



**SUMMARY OF THE CONFERENCE ON THE
MULTIFUNCTIONAL CHARACTER OF
AGRICULTURE AND LAND
12-17 SEPTEMBER 1999**

The "Cultivating Our Futures" Conference on the Multifunctional Character of Agriculture and Land (MFCAL) took place from 12-17 September 1999 in Maastricht, the Netherlands. Organized jointly by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Government of the Netherlands, this international conference was attended by 260 participants from more than 100 countries, including agricultural and environmental experts and policy makers from governments, international organizations, NGOs and other sectors of civil society.

The conference's objective was to provide a high-level technical forum to help identify new practices and the necessary enabling environments that will lead to increased sustainability in agriculture, with particular emphasis on raising awareness at all levels of the multiple contributions that agriculture and related land use can make toward increasing sustainability and food security. Conference participants focused on two tasks: reviewing progress toward fulfilling the principles contained in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and Agenda 21; and identifying the main issues to be addressed in the future.

During the course of the six-day meeting, delegates engaged in general discussions on MFCAL in Plenary sessions, discussed the MFCAL concept in regional group meetings, went on field excursions to visit project sites in the region, and considered several drafts of the Chair's report of the conference in Plenary sessions and "informal informal" consultations. The main outcome of the conference was the final report of the Chair, which reviews progress in implementing sustainable agriculture and rural development (SARD) and identifies instruments and issues for future action. It will contribute to the eighth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-8), which will focus on integrated planning and management of land resources and SARD when it convenes from 24 April-5 May 2000.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PROCESS

In adopting Agenda 21, the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) established a framework for consideration of integrated land management and SARD. Chapter 14 of Agenda 21 sets out the programme area on SARD as "agricultural policy review, planning and integrated programmes in light of the multifunctional aspect of agriculture, particularly with regard to food security and sustainable development." The FAO is the task

manager for Chapter 14 (SARD) and Chapter 10 (integrated management of land resources) and as such contributes to the report of the UN Secretary-General to each session of the CSD.

The third session of the CSD in 1995 registered disappointment at the slow progress in moving toward SARD in many countries. At the World Food Summit (WFS) in 1996, delegates adopted the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the WFS Plan of Action, which established seven commitments, one of which addresses participatory and sustainable food, agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development policies and practices and includes reference to the multifunctional character of agriculture. The following year, the Special Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGASS) to review implementation of Agenda 21 called for the formulation of policies promoting sustainable agriculture, comprehensive rural policies, an increase in investment in agricultural research and the continuation of the reform process then being undertaken in conformity with Article 20 of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Agriculture.

In the year 2000, CSD-8 will conduct a further assessment of progress toward implementing the goals and targets of Chapters 10 and 14 of Agenda 21. The Maastricht conference "Cultivating Our Futures" was an intersessional event in the CSD process, organized to help prepare for CSD-8. Early in 1998, the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries took the initiative, together with the FAO, to organize an international conference in the tradition of the 1991 Den Bosch conference, which provided an important input into the UNCED process, and the 1995 Wageningen workshop on integrated land management, which reported to CSD-3. The Maastricht conference has provided an opportunity to link the results of the WFS to the CSD process. Two notable preparatory processes took place in the lead-up to the Maastricht conference. A series of Internet activities were initiated to broaden participation in the months preceding the conference. This took the form of a two-phased electronic conference launched in February 1999, in which over 1300 people from 80 countries participated. Virtual participation continued during the conference itself via the WebForum. Secondly, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the Dutch Government organized a preparatory seminar, hosted by South Africa, held from 5-7 July 1999. At this seminar, policy makers, development practitioners and agriculture experts developed the concept and application of MFCAL. They concluded that MFCAL could play a role in supporting Agenda 21 targets by providing a holistic framework for planning sustainable development initiatives at the local and national levels and assisting in the development of improved indicators for monitoring relevant Agenda 21 target achievements.

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REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE

Participants at the Conference on the Multifunctional Characteristics of Agriculture and Land (MFCAL) spent the first two days in Plenary hearing opening remarks and engaging in general discussion on the MFCAL concept. The following day was devoted to regional group discussions, and the final days of the conference were spent negotiating the text of the Chair's report of the conference. The following is a summary of the conference and its outcome, the report of the Chair.

OPENING PLENARY

Geke Faber, State Secretary of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries of the Netherlands, welcomed participants to the conference. She stated that the conference would not only review progress in addressing the Agenda 21 themes of sustainable agriculture and land use and food security but also seek to discover new ways to achieve these goals. She noted that the context of the conference was the preparation for CSD-8 in April 2000, which will consider the Agenda 21 chapters on integrated land management and SARD. She emphasized that land use and sustainable agriculture offer excellent opportunities for an integrated policy approach.

She recalled that goals and targets in the areas of sustainable agriculture and land use were established and agreed in Agenda 21 and the 1996 WFS Plan of Action. She said the main challenge of this conference was to identify policy options, practical means of implementation and enabling environments to make progress in achieving these goals and targets and to seek innovative ways and appropriate institutional frameworks to integrate public, private and cooperative initiatives, taking into account local and regional conditions.

She noted an increasing awareness that agriculture has functions beyond producing food and fiber, such as: fostering food security in terms of the availability, access and nutritional content of food at household, national and international levels; encouraging rural development and viability of the rural economy; and supporting the environment and natural resource management. She stressed that the MFCAL concept offers a much-needed analytical framework. Analysis of the multiple functions of agriculture and land use can demonstrate how multiple functions can contribute to implementation of agreed goals and targets set out in Agenda 21 and the WFS Plan of Action.

Faber noted that the use of the phrase "multifunctional character of agriculture and land" had led to some misunderstanding, and explained that it was agreed language from the WFS. She urged participants to make their discussions on sustainable agriculture and land distinct from discussion in the WTO and not to engage in dogmatic debate on their understanding of the term. She emphasized that an overall approach to policy options and practical guidelines should be integral to the discussion, taking into account the interdependencies between local, national and international levels and between all economic, social and environmental factors at these different levels. She underscored the importance of dialogue with all relevant stakeholders at local and national levels.

Jacques Diouf, Director-General of the FAO, noted that for the first time in history the majority of people live in urban settings. A direct link to nature, one of the foundations of cultures and historical traditions, is no longer a part of daily life for most people, and fewer numbers are involved in cultivation. Increases in world population mean that solutions to the challenge of food security will have to be found. He recalled that governments at the WFS recognized the unacceptability of the fact that more than 800 million people cannot meet their basic food needs. He said adequate measures to increase food production and tackle poverty are imperative. He quoted from the WFS Plan of Action commitments on food security, including a reference to the need to consider the multifunctional character of agriculture. He

said the FAO had readily accepted the offer from the Dutch Government to organize this conference to help create a better understanding of MFCAL.

Diouf reviewed some of the FAO's work before and since UNCED in 1992, including research links and advice and inputs into international agreements. He said the conference on MFCAL would provide a good opportunity for experts to share their knowledge and experience and to transmit their ideas more effectively. He stressed that farmers remain the guardians of the basic resources of life. He noted, however, that sources of revenue and agricultural practice had changed over time. Rural regions' economies have become more diversified with the processing and marketing of foods, crafts, tourism, conservation and the regeneration of natural resources. The links created at national and international levels are both deep and numerous. The impact of globalization and market mechanisms, communications and transport networks now reach far-flung corners of the planet, with immediate effects on rural and urban populations.

