

**Business and Industry Statement
To the IPM for CSD-17
on Land
February 25, 2009**

Madame Chairperson,
I am Morgane Danielou, speaking on behalf of the Business and Industry group.

Safeguarding natural resources such as land and water requires specialized knowledge among regulators, farmers, and conservationists. There are important techniques such conservation tillage (as mentioned by Canada and the United States) that can dramatically decrease soil erosion and improve soil health. Good agricultural practices such as integrated crop management and better irrigation systems are important steps to be taken by farmers and farm workers. Careful, sustainable intensification of farm productivity helps avoid encroachment into wildlife habitat and protects biodiversity. Such strategies are furthered when they are integrated into an ecosystems and watershed approach by local and national governments.

Legitimate access to land improves the capacity of smallholders to steward land. When given the confidence, long term interest, and credit resources of land tenure farmers have a meaningful incentive to make the right decisions for their land. Good regulatory frameworks such as tenure rights and use protocols are important in all countries and in some areas must be established or reformed to be functional, particularly for women. Access to other resources, such as knowledge of good stewardship techniques, and inputs requires collaboration along the supply chain and with all stakeholders in rural areas, such as agro-dealers and extension workers.

To also comment on rural development: successful experiences, such as that of the partnership between CNFA and the government of Malawi could be replicated. CNFA established credit insurance in 2001 in Malawi to guarantee repayment of half of the money borrowed by agricultural input retailers to stock their shops. This greatly expanded the number of rural distributors and decreased the distances farmers travelled to obtain inputs, resulting in savings in both time and travel costs. By 2005, retailers covered by the guarantees had earned more than \$1 million and their success boosted local economies. They also join extension workers as a critical source of best practice information for farmers and farm workers.

In addition, farmers not only need to produce, they need to be able to sell their products. Building corridors for development can be a successful strategy that allows rational investment in infrastructure and links farmers to markets. This means focusing on the building of ports, railroads, storage facilities along geographically determined lines that tie in actors along the value chain and help bring farmers' products to local, regional and global markets. Development corridors are being created in Mozambique for instance and could be expanded regionally.

Market access is also about adding value to agricultural products, for example through marketing initiatives. Creating and sustaining rural development is an essential component of promoting sustainable development. It requires better access to local, regional and international markets; training, credit, and quality inputs for farmers. It requires more integrated value chains and support for creating brands and strategies for accessing markets.

These proposals follow the principles of *Farming First*, a 6 point action plan supported by business and industry, the scientists, and farmers groups.

Thank you Madame Chairperson.

Farming First

Safeguarding natural resources - furthering widespread adoption of sustainable practices of water and land use, such as conservation technology.

Sharing knowledge - while much knowledge to improve global agriculture already exists it often does not reach those farmers who could benefit most. Programs like village-based knowledge centre help.

Building local access - fundamental resources should be available to farmers to help them manage their production process more reliably, including mechanical tools, seed, fertilizer, and crop protection.

Protecting harvest - in many of the poorest countries, 20-40% of crop yields are lost because of inadequate pre- and post-harvest support. Likewise, vast quantities of food are squandered during production and consumption phases of the food chain.

Enable access to markets - farmers need to be able to get their products to market and receive equitable price treatment when they do by getting information like up-to-date market pricing even in remote areas.

Prioritise research imperatives - achieving sustainable agriculture requires intensified, continuous research, prioritising locally relevant crops, stewardship techniques, and adaptation to climate change.