

## **Statement by CABI to United Nations United Nations Climate Change Conference**

**Paris, France 8 December 2014**

**By the CEO, Dr. Trevor Nicholls**

CABI ([www.cabi.org](http://www.cabi.org)) is an inter-governmental, not-for-profit organization focussing on agriculture and the environment. We are established under UN treaty and represent 48 member countries. Reflecting growing concern amongst our member countries and the international community, CABI would like to highlight three implications of climate change which pose serious threats to agriculture and biodiversity worldwide

- 1) Existing crop pests and diseases which are becoming more aggressive as a result of temperature and humidity changes.
- 2) Known weeds, insects, microbes and invasive species spreading to new areas, countries and regions as changing conditions create new habitats for them.
- 3) New pests or diseases, such as Maize Lethal Necrosis Disease arising and thriving as the climate changes

We need to move **now** to help farmers adapt so that they can feed a growing world population. For example with soil fertility management, access to climate resilient seed varieties and the deployment biological control against pests.

The Plantwise global programme ([www.plantwise.org](http://www.plantwise.org)), led by CABI, strengthens the capacity of national extension and plant health systems to identify pest and disease problems and to provide farmers with advice to improve crop yields. We are also working with many countries to combat invasive species thereby preventing them spreading across arable and pastoral lands. By losing less of what we already grow we, can significantly increase output without using any extra land, water or chemicals – thereby reducing the carbon footprint of every tonne of produce.

CABI commits itself to develop and promote climate-smart agriculture, to combat the spread of pests, weeds and disease, to support rural communities in building resilience, to strengthen the capacity of national systems to adapt to climate change, and, above all to ensure that relevant information, knowledge and expertise are available to those who need it to address the agricultural and environmental challenges they face as a result of climate change.

We call upon COP21 to ensure that agriculture is seen not just as a contributor to climate change, but also as a victim of it and a vital part of the solution to it.