European Commission

Towards a long-term strategy for European agricultural research and innovation by 2020 and beyond

Speakers and moderators

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Agriculture and Rural Development

Ann TUTWILER is the Director General of Bioversity International, one of the institutes of the CGIAR (Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research) and a global research-for-development organization focused on using and safeguarding agricultural and tree biodiversity to attain sustainable global food and nutrition security. Ms Tutwiler has almost 30 years of experience in agricultural policy and development working in the public and private sectors. She was formerly the Special Representative of the Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in Geneva, and served as FAO Deputy Director General for Knowledge. Previously, she worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Hewlett Foundation and a multinational agribusiness firm. In 2002, she co-founded a global think tank in agricultural trade policy. She holds a master's degree from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and a bachelor's degree from Davidson College.

Jerzy PLEWA was appointed in April 2013 as Director-General of Agriculture and Rural Development after having successively held the position of Deputy Director General responsible for Rural Development and Deputy Director General in in charge of international affairs. Born in Poland, Mr Plewa holds a PhD from the Warsaw University of Technology, Faculty of Power and Aeronautical Engineering specializing in mathematical modelling of systems and equipment for energy production. From 1997 until 2004, Mr Plewa was Under-Secretary of State at the Polish Ministry of Agriculture, where he was responsible for negotiations on agriculture issues and participated as chief negotiator of agricultural affairs in the negotiation of Poland's accession to the EU.

Erik MATHIJS is Professor of Agricultural and Resource Economics at the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences of the University of Leuven, Belgium. His research focuses on innovation processes and more particularly on how to enable the transition towards a sustainable agricultural and food system. He was rapporteur of the SCAR 3rd foresight ("Sustainable food consumption and production in a resource-constrained world") and is the chair the 4th Foresight Exercise of SCAR, the EU's Standing Committee on Agricultural Research.

John R. PORTER is an agricultural scientist and educator in crop physiology, modelling and agricultural ecology. His contribution has been multi-disciplinary, highly international and collaborative in the response of crops and agro-ecosystems to their environment, emphasizing climate change and ecosystem services. He has published more than 120 papers in reviewed journals, receiving two international prizes for his research. His H index since 1995 is 31, with ca. 80% of his papers cited more than 10 and 30% more than 40 times. His 35-year career has been innovative, inclusive, long-lasting in its impacts, international and relevant for society. He led the writing of the important chapter for the IPCC 5th Assessment Report on food production systems and food security and contributed to the AR5 chapter on GHG mitigation in agriculture. He has been a prime driver of European and international teaching and use of e-learning in agriculture sciences, winning two prizes for this work.

Niels HALBERG is the director of two research-coordinating centres, the Danish Centre for Food and Agriculture (DCA; http://dca.au.dk/en/) and the International Centre for Research in Organic Food Systems (ICROFS; www.icrofs.org). DCA is the umbrella for research in Agro-ecology, plant and livestock production and food at Aarhus University and provides advice to the Food Ministry under a 35 mio. Euro contract. DCA also coordinates a research platform for Biorefinery and bioenergy, BioBase. Dr Halberg is the overall coordinator of several organic research programs (Danish OrganicRDD I and II; European ERA-net Core Organic with 21 partners; East African ProGrov). He is Chair of the European Commission's Advisory Group for Societal Challenge 2, Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine and maritime and inland water research, and the bioeconomy. Dr. Halberg has more than 20 years of experience in the research and modelling of organic and conventional farming systems including agronomy, economics, resource use and environmental impact mainly based on on-farm research in Denmark and European countries and since 2000 also in countries such as China, Sri Lanka, Brazil and Uganda.

Marta HUGAS Head of EFSA's Risk Assessment and Scientific Assistance Department (RASA). The Department carries out risk assessments on general health and safety priorities in areas such as biological hazards, chemical contaminants, plant health and animal health and welfare. The RASA department is also in charge of the methodological development, exposure assessment and data collection activities. She joined EFSA in 2003 to give scientific coordination support to the Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards. Prior to joining EFSA, she worked for the Institute for Food and Agricultural Research and Technology (IRTA) in Spain, where she was Head of the Food Microbiology and Biotechnology Unit and led a research group on applied research on meat and food safety. Dr. Hugas holds a BSc in biological sciences, an MSc in genetics and microbial biotechnology and a PhD in food microbiology. From 1992 to 2004 she was an Associate Professor at the University of Barcelona. She has published many scientific papers and reviews, and contributed to books and papers on food safety, particularly regarding the development of starter and bioprotective cultures for meat products, probiotics to improve the safety of poultry meat, and emerging preservation technologies.

Richard WAKEFORD is a champion for sustainable rural development and land use - passionate about bringing relevant science and evidence to government policy making. His last full time role was as Director General of the Scottish Government's Environment and Rural Department. Previously he was Chief Executive of the Countryside Agency creating innovative approaches to deliver living, working communities in rural England. He was active in the OECD's Rural Working Party, including five years as its Chair - leading research reports informing governments about territorial development in rural areas in particular. Since leaving government service, Richard has been chair of the UK Sustainable Development Research Network, a Board Member of the Cotswolds Area of Natural Beauty Conservation Board, and a town councilor in a small country town. He has also been Science Policy Advisor to a major EU Project led by Wageningen University focusing on future land use in Europe. Richard is a Visiting Professor at Birmingham City University, advisor to the Countryside and Communities Research Institute and Director of the Kazan Federal (Russian) University's Centre for Land Use and Sustainable Rural Development. He is an honorary life member of the Royal Town Planning Institute and a trustee of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors Research Trust.

