

16th Sustainable Development Conference 2010, 30 May – 1 June, Hong Kong.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Track: Sustainable agriculture: small-scale farmers in developing countries amidst of new international perspectives

Poverty reduction requires a need for pro-poor growth and a development towards sustainable livelihoods for small-scale farmers. The very truth of this statement cannot conceal the hardness of achieving it.

Besides promoting partnerships in product chains, there is a need for a greater variety of successful business models. In many developing countries large government-led production schemes that were implemented after colonialism have not brought the successes according to expectations.

There is much to say in favour of bottom-up approaches which recognise the business responsibility and entrepreneurship of the farmers. However, considering the elaborate support networks that surround the agricultural sectors in many European and other countries, recognition of the farmers' own responsibilities in developing countries should not exclude genuine support from governments and international agents.

Nonetheless, those who know the world of agriculture in developing countries are aware of the many vicious circles that seem to frustrate substantial progress in this area, especially in Africa.

Papers are invited that open up new perspectives in terms of new business models based on different types of chain involvement, capacity building, supportive networks, market orientation and sustainability.

Associated with this problem area, also questions of food shortage, liberalisation of markets and climate change are seen to be involved. Can the credit crisis be a turning point and inspire new ways of doing business? That is: is it possible to take longer term interests into account? What is the real *balanced scorecard* here? Can international food companies – by way of corporate social responsibility - be radically innovative and sustainable at the same time, upgrading food chains and creating value added that stands the test of ecological and social soundness? In this context, is there a place for small-scale farmers?

The papers can be limited to innovative case studies that show new ways of operation, but also papers which – although with a clear empirical orientation – have a broader outlook contemplating breakthroughs in sustainable agriculture are most welcome. You are requested to submit your abstract via the e-mail address below as soon as possible but no later than 1 February 2010.

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