



**Seventh International Media Forum On The Protection of Nature
Viterbo, 25-29 November 2009**

The effects of climate change hit the agrobusiness sector

Climate alarm, adopt adaptive mechanisms soon

"Climate is changing: facts, stories, and people": the theme for the Forum proposed by Greenaccord

Rome, 16 October 2009 - While the **Viterbo International Forum**, promoted by **Greenaccord**, is preparing to look at the "hottest" environmental themes for the international community, another alarm about the effects of global warming was sounded. **"Climate change in the next 40 years will reduce the production of foodstuffs between 9 and 12% in the developing countries. In Africa, between 2080 and 2100 agricultural potential could be reduced by between 15 and 30%."** The director of the **FAO Jacques Diouf** announced these figures, opening the **High Level Expert Forum** on how to **eliminate hunger by 2050**. Diouf sounded the alarm about how the impact of climate change will be more serious in the poorest areas of the globe *"making feeding 9 billion people who will inhabit the earth in 2050 even harder."*

Agriculture, one sees from the meetings going on now at the **FAO summit** in Rome, is responsible for 14% of the greenhouse gases, 74% of which are produced in the developing countries. On the other hand, however, *"it is just this sector that can most actively contribute to adaptation and mitigation strategies to reduce the effects of climate change – emphasized Diouf – and we have to learn from our errors and assure a global and local governance of agriculture that is up to the challenge."*

The Italian scenario invites reflection as well. *"With respect to climate change agriculture is subject to high risk levels, and agricultural firms in the future will be more constrained to adopt the necessary adaptive mechanisms to respond to the numerous influences of climate change, both direct and indirect,"* maintained **Stefano Masini, head of the regional Environment and Territory commission of Coldiretti**, a partner of **Greenaccord** in the Seventh International Media Forum On The Protection of Nature: *"These can be reduced to the following: qualitative and quantitative variations in production, alterations in phenological states, or of the phytopathological system and the needs in terms of irrigation and processing, the movement of production zones, modification of work patterns, etc. With respect to the climatic vulnerability of agriculture, it's important to remember that the determining element is represented by the speed of evolution of climatic phenomena, which characterizes the climate change going on now. The ever-more frequent extreme weather (forest fires, violent tempests, flooding and drought), together with the arrival of other climatic anomalies (early or late frosts, more infra-seasonal variation, alterations of the frequency of seasonal and annual precipitation, new animal and vegetable diseases) represent pressures able to put the solidity of the entire agricultural system at risk, provoking a general loss of revenue and of the quality of production most of the Mediterranean regions, even to the extreme of leading to the reduction or abandonment of agriculture and silviculture."*

In agreement with **urgency** of adoption of important measures for prevent and confronting evidence of climate change in the agrobusiness sector is **Riccardo Valentini, Professor di Forest Ecology in the Department of Agriculture of the University della Tuscia** *"Italian agriculture is hurt particularly by climate change in two ways, high-quality agriculture, as our agricultural system is based on the production of excellent local products which are most at risk, and secondly intensive agriculture, which demands huge energy expenditures. We need to be conscious"* maintained Valentini *"of the fact that the problem is urgent, and we need to protect the whole agricultural system."* *"One of the resources that needs to be most closely*

watched" -- concluded the professor "is water, that is to say our water resources, and improving their distribution. We need to invest right away in order to have young, well-trained professionals that can in turn spread correct information in this direction."

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Greenaccord is a non-profit cultural association with Christian inspiration, founded to stimulate the engagement of people of any creed or religion with the topic of the safeguarding of nature. Greenaccord organizes national and international forums for information professionals, with the aim of soliciting a in-depth, lay examination through a continuing debate about the role and the responsibility of information professionals with regards to ecological topics.

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