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## **COMPENDIUM OF ACTIONS**

**Prepared by the  
Government of the Netherlands  
to support the proceedings of the  
Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting of CSD-17**

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**Background Paper No. 1**

## COMPENDIUM OF ACTIONS

Prepared by the Government of Netherlands to support the  
Proceedings of  
Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting of CSD-17

Division for Sustainable Development  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
United Nations, New York  
23 February 2009



## **I. BACKGROUND**

1. During its 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> sessions, the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) is considering the themes: agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa. With crucial future global challenges, such as food security, energy security and water security, this upcoming 17th session of the CSD (CSD-17) provides a timely platform for Governments, UN, and major groups, including the private sector and NGOs, to reinvigorate their resolve to tackle the global food price crisis, meet the hunger and malnutrition challenge and contribute to the achievement of the MDG's and the Johannesburg targets and commitments.
2. The 17<sup>th</sup> session of CSD and its preparatory process will take place within the context of a continuing food price crisis; a financial and economic crisis; a stalled negotiating process in the WTO/Doha-round and important multilateral negotiations on climate change, which will culminate in the Copenhagen Conference at the end of 2009.
3. The Netherlands Secretary for Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality of the Netherlands, Ms. Gerda Verburg, will chair the CSD17 meeting. In support of the Netherlands Presidency of CSD-17, the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, in close collaboration with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Sustainable Development (DSD), organized a one day brainstorming session with selected experts with a view to explore strategic issues regarding the main CSD-17 themes. The brainstorm session was structured around a selected set of overarching themes aiming at identifying possible tangible outcomes and deliverables for CSD-17. The program of work, list of participants, the Chair's Vision Document and relevant background documentation is annexed to this briefing note.
4. This note provides an overview of the overarching key messages expressed during the informal brainstorm session by participants in their personal capacity.

## **II. KEY OUTCOMES OF THE MEETING**

5. The meeting focused on four main themes: (i) the food price crisis, (ii) competing claims for food and fuel, (iii) water for food, agriculture and eco-systems, and (iv) land and desertification. Within this framework, possible inter-linkages and cross-cutting issues were identified.

***Message 1     Transforming agriculture to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century***

6. Improving productivity, facilitating chain development (e.g., from growing to processing to sale), stimulating local and regional markets and improving access to international markets in a sustainable way were considered as key elements in order to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in the area of sustainable development and in particular sustainable agriculture. Participants indicated that in developing countries the main challenge would be to develop sophisticated sustainable agricultural systems. Important factors to promote such an agricultural transformation within an enabling environment are: research and development, green technology, improved use of plant properties that enable them to grow under difficult conditions and more careful use of phosphates to counter the impending phosphate shortage. Furthermore, the development of new market instruments, such as payment for ecosystem services, efficient water-use and the contribution to renewable energy resources were considered as essential elements for an agricultural strategy for the future.

***Message 2     A Future Agenda for integrating competing claims for food and fuel***

7. The aim for food security and energy security illustrates the enormous dilemma faced by the world in which there are competing claims on land use for food, feed and fuel. The food-fuel discussion has three aspects: i) social aspects; ii) environmental aspects and iii) price or economic aspects. The challenge will be to integrate the different competing claims which are at stake. Participants highlighted the need for the development of an integral set of sustainability criteria as a critical element for a coherent strategy addressing competing claims. In that regard, the development of a “Food-Fuel declaration” was considered as a possible outcome of CSD-17. Such a document could identify overarching principles aiming to guide a balance between food and fuel. The declaration, once adopted, could serve as important input into a medium-term process leading up to the development of an integral set of sustainability criteria.

***Message 3     A Future Agenda for integrating competing claims for land and water***

8. Water is a crucial resource in developing the productivity and resilience of the agricultural sector. Future sustainability of agriculture largely depends upon how water management in this sector is dealt with whilst at the same time taking care of the conservation of the ecosystems which are the sources of water. Integrating policies for water for agriculture, food and ecosystems was identified as the way forward in this area. Along the lines as discussed above, CSD-17 could produce a declaration on “water and land” focusing on the principles of how to balance water for food and ecosystems. Such a declaration would also be instrumental in broadening the traditional CSD-emphasis on framing water as a sanitation issue.

