Mercy For Animals submission on Action For Climate Empowerment
Proposed additions to Activities B.1.3 and C.4.4
October 2026

Mercy For Animals welcomes the co-facilitators' informal note[1] prepared during SBI 64 and the opportunity to submit views on it.

We encourage Parties to consider adopting language under two activities that would recognize the roles of food systems and sustainable lifestyles in achieving the objective of the Convention and goals of the Paris Agreement. We propose the inclusion of (1) **food systems** and **sustainable consumption and production** in Activity B.1.3 and (2) **sustainable lifestyles** in Activity C.4.4. As recognized by the UN and well-established in literature on the topic, empowering people, including Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women, youth and smallholder farmers, can support sustainable food systems and lifestyles that help address climate change. Accordingly, including the proposed language (found below) in the ACE framework would benefit dialogues and enhance support for ACE.

I. Activity B.1.3

Food systems cause over one third of global anthropogenic GHG emissions.[2] Thus, reductions in emissions from food systems are essential to maintain a global temperature increase below 1.5-2.0°C.[3] IPCC has concluded that "even if fossil fuel emissions were eliminated immediately, food system emissions alone would jeopardise the achievement of the 1.5°C target and threaten the 2°C target."[4] Mitigating climate change requires food systems changes, including reducing the consumption of animal products and shifting diets to include more plant-based protein sources.[5]

Sustainable food systems benefit both mitigation and adaptation efforts. Sustainable food systems provide adaptive responses to climate-related impacts on the food system like drought, flooding, heat stress, soil degradation, and livestock disease.[6] Sustainable food system adaptations responsive to these impacts include the abandonment of monocultures, crop

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[1] SBI 64 agenda item 15, Matters relating to Action for Climate Empowerment, Informal note by the co-facilitators, https://docs.unfccc.int/documents/10000182/files/en/ACE_dt_sbi642.pdf.
[2] Crippa, M., Solazzo, E., Guizzardi, D. et al, "Food systems are responsible for a third of global anthropogenic GHG emissions," Nat Food 2, 198–209 (2021), https://doi.org/10.1038/s43016-021-00225-9.
[3] A. Mukherji et al., "2024 Breakthrough Agenda Report: Agriculture," CGIAR, 10 (2024), https://hdl.handle.net/10568/152247.
[4] IPCC, "Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change," 1285 (2022), https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGIII_FullReport.pdf.
[5] *Id*. at 111–112, 374.
[6] IPCC, "Climate Change and Land: an IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems," Chap. 5, 437-550, generally (2019), https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009157988.

diversification, alternate cropping, erosion control, sustainable irrigation, perennial farming, and new technologies, among others.[7] Additionally, reducing meat consumption is an adaptation measure noted by IPCC "because it reduces pressure on land and water and thus our vulnerability to climate change and inputs limitations."[8]

ACE framework activities should also promote "sustainable consumption and production" because changes are necessary at all stages of the food system to support its mitigation potential.[9] On the production side, research shows that food systems are responsible for approximately 80% of deforestation, with the FAO estimating agriculture as the driver of up to 90%.[10] Deforestation eliminates a key resource for carbon sequestration and releases significant quantities of CO2, further exacerbating the harm caused by unsustainable food production. Large-scale, intensive animal agriculture (including feed crops) is an especially significant driver of both deforestation and environmental pollution which, in turn, degrade biodiversity and damage livelihoods.[11]

On the consumption side, the IPCC notes that mitigation actions within food systems "need to go beyond food producers and suppliers to incorporate dietary changes and consumers' behavioural patterns."[12] The reduction of meat and dairy consumption in excess of health guidelines is one of the most effective ways to mitigate GHG emissions, and is also associated with a high potential for co-benefits for animal welfare, food security, health, biodiversity, and the environment.[13] Education and public awareness can inform consumers about the environmental impacts of their food choices. Thus, ACE framework activities should expressly include opportunities related to food systems and promote sustainable food production and consumption.