Regarding preparations for CSD-8, Diouf stated that the FAO had been given a remit to help with preparations on agriculture, land management and sustainable rural development. He called for international support and appealed for increased cooperation between the various partners in agriculture and SARD. He said the results of the conference deliberations would be as fruitful as those from the 1991 Den Bosch conference.

Fawzi H. Al-Sultan, President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), noted that this conference would contribute to CSD-8, which will focus on integrated planning and management of land resources. He stated that, as part of its support for this conference, IFAD helped organize a Partners' Seminar in South Africa in July 1999. Emphasizing the relevance of the MFCAL concept to agro-ecosystems in all countries, he noted its critical importance for the drylands of the developing world, especially in Africa. He said IFAD's experience in helping small-scale farmers in sub-Saharan Africa to take advantage of the multi-functional character of agriculture required the full participation of intended beneficiaries.

He highlighted the pivotal role that MFCAL can play in reducing global poverty, given that many people living in poverty reside in rural areas. He called for priority to be given to creating access to productive assets such as land and productive services such as credit extension for poor rural groups. He noted the establishment in 1995 of a Popular Coalition to Eradicate Hunger and Poverty, which involves a variety of intergovernmental and civil society organizations and has taken up land tenure as a priority issue. He said the MFCAL framework needs to be made easy to understand and must evolve further if it is to successfully mobilize the synergies between agriculture's multiple functions and direct them toward rural poverty eradication.

Regarding food production, Doornbos noted IFAD's support for, *inter alia*: a multilateral framework of rules and regulations for agricultural trade that applies equally to all countries; access for farmers to resources, such as infrastructure, credit and secure land tenure arrangements, on reasonable terms; and market-oriented policies that apply to all relevant sectors, both upstream and downstream of production agriculture.

Conference participants elected by acclamation Hans Alders, Queen's Commissioner of the province of Groningen, the Netherlands, as Chair of the conference.

CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Participants convened in Plenary on Monday, 13 September to discuss issues raised in the conference's background documents. Conference Chair Hans Alders said the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries had organized this conference to help prepare for CSD-8's consideration of integrated land management and sustainable agriculture in April 2000. He said a successful confer-

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ence would simplify decision-making on these issues at the CSD, FAO and WTO. Chair Alders said the objective of the conference was to identify new policy options, practical methods and the necessary enabling environments for MFCAL, with particular emphasis on raising awareness. The principal tasks of the conference were to review progress toward realizing the Rio Principles and to identify the main issues to be addressed in the future. Alders explained that the MFCAL term is agreed language from the WFS and is concerned with the substance of agriculture and related land use, whereas the term "multi-functionality" has been tied to the issue of "non-trade-concerns," as referred to in the Uruguay Round of GATT, and addresses more specifically the effects on trade. He stressed that the trade-related discussion on multifunctionality is within the WTO's mandate, while this conference will remain within the FAO's mandate.

Louise Fresco, Director of the FAO Research, Extension and Training Division, outlined the method used in preparing for the conference, which was uniquely inductive, empirical and participatory and involved extensive peer review. She emphasized that the framework presented in the conference documents is analytical and scientific rather than normative and aims to facilitate effective analysis of agriculture's multiple functions from local to international levels, thus helping to identify where tradeoffs are necessary and synergies exist. The main documents of the conference were the Issues Paper and the Stock-taking Paper.

Michel Griffon, Director of the Economic Policy and Markets Programme, International Center for Agricultural Research and Development, introduced the Issues Paper, which outlines concepts, issues and policies relevant to MFCAL. He explained that it identifies agriculture as having environmental, economic and social functions as well as a food security role. He stressed that these multiple functions will apply differently in individual cases, but added that the multifunctional approach can be beneficial in all cases. The Issues Paper concludes that the MFCAL character of land: is less apparent when natural resources are more abundant; is more commonly recognized when there is greater institutional development; and can deliver effective outcomes when stakeholder participation is high.

Eric Smaling, Professor of Soil Science, Wageningen University and Research Center, introduced the Stock-taking Paper, explaining that it reviews recent contributions that an understanding of the multifunctional character of agriculture has made to improving the sustainability of agriculture and related land use while maintaining its primary role of providing food security. Analysis of the multifunctional character contributes to understanding the potential linkages, synergies and tradeoffs that can help towards achieving sustainability in agriculture and rural development. Smaling explained that the paper drew from three primary sources: CSD country reports; the electronic conference held in early 1999; and the Multifunctional Case Studies database. The major conclusions emphasize the importance of: active participation and leadership by rural communities; institutional development and mobilization of interested stakeholders; development and implementation of effective policies as well as enabling national policy environments; efficient and transparent flow of information; wide availability of applied research results; and improvements in economic instruments and longer-term perspectives for investment.

Responding to several requests for clarification, Chair Alders provided information on conference procedures and the status and preparation of documentation. He explained that the technical papers prepared for the conference, together with the results of the WebForum, were to serve as inputs to conference discussions. A short summary of the conference would be prepared for the November 1999 meeting of the FAO Council; an extensive report of the conference, including the results of the electronic consultation and a summary of the main debate and conclusions, would also be prepared by early 2000 and would be

subject to scientific review; and a third output, to be completed by December 1999, would summarize the conference and be incorporated into the FAO Task Manager's report to CSD-8.

In the ensuing discussion on the conference background documents, a participant from Cuba highlighted the need to implement agricultural policies that address poverty and provide access to appropriate technology and credit on reasonable terms to developing country farmers. A Guatemalan participant highlighted the value of participatory approaches that involve all relevant stakeholders. A representative from the Philippines called for a clear definition of MFCAL and multi-functionality, and urged governments to avoid externalizing the costs associated with implementing MFCAL concepts through trade distortions. A South African delegate said MFCAL could contribute to a framework that could help identify tradeoffs and synergies to assist policy making.

A UK representative recommended that the conference's outcome give particular emphasis to poverty, sustainable rural livelihoods, and issues of security of tenure, access and rights to land. A speaker from Ecuador emphasized developing countries' difficulties in achieving sustainable agriculture due to dependence on foreign capital and technologies and indiscriminate subsidies and unfair practices in developed countries. A speaker from Uruguay objected to the suggestion that discussions at this conference be separated from those in other fora, as the concepts of multifunctionalism discussed in the WTO and MFCAL are not different. He called for reforms to move toward free market prices and then to prices that reflect the full costs of production. He said when governmental policies distort international prices they negatively affect decisions about investment, production methods, international trade and consumption patterns. He advocated recommending policies that are decoupled from production and exports and rejecting export subsidies. He suggested that the conference's technical documents be revised to reflect these concerns, and did not support the production of a summary report by the FAO after the conference as the official conference outcome. A speaker from Egypt said the weight given to the various functions of agriculture should differ from one country to another depending on levels of development.

