

# Securing Water and Food security through a rights based approach

By

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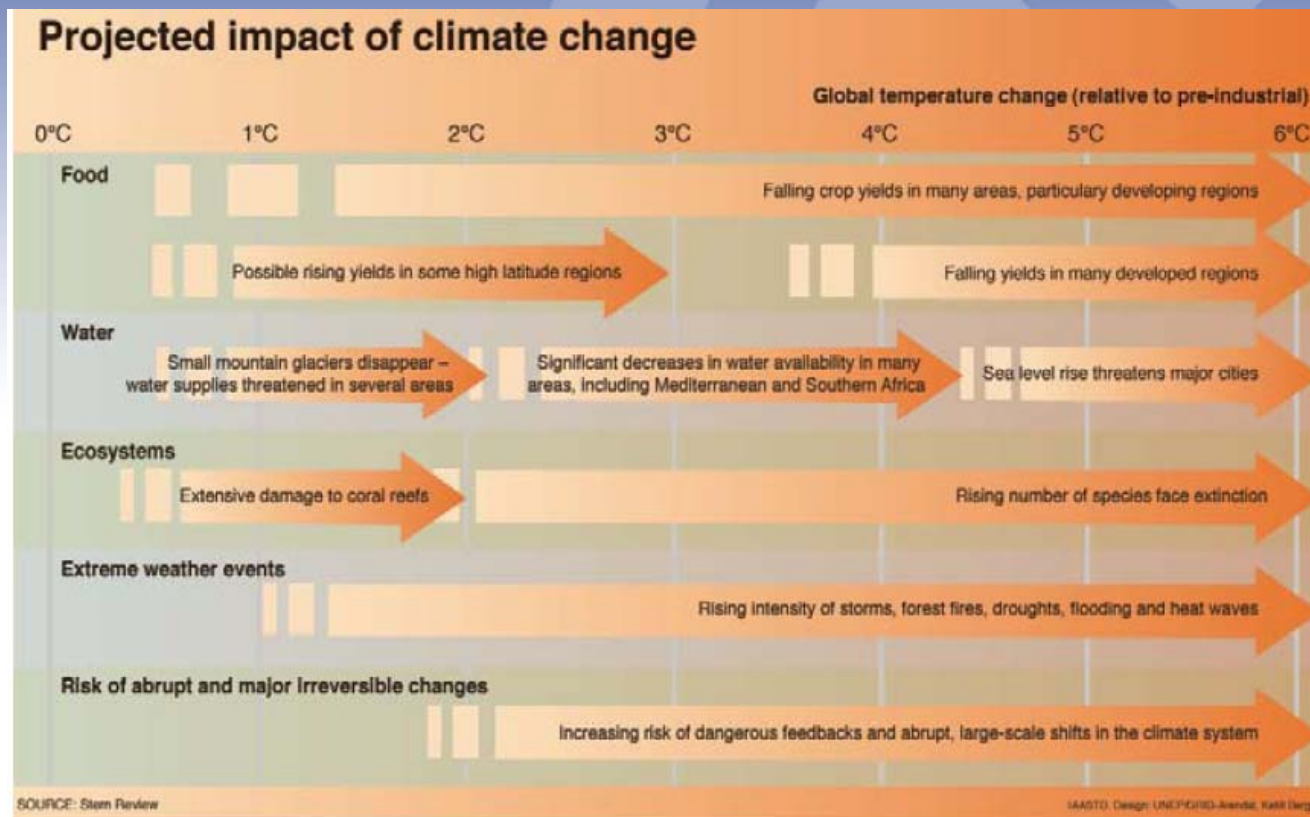
Water as a Cross Cutting Theme at  
CSD 17, New York, May 5, 2009

[www.iatp.org](http://www.iatp.org); [www.tradeobservatory.org](http://www.tradeobservatory.org)



