



International Chamber of Commerce

The world business organization

**Statement delivered by Annik Dollacker, Co-Chair ICC CBD Task Force
at SBSTTA-13 meeting, Rome, 18 February 2008**

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I am speaking on behalf of the CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity) Task Force of the International Chamber of Commerce, ICC.

The ICC is the voice of world business, serving as a partner of the United Nations and its agencies to work toward economic growth, job creation and prosperity. With thousands of member companies of all sizes and sectors and business associations in every part of the world, ICC is an engaged participant in environmental and sustainable development discussions. The ICC places high priority on current efforts to refine the programme of work on agricultural biodiversity.

Today we have already heard much about the increasing world population, changing consumption patterns, and impacts of a changing climate. It is in this challenging context of escalating demands placed on agriculture, that we must consider and ensure sustainability. The business community is convinced that there is no rational alternative to increasing yields per hectare, and we are optimistic that this can be achieved in a sustainable way. We all know that agricultural productivity has enormous remaining potential. Recovering only half of the existing yield gaps, existing in some regions would revolutionise the relationship between agriculture and biodiversity.

But how can sustainable productivity increase be achieved? A mosaic of site-specific approaches is required to manage agro-ecosystems sustainably. Industry has been promoting Integrated Crop Management, a holistic, ecosystem based approach that comprises a wide range of management measures such as soil and nutrient management, crop choice and protection as well as measures of water and energy management and landscape protection. Improved crop varieties, developed through traditional as well as advanced breeding techniques are an essential tool for increasing yield and quality output and enable more efficient use of land. Advanced breeding techniques can also help with the growing need for crops to adapt to the effects of climate change.

Accordingly we propose refinement of the programme of work, first, to provide for the systematic identification and assessment of good practices, techniques and technologies in agriculture, based on factual evidence, and secondly, to plan and carry out comprehensive efforts to spread knowledge-intensive approaches to allow for sustainable intensification of farming and therefore conservation of biodiversity.

Given the private sector's critical role in continuing to advance sustainable agriculture, including through scientific research, creation of new products, technologies, approaches and technology transfer and cooperation, the ICC looks forward to working as a partner in our mutual effort to concretely contribute toward sustainable agriculture this week and in Bonn. There we will be present with an exhibit and other activities, including around the International Biodiversity Day on 22 May.

Thank you for your attention.

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