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International Federation of Agricultural Producers.
FARMERS- MAJOR GROUP
3rd May, 2006.

Statement of the Major Group – Farmers (Multi Stake holders, Room Number 4, 11.30 am to 1.00 pm.)

Chairman, I would like to remind the meeting that agriculture covers approximately one third of the world's land surface. Farmers are the largest group of eco-system managers ranging from 2% to 95% in different countries of the world. Climate change affects them most. Already in some parts, farmers' livelihood is in danger due to land degradation and desertification. The challenge for farmers is to meet food demands on the one hand and on the other protect the environment through minimizing use of fossil fuels and provide bio-energy, carbon sinks etc.

We are only well aware of the deteriorating Resource Base including land, bio-diversity and water. Water security in some parts could lead to conflicts and water wars.

Farming activities and energy intensities of varying degrees contribute to greenhouse gases. It has been estimated that agriculture currently accounts for more than 20% of the human induced greenhouse effect (including fossil fuel emissions and deforestation, (mainly) in tropical areas). It is therefore urgent for policy makers to remove barriers and provide incentives for farmers to adopt alternatives and minimize greenhouse gas emissions.

Research has lead to the development of more climate-friendly farming practices. Unfortunately, lack of financial resources and policy regulation make adoption of these practices difficult to implement.

A lack of communication between researchers and the farming community and inadequate regional information on climate change impact are major bottlenecks.

Chairman, there is urgency for pro-farmer, and particularly pro-poor-farmer research. More efficient use of existing technologies, local knowledge and traditional practices, and their adaptation to changing situations requires greater attention.

There have to be appropriate policy frameworks and regulation systems that would be fully implemented, I would underscore "implemented" and harmonized by different agencies of Government from the national, regional and local levels. A sound infrastructure and support services should be put in place to face all contingencies.

Farmers on their part have taken extensive and innovative work to reduce emissions, shift sources of energy, contribute to energy and biomass plantations and are willing to

cooperate in the combat against climate change. Reduction of chemical inputs without decreasing yields, reduction of pesticides and practice of integrated pest management, alterations to cattle feed to reduce methane production per unit of beef – are some examples.

I would like to conclude with the following recommendations:

- Farmers be involved as key actors and real protagonists.
- Expand scientific research on global climate change
- Provide infrastructure services to farmers to adopt change
- Farmers be given appropriate awareness, information, technical and financial assistance to pursue the right kind of technological changes
- Farmers like to be provided incentives for changing and insurance against unforeseen losses.
- Governments ensure appropriate policies and regulation frameworks with access to markets and infrastructure.
- Lastly, ensure implementation, monitoring and review in a harmonized manner.