

## Remarks by Dr. Yutong Li, Head of CSAM

### **ReCAMA Workshop and Business-matching Event on Sustainable Mechanization for Smallholder Farmers**

- Promoting Sustainable Trade and Investment

28 November 2022 14:30-17:30 (Beijing time GMT+8)

Online (Zoom)

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Distinguished guests,

Dear friends,

Good morning / Good afternoon!

On behalf of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP-CSAM), it is my great pleasure to welcome all of you to the '*ReCAMA Workshop and Business-matching Event on Sustainable Mechanization for Smallholder Farmers - Promoting Sustainable Trade and Investment*' today.

Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization has a key role in reducing the toil and improving timeliness of agriculture operations, reducing labour shortages in rural areas, improving productivity and efficiency of agricultural inputs and resources, and contributing to addressing the various challenges facing agriculture including climate related hazards<sup>1</sup>.

However, the adoption of agricultural mechanization by smallholders encounters various challenges in Asia and the Pacific due to the small size of land holdings, limited investment capacity, and lack of technical expertise and service providers at the grass-roots level.

There are multiple ways in which the private sector can contribute to the accessibility and affordability of agricultural machinery for smallholder farmers. A variety of market-based solutions combined with sectoral policies and public-private coordination mechanisms have proved effective in this regard<sup>2</sup>. Firstly, companies should increase access to capital for smallholder farmers, rural communities and vulnerable groups by helping lower their credit risks and offering them the most cost-effective solutions. Secondly, the private sector should strengthen the capacity of smallholder farmers by encouraging their participation in various forms of training, technological awareness sessions and consultation services to improve processes and operational efficiency. Thirdly, targeted investments from the private sector can help build connections and partnerships between enterprises and rural communities. Retailers and distributors should work more closely with farmers to provide need-based and demand-driven services.

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<sup>1</sup> FAO Website, available at <http://www.fao.org/sustainable-agricultural-mechanization/overview/what-is-sustainable-mechanization/en/>

<sup>2</sup> UN DESA, available at [https://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/2020/wp169\\_2020.pdf](https://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/2020/wp169_2020.pdf)

The Regional Council of Agricultural Machinery Associations in Asia and the Pacific (ReCAMA) is a flagship project of CSAM with the aim to promote sustainable agricultural mechanization in the region through strengthening the capacity of national agricultural machinery associations, facilitating the exchange of knowledge and information, and enhancing collaboration and closer business connections among national associations and their members. As of date, ReCAMA has 21 member associations from 15 countries in the region. In 2020, ReCAMA was cited by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation as a *'Good Practice in South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development'* in its global publication.

Since its establishment in 2014, several trainings and study tours have been organized under ReCAMA to meet the needs of its members. The Workshop this year will focus on sustainable mechanization for smallholder farmers for tackling the particular challenges they face. A Business-matching Event on Sustainable Mechanization for Smallholder Farmers will also be organized along with the ReCAMA Workshop so that participants can establish closer business connections which can promote sustainable agricultural mechanization and related trade in the Asia-Pacific region in support of the SDGs.

The Workshop aims to, firstly, promote a better understanding of the needs of smallholder farmers in relation to agricultural machinery for sustainable and climate-smart agricultural development; secondly, to explore the range of mechanization-based solutions available for smallholder farmers; and finally, to enhance regional cooperation and promote sustainable trade and investment in agricultural machinery with a focus on smallholder farmers in the Asia-Pacific region.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our co-organizer and ReCAMA member association from China, the China Agricultural Machinery Distribution Association (CAMDA), for their collaboration for today's Workshop and Business-matching Event and for supporting various activities of ReCAMA over the years. I also thank the partner associations from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand as well as other countries for strengthening the network. Through these efforts, I trust that we can collectively enhance the engagement of the private sector towards offering more locally-adapted, environmentally-sound, and economically affordable solutions for sustainable agricultural mechanization in the region.

Thank you!