

8th Africa Agribusiness and Science Week

9th FARA General Assembly



Durban, South Africa

5th - 8th June 2023



Parallel Sessions

A CALL TO ACTION!

**Strengthening Science - Business Linkages
to Boost Intra-African Trade**

6th June 2023 | 11:00 -13:00hrs





Background

The African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership (AFAP) has been invited to collaborate with the CAADPXP4 consortium (FARA, CCARDESA, ASARECA, AFAAS, CORAF) and partners to develop an engaging private sector track during the forthcoming **8th African Agribusiness and Science Week (AASW8) to be convened in Durban, South Africa.**

The AASW8 is the main continental platform of all stakeholders involved in agriculture and agribusiness research and innovation in Africa. This platform assembles over 1,500 stakeholders every three years to take stock of progress on research and innovation, share information, network, create business alliances, and map out priorities for joint action. The previous AASW event (7th edition) was successfully held in Kigali, Rwanda in June 2016. However, the planned 8th edition, which was scheduled for 2019, did not take place due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Subsequently, to ensure continuity of the Science week, a new approach has been developed which entails making it primarily self-financing.

The 8th AASW will be held in Durban, South Africa from June 5th to 8th, 2023. It will focus on a topical issue on the continent, that is, strengthening linkages between agribusiness and science plus innovation to improve the continent's productivity and competitiveness in the agro-industry. To underline the shift in the event's thematic focus, the AASW brand has been tweaked from "Africa Agriculture Science Week" to "Africa Agribusiness and Science Week".

The AASW8 will feature an opening plenary session which shall include a high-level panel session and award of the FARA leadership prize; plenary sessions, parallel session, and side events (workshops) focusing on the event's theme and on how to harness opportunities provided by

the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), a broad-based Agritech Expo, research-to-business match-making sessions, and an investment forum. The event will also have field visits to selected agribusiness projects to demonstrate the opportunities and challenges in agricultural advancement and establishing agro-processing zones. Delegates will have the opportunity to participate in science and business discussions and connect with investors, innovators, researchers, and farmers across the entire agricultural value chain.

The theme of the event is Linking Science, Innovation, and Agribusiness for Resilient Food Systems. The event is structured into five sub-themes, namely: Climate Resilience, Natural Resources Management, and Farming Systems Transition Nutrition-Sensitive and Gender-Responsive Food Systems, Science – Business Nexus to Boost Intra-African Trade, Knowledge Management, Digitalization, and Youth Entrepreneurship, Policies, Institutions, and Capacities.

AFAP has been asked to develop and provide organizational leadership on Day Two of the AASW8 for the convening of the parallel session on strengthening science – business linkages to boost Intra-African trade. In addition to AFAP, contributors to this session will include FARA, AFAAS, CORAF, ASARECA, CCARDESA, and FAO.



Durban, South Africa

Business Parallel Session Overview

The formal theme of the business parallel session that AFAP and collaborators will convene is **“A Call to Action on Strengthening Science-Business Linkages to Promote the Relevance and Contribution of Research to Boost Intra- African Trade”**.

The Business Parallel Session will take place from **11:00am - 13:00pm on Tuesday, June 6, 2023**. The focus of the Parallel Session rests on the recognition that to achieve agricultural transformation in Africa, it will require an African-owned and African-led process that articulates the science, technology, extension, innovation, policy, and social learning that Africa needs to apply in order to meet its agricultural and overall development goals.

This will require strengthened collaboration with the increasingly connected global community across multiple sectors. Strengthening science-business linkages aims to promote the relevance and contribution of research to boost intra- African trade. This is against the backdrop that trade has been widely accepted as a critical engine of economic growth and development. Nonetheless, the AUC-African Continental Free Trade Agreement acknowledges that “the failure of African trade to serve as a catalyst for sustainable economic growth and poverty alleviation stems partly from its size, structure and direction”. As such, discussions within this sub-theme are not siloed, but will focus on cross-cutting solutions that are and can be further promoted to solve complex developmental challenges. Thus, discussions during this session of AASW8 will help identify the bottlenecks in linking science to business and explore possible avenues and strategies for strengthening the science-business nexus, and identify leverage points for boosting intra-African trade.

