THE HAGUE CONFERENCE ON AGRICULTURE, FOOD SECURITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

October 31 – November 5, 2010

Introduction

1. The world today faces one of the biggest challenges of the 21st century: how to feed 9 billion people in 2050, in the face of climate change, economic and financial crises and the growing competition for the use of natural resources. This challenge is even more crucial given that in the past decade, we have not come close to achieving the Millennium Development Goal of halving the number of people living in extreme poverty and hunger by 2015. Along these lines, the Seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-17) of May 2009 and the FAO Summit on Food Security of November 2009 voiced a clear message: the multiple challenges the world is facing in terms of food insecurity, climate change, degradation of ecosystems, and economic recession require an integrated response and an urgent transition of the world economy towards a sustainable, inclusive and resource efficient path.

2. A paradigm shift at all levels is needed: agriculture and food security should be at the heart of sustainable development and poverty eradication efforts, as well as those related to lower carbon, climate resilient growth.

3. *The Hague Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change*, aims to develop a roadmap with concrete actions linking agriculture-related investments, policies, and measures with the transition to climate smart growth. Specifically the conference would:

- Identify what needs to happen for agriculture and related land and water management to deliver on increased productivity, reduced emissions, increased sequestration, environmental sustainability, better livelihoods and food security
- Showcase and share knowledge on replicable good practices in climate resilient, low-emissions agriculture, livestock, fisheries, forestry and watershed management and demonstrate the potential for scaling up
- Use innovative approaches to bring together private and public sector finance for investments in climate smart agricultural systems.

Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change

4. Seventy five percent of the world's poor are living in rural areas and most are involved in farming, and agriculture, in the broader sense of its

definition - comprising of crops, forestry, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture, biomass, and agro-industries. Growth in the agriculture sector remains fundamental for poverty alleviation, economic growth and environmental sustainability. Agriculture is under threat from climate change, increased incidence of floods and droughts, increased temperatures, different patterns in the occurrence of weeds, pests, and diseases, and increased vulnerability of organic carbon pools. Climate change will affect the natural and managed systems – hydrology, forests, wetlands, coral reefs, agriculture, and fisheries – that societies depend on for food, fuel, and fiber, and for many other things. At the same time, agriculture, including livestock, land use change and forestry is a major agent of environmental and climate change at local, regional and global scales, contributing 30% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Agriculture is the single most significant driver of deforestation and directly contributes 14 percent of overall greenhouse gas emissions worldwide. Recognizing that some emissions from agriculture due to natural processes are inevitable, the challenge of producing more in a changing climate, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions overall, is immense. It will require managing the competing pressures on land and water from agriculture, forests and other ecosystems, growing population and urban expansion, as well as energy needs.

5. Climate change also poses an important challenge for future food security. The World Development Report 2010 estimated that climate change may increase the number of undernourished people in 2050 by up to 170 million It directly affects food production through changes in agro-ecological conditions and indirectly affects growth and distribution of incomes, and thereby, the demand for agricultural produce. Even if the current food security crisis has to some extent receded and prices have come down from recent peaks, this experience has demonstrated that the world food supply is highly unstable in the face of such pressures. In this, Sub-Saharan Africa is likely to surpass Asia as the most food insecure region. These challenges offer the potential to develop and promote food and livelihood systems that have greater environmental, economic and social resilience to risk in the face of changing climate conditions.

6. There is a need for a new paradigm for agricultural intensification, in terms of getting more per hectare, but without the increase in environmental costs currently associated with intensive agriculture. It is estimated that, in order to avoid taking over more land and spreading into forested areas, agricultural productivity will have to increase, by perhaps as much as 1.8 percent a year compared to 1 percent a year without climate change, according to the World Development Report 2010 (Development and Climate Change).

7. Agriculture in the twenty-first century will therefore be undergoing significant challenges, arising largely from the need to increase the global food, fiber and timber supply, while adjusting and contributing to respond

to climate change and ensuring long-term environmental sustainability. Success in meeting these challenges will require a comprehensive approach of technical, institutional and financial innovations, so that both adaptation and mitigation strategies are consistent with efforts to safeguard food security, maintain ecosystem services, provide carbon sequestration and reduce emissions. Such approaches exist and should be incorporated and, where possible scaled up, into agricultural policies, development, disaster relief, climate and decision making processes at both the national and international level.

