



NOW from NORTH AMERICA



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March 8 is International Women's Day | March 21 is International Day of Forests

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“Women play an important role in agriculture and food systems. Achieving gender equality and empowering women are crucial ingredients in the fight against extreme poverty, hunger and malnutrition.”

- José Graziano da Silva
Director-General, FAO

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Dear Reader,

International Women's Day on March 8th calls upon all of us to rededicate ourselves to alleviate hardships that women and girls disproportionately face, especially in the agricultural sector. It is also a day when we celebrate their strengths and successes amidst extremely challenging conditions. To highlight the importance of closing the gender gap in agriculture, FAO's Liaison Office for North America in partnership with the Center for Strategic International Studies will host an event entitled “Celebrating Women and Girls: Change Agents for Food and Nutrition Security in Conflict Settings” later this month.

On March 21st, we will recognize the International Day of Forests under the theme “Forests and Sustainable Cities.” We invite you to join the global celebration of this day by sharing a picture of your favorite tree or urban forest using the hashtag #IntlForestDay on social media. FAO North America will mark the day by participating in a panel discussion following the world premiere of the film “Backyard Wilderness” at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum.

In the month gone by, FAO North America in partnership with EcoAgriculture Partners emphasized the decisive role that sustainable land management plays in addressing climate change by launching a high-level speaker series called “Toward Sustainable Landscapes.” Furthermore, we organized an engaging roundtable with the Alliance to End Hunger featuring participants from the World Bank, the Brookings Institution and Bread for the World to deliberate on “Urgent Policy Priorities: Preparing Food and Agriculture Systems for a Changing World.”

Many of you have reached out to us with ideas and suggestions for making our newsletter even more informative and relevant. We thank you for your feedback and look forward to incorporating it into our current and future editions.

Sincerely,

Vimlendra Sharan

Director, FAO Liaison Office for North America

NEWS FROM THE FAO LIAISON OFFICE FOR NORTH AMERICA

Integrated Landscapes - Key to Achieve Climate and Sustainable Development Goals



From right to left: Kathleen Merrigan, Vimlendra Sharan, Paula Caballero, Leonard Jordan, Sara Scherr and Anne Bartuska.

12 February 2018, Washington, DC - FAO North America and EcoAgriculture Partners co-hosted the inaugural session of a new high-level speaker series entitled “Toward Sustainable Landscapes” at the National Press Club. The series aims to highlight the multiple benefits of adopting an integrated landscape management approach to achieve sustainable food and agricultural systems, while addressing the impacts of climate change.

Vimlendra Sharan, Director, FAO North America, provided opening remarks noting that food production practices can be undermined by the degradation of soils and land upon which all agriculture depends. He highlighted that FAO is focused on improving the efficiency of food systems, conserving natural resources, building livelihoods and improving human wellbeing, enhancing the resilience of communities and ecosystems, and promoting good governance.

Paula Caballero, Global Director of the World Resource Institute’s Climate Program, launched the series by delivering a keynote address. She emphasized that the global community must both reduce greenhouse gas emissions and remove excess carbon from the atmosphere in order to achieve the Paris climate agreement and limit the global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. This will entail afforestation, restoration, and agroforestry, as well as sustainable land management.

“We must focus on what is the only tried, tested, and cost effective negative emissions technology that’s out there—trees and soil.” - Paula Caballero

A panel discussion moderated by **Sara Scherr**, President and CEO of EcoAgriculture Partners, followed the address. Speakers included **Kathleen Merrigan**, Director of the George Washington University’s Food Institute; **Anne Bartuska**, Vice President of Land, Water, and Nature at Resources for the Future; and **Leonard Jordan**, Acting Chief of the Natural Resource Conservation Service. The event explored the role of integrated landscape management in achieving policy objectives for agriculture, environment, and development, as well as how national and local policymakers can help landscape initiatives become more successful. [Click here](#) to learn more about the event.

2018 AgVocacy: Working Towards Achieving Sustainable Food Production

26 February 2018, Anaheim, CA - The 13th Bayer AgVocacy Forum took place in Anaheim, California from 25 to 26 February. The annual event brings together leaders from across many industries, including technology, food, government and agriculture, who share the common goal of working toward achieving sustainable food production. The focus of this year’s forum was on innovation and collaboration.

