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Asia-Pacific countries call for strengthening of agricultural technology transfer to support Smallholder Farmers

Bogor, 13 February 2013 – Agricultural researchers, non-governmental organizations, universities, representatives from governments and multilateral agencies attending a UN conference in Bogor, Indonesia, on 13 February called for joint efforts to support smallholder farmers by enabling the transfer of agricultural technologies which are sustainable, productivity-enhancing and suitable to farmers' needs.

The day-long meeting was held by the Centre for the Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (CAPSA) - a subsidiary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) - the European Union (EU) and the Government of Indonesia.

“The pressure on food systems to produce safe and affordable food for all is growing tremendously and requires an urgent paradigm shift in our thinking and actions,” said Shun-ichi Murata, Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCAP. “By working in partnership we can ensure that the right tools and policies are scaled up and will be applied to benefit smallholders and others in the value chain.”

According to Dr. Ir. Haryono, Director General, Indonesian Agency for Agricultural Research and Development (IAARD), “there is a great need to develop a new vision for future farming activities in order to strategically position investment, technology delivery and design policy reforms.”

The meeting highlighted two bottom lines of agricultural research – how to innovate without duplicating already established technologies and how to ensure that this knowledge benefits smallholder farmers. Policymakers and researchers were urged to work together to provide farmers with the right means to ensure that there is more food to feed the hungry, more incomes to ensure education of their children, and more protection of the environment.

According to CAPSA, new technologies are of no use unless they benefit those who need them the most. To be able to adopt these technologies in their diverse contexts, farmers need the capacity and support of agricultural extensionists and researchers.

Talks focused on options for policymakers to facilitate and enhance the transfer of sustainable agricultural technologies to smallholder farmers and support investments that improve food security, reduce poverty and preserve the environment.

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- *ESCAP translates these findings into policy dialogues and recommendations, and;*
- *ESCAP provides good development practices, knowledge sharing and technical assistance to member States in the implementation of these recommendations.*