A participant from Madagascar stressed the importance of the environment within the MFCAL concept. An Australian representative questioned whether MFCAL represents progress beyond the SARD approach in agricultural policy. He said MFCAL is seriously flawed when put forward as a concept, and added that the conference background papers failed to provide consistent, practicable and cost-effective proposals. He said delegates must ask if the MFCAL approach benefits developing countries. He also questioned the background papers' emphasis on centralized decision making. An important question for CSD-8 will be whether one country should be able to develop an MFCAL approach that impinges on the MFCAL objectives of another. A participant from Niger called for greater attention to investment, noting the lack of investment available to developing country producers. A speaker from Mauritius called for concrete proposals based on specific case studies that would address small island developing States' concerns about their competitive disadvantages. A German delegate concurred with those who would define MFCAL in its broadest sense, and highlighted the MFCAL concept as important for the EU. He said some services associated with the agricultural sector, particularly its non-production elements, should be considered public goods. A participant from China said the MFCAL framework should give more attention to socioeconomic considerations and the need to make the concept effective at the micro-level.

A Canadian delegate said he doubted whether the MFCAL approach would provide a useful new paradigm to promote sustainable agriculture and expressed concern that engaging in debate on the concept could distract from the key concern of world hunger. He said MFCAL and

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multifunctionality need to be clearly defined. A Malaysian representative said MFCAL should address the ongoing need in many countries to create employment.

A US representative said the many functions of agriculture need not be realized through trade-distorting practices but can both encourage continued production of non-food objectives and achieve agreed national commitments to reduce trade-distorting policies and practices. She emphasized that this conference should focus on identifying specific tools and actions to help move toward more sustainable agriculture. A participant from Cameroon stressed the need for strategic planners to take the economic life of rural peasants into account. He urged that the conference's conclusions address mechanisms for implementation.

A representative from New Zealand said the linkages between MFCAL and agricultural sustainability were unclear and questioned the value added by MFCAL. He recalled that the WFS Plan of Action commitments refer both to MFCAL and trade as key to achieving food security. He opposed any definition of MFCAL or multifunctionality that would undermine commitments adopted in other fora. A delegate from Morocco said the multiple functions of agriculture and land use make it possible to implement policies that balance the different uses of land with environmental protection. He highlighted constraints posed by arid and semi-arid land and patterns of land ownership.

A participant from Thailand underlined the need to address the different realities of commercial and subsistence farmers. She appealed for clear definitions to prevent the use of MFCAL as a means of hiding market distortions that impact developing and least developed country markets. A representative from Benin highlighted the problem of food insecurity. A Spanish participant recalled the objectives of the WFS Plan of Action, reiterating the urgency of combating poverty by ensuring food security and developing a fair and equitable trading system. A speaker from Argentina emphasized that removal of price-distorting subsidies is only a first step toward achieving sustainable development. He said prices should reflect the full costs of production and stressed the need to eliminate subsidies that prevent prices from reflecting environmental externalities.

A participant from Paraguay supported the principle of MFCAL, provided that it recognizes that agriculture meets a variety of needs. She said the concept should not create incentives to implement more subsidies. A representative of Mexico said the conference and its report should address trade, as the former has the institutional flexibility to enrich international debate not only at CSD-8 but also within the WTO and environmental fora. A Lebanese participant stressed the importance of incorporating the multifunctionality of agriculture into regional and international plans of action. A delegate from Trinidad and Tobago recommended that the multiple functions be prioritized, focusing first on food security and the role of stakeholders, followed by the economic, social and environmental functions respectively.

A French delegate stated that the market has failed to guarantee food security. He said agriculture's multifunctional character has to be considered when discussing trade liberalization. A Swiss representative praised the MFCAL approach as a progression beyond the SARD approach. A representative from Zimbabwe said he did not see MFCAL as conceptually different from SARD, but conceded that there are times when it is necessary to restate a concept differently.

A representative of the International Union of Food and Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations called for recognition of the important and distinct role of agricultural food workers in sustainable agriculture, and said MFCAL should refer to agricultural workers and their trade unions as a distinct category, in line with agreed language in Chapter 29 of Agenda 21 on trade unions. A speaker from the Popular Coalition to Eradicate Hunger and Poverty called for urgent action to: redress the inequitable distribution of wealth and insufficient participation of the poor; reform macro-economic policies that adversely affect the poor; and overcome barriers

preventing land tenure reform. A representative of the Global Forum for Sustainable Nutrition and Food Security called for implementation of policies to favor small farms and facilitate land reform and denounced export subsidies and protectionism in developed countries. A Via Campesina representative stressed the need to examine the negative impacts of the privatization of seeds, grain and water and the use of genetically modified organisms. He emphasized that MFCAL should not be used as an excuse to maintain destructive environmental and agrarian policies and below-cost pricing of agricultural goods.

The representative of Rural Advancement Foundation International suggested that a useful conference outcome would recognize the causes of diminished multifunctionality and could include recommendations to develop an action plan that integrates all functions. He warned against the diversion of resources into biotechnology at the expense of R&D investment in more accessible technologies for organic agriculture. He called for a rejection at the CSD of "terminator technologies," which deny farmers their rights and destroy local environments and livelihoods.

A Dutch delegate said the conference's main challenge was to identify policy options and practical approaches as well as to enable the realization of previously agreed goals and targets. He called for innovative ways to integrate public, private and cooperative initiatives.

REGIONAL GROUPS

On Tuesday, 14 September, participants convened in Plenary to hear presentations of three case studies. They then met in five regional groups to continue discussion of the MFCAL concept and hear presentations of further case studies. On Wednesday, 15 September, participants made field excursions to interesting project sites in the cross-border region, where they continued these discussions. The following is a summary of the case studies presented in Plenary and the regional groups' findings.

Des McGarry presented a case study on land management for Australian cotton. He explained that greater understanding of the fragile nature of soils in the cotton-growing areas led to widespread adoption of a cropping system that is less intensive and includes crop rotation in existing beds. This system was part of a "multiple output system" that resulted in increased awareness by farmers of their soil resources, greater crop diversity, increased crop yields, environmental benefits and cost efficiencies. The system was farmer-driven and assisted by scientifically based research and training. It demonstrated that mechanization is not a panacea and that an understanding of soils and other physical factors is essential.

Ian Cherret and Luis Alvarez Welchez presented a case study from Lempira Sur, Honduras. They described the area in southwestern Honduras as facing problems caused by unsustainable migratory agriculture and extensive cattle grazing; malnutrition, drought, low productivity and natural resource deterioration were widespread. A demand-driven and participatory strategy was developed to improve productivity and better manage resources by bringing appropriate technology, micro-credit and a system of local financing to the area. A system based on natural regeneration of trees was implemented. As a result of these activities, profits, wages and productivity have increased; the area now has a food supply surplus; forest burning has been brought under control; erosion has decreased; and the local population is less dependent on outside factors and thus more confident about its development prospects.

Zana Sanogo presented the third case study. He described Mali's Extension Programme and how it has responded to diverse conditions and farming practices throughout the country. The Programme has involved extensive partnerships between government, civil society, researchers, educators and farmers and a focus on the integration of women. The overall objectives include poverty reduction, enhanced incomes, and extension of efficiency and support for farmers' organiza-

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tions. The Programme has addressed crop yields, fertilizer use, environmental protection, training and partnerships employing decentralized approaches.

