



## FAO Reference Centres

### Declaration of interest

**Name of the designated FAO Reference Centre:**

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Scientific, social and economic considerations relating to nutrition, food and agriculture are of primary importance in all FAO technical work. Proactive measures need to be taken to ensure that the best possible assessment of scientific evidence and in its practical application is achieved in an independent atmosphere free of either direct or indirect pressure. Thus, to assure the technical integrity, neutrality and transparency of FAO's work, it is necessary to avoid situations in which financial or other interests might affect the outcome of that work.

The head of the designated FAO Reference Centre is therefore requested, on behalf of the said Centre, to declare any interests of the Centre or its employees and/or partners that could constitute an actual, potential or apparent conflict of interest with respect to its involvement in the agreed work plan with FAO.

For the purposes of this Declaration, the term "private sector entity" is defined as a broad array of entities, ranging from farmers, fishers, MSMEs (including cooperatives, farmers/fishers/producers' organizations and social enterprises), large firms, domestic and multinational companies, philanthropic foundations, state-owned enterprises and consortiums, organizations or foundations largely funded or governed by private entities.<sup>1</sup>

### What is a conflict of interest?

A "conflict of interest" is where the interests of a third party interfere or exert undue influence – or appear or may be reasonably perceived to interfere or exert undue influence – over FAO's interests or decision-making processes, or call into question its integrity, independence, or impartiality. This includes, but is not limited to, instances where:

- a) the Centre has a financial or other interest that could unduly influence the Centre's position with respect to the subject matter being considered or work being undertaken (an actual conflict of interest);
- b) an interest would not necessarily influence the work of the Centre but could result in the Centre's objectivity being questioned by others (an apparent conflict of interest); or
- c) any reasonable person is uncertain whether an interest should be reported or not (a potential conflict of interest).

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<sup>1</sup> The applicable definition is as set out in the *FAO Strategy for Private Sector Engagement 2021-2025*, as updated, amended, or replaced from time to time.

Different types of financial or other interests can be envisaged and the following list, which is not exhaustive, is provided for guidance. For example, the following types of situations should be declared:

1. a current proprietary interest in a substance, technology or process (e.g. ownership of a patent), to be considered in – or otherwise related to the subject matter of – the work being conducted;
2. a current financial interest (e.g. shares or bonds) in a private sector entity with an interest in the subject matter of the work;
3. a consultancy (or other form of employment) during the past four (4) years, whether or not paid, in any private sector entity which has an interest in the subject matter of the work, or an on-going negotiation concerning prospective work or other association with such private sector entity;
4. performance of any paid work or research during the past four (4) years commissioned by a private sector entity with interests in the subject matter of the work; and/or
5. payment or other support covering a period within the past four (4) years, or an expectation of support for the future, from a private sector entity with an interest in the subject matter of the work, even if it does not convey any benefit but which benefits the administration of the Centre (e.g. a grant or fellowship or other payment for the purpose of financing a post or consultancy).

With respect to the above, an interest in a competing substance, technology or process, or an interest in or association with, work for or support by a private sector entity having a direct competitive interest must similarly be disclosed.

### **How to complete this Declaration**

Please complete this Declaration and submit it (attach additional sheets if necessary) to the FAO technical unit with whom the Centre is in contact. Any financial or other interests that could constitute an actual, potential or apparent conflict of interest should be declared. Only the name of the private sector entity and the nature of the interest are required to be disclosed, and no amounts nor any confidential proprietary information need to be specified (although they may be if this information is considered to be relevant to assessing the interest). With respect to items 1 and 2 in the above list, the interest should only be declared if it is current. With respect to items 3, 4 and 5, any interest during the past four (4) years should be declared. If the interest is no longer current, please state the year when it ceased. With respect to item 5, the interest ceases when a financed post or fellowship is no longer occupied, or when support for an activity ceases.

### **Due diligence**

The information submitted by the Centre will be used to assess whether the information declared constitute an appreciable actual, potential or apparent conflict of interest. Such conflict of interest will, depending on the situation, result in: (i) the Centre being asked not to take part in the portion of the work or discussion affecting that interest; (ii) being asked not to take part in the work altogether; or (iii) if deemed by FAO to be appropriate to the particular circumstances and with the agreement of the Centre, taking part in the work and the Centre's interest being publicly disclosed.

FAO will maintain information disclosed on this Declaration form in confidence and will process it in accordance with FAO's internal rules, regulations, policies and procedures concerning data protection. Information disclosed on this form will not be made available to any person(s) outside of FAO without the agreement of the Centre.

**[INSERT FULL NAME OF THE CONCERNED INSTITUTION]**

**DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Has *[insert full name of the concerned institution]* any financial or other interest in the subject matter of the work in which it will be involved, which may be considered as constituting an actual, potential or apparent conflict of interest?

**Yes:**  **No:**  **If yes, please give details in the box below.**

Type of interest, e.g. patent, shares, employment, association, payment (including details on any compound, work, etc.)	Name of private sector entity	Belongs to the Centre?	Current interest? (or year ceased)

Is there anything else that could affect the Centre’s objectivity or independence in this work, or the perception by others of its objectivity and independence?

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I hereby declare, on behalf of the Centre, that the disclosed information is correct and that no other situation of actual, potential or apparent conflict of interest is known to the Centre.

I undertake to inform FAO of any change in these circumstances, including if an issue arises during the course of the agreed work plan.

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Signature Date

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Head of the Centre Seal of the Centre