



Biographies of Key Speakers



Tom Vilsack
United States Secretary of Agriculture

Tom Vilsack became the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) January 2009. Prior to that, Vilsack served in the public sector at nearly every level of government, beginning as mayor of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa in 1987, then as state senator in 1992, and as governor in 1998.

Under Vilsack's leadership, USDA is working to promote a safe and nutritious food supply for all Americans and to end child hunger by 2015. Throughout his time as Governor of Iowa, Vilsack created the Iowa Food Policy Council to advance local food systems, enhance family farm profitability, and combat hunger and malnutrition. He led trade missions to foreign countries to market agricultural products and attended the Seattle meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to push for expanded agricultural trade negotiations. In addition, he worked to support independent farmers and ranchers by enacting livestock market reform and mandatory price reporting legislation in 1999. A native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Vilsack received a bachelor's degree from Hamilton College in Clinton, New York, in 1972 and earned his law degree from Albany Law School in 1975.

Source: United States Department of Agriculture,
http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/tut/pl_s.7_0_A7_0_1OB?contentidonly=true&contentid=bios_vilsack.xml



Gordon Conway
Professor of International Development, Centre for Environmental Policy, Imperial College

Gordon Conway served as the Chief Scientific Adviser to the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) and President of the Royal Geographical Society from 2004 until June 2009. Previously, he was President of the Rockefeller Foundation (1998-2004) and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sussex. In the 1970s and 1980s he lived and worked extensively in Asia and the Middle East, for the Ford Foundation, World Bank and USAID. He directed the Sustainable Agriculture Programme at the International Institute for Environment and Development and was representative of the Ford Foundation in New Delhi. Conway is honored as a Knight Commander, Deputy Lieutenant of East Sussex, and Fellow of the Royal Society and holds five honorary degrees and fellowships. He is the author of *'The Doubly Green Revolution: Food for All in the 21st Century'*, published in 1997. Conway trained in agricultural ecology, attending the universities of Bangor, Cambridge, West Indies (Trinidad) and California (Davis).

Source: Imperial College, <http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/people/g.conway>;
DFID, <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/research/NPT-Speaker-Biographies.pdf>



Kanayo Nwanze
President, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

Kanayo F. Nwanze began his term as IFAD's fifth President on 1 April 2009. A Nigerian national, Nwanze has a strong record as an advocate and leader of change and a keen understanding of the complexity of development issues. He has nearly 30 years of experience across three continents in poverty reduction through agriculture, rural development and research. During his ten years as Director-General of the Africa Rice Centre (WARDA), Nwanze was instrumental in introducing and promoting New Rice for Africa (NERICA), a high-yield, drought- and pest-resistant rice variety developed specifically for the African landscape. Nwanze earned a degree in agricultural science from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, and a doctorate in agricultural entomology from Kansas State University.

Source: IFAD, <http://www.ifad.org/governance/internal/president/bio.htm>



Katherine Sierra

*Vice President for Sustainable Development, World Bank
Chair, Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)*

Katherine Sierra, Vice President for Sustainable Development at the World Bank, has overall responsibility for strategies and work in agriculture and rural development, energy, the environment and natural resource management, social development, transport, urban policies, and water. She also chairs several international consultative groups, including the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). Sierra, an urban planning specialist, joined the World Bank in 1978 and has worked principally in Latin America and East Asia. She served as Vice President, Human Resources (2000-2004) and Vice President, Infrastructure (2004-2006) before assuming her current position. Sierra holds a Master's degree in Urban and Regional planning from Harvard University and Bachelor of Arts degrees in Anthropology and Hispanic Civilization from the University of California at Santa Barbara.

Source: World Bank, <http://go.worldbank.org/O6U0FTXWQ0>



Lindiwe Sibanda

Chief Executive Officer, Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN)

Lindiwe Sibanda is Chief Executive Officer of the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN). Sibanda is responsible for facilitating the development of tools and processes that promote harmonization of policies at regional levels through reviews of policies, legal frameworks, institutional arrangements, and governance processes. She has 20 years of experience in rural development, and is currently coordinating policy research and advocacy programs in 13 southern African countries, all aimed at making southern Africa a food secure region.

Source: FANRPAN, <http://www.fanrpan.org/about/team/>



Ajay Vashee

President, International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP)

Vashee, who was elected to his current position at the 38th IFAP World Farmers' Congress in June 2008, is the first President from a developing country in IFAP's 62-year history. He served as the IFAP Vice President from 2006-2008, during which time he was leading IFAP's work on environmental issues. Vashee is the founding and current President of the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU), which represents fourteen national farmers' organizations in Southern Africa. Previously, he served as president of the Zambia National Farmers Union, where he united diverse national farming interests under its umbrella for the first time in the history of the nation. Vashee is a member of the International Food & Agricultural Trade Council. A dairy and crop farmer in Zambia, he has been involved in organized agriculture for over 22 years.

