

## **The opportunities and challenges in urban and peri-urban agriculture and the role for science-based policies and practice**

Conveners:

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Today more than half of the planet's inhabitants live in cities. The world-wide migration of rural people to cities is particularly prominent in Africa and Asia. Besides the demographic aspects, these dynamics do also change the conditions for agriculture, livelihoods and food production. There are new opportunities and challenges to which science can contribute. These relates to several of the Sustainable development goals, primarily SDG 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 11.

People in cities and towns in low-income countries demand and eat a more varied diet than rural dwellers. This more varied diet comprises more legumes, fruits, meat, milk, egg and fish compared with the rural staple food-based diets. The demand for these different components of urban diets opens for urban and peri-urban agriculture (UPA). This kind of farming is mainly small-scale and often operated by women, yet contributing to a significant share of the food in many cities in low-income countries. Also, the rural dwellers moving to cities often bring agricultural practices with them for income and food and nutrition security reasons. In addition, particularly the high value perishable products also create unique market opportunities, whereby UPA can become a deliberate accumulation strategy actively pursued by entrepreneurial women, men and youth from different socio-economic classes. In spite of its important role(s), there are often no policies about or infrastructure for UPA and sometimes it is even illegal but still practiced.

Unfortunately, there are also challenges related to UPA. For instance, threats to the public health from zoonotic diseases in livestock, sanitary issues from cultivation and livestock-keeping, and local environmental degradation from pollution.

Analysing the opportunities and challenges in UPA as well as suggesting policies or interventions to balancing the up- and down sides, sustainably develop the sector and integrate it into inclusive urban planning activities will be the focus of the presentations and discussions in this panel. Thus, abstracts from a multitude of disciplines are welcome to this panel.