FAO was represented by the North America Director **Vimlendra Sharan** who along with his co-panelist **Julie Reynes** of the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research discussed “Working Together to Feed a Growing Planet.” In his remarks, Sharan highlighted FAO’s work to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), particularly SDG 2 by 2030, and underlined the need for effective partnerships to address the task at hand. He also stressed the need to strengthen trust between the scientific community, consumers and farmers, for the quick and efficient adoption of modern technology to enhance productivity, especially by smallholder farmers. [Watch highlights](#) from the conference.

Robust Animal Disease Preparedness Critical for Food Security

23 February 2018, Washington, DC - **Dominique Burgeon**, Director of FAO’s Emergency and Rehabilitation Division, spoke at the US Department of Agriculture’s 94th Agricultural Outlook Forum. The Forum, USDA’s largest annual meeting, serves as a platform for dialogue among producers, processors, policymakers, government officials, and both international and domestic NGOs. At the Forum, Burgeon underscored the potentially enormous impact of infectious disease outbreaks, which could cost an estimated USD 7.3 trillion and lead to as much as 140 million human deaths if sufficient monitoring and preventative actions are not implemented.



Dominique Burgeon speaking at USDA’s Agriculture Forum

NEWS FROM THE FAO LIAISON OFFICE FOR NORTH AMERICA

Preparing Our Food and Agriculture Systems for a Changing World



Thought leaders from diverse institutions discuss policy priorities for urgent challenges facing the global food and agriculture systems.

15 February 2018, Washington, DC - FAO North America and the Alliance to End Hunger hosted a roundtable titled, "Urgent Policy Priorities: Preparing Food and Agriculture Systems for a Changing World." The event, moderated by **Rebecca Middleton**, Executive Director, Alliance to End Hunger, brought together thought leaders from diverse institutions to deliberate on the most pressing challenges facing global food and agriculture systems. A highly esteemed panel representing key leaders from the World Bank, the Brookings Institution and FAO offered their insights on possible solutions.

Ren Wang, Assistant Director-General of FAO's Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department, opened the roundtable by highlighting FAO's efforts to increase the quantity and quality of food globally, while recognizing the impact of climate change on food production. He stressed the important role FAO plays in helping smallholder farmers improve the resilience of their production system through a range of technical assistance programs at the local, national and regional level.

David Beckmann, President of the Alliance to End Hunger, spoke about the leadership role that the United States Government has played in global food and nutrition security. He urged that now is not the time for the United States to withdraw its commitment for food and nutrition security programs noting that the number of fragile states is on the rise.

Martien Van Nieuwkoop, Director of the World Bank's Agriculture Practice, highlighted the key decision made at the Marrakesh Climate Conference (COP22) which placed agriculture on the climate agenda, and as a vital means for mitigation and adaptation. He also showcased ways that countries can eliminate food waste, a contributor to climate change.

John McArthur, Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, discussed the need for reliable data to support policy-making. He emphasized the lack of sufficient data to benchmark how countries are tackling hunger, especially on Sustainable Development Goal 2 on "Zero Hunger," where some of data on the indicators are not adequate. He stressed that investment in data gathering and analysis should be prioritized by decision-makers and donors for good policy decisions to be made.

Read more about FAO's work to [enable inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems](#) and [Climate Change](#).

Partner Corner: CSIS Global Food Security Project

In this section, FAO's Liaison Office for North America invites a different partner organization each month to comment on how the partnership has benefitted both organizations.

CSIS | CENTER FOR STRATEGIC & INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

The Global Food Security Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) provides policy analysis on U.S. foreign assistance programming that addresses hunger, poverty and malnutrition. Through desk and field research, forward-looking analyses, and public and private events, the project builds bipartisan awareness about global food security and its importance to U.S. strategic interests.

"Our partnership with FAO North America seeks to increase awareness among U.S. policymakers and the wider policy community of current global food security trends, the importance of long-term agricultural development, and the United Nations leadership role in this space. We convene experts, government officials, academics, and the private sector to discuss cutting-edge agricultural and nutrition development issues through large public forums and private roundtables.