AFRICA: This regional group was co-chaired by J.H. Owusu-Acheampong (Ghana) and Timothy Kirway (Tanzania). The group agreed that MFCAL is only useful if it can contribute to achieving food security. Many participants said the multifunctional nature of agriculture in Africa is not a new concept, but it can help in identifying practical actions to implement SARD. Other important issues identified by the group included: the need for stakeholder involvement in planning and development; better information exchange; free trade; enabling policies; and more investment.

Two case studies were presented, on farmer-scientist research relationships for integrated aquaculture in Malawi and on sustainable multiple land use in the Netherlands. During the subsequent exchange of lessons learned and identification of processes and instruments needed for SARD, participants reiterated the importance of stakeholder involvement, particularly of farmers, "middle men" and NGOs with direct links to grassroots communities, in planning, decision-making and implementation. Participants highlighted the need for platforms for discussion and support at the international level, and expressed hope that this conference would formulate practical recommendations and that international fora could help to translate their recommendations into actions.

ASIA-PACIFIC: This group, co-chaired by Vince McBride (New Zealand) and Nelson P. Hutabarat (Indonesia), explored the question of whether the concept of multifunctionality represents an advance beyond the SARD approach. It was observed that the concept is not new, but the policy context, now characterized by globalization, trade liberalization and national policy reform, has evolved. The MFCAL concept could thus be useful in generating awareness and catalyzing governmental action. Participants stressed the need to focus on practical ways to use the MFCAL concept to develop new policies and instruments to foster sustainable agriculture. The group noted that efforts to achieve food security often result in environmental degradation, and the MFCAL approach could facilitate a transition from the necessity for such tradeoffs to the possibility of forging synergies and win-win situations. The need for flexibility in implementing MFCAL was underscored, given differing country conditions and levels of development.

Participants heard presentations of two case studies -- a community-based resource management project to enhance farmers' opportunities for agrarian reform and poverty alleviation in the Philippines, and a collaborative economic diversification and sustainable forest management project in the Toros Mountains of Turkey. They shared experiences and lessons learned from other regional projects, and identified a number of processes, instruments and enabling factors to facilitate successful sustainable agriculture projects. These included land tenure security and institution building, encompassing stakeholder mobilization and participation, particularly the participation of women, and the creation of farmers' associations. The group discussed the need to ensure the sustainability of projects by, *inter alia*: fostering a sense of community ownership; ensuring self-financing once external funding expires; having public and private sector support, international financing and non-trade distorting policies; developing and employing appropriate technology and local knowledge; incorporating health and environmental costs into project cost-benefit analyses; providing support for marketing for and mechanization of small farms; incorporating training, education and extension; and enacting appropriate national policies.

EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA: This group, co-chaired by Eli Reistad (Norway) and Raphael Breidenbach (Germany), first examined the utility and potential implications of the MFCAL concept. Although the group did not reach a consensus on the implications of the concept, there was agreement that the term can offer a new perspective to describe the multiple functions of agriculture and land. Discussion

centered on a few key issues, including: the need to consider off-farm activity in the contemporary rural economy; the implications of global trade and markets for small farmers; valuation of non-production aspects of agriculture; and ways to evaluate and address the costs to farmers and society of other dimensions of rural activity, such as maintenance of landscapes and other amenities.

Two case studies, from Haiti and the US, offered concrete examples of initiatives in rural areas in diverse circumstances. In Haiti, local community organizations initiated changes in local practices to regenerate soils and the watershed while introducing additional sources of protein using fish culture. In the US case, a non-profit institution in West Virginia is using education programmes for local youth in order to maintain cultural traditions while promoting sustainable practices. Participants then concentrated on identifying tools to optimize sustainability and measure the viability of the multiple functions of agriculture. They emphasized the importance of building partnerships and organizational capacities in rural areas, maximizing the use of public and private resources, and facilitating access to credit and mechanisms for financial security. The group agreed that the concept of MFCAL must be explored further to determine what additional benefit it adds to the current understanding of SARD.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: This regional group's discussions were co-chaired by Motee Ramsaran (Trinidad and Tobago) and Eduardo Marin (Nicaragua). Some participants said the MFCAL is a statement of the obvious and that it is an inherent element of sustainable agriculture. Many supported the view that the conference background papers were "vague" and that MFCAL should not replace a necessary focus on Agenda 21 implementation. Some linked multifunctionality to criticism of developed country subsidies, unfair terms of trade and dumping, with their implications for sustainable development and the food security of developing countries. The discussants highlighted: poverty, agricultural reform and land tenure issues; food security; education and training needs; local authorities' role in land planning; spending on food security versus arms spending; debt; payment to rural communities for ecological services; and the WTO, trade liberalization and discriminatory trade practices.

Two case studies were presented, on an ecological agriculture "demonstration county" in China and on an organic coffee cultivation project to promote autonomous development of indigenous communities in Mexico. Participants agreed that: multifunctionality is contained in the concept of sustainable agriculture; an examination of the requirements for the application of sustainable agriculture is needed; subsidies impact the environment and international pricing; environmental services are provided by agricultural workers; education, organizations and technical innovations for communities should be supported; and Agenda 21 should be fully implemented.

NEAR EAST: Saad Nassar (Egypt), Chair of the Near East group, introduced key issues relating to the MFCAL concept, including the need to establish what the concept means and how and where it can contribute to sustainable agriculture and land use. Participants did not agree on the value of MFCAL or whether it added anything new or useful to SARD. There was consensus on the need for further clarification of the concept. Participants debated whether MFCAL is universally applicable, with some expressing particular interest in whether it can be used in developing policies and programmes for arid and semi-arid regions. The need to achieve food security and target poverty was emphasized. On trade and the environment, participants said environmental considerations should not be used as a form of disguised protectionism that obstructs developing countries' exports.

Participants stressed the need for: access to appropriate technology as well as development and use of local knowledge and traditional systems and practices; investment in relevant research; and development of commercial marketing techniques and systems for farmers in developing countries. Participants also heard and discussed case studies

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on France's new legislation highlighting the multifunctional character of agriculture and a project in Iran relating to integrated water management and flood utilization.

CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE OUTCOMES

On Tuesday, 14 September, Chair Alders introduced documents outlining the conference process and reporting procedure and also suggesting possible key elements for the report of the Chair, which he said would be the final outcome of the conference and would reflect participants' ideas and views. Several delegates said the status of the Chair's report on the conference should be made very clear so that it would not go forward to other fora as a consensus paper if this conference did not adopt it.

An Argentinean participant, supported by an Australian delegate, expressed surprise at the absence of references to "massive" subsidies by developed countries in the document outlining key elements of the report. He said he was not prepared to endorse the vague concept of MFCAL, which brings no clear value-added to Agenda 21. A representative from Chile said the key elements outlined by the Chair did not reflect the various positions held by participants. A speaker from New Zealand, supported by an Australian participant, said the correct assessment is that no consensus exists on the value of the MFCAL concept and stated that case studies demonstrate that sustainable agriculture is being delivered without MFCAL. The Australian representative questioned the Chair's suggestion that the removal of subsidies is necessarily linked to WTO negotiations.

