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## Asia-Pacific countries reaffirm importance of CAPSA in achieving sustainable development

Bogor, Indonesia (*ESCAP News*) -- During the Thirteenth Governing Council of the Centre for the Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (CAPSA), held this week, Member States reaffirmed that the centre remains relevant to implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region. The Council renewed its commitment to support the centre and ensure that the work of CAPSA continues to benefit its members.

In his welcoming remarks, Mr. Kaveh Zahedi, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) emphasized that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development presented CAPSA with a unique opportunity to contribute to Member States' efforts to address the Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals in an integrated manner. Permanent Secretary for Agriculture, Fiji and the Chair for the Thirteenth Session, Mr. Jitendra Singh highlighted the significant demand by Asia-Pacific developing countries for CAPSA's services through its function as regional hub for policy research, capacity-building, knowledge-sharing and networking in the areas of sustainable agriculture, food security and rural development. To support this, the government of Fiji has taken steps to strengthen its financial contributions to CAPSA.

The Thirteenth Session was hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture of the Government of Indonesia and convened in Bogor on 28 February 2017. Representatives of Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand were in attendance.

The Council reviewed the activities and accomplishments of CAPSA since its Twelfth Session, the 2016 financial statement as well as the workplan for 2017 and beyond. The council expressed its appreciation of the work undertaken by CAPSA, including its new focus on supporting the regional implementation of the 2030 Agenda including the Sustainable Development Goals.

This session of the Council was crucial in determining CAPSA's future as it faces severe resource constraints. The council made several recommendations to ensure CAPSA's financial viability to effectively address its mandate, by enhancing cash and other contributions from the host country, council members and other ESCAP countries. Additionally, it advised that CAPSA should initiate an in-depth study of an alternative option to transform it into an intergovernmental organization outside the United Nations system.

For media enquiries, please contact:

Mr. Ricardo Dunn, Chief, Strategic Communications and Advocacy Section, ESCAP  
T: (66) 2 288 1861 / M: 66-81 835-8648 / E: [dunn@un.org](mailto:dunn@un.org)

Mr. Martin Dessart, Public Information Officer, Strategic Communications and Advocacy Section, ESCAP, T: (66) 2288 2591 / M: (66) 9 0985 2275 / E: [dessart@un.org](mailto:dessart@un.org)

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