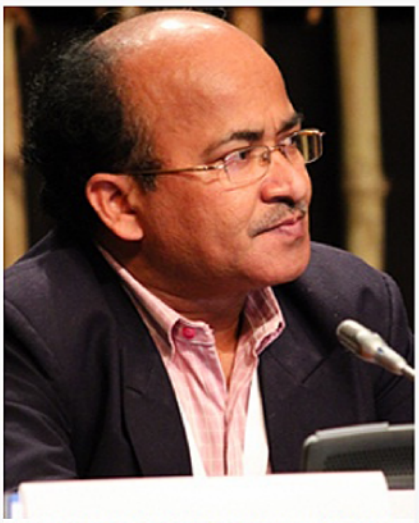
Climate Change, Agriculture Biodiversity and Food Security

Presented by South Asia Watch on Trade Economic and Environment (SAWTEE)



Suresh Singh, CUTS International, highlighted South Asia's vulnerability to climate change compounded by geographical diversity, population density and poverty.

Ane Jørem, Fridtjof Nansens Institute, outlined her organization's work on examining how the CBD and ITPGRFA have been implemented in India and Nepal.

Krishna Paudel, Ministry of Forests, Nepal, emphasized the need for an integrated approach to ecosystem management and a broader multi-stakeholder participatory platform.

Ratnakar Adhikari, SAWTEE, noted that only a handful of multinational companies control the global supply of seeds and they promote the use of proprietary seeds. He observed that the increasing monoculture is also making farmers vulnerable to climate change. Adhikari called for a robust ABS mechanism with incentives for rewarding farmers for breeding new seed varieties.

Krishna Paudel, Ministry of Forests, Nepal, observed that climate change is expected to result in a substantial reduction in food production and that some wild crop varieties could soon become extinct. He called for: promoting the importance of traditional seed systems, particularly to the scientific community; encouraging local communities to maintain, share and use traditional agricultural seeds and breeds; developing new climate change resistant and resilient seed varieties; engaging the private sector in biodiversity conservation; and encouraging the diversification of food crops in farming systems.

Suresh Singh, Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment (CUTS) International, emphasized the need to understand impacts at the local level and implement useful adaptive practices. He highlighted a study conducted in conjunction with Oxfam novib aimed at understanding marginal farmers' perceptions on climate change impacts and ascertaining measures to ensure sustainable livelihoods. He said perceptions on adaptive steps by farmers included: switching to climate resilient agriculture and crops; and replacing water intensive crops.

Pratap Shrestha, USC Canada Asia, noted that from the fourth Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 10-12% of greenhouse gas emissions are largely derived from modern agricultural production and distribution systems, mono cropping and high external inputs. He drew attention to the lack of a specific COP-11 agenda item on agricultural biodiversity and the narrow focus on mitigation under UNFCCC with limited attention on agricultural biodiversity.

Ane Jørem, Fridtjof Nansens Institute, highlighted her institution's work on conditions for the successful implementation of certain international agreements, which examines implementation of the CBD and IPTGRFA, in India and Nepal and also considers prospects for further implementation. She noted the work that India has done on implementing polices for the sustainable management of crops and described Nepal as a country endowed with a rich heritage of plant genetic resources being impacted by climate change.

L-R: **Ane Jørem**, Fridtjof Nansens Institute, **Pratap Shrestha**, USC Canada Asia, **Suresh Singh**, CUTS International, **Krishna Paudel**, Ministry of Forests, Nepal, and **Ratnakar Adhikari**, SAWTEE