8. In order to promote this transformational change in the agricultural sector, comprehensive action is not feasible without global cooperation, which requires an approach that is equitable, efficient and effective. Innovative ways of financing are needed from all sources, combined with capacity building and access to technology, knowledge and information on best practices.

9. The CSD-17 and the FAO Summit on Food Security highlighted the urgency of appropriate national and international action and greater cooperation to bring about a shift and to realize a *major transformation* towards climate-responsible agricultural productivity growth. They agreed that in the context of climate change, nothing less than a transformation in ideas, policies, technologies and finance is needed in the agriculture sector

10. New ways must be found and instruments developed to help farmers, fishers and foresters at both large and small scales, to manage their increased exposure to climate risk. Investments in adaptation, including drought, heat- and flood-resilient as well as salt-resilient crop varieties and broader farming systems and watershed management, need to increase. International efforts to enhance resilience of agriculture need to be scaled up, as developing country farmers will be seriously affected. Agriculture has also an important role to play in climate change mitigation. Wise management of soil and biomass carbon is a win-win, increasing productivity and restoring soil fertility while storing carbon which would otherwise be released into the atmosphere.

11. As is widely reported, the climate change conference in Copenhagen ended with an Accord which was noted by parties. It highlights the need to cap the global temperature rise to below 2 degrees compared to pre-industrial levels and raise finance to fast start action in the developing world to deal with climate change. Although some progress has been made in the realm of agriculture and climate change, no specific reference on agriculture was made in the Copenhagen Accord. The next UNFCCC COP will take place towards the end of 2010 in Cancun in Mexico, and may provide an opportunity to advance the agricultural agenda.

12. In light of the Ministerial Vision at CSD-17, the Netherlands, as outgoing Chair, has been requested to explore how to further develop the agriculture, food security and climate change agenda. In response to this, the Netherlands has taken the initiative to organize an international conference on agriculture, food security and climate change in close cooperation with Ethiopia, other developing country partners, New Zealand, Norway, the World Bank, and FAO.

The Hague Conference Objectives

13. *The Hague Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change*, aims to develop a roadmap, with concrete actions linking agriculture-related investments, policies, and measures with the transition to lower carbon-emitting, climate resilient growth.

14. The conference aims to bring together a wide range of stakeholders, from governments, international organizations, private sector, non-governmental organizations, philanthropic foundations, local community producers, and the scientific community, to assess key challenges and opportunities, and take stock of innovative approaches and emerging trends in the development of technologies, knowledge, information on best practices and methodologies for addressing climate smart-agriculture and related land and water management systems. The conference will seek to highlight innovative financial mechanisms and facilitate leveraging of additional financial resources for agriculture, food security and climate change from the private and public sectors. (see Annex for preliminary program). The themes are:

I. *Agriculture, food security and climate change: framing the issue and taking stock of innovations*
II. *Scaling up replicable models of climate change-smart agriculture: opportunities and challenges*
III. *Mobilizing investments from all sources for a transformational change to climate-smart agriculture*
IV. *A road map for action*

15. Since it is recognized that Africa above all could benefit from a *major agricultural transformation* in the wake of climate change and its vulnerability in terms of food security, it is vital that Africa, as a region, is strongly involved in the Conference, its preparation and, consequently, the implementation activities. To ensure such a close involvement, a preparatory conference for the African region will be convened in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to identify the regional specific challenges and opportunities for agriculture, food security and climate change.

Timing and Participation

16. *The Hague Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change* is scheduled from October 31- November 5, 2010. The Netherlands will host the conference. The Conference includes a Ministerial Roundtable. Background studies will be prepared in advance of the meeting.

17. Participants will be invited from governments, international organizations, private sector, non-governmental organizations, philanthropic foundations, local community producers and the scientific community, respecting regional balance.