Plenary discussion on conference outcomes resumed on Thursday morning, 16 September. Regarding follow-up to the conference, delegates from Malaysia and Italy encouraged the FAO to continue building a framework for planning sustainable agriculture. Members of the CSD NGO Sustainable Agriculture Caucus called on the FAO and CSD-8 to examine the contribution of organic agriculture to sustainability and MFCAL. They called for an examination of support mechanisms for land tenure security at CSD-8.

On MFCAL's utility and its contribution to SARD, a participant from Uruguay, supported by speakers from Australia, New Zealand and Indonesia, called for a focus on practical sustainable agriculture policies and tools in the absence of agreement on MFCAL's utility. An Indonesian delegate called for attention to farmer participation, institution building and farmer-led training and education. A French representative said the MFCAL approach could help operationalize the relationship between food and non-food production demands.

On reflecting country priorities in the elaboration of the MFCAL approach, a French representative said countries must cooperate, some within the OECD, while taking the concerns of developing countries on board. Senegalese, Mexican and Spanish participants underlined the importance of food security. Speakers from India, Norway, Morocco, Switzerland and the Republic of Korea emphasized the need to take account of differences between country and regional situations.

On multifunctionality and trade, a French participant said that countries could use MFCAL while respecting the obligation to reduce distortions in the global market. Delegates from Uruguay and South Africa said the multifunctional character of agriculture should not be used as a pretext to maintain subsidies. A delegate from Austria said the EU's multifunctional agricultural policies are intended to relieve pressure for ever-increasing production. A Chilean participant, supported by speakers from Argentina and Uruguay, said developing country export prices have been depressed by other countries' export subsidies, at the expense of sustainability.

On developing country needs, a participant from Trinidad and Tobago supported a speaker from Argentina's view that, with declining ODA, countries dominated by agriculture have no alternative but to increase production. A participant from Chile suggested that MFCAL could be used to boost aid flows for Agenda 21 implementation. Parti-

pants from Haiti and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) called for technological support and research and development.

Participants said the Chair's report should include text on: OECD work on MFCAL, indicators, subsidies and the impact of policy reform on sustainable agriculture (OECD); recognition of waged agricultural workers as stakeholders and Agenda 21 language on core labor standards (CSD NGO Agriculture Caucus); the fundamental influence of trade (Trinidad and Tobago); FAO and partner support for participatory land management and measures to support security of land tenure (Popular Coalition); and FAO guidelines on Chapter 10 of Agenda 21 which are designed to provide tools for analysis of land use (UK and Thailand).

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Following the general discussion on conference outcomes, a draft report of the Chair was circulated, which delegates debated at length in Plenary and "informal informal" consultations on Thursday, 16 September and Friday morning, 17 September.

The following is a summary of the final document, including details of discussions and key amendments to the document arising from these discussions.

I. BACKGROUND: This paragraph sets out the main challenge of agriculture, which is to achieve the common objective of food security at the individual, household, national, regional and global levels together with the eradication of poverty.

A US delegate said a principal task of the conference was to identify tools to move forward. The International Union on Food advocated incorporating core labor standards in SARD and MFCAL.

The paragraph further states that in order to meet the challenge of achieving these goals, major adjustments are still needed in agricultural, environmental and economic policies at national, regional and international levels if the conditions are to be created for SARD.

Institutional context of SARD: This section sets out the institutional history of the SARD concept, commencing with the adoption of Agenda 21 at UNCED in 1992. The section explains that UNCED set the framework for integrated land management, sustainable agriculture and rural development. SARD is the first of twelve programme areas set out in Chapter 14 of Agenda 21. Disappointment was expressed at the slow progress toward SARD at CSD-3 in 1995. In 1996 the Rome Declaration of World Food Security and the WFS Plan of Action established seven commitments on world food security. In 1997 the Special Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGASS) returned to these issues, with a request for the formulation of policies promoting sustainable agriculture, comprehensive rural policies, increased investment in agricultural research and the continuation of the reform process in conformity with Article 20 of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture as well as implementation of the WTO decision on negative effects of the reform programme on least developed and net food-importing developing countries. CSD-8, in April 2000, will further assess implementation of the goals and targets of Chapters 10 and 14 of Agenda 21 and the WFS Plan of Action. The section concludes by outlining the principal objectives of the Maastricht conference: to review progress on agriculture and related land-use issues as identified in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and Agenda 21, and to identify the main issues and tools to be addressed.

Some clarifications on the multifunctional character of agriculture and land: This section explains that, while there are no internationally agreed definitions of the multifunctional character of agriculture, there are several internationally agreed references to the term. The section sets out a number of reasons for consideration of MFCAL at the Maastricht conference.

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This was a particularly contentious section in the document, prompting a number of re-drafts by the Chair. During an initial round of comments on Thursday, 16 September, a participant from the UK opposed attempts by an Argentinean representative to remove a statement that one of the *raisons d'être* of agriculture is the provision of livelihoods for farmers. A delegate from Uruguay led attempts to introduce text acknowledging that MFCAL should not be used as a pretext to preserve current agriculture subsidies and underscoring the varied opinions expressed at the conference on the merits of the MFCAL concept.

A second round of negotiations followed after the Chair introduced a re-draft of the section at an informal Plenary session on Thursday evening, 16 September. Participants from Namibia and Canada advocated balancing a reference to agriculture's positive contribution to welfare with a reference to the potential negative effects and costs. Representatives from France, the UK, Finland and others preferred to retain the Chair's draft, which elaborated agriculture's geographic extensiveness and direct relation to nature and the environment. Views also differed over a statement in the draft that growing attention to non-food functions of agriculture had augmented MFCAL's policy relevance. A US delegate preferred to note that it was SARD's policy relevance that had been augmented. Delegates also debated text confirming the importance of targeted, transparent and cost-effective policies that do not distort production and trade, with participants from Argentina and Uruguay supporting this phrase while a US speaker sought to delete it. A proposal from the Uruguayan representative to add text stressing that MFCAL should not be used as a pretext to preserve developed country subsidies was supported by an Argentinean participant but opposed by speakers from the Republic of Korea, France and Germany. The speaker from Uruguay said developed country opposition confirmed that there was a hidden agenda behind the MFCAL concept.

The section states that all human activities, including agriculture, are multifunctional in that they contribute to a varied set of needs and values in addition to fulfilling their primary function derived from their *raison d'être*. The provision of food and raw materials is the basis for farmers to earn their living. The section sets out four reasons to consider MFCAL: agriculture and related land-use contribute through several functions to Chapters 10 and 14 of Agenda 21, which are to be considered at CSD-8; agriculture has the capacity to contribute to welfare; recent trends toward more intensive and specialized forms of agriculture have increased our ability to feed the world but, in some cases, at the expense of social and/or environmental goals; and the growing attention given to non-food functions of agriculture has augmented the relevance of policies to address MFCAL within the framework of SARD.

The wider context of the discussions on SARD: This section sets out the debate on progress toward SARD alongside other international debates and instruments since 1992. These include WTO agreements and the major environmental conventions on biodiversity, climate change and desertification.

