

## **A Multi-Billion-Dollar Opportunity: Repurposing Agricultural Support to Transform Food Systems**

### **Speakers' Bios**

#### **1. Achim Steiner**



Achim Steiner, Administrator of UNDP

Mr. Steiner is also the Vice-Chair of the UN Sustainable Development Group, which unites 40 entities of the UN system that work to support sustainable development.

Over nearly three decades, Achim Steiner has been a global leader on sustainable development, climate resilience and international cooperation. He has worked tirelessly to champion sustainability, economic growth, and equality for the vulnerable, and has been a vocal advocate for the SDGs.

Prior to joining UNDP, he was Director of the Oxford Martin School and Professorial Fellow of Balliol College, University of Oxford. Mr. Steiner has served across the UN system, looking at

global challenges from both a humanitarian and a development perspective. He led the United Nations Environment Programme, helping governments invest in clean technologies and renewable energy. He was also Director-General of the UN Office at Nairobi. Achim Steiner previously held other notable positions including Director General of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and Secretary General of the World Commission on Dams.

Achim Steiner has lived and worked in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Europe, Latin America and the United States. He graduated in Philosophy, Politics and Economics (MA) from Worcester College, Oxford University and holds an MA from the University of London/School of Oriental and African Studies.

## 2. Qu Dongyu



Qu Dongyu, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Born in 1963 to a rice-growing family in China's Hunan Province, Qu studied horticultural science at Hunan Agricultural University and then plant breeding and genetics at the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences. He later added environmental science to his knowledge portfolio while earning a PhD at Wageningen University, Netherlands.

Before coming to FAO, Qu served as China's Vice Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, where he promoted inclusive and innovative development and make sure information and communication technologies (ICT) were available in rural areas.

Among his national initiatives has been to improve reporting of wholesale prices for agricultural products in China and foster the establishment of more than 100 specialty production areas geared to making local comparative advantages work to the benefit of local farmers. As Vice Governor of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Qu formulated action plans aimed at poverty reduction, disaster reduction and prevention, women empowerment, agritourism and mutual learning platforms designed to boost trust between ethnic groups.

Recognized for scientific innovation as a young scholar, Qu has for 30 years been involved in international exchanges and orchestrated major events and participated in multilateral initiatives such as the World Trade Organization and the G20. He has also directly helped design flagship South-South Cooperation projects with FAO and the World Bank.

### 3. Inger Andersen



Inger Andersen is Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya.

Between 2015 and 2019, Ms. Andersen was the Director-General of the International Union for Conservation of Nature. Ms. Andersen has more than 30 years of experience in international development economics, environmental sustainability, strategy and operations. She has led work on a range of issues including agriculture, environmental management, biodiversity conservation, climate change, infrastructure, energy, transport, and water resources management and hydro-diplomacy.

Between 1999 and 2014, Ms. Andersen held several leadership positions at the World Bank including Vice President of the Middle East and North Africa; Vice President for Sustainable Development and Head of the CGIAR Fund Council.

Prior to her 15 years at the World Bank, Ms. Andersen worked 12 years at the UN, first on drought and desertification, beginning with the UN Sudano-Sahelian Office. In 1992, she was appointed UNDP's Water and Environment Coordinator for the Arab Region.

Ms. Andersen holds a Bachelors from the London Metropolitan University North and a Masters in Development Economics from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

### 4. Hon. Minister Dr. Gérardine Mukeshimana



Dr. Gerardine Mukeshimana is the Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources of Rwanda.

As a Minister, she is responsible for oversight of all agricultural and livestock related activities in the country, charged with new policy formulation, oversight of implementation of existing policies, work with other ministries and development partners on issues that affect the agricultural sector especially land use and land management, trade, commerce, infrastructure, gender, and youth employment.

Prior to that, Minister Mukeshimana worked at International Livestock Institute, MINAGRI, and the National University of Rwanda.

She holds both PhD and Masters in Plant Breeding, Genetics, and Biotechnology from Michigan State University.

## 5. Hon Minister Victoria Prentis



Victoria Prentis was appointed Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on 14 February 2020.

She was elected as the Conservative MP for Banbury in May 2015.

Victoria served on the Justice Select Committee from 2015 to 2019, the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments from 2015 to 2017, and as a lay member on the Speaker's Advisory Committee on Works of Art from 2019.

Victoria also served as Principal Private Secretary to the Attorney General from 2019 to 2020, to the Leader of the House of Commons from 2017 to 2019, and to Junior Ministers at the Department for Transport from 2016 to 2017.

For seventeen years Victoria was a lawyer for the Treasury Solicitors' Department and headed up the government's Justice and Security team. Her responsibilities included providing advice on military, prisons and national security matters and representing the government in court.

## 6. Marco V. Sánchez



Marco V. Sánchez is Deputy-Director of Agrifood Economics at FAO, where he directs flagship reports The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World and The State of Food and Agriculture. Previously he was Senior Economist at the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2006 – 2017) and Economist at the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (2004-2006). He has been consultant to UNDP, IFPRI and IADB (2000-2004) and has supported lecturing and research at the International Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University in the Netherlands (2000-2004), National University of Costa Rica (1995-1999), and Tilburg University in The Netherlands (1995-

1996). He has published extensively and was lead editor of books for Bloomsbury (Financing Human Development in Africa, Asia and the Middle East) and Pelgrave/Macmillan (Public Policies for Human Development: Achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Latin America). His recent articles feature in World Development, Journal of Environment and Development and Food Policy.

