



Qu Dongyu

Director-General,
FAO

Dr. Qu Dongyu took office on 1 August 2019 as the ninth Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and was re-elected for a second four-year term on 2 July 2023.

Before first being elected as FAO Director-General, Dr. Qu served as China's Vice Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA), where one of his achievements was to promote inclusive and innovative development and make sure information and communication technologies (ICT) were available in rural areas so that more than 400 million farmers could use their smartphones as a new farming tool. Another national initiative led by Dr. Qu was 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.

Born in 1963 to a rice-growing family in China's Hunan Province, Dr. 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, in the Netherlands.



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Máximo Torero

Chief Economist,
FAO

Mr. Máximo Torero Cullen is the Chief Economist of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). He joined the Organization in January 2019 as Assistant Director-General for the Economic and Social Development Department.

Prior to joining FAO, he was the World Bank Group Executive Director for Argentina, Bolivia, Chile Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay since November 2016 and before the Bank Mr. Torero led the Division of the Markets, Trade, and Institutions at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

His major research work lies mostly in analyzing poverty, inequality, importance of geography and assets (private or public) in explaining poverty, and in policies oriented towards poverty alleviation based on the role played by infrastructure, institutions, and on how technological breakthroughs (or discontinuities) can improve the welfare of households and small farmers. His experience encompasses Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Asia.



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Dejan Jakovljevic

CIO and Director of Digitalization and Informatics Division, FAO

Mr. Jakovljevic is the Director of the Digitalization and Informatics Division of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

He has more than 20 years of IT experience and use of technology in International Development. He is a strategic leader in the field, aiming to harness the power of technology towards achieving SDG goals. His work focuses on driving Digital Transformation, organizational modernization and enabling Innovation scale up and delivery.

Prior to joining FAO, Mr Jakovljevic held positions with UNICEF and WHO, with leadership roles in East Asia and Pacific, European Region, and driving Global initiatives in the other parts of the world. Mr. Jakovljevic has Master's and Bachelor's degrees from the University of Houston, Texas.



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Vincent Martin

Director of Office of Innovation,
FAO

Dr. Martin is the Director of the Office of Innovation at FAO. With a wealth of expertise in Diplomacy, Global Health, Food and Nutrition Security, Epidemiology and Spatial Analysis, he has more than 20 years of field experience developing strategies and policies, exploring, and experimenting to source solutions to fight against hunger while championing the gender agenda.

Dr. Martin joined FAO in 1998, in the Animal Production and Health Division. Since then, he has held various positions at FAO and the UN, including Animal Health Officer of Infectious Disease Analysis and Early Warning, Senior Technical Advisor, Head of Animal Health Early Warning System (EMPRES), FAO Representative in Senegal and Head of the Regional Resilience Team for West Africa and the Sahel. Since May 2020, he has served as the United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC) in Guinea, overseeing some 24 UN agencies, funds and programmes.

Dr. Martin holds a University Diploma focused on Statistics and Epidemiology from Université Pierre et Marie Curie-Paris VI, a Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine, an MSc and a PhD in Agronomic Sciences and biology engineering.



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Sebastian Bosse

Head of Interactive & Cognitive Systems Group,
Fraunhofer Heinrich Hertz Institute, HHI

Sebastian Bosse is heading the Interactive & Cognitive Systems Group in the Vision and Imaging Technologies Department, at Fraunhofer Heinrich Hertz Institute (HHI), Berlin, Germany.

Sebastian is a lecturer at the German University in Cairo. He is on the board of the Video Quality Expert Group (VQEG) and on the advisory board of the International AIQT Foundation. Sebastian is an affiliate member of VISTA, York University, Toronto, and serves as an associate editor for the IEEE Transactions on Image Processing. Since 2021 he has been appointed a chair for the ITU focus group on Artificial Intelligence for Agriculture.

His current research activities center around computational perception and cognition, machine learning, computer vision, and human-machine interaction and cover a wide field of applications ranging from multimedia and augmented reality, through medicine to agriculture and industrial production.



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Salla Saastamoinen

Deputy Director-General,
European Commission Joint Research
Centre

Salla Saastamoinen is the Deputy Director-General of the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission.

Salla Saastamoinen has 25 years of outstanding career in the Commission, including 21 years in the Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers (DG JUST). She was acting Director General in DG JUST during the challenging pandemic period. In this capacity, she was leading the EU policies on justice, rule of law, fundamental rights, equality, and consumers. In addition, and currently, she is Director for Civil and Commercial Justice in charge of the development of the European area of civil justice, including contract law and company law.

Prior to that, she was Director for Equality. Previously, she also served as Head of several units in the same Directorate-General. Before joining the Commission in 1996, she was a partner in a business law firm, a researcher in law and author of several books on environmental law and EU law.



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Rikin Gandhi

Founder and Chief Executive Officer,
Digital Green

With a Master's degree in aeronautical and astronautical space engineering from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science from Carnegie Mellon University, Rikin began his career at Oracle, where he received patents for linguistic search algorithms that he helped develop.

Later he joined Microsoft Research India's Technology for Emerging Markets team, where he researched ways to amplify the effectiveness of agricultural development globally.

The time Rikin spent in India's rural communities changed his life. He developed a passion for helping the country's rural farmers, whom he saw as heroes. More than a decade later, that passion has become Rikin's career; in 2006, he co-founded what has become Digital Green.



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Najat Mokhtar

Deputy Director General and Head of the
Department of Nuclear Sciences and
Applications,
International Atomic Energy Agency

Najat Mokhtar was appointed Deputy Director General and head of the Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications on 1 January 2019. Prior to her appointment, she was Director of the Division for Asia and the Pacific in the Department of Technical Cooperation.

From 2012 to 2014, Ms Mokhtar was the Section Head of the Nutrition and Health related Environmental Studies, Human Health Division. From 2010 to 2012, she was the Director of Science and Technology at the Hassan II Academy of Science and Technology in Morocco, where she coordinated the national strategy on Education and Research. She worked as University Professor and Research Director at the University Ibn Tofail in Morocco for more than 20 years. Ms Mokhtar was a Technical Officer at the Agency from 2001 to 2007.

Ms Mokhtar holds a PhD in Nutrition and Endocrinology from Laval University in Canada and has a doctorate in food sciences from the University of Dijon in France. She has done her postdoctoral training as a Fulbright fellow at Johns Hopkins University in the United States of America.



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