***Message 4    Linking Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Change***

9.        There is increasing consensus that addressing climate change is central to the sustainable development, economic growth and poverty reduction agenda. Increasing the resilience to climate change needs to combine both mitigation and adaptation measures. A delay in reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions would significantly constrain opportunities to achieve lower stabilization levels and is likely to increase the risk of more severe climate change impacts. Climate change impacts have the potential to reverse the development gains that have been hard-earned by developing countries over the past decades and progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. In this regard, agriculture should play a vital role in providing a cost-effective solution to climate change mitigation and adaptation. Participants indicated a possible role for CSD-17 identifying the contribution of agriculture in addressing climate change without prejudging the outcome of UNFCCC.

***Message 5    Sustainable Development: broadening sustainable agriculture beyond the environment***

10.      Participants expressed the importance of integrating the three pillars of sustainable development when advancing the sustainable agriculture agenda. In that regard, representation of a broad range of sectors, including agriculture, was considered as critical for achieving tangible outcomes of CSD-17. It was noted that the high level segment could be used to develop innovative ideas and a way forward on critical issues.

## ANNEX

### **Sustainable agriculture and rural development Meeting the challenges for food, energy and water security**

- Brainstorm in preparation for the CSD17 Chairpersonship -

Washington, US, 22 January 2009

Co-organised by

Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, Government of the Netherlands  
and

UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
Division for Sustainable Development

During its 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> sessions, the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) is considering the themes: agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa. With crucial future global challenges as food security, energy security and water security this upcoming 17th session of the Commission for Sustainable Development will provide a timely platform for Governments, UN, and major groups, including private sector, to reinvigorate their resolve to tackle the global food price crisis, meet the hunger and malnutrition challenge and contribute to the achievement of the MDG's and the Johannesburg targets and commitments.

Minister Gerda Verburg was elected chairperson of 17th session of the Commission for Sustainable Development last May. The Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality in collaboration with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Sustainable Development, is organizing a one day brainstorm on inter linkages and cross-cutting issues as the global food crisis, water, land and competing claims in regard to bio-fuels and food production in the light of the CSD-17 topics. Especially formulating deliverables for CSD 17 will be a challenge.

A number of report were released last year recognising the importance of agriculture as a fundamental sector for sustainable development and poverty reduction and supporting renewed commitment and investments to agriculture and rural development. Now it is time to define how that could be done. In that regard, this brainstorm session will consider how governments and other stakeholders in specific can meet those challenges and what forceful policy and practical measures, in co-operation with the international community and development partners, are needed to revitalize agriculture and the broader rural economies in ways that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. The brainstorm will especially focus on tangible outcomes and deliverables for CSD17.

The meeting will aim to engage a few key resource persons to share views on how to meet the challenges in the area's mentioned above and how to take forceful policy and practical measures on the issues for CSD 17. Focus would be on what kind of deliverables we could think of.

The objective of the meeting is not to cover everything of the CSD17 topics, but to focus on a handful of issues that the CSD discussion will most likely address.

The meeting will focus on **four main themes**:

Theme 1: Food crisis

Theme 2: Competing claims for food and fuel

Theme 3: Water for food, agriculture and eco-systems

Theme 4: Land and desertification

Under all theme's the CSD17 inter-linkages, cross cutting issues and the regional focus on Africa will be taken into account

After the four main theme's have been discussed the session will be closed with concluding remarks by the Chair.

Date and venue: The meeting will take place in the Fairmont Hotel in Washington, US, on 22 February 2009 from 10.00 – 16.00 hours.

Participants: A few key resource persons will be invited to participate to the meeting.

Organisation: The meeting will reflect the segmentation of the program into two parts, each of which will contain two of the main theme's. During Part 1 in the morning the themes food crisis and water for food and agriculture, eco-systems and sanitation will be discussed and part 2 in the afternoon will discuss the themes competing claims for food and fuel and land en desertification.

The lunch will be in an informal setting and will take place at the venue in the Fairmont Hotel.

As ease of reference the Ministry prepared an overview document with summaries of the most relevant internationa reports and decisions on the themes of the brianstorm session. This document will be send by e-mail, but will also be made available in hard copy to all participants at the meeting.

Output of the meeting: The proceedings of the meeting will be summarised into a document that will be prepared by the organising country and UNDESA. The document will be used in support of the Chair.

