

Statement –Tuesday May 12 2009 by the Scientific and Technological Community at CSD-17

Thank you Madame Chair,
The Scientific and Technological Major Group would like to emphasize two important considerations. These are: the cross cutting issue of Capacity Building and the importance of enhancing investments in research to address the challenges of this cycle's thematic issues.

The cross cutting issue of Capacity Building can be the thread that weaves together the economic, social, and physical infrastructures. The definition of Capacity Building that WFEO is using clearly sets the foundation for policy discussions and the output from this round.

“The building of human, institutional and infrastructure capacity to help societies develop secure, stable and sustainable economies, governments and other institutions through mentoring, training, education, physical projects, the infusion of financial and other resources, and most importantly, the motivation and inspiration of people to improve their lives.”

When the issues of this theme are considered with a focus on capacity building needs, major attention is required on: rural to urban migration, education levels amongst farmers, disproportionate resource allocation to urban issues at the expense of rural issues, lack of metrics on infrastructure and infrastructure operations, better informed government workers would make better informed choices for farmers, and lastly the opportunity to involve women in capacity building.

Turning to the second cross cutting issue of research and knowledge sharing, much of the needed knowledge already exists within the scientific and engineering communities; however the knowledge often does not reach those that could benefit the most because of policy failures. Madame Chair, the Scientific and Technological Community has partnered with the farming, business and industry communities to push for a Farming First agenda which puts the farmer at the centre of the policy processes and calls for the promotion of interactions between the development processes, research, knowledge use and policy development. The Scientific and Technological Communities are calling for increased and consistent investment in farmer centered Research, Development and engineering applications.

For available knowledge to reach the remote indigenous communities, and benefit global agriculture, we need genuine partnerships, strengthened human and institutional arrangements for coordinated research, extension and policy development. We need to establish open and transparent two-way exchanges

that capture the 'voice of the farmer' creating space for Africa's women farmers to actively participate policy formulation and implementation.

There is need to strengthen farm level data collection and national policy analysis capacity, enhance involvement of universities and research institutions in multi-stakeholder public policy debates and the use research evidence to inform policies. There is need for technologies that enable farmers to receive information on weather, input and output markets and other early warning data that allows timely decision making.

Madame Chair, the CSD should make a case for a global policy environment that recognizes and rewards Agriculture, Forestry systems and sustainable land use systems to be part of the solutions to climate change mitigation and adaptation being negotiated. This can happen only if the science community is adequately resourced to generate the scientific evidence and the technological community has a conducive policy environment to develop low cost technologies.

Madame Chair, increased investments and partnerships between the, farmers other major groups and governments are critical for the development and implementation of sustainable solutions. The S&T communities are grateful for the visionary leadership of the CSD that embraces contributions of major groups; we would like to see similar efforts at national level, particularly in Africa.