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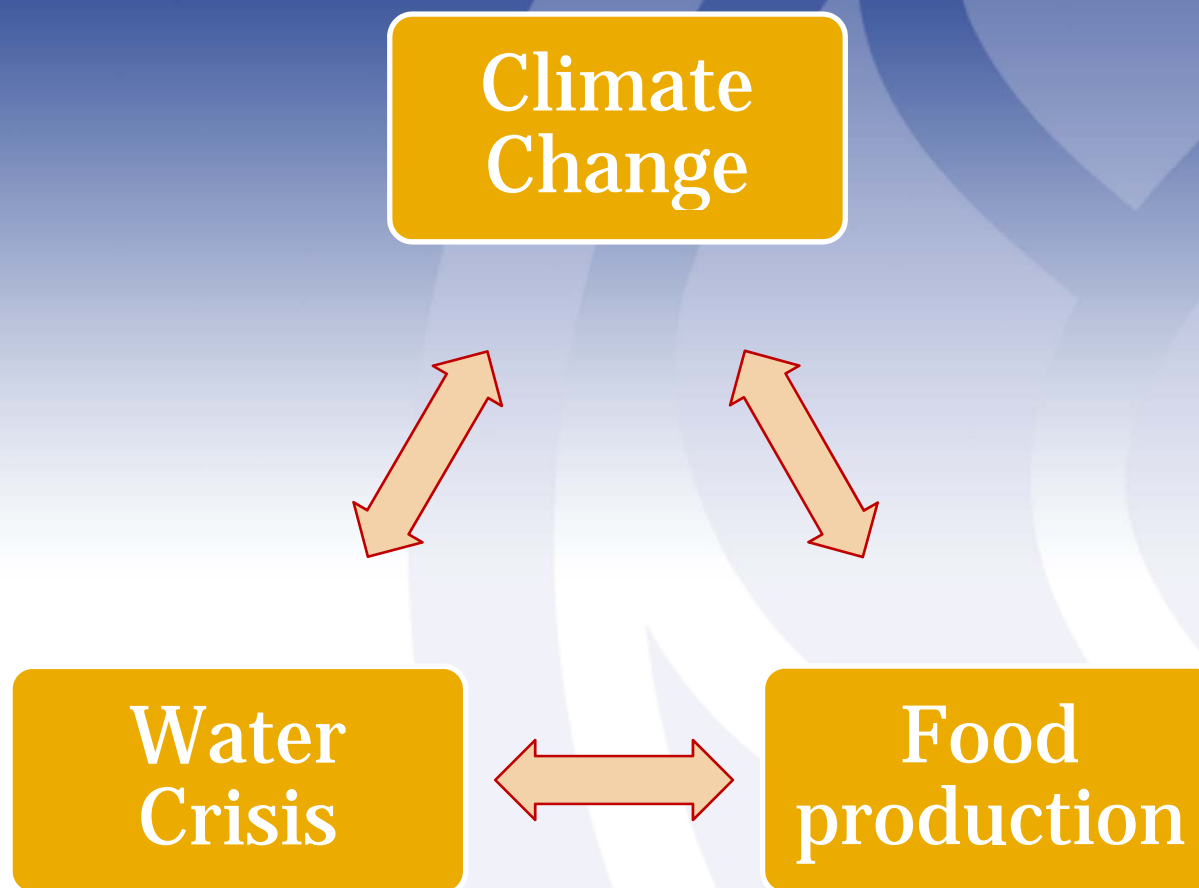
# Climate Change Impacts



- **Themes at CSD 17: Agriculture, Land, Rural Development, Drought and Desertification, Africa**
- **All these affected by climate change**
- **Most climate impacts mediated through plentiful precipitation (causing floods), or (more often) lack of water availability**