<b>Program Brainstorm session in preparation of CSD-17</b> <b>Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2009</b>
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10.00            **Part I: Morning session**

Welcoming address by Mr. Hans Hoogeveen

Opening of the session by Chair Mr. Tariq Banuri

Topics for discussion during Brainstorm session:

**Theme 1: Food Crisis**

This theme will examine the inter linkage between sustainable agricultural, rural development, food security and poverty reduction. Last year, the world has witnessed unprecedented rise in food prices, leading to social tensions in many countries. Estimates suggest that the total number of malnourished people worldwide could rise to 967 million in 2008, up from 923 million in 2007. In addition, a large number of developing countries are struggling to address the macroeconomic impact of high domestic food prices and inflationary pressure, as well as increased import expenditure. The food security challenges facing Africa particularly threatens the progress on achieving the Millennium Development Goals. In the 21st century agriculture will continue to be a fundamental sector for sustainable

development and poverty reduction, since it remains the main source of income for most of the world's poor. In most developing countries, agriculture and rural development issues form the core of sustainable development agenda.

- Productivity improvement: more private and public investments in agriculture, particularly in scientific, technological and institutional innovations; sharing of knowledge, technology transfer and capacity building; sustaining smallholder farming;
- Enabling environment, creating an environment for private investments and stimulating entrepreneurship;
- Market access: Equally important is the impact of subsidy on food production, the need for improved access for agricultural exports from developing countries and supporting the development of local and regional markets. Also the development of markets that are accessible to small farmers as well.
- Food security and safety net mechanisms, affordable private health insurance of public health care, food aid; Medium- and long-term needs in education, health and social infrastructure in rural areas.

## **Theme 2: Competing claims for food and fuel**

This theme would examine the policies that would be needed to address the competing claims for agricultural production for food and for fuel. Increased demand for biofuel has become an increasingly significant user of agricultural commodities and may have pushed up their prices. It will build upon a vision on the food-fuel debate coming from the previous sessions of the CSD and international meetings of FAO and other international organisations.

- Managing the food security versus biofuels dilemma: avoiding transforming self-sufficient farmers into wage labour;
- Innovative ways to involve farmer communities in small-scale biofuel projects; regulatory social and environmental safeguards for biofuel production;
- Managing the biofuel boom and small holders' access to land: innovative models;
- Developing a sustainable value chain (production, processing, marketing, trade and consumption).

12.00 Informal lunch at the Fairmont Hotel

14.00 **Part II: Afternoon session**  
Continuation

Topics for discussion during Brainstorm session:



### **Theme 3: Water for food, agriculture and eco-systems**

This theme would examine the challenges and solutions of agricultural water management and food security. Water is a crucial resource in developing the productivity and resilience of the agricultural sector. Many countries are confronted with the challenge of water scarcity. The climate change is adding further compounding this problem. At the same time, water use efficiencies are quite low in many of the large irrigation systems. Future sustainability of agriculture largely depends upon how water management in this sector is dealt with.

- Introducing technological innovations and implementing demand management measures, alleviate water poverty in water using sectors other than agriculture; Water use efficiencies, ‘more crop per drop’;
- Implementing difficulties of integrated water management, ‘virtual water’ and the ‘water footprint’;
- Investing in watershed management: impact on water quality, quantity and disaster reduction.

### **Theme 4: Land and desertification**

This theme will examine the incorporation of sustainable land management and agricultural practices into agriculture worldwide, especially into African agriculture. Land is becoming a more valuable resource than ever, Optimizing its use, while increasing access to land is often viewed as the basis for sustainable rural development. Policies and actions to provide incentives for sustainable land use and to empower land users will be central to changing land use patterns. Effective policies and institutions to manage land and related natural resources, are along with secure land rights a prerequisite for stimulating investment for sustainable rural development.

- Impact of sustainable land management practices and agricultural practices on agricultural productivity (yields, crop failure, etc), including impact of crop biodiversity on yields;
- Advances in land regeneration and fighting desertification in arid and semi-arid environments: sustainable land management practices, including agro-forestry; Adapting to climate change in managing land and other natural resources;
- Providing access to land; Institutions and policies for sustainable land use planning and management.

16.00

Closing address

<b>Venue</b>
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Fairmont Hotel  
2401 M Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20037  
Tel: 001-202-429-2400  
Fax: 001-202-457-5010

<b>Background documentation</b>
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Message from the Chairperson of CSD-17, Vision statement

Summary of recommendations from international negotiations and relevant reports

<b>List of participants</b>
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Mr. Banuri	CSD Secretariat, UNDESA
Mr. Fernandes	World Bank
Mr. Gustavson	FAO
Mr. Hoogeveen	Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality
Mr. Najam	Pardee Center, Boston University
Mr. Rabbinge	CGIAR
Ms. Wringler	IFPRI

**Others**

Ms. Hagenaars	Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality
Mr. Steeghs	Netherlands Permanent Mission to the UN
Mr. Thissen	Counsellor Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality in Washington
Mr. Verkooijen	World Bank