

## **ABSTRACT:**

### **Agriculture in the international negotiations on climate change: the launching of a new process**

**Nathalie Guesdon, DG Agriculture and Rural Development/EC**

The last Conference of the Parties (COP) in Durban in December 2011 initiated a new process on agriculture. Consequently, an item "Issues relating to agriculture" was open in the agenda of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) at the following Bonn session in May 2012. The Durban decision also includes the adoption of a COP decision in December 2012 in Doha.

The objective of this discussion for the EU and many other Parties is to launch specific work on agriculture, covering scientific and technical aspects of adaptation and mitigation for the sector. This work would potentially benefit to all countries, on a voluntary basis and taking into account the diversity of agricultural systems worldwide as well as specific national and regional development priorities.

In Bonn in May 2012, constructive discussions were held on how to better address agriculture in the UNFCCC. Many Parties including several Least Developed Countries got involved in these discussions, highlighting the importance of this sector in relation to climate change and food security at a local, national and global level.

Substantive issues on agriculture were considered and possible areas of convergence for future work have been discussed on the basis of SBSTA mandate: assessment of existing knowledge, of research gaps, need to increase resilience, productivity and efficiency of agricultural systems in a sustainable manner, need for more cooperation in research, development and capacity building, information sharing and training especially for farmers, ways and means for support.

In Bonn, the EU and many other Parties supported an integrated approach including adaptation, mitigation and the synergies between them. In the agricultural sector, adaptation and mitigation actions should go together, as there are many win-win opportunities (for instance in protecting and improving soil carbon content). Many developing countries were also on this line of an integrated approach. Some others re-emphasised food security and adaptation as the main priority, but showed openness to address also mitigation at least as a co-benefit. Few Parties opposed to consider mitigation at all at that stage.

Good progress have been made in the consideration of agriculture in the UNFCCC since last year and it is clear that now everyone is willing to engage into the debate. Discussions will continue in Doha in December 2012, at the next SBSTA session.