



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

17–21 October 2022

FAO SCIENCE AND INNOVATION FORUM

Harnessing science, technology
and innovation for advancing
water-energy-food nexus

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19 October 2022 | 9:30 (Cairo time) | Nile Ritz Carlton | in Hybrid format

19
October
2022

Special event for the Near East and North Africa

In a context of an increasing population, the demand for water and food is projected to double or more by 2050, while energy demand in a large part of the Near East and North Africa (NENA) region may expand to 61 percent by 2050, leading to competing needs for the already degraded regional resources. Water is needed everywhere for the development of the NENA region – for irrigating crops, watering livestock, supporting aquaculture and agricultural processing, water for energy production and cooling, drinking water, industrial waters. It represents 70 percent on average but more than 90 percent in some countries. In some countries, oil and gas revenues pay for food imports, in others butane enabled irrigation is booming enabling groundwater pumping. Fossil fuels use will need to be limited to curb the gas and climate change effects. Currently, the NENA region is one of the biggest net importers of cereals in the world – a staple crop for most of the countries. The current crisis with Ukraine War is leading countries to reconsider their import policies and increasing the share of staple crops produced internally even at high cost and increasing the pressure on scarce water. Science, innovation and dialogue between water, agriculture, energy, and the environment sectors seem to be at the center of finding a sustainable path for food system transformation in the NENA region.

The event in association with the Cairo Water Week, will discuss the use of a Water-Energy-Food and Environment nexus approach to implement the 2030 Agenda while coping with water scarcity. It will show how science and innovation are part of practical implementation and will advance understanding of the importance of developing effective science-policy interface platforms. In particular, the session seeks to:

- Frame the debate around the Water-Energy-Food nexus with focus on the NENA region.
- Obtain the views of scientists and experts on ways to cope with water scarcity with a Nexus approach to enable the emergence of resilient and efficient agri-food systems.
- Discuss the ways to support agri-food systems transformation through science, innovation, and dialogue.

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AGENDA

Organized by
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

5 min

OPENING

Abdulkhkim ELwaer, FAO Assistant Director General and Regional Representative for the Near East and North Africa

Moderator

Jean-Marc Faurès, Regional Programme Leader, FAO Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa

10 min

GUEST SPEAKER

Hany Sewilam, Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation, Egypt

15 min

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Rabi H. Mohtar, Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station (TEES) Endowed Professor, USA

35 min

PANEL DISCUSSION

Tarifa Alzaabi, Director General, International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA), UAE

Eckart Woertz, Director of the GIGA (German Institute of Global and Area) Institute for Middle East Studies, Germany

Carol Chouchani Cherfane, Head, Climate Change and Natural Resource Sustainability Cluster, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Abdelghani Chehbouni, Director, International Water Research Institute, Mohammed VI Polytechnics University, Morocco

20 min

Q&A

5 min

CLOSING