

International Federation of Agricultural Producers

IFAP's PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

CSD 13, APRIL 11-22, 2005

ACCESS TO AND MANAGEMENT OF FRESHWATER RESOURCES IN AGRICULTURE

AN ALARMING SITUATION

- ✓ Agriculture is being called upon to double production capacity over the next 25 years, from essentially the same resource base, to feed an additional 1.5 billion people by 2025.
- ✓ Agriculture already uses 70 per cent of freshwater resources, so farmers will have to use the best practises available to produce "more crop per drop".
- ✓ Appropriate water and food strategies must be country, regional and local specific. More particularly, they have to take into account **the specific needs of the different user communities and find appropriate means to balance them off without putting any of them on the fringe of decision-making processes.**

MAIN CAUSES OF WATER SHORTAGE

- ✓ Inefficient use of the water resource is often a consequence of:
 - Weak infrastructure
 - Lack of a good functioning water authority with the right competencies,
 - Poor maintenance of irrigation systems,
 - Lack of incentives for efficient use of fresh water,
 - Lacking drainage infrastructure or poor maintained drainage systems,
 - Unsuitable crops which cause inefficiencies.

- ✓ National and International water management schemes are often lacking
 - Countries are not willing to reach agreements in the cross Border Rivers and aquifers.
- ✓ Farmers and their organisations often lack participation and access to decision making pertaining to water issues
 - they are not trusted enough or
 - they do not have enough capacity to get involved actively.

WATER FOR AGRICULTURE AS A PRIORITY ON NATIONAL AND GLOBAL AGENDAS

- ✓ **Water is necessary for food production, for health, and for the livelihoods of Millions of farm families.** It is a public concern. Water is not a tradable good. Increased priority is needed for water for agriculture both at the national, regional and international levels.
- ✓ **Water security should be recognised as a key to poverty alleviation.** Particular attention should be given to farmers and the rural population because they are the first victims of water problems in terms of quantity and quality.
- ✓ **IFAP calls on national governments to give priority to investment in water for agriculture** and rural development as well as for the protection of the water resource in their national budgets. They must set clear priorities concerning water use.
- ✓ **While the quality of water is a prerequisite for sustainable development, its protection has to be shared by all stakeholders.** Establishing voluntary agreements between local/regional authorities or water stations and the farmers, are important in this regard.
- ✓ **IFAP calls for** appropriate mechanisms for technology transfer and locally-friendly, low-cost technology and make them available for farmers. **National and international political commitment** is essential to translate this into action and to ensure sustainability and equity of distribution of water resources.
- ✓ **IFAP urges relevant international organisations** to include not only gender balance and indigenous peoples' rights, but also **a requirement to engage with local farmers' organisations as partners in all stages of development projects.**

- ✓ **IFAP favours water management strategies that put emphasis on stewardship programs for farmers** who adapt their water management practices to meet environmental requirements.
- ✓ IFAP urges the **creation of a UN Convention on Water and Poverty** including funding mechanisms.
- ✓ IFAP recognises the need to create **an international mechanism to discuss, regulate and arbitrate** over the usages, abstraction of water, especially in regional shared basins.
- ✓ IFAP calls for **an integrated approach on** the way to deal with water issues. **National and regional water resource policies should be linked with other international agreements and processes** related to environment, development, finance and trade.

GOVERNANCE AND REGULATION

- ✓ National governments are **the guardians of the water resources. The principles of conservation, management and the use of water must be regulated by law.** This includes access to water for everyone.
- ✓ **Farmers including women farmers need secure water supply rights and transparent legal frameworks taking into account local socio- economic, cultural and hydrological contexts.**
- ✓ **National governments have different responsibilities:**
 - Set up a general framework with clear water policies and schemes through the establishment of a water code and a National Water Institution.
 - Take stock of the actual availability and use of the water resource and identify best water use practices.
 - Develop risk management tools for farmers
 - Set up clear priorities for the different uses of water resource

While the private sector has a role in water delivery, it will not be cost-effective to do it in remote rural areas. This should be a government responsibility.

TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT APPROACH

- ✓ International basins cover 45% of the land surface of the Earth, 40% of the world's population and 80% of the global river flow.
Promotion of international river basin cooperation through decentralised targeted action for each river basin with full recognition of all uses and users and consultation of all stakeholders is needed. This would avoid tensions between competing users and help increase efficiency of the water use.
- ✓ **The management of water should go beyond technical and economic aspects** by including social aspects. Education and raising awareness help change basic attitudes to water.
- ✓ **Women farmers and young farmers need to be involved at all levels of decision making because they are responsible for the major part of food production in many developing countries.**
- ✓ **Farmers' organisations need support** –in particular public support- **to build their capacities and gain the skills** so that they are able to play their full role in water management and prioritisation through user groups or other consultation frameworks. Farmers should be members of water associations.
- ✓ **Linking water management policies with agricultural policies is essential.** The creation of special national budget lines for the participation of farmers' organisations is needed.

DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS AS A FOLLOW UP TO THE WSSD AND MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- ✓ **Developing public/private partnerships for water access doesn't mean total privatisation of the water resource.** They should finance the working and maintenance of distribution networks.
- ✓ Strengthening of water research and extension **services through partnerships between researchers and farmers using appropriate technologies.** Scientists must benefit from farmers' traditional and indigenous knowledge, by involving them in the formulation of research projects to match their real needs.
- ✓ There is a need for cooperation between donor agencies and the industry for transfer and adaptation of best technologies.

USING ALL SOURCES OF FUNDING

- ✓ FAP calls for the mobilisation of all sources of funding and an increase of development assistance as a complement to domestic sources of funding.
- ✓ IFAP calls for the achievement of the 0.7% target of GDP for ODA.
- ✓ IFAP calls for an increased coordination of donors and international financial institutions to avoid resource duplication.
- ✓ IFAP favours the creation of national international solidarity funds to support sustainable water management initiatives where farmers' organisations are systematically associated.