

**4th Regional Forum
on Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization in Asia and the Pacific**

- Leading the Way for Climate-Smart Agriculture through Machinery
and Practices

23-25 Nov. 2016, Hanoi, Vietnam

Opening Remarks by Dr. Katinka Weinberger, OiC of CSAM

**Distinguished Dr. Le Quoc Doanh, Vice Minister of the Ministry of
Agriculture and Rural Development of Vietnam;**

**Distinguished Dr. Pham Anh Tuan, Director General of the Vietnam
Institute of Agricultural Engineering and Post-Harvest Technology
(VIAEP);**

Representatives of CSAM Member Countries;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the *4th Regional Forum on Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization in Asia and the Pacific*.

The Regional Forum on Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization in Asia and the Pacific is a flagship initiative of CSAM. Since 2013, three Forums were organized providing a unique opportunity to key stakeholders in our region to share and elaborate on important topics related to the whole spectrum of agricultural mechanization.

The 4th Regional Forum has chosen “**Leading the Way for Climate-Smart Agriculture through Machinery and Practices**” as its guiding theme.

This theme is very timely. Earlier this month on the 4th, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change entered into force; an important achievement in our global collective efforts to address climate change.

The preamble of the Paris agreement makes explicit reference to food security and production. It acknowledges “the fundamental priority of safeguarding food security and ending hunger, and the particular vulnerabilities of food production systems to the adverse impacts of climate change”.

80% of the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) submitted by countries committed to action on agricultural mitigation, and 90% of INDCs that include adaptation selected agriculture as a priority sector for action.

We thus now have a strong framework for climate action in the agricultural sector.

What is needed now, urgently, is action.

- The effects of climate change, such as increasing frequency and intensity of ‘extreme events’, increasing average temperatures, changes in rainfall patterns, and changes in water availability are already undermining global efforts to assure food security and nutrition.
- On the other side, agriculture and land-use change, mainly deforestation of tropical forests, contribute around one quarter of the global anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions. It is impossible to address climate change without considering change to current production practices in the agricultural sector.

- 76% of the world's poor live in Asia-Pacific's rural areas. More than 2.2 billion people in our region rely on agriculture for their livelihoods. The people in our region are likely to be hit hardest by climate change.

Food systems in the region need to change to allow for sustainable productivity increases and higher incomes of farmers, and adapt to and build resilience of communities to climate change and variability. All of this is encapsulated in the climate-smart agriculture (CSA) approach.

Climate-smart agriculture is an approach that can help to transform and reorient agricultural systems to effectively support development and ensure food security in a changing climate. CSA aims to sustainably increase agricultural productivity and incomes; adapt and build resilience to climate change; and reduce and/or removing greenhouse gas emissions, where possible.

Agricultural mechanization can play a positive role in achieving climate-smart agriculture both in adaptation and mitigation.

- Consider for example more efficient use of water and fertilizers;
- improving land management, for example through laser leveling;
- enhancing crop residue utilization;
- reducing post-harvest losses; and
- conservation agriculture and precision agriculture.
- Also, fuel use efficiency of agricultural machinery and equipment in the region has large room to improve. For instance, the fuel consumption of the tractors produced in China is generally 30% higher than the consumption of American and Germany tractors of same horse power

CSAM, a Regional Institute of the Economic and Social Commission of Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is devoted to sustainable agricultural mechanization in the region. In its nature and mandate, CSAM has the

responsibility to facilitate efforts of member States in achieving Climate-Smart Agriculture and Sustainable Development Goals.

We are meeting today in Hanoi at the 4th Regional Forum to:

- improve the awareness of key stakeholders on the role of mechanization in achieving climate-smart agriculture;
- To share and document experiences with agricultural machinery knowledge, technologies and practices that contribute to the adaptive capacity and income security of farmers in the region while also reducing GHG emissions; and
- To facilitate cooperation between different stakeholders in the field of climate-smart agricultural machinery technologies and practices in the region.

I look forward to listening to your insightful thinking and sharing of best practices in your respective countries in the coming two days.

Last but not least, let me express my deep appreciation to our co-host – the Vietnam Institute of Agricultural Engineering and Post-Harvest Technology (VIAEP) for their commitment and dedication. They have shown incredible support in organizing this Forum. My sincere gratitude also goes to the Centre of International Cooperation Service of the Ministry of Agriculture of China for supporting the poster exhibition in parallel to the Forum.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish you every success to your deliberations in Hanoi.

Thank you.