

**Remarks for PSM/Roundtable on Water for Food Security and Nutrition
October 12, 2015**

Good afternoon. I'm Brian Lowry, deputy general counsel with Monsanto Company - an agriculture solutions company that helps address challenges in meeting the global demand for food in the face of climate change and water scarcity. Thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of the Private Sector Mechanism.

The only option to feed a growing global population in a context of increasingly scarce water resources is to increase the 'water productivity' of agricultural production. This challenge has been clearly recognized as an imperative in the formulation of the 2030 Goals. This means developing a broad spectrum of tools that allows farmers of all sizes in all regions to grow crops in smarter ways: using resources more efficiently while still getting high yields.

You've heard today a key challenge for water is in the context of food security and nutrition. Nowhere is that more evident than in Africa. Monsanto is part of the Water Efficient Maize for Africa (WEMA) project, a multi-stakeholder public-private partnership. WEMA aims to improve food security and livelihoods among smallholder farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa by developing conventional hybrid maize seed that uses water more efficiently. Maize is the main source of food for more than 300 million Africans. Working with project leaders, Monsanto shared maize seed, our technical plant breeding know-how and our drought-tolerant and insect protection traits. In the first harvest, farmers saw improved yield under regular and drought conditions. The WEMA project is now the largest tropical white maize breeding program in Sub-Saharan Africa—with the goal of improving food security and livelihoods for more than 25 million people. Multi-stakeholder approaches like these are widely recognized to be an efficient approach to tackling nutritional challenges on a large scale.

The role of technology, best practices, innovation, and alternative methods of agriculture are fundamental in improving water management. For instance, improving efficiency in irrigation can offer striking improvements in water management. Recently a project called AquaTEK showed that providing farmers with a systems-based approach to irrigation could deliver a 12 percent increase in crop yield despite a 30 percent reduction in irrigation water use, an 80 percent drop in fuel use, and a 70 percent reduction in nutrient runoff.

We know there's much more to do, which is why we continuously seek partners with whom to collaborate to find solutions. I hope the examples I provided demonstrate that the private sector can absolutely help provide solutions to improve water management.

Thank you.