied to cities and rural areas should be incentivised through tax rebates to expand their investments in climate-adaptation technologies (like those described above, including active preservation of wetlands, rangelands and water sources) and to make at least 30% of their land available for redistribution to farm dwellers and communal farmers in the area.

Specific policies and legislative amendments should include:

- The new proposed Land Redistribution Bill must reflect the VGGTs – particularly the unrecorded land rights of smallholders - and address climate change and land reform simultaneously. The failure to do this will generate negative consequences for both land reform and climate adaptation.

- The Interim Protection of Land Rights Act must be strengthened and made permanent. The HLP (2017) proposal is consistent with the September 2019 resolution (UNCCD COP 14, 2019), which
notes the urgency of recognising tenure security, including of those who do not have registered land rights, for combating desertification, land degradation and drought. The amendments must take cognisance of the VGGTs, namely, that smallholders must be consulted where changes to tenure are proposed and particularly that proposals to consolidate landholdings must be subject to a cost-benefit analysis from the perspective of all the smallholders currently using the land. This is important given shifts in cultivation from fields to gardens and public-private initiatives involved in agricultural “massification” projects on “abandoned” fields that do not provide benefits to smallholders.

- The concentration in the food system is unsustainable and compounds the vulnerability of the majority of the population to climate change. This requires cross-cutting policy changes:
  - **Agricultural extension policies** must allocate at least 80% of its staff, grant and research resources to households farming for subsistence and sales of surplus to local markets;
  - **Comprehensive agricultural support policies and financial services** should be geared at providing support to enable smallholders and bigger farms to shift to climate resilient practices (eg. low till and input agriculture, low maintenance drip irrigation systems, mixed farming scales and systems, shifts away from carbon based fossil fuels to energy sources such as biogas and solar energy);
  - **Land redistribution policy** must explicitly aim to restructure the agrarian economy to include those marginalised and stop creating opportunities for political alliances and elite enrichment. It must include urban and rural land to enable marginalised households to straddle urban and rural livelihoods, and prioritise rural land for smallholders constrained by land shortages, such as communal farmers including those engaged in “informal” markets, farm dwellers who are already farming on a small scale and urban farmers;
  - **Land use policy** must ensure the preservation of all agricultural land, wetlands, water sources and natural rangelands against conversion, pollution and encroachment.
  - **Consumer protection policy and legislation** must be geared at preventing monopolies and government from acting against the food security of the poor (eg. collusive practices around staples and basic foods, and increases or extensions of VAT on staples and basic foods including proteins).

8. Conclusion

The corporatised structure of South Africa’s food system has perpetuated the notion of a dual agriculture systems in which smallholder development is narrowly conceived. Assumptions about the abilities of farmers to progress and commercialise have led to policies and strategies that do not adequately account for the structural socio-economic factors that make it difficult smallholder farmers to benefit from the range of government interventions that exist. The state has several options for facilitating the transition from the dominant corporate agro-food system, with multi-pronged strategies that will focus on expanding the productive base and markets simultaneously. Smallholders in South Africa are a highly differentiated group of farmers. Each group requires specific targeted interventions in order to support their farming and climate adaptation strategies. The majority of state resources should be geared at the vast majority of smallholders who produce to supplement household food consumption and to sell surpluses in very local markets. They are extremely vulnerable to climate change, including drought, unpredictable weather events, bush
encroachment and zoonotic diseases. The constraints facing these households are cash for purchased inputs (seeds, fertilizers), labour (as a result of mass rural-urban migration) and climate and market information deficits. Agroecology practices that focus on organic soil fertility, water conservation, seed banks, and local producer-to-consumer markets together with amendments to IPILRA, would address climate resilience at the same time as household tenure and food security.
9. Appendix A

Terms of Reference for the drafting of an Expert Policy Brief on safeguarding tenure in smallholder agriculture in South Africa

This Policy Brief will contribute to meaningful policy dialogues and engagement on responsible tenure governance in the context of agricultural and rural development in line with the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security

Background

South Africa’s economy remains uniquely dual and faces challenges of continued inequality, structural unemployment, and poverty. The income inequality is associated with the unequal land holding patterns. The duality in the agricultural sector shows in having a minority of the population controlling the well-developed commercial agricultural sector where applied research and improved farm management practices, business-driven extension and advisory services result in high outputs, while the majority of the rural population earns their living using subsistence-oriented practices with minimal resources. Consequently, food and nutrition security are high on the country’s list of priorities.

