



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

BIOGRAPHIES

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS AND TECHNICAL PANELLISTS

HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT



Dr Qu Dongyu took office on 1 August 2019 as Director-General of FAO.

Born in 1963 in Hunan Province, China, Qu studied horticultural science at Hunan Agricultural University, plant breeding and genetics at the graduate school, CAAS. He later added a PhD on agriculture and environmental science at Wageningen University.

Before coming to FAO, Qu served as China's Vice Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, promoted inclusive and innovative development and make sure information and communication technologies (ICT) were available in rural areas.

As Vice Governor of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Qu formulated action plans aimed at poverty reduction, women empowerment, youth startups, agritourism and solidarity between ethnic groups.

As FAO DG, Qu makes the full range of his efforts to build a dynamic, open, transparent and deliverable FAO to achieve the 2030 Agenda through the transformation to more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agri-food systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life, leaving no one behind.



Professor Louise O. Fresco is President of the Executive Board of Wageningen University & Research. She is member of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the Royal Holland Society of Sciences and Humanities. She is also member of academies in Sweden, Spain, Belgium, France and South Africa. Prof Fresco is professor at Wageningen University and was professor at Leiden University and Stanford University and received honorary doctorates from the Universities of Liège, Leuven (both Belgium), Montpellier (France), and Hebrew University (Israel). She is active in various boards in the field of agriculture & food, and also in arts. In 2021 She was Vice Chair of the Scientific Group of the United Nations Food Systems Summit and From 2021–2022 she was a member of the WHO's Pan-European Commission on Health and Sustainable Development.

Before joining WUR Prof Fresco was University Professor at the University of Amsterdam and from 1998–2006 she worked at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations where she was director of Research (1998–2000) and for 6 years (2000–2006) Assistant Director General responsible for agricultural production and food security. From 2015 to 2019 she was a member of the 3rd Steering Committee of the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (CFS-HLPE). She writes a bi-weekly column in one of the leading newspapers in the Netherlands (NRC Handelsblad) and has written 12 non-scientific books.



Ambassador Marcel Beukeboom is the Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the UN Organizations for Food and Agriculture in Rome. He is an all-round diplomat, with over 20 years of experience in a variety of positions across the globe. Always trying to find joint interests, the common good and the most sustainable solution. As Ambassador-at-large for Climate, Marcel was the representative for the Netherlands in international meetings, figurehead of Dutch climate policy and linking pin between global, European and national levels. Experienced in multi-stakeholder cooperation, Marcel easily connects with academic institutions, businesses and civil society, with a special emphasis on youth. As Permanent Representative in Rome, Marcel has returned to the field of agriculture and food security, now with the Paris Agreement as his job description. If you miss him, he is probably riding his bike.



Dr Ismahane Elouafi is the first Chief Scientist of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, a new position created within FAO's core leadership structure.

She has two decades of experience in agricultural research and development in Asia, Africa and the Middle East. She is internationally known for her work on promoting neglected and underutilized crops, use of non-fresh water in agriculture, and empowerment of women in science.

From 2012 until her appointment at FAO, Dr Elouafi led the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture based in the United Arab Emirates. Previously, she held senior scientific and leadership positions in the Ministry of Agriculture in Canada and at the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. She has also worked as a scientist with several international research organizations and served as a board member of several notable organizations.

Dr. Elouafi holds a B.Sc. in Agricultural Sciences and an M.Sc. in Genetics and Plant Breeding, and a Ph.D. in Genetics.



Moderator:

Dr Marcella Villarreal, Director, Partnerships and UN Collaboration Division, FAO

Marcela Villarreal has a PhD in Rural Sociology from Cornell University and a BA/MA in Systems and Computing Engineering from the University of Los Andes in Bogotá.

She is responsible for the implementation of FAO's innovative strategies on partnerships with civil society, academia and research institutions, and collaboration with UN agencies. She coordinates the initiative on the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture (CFS-RAI), FAO's policy on Indigenous Peoples, the Parliamentarian Fronts against Hunger initiative, the Decade of Family Farming and the implementation of International Years, among others.

