UNECE Regional Preparatory Meeting for Rio+20  
Statement of Biovision Foundation and Millennium Institute as members of the  
Farmers Major Group  
December 1st, 2011.

Thank you chair for having the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Millennium Institute, the Biovision Foundation and 120 NGOs supporting a paradigm change in agriculture and food systems.

We strongly believe that the issues of agriculture and food security– as was shown by the two food crises we faced in the last 5 years - are crucial for sustainable development and pose immense challenges for the future. This is not only an issue for developing countries but also for the ECE region. We therefore call for the ECE region to take a leadership role by transforming its own food production and consumption patterns to fit within ecological limits and enhance social equity.

Therefore the issues of agriculture and food security need to be prioritized within the negotiations of the ECE region with focus on:

1. Ensuring that agriculture’s primary purpose is to nourish all people and communities both today and in the future with healthy, diverse and culturally appropriate food that respects animal welfare and the integrity of natural ecosystems at both the local and global level.
2. Acknowledging that a transition to an ecologically-based, resilient, fair and fully inclusive and humane agriculture is essential if the goals of sustainability and poverty eradication are to be simultaneously achieved.
3. Acknowledging that multi-stakeholder assessments of knowledge, science and technology are vital to inform sustainable development and sustainable agriculture policies. These are needed in international, regional, and national policy making and decisions should be knowledge and science-based. Participatory research is needed into different models of sustainable agriculture that respect traditional knowledge and will help agriculture achieve its multifunctionality goals.
5. establishing an 'International Multi-stakeholder Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems', based on the IAASTD process and its objectives, that informs the transition to a green, fair, ecologically sound and humane agriculture.
through the provision of regular updates on Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology options that address food and water security within the context of sustainable and equitable development. Such a panel would integrate the key findings relating to agriculture and food systems from the UNFCCC-IPCC,CBD,UNCCD and now IPBES with its own agriculture and food system assessment into coherent and action oriented policy advice.