FAO North America has long been a critical thought leader in the DC community and we are honored to have the opportunity to collaborate with them through a formal partnership. Through our joint events, we are able to highlight the important work FAO is doing both at the international level and within the policy space here in Washington, DC"

– CSIS Global Food Security Project

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FAO NORTH AMERICA EVENTS & TAX CORNER

FAO NORTH AMERICA EVENTS IN MARCH

What	When	Where	RSVP
3rd Geographical Indications Roundtable	Tuesday, 6 March 2018 9:00 - 10:30 AM	FAO Liaison Office for North America, 2121 K Street, Suite 800B, NW, Washington, DC	For more information, contact: Edona.Dervisholli@fao.org
5th Anniversary of the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGTs)	Monday, 19 March 2018 2:00 - 3:30 PM	FAO Liaison Office for North America, 2121 K Street, Suite 800B, NW, Washington, DC	To RSVP, email: Gabriel.Laizer@fao.org
Toward Sustainable Landscapes: Agroecology	Tuesday, 27 March 2018 8:30 - 11:00 AM	FAO Liaison Office for North America, 2121 K Street, Suite 800B, NW, Washington, DC	To RSVP, email: Gabriel.Laizer@fao.org
Celebrating Women and Girls: Change Agents for Food and Nutrition Security in Conflict Settings	Wednesday, 28 March 2018 9:00 - 10:30 AM	Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1616 Rhode Island Ave NW, Washington, DC	For more information, contact: Gabriel.Laizer@fao.org

TAX CORNER

This section provides important updates from the tax unit located at the FAO Liaison Office for North America, which processes tax reimbursement requests by FAO, World Food Programme (WFP), and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) staff members.

Requirements for applications for reimbursement or advances to pay estimated taxes

A staff member who is a United States citizen or a permanent resident, as a rule, is subject to taxation by the United States on his/her earnings from FAO, WFP or IFAD. Staff members are personally responsible to ascertain and meet their legal obligations, if any, arising under United States federal, state and municipal income tax legislation.

A staff member who is liable for such taxes and who wishes to claim reimbursement, must apply for reimbursement or for advances to pay estimated taxes. Staff members claiming reimbursement are required to make maximum use of all exemptions, adjustments to income, and deductions in order to minimize his/her tax liability.

FAO staff members can now access their 2017 Statement of Earnings (ADM148) in the HR Employee module in GRMS. Please ensure that the information listed on the ADM148 are valid and reflect earnings received.

IRS Due Dates for Estimate Tax Payments:

- 1st Quarter – 17 April 2018
- 2nd Quarter – 15 June 2018
- 3rd Quarter – 17 September 2018
- 4th Quarter – 15 January 2019

NEWS FROM FAO HEADQUARTERS

Tackling humanitarian crises with relief assistance and development actions

26 February 2018, Riyadh - The international community needs to intervene more swiftly in humanitarian crises in ways that support affected farmers, pastoralists, fishers and other food producers, stressed FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva at the [First International Humanitarian Forum](#) held in the capital of Saudi Arabia.

"The international community has not been effective enough in its response to humanitarian crises. To improve results, we need to better combine humanitarian assistance with development actions on the ground," said Graziano da Silva.

While humanitarian funding requirements nearly tripled from USD 8.5 billion in 2013 to USD 22 billion in 2018, agriculture has been one of the least-funded sectors under the UN's 2017 humanitarian appeal. This is despite the growing evidence that investing in agriculture is a fundamental and cost-effective way to respond to crises. [Read more](#)



FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva (fourth from left) at the Riyadh Humanitarian Forum.

Celebrate International Day of Forests on 21 March

Urban trees and forests can help transform our cities, making them greener, healthier and happier places to live. To showcase how green spaces can improve urban environments, this year's [International Day of Forests](#) will focus on "Forests and Sustainable Cities." Join global celebrations on 21 March by sharing a picture of your favorite tree or urban forest with the hashtag #IntlForestDay on social media. Photos of activities taking place around the world will be featured on the official homepage for the day. To share your story, email IDF@fao.org.

