

Statement by Farmers' Major Group – Dr.Sarala Gopalan, IFAP.

On Interlinkages

CSD-18

Mister Chairman,

The themes of this years' CSD may seem disparate, but we join our colleagues in the major groups in noting that there are linkages between the themes. First and foremost, CSD has been part of a global effort to foster techniques in **sustainable SYSTEM management** rather than specific management projects.

For farmers, this includes **integrated crop and pest management and best practices in livestock production** that support an eco-system approach. The importance of scientific information, training, and extension services to further adoption of these techniques cannot be overstated. The strong linkage between Science and Technology development to optimize production and supply needs special emphasis.

We have also spoken on the issue of wasted food. The current levels of **post-harvest losses** of food are estimated at 40%. This figure must be reduced through better storage, transportation, and processing. As well, reducing food waste at an institutional and consumer level is in the power of everyone. This item links several themes including transportation, waste management, and sustainable production and consumption.

The need to conserve sources of water without pollutants from other economic activities, as well as agriculture, is very urgent as we are running out of basic resources of water particularly, not to mention land and soil quality.

At several times in the discussion, including the mining session, the issue of poverty among smallholder farmers has been raised. It will come as no surprise that the farmers' major group remains concerned about the mechanisms to improve the lives, livelihoods, and sustainable output of smallholder farmers. We encourage CSD-18 to consider reiterating some of the key elements of the CSD-17 outcomes including the need for

information sharing on markets, the need for scientific research, and the role of micro-credit.

We also agree with the points raised by the women's major group identifying the need to support women farmers, including the recognition of land tenure.

Finally, significant financial resources and political will are needed to **strengthen farmers' organizations, who form one third of world population** to better address food security and sustainable patterns in production and consumption.