

**Position of the UNEP Farmers Major Group on
the Draft Decisions of the UNEP Governing Council/
Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC/GMEF)**

Nairobi – Kenya, 18th to 22nd February, 2013

Sustainable agriculture requires sustainable agricultural communities. We cannot separate environmental, social and economic elements and must consider them together as dynamic and interdependent if we are to achieve sustainability.

*We therefore applaud the designation of 2014 as the **International Year of Family Farming**, as the majority of people involved in global food production are small-scale farmers operating largely at the family level. This designation also emphasizes the importance of long-term land tenure and ownership, as there can be no family farmers if there are no family farms.*

Social sustainability for farmers requires political security; economic sufficiency; and local community supports to ensure the passing of knowledge, skills and property from one generation of farmers to the next.

Many farmers consider the concept of food sovereignty to be a comprehensive framework which addresses the issue of poverty, hunger, climate and the environment, as well as issues of human rights, and animal welfare. Food sovereignty addresses poverty in both rural and urban areas through sustainable local food systems while ensuring culturally appropriate, nutritious food and clean water for all. It ensures access, right to decision making, rural community and marginalized producers' control over food, land, seeds, other productive inputs, trade and markets which are central to UNEP discussions such as those on the Green Economy and Sustainable Consumption and Production.

The following are the priorities of the UNEP Farmers Major Group for the upcoming GC and GMEF:

Model of Participation and Engagement in an Upgraded UNEP

1. We support an enhanced and expanded model of stakeholder representation in UNEP which provides for an enhanced role in agenda setting, framing of policy and the implementation of the work of UNEP while ensuring regional inputs and representation. In terms of the implementation of paragraph 88(h) of “The Future We Want” we would like to draw attention to the ‘Principles of Stakeholder Engagement in UNEP’ agreed by all the UNEP Major Groups prior to the Governing Council which is aimed at helping to ensure the active participation of all relevant stakeholders in UNEP. In terms of best practices and models we recommend that the UNEP Governing Council consider the successful Civil Society Mechanism of the Committee on Food Security as an effective multi-stakeholder

participatory model for informing the development of civil society engagement in the upgraded UNEP.

Science & Technology

2. Given the reality of climate change, we call on governments to increase public funding for agricultural research in three areas: First, to develop indigenous and local crops to make them resilient in the face of changing climatic conditions, while maintaining control of the seed by local producers; Second, to develop new agricultural technology appropriate to long-term, sustainable agriculture, incorporating both the best practices of new scientific research and the traditional agricultural knowledge of local communities; Third, to enhance extension services to improve agricultural productivity, resilience and sustainability through the voluntary sharing of knowledge and good practices.

Chemicals

3. We call for new and more effective approaches to minimizing the risks of novel chemicals and other novel innovations in agriculture by ‘working towards a more comprehensive and anticipatory management approach by which the implications of novel technologies and chemicals are systematically and comprehensively assessed before they reach the production phase’.¹ In particular, we call on member states to establish appropriate testing protocols based on the nonmonotonic dose responses and lifetime and intergeneration feeding trials as part of new and more effective approaches to minimizing risks of novel agricultural technologies.
4. Further, we call on government to fully engage and consult Farmers, Indigenous Peoples and their communities, Local Authorities, Workers, Trade Unions, Children and Youth, Women, Social Movements in the development of policies on minimizing the risks of novel agricultural technologies.

Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP)

5. Given that food production relies on natural resources and ecological processes the Farmers Major Group encourages governments and the private sector to support the implementation of the 10 Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production to support the implementation of practices that conserve planetary limits, biodiversity and natural resources that underpin food security and rural livelihoods. Farmers are however disappointed that sustainable agriculture has been dropped from the 10 Year Framework Programme on SCP. The promotion and enhancement of more sustainable agriculture is critical, given the impact and reliance of agriculture and food systems on the environment. We therefore call for UNEP to find ways to effectively engage the Farmers Major Group in addressing this important thematic gap in the 10 Year Framework Programme.

