



## Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

### **FAO Regional Meeting on Agricultural Biotechnologies in Sustainable Food Systems and Nutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 22-24 November 2017**

**Meeting website:** <http://www.fao.org/africa/events/detail-events/en/c/1035227/>

#### **INFORMATION NOTE FOR PARTICIPANTS**

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This note was prepared to provide participants of the FAO Regional Meeting on Agricultural Biotechnologies in Sustainable Food Systems and Nutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa with information on the meeting's logistics.

**Dates of the Meeting:**

22-24 November 2017

**Venue:**

African Union Conference Center (AUCC)  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Old Airport Area  
W21K19, *Addis Ababa,*  
*Ethiopia*

#### **LANGUAGE**

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Most of the presentations in the meeting will be in English. Simultaneous translations from English to French and from French to English will be provided.

Please be informed that the FAO meeting will be recorded and the video will be made available on the website after the event.

## **ACCOMMODATION**

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FAO has secured accommodation booking for funded participants at the Friendship Hotel:

### **Friendship International Hotel**

African Avenue, Bole Sub City

Tel.: 0116 670178 or +251 966-236666, Addis Ababa

Email: [gm@friendshiphotel.com.et](mailto:gm@friendshiphotel.com.et) and [marketing@friendshiphotel.com.et](mailto:marketing@friendshiphotel.com.et)

Participants coming on their personal capacity are suggested to reserve in autonomy at:

**(1) Friendship International Hotel** (details above)

(2) Saro-Maria Hotel: Tel.0935402421, Email: Samuel.Omala@saromariahotel.com

(3) Harmony Hotel: Tel: +251 11 618 3100, +251 11 6516053, +251118625991,  
Email: reservation@harmonyhotelethiopia.com

A pick-up transport service from the Friendship International Hotel to the meeting venue will be available for funded and not funded participants.

Transport between the airport and the Friendship International Hotel will be available at no charge for funded participants.

## **COMMUNICATION**

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All correspondence concerning the FAO Regional Meeting should be addressed to: [RAF-Biotech@fao.org](mailto:RAF-Biotech@fao.org)

Any urgent matters during the Meeting should be addressed to:

Hassen.Ali@fao.org (FAOET) - Tel. 0935986402; Ayele, Martha (FAOET)

Martha.Ayele@fao.org - Tel: 0935986405; Mahider Tadesse

mahider@eshievents.com - Tel. 0911113209

WIFI is available at AUCC and Friendship International Hotel

## **REGISTRATION**

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The online registration form is available at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/fao-regional-meeting-on-agricultural-biotechnologies-in-sustainable-food-systems-and-nutrition-in-registration-39082782655>

Info on how to register (e.g. website link and instructions)

## **LOGISTIC ARRANGEMENTS**

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FAO will provide air ticket (via the least costly and most direct route) and hotel accommodation for the participants sponsored by FAO. In addition, these participants will receive an applicable Daily Subsistence Allowance and a flat sum of terminal expenses as per FAO regulations.

Daily Subsistence Allowance will be disbursed to the participants sponsored by FAO at the Meeting venue.

If participants **sponsored** by FAO provide an official visa receipt to FAO in advance of the meeting, then their visa fee will be reimbursed by FAO.

## **INFORMATION ON ETHIOPIA**

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### **IMMIGRATION**

At the time of the visit, travelers are requested to show a passport in course of validity, with an expiry date not before 6 months.

UN Laissez Passer holders do not require a visa to enter Ethiopia, and will be allowed to stay in the country for 30 days. They are nonetheless requested to bring the FAO official invitation letter with them, as they may be asked to present a copy.

Please refer to the website of the nearest Ethiopian Embassy for further information and instructions. Please note that customs and immigration rules are set by the Ethiopian government, and the organizers have no control over issuance of visas and admission into the country.

### **TRAVEL INFORMATION**

Many major airlines fly to the Bole International Airport in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Moreover, the airport serves as the global hub of Ethiopian Airlines.

### **TAXI SERVICES**

There are no companies in Addis Ababa providing taxi services. All taxis in Addis Ababa are owned and operated by individuals. Most taxi drivers speak at least basic-level English.

Yellow taxis are available at the Bole International Airport, as well as in front of major hotels. Blue taxis, on the other hand, are available around the city. Neither yellow nor blue taxis carry meters, and you will have to negotiate the price with the

driver in advance. For your reference, a reasonable average amount from the Airport to Friendship Hotel is about 200 birr.

