



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



HIGH-LEVEL EVENT: LAUNCHING OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN FAO AND WAGENINGEN UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

Science and Innovation for MORE efficient, inclusive,
resilient and sustainable agrifood systems

CONCEPT NOTE and AGENDA

DATE: Friday, 8 April 2022

TIME: 14h30 - 16h30 CEST

CONTACT: Chief-Scientist@fao.org

VENUE: Virtual event



BACKGROUND: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN FAO AND WAGENINGEN UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Wageningen University & Research (WUR) have a long-standing partnership and share common objectives to promote and carry out innovative and sustainable approaches for improving lives while safeguarding natural resources in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In December 2021, a renewed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by the FAO Director-General and the President of the WUR Executive Board to further strengthen and accelerate cooperation between the two organisations.

By signing the MoU, FAO and WUR committed to strengthening capacity building, facilitating knowledge exchanges, and providing resources to advance their common goals. They will enhance dialogue on science, including by developing knowledge and expertise, and harness the foremost science-based evidence on technologies and innovations for agrifood systems. Under this new framework agreement, eight technical areas of cooperation have been established:

- (1) improved agrifood economics;
- (2) sustainable animal production and health;
- (3) impacts of climate change, biodiversity, and environment;
- (4) sustainable fisheries and aquaculture;
- (5) improved food security and nutrition;
- (6) strengthened agrifood systems and food safety;
- (7) sustainable forestry; and
- (8) partnership enhancement.

The agreement puts innovative collaborations and enhanced coordination at its center. It sets a new joint vision with the two organizations bridging the science-policy interface, linking research staff and policymakers, and working through agile actions to efficiently tackle challenges in a rapidly changing world.

This strengthened partnership is an opportunity to enhance cooperation between FAO and WUR and generate greater impact, working to deliver on shared goals of better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life through the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems, leaving no one behind.

HIGH-LEVEL EVENT'S OBJECTIVES

- Celebrate the longstanding partnership between FAO and WUR, raising awareness of the recently signed MoU and the new and strengthened areas of cooperation.
- Highlight FAO's and WUR's visions and missions and their joint efforts to support the achievement of the SDGs.
- Provide a platform to discuss in more depth selected technical areas of joint work between FAO and WUR, in line with the eight areas of cooperation.

The event will be divided into three segments:

- (1) a high-level session with keynote speakers;
- (2) thematic technical sessions with experts from FAO and WUR; and
- (3) a closing session.

HIGH-LEVEL OPENING SESSION:

14h30 - 15h10

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

- Dr **QU Dongyu**, FAO Director-General
- Professor **Louise O. Fresco**, President of the Wageningen University & Research Executive Board
- H.E. Ambassador **Marcel Beukeboom**, The Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the UN Organizations for Food and Agriculture
- Dr **Ismahane Elouafi**, FAO Chief Scientist

Moderator:

Dr **Marcela Villarreal**, Director, Partnerships and UN Collaboration Division, FAO

15h10 - 15h15

Short break Transition between the segments

TECHNICAL SESSIONS:

15h15 - 15h45

SESSION 1:

Science, technology and innovation (STI) for food security and climate action

In this interactive discussion, experts from FAO and WUR will share firsthand experience on their joint activities, and discuss how STI is essential to overcoming the impacts of climate-related shocks in agrifood systems.

Panelists:

- Mr **Ivo Demmers**, Head of Programme, *Food security and valuing water program*, WUR
- Mr **Erik VanIngen**, Digital Agriculture and Innovation Specialist, *Frontier technologies*, FAO

Moderator:

Dr **Preet Lidder**, Technical Advisor to the Chief Scientist, FAO

15h45 - 16h15

SESSION 2:

Transformative partnerships for resilient agrifood systems

In this interactive session, experts from FAO and WUR will communicate their personal experience on implementing FAO-WUR joint science- and evidence-based projects in the field that are supporting resilient agrifood systems.

Panelists:

- Dr **Marion Herens**, Project Leader,
Support for modelling, planning and improving Dhaka's Food System, WUR
- Mr **Cyril Ferrand**, Resilience Team Leader,
Subregional Office for Eastern Africa, FAO

Moderator:

Ms **Inge Wallage**, Director of Communication, WUR

WRAP UP AND CLOSING REMARKS:

16h15 - 16h30

- Professor **Louise O. Fresco**, President of the Wageningen University & Research Executive Board
- Dr **Ismahane Elouafi**, FAO Chief Scientist

Moderator:

Dr **Marcela Villarreal**, Director, Partnerships and UN Collaboration Division, FAO