

## MOROCCO DECLARATION

### **Pulses: Solutions to Food and Nutrition Security, Agricultural Sustainability and Climate Change Adaptation**

An outcome of the International Conference on Pulses for Health, Nutrition and Sustainable Agriculture in Drylands, held April 18-20, Marrakesh, Morocco

The UN International Year of Pulses 2016 provides us the opportunity to call attention to the underutilization of pulses in comparison to cereals in spite of known benefits of pulses to sustainable agricultural productivity and human health.

We, the participants of the *2016 International Conference on Pulses for Health, Nutrition and Sustainable Agriculture in Drylands*, gathered in Marrakesh, Morocco, from April 18-20, 2016, recognize that:

- Pulse production is not commensurate to the demand in the developing world in spite of increasing global demand.
- Pulses are grown across a range of farming systems – subsistence agriculture to sophisticated commercial production and various agro-ecologies. Research and development must target particular pulses crops for each of these agro-ecological and farming systems. Pulses have a significant role because of their sustainability and environmental benefits, such as reducing the carbon footprint and the need for nitrogen fertilizer.
- Health benefits of pulse are many faceted. Their role in global health including the reduction of non-communicable diseases such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease and neuro-degenerative disease is understated.
- To date, pulses have received limited attention from policy-makers and governments despite their multiple benefits.
- The current level of research and development funding in pulses is low and unstable. A recent global survey shows an investment of US\$175 million per annum for the 13 pulses crops compared to billions invested into cereal crops.
- There are tremendous opportunities to accelerate pulses production and productivity through the use and application of innovative technologies, e.g., improved germplasm, conservation agriculture, integrated crop management, crop-livestock systems, rice-fallow replacement, seed and marketing systems, and value addition.
- Major yield gaps exist between on-farm and potential yields as shown by a large number of studies across pulses production regions. Previous investments in pulses research and development has developed many improved varieties and production technologies.



- Enhanced pulses production creates opportunities for local value-added processing, stimulates domestic demand, and provides off-farm employment and sources of income for rural poor, especially women and youth.

Key recommendations from the ICP 2016 include:

1. Increase global pulses production 20% from the current level by 2030.
2. Prioritize bridging the yield gap currently existing on farmers' fields compared to results from research and demonstration programs.
3. Undertake comprehensive review of policy related to pulses production and consumption needs in pulses producing countries.
4. Increase public awareness of health and nutritional benefits of pulses. Further quantification of specific health benefits from pulses consumption is required.
5. Promote public-private partnerships in pulses research, development and value addition.
6. Build capacity at all levels to foster the next generation of pulses researchers, extension specialists, entrepreneurs and champions.
7. Embrace a coordinated approach by all stakeholders building on existing networks to implement the above recommendations.

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