The sustainable land reform aligned to the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme is a key country priority, as well as sustainable natural resources management and food and nutrition security. There is also a role for South Africa in the region², in particular concerning South-South Cooperation (SSC). The Government of South Africa has successfully demonstrated strong linkages between social protection instruments, food security and poverty alleviation. Experiences and lessons learned from South Africa and other countries of the continent are highly instrumental to guide policies, strategies and instruments in the continent as an integral part of food and nutrition security and poverty alleviation efforts.

A significant achievement has been the development of a Fisheries Policy that has attempted to correct the imbalances that prevailed during the apartheid era and to provide stakeholders with a fair and equitable access to the living marine resources, as well as ensuring their involvement and participation in the management of fishery resources. The policy also places emphasis on food security and sustainable income generation. Further access to land, change in water rights and access, has the potential for expanding small aquaculture projects.

Private sector ownership of timber plantations accounts for a large proportion of the total plantation area for timber. Moreover, there are a number of land restitution claims and redistributed lands that have natural and commercial forests.

South Africa has a complex legislative and policy framework regarding land. A Green Paper on Land Reform was published in August 2011. In addition, there is a wide range of policies and bills currently under review. South Africa’s Constitution strongly commits national institutions to respect, protect and strengthen the land

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² The UK has a development partnership with South Africa as mentioned in the DFID Country Profile, dated July 2018 (available at https://www.gov.uk/world/organisations/dfid-south-africa). DFID sees South Africa as an increasingly important development actor in its own right, both in Africa and at international levels.
rights of women and men, gender equity, equitable access to and distribution of land, and the rights of human rights defenders. Section 25 of the Constitution known as the ‘Property Clause’ extends and protects land and property rights, and allows for expropriation of land. Sections 25(5), (6), (7) and (9) guarantee (a) equitable access to land through redistribution; and (b) restitution to those whose rights were historically dispossessed because of racial discrimination.

The question of how South Africa will move forward to both address historical land dispossession and inequitable access to land and resources, has become increasingly politicised with the issue of ‘expropriation without compensation’ topping current discourse. A Joint Constitutional Review Committee established and mandated by the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces to review section 25 of the Constitution - which speaks to the right of property ownership - has received over 700,000 written submissions on issues related to making it possible for the state to expropriate land in the public interest without compensation.

Inclusive access to land, sustainable management and use of natural resources, forestry and fisheries, enhancing agro-ecological practices to improve resilience to climate change, are key aspects for including governance and improved coordination. The emphasis is on strengthening policies, management and institutional frameworks at national and community levels.

In South Africa, different streams of work have created an enabling environment for VGGT implementation in the context of the land reform agenda:

- General and specific VGGT awareness increased at national and sub-national levels of government, CSOs, private sector and academia/research centres;
- Capacities to implement the VGGT were self-assessed by government (e.g., Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR), the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), with participation from the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO)), CSOs (from the land and fisheries sectors) and academia/research centres;
- The use of the VGGT by CSOs and grassroots organizations increased in addition to building enhanced cross-sectoral networks (in collaboration with Masifundise Development Trust); and
- Enhanced awareness of gender equality was realized by the Gender and Land Learning Programme.

In late September 2017, a national Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP) was established with the FAO Country Office playing a catalysing role. With the MSP created, being co-chaired by DRDLR and the Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA), it is important that the synergies and complementarities between the National Engagement Strategy (NES) and the Land Observatory, chaired by AFRA and supported by the International Land Coalition (ILC), and the VGGT related activities merge into a single approach to strengthen tenure governance, especially for the marginalised and vulnerable groups.