The use of minibus taxis is not advised by the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS).

## **TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INTERNET SERVICES**

The international country code for Ethiopia is +251. The area code for Addis Ababa is 011.

Ethio-Telecom is the only service provider in the country for landlines and mobile phones. Depending on whether Ethio-Telecom has an agreement with your provider, you may be able to roam with your foreign number while in Ethiopia. Usually, only the providers from neighboring African countries are supported.

While in the country you can purchase a local SIM card from Ethio-Telecom.

## **HEALTH REQUIREMENTS**

Health professionals advise that travelers are up-to-date on routine vaccines before every trip. These vaccines include measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine, varicella (chickenpox) vaccine, polio vaccine, and your yearly flu shot.

Addis Ababa is over 2,600 meters above the sea-level. Therefore, participants from low-altitude countries may experience mild altitude sickness symptoms such as dizziness. It is advisable that participants from these countries consult with their doctors prior to travel, and carry relevant over-the-counter medications.

Addis Ababa is not in a risk area for malaria. Therefore, no anti-malarial medication is required.

Ethiopia requires proof of yellow fever vaccination if you are traveling from a country with risk of yellow fever.

The following vaccinations are also advised:

Hepatitis A, Polio and Typhoid to avoid infection through contaminated food and water.

## **TIME ZONE**

Ethiopia is on the UTC/GMT+3 time zone throughout the year.

## **CLIMATE**

Ethiopia has a humid subtropical climate, with a dry and rainy season.

Addis Ababa experiences these two seasons. The dry season approximately lasts from October to May. The rainy season, on the other hand, usually falls between June and September.

## **LANGUAGE**

The official language of Ethiopia is Amharic, and most locals speak it. Depending on the part of the country, there are various regional and tribal languages in use as well. English is often widely-spoken at least at the basic level.

## **LOCAL CURRENCY, EXCHANGE AND PAYMENTS**

The local currency used in Ethiopia is called Ethiopian Birr (ETB). The November 2017 UN rate of exchange is: 1 USD = 27.35 ETB. Ethiopia has strict foreign currency restrictions in place, and most shops, cafes and restaurants will not accept payments that are not in local currency.

There is an exchange office in the arrivals terminal of the Bole International Airport. Most banks and hotels also exchange currency on work days.

Most large hotels and shopping malls host ATMs of several Ethiopian banks. Foreign cards can be used to take money out in local currency. Please note that most Ethiopian banks only have an agreement with VISA, and Master Card is often not supported by their ATMs.

## **ELECTRICAL POWER**

The electric current in Ethiopia is 220 volts AC, 50 Hz. Most power outlets in the country, as well as those in the venue, are European type C and F sockets, shown on the side.



## **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

UNDSS considers the current security situation in Addis Ababa to be low-risk. It is safe to walk around the city center during the day. While you may face some minor cases such as beggars insisting for a tip, the city is quite safe in general.

Most criminal cases involving the UN staff take place at night, particularly when people are alone in a poorly-illuminated area. Therefore, it is advised that participants remain vigilant, and avoid walking distances alone after sunset.

It is also advisable to take basic precautions to ensure your health and safety. This includes locking valuables in the hotel safe, avoiding carrying large amounts of cash, and keeping a close eye on belongings when visiting crowded areas such as markets.

## **EMERGENCIES**

In case of emergencies, please immediately inform the hotel front desk reception.

## **TOURISM AND SHOPPING**

Participants who are interested in tourist sites and shopping can seek assistance from the hotel concierge.

A few places of interest within Addis Ababa include:

- Ethiopian National Museum: historical and cultural artifacts, including a replica of Lucy, the oldest hominid to be unearthed;
- Red Terror Museum: learn about the Derg regime and the famine of 1990;
- Parliament Building: built during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie, with its clock tower, still continues to serve as the seat of parliament;
- Medhane Alem Cathedral: this cathedral, whose name means "Savior of the World", is the second largest church on the continent.
- St George's Cathedral: built in 1896 to commemorate Ethiopia's victory over the Italians;
- Gola St. Michael Church: one of the many old churches found in Addis Ababa, also hosts paintings of many famous Ethiopian artists.

There are various shops and malls available on the Bole Road and Tele-Bole Road, including shops where traditional souvenirs such as scarves, baskets and paintings can be purchased. Piazza Area is the old city center, and hosts many jewelers and old coffee shops.