IFAD at COP26

Small islands, big challenges, bigger opportunities

8 November | 12:30-14:00 CET | 11:30-13:00 GMT

Mrs Helen Clark
The Right Honourable Helen Clark, Chair of the Women Political Leaders Board / Former Prime Minister of New Zealand

Helen Clark is a respected global leader on sustainable development, gender equality and international co-operation. She served three successive terms as Prime Minister of New Zealand between 1999 and 2008. While in government, she led policy debate on a wide range of economic, social, environmental and cultural issues, including sustainability and climate change. She then became the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator for two terms from 2009 to 2017, the first woman to lead the organisation.

His Excellency Francisco Martins dos Ramos
Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development, Alternate Governor of IFAD for the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe

Hon. Francisco Martins dos Ramos is the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development of São Tomé and Príncipe. An agronomist trained in Russia, (ex-USSR), he is one of the senior cadres of the ministry in question and now with the mission of continuing the policy of relaunching this sector still considered the basis of the economy of São Tomé and Príncipe.

Her Excellency Elizabeth Thompson
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, with special responsibility for Climate Change, SIDS Issues and Law of the Sea, Barbados

She is an attorney, with LLM, MBA, LEC, but for many years worked as a policy maker. She was a former elected Parliamentarian and Minister of Government. At various times during the period 1994 to 2008 she had responsibility for the portfolios of Energy and Environment, Housing and Lands, Physical Development and Planning, and Health. In 2008, she received the UNEP’s top award in environment, sustainable development and climate change, that of "Champion of the Earth." In 2012, she served as Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations and Executive Coordinator of the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development. Her immediate past role was as Barbados’ Ambassador to the United Nations.
Mrs Ethel Tebengi Frances  
Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Solomon Islands  
Mrs Ethel Tebengi Frances is the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock in the Solomon Islands. She joined the ministry in August 2018 from the Prime Minister office where she served there as a Policy Advisor Fundamental Reforms from 2015 to 2018. She was working as a freelance consultant for nine years before she took up the policy advisor position at the Prime Minister’s office. Before that she was working in the Education sector as a lecturer and then on an EU Funded Education sector wide project.

Dr Simona Marinescu  
UN Resident Coordinator, Cook Islands, Samoa, Niue, Tokelau  
Dr. Simona Marinescu is the UN Resident Coordinator for the Cook Islands, Niue Samoa, and Tokelau. She leads a UN Country Team of 15 UN agencies and is based in Apia, Samoa. Dr. Marinescu has over 20 years of experience in international development coordination, economic diversification, green growth, humanitarian and sustainable human development.

Mr Donal Brown  
Associate Vice President, Programme Management Department at the International Fund for Agricultural Development  
Brown previously worked at the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID) in a number of senior positions. In 2014-2015, he led the UK’s task force to Sierra Leone in support of the government’s efforts to fight Ebola. Brown worked at DFID headquarters and in field offices in Africa, Asia and Latin America, covering all of DFID’s areas of interest.

Professor Jeffrey D. Sachs  
Director of the Centre for Sustainable Development at Columbia University  
Jeffrey D. Sachs is a world-renowned economics professor, bestselling author, innovative educator, and global leader in sustainable development. He is widely recognized for bold and effective strategies to address complex challenges including debt crises, hyperinflations, the transition from central planning to market economies, the control of AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, the escape from extreme poverty, and the battle against human-induced climate change.