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# COP31 Gave the UN's Farm-Climate Talks One More Year in a Two-Paragraph Text. Sudan Should Use That Year to Bring Its Farm Projects to COP32.

3Bi Research Team | Situation Report | 15 November 2026

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COP31 has given the UN's only agriculture work programme one more year, in a two-paragraph decision that says nothing about finance for farmers. Sudan, where about 40% of workers farm, should use the year to bring a position and fundable projects to COP32.

*On 14 and 15 November 2026, at COP31 in Antalya, governments extended the Sharm el-Sheikh joint work on agriculture and food security by one year, to COP32 in November 2027, in a two-paragraph decision. (Illustration: 3Bi)*

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# Headline Fact

The UN climate talks' only work programme dedicated to agriculture and food security did not end at COP31 as scheduled. It was given one more year. In plenaries that ran past midnight into Sunday, 15 November, the two subsidiary bodies adopted conclusions on the Sharm el-Sheikh joint work on implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security, and the COP adopted the draft decision they forwarded (IISD Earth Negotiations Bulletin, Vol. 12 No. 907, summary of 14 November 2026). The text is two paragraphs long. The COP asks the subsidiary bodies to "continue consideration" of the joint work at their June 2027 sessions, and to report on its "progress and outcomes" to COP32 in November 2027 (UNFCCC, FCCC/SB/2026/L.5, 14 November 2026). It says nothing about finance, the joint work's online portal or the workshop reports that were deferred to Antalya. ENB reports that various Parties "expressed disappointment at failing to reach a positive outcome despite progress in discussions", and quotes one observer: "It's a real shame that a decision on agriculture will be delayed until 2027" (IISD ENB, Vol. 12 No. 907).

# Timeline

- **November 2017 to November 2022:** The Koronivia joint work on agriculture runs for five years, followed at COP27 by the four-year Sharm el-Sheikh joint work, set up under decision 3/CP.27 to advance implementation (Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA), position paper, 9 November 2026; UNFCCC, FCCC/SB/2026/L.5).
- **17 June 2026, Bonn (SB64):** The subsidiary bodies defer the report of the first workshop and the second annual synthesis report to Antalya, note that Parties are increasingly including agriculture and food security in national plans, and say the joint work's online portal can help with "matchmaking for funding". They invite the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism

to take the joint work's outcomes into account (UNFCCC, FCCC/SB/2026/L.1, 17 June 2026).

- **24 October 2026:** Stephen Muwaya of the African Group of Negotiators says only 0.3% of total financing reaches farmers, pastoralists and other vulnerable groups, and asks for predictable, grant-based and concessional finance (Science Africa, 24 October 2026). 3Bi covered this push on 25 October.
- **5 November 2026:** The Center for Climate and Energy Solutions (C2ES) writes that, given limited time, it "may be more practical" for Parties to extend the current mandate to COP32 (2027) or COP33 (2028) (C2ES, "COP31 Insights: Climate Action on Agriculture and Food Security", 5 November 2026).
- **9 November 2026:** AFSA, which says it brings together more than 40 networks representing about 200 million small-scale food producers in 50 African countries, says it "rejects any COP31 outcome that merely extends workshops or relabels dialogue as implementation" (AFSA, 9 November 2026).
- **12 November 2026, Africa Day:** The African Union-led Africa Day event at COP31 calls for investment in irrigation, watershed management and climate-smart agriculture, and for adaptation finance that is "more accessible, predictable and responsive" to African countries (African Union, press release, 14 November 2026).
- **14 November 2026:** The Chairs issue draft conclusions FCCC/SB/2026/L.5 (UNFCCC, 14 November 2026).
- **14–15 November 2026:** The subsidiary bodies close at 12:48 am on 15 November after adopting the conclusions; the COP adopts the decision (IISD ENB, Vol. 12 No. 907).

# What We Know / What We Don't

We know what the decision does. It keeps the joint work alive and moves its end point from COP31 to COP32, one year later. COP32 will be held in Ethiopia; the WMO Secretary-General called it "the African COP" in Antalya on 12 November (WMO, statement by Celeste Saulo, 12 November 2026). In practice, the next negotiating round on agriculture will be at the June 2027 sessions, and the report on what four, now five, years of joint work have achieved will land at a conference hosted on the continent (UNFCCC, FCCC/SB/2026/L.5).

We know what the decision leaves out. The text contains no reference to finance, to the online portal or to the workshop and synthesis reports that the Bonn session sent to Antalya (UNFCCC, FCCC/SB/2026/L.5; FCCC/SB/2026/L.1). During the final consultations, the LDCs and the Like-Minded Developing Countries underscored "accessible finance, technology transfer and development, and capacity-building" for future work on agriculture. The EU, supported by Brazil, proposed a "friends of progress" group to explore formats for advancing the work and report

back to Parties (IISD ENB, Vol. 12 No. 907).

We know why the subject matters to Sudan. Agriculture accounts for about 40% of employment in the country (World Bank, World Development Indicators, ILO modelled estimate for 2022, data updated 11 November 2026). Sudan's largest Green Climate Fund project on farming, the UNDP-implemented programme on resilience in traditional rain-fed agricultural and pastoral systems, has a total value of US$41.2 million, has disbursed 44% of its GCF funding and is due to be completed on 21 September 2027 (Green Climate Fund, FP139 project page, accessed 15 November 2026). That is two months before COP32.