# Convergence of crises



**Our solutions need to be integrated**



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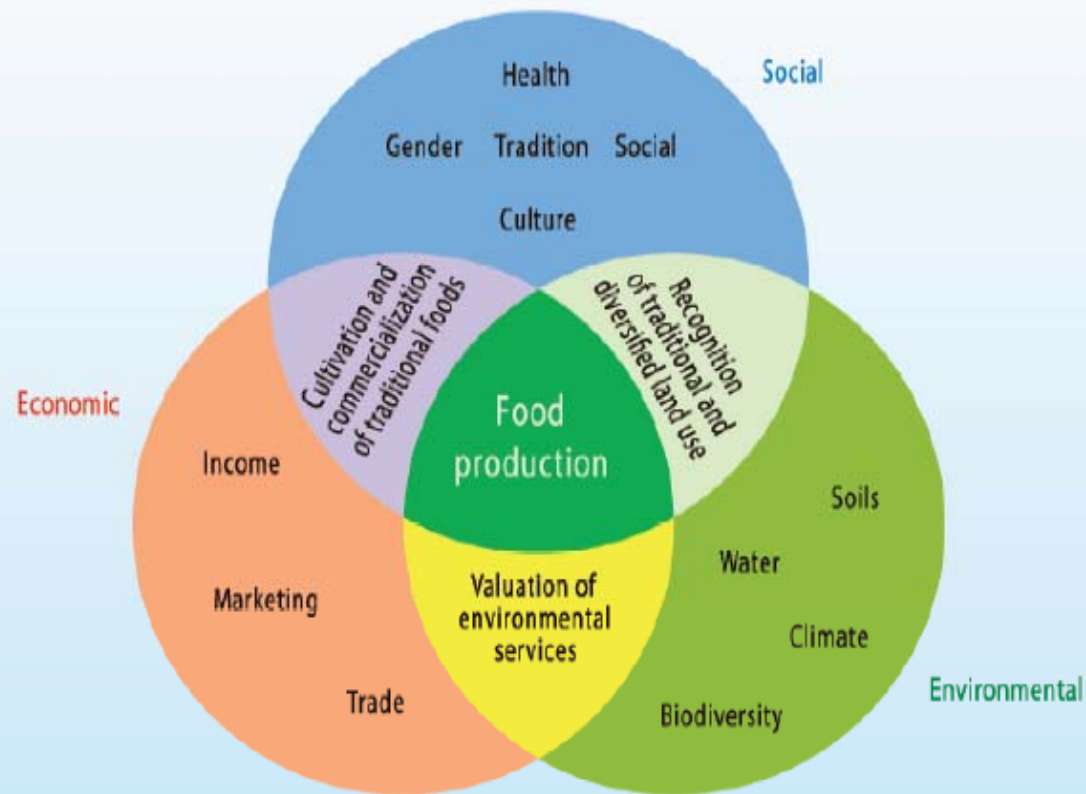
# Our crises are interlinked; our solutions need to be integrated

- Well recognized that climate change will impact food security and right to water, and thus emphasis on adaptation needs
- agriculture's role in water crisis, and its climate impact recognized. Some recognition on agriculture's potential for mitigation, and ag. wue improvements
- but not enough analysis of differential impacts of different agri. food systems (industrial vs small scale, agrochemical intensive vs organic) on climate water crisis nor of differing potentials of these systems.



# Multi-functional Agriculture...

The inescapable interconnectedness of agriculture's different roles and functions



