

UAE Minister of State for Future Food Security approves ICBA's new board of directors

Dubai, UAE, June 27, 2018 – In line with a resolution issued by Her Excellency Mariam bint Mohammed Almheiri, UAE Minister of State for Future Food Security, a new Board of Directors has been appointed at the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture ([ICBA](#)) with immediate effect.

Her Excellency welcomed the new board, applauding the outgoing members' valuable contribution towards agricultural research and development work led by ICBA.

The nine-member board comprises renowned leaders and experts from government and non-government organizations, donor agencies, as well as international research and development organizations from the Middle East, Africa, Asia, Europe and Australia.

The board will be chaired by Her Excellency Razan Khalifa Al-Mubarak, Secretary General of the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi (EAD).

Mrs. Al Mubarak is also the Managing Director of the Mohamed Bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund – one of the world's largest philanthropic endowments supporting species conservation in over 200 countries. Under her leadership, the fund has garnered global attention for demonstrating best practice in the sustainability of their endowment-based funding model. She is also the Managing Director of Emirates Wildlife Society in association with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). Mrs. Al Mubarak serves as a member of many of Abu Dhabi's interconnected environmental influencers and stakeholders, including the Infrastructure and Environment Committee to the General Secretariat of Abu Dhabi Executive Council. She is also a board member of the Federal Authority for Nuclear Regulation and the Abu Dhabi Food Control Authority. In addition, she is an Advisory Board member of the Rockefeller Foundation Economic Council on Planetary Health, the Cambridge Conservation Initiative, the Emirates Diplomatic Academy, Panthera, and the Women in Sustainability, Environment and Renewable Energy Initiative (WISER).

Speaking about her appointment, Her Excellency Razan Khalifa Al-Mubarak expressed her gratitude to the UAE leadership for selecting her as chair of ICBA's board and the trust placed in her to lead the advanced international center for research, innovation and technology.

Her Excellency Razan Khalifa Al-Mubarak said: "I am delighted to be chairing ICBA's board of directors, a strategic partner of EAD for the past 17 years. Together we have contributed to the management and improvement of terrestrial ecosystems and, most notably, we collaborated on a survey of Abu Dhabi Emirate's soil that has helped in land use planning. Over the years, ICBA has built a unique base of knowledge on sustainable agricultural production and I am looking forward to working with the new board members to continue making great strides in achieving its ambitious goals."

For her part, Dr. Ismahane Elouafi, Director General of ICBA, said: "On behalf of ICBA, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all our outgoing board members. The former board under the leadership of Prof. Abdulrahman Sultan Al Sharhan provided a new direction to ICBA's mission and strategy and played a central role in the success and continuity of the center. Further, we are delighted to welcome a new Board of Directors to be led by Her Excellency Razan Khalifa Al-Mubarak, a great female role model and a seasoned Secretary General. I am very hopeful that ICBA under the leadership and guidance of the new Board of Directors will further elevate its role in delivering agricultural solutions in the marginal environments for the benefit of smallholders worldwide."

The other board members are H.E. Mohamed Saif Al-Suwaidi; Mr. Mohammad Jamal Al-Saati; Dr. Abdelouahhab Zaid; Dr. Kanayo F. Nwanze; Mr. Essa Abdulrahman Alhashmi; Dr. Ursula Schaefer-Preuss; Dr. Ren Wang; and Prof. Quentin Grafton.

H.E. Mohamed Saif Al-Suwaidi is Director General of the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development. He is also Chairman of Al Ain Farms for Livestock Production and Vice Chairman of Arab Bank for Investment and Foreign Trade. He serves as a board member of First Gulf Bank, the Center of Food Security of Abu Dhabi, UAE Red Crescent and Agthia Group.

Mr. Mohammad Jamal Al-Saati is Special Advisor to the President of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB). As a member of the previous board, he played an instrumental role along with the other members in developing the ICBA Strategy 2013-2023. He represents the IsDB on the board and its commitment to the center's objectives and mission.

Dr. Abdelouahhab Zaid is Special Advisor at the Ministry of Presidential Affairs of the UAE. He also serves as Secretary General of the Khalifa International Award for Date Palm and Agricultural Innovation.

Dr. Kanayo F. Nwanze is former President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, a specialized agency of the United Nations. His career spans over 40 years in the development sector in three continents.

Mr. Essa Abdulrahman Alhashmi is Head at the Food Security Office in the Prime Minister's Office, the Government of the UAE. He has more than 10 years of experience in strategy development and implementation covering a wide range of sectors, including infrastructure development, environment management, food security and green development.

Dr. Ursula Schaefer-Preuss is ex-Chair of the Global Water Partnership. She is an economist who has been engaged in the field of development policy for more than 35 years. Her latest assignment was as Vice President of the Asian Development Bank for Knowledge Management and Sustainable Development.

Dr. Ren Wang is Special Advisor to the President of the Beijing Genomics Institute (BGI). He has held key positions in different organizations, including the Director of CGIAR based at the World Bank in Washington, DC, USA, and Assistant Director General of FAO's Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department.

Prof. Quentin Grafton is Chairholder, the UNESCO Chair in Water Economics and Transboundary Water Governance. He is also Professor of Economics, ANU Public Policy Fellow, Fellow of the Asia and the Pacific Policy Society and Director of the Centre for Water Economics, Environment and Policy (CWEEP) at the Crawford School of Public Policy at the Australian National University.

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About ICBA

The International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) is an international, non-profit research-for-development organization that aims to strengthen agricultural productivity in marginal and saline environments through identifying, testing and facilitating access to sustainable solutions for food, nutrition and income security.

www.biosaline.org