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# Crawford Fund

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# World Food Security

### Can Private Sector R&D Feed the Poor?

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE AND ABSTRACT FOR

## Dr Marco Ferroni



An expert in international agriculture and sustainability issues, Marco Ferroni joined the Syngenta Foundation as its Executive Director in 2008, after a career in multilateral institutions and government. Formerly, as a Deputy Manager of the Sustainable Development Department of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), he had responsibility for regional sector policy and technical support to the Bank's country departments. As the Principal Officer in the Bank's Office of Evaluation and Oversight, he directed evaluation studies that assessed the relevance, performance and results of Bank strategies and investments. As a senior advisor at the World Bank, he advised on donor relations and directed work on international public goods and their role in foreign aid and international affairs. Earlier in his career, he was an economist and division chief in the government of Switzerland, working in development cooperation. He holds a doctoral degree in agricultural economics from Cornell University. He has worked in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

### **Private Sector R&D and Small Farmers: What Is and What Can Be**

Neither the public nor the private sector appears equipped to adequately fill the R&D gap that limits the production possibilities of resource-poor small farmers in developing and emerging countries as of today. But while public investment in R&D has tended to stagnate or decline in many countries during the last two decades, the private sector has stepped up spending and deepened its presence in agriculture against the background of more market-friendly policies and the restructuring of governmental functions that may have crowded out the private sector in the past. The presentation assesses the extent to which the fruits of private R&D are reaching small farmers now and determines what is needed for the private sector's reach to grow. The focus is on Africa and South Asia, measuring and discussing the research and commercial activity of the agricultural input industry inasmuch as it affects smallholders there. The role of donors, NGOs and foundations in fostering market growth and bringing technology to small farms in cooperation with the private sector is discussed. Also, IP issues, regulatory and stewardship matters, marketing and pricing strategies, cooperation among firms, and public-private partnerships are addressed. The presentation concludes that the private sector's reach is rather broad and growing, with very sizeable production consequences. The divisibility of agricultural inputs such as seed, fertilizer and crop protection products facilitates selling to, and uptake by, small farms. But a considerably larger private sector contribution to production and improved livelihoods could materialize if some of the limiting factors identified in the presentation were addressed.

*189. Myrtilis Allahungi L.*

*Gemeine Budenkirche.*