The two-hour break away parallel session will be divided into two-hour long panel discussions. Overall, the aim is for these two panel discussions to contribute to the development of actionable recommendations and initiatives to strengthen agribusiness value chains, promote financial inclusion, improve supply chain efficiency, and foster intra-African trade for sustainable agricultural growth in Africa.



Breakaway Session 1

Empowering Africa's Agricultural Transformation: Unleashing the Potential of Science, Innovation, and Productivity

This session aims to explore the critical role of science, innovation, and enhanced productivity in driving sustainable agricultural development across Africa. With a focus on harnessing the transformative power of cutting-edge technologies, research advancements, and innovative practices, this session will delve into the strategies and interventions necessary to propel the continent towards resilient and productive food systems. Through dynamic discussion, sharing best practices, and identifying key challenges and opportunities, the session will inspire actionable solutions that empower farmers, agribusinesses, researchers, policymakers, and other agri-sector value chain stakeholders to leverage science and innovation for increased agricultural productivity and long-term food security.

| TIME | SESSION |
|---|---|
| Empowering Africa's Agricultural Transformation: Unleashing the Potential of Science, Innovation, and Productivity | |
| 11:00 - 11:05 | Welcome Address Michael Sudarkasa, CEO, African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership (AFAP), Moderator |
| 11:05 - 11:15 | Setting the Scene Dr. Irene Annor-Frempong, Lead, AU-EU International Research Consortium; Directorate of Research and Innovation at Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) |
| 11:15 - 11:45 | Facilitated Pannel Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nasir Yammama, Founder & CEO, Verdant Agri-Tech Dr. John Recha, Scientist, Climate – Smart Agriculture and Policy, International Livestock Research Institute Jehiel Oliver, Founder and CEO, Hello Tractor Dr. Canisius Kanangire, Executive Director, African Agriculture Technology Foundation (AATF) Dr. Innocent Okuku, Executive Secretary, West African Fertilizer Association - Contribution of Research to Boost trade: A case of West Africa |
| 11:45 - 12:00 | Facilitated Q&A |

Breakaway Session 2

Transforming Agribusiness: Accelerating Aggregation, Finance, Supply Chain Development, and Trade for Sustainable Agricultural Growth

This session delves into the critical elements of agribusiness value chains and explores strategies to enhance aggregation, crowd in increased finance, further supply chain development, and promote intra- African trade in the agriculture and food sectors. By addressing challenges and identifying opportunities, this session will foster discussions on innovative approaches and interventions to unlock the full potential of agribusiness for sustainable agricultural and economic growth across Africa.

| TIME | SESSION |
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| Transforming Agribusiness: Accelerating Aggregation, Finance, Supply Chain Development, and Trade for Sustainable Agricultural Growth | |
| 12:00 - 12:05 | Welcome Address Michael Sudarkasa, CEO, African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership (AFAP), Moderator |
| 12:05 - 12:15 | Setting the Scene Themba Khumalo, Advisor to the Secretary General of AfCFTA |
| 12:15 - 12:45 | Facilitated Pannel Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nomathemba Mhlanga, Agribusiness Officer, Subregional Office of Eastern Africa, FAO • Litha Kutta, Director, Enterprise and Supplier Development, Tiger Brands • Nico Groenewald, Head Agriculture, Standard Bank • Beverly De Sousa, Education Manager, SAPICS, The Professional Body for Supply Chain Management • Justy Range, Business Development, Freshmark Systems, Shoprite |
| 11:45 - 13:00 | Facilitated Q&A |



Durban, South Africa

Desired Participants

The desired participants for this track of activity will ideally be a cross-section of the participants at AASW8 will join and contribute to this conversation as we want to present voices with selected experiences and also seek to gain additional insight from the engagement with the audiences.

Desired Outcome

The aim of this business track is to sensitize both private sector and public sector participants to the key issues that must be addressed to strengthen the science – business for intra-regional trade framework. We also see this program within a program as an important networking and match-making opportunity amongst stakeholders in the science, innovation, finance, and private sector communities who will attend AASW8. The business track is also expected to develop a call to action on strengthening science-business linkages to promote the relevance and contribution of research to boost intra- African trade.focusing on the event's theme and on how to harness opportunities provided by

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