Civil society organisations took the decision to organise themselves into a national network, called LandNNES, to ensure that civil society is strengthened and able to participate effectively in policy level engagements with government and other actors in the MSP to strengthen land governance and land rights in South Africa. They developed a ‘Multi-year Action Plan 2019-2021’ adopting the NES approach ‘to connect, mobilise and engage’. Their objectives are fully in line with the objectives of FAO’s global support to the VGGT implementation programme aimed at achieving:
- An increased number of good fit national policies and legal framework adopted and promulgated: this relates to facilitating and providing technical assistance to the review of existing and draft policies resulting in recommendations for alignment with VGGT principles and internationally recognized best practices; and
- An increased number of organisational frameworks and coordination mechanisms are strengthened in functioning and performance.

FAO will support the national MSP, leveraging on the achievements of LandNNES, and the recommendations of the VGGT workshop held in Durban in February 2017, where priorities were identified and prioritised resulting in the road map.

FAO South Africa has played a pivotal role in continuous dialogue between the above listed partners that are all highly committed to make responsible tenure governance happen for the benefit of all.

In this context the FAO has signed a Letter of Agreement with AFRA (Association for Rural Advancement), which currently host the LandNNES Secretariat, to provide a series of service in support of the “Tailored capacity development, policy dialogues and engagement on responsible tenure governance in the context of agricultural and rural development in line with the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure Land, Fisheries and Forests in the context of National Food Security”.

AFRA agreed to produce Four Policy Briefs that will serve as input to future multi-stakeholders meetings and policy dialogue. The Policy briefs would be around four selected policy themes, which corresponds to the main themes LandNNES working groups (Get It, Keep It, Use It) are working on:

a) Women land rights and their role in smallfarming value chain  
b) Equitable Land Redistribution  
c) Land Administration System.  
d) Safeguarding tenure in smallholder agriculture enhancing agro-ecological practices to improve resilience to climate change.

**Task and Responsibilities**

Provide a complete policy brief (approximately 8 pages) by the **30th October 2019**

The policy brief should provide strong, contextual mapping, critique and analysis of the complexities around small-holder agriculture in South Africa, tenure, business development, access to markets etc. as well as agro-ecology, and propose recommendations for the multi-stakeholder interlocution between Government, United Nations Agencies and Civil Society.

The policy brief should be developed around the following **general structure:**

- A concise message of the current situation
- A brief overview of the envisaged situation/desired changes
- A set of incremental, concrete and actionable recommendations of how to get to the desired situation. This recommendations will constitute the essential inputs for discussions in the future multistakeholder meetings and will be the base to develop an action plan/road map on the issue.

The policy brief should include **(contents):**

- A brief analysis of the role of smallholder agriculture in South Africa
- A brief analysis of the challenges of the sector in terms of tenure, business development, access to market, access to credit, extensions availability, climate change etc.
- An overview of existing agroecology projects in South Africa which could be shared as best practice models and be scaled up.
- Recommendations on how to safeguard tenure in small-holder agriculture
- Recommendations to improve resilience to climate change, including agro-ecological approaches with secure tenure and making reference to the recent UNCCD COP14 resolution on land tenure (see [https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/sessions/documents/2019-09/ICCD_COP%2814%29_L.17-1915681E.pdf](https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/sessions/documents/2019-09/ICCD_COP%2814%29_L.17-1915681E.pdf)).

As previously mentioned recommendations should be actionable and should consider the peculiarities of the South African context.
10. Appendix B

The following projects are mostly driven by NGOs with support from international and national donors. The NGOs provide smallholders with safe platforms for climate-adapting innovation and help to amplify their collective voices to strengthen their influence over policy.

Ntinga Ntaba KaNdoda is a self-governed rural community movement in Keiskammahoek in the Eastern Cape that stands for “thorough-going democratisation, achievement of people’s power and the achievement of ecologically integrated and sustainable development in rural areas”. The popular movement links the democratic evolution of living customary law, gender equality in terms of land access, heritage and culture and food sovereignty, public education and youth leadership to an alternative solidarity economy for sustainable livelihoods and development. The work spans 42 rural villages and the plans, mandated by the communities the movement works in, include a learning agroecology farm and centre, an early childhood development centre, a recreational and learning centre for the elderly, a heritage museum, sports facilities, meeting rooms and offices, a community hall and a roadside farm stall.