A representative from Canada proposed that the section acknowledge that the major environmental conventions have strengthened approaches to the costs as well as the benefits of agriculture. Participants did not agree to incorporate an Argentinean delegate's proposal to add a sentence observing that "export subsidies are particularly perverse" for sustainable agriculture since developing countries cannot compete due to artificially depressed prices.

The section states that the debate on progress toward the goal of SARD cannot be isolated from other important international debates and instruments since 1992. Specific references are made to Article 20 of the WTO's Agreement on Agriculture, further negotiations at the WTO, the general acknowledgement that policies in one country must not undermine the social, rural, development and environmental objectives in others, the UN conventions on biodiversity, climate change and

desertification and their role in strengthening the attention given to environmental impacts, including the costs and benefits as well as the functions of agriculture.

II. SETTING OF THE CONFERENCE OF MAASTRICHT:

This section explains that the conference was an intersessional event in the CSD process, convened to explore and deepen the understanding and knowledge of sustainable agriculture, rural development and related land-use issues and to facilitate decision making in international fora such as the CSD and FAO. The section also describes a preparatory seminar, conference documentation, Internet activities and levels of participation.

The section details the conference papers prepared by the FAO, including a Stock-taking Paper, an Issues Paper and six background papers. Details of a preparatory seminar organized by the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the Netherlands and hosted by South Africa in July 5-7 1999 are outlined. The section notes a series of partnership-based Internet activities, including a two-phased electronic conference in preparation for the conference and a WebForum held parallel to the conference. The conference itself was attended by about 260 participants representing more than 100 countries and 30 organizations.

III. REVIEWING PROGRESS: Furthering the implementation of SARD:

Delegates debated a number of paragraphs in this section at length. Representatives from the US, Canada and Paraguay observed that the Chair's initial draft exaggerated the level of agreement on the MFCAL concept. Participants from Argentina and Chile proposed that the section reflect that conference participants expressed different "opinions" regarding MFCAL. The Argentinean delegate said he would prefer a reference to "disagreements." Delegates agreed to state that participants expressed different "perceptions" regarding the definition, scope, utility, added value and coverage of MFCAL. The final report notes that participants understood that agriculture has multiple objectives and functions within the framework of SARD, which can be fostered by appropriate policies that are targeted, cost-effective and transparent and do not distort production and trade.

Participants discussed the need for an analytical framework for measuring the economic, environmental and social costs and benefits of interlinkages in the context of MFCAL. A Norwegian speaker questioned a call for a common framework for analysis and emphasized the need for policy consistency. As advocated by participants from Malaysia, Chile and Paraguay, delegates agreed to call for a "coherent" analytical framework, taking into account varied circumstances in different countries and regions. The final report notes that this analysis may contribute to renewing awareness of interlinkages among different aspects of agriculture and could assist in prioritizing policies, processes, institutions, synergies and tradeoffs involving all stakeholders.

To a paragraph highlighting the multiple benefits derived from agriculture, delegates agreed to a Canadian delegate's proposal to refer to costs as well as benefits. The paragraph stresses the need for: continued international cooperation to assist developing countries, particularly least developed countries and small island developing States, providing an adequate enabling environment for the basic requirements of agriculture; intensified regional cooperation; and appropriate national policies in support of food security, land tenure security, land and water conservation and rural development. It notes that attention to the multiple functions of agriculture and land should intensify rather than detract from Agenda 21 implementation.

Delegates debated a paragraph on the agricultural trading system. Participants from the US and Canada, opposed by those from Mexico and Uruguay, suggested deleting a formulation calling for a more open and non-discriminatory trading system. Participants from Argentina and Colombia proposed strengthening the text to note that developed country use of production and export subsidies damages developing country efforts to achieve sustainable development. Participants agreed

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that a "fair and market-oriented" agricultural trading system, as well as the avoidance of unjustifiable trade barriers, will facilitate further integration of agricultural and environmental policies.

Some participants did not support an Argentinean participant's proposal to call for increased market access for developing countries' agricultural exports in order to provide foreign exchange for development and implementation of sustainable agriculture policies. Delegates reached a compromise by underlining the importance of efforts to ensure that policy measures do not unfairly limit market access or distort food and agricultural exports markets, especially for developing countries. Delegates further compromised on differences by referring to UNGASS language that calls for implementation of special and differential treatment for developing countries to enable them to benefit from the international trading system while conserving the environment, and stresses the need to continue eliminating discriminatory and protectionist policies, thus improving access for developing countries' exports.

The section on furthering implementation of SARD further states that participants: reaffirmed their commitment to achieving the SARD goals and targets and food security as identified in Agenda 21 and the WFS Plan of Action; agreed that poverty and food insecurity are still the main problems faced by many developing countries; and agreed that the preparatory work for this conference demonstrates the existence of many examples of successful implementation of SARD.

Instruments: This section of the final report notes participants' appreciation of the case studies presented during the conference and in its documents as important contributions to further progress toward SARD. It lists a series of conclusions reached by conference participants, which emphasize the importance of: active participation and leadership by rural communities; cooperation among local and national institutions of farmers associations and cooperatives, the private sector and government agencies to collectively address concerns about agriculture and land use; enabling national policy environments; the efficient and transparent flow of information between all levels to promote participation and ownership in innovation; wide availability of applied research results and locally relevant, adaptable scientific and technical information; improvements in economic tools for valuation of agriculture's range of functions and longer-term assessments and perspectives for investment; measures to address insecure access to land and land tenure issues; and capacity building and mobilization of stakeholders. The text further identifies the following instruments and enabling factors, in addition to access to and control over land and other forms of property: credit; inheritance; education; gender issues; technology for enhanced productivity; impact on urban migration; enhanced health and eradication of poverty.

IV. IDENTIFYING ISSUES FOR FUTURE ACTION: This section notes that the increasing number of case studies on SARD requires a more systematic analysis to extract lessons learned. In line with a suggestion by a US delegate, the report includes a paragraph stating that effective ways of monitoring, evaluating and assessing progress and barriers to progress towards SARD are needed, such as the development of indicators and cost-benefit analysis.

On implementation of Agenda 21 and the WFS Plan of Action, the section states that this aim could be advanced by creating an agricultural network that includes elements such as, *inter alia*, research, training, capacity building, extension services and financial resources. This approach would integrate, *inter alia*, policy and institutional circumstances at the local and national level, appropriate planning and management factors, research and development, information and education and stakeholders' consultative mechanisms. The final report further notes that participants highlighted an open, participatory process as the key to successful implementation and encouraged governments to strengthen existing stakeholders' platforms and help establish new ones. Stakeholder platforms could develop practical measures to help deliver the multiple functions of agriculture and land within the SARD

framework. All relevant parties should be involved, including farmers, women, the private sector, local environmental groups, indigenous peoples and agricultural workers. The report says implementation of Agenda 21 and the WFS Plan of Action should be strengthened and advocates the elaboration of instruments to achieve sustainable development at national, regional and international levels. It calls for particular attention to least developed countries and small island developing States.

National level: Regarding issues for future action at the national level, this section notes that participants stressed the need to prioritize research, training and extension services and capacity building, taking account of local and indigenous knowledge. It advocates tailoring agricultural research, extension funds and the application of modern technology to particular local and national circumstances and notes that participants highlighted the value of establishing local research and information centers in cooperation with other countries and their institutions.

