

CABI'S ASIA-PACIFIC MEMBER COUNTRIES REGIONAL CONSULTATION

“Working in partnership for a sustainable future”

16-19 October 2018, Beijing Friendship Hotel, Beijing, China

Introductory and Welcoming Remarks

By Roger Horton, Chair of CABI Board

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning! **Zao Shang Hao**

I will start by introducing myself. I am Roger Horton and Chair of the Board of CABI which I joined on 1st September 2017. I feel greatly privileged to join you today - delegates from our member countries, prospective member countries and partner organisations. This is my first time at CABI's regional consultation meeting so I am looking forward to learning from you. I have been to 3 CABI centres and seen some of the work in the field in Africa but I believe attending this meeting will go a long way to give me a first-hand feel about what CABI is doing, what is working and what needs to be improved.

I would like thank our host, the Chinese government through the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA for short), and Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS for short) – represented today by Professor Tang Huajun (**Tang Hua Jun**), President, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences and Member of the Leading Party Group of MARA, Dr

Tang Shengyao (**Tang Sheng Yao**), DDG of International Co-operations at MARA, who is also CABI's Executive Council member for China, and Professor Wu Kongming (**Wu Kong Ming**), Vice President of CAAS. Sincere thanks to China for helping to organise and host this Regional Consultation, as well as providing financial contribution. Welcome to you all our member country representatives and development partners – many of you have travelled far to be with us here so thank you for the commitment and support that you continue to give us. Last but not least, I would also like to thank the CABI team led by the CEO, Dr. Trevor Nicholls for the work that has been done to make this meeting a reality!

I am told that these triennial regional consultation meetings have become an important activity in CABI's calendar. They present an opportunity for our Member Countries to provide input into CABI's plans and thus own them but more importantly, serve as a mechanism for CABI to listen and engage directly with its membership. So as Chair, I am keen to see the outcome and how this will inform our direction in the next few years. This meeting in Beijing is the 2nd in the series of regional consultation meetings, with the first one held successfully in Canada for the Americas and Caribbean region one month ago, the third and last one for Africa to be held in Botswana in February 2019.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The partnership between the host country, China and CABI goes back to 1981. Building on a long-term collaboration, China joined CABI in 1995. China's membership of CABI has seen close and fruitful co-operation

across a wide range of areas, including information and knowledge management and scientific research.

In 2002, CABI opened an office following the signing of an agreement for scientific collaboration between the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences and CABI. In December 2007, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the then Chinese Ministry of Agriculture and CABI at the High-level Joint Summit on Strategic Partnership. This led to the creation of the Joint Laboratory for Biosafety between the MARA and CABI in 2008. All these were made possible by Chinese Government support. You will be hearing what the Joint Laboratory has achieved over the past decade at the celebration of 10th Anniversary of the Joint Laboratory shortly.

China is playing a significant role in south-south co-operation and technology transfer. Important Chinese initiatives, such as The Belt & Road and Chinese Agricultural Technology Going Global, presents us with future opportunities for multi-lateral collaboration, particularly among CABI member countries not just in Asia but contributing to agricultural and economic development globally, and our joint pursuit to achieve the SDGs.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are blessed with a team of dedicated and highly qualified people with diverse, long and unique collective experience. And so we should regard this as a period of opportunity and to work more closely together. For example, after leaving a trail of ruined crops in Africa and the Americas, the

Fall armyworm has been found in India, prompting concern that it could have a devastating effect on the country's agriculture. Fall armyworm, a pest which feeds on maize and other key crops, has been detected in the state of Karnataka. In neighbouring Tamil Nadu, about 15% to 20% of the maize crops on the campus of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University showed evidence of the worm. CABI, through our new programme on Action on Invasives is supporting work in these countries to implement a response plan, drawing on the lessons from the Americas where Fall armyworm originates.

With initial funding from DFID and DGIS and currently being piloted in Africa and Asia, the Action on Invasives Programme builds on the successful Plantwise Programme and is intended to be a unique Global Programme, that seeks to protect and improve livelihoods of millions of rural poor households affected by invasive species using new partnership approaches to **Defend**, **Detect** and **Defeat** new invasions - this includes helping to build biosecurity capacity of countries to effectively monitor and manage specific priority invasive species.

So this meeting will help to shape the revisions of CABI Medium-term Strategy. In response to the priorities identified by you in 2015-16, we have built more capabilities in the issues you identified. We believe these will help our member countries in their endeavour to achieve the SDGs.

During this meeting, we will therefore:

1. Review the progress made in addressing the priority areas identified during the last consultation

2. Identify the key emerging issues influencing and impacting on sustainable development nationally and regionally
3. Share country experiences and lastly,
4. Develop regional plans, identify synergies and agree ways of working together

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Some of you may be new as CABI member country representatives, and not too familiar with CABI. You will be hearing more about us and our work from our CEO, Dr Trevor Nicholls and my colleagues but more importantly you will hear the progress we have made since the Malaysia meeting in 2015. We will also be hearing from our member countries and partners on their experience in working with CABI in the last three years.

Tomorrow, we will identify priorities of CABI Member Countries and ways of working in partnership with you all to realise our common goals. My colleagues will be explaining in more details some of the selected strategic areas of CABI's such as value chains and trade, invasive species, agriculture & climate change, development communication and digital development and a number of new products in CABI such as AgPortal and PestSmart.

On Friday, the Institute of Plant Protection of the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences have invited us all for a field trip and we encourage all of you to take part. This Institute is the host of our Joint Laboratory with

China so you will also have an opportunity to see the Joint Laboratory in action.

Lastly and as I conclude – I look forward to close interactions with representatives of our partner institutions – we need your buy-in, commitment and support to pursue the proposals emanating from this Consultation. And so once again, thank you for finding the time to attend. We are very much looking forward to listen to your contributions.

Thank you very much. Xie Xie