We do not know what Sudan said in the agriculture consultations. ENB reports group positions, and 3Bi has not seen a Sudanese intervention on this item. We do not know what happens to the reports deferred from Bonn, since the decision is silent on them, or whether the EU's "friends of progress" group will be formed and who would join it. Nor do we know whether Parties will be invited to send written views before June 2027; the decision does not ask for submissions.

# Implications

In our reading, the extension is a holding decision. It avoids the outcome C2ES described in June, in which agriculture would have continued only through the work of non-Party stakeholders under the Global Climate Action Agenda (C2ES, "Issues and Options: The Future of Agriculture and Food Security Discussions Under the UNFCCC", 3 June 2026), but it does not deliver what African negotiators and farmer groups asked for: finance that reaches farmers. AFSA's test was whether resources and decision-making power reach communities. A two-paragraph extension does not meet that test, and the coming year will decide whether it ever does (AFSA, 9 November 2026).

There is a fair objection. An extension is not a failure. C2ES argued before the conference that more time was the practical option, and a clean text that every Party accepted keeps the subject on the agenda (C2ES, 5 November 2026). 3Bi is not arguing that the decision was wrong. The narrower point is that the extra year is only useful if countries arrive in June 2027 and at COP32 with concrete proposals and projects, rather than another round of views. That is especially true for a country where four in ten workers farm.

In our view, three low-cost steps follow for Sudan.

First, write down what Sudan wants from the joint work after 2027. The Higher Council for Environment and Natural Resources, as the UNFCCC focal point, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation can agree a short national position by the end of March 2027 and carry it into African Group and LDC coordination before the June sessions. The decision does not require a submission, so this is a choice, not an obligation. It would give Sudan's small delegation a clear line when the talks resume.

Second, put Sudan's farm projects where funders look. The Bonn conclusions describe the online portal as a tool for "matchmaking for funding" (UNFCCC, FCCC/SB/2026/L.1). Before June 2027, the ministry can list two or three farm-adaptation concepts there, drawn from Sudan's national climate plans. 3Bi is not claiming that a portal listing brings money on its own; it costs little, and it puts Sudan's needs on record before the next round.

Third, plan what comes after FP139 now. The project closes in September 2027. Starting a successor concept in 2027, built on its lessons and on the food-systems plan that Khartoum is updating with UN and Arab partners (3Bi, 31 October 2026), would let Sudan bring a pipeline project, not only a completion report, to the African COP.

# Watch Next

- **This week:** Ministerial consultations on adaptation, co-facilitated by Jiwoh Abdulai (Sierra Leone) and Miatta Fahnbulleh (UK), and on climate finance, begin under the COP31 Presidency's plan for the second week (IISD ENB, Vol. 12 No. 907).
- **This week:** Whether the EU's proposed "friends of progress" group on agriculture takes shape (IISD ENB, Vol. 12 No. 907).
- **20 November 2026:** COP31 is scheduled to close; the conference runs from 9 to 20 November (AFSA, 9 November 2026).
- **June 2027:** The subsidiary bodies resume consideration of the joint work at their sixty-sixth sessions (UNFCCC, FCCC/SB/2026/L.5).
- **21 September 2027:** Scheduled completion of Sudan's GCF-funded rain-fed agriculture and pastoral resilience project (Green Climate Fund, FP139).
- **November 2027:** The subsidiary bodies report on the progress and outcomes of the joint work to COP32 in Ethiopia (UNFCCC, FCCC/SB/2026/L.5; WMO, 12 November 2026).

# Sourcing & Next Update

Primary sources: UNFCCC, FCCC/SB/2026/L.5, "Sharm el-Sheikh joint work on implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security: draft conclusions proposed by the Chairs" (14 November 2026); IISD Earth Negotiations Bulletin, Vol. 12 No. 907, "Antalya Climate Change Conference: Saturday, 14 November 2026" (accessed 15 November 2026); UNFCCC, FCCC/SB/2026/L.1, SB64 draft conclusions on the joint work (17 June 2026); Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, "COP31 Insights: Climate Action on Agriculture and Food Security" (5 November 2026); Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa, "Action, Not More Talks" press release and position

paper (9 November 2026); Science Africa, "COP 31: African Negotiators to Push for Action on Agricultural Climate Finance" (24 October 2026); African Union, "Africa Day at COP31 calls for water security, climate resilience and accessible finance to advance Agenda 2063" (14 November 2026); WMO, statement by Secretary-General Celeste Saulo, "COP31: Towards early warnings for all in Africa" (12 November 2026); World Bank, World Development Indicators, employment in agriculture, Sudan (data updated 11 November 2026); Green Climate Fund, FP139 project page (accessed 15 November 2026); Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, "Issues and Options: The Future of Agriculture and Food Security Discussions Under the UNFCCC" (3 June 2026). Next update: 3Bi will report on COP31's adaptation and finance outcomes after the close. For methodology questions or to propose a correction, contact 3Bi's Research Team via 3bisudan.org.

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