Proposed wording for Activity B.1.3:

[Organizing workshops and developing tools for education, disaster preparedness, gender, energy, [**food systems**] and other relevant sectors to promote [**sustainable consumption and production,**] climate-resilient services and awareness of loss and damage, as applicable]

[7] IPCC, "Climate Change and Land," at 467.
[8] IPCC, "Climate Change and Land," at 474.
[9] IPCC, "Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change," at 111.
[10] UNCCD, "The Global Land Outlook, Second Edition; Land Restoration for Recovery and Reslience," 5 (2022), https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/2022-04/UNCCD_GLO2_low-res_2.pdf; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO], "FRA 2020 Remote Sensing Survey," FAO Forestry Paper, No. 186, 47 (2022), https://doi.org/10.4060/cb9970en.
[11] Pendrill, F., U. M. Persson, J. Godar, et al., "Agricultural and forestry trade drives large share of tropical deforestation emissions," Global Environmental Change 56, 1–10 (2019), doi:10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2019.03.002.
[12] IPCC, "Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change," at 1279–80.
[13] IPCC, "Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change," at 1292.

II. Activity C.4.4

Sustainable lifestyles encompass everyday practices that consumers engage in to advance the goals of the Convention and Paris Agreement. An important aspect of supporting sustainable lifestyles is providing resources to increase individuals' knowledge of and education in sustainable lifestyles, including sustainable food systems and sustainable diets. Individually, "low-carbon" lifestyle choices, which include car-free living, plant-rich diets with no or very little animal products, and using low-carbon sources of electricity can reduce an individual's carbon footprint by up to 9t CO2-eq.[14] As such, sustainable lifestyles are critical in reducing emissions.

In order for individuals to engage in sustainable lifestyles, education, training, and access to information are critical. The IPCC also provides that education is an important factor impacting individuals' consumption choices and that education can be a way to reduce emissions.[15] Including sustainable lifestyles in C.4.4. would aid in providing individuals with the tools necessary to participate in sustainable lifestyles by encouraging and enabling education, training, and increased access to information regarding sustainable lifestyles.

In addition to supporting education and access to information, inclusion of sustainable lifestyles is consistent with the Paris Agreement itself which recognizes the importance of sustainable lifestyles in addressing climate change.[16] The inclusion of sustainable lifestyles also supports the preambular paragraph 5 of the Glasgow work programme on ACE, which states: "*Recognizing* that Action for Climate Empowerment plays a key role in promoting the changes in lifestyles, attitudes and behaviours needed to foster low-emission, climate-resilient and sustainable development."[17] Finally, the inclusion would support the first global stocktake outcome which "[n]otes the importance of transitioning to sustainable lifestyles and sustainable patterns of consumption and production in efforts to address climate change, including through circular economy approaches, and encourages efforts in this regard."[18] Thus, the ACE framework should expressly include sustainable lifestyles in C.4.4.

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[14] IPCC, "Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change," at 107-110 (TS 5.6.1).
[15] IPCC, "Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change," at 262, 264 (providing that "Demographic characteristics such as age, sex, and education constitute an important set of determinants influencing emissions patterns" and "Moreover, education that is designed to specifically inform decision makers of the impacts of their decisions and provide behavioural nudges can be a way to reduce emissions.").
[16] United Nations, *Paris Agreement* (2015) ("Also recognizing that sustainable lifestyles and sustainable patterns of consumption and production, with developed country Parties taking the lead, play an important role in addressing climate change.").
[17] UNFCCC, Decision 18/CP.26, Glasgow work programme on Action for Climate Empowerment (2022).
[18] UNFCCC, Decision 1/CMA.5, Outcome of the first global stocktake, para 36 (2023).

Proposed wording for Activity C.4.4:

[C.4.4 Encouraging Parties to develop accessible, multilingual learning materials, including easy language formats, for different age groups and promote training that support interdisciplinary and action-oriented approaches to climate education, and provide professional development opportunities for teachers on climate education and education for sustainable development [**and sustainable lifestyles**] with special consideration given to gender equality and inclusion of persons with disabilities]