

Launch of the World Agricultural Report

The media conference on the IAASTD Report takes place on the 15th April in Washington D.C. (Dr. Hans R. Herren); London (Dr. Bob Watson); Nairobi (Dr. Judi Wakhungu).

Released on the 15th April:

IAASTD Conclusion Report: Summary for policy makers, and synthesis report (the total report contains around 2,000 pages).

World Agricultural Report

"We simply cannot go on as before!" is how Dr. Hans Rudolf Herren, Swiss recipient of the World Food Prize, summarizes the first global report for governments and policy makers on the agricultural situation. Dr. Herren, together with Prof. Dr. Judi Wakhungu, has presided for four years over a worldwide network of 400 scientists, who have evaluated agriculture and its impact, opportunities and risks.

The final report, now available, has been approved by the governments of around 60 countries and contains amongst others, 22 core statements which formulate recommendations for decision makers in politics and economics on how food production, hunger and poverty alleviation can be implemented on a sustainable basis.

" The approach of the ecological development projects, which BioVision has been supporting and promoting for 10 years in Africa, follow exactly the recommendations set out by these international experts" says Dr. Hans Rudolf Herren, founder and president of the Swiss BioVision Foundation. "I hope that this way of thinking finds its way into other circles and executive levels."

The IAASTD World Agricultural Report documents that around 2.6 billion people worldwide depend on agriculture for survival. The great majority of the poorest people live in rural areas and are predominantly farmers. "The fact that in the past, less and less has been done for small farmers in developing countries, is fatal", says Dr. Herren, "we must promote training, access to information, small loans and land for farmers, and also create market structures which give these people the chance to feed and support their families!" The IAASTD report proves that enough food is produced worldwide to feed the global population. According to the World Agricultural

Advisory Board, the main problems are dissemination and sustainability. The report documents that increasing use of chemicals and industrialisation, as well as lack of training and research into sustainable agricultural methods have lead to an increase in the overuse of natural resources and soil infertility "If we do not improve the soil and methods of cultivation, then even the best seeds and most modern techniques will be of no use whatsoever," – Dr. Hans Rudolf Herren comes to the point, and adds that a trend reversal is urgently needed. "Agriculture must become more humane and more sustainable", says the Swiss recipient of the World Food Prize "and we have good examples in Africa already, which show that adaptive techniques and applied research lead to solutions which help both the environment and small farmers".

Characters: 2973 (with spaces)

Lines: 52

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IAASTD Conclusion Report and **image material** available to download at www.biovision.ch/IAASTD

Image Captions:

"We simply cannot go on as before!" In his capacity as co-president of IAASTD, BioVision president Dr. Hans Rudolf Herren presents the global agricultural report.

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- BioVision Box

The BioVision Foundation combats hunger and poverty at their roots and promotes environmentally friendly methods for the sustainable improvement of living conditions in Africa. BioVision facilitates 'help for self-help' and promotes ecological thinking and action – in both North and South. BioVision was founded in 1998 by the Swiss recipient of the World Food Prize, Dr. Hans Rudolf Herren, and is certified by ZEWO.

Donations to BioVision are tax-exempt. PC 87-193093-4

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- Hans Rudolf Herren Box

Dr. Hans Rudolf Herren (60), is one of the world-leading scientists in organic pest control. For 27 years he lived and researched in Africa. From 1994 to 2005 he headed the international institute for insect research *ICiPE* in Nairobi, Kenya. *ICiPE* plays a central role in the combating of pests, parasites and disease in developing countries. Dr. Herren has been awarded many renowned accolades for his work to benefit mankind. In 1995 he was the first Swiss national to be awarded the World Food Prize.

In 1998 Dr. Herren founded the non-profit BioVision Foundation to promote sustainable, ecological development.

Since 2004, Dr. Herren has worked pro-bono as co-president of IAASTD (The International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology) and has presided over the preparation of the first global report for governments and policy makers on the agricultural situation.

As his main occupation, Dr. Hans R Herren works as head of the internationally active Millennium Institute in Washington D.C. This institute supports the governments of developing countries in the allocation of resources for sustainable development.

Background:

From the 7th to the 14th of April, the closing conference of the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology (IAASTD) took place in Johannesburg under the leadership of co-chairs Dr. Hans Rudolf Herren and Prof. Dr. Judi Wakhungu. The final report was endorsed by representatives from the public sector as well as representatives from around 60 governments present at the closing conference.

Dr. Hans Rudolf Herren, founder and president of the BioVision Foundation, has operated as co-president of IAASTD for the last four years and with his dedication, advocates BioVision's direct and long-term participation in the dissemination of a new sustainable approach to agriculture.

IAASTD was created in 2002 by the World Bank and the UN Organisation for Food and Agriculture. Since 2004, IAASTD has worked towards the goal of improving the lives, health and living standards of millions of small farmers. For three years (2005-2007) around 400 scientists selected by IAASTD evaluated the relevance, quality and efficacy of knowledge, research and technology in the agricultural sphere, as well as the relevant directives and institutional solutions. Experts arrived last week in Johannesburg with representatives from governments and the public sector to finalise and sign the final report together.

Development of healthy, ecological and fair agriculture corresponds to the directives for organic agriculture (health, ecology, fairness and care) and to the directives of BioVision. BioVision supports IAASTD in its efforts to initiate a fundamental revision of opinion regarding agriculture, and to follow a sustainable approach. BioVision considers the IAASTD report to be an important directive, which is, in the best sense, both the basis for general consensus and a workable approach which calls for relevant action.