

FOSTERING RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS THROUGH FERTILE AND HEALTHY SOILS

FRIDAY, 25 OCTOBER 2024 | IRAN ROOM (FAO HEADQUARTERS) | 10:00 – 11:15 (CET)

REGISTER: [Virtual participation](#) | [In-person participation](#)

ORGANIZERS

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Global Soil Partnership (GSP); The United States, Department of State; Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture of Germany (BMEL); Global Environment Facility (GEF)

BACKGROUND

People require sufficient, wholesome and safe food to thrive. More than 95% of our food comes from soils. Efforts and investments to produce nutritious crops can be lost if soil management is not sustainable or if soils are unhealthy. Unhealthy soils cannot produce nutritious crops nor assimilate nutrients added by fertilization. Sustainable soil and fertility management (SSFM) is essential to preserve and increase nutrient content in soils, plants, animals, and humans. As global demand for food increases and environmental pressures intensifies, it is imperative to recognize the critical role that healthy soils play in shaping resilient and equitable food systems capable of meeting the challenges of the future. This side event focus on innovative approaches to achieve SSFM, highlighting key insights from the Global Soil Partnership projects, programmes and tools, FAO's SoilFER Framework, the nutrition sensitive approach from the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture of Germany (BMEL) and the integral food systems program of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the flagship initiative of the US, the Vision for Adapted Crops and Soils (VACS). By bringing together experts this event will provide a platform for sharing successful practices, discussing challenges, and identifying opportunities for collaboration to enhance soil health and agricultural productivity worldwide.

AGENDA

Moderator: Mahmoud Abdelfattah, Land and Water Officer, Land and Water Division (NSL)

Session 1. Opening remarks

- Mr H.E. Ambassador Andreas von Brandt, Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Rome, Germany (5 minutes)
- Ms. Simone Passarelli, Policy Advisor, US Department of State (5 minutes)

Session 2. Presentation of the findings from soil fertility activities (30 min)

- **Enhance capacities for soil health development and production of nutritious food (Soil 4 Nutrition) & INSOILFER**, Yuxin Tong, Land and Water Division, FAO
- **Vision for Adapted Crops and Soils (VACS) & SoilFER** – Mr Jeff Herrick, The US Department of State, Office of Global Food Security & Mr Yusuf Yigini, Land and Water Division, FAO

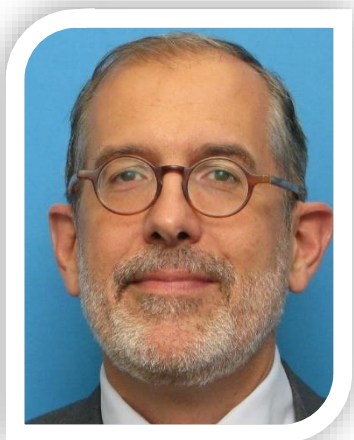
Session 3. Moderated panel discussion (30 min)

Panelists

- Mr. H.E. Ambassador Andreas von Brandt, Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Rome, Germany
- Mr. Jeff Herrick, Senior Advisor, US Department of State.
- Ms. Piedad Martin, Deputy Director, OCB.
- Ms. Karen Salazar, Policy Working Group, Young Professionals for Agricultural Development.

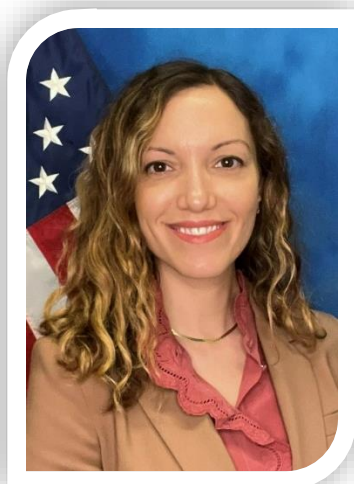
Closing remarks - Mahmoud Abdelfattah, Land and Water Officer, Land and Water Division (NSL) (5 min)

OUR SPEAKERS



**Mr H.E. Ambassador Andreas von Brandt,
 Permanent Representative to the United Nations in
 Rome, Germany**

Ambassador Andreas von Brandt started his tenure with the three Rome-based agencies in August 2024. Before, he was in charge of implementing the Humanitarian, Development and Peace (HDP) Nexus within the German Foreign Office. From 2020-22 he worked as EU Ambassador to Afghanistan and oversaw the evacuation of all expats in May and all Afghan staff in August 2021. Before joining the European External Action Service (EEAS), von Brandt worked as Deputy Director in the Private Office of NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, from 2018-20. From 2017-18 he was Deputy Ambassador at the German Embassy in Kabul and from 2014-17 Deputy Head of Division for the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia at the Federal Foreign Office and as Chargé d’Affaires a.i. at the Embassy in Bishkek. Mr von Brandt holds two 5-year Masters degrees, one in Political Science / International Relations and one in Law, as well as a Masters of Law (LLM) in International Law. He is fluent in 7 languages.



