

Agriculture Statement

Thank you Madame Chair.

The need for sustainable agriculture is characterized by a sense of urgency. **As we meet today**, there are nearly 1 billion people in the world that are not benefitting from the existing agricultural system.

This morning Sarah Shiller from Ecoagricultures mentioned the **production-biodiversity-livelihood** mosaic during her presentation. We fully support looking at all of these aspects of agricultural production and we would like to emphasize two points in particular: first, the need for local knowledge and food systems and second, the need for innovation through education.

[Local Knowledge & Food Systems]

- Solutions that incorporate local or traditional knowledge can help foster innovation and reduce dependence on external inputs such as petroleum based fertilizers. Small crop and livestock farmers actively push against an import-based agricultural economy, and we fully support this position. In order to protect the survival of small farms, it is important to halt the ongoing subsidization of crops in developed countries that perversely effect agriculture in developing countries.
- The livelihoods and cultures of many people are on small, local farms or mobile family-based pastoral systems. An emphasis on local farming knowledge and practices allow young people, small scale farmers, and women to pursue farming as an intellectually and physically rewarding career.

[Innovation through education]

- In addition to local knowledge and food systems, we also need innovation through education. Innovation on a system-wide level is needed to achieve sustainable agriculture. Activities that promote education on conservation, native food crops, and the exchange of knowledge should be encouraged in the design and implementation of sustainable development strategies.
- As part of this innovation through education, the role of youth and children must be considered, and we thank the distinguished delegate from Mexico for recognizing this today. We ask delegates to remember the crucial role and potential that young people have. We hold vital and fresh perspectives that we encourage delegates to consider as they move forward at the IPM and CSD.

Brave and bold thinking is what we need during this time of crisis. As such, all of us here today need to consider brave and bold measures for a more equitable and environmentally sustainable agriculture.

Thank you.

(priorities from this statement: local knowledge, rewarding careers, innovation through education!!)