The report includes a paragraph noting the importance of women in making progress toward SARD. The paragraph encourages countries to take urgent action to avert environmental and economic degradation in developing countries, which affects women and children in rural areas. It calls the full involvement of women in decision-making and in implementing SARD-related activities, and for removal of barriers to achieving this goal.

This section also states that participants highlighted the need for an integrated approach to the market so as to further rural development, with interlinkages between all stages in the production cycle. It notes that participants underlined the importance of family-based small farm activities for rural development.

The document stresses the importance of ensuring access, especially for women, to productive resources, including: land tenure and access to credit; diverse seed supplies; wider agricultural biodiversity; human resources; and organic agriculture and ecological food production methods. It also notes advances made in implementing Integrated Pest Management Techniques, and suggests practical measures for further progress, including, *inter alia*, farmers' field schools and enabling policy environments that promote multi-stakeholder cooperation.

In light of a Canadian delegate's suggestion, a paragraph on the need to ensure that prices for commodities reflect all production costs was amended to indicate the need to "work towards market prices that better reflect all production costs," including social and environmental costs.

Regional level: Regarding issues for the future at the regional level, the final report states that participants highlighted the need for stronger regional and international cooperation and suggested partnerships between developed and developing countries that would involve sharing knowledge on institution building, policy making and capacity building.

International level: The report states that participants called for a reversal in the downward trend in ODA, particularly in light of commitments made at UNCED. It notes the Special Session of the UN General Assembly's conclusions that the international community and governments must continue to increase funding for sustainable agriculture, particularly research, extension services and technology transfer. It calls for adequate financial support to implement sustainable agriculture at the local level. Innovative financial mechanisms could include: capacity building for stakeholders; diversification of rural income composition; public-private or civil society partnerships; and financial instruments that conform with international agreements.

A draft paragraph requesting the FAO to continue developing the analytical framework for the analysis of agriculture's multiple functions was omitted from the final document after considerable debate over language. Delegates proposed a number of amendments, including a suggestion from a delegate of Argentina that the FAO assess the impact

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of subsidies on developing countries' capacity to promote SARD. Delegates did not agree to include in the final report a proposal by a French delegate, supported by participants from Mexico and Spain but opposed by one from New Zealand, to recommend that a working group be established under the FAO's aegis to develop an understanding of agriculture's multifunctional character and a framework to help achieve sustainable development.

V. REPORTING: The section on reporting on the conference notes that participants discussed the character of the report and the way of reporting to CSD-8 and the FAO, with details included in an annex. It notes that participants recognized the need for further work on several elements of the report, and urged governments and relevant international organizations to discuss how they can contribute. It concludes by noting that participants considered that the report reflected the discussions at the conference.

The annex states that the final outcome of this conference is the report of the Chair, that conference participants should "recognize themselves" in this report, and that this is the only document directly resulting from the conference's consultative process. It states that the FAO will provide an information note to the FAO Council and Conference in November 1999 to brief them on this conference, with the Chair's report attached as an annex. The FAO will also produce its own technical report by early 2000 for distribution to interested parties. The Dutch Government plans to present the Chair's report in a number of fora, including CSD-8 in April 2000.

CLOSING PLENARY

CSD-8 Chair Juan Mayr, Minister for the Environment of Colombia, recalled his work with indigenous and campesina groups in Colombia and described the issues of the MFCAL as fundamentally important. He said food for the future is a major concern, which poses the challenge of finding adequate and equitable responses at the international, national and local levels. He noted that CSD-8, which will be held in New York, 24 April-5 May 2000, is to address the issues of the management of land resources, financial resources, trade and investment together with economic growth. The MFCAL conference would make a real contribution to the CSD's consideration of agriculture and land use. On the CSD process, Mayr described attempts to bring the major sectors and stakeholders together. Working groups are gleaning inputs on finance and trade and on land and agriculture. They will meet in the last week of February and first week of March next year. Dialogue among stakeholders at the CSD-8 will focus on agriculture, with the FAO playing a fundamental role. At the High-Level Segment, ministers from departments of agriculture, finance and the environment will participate in a dialogue to examine issues on an inter-departmental basis. He said the theme of indigenous people would be mainstreamed into all the discussions. Mayr noted that a number of experts would be assisting him in the preparation for the session and invited conference participants to establish a support group in collaboration with the FAO. He highlighted the importance of the CSD. However, while resolutions are passed, very few ideas are turned into actual practice. He said if participants do not act on the basis of their own realities, problems will be exacerbated. The CSD must be a forum for dialogue and discussion, with the inclusion of outcomes from parallel meetings, including those of the WTO and the preparation of a Protocol to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on Biosafety. Mayr said he would like to see CSD-8 as a significant and candid forum, ushering in the new millennium. He invited the conference participants to keep channels open with the CSD Chair.

Modibo Traore, Minister of Rural Development and Water of Mali, congratulated the conference on reaching a consensus on MFCAL. Noting that MFCAL varies from one country to another, he underscored that the major function of agriculture is to provide for food security and thus discussions of other functions, while also important, are only useful if they contribute to world food security. He highlighted problems for developing countries competing in world agricultural markets

due to the use of certain economic instruments by developed countries, and stressed the need to mobilize new resources for developing countries to ensure food security. He supported continued dialogue to ensure that the new concept of MFCAL is used properly to help developing countries in this regard and to protect the environment.

Cui Shian, Assistant Minister of Agriculture of China, said he believes the concept of MFCAL is another active step that will help bring about practices leading to sustainable rural and agricultural development. Noting that China attaches great importance to sustainable agriculture, he outlined China's rural reforms, initiated in 1978, which have improved the country's ability to balance food demands with production.

He noted, however, that its economy is growing rapidly, though it is facing serious challenges to further development, brought on by, *inter alia*, an increasing population, water scarcity, reduced biodiversity, degraded grasslands and desertification. He said the government has established a sustainable development agenda to address these challenges, as well as an agricultural action plan and significant legislative reforms. He discussed China's efforts to protect the environment while increasing farm capacity.

Christopher Agbobu, Minister of State, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Nigeria, discussed Africa's unique challenges regarding agricultural and rural development, emphasizing the large concentrations of poor and hungry in Africa's rural areas. He highlighted key issues for the continent, including the problem of desertification and the need for sustainable rural development, food security and poverty alleviation. He said small-scale farming is a major feature of agricultural systems in the developing world, and urged a renewed focus on agricultural development and sustainable rural development.

Belay Ejigu, Vice Minister of Agriculture of Ethiopia, described his country's efforts to improve the livelihood of its rural people, including a food security programme to increase the availability, accessibility and stability of food supply for all. He stressed the need for multisectoral and multilateral approaches to address the problem of food insecurity. He noted that agriculture may play other significant functions beyond food security, but in most developing countries these will only receive attention if the food security function is addressed first.