Source: World Food Prize Symposium 2009, <http://www.worldfoodprize.org/symposium/2009/speakers.htm>



Juergen Voegele

Director, Agriculture and Rural Development Department, World Bank

Juergen Voegele joined the World Bank in 1991, after working with the University of Hohenheim, the GTZ, and the BMZ Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation in Germany, including a three-year field assignment in Western Samoa. In 1998, Voegele became the leader of the Agriculture Unit for the China Office and subsequently became Manager of Agriculture and Rural Development for Europe and Central Asia in 2004. In February 2008, Voegele was appointed Director of Agriculture and Rural Development where he oversees global programs for rural poverty alleviation, agriculture and natural resources management. Voegele completed his Master's degree in Agronomy and Doctoral degree in Agricultural Economics at the University of Hohenheim, Germany.

Source: World Bank, <http://go.worldbank.org/IN52J99B90>

Roundtable Lead Speakers



M. S. Swaminathan

Chairman, M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation

A plant geneticist by training, M.S. Swaminathan's contributions to the agricultural renaissance of India have led to his being widely referred to as the scientific leader of the green revolution movement. His advocacy of sustainable agriculture makes him an acknowledged world leader in the field of sustainable food security. Swaminathan was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership in 1971, the Albert Einstein World Science Award in 1986, and the first World Food Prize in 1987. He served as Independent Chairman of the FAO Council and President of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. Swaminathan is a Fellow of many of the leading scientific academies in India and the world, including the Royal Society of London and the US National Academy of Sciences. He currently holds the UNESCO Chair in Ecotechnology at the M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation in Chennai (Madras), India.

Source: M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, http://www.mssrf.org/about_us/about_chairman.htm



Maura O'Neill

Senior Advisor for Energy and Climate and Chief of Staff to the Undersecretary for Research, Education and Economics, US Department of Agriculture

Maura O'Neill is Senior Advisor for Energy and Climate and Chief of Staff to the Undersecretary for Research, Education and Economics, US Department of Agriculture. She serves as the chief policy and strategic officer for the Mission Area which focuses on five priorities: energy, climate, global food security, food safety and health/nutrition in addition to tradition agriculture research. O'Neill was instrumental in drafting a new biofuels strategy for the country and helping to launch at Copenhagen a Global Research Alliance for Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Reductions. O'Neill received MBAs from both Columbia University and the University of California at Berkeley, and a PhD from the University of Washington.

Source: Text provided by CCAFS, photo: http://www.ars.usda.gov/News/News.htm?modecode=53-06-20-00&pf=1&docid=9522&cg_id=0

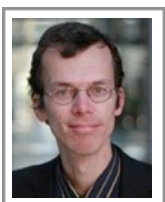


Adel El-Beltagy

Chair, Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR)

Adel El-Beltagy is Chair of the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) and serves as Chair of the Agricultural Research and Development Council (ARDC) and the International Dryland Development Commission (IDDC). Additionally, he is a member of various committees and boards including the European Action on Global Life Sciences (EAGLES), the Global Diversity Trust Fund, Alexandrina Bibliotheca, the FAO High-Level Committee, the High Council of Science & Technology of Egypt and Professor of Agriculture at Ain Shams University in Egypt. El-Beltagy served as Director General of the International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA) from 1995-2006. He holds an Honorary Doctorate of Science from the University of Khartoum, Sudan and has authored and co-authored more than 140 scientific publications.

Source: Global Forum on Agricultural Research, <http://www.egfar.org/egfarW/website/aboutgfar/management/person?contentId=1401>



Alex Michaelowa

Senior Founding Partner, Perspectives Climate Change

Alex Michaelowa is Senior Founding Partner at Perspectives Climate Change, an independent, consulting service enterprise, working with governments and non-governmental organizations to realize and enhance instruments in the international greenhouse gas market. From 1999 to 2006, he was head of the Research Program on International Climate Policy at the Hamburg Institute of International Economics (HWWA). Since 2007 he has been leading a research group on climate policy at the University of Zurich's Institute of Political Science. He is an expert on the Clean Development Mechanism and the development of baseline methodologies and UNFCCC rules. Michaelowa holds a PhD in Economics and has worked on international climate policy instruments and the UNFCCC process since 1994.

Source: Perspectives Climate Change, <http://www.perspectives.cc/PhD-Axel-Michaelowa.82.0.html>