TECHNICAL SESSION N. 1:

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



WUR Panellist:

Mr Ivo Demmers Msc. Programme Lead for the Research Programme on Food Security and Valuing Water (a 4 years project, with a total budget of 17M Euro). He has 20+ years of experience in water, environment and food sectors. Before joining Wageningen University and Research in 2014, he held general management and consultancy positions in private as well as not-for-profit organisations. Ivo has experience in Europe, including the Netherlands, Africa, Asia and Northern America.



FAO Panellist:

Mr Erik VanIngen works as digital agriculture and innovation specialist through blockchain, artificial intelligence, data analytics, data governance, IoT, remote sensing, design thinking and hackathons in the FAO Office of Innovation and the FAO Office of Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment. He drives the blockchain community of practice in FAO in collaboration with other UN entities such as IFAD, WFP and UNIN. Erik is especially interested in digital agrifood systems sustainability on the topics of climate and child labor in collaboration with the private sector. Before joining FAO, he worked for 10 years in the private sector in the Netherlands and Sweden as a software architect and project leader. Erik holds a bachelor in Telematics and a master's degree at the Open University in the Netherlands in Business Process Management and IT.



Moderator:

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

Preet Lidder is Technical Adviser to the Chief Scientist at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN. She has worked for over 14 years with international organizations including FAO and CGIAR in the provision of research, capacity development, technical assistance and policy advice in support of efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems. Her experience covers a wide range of expertise including sustainable agriculture; food and nutrition security; climate change; natural resource management; technology and innovation; rural development; and, policy and institutional change. She has published in various peer-reviewed journals. She trained as a molecular biologist with an M.S. in Plant Molecular Biology from the University of Delhi, a Ph.D. in Cell and Molecular Biology from Michigan State University, followed by postdoctoral research at New York University.

TECHNICAL SESSION N. 2: Transformative partnerships for resilient agrifood systems



WUR Panellist:

Dr Marion Herens has over 25 years of experience in food and nutrition security and health promotion in the national (the Netherlands) and international domain. She has worked as an expert for various national and international organisations, e.g., FAO, SNV Oxfam Novib. She is experienced in managing the processes of formulation, implementation and evaluation of multi-sectoral food security, nutrition and health promotion programmes and projects in different contexts. She holds a PhD in the domain of health and physical activity promotion. She is experienced in managing the processes of formulation, implementation and evaluation of multi-sectoral food security, nutrition and health promotion, and acts as facilitator of interactive action-oriented research, policy and planning processes, and trainer.

Presently, she holds the position of food and nutrition security expert at Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation (WCDI, part of Wageningen University & Research) and is the acting programme manager at WUR in FAO's Dhaka Food systems project.

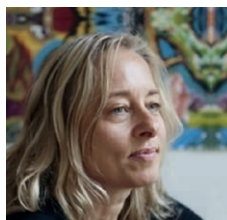


FAO Panellist:

Mr Cyril Ferrand is a French citizen who has been appointed East Africa Resilience Team Leader for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on August 01, 2017.

His humanitarian experience started in 1994 in France in support of economic refugees and asylum seekers and continued overseas since 1996 when he joined the international Non-Governmental Organization Action Contre la Faim (ACF) as a food security expert until 1999 (Burundi, Russian Federation – North Caucasus, Cambodia). He has been then working for the FAO Emergency and Rehabilitation Division between 1999 and 2014, period during which he covered major humanitarian crisis, including, but not limited to, Kosovo, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Somalia, the West Bank and Gaza Strip. From 2014 to 2017, he was appointed global Food Security Cluster Coordinator by both FAO and WFP.

Cyril Ferrand is holding University degree in Natural Sciences and advanced University degrees in Agronomy, Sustainable Agriculture and Rural development from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), part of the University of London.



Moderator:

Ms Inge Wallage, Director of Communication, WUR

Inge Wallage is a communications & marketing leader, and change maker. She pursued an international career, initially in the private sector before making the leap from the oil industry to environmental campaigning. That move sustained her continuous drive to contribute to a better world; a green and peaceful one. In her current role at Wageningen University & Research she continues this quest.

Inge has worked across all areas of communications/marketing. She held various in-house and agency roles, like the International Water Association, Greenpeace International, Statoil, Philips Electronics, Motorola and Burson-Marsteller. Based in The Netherlands, she has lived and worked in London, Norway and Bangkok.

Inge is convinced that listening and dialogue are fundamental in negotiating our shared future. She also writes fiction, driven by the idea that "story will change systems".