Henryk Wujec, Secretary of State at Poland's Ministry of Agriculture and Food Economy, described the Polish Government's implementation of policies to recognize the multifunctional character of agriculture and reform the agricultural sector. These policies seek to: facilitate the development of off-farm employment by supporting rural infrastructure improvement; enable the development of strong, modern and dynamic farms by encouraging the establishment of efficient and effective market structures and supporting farm investment and restructuring; implement a better social security system for rural dwellers by funding pensions for retired farmers who decide to sell their land; and preserve the environment in rural areas. He expressed Poland's satisfaction with the conference's outcomes and his conviction that the proposals adopted by the conference would guide CSD-8 deliberations.

Henri Carsalade, Assistant Director-General at the FAO Sustainable Development Department, thanked participants for their efforts and said the conference demonstrated the will of all to work toward SARD. He said the Chair's report is powerful and constructive and will enable the FAO to build on the analysis, respecting differences of opinion. He paid tribute to the work of Chair Alders. He urged participants to underscore the importance of technical meetings and their place in the negotiating process involving the CSD and the FAO's internal work. He also thanked the Dutch Government.

The final draft of the Chair's report was circulated to participants. Chair Alders read through the text, which incorporated changes proposed during the morning discussion. Delegates approved the Chair's report by acclamation.

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Chair Alders thanked participants and conference organizers for their contributions. He acknowledged that conference participants had pursued different agendas and paid tribute to their spirit of cooperation. He officially brought the "Cultivating Our Futures" conference to a close at 3:15 pm.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

FOOD AND FORESTRY: GLOBAL CHANGE AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES: This conference will take place from 20-23 September 1999 in Reading, UK. For more information contact: John Ingram, GCTE Focus 3 Office, NERC Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Crowmarsh, Gifford, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 8BB, UK; fax: +44-1491-692-313; e-mail: j.ingram@ioh.ac.uk; Internet: <http://www.elsevier.nl/locate/gcte99/>.

FAO SYMPOSIUM ON AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND FOOD SECURITY: As part of FAO's mandate to provide assistance to member countries for the follow-up to the Uruguay Round and future negotiations on agriculture, FAO will be holding, on 23-34 September 1999 in Geneva, Switzerland, an FAO symposium to examine issues relating to the forthcoming WTO negotiations on agriculture from the perspective of developing countries. For more information contact: FAO; tel: +39-6-5705-2753; fax: +39-6-5705-6347; Internet: <http://www.fao.org>.

ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE FAO PANEL OF EXPERTS ON FOREST GENE RESOURCES: This session will be held from 28 September-1 October 1999 in Rome, Italy. For more information contact: FAO; tel: +39-6-5705-2753; fax: +39-6-5705-6347; Internet: <http://www.fao.org>.

CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE LAND USE MANAGEMENT: The European Ecological Federation and the Ecology Center of the University of Kiel, Germany, are organizing the on conference "Sustainable Land Use Management - The Challenge of Ecosystem Protection" from 28 September-1 October 1999 in Salzwedel, Federal Cultural Center, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany. For more information contact: Uta Schauerte, Ecology Center, Schauenburgerstraße 112, D-24118 Kiel; tel: +49-431-880-4022; fax: +49-431-880-4083; e-mail: Utas@pz-oekosys.uni-kiel.de; Internet: <http://www.ecology.uni-kiel.de/slm99>.

IUFRO BIODIVERSITY CONFERENCE: IMPACT OF LOGGING ON BIODIVERSITY: This meeting will be held from 18-22 October 1999 in Hanoi, Vietnam. For more information contact: Rita Mustikasari, IUFRO Liaison Officer, Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), P.O. Box 6596 JKPWB, Jakarta, Indonesia; tel: +62-251-622-622 ext.209; fax: +62-251-622-100; e-mail: r.mustikasari@cgnet.com; Internet: <http://www.cgiar.org/cifor>.

THIRD CONFERENCE OF PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION (CCD): COP-3 of the CCD will take place from 15-26 November 1999 in Recife, Brazil. For more information contact: CCD Secretariat, POB 260129, Haus Carstanjen, D-53153, Bonn, Germany; tel: +49 228 815 2800; fax: +49 228 815 2899; e-mail: secretariat@unccd.de; Internet: <http://www.unccd.de/>.

FIFTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE UN FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE: COP-5 will be held in Bonn from 25 October-5 November 1999. For more information contact: the FCCC Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-1000; fax: +49-228-815-1999; e-mail: secretariat@unfccc.de; Internet: <http://www.unfccc.de/>.

117TH SESSION OF THE FAO COUNCIL: The FAO Council's 117th Session will take place from 9-11 November 1999 in Rome, Italy. For more information contact: Internet: <http://www.FAO.org/unfao/bodies/council/cl117/cl117-e.htm>.

FAO CONFERENCE (30TH SESSION): The FAO Conference (30th Session) will take place 12-23 November 1999 in Rome, Italy. For more information contact: Internet: <http://www.FAO.org/unfao/bodies/conf/c99/c99-e.htm>.

THIRD MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION (WTO): The WTO will hold its third Ministerial Conference from 28 November-3 December 1999 in Seattle, Washington, USA. For more information contact: Claude Trollet, WTO; tel: +41-22-739-5589; Internet: <http://www.wto.org/>.

FOURTH AND FINAL SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORUM ON FORESTS (IFF): IFF-4 is scheduled to be held from 31 January-11 February 2000 in New York. For more information contact: IFF Secretariat, Two United Nations Plaza, 12th Floor, New York, NY 10017, USA; tel: +1-212-963-6208; fax: +1-212-963-3463; Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/iff.htm>.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MANAGING NATURAL RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN THE 21ST CENTURY: This conference will take place from 14-18 February 2000 in New Delhi, India. Themes to be discussed include: agro-biodiversity and agro-forestry; biodiversity, people and sustainable agriculture; and natural resources management and comprehensive food security. For more information contact: A.K. Singh, Secretary-General, Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, 110 012 India; tel: +91-11-573-1494; fax: +91-11-575-5529; e-mail: icmnr@bic-iari.ren.nic.in.

INTERNATIONAL LANDCARE CONFERENCE: The International Landcare Conference will be held from 2-5 March 2000 in Melbourne, Australia. For more information contact: Joanne Safstrom; tel: +61-3-9412-4382; fax: +61-3-9412-4442; e-mail: j.safstrom@dce.vic.gov.au.

EIGHTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CSD): CSD-8 will meet from 24 April-5 May 2000 to consider integrated planning and management of land resources, agriculture, and financial resources/trade and investment/economic growth. The CSD *Ad Hoc* Intersessional Working Groups will meet in New York from 22 February-3 March 2000. For more information contact: Andrey Vasilyev, Division for Sustainable Development; tel: +1-212-963-5949; fax: +1-212-963-4260; e-mail: vasilyev@un.org. For major group information contact: Zehra Aydin-Sipos, Division for Sustainable Development; tel: +1-212-963-8811; fax: +1-212-963-1267; e-mail: aydin@un.org; Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/>.

FIFTH CONFERENCE OF PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (CBD): CBD COP-5 will be held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 15-26 May 2000. For information contact: CBD Secretariat; World Trade Center, 393 Jacques St., Suite 300, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H2Y 1N9; tel: +1-514-288-2220; fax: +1-514-288-6588; e-mail: chm@biodiv.org; Internet: <http://www.biodiv.org>.