

CSD 17/IPM on Agriculture, Rural development, Land, Drought, Desertification, and Africa, New York, 23 – 27 February 2009

Intervention on Interlinkages and cross-cutting issues held by Daniel Ziegerer on 27 February 2009 behalf of the Swiss Delegation

Thank you Madam Chair,

We welcome this opportunity to address cross-cutting issues and inter-linkages among the main topics on our agenda. As we have tried to already deal with some of these issues in our previous interventions, we would like to highlight just a few important aspects.

Sustainable consumption and production patterns: Water

Sustainable consumption and production patterns are central to any strategy for moving towards sustainable development. In the context of our discussions, this means that we should give special attention to the issue of water. Switzerland is convinced that it is crucial to apply Integrated Water Resources Management strategies which take into account the particularities of the catchment area and which carefully balance the competing needs of domestic use, agricultural production, industrial use and also the environment itself.

We believe that three types of measures need to be prioritised : Firstly research, secondly capacity building, and thirdly infrastructure. This means that we need to undertake more research for example on species that are resistant to droughts. We also need to improve our capacities and extension services to manage our soils in a sustainable manner. Furthermore, we need to improve our water infrastructures with a view to reducing losses.

Genetic resources

Genetic resources are another important cross-cutting subject. A sustainable agriculture depends on the availability of genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their use. The challenge remains to mobilise the necessary public and private resources for implementing the respective multilateral instruments. In this regard, the Global Crop Diversity Trust is an innovative example.

High-level event on sustainable development

Lastly, Madam Chair, I would like to briefly address the issue of a possible Rio+20 or Stockholm+40 conference. In the UN General Assembly resolution on the implementation of Agenda 21 agreed upon last December, member states were invited to express their views on the possibility of convening a high-level event on sustainable development. We very much welcome this opportunity, because it will help my Government and others to advance our thinking on this important issue. At the same time, we would like to invite all of us and also the Bureau and the secretariat to think about ways to make use of the upcoming CSD session in May to continue this discussions in an inclusive and transparent manner.

Madam Chair, there would be many more important cross-cutting issues and inter-linkages to be addressed such as climate change or gender or some of the issues raised in this morning's presentations, but since our time is limited, I will leave it at this for the time being.

Thank you, Madam Chair.