

Please check against delivery



Slovensko predsedstvo EU 2008  
Slovenian Presidency of the EU 2008  
La Présidence slovène de l'UE 2008

**COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**  
**Sixteenth Session, New York, 05 – 16 May 2008**

**AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**PART 2**

Statement by  
Ms. Marta HRUSTEL MAJCEN  
Deputy Head of Delegation

on behalf of the European Union  
New York, 7 May 2008

Mr. Chair!

In addition to the statement made earlier for the previous session on Agriculture and Rural Development by the European Commission Slovenia would on behalf of the EU like to highlight some important challenges in the area of agriculture and rural development within the EU 27 and also worldwide.

- **In the EU a Thematic Strategy for Soil Protection** is designed to ensure the sustainable use of soil and to protect its vital functions. Explicit links with climate change and Integrated Water Resource Management are established.
- The long-term survival of Europe's most **valuable and threatened species and habitats** is pursued by the **Natura 2000** network. Biodiversity is also addressed by CAP measures, notably cross compliance and Rural Development Policy.
- The EU launched in 2004 a **Community Programme on the conservation, characterisation, collection and utilisation of genetic resources in agriculture**.

The EU believes that actions are required at the international level. The further promotion of the precautionary principle in agricultural policies is vital for the achievement of sustainable development. We would also like to draw your attention to COP9 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) where the EU is promoting among other things the following three issues:

- a. The establishment of sound policy frameworks which ensure the sustainable production and consumption of bioenergy, as well as the development of biodiversity-related guidelines under the CBD, and
  - b. Enhanced implementation of the CBD programme of work on agricultural biodiversity, including in the areas of assessment, adaptive management and capacity building, research, mainstreaming in wider policy frameworks, climate change as well as strengthening of international initiatives on pollination, food and nutrition and soil by cooperation of the CBD and FAO.
  - c. The close cooperation between the CBD and FAO in particular in implementation of the CBD programme of work on agricultural biodiversity and the Multi-year Programme of Work (MyPoW) of the FAO Intergovernmental Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture as there are strong linkages between both programmes.
- The EU supports the sustainable production and consumption of sustainable biofuels by welcoming international initiatives on this matter, including partnerships operating in the context of the G8 Gleneagles' Dialogue such as the Global Bioenergy Partnership which

promotes a shared understanding with a view to developing a voluntary and flexible framework on sustainable bioenergy and ways to achieve it.

- The **EU Water Initiative** (EUWI), launched at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), aims to achieve WSSD targets for drinking water and sanitation within an integrated approach to water resource management.
- The EU supports and promotes the implementation of the **International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture**. Its objectives are the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of their use. The Treaty's implementation is essential for the achievement of MDG 1 and 7 and contributes to food security. We would like to urge countries that have not yet done so, to ratify or accede to the International Treaty, in order to further global cooperation. Furthermore, the EU supports and promotes the FAO Intergovernmental Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and its Multi-year Programme of Work. In addition, support is given to the Global Plan of Action on Animal Genetic Resources and to the work of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research. The important role of the Global Crop Diversity Trust in the field of *ex situ* conservation of plant genetic resources worldwide is highly acknowledged. In this context, we would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Norway on the opening of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault.

With this intervention we complete the EU contribution to the session on agriculture and rural development.

Thank you for your attention.