## 7. Vijay Kumar Thallam



Vijay Kumar Thallam, Executive Vice Chairman, Rythu Sadhikara Samstha ( a Farmers' Empowerment Corporation), Govt of Andhra Pradesh, INDIA

Physics graduate and a master's degree in business management; served in the India Administrative Service for 38 years, 25 of these years in leading initiatives for large-scale community mobilization and empowerment of rural women, tribal communities and farmers, both in the state of Andhra Pradesh and at the national level; since 2015, is leading the climate-resilient, community-managed natural farming program in Andhra Pradesh, which by 2021 has enrolled more than 700,000 farmers and farm workers. He is also the Vice

Chair (Productions) of the Champions Network for the United Nations Food Systems Summit to be held in September 2021.

## 8. Nicoletta Batini



Nicoletta Batini is the Lead Evaluator of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Independent Evaluation Office.

Prior to the IMF, she was Advisor of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee, Professor of Economics at the University of Surrey, and Director of the International Economics and Policy Office of the Treasury in Italy. She holds a Ph.D. in international finance (S.S.S.U.P. S. Anna) and a Ph.D. in monetary economics (University of Oxford). Currently, her research focuses on the economics of energy and land and sea use transitions for climate mitigation. Her new book "The Economics of Sustainable Food: Smart Policies for People and the Planet" was published in

June 2021 by Island Press and the International Monetary Fund.



## 9. Johan Swinnen



**Dr. Johan Swinnen** is Director General of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), and Global Director of the Systems Transformation Science Group at CGIAR. Prior to joining IFPRI, Dr. Swinnen was professor and director of the LICOS Centre at KU Leuven (Belgium) and senior research fellow at the Centre for European Policy Studies.

Dr. Swinnen earned his PhD from Cornell University and holds honorary doctorates from University of Göttingen and the Slovak University of Agriculture (Slovakia). He is a Fellow of the Agricultural & Applied Economics Association and the European Association of Agricultural Economists and served as president of the International Association of Agricultural Economists from 2012

to 2015.

Dr. Swinnen has published extensively, and is widely cited, on agricultural and food policies, international development, political economy, institutional reforms, trade, and global value chains. For more information see his [webpage](#) or [CV](#).

## 10. M. Ann Tutwiler



Ann is a Senior Fellow at Meridian Institute and a Senior Advisor to the Just Rural Transition. She served as the Director General of Bioversity International, an agricultural research organization focused on using and safeguarding agricultural biodiversity to improve nutrition, enhance resilience and to support the conservation of genetic resources. Ann was Deputy Director General for Knowledge at FAO, and Senior Advisor on Food Security for USDA during the Obama Administration. She has a Bachelor of Arts from Davidson College and a Masters in Public Policy from the Kennedy School at Harvard University.

## 11. Francesco Branca



Francesco Branca MD, PhD, is the Director of the Department of Nutrition and Food Safety in the World Health Organization, Geneva and previously the Director of the Nutrition Department and Regional Advisor for Nutrition in the WHO European Region.

He has been a Scientist at the Italian Food and Nutrition Research Institute and previously a medical staff of a Primary Health Care project in the South of Somalia.

Francesco graduated in Medicine and Surgery and specialized in Diabetology and Metabolic Diseases at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Roma and obtained a Msc in Nutrition and then

a PhD at Aberdeen University.

## 12. Hon Minister James Shaw



James Shaw is the Minister of Climate Change and Government's Associate Minister for the Environment, New Zealand.

Prior to becoming an MP, James had a successful career in management consulting, primarily in London, where he lived from 1998 to 2010. He has diverse experience working for large multinational organisations through to local start-ups, social enterprises and community organisations, across Europe, in New Zealand and around the world.

While completing a Master's in sustainable development and business leadership at Bath University, James came to the realisation that the private sector alone was not able to effect change at the speed and scale necessary to meet the challenge

of climate change and that political change was also required.

He moved back to New Zealand to run for Parliament in 2010 and was elected in 2014, becoming Green Party Co-leader in 2015. In 2017 James led the Green Party into its first ever term in Government with Ministers and was appointed Minister for Climate Change, Statistics and Associate Minister for Finance.

In his first term, James guided the Zero Carbon Act through Parliament with unanimous support; reformed the Emissions Trading Scheme to cut pollution into the atmosphere; and established Green Investment Finance Ltd., to stimulate investment in the low-carbon economy.

Now in his second term, and as Minister of Climate Change, James is focusing on specific measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the transport, energy and agricultural sectors.

## 8. Nozipho Tshabalala



Nozipho is the CEO of The Conversation Strategists - a firm dedicated to facilitating consequential conversations on global stages.

She describes it as "helping smart people, have simple conversations, that make the world a better place." Her clients are international organisations (UN, World Bank Group, AU, ILO etc), governments, and multinationals in Africa. Nozipho is also a Human Capital Advocate for The World Bank and Global Citizen in Southern Africa. She is the chairperson designate of the LRMG Group and has served in government (The Presidency, RSA), civil society (Umlambo Foundation), and corporate (Tata Africa, CNBC Africa).