Krijn J. POPPE is a business economist working in the research management of the Agricultural Economics Research Institute (LEI) of Wageningen University and Research Centre, located in The Hague, the Netherlands. He is involved in the management of several large, multidisciplinary research projects for the EU. He co-chairs the collaborative working group AKIS (Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems) of the EU's Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR). Current research interest focus on agricultural policy issues, monitoring, the agricultural knowledge and innovation system, cooperatives and ICT. From 2009 to 2011 he worked part-time as Chief Science Officer at the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation. Krijn J. Poppe was for 12 years (1999-2011) Secretary-General of the European Association of Agricultural Economists. He is honorary secretary-treasurer of the European Agricultural and Applied Economics Publications Foundation Foundation, chairs the Steering Group of the journal EuroChoices, chairs the foundation eRNAC on research concerning cooperatives. He co-owns a small arable family farm.

Claudia SORLINI is a Professor of Agricultural Microbiology at the University of Milan, Department of Food Science, environment and nutrition. She is author of numerous publications on international journals, has co-ordinated European and national projects on environmental issues, agriculture and bioenergy. She is also committed to international cooperation, under which she coordinated a master's degree and a research project on agriculture in arid areas at the University of Ain Shams, Cairo (Egypt) and currently coordinates a committee supervising the Faculty of Agriculture of Makeni (Sierra Leone), which she helped to establish. At present she is the scientific responsible for the University of Milan of the European project on women and science and has been involved, right from the application stage in cultural activities at EXPO 2015.

Hans R. HERREN's main research and development interests and achievements are in holistic, integrated and sustainable agriculture and food systems. He managed agriculture and bio-science research organizations and is now active at the policy development level. He has been the President and CEO since May 2005 of the Millennium Institute USA and has occupied before that the following functions: Chief Executive and Director General, 1994 – 2004 of the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE) Kenya; Director of Biological Control Program and Director of Plant Health Management Division from 1979 to 1994 at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) Nigeria; Coordinator of the Agriculture chapter of the UNEP Green Economy Report, 2011 and of the UNEP Report on the Ecological Bases of Food Security, 2012; Co-Chair of the International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD), 2003-2009. He is laureate of the Right Livelihood Award 2013, World Food Prize 1995, Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement 2003 and Foreign Associate in US National Academy of Sciences in 1999. He has been a Member of the Third World Academy of Sciences since 2005.

Albert Jan MAAT is the President of the Dutch national farmers' union LTO Nederland, of the European Committee of agricultural professional organisations (COPA) and of AGRITERRA, an agency involved in international cooperation which was co-funded by rural civil society organisations and the agricultural private sector. He has occupied several positions in farmers' organisations at local,regional and national levels from 1977 to 1999. He has in particular been involved in the managing committee of the experimental poultry farm "North Netherlands", of the ICCO and of the Groninger Landschap interest and conservation group. He has also been involved in various management functions in education, such as president of the Supervisory Board of Agricultural schools such as AOC Terra, Dollard College and 'Onderwijsgroep Noord'. He has been a Member of the European Parliament from 1999 to 2007 and occupied various functions such as Vice-President of the Committee for agriculture and rural development, the Committee for international trade, the parliamentary delegation for Central Asia and the temporary committee of inquiry into the foot and mouth disease. He has been a rapporteur for the European Parliament on issues like animal transport, school milk, agricultural budget and multi-year budget for agriculture and rural development 2007-2013, trade treaty with Turkmenistan, resolutions on Kazakhstan and Central Asia.

Anna GROSMANOVÁ is a student at the University of Life Sciences in Prague, Faculty of Agrobiology Food and Natural Resources, Department of Products Quality, focusing on biodiversity, old animal breeds and also biologically active compounds and food conservation. She is also a food blogger and author. She is the leader and founder of the international Slow Food Youth Network "convivium" in Prague, which organises events focusing on food waste, educating youth in food quality and sensory analysis, urban gardening, guerrilla gardening and sustainable lifestyle in general. She is also the founder of the Food hub, an incubator which provides gastronomical start-ups with a legal production place and support. The project has been running since 2014 and faces some challenges. Until now it has developed a strong network of similarly thinking gastronomes who search for easier ways of starting up their businesses. It focuses on start-ups that in some way sympathise with overall Slow Food ideology.

Hervé GUYOMARD is scientific director for agriculture and director of research at the French National Institute for Agronomic Research (INRA). His research deals with the economic and environmental analysis of European and French agricultural systems, and the study of the Common Agricultural Policy (PAC) and of its impacts on agricultural markets and incomes. Other research interests include the analysis of world food security issues.

Janny VOS is CABI's Strategic Partnerships Director, which is a global role and includes managing the liaison between CABI and its key donors as well as quality assuring CABI's donor-funded work. Dr Vos is a specialist in Integrated Crop Management by training, and has specialized in participatory approaches to agricultural extension and research. She has developed training modules for discovery learning about sustainable production of various annual and perennial crops, among which vegetables, cocoa and apple, but has also been involved in supporting and implementing policies on phase-out of hazardous pesticides. Dr Vos worked for the Dutch government (DGIS) in Indonesia and subsequently with CABI, initially based in Malaysia, thereafter in UK and now in the Netherlands. Dr Vos has produced over 20 research articles, manuals and books in the areas of integrated crop management / sustainable agriculture, and farmer training and adoption. She has also written numerous discussion papers on pesticide issues in crop production.

Aldo LONGO is Director responsible for "General aspects of rural development and research" at the European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development. After graduating as an agronomist at the University of Naples, he started his career in the Cabinet of the Italian Minister for Agriculture. He joined the European Commission in 1984 and has held positions of increasing responsibility. He has experience in all the main areas of the Common Agricultural Policy, notably agricultural markets, international affairs, management of resources and rural development, being a key player in horizontal and sectorial agricultural policy developments.