



MORE FOOD, GROWN SMARTER AND GREENER, FOCUS OF UN COMMISSION

New York, 1 May — With a lingering food crisis and global population growing by 90 million a year, countries will decide how they can scale-up successful pilot projects to grow more food in a greener way when the UN Commission on Sustainable Development meets at UN Headquarters in New York from 4-15 May.

“Solutions exist,” says Tariq Banuri, Director of the UN’s Division for Sustainable Development. “We know what they are. We just need to use them globally and tailor them locally to put the world’s agricultural production onto a more secure and sustainable footing.”

Many of the policy proposals at hand would help countries to directly confront the challenges faced by the food, financial and climate crises that have—and will—continue to affect virtually everyone.

Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs says these multi-dimensional challenges do not have purely economic solutions, nor purely social or environmental ones. “They require integrated solutions that combine economic, social, and environmental elements. Such solutions can come only from the framework of sustainable development.” He adds, “Now is the time for the champions of sustainable development to step forward.”

“The food crisis,” Banuri says, “is no different than the financial or climate crisis in that a coordinated global response is needed, and without which the economic, social, and environmental forces of the problem will impact the lives of billions. We have a real chance now to put the machinery in place that will not only put food on the table, but will do so in a way that we can manage into the future.”

The 53 member-state Commission will discuss and ultimately adopt a series of policy recommendations to guide agricultural development along with measures to address drought, desertification, land use, rural development and sustainable development in Africa during its two week session.

The motto of the meeting, says Gerda Verburg, Netherlands Minister of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, will be “Swords into ploughshares, words into action!” She says she will ask member states in the 17th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development to “go beyond generalities.”

“The world is facing multiple crises in the form of poverty, food crisis, economic recession, environmental degradation and climate change,” Ms. Verburg says. “Global policy makers have great responsibility during the upcoming session of the CSD to come up with policies to overcome these crises. This will be critical to help the affected population in developing countries, especially the most vulnerable ones who are the hardest hit by present crises.”

“The technologies exist, the resources exist – we just need to talk about how to grow them, adapt them, and improve them. A global ‘green’ green revolution calls for a revolution in ideas, a revolution in technologies, and a revolution in policies to make it all possible, at every level in every country. It calls for new, creative and innovative thinking. But, moreover it calls for concrete deliverables and actions to be implemented,” she added.

The two-week meeting will bring together over a 1,000 representatives from governments, civil society and the UN system to debate these issues and devise policy solutions. From 13-15 May, Ministers from developing and developed countries will weigh-in specifically on the issues of food security and a green revolution in round-tables that will be preceded by the High Level Segment opened by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

More information on CSD-17, including the full press kit, can be found at http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd_csd17.shtml

CSD-17 will be webcast live at www.un.org/webcast.

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