**Ms. Simone Passarelli, Policy Advisor, US
 Department of State**

Dr. Simone Passarelli is a Policy Advisor in the Office of Global Food Security at the U.S. Department of State and is currently based at the U.S. Mission to the U.N. Agencies in Rome. Prior to the State Department, Dr. Passarelli was based in the Nutrition Department at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, where she earned her PhD and became a Postdoctoral Research Fellow. She holds an M.S. in Food Policy and Applied Nutrition from the Tufts University Friedman School of Nutrition, and a B.S. in International Agriculture and Rural Development from Cornell University. Dr. Passarelli

has previously held positions with the International Food Policy Research, PATH, CARE, Action Against Hunger (ACF), and the World Food Programme.



Mr. Yuxin Tong, Land and Water Division, FAO

Yuxin Tong, work at the Global Soil Partnership, Land and Water Division, FAO. He supervises the activities of the International Network of Black Soil (INBS), the International Network on Soil Fertility and Fertilizers (INSFOILFER) and the Global Soil Laboratory Network (GLOSOLAN). He also involved in the implementation of the International Code of Conduct for the Sustainable Use and Management of Fertilizers in FAO, and implemented South-South Cooperation projects on capacity building of soil fertility in Africa as leading technical officer. Before joining FAO, his

research was focused on the sustainable management of black soils, balanced fertilization, soil erosion and acidification. He holds a Ph.D. in Plant Nutrition.



Mr. Jeff Herrick, Senior Advisor, US Department of State

Jeff is a senior advisor to the Special Envoy for Global Food Security at the State Department and a USDA Agricultural Research Service soil scientist with appointments at New Mexico State University and the University of Colorado. He also leads US negotiations on science and technology at the UNCCD. He has published widely on a variety of topics ranging from soil health to ecosystem resilience and led the development of nationally and globally applied

assessment, monitoring and decision support tools.



Mr Yusuf Yigini, Land and Water Division, FAO

Yusuf Yigini is a soil expert who holds Ph.D., M.Sc., and B.Sc. degrees in Soil Science, with a focus on soil information, data, and spatial data modelling. With over 20 years in the field, he has accumulated a wealth of research and policy experience. In 2017, he joined the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Global Soil Partnership (GSP) Secretariat. In his role, Yusuf coordinates various soil information and data activities, including the Global Soil Information System (GloSIS), SoilSTAT, Country-Driven Global Data Products, and capacity development programs for member countries. Before joining the FAO, he served at the Joint Research Centre

of the European Commission as a Technical and Scientific Project Officer for more than six years. Additionally, he spent more than 9 years as a researcher in Turkey.

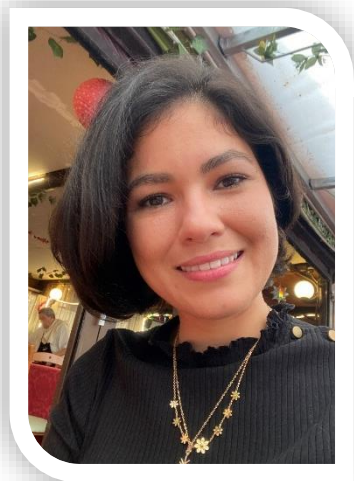


Ms. Piedad Martin, Deputy Director, OCB

Piedad Martin has worked in sustainable development and international cooperation for 20 years and has extensive experience in intergovernmental, policy and field work on the environmental agenda and the “Leaving No One Behind” Nexus. Piedad joins us from UNEP headquarters in Nairobi where she was the Head of the Strategic Planning Unit. Prior to that she served as deputy regional director at UNEP regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean. She was special advisor to the Resident Coordinator in Mexico. While in

UNDP Colombia, she worked as climate change, biodiversity and disaster risk reduction officer in Bogota and directed an office for the Coffee Region based in Manizales. Piedad started her international career at the Spanish International Cooperation Agency, as regional advisor on environment and poverty in the Mediterranean region and was later transferred to the technical cooperation office for the Palestinian Territories, based in Jerusalem. She has a degree in Environmental Sciences and a master's degree in economic integration and development economics. She

has completed her studies at the Autonomous University of Madrid, the University of Manchester, and the Tufts University and Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in Boston.



Ms. Karen Salazar, Policy Working Group, Young Professionals for Agricultural Development

Ms. Karen Salazar, Policy Working Group, Young Professionals for Agricultural Development “Born and raised in Costa Rica, Karen holds a Bachelor’s degree in Nutrition and Food Security from the University of Costa Rica. She is currently pursuing a Master’s degree in Economics with an emphasis on Global Development at Roma Tre University, Rome.

In 2017, Karen co-founded GlobalRise, a U.S.-based NGO operating in Uganda, where she gained valuable experience in community-based interventions with women smallholder farmers. Over the past four

years, she has led a local team in Kasese District to develop and implement a Community Nutrition Program that has trained over 100 individuals. Recently she has joined YPARD where she collaborates in youth working groups. Karen's vision is to create a world free of childhood stunting.



Mahmoud Abdelfattah, Land and Water Officer, Land and Water Division, FAO

Dr Mahmoud A. Abdelfattah is a Senior Officer at Land and Water Division (NSL), FAO HQ. Dr Abdelfattah brings more than 29 years of practical experience in the field of soil mapping, integrated soils and water management, soil fertility and sustainable agriculture. He worked for the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA), the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi, in the United Arab Emirates, Cairo and Fayoum Universities in Egypt and FAO Egypt. He has managed a mega scale

soil mapping project for the entire UAE for 12 years, published over 90 peer-reviewed publications and supervised number of Master and PhD students.