Biowatch South Africa is an environmental justice NGO that explicitly promotes agroecology as a means of achieving food sovereignty. It works directly with smallholders, mainly in KwaZulu-Natal, and builds on indigenous farming knowledge to strengthen agroecological practices, and draws on its experience with this direct relationship to advocate for practices that promote biodiversity, food sovereignty and social justice. The organisation challenges industrial agricultural practices, which are key drivers of climate change, primary users of the country’s water resources and are “compromising” the ability of the country to adapt to climate change. In their submission (2019) on the Draft National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (NCCAS), the organisation identified the threats of pollution (through fracking, coal mining) and over-exploitation (through industrial farming, plantation agriculture) to the country’s scarce water sources, which they argue should be a key climate adaptation priority with urgent measures taken to conserve, protect and rehabilitate water resources. They also identify the “industrialised food system” as a key driver of climate change responsible for up to 50% of global emissions. The mechanisms of emissions are soil disturbance, chemical fertilisers, conversion of natural ecosystems to monocultures, global export trade in food commodities including transport, packaging, refrigeration and processing, and food waste (30% of all food produced) including through the retail sector and that produces methane emissions. They also critique the adaptation strategy’s sole focus on Climate Smart and Conservation Agriculture practices, which “promote some better practices” but fall short of the “transformational and systemic changes” required of South Africa agriculture.

The Goat Agribusiness Project (GAP) in KwaZulu-Natal is a partnership between two NGOs (Mdukatshani and HPSA Southern Africa) and Government. It aims to address youth unemployment, food security, women headed households and agricultural output by improving the productivity of indigenous household goat herds. The project achieves this by providing youth with training in animal health interventions, including nutrition, and have supported youth to make small nutritional blocks to sell to goat farmers. The project also targets academic researchers to contribute to better small farmer support. The rising numbers of household goats as a result of the interventions has generated a need to support their commercialisation, increasing rural incomes. Because both men and women, younger and older people are permitted by social convention to own goats, and women can manage them easily (they self-herd, ie. return home at the end of the day), the project targets gender and generational asset accumulation. Goats are natural browsers, helping to keep in check the invasive bush encroachment of South Africa’s rangelands – an effect of rising carbon levels in the air. They are thus livestock with environmentally positive benefits, and by inhibiting bush encroachment,
make continued cattle production possible. As goats are used in African ceremonies, they are produced by households across the country, in rural and urban areas, and in Southern Africa more broadly.

The **African Centre for Biodiversity** (ACB) is a research and advocacy NGO that focusses on food sovereignty and agro-ecology in Southern and East Africa. It focusses on biosafety, genetic modification, seed sovereignty and opposing corporate expansion in African agriculture. It works in partnership with extensive continental and global networks, and uses its core competency in research, analysis and advocacy to share information and amplify the voices of social movements fighting for food sovereignty in Africa.

**Enaleni** (meaning “enough”) is a 10 hectare privately owned agroecological farm located in a dry, rain shadow belt on the East Coast inland from Durban. It is a mixed integrated farming system that includes crops, bees, orchards (avocado, macadamia and olives) and livestock. It focuses on heritage livestock breeds (many indigenous) including Nguni cattle, Zulu sheep, Kolbroek pigs and a variety of poultry and breeds. Livestock diseases include the tick-borne killer diseases redwater and heartwater while vervet monkeys pose challenges for crop production. The main crops are certified GMO-free soya and local maize strains. They are grown from saved seed, planted with animal traction, using animal and green manures and crop rotation. The farm also produces legumes, cucurbits (squash) and vegetables. The farm’s business model includes: a pop-up monthly restaurant sourcing food from within 150m of the plate served; school and other educational tours and sale of on-site processed foods (chutney, jams, cheese); a guest house; and short courses on food processing, local cultivation, bread- and cheese-making.

Farmer Support Group (FSG) is also a KwaZulu-Natal based NGO that provides agroecological support to smallholders in order to assist them to adapt to climate change and to secure food and livelihoods. However, since it is a member of LandNNES, it is not discussed here.
11. References

March, Johannesburg.


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