
Farmers' Major Group Statement for the Ministerial Consultations at UNEP 25th GC/GMEF

‘Globalization and the Environment: Global crisis, national chaos?’

Chairperson,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure for me to intervene on behalf of the farmers of the world, on such a critical issue as the environment. My name is John Mutunga; I am a tea and dairy farmer and also the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Kenya National Federation of Agricultural Producers (KENFAP). KENFAP is a member organization of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP); which I represent.

What are the problems or limitations of a green economy? In fact, there are more benefits than limitations. Listening to the Ministers and others, much has yet to be done. There is an urgent need for plans, proposals and prospects. Farmers therefore identify an opportunity for accurate integration into the outcome of these consultations.

Farmers believe that the outcome of these Ministerial Consultations will be policy related, investment targeted, productivity enhancing, wealth creating and conservation focused.

Agriculture, however, already provides multiple answers to address these challenges in a sustainable way. These include:

- Mitigation of climate change by storing carbon in the soil through agro-forestry, conservation agriculture techniques, sound land use management, and providing renewable sources of energy such as bioenergy
- Implementation of agricultural practices to combat land degradation and adoption of sustainable water management (70 percent of the farmers in Argentina already use conservation agriculture techniques with very positive results for soil quality and water resources)
- Protection of natural resources and biodiversity through implementation of sustainable agricultural practices such as: reduced and zero tillage, agro-forestry, etc.

In order to maximize this huge potential offered by the agricultural sector, farmers need to be supported in the following concrete ways:

- Farmers need to benefit from positive and comprehensive policy guided programs such as stewardship programs in order to encourage them in the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices. Farmers already provide a host of ecosystem services for free. Therefore, they should be rewarded for doing so in the form of incentives in order to guarantee the continuation of these actions and the improvement of environmental protection. The levels of incentives have to be commensurate relative to their respective contributions. At the same time, these policy incentives will help provide them with a decent income for the services they render to nature.
- There is a need for policy makers to re-engage with farmers and other relevant stakeholders to build a new sustainable agriculture paradigm based on long term investments in agriculture in the form of technology transfers and increased research programs and extension services e.g. farmers' centered programs, affordable credits, rural infrastructure, land and water availability. The lack of investments in agriculture for the past four decades resulted in lower yields and resilience as well as increased poverty especially in Africa.
- An agriculture specific agreement under the UNFCCC-umbrella in order to encourage and reward farmers for climate mitigation actions such as soil carbon storage and also to support them in adapting to climate change, especially small scale farmers in developing countries.

Such a shift in focus will harness the potential of agriculture to reduce poverty, revitalize rural areas while preserving our precious natural resources. These are the elements that IFAP farmers consider as the fundamentals of the new Green Deal which cannot be achieved without deliberate efforts by governments for the effective involvement of farmers as key players at international, national, regional and local level. IFAP Farmers stand ready to engage with you, as national governments, local authorities and decision makers as well as all the stakeholders from the civil society to make this deal true.

Thank you for your attention.