

I would like to begin by thanking Mr Boljkovac and Ms Guthrie for their informative and thought provoking presentations. **FAO** is a participating organization of the IOMC and is concerned with helping developing countries to address issues that include chemicals management in the agricultural sector.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations leads international efforts to defeat hunger. Serving both developed and developing countries, FAO acts as a neutral forum where all nations meet as equals to negotiate agreements and debate policy. FAO is also a source of knowledge and information. We help developing countries and countries in transition modernize and improve agriculture, forestry and fisheries practices and ensure good nutrition for all.

The Organization promotes Sustainable Intensification of Crop Production. This approach requires the integration and harmonization of all appropriate crop production policies and practices aimed at increasing crop productivity in a sustainable manner, thereby meeting key millennium development goals aimed at reducing hunger and preserving the natural resources and environment for future use. The focus of our activities are to develop and strengthen;

- effective and strategic decisions that increase crop production using an ecosystem approach
- national capacities to monitor and to respond effectively to transboundary and other important outbreak pests
- policies and technologies appropriate to needs of a country and/or region to reduce negative impact of pesticides
- conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources with strong linkages between conservation, plant breeding and seed sector development.

The Plant Production and Protection Division (AGP) considers reducing reliance on pesticides and a science based integrated approach to fertilizer use as principle elements of its focus areas on Sustainable Production Intensification and Pesticide Risk Reduction. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Integrated Plant Nutrient Management programmes have demonstrated that pesticide and fertilizer use often can be reduced considerably with benefits to yields and farmer profits.

Preventing the spread of pests saves crops and reduces the need to use pesticides. Through the International Plant Protection Convention and the EMPRES Plant Health programme, FAO assists in monitoring and preventing the spread of plant pests and diseases. EMPRES Plant Health comprises programmes on Migratory Pests and Wheat Rust.

Pesticide risk reduction is further achieved through judicious selection of pesticides and proper Pesticide Management. Pillars of our work in this area are the programme to promote the implementation of the International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides – a voluntary framework endorsed by FAO member governments, the international development community, the private sector and NGOs and which is fully compatible with SAICM and the chemicals conventions. FAO also provides the Secretariat for the Rotterdam Convention for the part that

concerns pesticides. Related areas of work areas include the determination of Maximum Pesticide Residue Limits for agricultural products, Pesticide Specifications and Prevention and Disposal of Obsolete Pesticides, including the Africa Stockpiles Programme.

FAO leads the international normative work in the above areas. In addition, it provides practical technical assistance to countries in capacity building towards realizing the objectives set by its normative work.

I would like to take this opportunity to inform the distinguished delegates of a side event presented by WHO, UNEP and FAO to discuss why pesticides in agriculture and health care need more attention. This will take place at 1.15 in Room 6.