

## **Statement by Farmers' Major Group – Sarala Gopalan, IFAP**

### **On sustainable consumption and production patterns**

Mister Chairman,

Day by day farmers deal with the deterioration of natural resources due to land degradation, floods, droughts, desertification and other phenomena caused by climate change. Smallholder farmers cannot break out of the poverty cycle without fertile soil, healthy animals and the right tools for sustainable land management. These conditions of natural resource deterioration and biodiversity impoverishment endanger farmers' livelihoods.

One of the biggest challenges for sustainable agriculture is the adoption of a farming approach that encompasses environmental sustainability, animal welfare and food security and includes improved yields, better farmer incomes, lower costs of production, and reduced waste, with optimal inputs of water and fertilizers.

Sustainable growth of production by optimising use of land, water and other input requires more scientifically planned agriculture and animal husbandry and transfer of technologies to do this humanely, efficiently and economically.

The most conspicuous issue is of water – where surface as well as ground water has been over exploited making lands arid and cattle production unsustainable.

Farmers need infrastructure and tools to save their crops, protect their animals and harvest more efficiently by storing products in secure storages and process effectively for better keeping qualities and preserving nutrition.

Subsidies that encourage sustainable and local farming systems can ensure that proper signals are sent to producers and consumers to make sustainable choices, and help to address the true cost of production including environmental, animal welfare and natural resource consumption costs.

Investment in agriculture are inevitable and aspects of agriculture such as animal husbandry, fishery, land and water management has to go high up on national budgets and international financing projects.

In many developing countries, sustainable practices are difficult to implement due to the lack of financial resources, infrastructure and services. This represents a major constraint on the competitiveness and profitability of the agriculture sector. Training, education and extension programs are essential to transfer information from the scientific community. May I request the national governments, regional authorities and financing agencies give adequate attention and resources for building these capacities?