

## Summary of CFS Side Event 31

### Global Dialogue on water tenure for water & food security, social inclusion, and climate resilience

Friday, 27 October; 8.30 – 9.45 (UTC+2)

Sheikh Zayed Center & via Zoom

#### Objectives:

- Raise awareness among CFS delegates on the importance of responsible governance of water tenure and its contribution to food and water security, climate resilience and social inclusion;
- Present recent advances in water tenure assessment coupled with water accounting to support design and implementation of equitable and climate-proof water allocation systems;
- Present the Global Dialogue on Water Tenure as an FAO commitment to the Water Action Agenda.

#### Speakers:

- Mr Lifeng Li, Director, Land and Water Division, FAO
- H.E. Muhamad Mardiono, Special Envoy of the President of the Republic of Indonesia for Poverty Alleviation and Food Security Cooperation
- Ms Susanne Schlaack, Director, Right of Food Division, Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Germany
- Ms Sofia Espinosa, Land and Water Specialist, Land Tenure Team, FAO
- Mr Benjamin Kiersch, Senior Water Specialist, Land and Water Division, FAO
- Mr Pedro Arrojo-Agudo, UN Special Rapporteur on Human Right to Water and Sanitation
- Ms Jessica Troell, Director, International Water Programme, Environmental Law Institute
- Ms Barbara Schreiner, Executive Director, Water Integrity Network
- Mr Alsaad Ndiazeye, Flood Control Officer, Rwanda Water Board, Rwanda
- Mr Michael Taylor, Executive Secretary, International Land Coalition
- Ms Rachael McDonnell, Deputy Director-General, International Water Management Institute
- Mr Sean Harverson, Director, Water Policy Division, Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australia
- Ms Caitlin Doughty, Global Water Strategy Associate, The Nature Conservancy
- Mr Srinivasa Reddy Srigiri, Senior Researcher, German Institute for Development and Sustainability
- Mr Carlos Alberto Gaitán Rodríguez, Territorial Coordinator, Organización nacional de los pueblos indígenas de la Amazonia Colombiana, OPIAC

**Moderator:** Ms Sasha Koo-Oshima, Deputy Director, Land and Water Division, FAO

## Summary:

The side event provided the opportunity for FAO and partners to raise awareness on the importance of equitable water tenure arrangements for food and water security, and to present the Global Dialogue on Water Tenure. Lifeng Li, Director of FAO's Land and Water Division, set the scene elaborating on the interlinked challenges to achieve both food and water security and the need for upscaled efforts and investments on water tenure. FAO will continue its work on water tenure, with the Global Dialogue on Water Tenure being one of FAO's eight commitments submitted to the Water Action Agenda.

H.E. Muhamad Mardiono, Special Envoy of the President of the Republic of Indonesia for Poverty Alleviation and Food Security Cooperation, underlined Indonesia's efforts to achieve SDG6 using science-based approaches to develop policies for clean drinking water and sanitation crucial for poverty reduction. He raised the importance for inclusive guidelines accompanied by necessary resource mobilization to ensure equitable access to water for all. With the World Water Forum 2024, Indonesia is providing a global platform for discussion and experience sharing on water tenure assessment, and building commitments to equitable access to water for all.

Ms Sofia Espinosa and Mr Benjamin Kiersch of FAO presented the definition and history of water tenure and the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT) as well the details of the Global Dialogue on Water Tenure. FAO invites all Members to get involved in the dialogue .

In her keynote presentation, Ms Susanne Schlaack, Director of the Right of Food Division of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture of Germany, elaborated on the interface between water tenure and human rights to food and water, presenting in more detail the new German funded FAO project 'ScaleWat', contributing to the Global Dialogue. Ms Schlaack highlighted the importance of discussing the process and outcomes of the Global Dialogue on Water Tenure in a well-functioning body like the CFS.

In the first session on Water Tenure and Social Inclusion, speakers raised the following points:

- Water tenure governance plays a crucial role to ensure that water rights are protected, especially for marginalized population groups.
- Discussions around water tenure should be based on a human rights approach, including multistakeholder platforms and civil society mechanisms.
- Governments should ensure equitable access to water to all through sound water governance arrangements, based on local needs assessments.
- Customary rights should be fully encompassed in water laws, which is often still not the case.
- Effective water accounting is key for successful water governance.

In the second session on Water tenure, food security and resilience, speakers raised the following points:

- the need for strong water tenure for fisheries and freshwater ecosystems, for achieving food security of marginalized population groups in the Global South, and for ensuring sustainable livelihoods, particularly focusing on indigenous peoples.
- Strong water tenure governance is key for both water and food security and resilience.
- Water, land and soil governance should be addressed in an integrated and interlinked manner.

- Water should be included in policy processes related to food security, using CFS as a well-functioning body to discuss water tenure.
- Water tenure governance needs a gender focus as women's land rights and water access are often interlinked
- There is a need to define principles for the responsible governance of water tenure including attention to prioritization of water access, and constitutional rights to water and food for all