
ESCWA Technology Centre (ETC)

Technology and Innovation for Agricultural Development, 15 October 2018
Eighth Scientific Agricultural Conference (ESAC-2018)
(Mutah University, Karak, Jordan 15-17 Oct 2018)

Information Note

I. Background

Food security issues in the Arab region are facing serious challenges including water scarcity, arid climate and population growth along with ongoing conflicts. Local agriculture remains vital for food security and is tied closely with livelihoods of the rural poor, many of whom are women. Arab countries have implemented strategies to improve food availability through local production complemented by imports and recently through foreign land deals. Despite the successes achieved, these strategies had drawbacks, including for example putting a heavy toll on the scarce resources or making countries dependent on wildly changing global markets and commodity prices. As a result, experts are increasingly calling for the region to focus on utilizing green technologies to support the regional agricultural development. Green agricultural technologies are expected to address issues of water productivity, production efficiency, and aridity. In addition, technologies will assist in enhancing the resilience of the agriculture sector to the impact of climate change.

In that context, ESCWA is supporting the Eighth Scientific Agricultural Conference (ESAC-2018) entitled "Agricultural Challenges and Sustainable Development" organized by the Faculty of Agriculture at Mutah University, Karak, Jordan during the period 15-17 October 2018. The ESAC-2018 will be held in collaboration with the Agricultural Faculties at the Jordanian Universities, the Ministry of Agriculture, the National Center for Agricultural Research and Extension, and Ministry of Water and Irrigation, ESCWA and FAO. The conference is expected to attract professionals, academics, experts in the fields of agriculture, food, water and environment, and farmers. The main objectives of the conference are to provide a forum for deep discussion of the challenges and new trends in the fields of agriculture, water, food and environment and to establish a better cooperation among researchers in these fields at local, regional and international levels.

As part of the conference, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) Technology Center (ETC) and ICARDA are organizing a dedicated session on "Technology and Innovation for Agricultural Development". The main objective of this session is to exchange views of regional and international experts on how to use technology as one of the means of implementation of SDGS to develop a sustainable agricultural sector in the region. The session will provide a podium to discuss pathways in which green technology can be used to reduce hunger, enhance prosperity in a region that is characterized by ongoing conflicts and wars.

II. Objectives of the session

The session will provide the experts and academicians the opportunity to discuss the prospect of using technology and innovation to develop further the agricultural sector, alleviate poverty and achieve the sustainable development goals (SDGs) in the region. The session will also support networking of regional professionals working on technology and agriculture to ensure complementarity and coordination.

III. The Session Agenda

Below is a draft agenda of the two-hour session noting that a final one will be shared ahead of the conference.

Date: Monday 15 October 2018 (afternoon)

Welcoming remarks

- Mrs. Reem Nejdawi, Executive Director, ESCWA Technology Centre
- Dr. Kamel Shideed, Assistant Director General for International Cooperation and Communication, ICARDA

Panel discussion

Moderator: Mrs. Reem Nejdawi, Executive Director, ESCWA Technology Centre

Panelists:

- **Integrated Approach for restoration of degraded rangelands: Empirical examples from Jordan** - Dr. Theib Oweis, Director of ICARDA's Research Program on Water, Land and Ecosystems.
- **Genes Technology for Economic Sheep Production** - Dr. Khaleel Jawasreh, Animal Breeding and Genetics Associate Professor, Department of Animal Production, Faculty of Agriculture, Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST)
- **European experience in introducing new agriculture technologies in semi-arid areas** - (TBC)
- **Examples of applying new technologies in a refugee context- challenges and opportunities** - (TBC)
- **Barley sprout production under a controlled environment, Water use efficiency in hydroponic production systems** – (TBC)

Discussant:

- Dr. Martin Keulrutz, Assistant Professor, AUB

General discussion

Concluding Remarks

- Dr. Kamel Shideed, Assistant Director General for International Cooperation and Communication, ICARDA
- Mrs. Reem Nejdawi, Executive Director, ESCWA Technology Centre

IV. Participants

All participants to the conference are cordially welcomed to attend the session. The participants include technical experts from the region in various developed and emerging technologies, representing stakeholders from the academic and research institutions, public sector, and related UN organizations.

V. Organization of the Session

A. Date and venue

The session will be held on Monday 15 October 2018 at the Faculty of Agriculture at Mutah University, Karak.

B. Language of the session

The conference will be conducted in English languages.

C. Format

The session will consist of a panel presentations followed by discussion and comments from the plenary.

D. Travel

Air travel reservation and ticketing for **sponsored participants** will be arranged by ESCWA. Roundtrip tickets will be issued in economy class on the least expensive route in accordance with United Nations Financial Rules and Regulations. Participants attending the conference at their own cost are responsible for making their own travel arrangements. Sponsored participants will receive a daily subsistence allowance (DSA) to cover the cost of their hotel, meals and incidental expenses, in addition to a fixed terminal expenses allowance to cover their airport transfers.

Sponsored participants are kindly requested to bring with them on the first day of the conference their passport, a copy of their airline ticket and original boarding pass. Sponsored participants will be asked to complete a bank details form to allow for the electronic transfer of their sponsorship entitlements following the conference.

E. Accommodation

The conference will be held in the campus of Faculty of Agriculture, Mutah University, Karak, Jordan. Participants are requested to arrange for their own accommodation. Preferential rates for participants' accommodation at Falcon Rock Hotel – Al Karak were obtained by the conference organizers (Single Room-45 JOD, Double Room-55 JOD (rates are subject to 10% Service Charge and 16% Sales tax). However, for reservation at the Falcon Rock Hotel, please contact Mr. Saif Mdanat at the following e mail copying us: saifmdanat@outlook.com.

F. Correspondence

Inquiries and completed registration forms should be submitted to the following officials:

Mrs. Reem Nejdawi

Executive Director
ESCWA Technology Centre
Amman, Jordan
Tel : + 962 6 5343346
E-mail : nejdawi@un.org

Mr. Abed Maarouf

Administrative Assistant
Sustainable Development Policies Division
ESCWA
Beirut, Lebanon
Tel: +961 1 978 591
Mob: +961 3 50 55 66
E-mail : maaroufa@un.org

Mr. Mohammad Al Faqeh

Consultant
ESCWA Technology Centre
Amman - Jordan
Tel.: (+962-6) 534 3346
E-mail: f_mom79@yahoo.com