

**FARMERS GROUP STATEMENT AT CSD 12, NEW YORK, 19-30
APRIL 2004**

**OVERALL REVIEW SESSION
PRESENTATION ON**

“OVERALL REVIEW ON FARMER’S AND WATER IN AGRICULTURE

By Mr. Esa HARMALA,
Vice-President of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP)

Mr. Chairman, Your Royal Highness, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure for me to be here today to present the farmers’ views on such a crucial issue as water. I come from Finland, I am President of the Finnish Farmers’ and forest farmers’ Union. I am also the Vice-President of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP).

Water is a critical resource for agriculture. Without water, there is no agriculture, and agriculture is the basis for life itself. In the sessions of the coming days, farmers expect that the CSD will give a high priority to the need for water to achieve world food security, and to reduce poverty.

Throughout this CSD 12, it is important to stress the link between the three cluster themes. 70 per cent of the poor in the world are located in rural areas, and a majority of them are farmers. Many of them do not have access to safe drinking water or to adequate sanitation services. Finally, hunger is a problem mainly affecting rural areas, and without water, in sufficient quantity and in good quality, farmers will not be able to grow food nor will they be able to feed themselves. We should remember the message from the World Food Summit that food production needs to be doubled by 2050 to meet the needs of a growing world population.

More crop per drop is our slogan too.

Investment in basic utilities -potable water and agriculture infrastructure - so that farmers can live from their work is essential to stop poor farmers and rural communities from leaving the countryside and moving to overcrowded cities. This is precisely where the relationship between human settlements, sanitation and water lies.

Mr. Chairman, everyone can agree that it is critical to manage water supplies efficiently.

Nowhere is this more important than in agriculture, which uses 70 per cent of the freshwater supplies of the planet. Farmers are more and more aware of this, and feel responsibility for accessing and managing their local water resources. However, they need the means to do it, working as equal partners with the public and private sector as well as with other stakeholders.

Farmers have to be involved in the formulation of water policies, their implementation and the monitoring of results. However, for this participation to be effective, farmers' organisations need capacity building. Otherwise, farmers' participation will not be meaningful.

National and regional water resources policies and management should be linked with other international agreements and processes, especially those on poverty alleviation.

It is only in these conditions, that the Millennium Developments Goals of improving water use efficiency in the agricultural sector by 5 percent by 2010 and by 10 per cent by 2015 will be effective.

Thank you.