Statement of FAO

Consultation on Technical Examination Process in 2015

10 Feb., 2015 Geneva, Switzerland

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations very much values the opportunity to be involved in the Technical Expert Meeting process focusing on land use and agriculture actions.

As highlighted in our presentations during previous sessions , the agricultural sectors, which include in the FAO context includes crops, livestock, forestry and fisheries, can make a significant contribution to mitigation, but the sectors are also critical to ensure food security, nutrition, and to the livelihoods of many people, in particular the poor.

We note the decision by Parties in Lima to frame the TEM process as considering opportunities with high mitigation potential, including those with adaptation, health and sustainable development co-benefits. Our experience is that certain land use, and particularly agriculture, actions can lead to adaptation, mitigation and productivity

improvements and contribute to sustainable development. This is also the behind the concept of Climate-Smart Agriculture as developed by FAO, where the linkages between food security, sustainable productivity increase and climate change adaptation and mitigation are explored for the agriculture sectors.

We also note the Co-Chairs decision to frame this TEM agenda item as land use and agriculture, which in our view reflects well the practical realities on the ground of land use management and signals the value of considering an integrated approach to land use management (or as we would frame it in FAO an integrated approach to the agriculture sectors). Mitigation in land use and agriculture requires a multiple objective approach which maximizes positive linkages with sustainable development and social inclusion, as well as with adaptation, and recognizes the special role of agriculture in food security. An integrated land use management approach mirrors the decisions that farmers are facing on the ground. It recognizes the interaction between planting crops, raising cattle, growing trees and water use while considering tradeoffs between these decisions and

their effect on adaptive capacity, mitigation, productivity and sustainable development.

I would like to start by briefly highlighting two recent international developments. First, the New York Declaration on Forests was launched at the UN Secretary General's Climate Change Summit in September 2014. Importantly, the Declaration includes a pledge to halve deforestation of natural forests by 2020 and to end it by 2030, a range of practical agreements were made. Efforts are already undergoing to implement them.

Second, is the official launch of the Global Alliance on Climate Smart Agriculture also at the Climate Summit. The Alliance has been established to help a range of stakeholders, including farmers, governments and research institutions, adjust agricultural production systems and their enabling support and policy environment, so that they better take account of climate change, the efficient use of natural resources and become more sustainable.

I would now like to turn to some specific example of work undertaken by FAO. Again I'll start with forestry. As I'm sure most of you are

aware, FAO is collaborating with the UNDP and UNEP and 58 member countries on the UN-REDD Programme. UN-REDD is now supporting 21 national programmes for comprehensive readiness, and is supporting up to 37 countries on particular thematic areas of readiness, such as forest monitoring systems, reference levels, legal preparedness, stakeholder consultations, national strategies, and safeguard programmes across Asia, Latin America and Africa. The Programme is currently developing its 2016-2020 strategy to continue to support REDD+.

On agriculture, I would like to highlight two key thematic areas where FAO is working to support the implementation of policy options and practices to enhance both adaptation and mitigation.

The first is the area of climate smart agriculture, which, as said before, is an approach based on three pillars: sustainable increase of productivity and incomes, increased adaptation and resilience and increased mitigation when possible; all within the ultimate goal of increased food security. FAO’s experience is that climate smart agriculture offers a potentially valuable approach to identify actions,

measures, and practices that have potentially multiple benefits across these goals. Our experience is also that a strong evidence base is necessary to properly analyze benefits, co-benefits, and tradeoffs across these goals; as well as identifying barriers towards adaption of improved practices FAO is currently working with Malawi, Viet Nam and Zambia to develop and ultimately implement climate smart agriculture practices.

The second area is land use and agriculture NAMAs. In response to strong interest at a country level, FAO is working with Kenya and Tanzania to analyze the mitigation potential of smallholder agriculture practices and systems. This work emphasizes and reinforces that in addition to achieving GHG reductions and/or removals, NAMAs need to generate other benefits including productivity and efficiency increases, as well as resilience to climate change. FAO is developing a range of tools to assist countries analyze and assess possible options for land use and agriculture NAMAs.

FAO is currently examining opportunities to scale up work in both climate smart agriculture and land use/agriculture NAMAs.

Finally, good data is critical to enable countries to make informed decisions on land use and agriculture actions. FAO produces a range of materials that provide real quantitative analysis that can inform countries' decision-making. These include the FAOSTAT database and publications on areas like GHG emissions and mitigation potential in livestock supply chains.

I would like to close with one last remark. FAO's experiences show that it's a real value in considering an integrated approach to land use management, one that recognizes the interactions between various decisions that farmers and landholders make, and the tradeoffs and synergies between these decisions and their effects on adaptive capacity, mitigation, productivity and sustainable development. This could provide a valuable lens for this TEM process on land use and agriculture action.

Thank you!