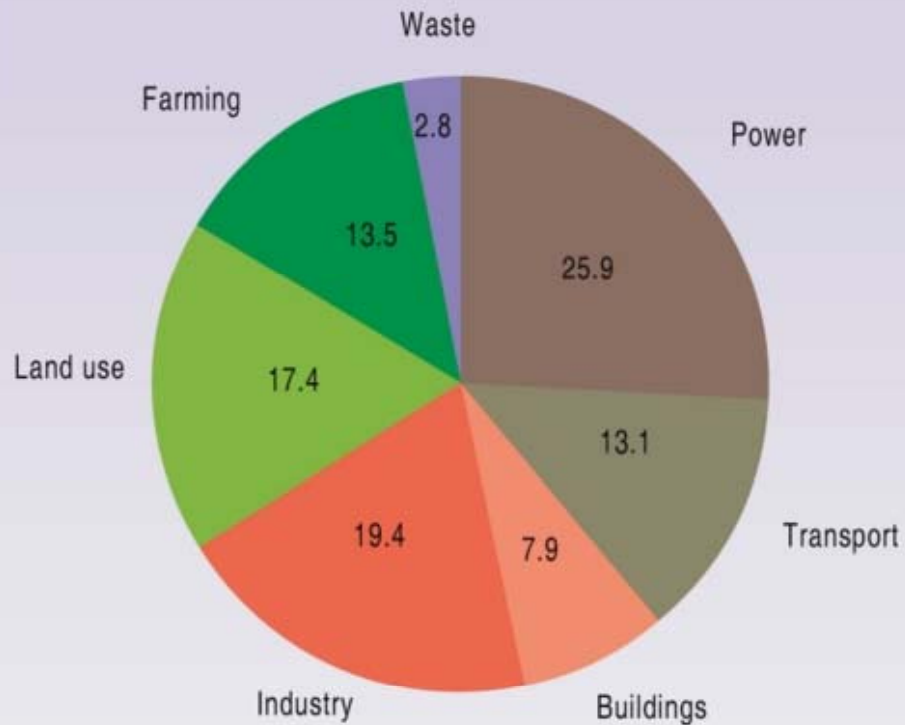


- for addressing the crises?

- Because agriculture has the potential to be multifunctional (i.e., provide food, feed, fibers, bio-energy, medicinal products, environmental services, landscape amenities, social and cultural values), it could play a critical role in addressing global challenges related to climate, water, social justice and food.



## Greenhouse gas emissions in 2004 by source



SOURCE: IPCC, Working group 1, 2007

IAASTD/Ketilil Berger, UNEP/GRID-Arendal



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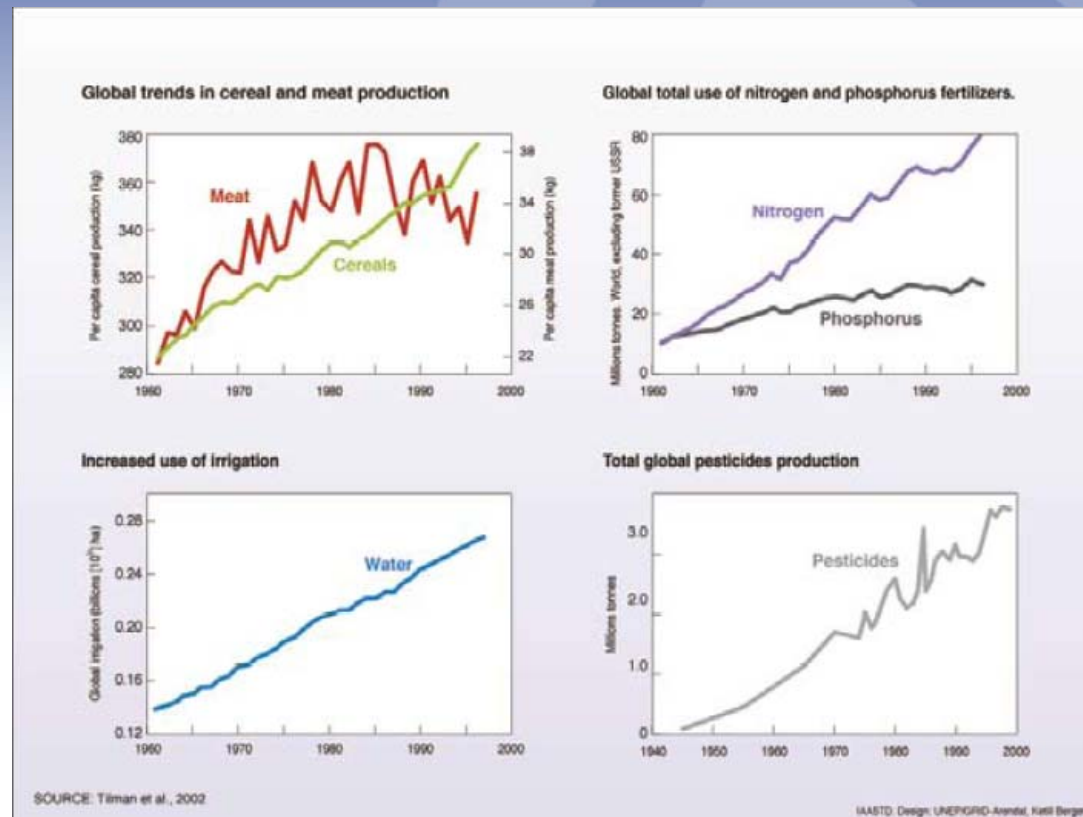