18. The preparatory conference in Africa is scheduled for the 6th to 8th of September allowing for an adequate input into the Hague Conference.

ANNEX PRELIMINARY THEMES AND SESSIONS

1. Agriculture, food security and climate change: Framing the issue and taking stock of innovations

Agricultural systems, including crops, forestry, livestock, fisheries and sustainable management of the land and water on which these systems depend, have to step up to the challenge of increasing food production by 70% to feed 9 billion people by 2050, in the face of changing climatic conditions and the ongoing objective of worldwide food security. We need to integrate the agriculture, climate change, and food security agendas, strengthening and collaborating on efforts to make our agricultural systems climate-smart, restore degraded landscapes, and increase agricultural productivity. The introductory segment of the conference sets the scene by framing these inter-related issues and by taking stock of innovative approaches to integrate of climate change dimensions into sustainable agriculture.

2. Scaling up replicable models of climate change-smart agriculture: Opportunities and Challenges

As the climate changes, there will be a variety of responses - from targeted adjustments to existing systems to radical changes - for different regions. Responses must also be dynamic – as the climate changes, the approaches must also change. Both sectoral approaches, as well as land and water management approaches are needed. Regarding mitigation, while approaches to measuring sequestration and emissions reduction from the forestry and livestock sectors are well established, there are still challenges in developing land-based approaches in agriculture and watershed management, and in cost-effective approaches to soil and biomass carbon sequestration. There is great potential to shift policy support measures to broader measures to enhance productivity and invest in sustainable land and water management. The conference will highlight lessons from a range of developed and developing countries, and attempt to address the key challenges in a system wide approach to agriculture. This includes among others crop production, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture, forestry, agro-forestry, sustainable land and water management and methodological advances.

Unlocking the potential for policies at global, regional, national and local levels is crucial for developing a road map for action. Questions that need to be addressed if we are to identify effective, efficient and equitable

interventions are: How do different ***policies*** affect agricultural growth, food security, poverty and environmental sustainability? What can we learn from the pilots and concrete ***programs and projects*** are underway in different regions? Under what conditions can these programs be ***scaled-up***? These themes provide the context for three of the conference sessions during which practical and replicable models from the regions will be showcased, policy support measures will be discussed and tools to support adaptation and mitigation will be presented.

3. Financing for a transformational change to climate-smart agriculture

Current financial resources, including those newly committed to support improvements in agricultural systems are not enough, while existing financing mechanisms for climate change mitigation largely exclude agriculture and food security. This has become one of the major stumbling blocks for unlocking the potential of the agriculture sector to contribute to the climate change agenda. Major investments from all sources in adaptation and resilience as well as lower carbon growth and mitigation are needed. Investments in related capacity building are also needed. At the same time, policy shifts have the potential to provide major incentives to invest in climate-smart agriculture. Innovative ways of combining financing and policy options and approaches should be developed building upon the respective strengths of the public sector, private sector, civil society and philanthropic foundations. There are two sessions for discussions on carbon finance as it relates to agriculture as well as the ways in which new and additional resources from various sources can be mobilized.

4.A road map for action

Addressing agriculture, food security and climate change in a comprehensive fashion requires more than capacity-building in the agricultural sector, or isolated commitments to support for action on agricultural adaptation and mitigation. The challenge of the concluding part of the conference is to develop an integrated roadmap for action.

Session Summaries:

Session 1: Framing the issues, challenges and opportunities in agriculture, food security and climate change and stocktaking of innovations

Session 2: Practical and replicable models from the regions: lessons learned from successful current practices

Session 3: Policy support measures: successes and challenges in adaptation for resilience and mitigation for lower greenhouse gas emissions

Session 4: Tools to support adaptation and mitigation

Session 5: The world of carbon finance

- What is out there, why has agriculture not yet been featured in the regulatory market, and what needs to be done?
- What lessons can be learned from the voluntary market?

Session 6: Mobilizing new and additional resources from all sources

- Targeted/climate related investments for the agricultural sector
- Policy shifts to support climate-smart agriculture

Session 7: Way forward, concrete actions and conclusions