

# International Assessment of Agriculture Science & Technology for Development

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# The „IPCC of Agriculture“

- Initiated by World Bank
- Sponsored by several UN organisations: FAO, WHO, UNEP, UNDP
- Multistakeholder Board: governments, private sector, civil society

# Objectives

- How to structure agricultural research and development to
  - *reduce hunger and poverty*
  - *improve rural livelihoods and human health*
  - *facilitate equitable, socially, environmentally and economically sustainable development*
- AKST - Agriculture Knowledge, Science and Technology

# The Process

- 400+ scientists selected by all stakeholders
- 1 global and 5 regional reports, plus a Synthesis Report on key issues (e.g. biofuels)
- Drafts available for public comment in 2007
- Lead authors drafted Summaries for Decision Makers
- April 2008: Governments discussed and accepted final reports in Johannesburg

# The Outcome

- *„Business as usual is not an option“*
- *Successfully meeting development and sustainability goals (...) would require a fundamental shift in AKST*

## ... on multifunctionality

- *Agriculture operates within complex systems and is multifunctional in its nature.*
- *The concept of multifunctionality recognizes agriculture as a multi-output activity producing not only commodities (...), but also non-commodity outputs such as environmental services, landscape amenities and cultural heritages.*

## ... on rural livelihoods

- *People have benefited unevenly*
- *The small-scale farm sector in the poorest developing countries is a net loser under most trade liberalization scenarios..*
- *Policy options include improving security of tenure and access to land, diversification with locally important crop species, access to resources, supporting rural livelihoods by transparent price formation (...) These options imply a fundamental transformation of AKST and economy wide approach to agricultural policy.*

## ... on resource degradation

- *AKST systems are needed that enhance sustainability while maintaining productivity in ways that protect the natural resource base and ecological provisioning of agricultural systems.*
- *Options include (...) increasing farm diversification; supporting agroecological systems, enhancing biodiversity conservation...*
- *Policy options include ending subsidies that encourage unsustainable practices.*

## ... on genetic engineering

- *A problem-oriented approach to biotechnology R&D would focus investment on local priorities identified through participatory and transparent processes, and favour multifunctional solutions to local problems.*
- *emphasis on modern biotechnology without ensuring adequate support for other agricultural research can alter education and training programs and reduce the number of professionals in other core agricultural sciences.*

# The way forward

- The future of farming is smart
- There is no silver bullet, but a range of options are outlined in the UN Ag Assessment
- Key is
  - More investment into agricultural R & D and knowledge transfer
  - Redirect investment away from chemical intensive agriculture towards sustainable farming systems
  - Eliminate environmentally destructive subsidies
  - Ban genetically engineered crops.
  - Protect domestic food production through appropriate trade agreements