

Declaration of the 2nd World Congress on Conservation Agriculture, Iguassu Falls, Paraná State, Brazil.

August 11-15th 2003

Conservation Agriculture-
“Producing in Harmony with Nature”

This Congress endorses the Declaration of the First World Congress on Conservation Agriculture (CA) in Madrid (2001) and notes the remarkable advances made in the two years which succeeded it, both in area adopted (now totaling 72 million ha of annual crops worldwide - an additional 7 million hectares since 2001- and at least a similar area of agro forestry/perennial crops) and the evolution of CA technology and its implementation in many new farming systems in the 50 countries represented in the WCCA2. This congress strongly believes that CA, comprising the universal principles of permanent soil cover, direct seeding or planting, minimum soil disturbance and pluri-annual crop rotation, is the principal road to sustainable agriculture and capable of helping solve the world's hunger and environmental crises while improving the quality of life. CA can achieve food security by reversing soil degradation, reducing agrochemical use and contamination, improving food quality, and conserving, preserving and enhancing the quality of natural resources and biodiversity while increasing farmer net income and competitiveness, and sequestering carbon from the atmosphere. Also, CA is applicable to all sizes and types of farms and to all crops. Therefore, this Congress calls upon all governments, elected politicians, policy makers, NGOs, the private sector and consumers of agricultural products worldwide to actively support the wider adoption and development of CA.

To achieve this goal, the following road map is recommended which would:

- Create conditions for the paradigm shift necessary to the adoption of CA principles by lead farmers, technicians, educators and policy makers (education, training, demonstrations, risk removal, media reports).
- Apply the universal principles of CA, as stated above.
- Support all initiatives, with preference for farmer-led, to transfer and develop CA technology.
- Carefully examine and endeavour to overcome the barriers to CA.
- Fund farmer led on-farm research programs and support applied research to maximize agricultural sustainability and net returns for CA farmers.
- Develop widespread awareness of the substantial benefits of CA for society as a whole and fund research for socio-economic and environmental impact assessments.
- Include support actions for CA in ongoing national and international initiatives, especially those in developing countries.
- Promote the remuneration of environmental services including carbon sequestration, reduction in soil erosion and water pollution.
- Develop world guidelines for the market differentiation of environmentally friendly products produced by CA.

- Incorporate support actions for CA in the implementation of international conventions, such as Agenda 21, Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD), Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) (including the Kyoto protocol) and Convention for Biological Diversity (CBD), especially as a means of mitigating global warming, de-forestation and HIV/AIDS-induced labour shortages.
- Support farmer organizations to lobby for appropriate enabling policies for CA.
- Promote the intensification of worldwide exchange of information on CA technologies.
- Promote and support, where appropriate, integrated crop x livestock CA systems and other means of minimizing the conflict of demands on crop residues.
- Move towards the establishment of an International Coordinating Committee for CA which would interconnect national and regional efforts, perhaps through a “web-based” platform, to facilitate sharing of information on CA study tours, international training schemes, publications and congresses/seminars, etc.