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ENB on the Side - A Special Report on Selected Side Events at the Fifteenth Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Fifth Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP 15 and COP/MOP 5)

7-18 December 2009 | Copenhagen, Denmark



Beyond Copenhagen: Agriculture and Forestry are Part of the Solution

Presented by the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP)

Ajay Vashee, IFAP, read an opening statement that emphasized, among other things: the need to address agriculture, forest and rural development in an integrated manner; the need for policy processes to respond to local communities' situations; and the critical rights and roles of indigenous peoples in mitigation and adaptation.

Frances Seymour, Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), underscored that agriculture is a key driver of deforestation, and that agriculture and deforestation must be addressed in concert. Urging participants to look beyond a zero-sum game between forests and agriculture, Seymour stated that much land is being used in a suboptimal manner and that there are opportunities to maximize both food security and carbon sequestration.

Alexander Müller, FAO, stressed that climate change and agriculture are intrinsically linked, with the agricultural sector offering significant potential to sequester carbon. He called for the establishment of a work programme under the UNFCCC to undertake gaps-analyses, direct research and focus on institutional capacity building.

M. S. Swaminathan, M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, argued that COP 15 underscores the need for sustainable food security. To achieve this goal, he said, more participatory research is required on climate-resilient genes and on the carbon sequestration potential of

the agricultural sector.

Mark Cackler, World Bank, invited participants to comment on the opening statement with a view to improving its content. Participants discussed: the moral responsibility of developed countries to assist developing countries in meeting the challenges associated with climate change; the meat intensive “European” diet; the benefits of REDD++ over REDD+; and technology transfer.



Frances Seymour, CIFOR, provided examples of “perverse” land-use choices, such as deforestation of areas of high carbon sequestration for low productivity livestock farming.



Ajay Vashee, IFAP, stated that climate adaption and mitigation must also deliver other benefits, such as the conservation of biodiversity and livelihood generation.



M. S. Swaminathan, M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, stated that women are the holders of much traditional knowledge about climate resilience and suggested the establishment of gender-balanced local climate risk groups.