# Agriculture and GHG emissions

- Agriculture's contribution to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is approximately 12 percent according to IPCC.
- Could vary from 16-30 percent (Greenpeace International) when land use, transportation, packaging and processing are included in the calculations.
- The percentage could very well go higher especially for industrial agriculture when cross-sectoral emissions are included



# Trends: Industrial Agricultural Production, fertilizer use, irrigation, and pesticide production



**Industrial agriculture,  
with or without intensive irrigation,  
is not only inadequate to solve the crisis,  
but it is part of the problem.**



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# Reaching the limits

- Having reached the limits of water intensive agriculture, most policy advocacy now focus on water use efficiency improvements in irrigation and the potential of rain-fed systems.
- But limited discussion about reducing environmental foot print of producing food/energy, that worsen water crisis



# Rain-fed agricultural Systems

Increased focus on rain-fed systems is good; but it should not be developed on the industrial model:

Fossil fuel, agrochemicals, GMO

- “How can we *squeeze* more food from a RAINDROP?” [asks a recent Monsanto advertisement in New Yorker (2009)]



# Vulnerable groups





# Focus on women, small holder agriculturists, poor

- Right based approaches and focus on vulnerable groups have to be central to achieving MDG goals on food and water security: these include right to food, right to water and responsibility to ecosystems.
- “Sustainable food security means enough food for everyone at present plus the ability to provide enough in future as well”
  - - Sheelu, Tamil Nadu Women’s Collective



Systematic Rice Intensification (SRI) being practiced by members of Tamil Nadu Women's Collective, an organization of women farmers and agricultural workers in about 1500 villages in South India



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## Five Points to Remember

1. Our crises are interlinked; our solutions need to be integrated
2. Forgotten component of agri. policy: Food production is only its core, there is much more to agriculture
3. Industrial agriculture, is not only inadequate to solve the crisis, but is part of the problem
4. Increased focus on rain-fed systems is good; but it should not be developed on the industrial model
5. Right based approaches and focus on vulnerable groups have to be central to achieving MDG goals on food and water security: these include right to food, right to water and responsibility to ecosystems.

Source: **Integrated Solutions to the Water Agriculture and Climate Crises** at [www.waterobservatory.org](http://www.waterobservatory.org)



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# Policy suggestions

1. Adopt right based approach: towards realization of right to water; right to food
2. Support the recommendations of the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) such as agro-ecological practices and multi-functional agriculture
3. Harmonize approaches to water, agriculture and climate at international fora (Water Forum, UNCSD, UNFCCC etc.) (contd....)





## Policy Suggestions (contd..)

4. Ensure that water availability is prioritized for ecosystem needs and for basic needs of people;
5. Safeguard women's and other vulnerable groups human rights, including right to water and right to food
6. Ensure that voices of small-holders are central to policy reform and solutions for food and water security.



# Thank You!

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