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# Opening remarks

*Modibo Traore'*

*Assistant Director-General, Agriculture and Consumer Protection  
Department, FAO, Rome*

Your Excellencies, Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives, OECD Delegates, Members of the Advisory Group to the Bureau of CFS, distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is my great pleasure and honour to welcome you to this FAO/OECD workshop on Building Resilience for Adaptation to Climate Change in the Agriculture Sector.

The collaboration between FAO and OECD is old and rich. The OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook is probably the best known example of this, but there are many other fields in which we work together.

The Joint Working Party of OECD on Agriculture and Environment has been a pioneer in linking agriculture and environment from an economic and policy perspective. The work of your group on agro-environmental indicators has exerted a tremendous influence on the design of such indicators, worldwide.

More recently, the work of your group has been essential in the global reflection about green economy and agriculture. What does green economy mean for agriculture? What is agriculture's contribution to green economy, to green growth?

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for these contributions to our common understanding of the complex interactions among agriculture, environment and economics for improving policy design.

Your group and my Department work on the same issues, from different but complementary perspectives. That is why, since your first invitation to us in 2007 to participate as an observer to the work of your group, the collaboration has been extremely fruitful. This workshop is a good example of it.

Agricultural systems – food systems – are complex. They are biophysical systems, economic systems, social systems. And these dimensions interact with each other, at various scales, from local to global and, again, from global to local.

This is why, to consider adaptation of agricultural and food systems, we need to adopt a holistic approach, from different angles and different perspectives. Here again, it is not only about ensuring a “balanced” view. It is to take into account, at the same time, diverse perspectives and approaches. To consider very technical issues: animal health, plant pests; and also economic perspectives, and households, and policies. Because all of these make up the food system. All of these, and their interactions, are going to be modified by climate change.

In June 2010, we had a first joint workshop, hosted by the Istituto Nazionale di Economia Agraria, on Agriculture and adaptation to climate change.

Climate change brings new uncertainties, and adds new risks and changes to already existing risks. One of the conclusions of the workshop was to consider how building resilience in agriculture could be a way to adapt to climate change. This workshop builds upon these conclusions.

Building resilience is not specific to climate change; climate change adaptation responses are “embedded” in agricultural systems (therefore, sometime there is a difficulty to distinguish adaptation practices *stricto-sensu*). How do we need to increase resilience and build adaptive capacity? We need to adopt a holistic approach, embracing various risks, and accounting for synergies and trade-offs. There are huge variations between countries, in terms of risks to be faced and capacities to face them.

The workshop will consider various types of risks to which agriculture is prone, the effects that climate change is expected to have on them, and various risk management strategies, depending on types of risks and the country in question. It will examine technical issues and case studies in order to determine how addressing various types of risks and vulnerabilities, including plant pests and diseases, animal health and socio-economic vulnerabilities, can contribute to prepare agriculture for future climate-induced risks and uncertainties.

In the international negotiations on climate change, in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, there is now a much stronger interest for adaptation: the Cancun Agreement contains a framework for adaptation, including a programme of work on loss and damages and the establishment of national plans of adaptation for developing countries.

The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) has requested its High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) to undertake a study on climate change and food security, which will be presented to CFS in October 2012.

During the UNFCCC meeting in Bonn in May this year, there was a dialogue on agriculture and climate change, which could lead to a decision in Doha on a programme of work.

For all these reasons, there is now an opportunity to better emphasize the importance and the specificities of the adaptation of agriculture to climate change.

This meeting can make a very timely and useful contribution to these various processes. I wish you a successful discussion.

Thank you.