

conference

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ROME

Twenty-fifth Session

Rome, 11 - 30 November 1989

UNEP DECISION 15/24 ON SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

The Governing Council,

Having regard to the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, 10/ which notes, inter alia, that current development policies tend not to promote sustainable agriculture,

Aware of the growing concern of the international community about the ecological unsustainability of agricultural systems in both developed and developing countries, as reflected in the Environmental Perspective to the Year 2000 and Beyond adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 42/186 of 11 December 1987, which notes that insufficient attention to the environmental impact of agricultural policies and practices has been causing great environmental damage, such as: soil degradation, deforestation and desertification; loss of land productivity, soil and water pollution and hazards to human health caused by excessive use of agricultural chemicals; salinization due to inappropriate irrigation; and, genetic erosion and increased vulnerability of crops to diseases and pests due in part to the use of high-yielding varieties, 56/

Desiring to contribute to the achievement of food security without resource depletion or environmental degradation through the internalization of environmental considerations in sectoral policies and programmes, as recommended by the General Assembly in its resolution 42/186,

Considering the urgent need for better co-ordination of agricultural and environmental policies at national and international levels and for more effective integration of environmental concerns in the policies and programmes of all international agencies involved in agricultural development,

Taking note of the report of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 57/ and the work of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in the European region on integration of agricultural and environmental policies,

Aware also of the need to increase agricultural production in order to overcome present food shortages that seriously affect developing countries,

Bearing in mind the co-ordinating and catalytic role of the United Nations Environment Programme in the achievement of sustainable development, as reiterated by the General Assembly in its resolution 42/186,

56/ General Assembly resolution 42/186, annex, sect. II B, para 10.

57/ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Agricultural and Environmental Policies: Opportunities for Integration (Paris, 1989).

1. Recommends that a joint Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and United Nations Environment Programme meeting on sustainable agriculture should be convened within the framework of the preparation of the proposed 1992 United Nations conference on environment and development, with a view to:

(a) Reviewing the mechanism for integrating agricultural production and environmental policies worldwide;

(b) Elaborating a world strategy for sustainable agriculture to guide agricultural policies at national and international levels, in order to ensure that such policies encourage farmers to adopt practices that are ecologically sustainable and that lead, inter alia, to improving the quality of life of rural people;

(c) Formulating recommendations for practical action that might be taken by the United Nations Environment Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other international organizations concerned within the context of their ongoing activities to promote sustainable agriculture;

2. Requests the Executive Director to forward the present decision forthwith to the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, so that the above recommendation may be given due consideration by the Governing Council and the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations at their forthcoming sessions.

12th meeting

25 May 1989