Sustainable Public Procurement

6. Sustainable Public Procurement is an important tool for encouraging and rewarding sustainable agriculture and sustainable food systems as they can simultaneously address

¹ UNEP Foresight Process on Emerging Environment Issues, pg. 40

food security, poverty alleviation and natural resource management at the local level through the effective engagement and empowerment of smallholder farmers. The World Food Programme's local procurement initiative 'Purchase for Progress' has used its purchasing power to date to help over half a million smallholder farmers to improve their agricultural production systems, access agricultural markets and to raise their incomes, resulting in significantly reduced hunger. The Government of Brazil's 'National Policy on Agroecology and Organic Production' supports smallholder farmers through provisions for sustainable public procurement. We call for much greater engagement by Governments at all levels with farmers to develop sustainable public procurement policies and initiatives that help establish inclusive sustainable food systems while alleviating poverty and food insecurity.

7. We further call on governments to work with farmers to significantly reduce post-harvest and other food losses and waste throughout the food supply chain.

Climate Technology Centre and Network

8. We welcome the selection of UNEP as the host of the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CCTN) for an initial term of 5 years. We hope the CCTN and its advisory board will take on board the views of farmers, especially smallholders and pastoralists, on climate technologies and how they impact on agricultural livelihoods, food security and resilience.

Inclusive Green Economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication

9. We promote green economies in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication that ensure gender equality; human well-being; environmental risk reduction; ecosystem and biodiversity conservation; disaster reduction; human rights protection; elimination of child labor; opportunities for green decent work and the right to livelihoods; the needs of marginalized and vulnerable groups; food, water and energy security; and which safeguard animal welfare.
10. We call on governments to engage all stakeholders, in particular Farmers, the most vulnerable communities and the private sector, in decision-making processes in relation to green economy, sustainable development and poverty eradication policies and initiatives through country-lead multi-stakeholder fora,

Sustainable Development Goals

11. We urge the member states, the Universal Inter-Governmental High Level Political Forum, the High Level Panel on Post 2015 Development Agenda and the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to consider as one of the SDGs goals; "Food Security and Nutrition and Sustainable Agriculture". This goal should take into consideration the Right to Food and the goal of achieving global food security through inclusive, sustainable and humane agriculture, with a focus on supporting and protecting small holder farmers so as to increase food production, while protecting and maintaining biodiversity, ecosystems services and enhancing animal welfare.

Rural Women

12. We recognize that women are key to food and nutrition security, knowledge, and sustainable development. They account for 60 to 80% of smallholder farmers and produce 90% of food in Africa and about half of all food worldwide.
13. We urge member states to provide equal access to productive resources and protection under the law and freedom from violence, as well as access to key means of implementation such as education, health, extension and financial services.

Means of Implementation

14. We urge member states to provide UNEP with adequate means of implementation to enable it to fulfill its new mandate as a universal body and fulfil its important leadership role in the transformation towards greater global sustainability. In order to leverage the potential of Civil Society Organizations (CSO), we call for the Governing Council to earmark specific budgetary allocation to support CSO participation and capacity building for effective engagement in UNEP's work, such as by earmarking specific a budget line for this purpose in the Environment Fund and or setting up a Voluntary Trust Fund.
15. For inclusive sustainable development, poverty alleviation and sustainable food systems to be realized, Farmers must be empowered with the means of implementation, in particular, access to resources, secure land tenure, equitable markets and prices and importantly the means to organize themselves such as through cooperatives, especially the most vulnerable.
16. We urge member states to develop a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system that will promote agricultural and rural development in developing countries and contribute to world food security.
17. Finally, we call on governments, intergovernmental organisations, international monetary institutions and regional development banks to support farmers especially smallholder farmers in developing countries and to increase investment and support in the following areas; humane and sustainable agricultural practices; rural infrastructure, storage capacities and related appropriate technologies; research and development on sustainable agricultural technologies; development of strong agricultural cooperatives, local markets and value chains; and the strengthening of urban-rural linkages.