Green Climate Fund approves first FAO funding proposal to combat climate change in Paraguay

27 February 2018, Rome - The [Green Climate Fund](#) (GCF) has approved a USD 90 million climate change adaptation and mitigation project jointly developed by FAO and the Government of Paraguay. The project aims to decrease the adverse effects of climate change, while reducing rural poverty, combating deforestation, and mitigating greenhouse gas emissions. [Read more](#)

FAO and OECD call for responsible investment in agriculture

16 February 2018, Paris - The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and FAO launched a pilot project in Paris to kick-start the practical application of the "OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains" with 30 leading enterprises. The project aims to improve the implementation of the Guidance and internationally-agreed standards on responsible production, sourcing and supply chain management in the agricultural sector.

Enterprises involved in the agricultural sector are critical for the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals through playing a key role in generating much-needed investment, decent employment, developing productivity and supply chains that benefit producers and consumers. At the same time, business activities in this sector can undermine this potential when their operations or supply chains negatively impact workers, human rights, the environment, food security, nutrition, and tenure rights. [Read more](#)

Reaching an important milestone in reducing dangerous "ghost gear"

9 February 2018, Rome - In a historic decision, countries agreed on a set of draft "Voluntary Guidelines on Marking Fishing Gear" taking a big step forward towards cleaner seas and safer navigation. It is expected that the guidelines will receive final endorsement by FAO's Committee on Fisheries (COFI) in July 2018.

Made predominantly of plastic, fishing gear, when abandoned, lost or discarded at sea, is a significant component of marine debris. Approximately eight million tonnes of plastic litter, up to ten percent of which is estimated to come from the fisheries sector, ends up in our oceans every year.

The guidelines will help countries develop effective systems for marking fishing gear so that it can be traced back to its original owner. Doing so will support efforts to reduce marine debris and its harmful impacts on the marine environment, fish stocks, and safe navigation. [Read more](#)

SELECT NEW FAO PUBLICATIONS

Major releases from 2017



From the annual hunger report, re-gearred to provide a broader understanding of food security and nutrition, to the first in a new series on the future of food and agriculture, FAO produced over 700 publications in 2017. Access all publications through our [Publications catalogue 2017](#).

New E-learning courses on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators

With the aim of assisting countries in the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, FAO released an innovative series of e-learning courses on the SDG indicators.

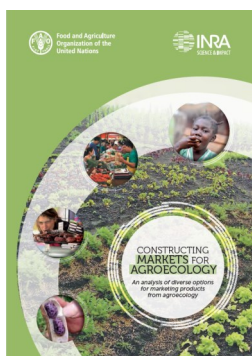
FAO is the custodian agency for 21 SDG indicators, and partner agency in four other indicators, all related to FAO's vision for food security, nutrition, sustainable agriculture and the sustainable management of natural resources.

The e-learning products will strengthen national capacities in collecting, analyzing, monitoring and reporting of these indicators. The first set of courses focus on: the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES); the agriculture orientation index; food price anomalies; equal tenure rights for women on agricultural land; ensuring women's legal rights to land ownership and/or control; level of water stress; and securing sustainable small-scale fisheries.

The first eight courses are already available online, free of charge, through the [FAO e-learning center](#).



Constructing markets for agroecology



An analysis of diverse options for marketing products from agroecology

This study explores whether and how products from agroecological production systems are being valued in markets. Based on a meta-analysis of 12 case studies, mainly from developing and emerging countries, and one developed country, the publication provides a unique approach to understanding how markets are constructed for agroecological products. Read the publication [here](#).

ACCESS FAO PUBLICATIONS [HERE](#).

FAO AND THE UNITED STATES & CANADA

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has deep roots in North America. The Organization was conceived of during a meeting in Hot Springs, Virginia, United States in 1943 and its first headquarters was located in Washington, DC. In 1945, FAO was formally established as a specialized agency by the newly created United Nations during its very first session, which was held in Quebec City, Canada. FAO's headquarters was permanently moved to Rome, Italy in 1951. The FAO Liaison Office for North America based in Washington, DC continues to strengthen the Organization's partnership with Canada and the United States.

FAO shares with Canada and the United States a vision of how to achieve a world without hunger and poverty. Both member states have been working closely with FAO since its inception more than 70 years ago. Canada and the United States both play critically important leadership roles within FAO and they are also among the Organization's largest financial supporters.

FAO's Liaison Office for North America works to support and implement FAO policies and programs through strategic partnerships with governments and other key stakeholders based in Canada and the United States, including civil society organizations, multilateral institutions, research centers and think tanks, the private sector, philanthropic foundations and the media.

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