

Business and Industry Intervention

CSD 16

SIDS Day

May 12 2008

Thank you Madame Chair. I speak on behalf of CropLife International, one industry federation cooperating under the chapeau of the International Chamber of Commerce to this session of the CSD.

Sustainable land and water management in agriculture are central to SIDS capacity to face the challenge of drought, desertification and more generally, climate change. Meeting these challenges relies on sustainably increasing productivity per hectare to protect non-agricultural land from encroachment, while at the same time meeting demands for agricultural goods.

Increasing productivity requires that farmers have access to knowledge and appropriate technologies for them to manage their land adequately. Industry groups, such as CropLife International, have since 1991 been working with partners at the regional and national level in over 80 countries to build capacities of farmers in using technologies and managing land. Over the years, more than 5 million farmers and other beneficiaries have been trained.

Stewardship programmes today embrace a more holistic, integrated approach to farm management than in the past, as they now also address suitable solutions throughout the agricultural value chain. Integrated Crop Management (ICM) balances economic, social and environmental concerns and sets a framework for good practices that address soil erosion, water management, crop choice, protection and nutrition as well as biodiversity enhancement.

As the challenge to reach out to the many rural farmers is huge, industry has always been working in partnerships with other organisations to tackle pressing issues, such as that of run-offs, as in Latin America where CropLife International cooperated with WWF. In many countries we have joint forces with national governments, development agencies, retailers, food retailers, NGOs and other interested stakeholders to address the challenges ahead.

Technologies and mitigation measures provided by CropLife member companies have also helped manage invasive species, such as rats brought onboard ships to the Norfolk Island. In that case, the technology package helped reverse the declining native green parrot population, which had been threatened by the greed of rats for the bird's eggs.

There are thus possible solutions which exist and have been used elsewhere which can be replicated and up-scaled in the context of SIDS. These could help contribute to meeting some of the challenges discussed during this session.