

GLOBAL WORKSHOP ON WATER, AGRICULTURE AND CLIMATE CHANGE

17 OCTOBER 2022

LIFENG LI, NSL DIRECTOR

Excellency Under-Secretary-General Ms Algayerova,
Mr. Ollikainen of Adaptation Fund,
Co-chairs of this Workshop Ms. Vermont and Mr. Vlaanderen,
Distinguished participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,
A very good morning to you all from Rome!

1. It is a great pleasure to join you today and bring FAO's contributions to such a crucial and urgent discussion on water, agriculture and climate change.
2. Climate extremes in 2022 have hit the world at unprecedented levels. In Africa, Australia, America and the Caribbean, and Asia, floods took life of thousands of people, destroyed villages and infrastructure, and affected crop and livestock production. While the unprecedented droughts in US, Canada, China, horn of Africa, Europe also have massive impacts on people's livelihood and agriculture.
3. In addition to climate change, other pressures on productive water ecosystems are also intensifying at alarming rates, such as population growth, urbanization, changes in dietary patterns.
4. Feed the world with 50 percent more food in 2050 will need at least 35 percent more water. Producing "more crop per drop" is an absolute necessity and it is totally possible.
5. As illustrated in FAO report on "The state of the world's land and water resources for food and agriculture", land and water systems are stretched to their productive limits.

6. Human-induced land degradation, water scarcity and impacts of climate change are increasingly restraining the productivity of agricultural systems and enhancing food insecurity.
7. Water scarce drylands already cover around 41 percent of Earth's land surface and host more than 2 billion people, whose food security is increasingly under threat. Every year, drought directly affect around 55 million people. It represents the most serious hazard to livestock and crops in nearly every part of the world.
8. Both urban and rural livelihoods worldwide are already experiencing the harshest consequences. In 2021, the number of people experiencing hunger increase again.
9. So, what shall be done and how they could be done differently?
10. The recent publication of FAO on drought financing highlighted the need for proactive investments to enhance drought risk assessment and preparedness and prevent extreme climate events from reversing development gains.
11. Achieving relevant SDGs Goals requires groundbreaking approaches to respond to the growing demand for agri-food products without further compromising the quantity and quality of land and water resources.
12. Transformation to MORE efficient, more inclusive, more resilient and more sustainable agri-food systems is urgently needed, which has been articulated in the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031, so as to achieve Better Production, Better Nutrition, a Better Environment and a Better Life, leaving no one behind. Towards this objective, FAO will implement a suite of programmatic initiatives to address the interlinked land-water-agriculture-climate-environment nexus.
13. 1. Based on our very successful WaPOR (water productivity) project funded by the Netherlands, we will start soon the **Soil-Land-Water Information System (SoLaWiSe) initiative** that will build a global information system at crop level and provide near real time information derived from remote sensing. Such a system can be used by both decision-makers and farmers in the field, so as to improve resources' management and informed decision making.
14. 2. Build upon the Global Framework of Water Scarcity in Agriculture, our new AWSAME initiative - "**Addressing Water Scarcity for Agriculture and Environment**" will promote innovative practices and digital tools for climate resilient agriculture, inducing the promotion of drought resilient, nutritious and indigenous crops.

15. 3. Developing multiple uses of water through a twin-track approach, as illustrated in the “**SMART irrigation-SMART WASH**” proposal, represents the corporate solution to enhance irrigation and provide WASH facilities, responding to the global One Health initiative. In response to the increasing frequency and severity of droughts, FAO will launch a global assessment of irrigation needs in the new context of climate change and food. Such assessment will be providing the first-hand information to both countries and international financial institutions to inform their investment in the future.
16. 4. Equitable and inclusive land and water governance contributes to sustainable food systems. Built on FAO’s works on land tenure, we will also launch a **Global Dialogue on Water Tenure**, to share experience from countries, identify knowledge gaps, promote the needed institutional and policy arrangement to advance water tenure as a water management tool.
17. 5. In the running up to UN 2023 Water Conference, FAO proposed and will continue to support the development of country-owned **National Water Roadmaps** through a country-led water dialogue process. We believe such a Roadmap will be able to strengthen national decision-making on water management to support the delivery of SDG6 and all other relevant SDGs. FAO will also host Rome Water Dialogue on 29 Nov. to further discuss the National Water Roadmap as well the possible actions and commitment that agrifood sector could contribute to a water secure future. I look forward to welcoming you in November in Rome.
18. Lastly, the rapid deterioration of land and water resources urgently require increased investments to restore the systems and bring them back to healthy and productive levels.
19. FAO works in partnership with development banks, climate funds, and the private sector to promote responsible and highly **sustainable investments** in land and water management, for effective investments in climate mitigation and adaptation in agriculture sector.
20. Dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, in responding the massive water challenge as we experienced this year, in preparing for the upcoming UNFCCC CoP27 and UN 2023 Water Conference, this workshop is very timing and strategic and hope our messages could be conveyed to those events. I will also make sure the messages of this workshop will also be shared in FAO systems, such as the Council in December and the Conference next year.
21. I thank you again for your invitation, and we at FAO would continue to collaborate with all of you, your institution and your countries to address the

challenges so to achieve water secure and food secure world with a stabilize climate. I wish you a very productive and successful workshop!