

“Bridging scientific and indigenous peoples’ knowledge for sustainable and inclusive food systems”

Bridging scientific and indigenous peoples’ knowledge is crucial to achieving sustainable and inclusive food systems. Food systems of indigenous populations are quite unique in many ways and constitute an integral part of their cultural identity and social integrity. For centuries, many of the indigenous populations have relied directly on their biophysical environment for sustenance, and their way of life is based on a strong sense of interconnection, interdependence, and shared meanings and knowledge. Indigenous peoples’ knowledge is largely preserved by oral tradition and is passed from generation to generation through storytelling, ceremonies, arts, crafts, song, media, etc. As indigenous people’ knowledge on food systems is often characterized by sustainable resource use, locally adapted production systems, traditional processing and preservation techniques, and culturally influenced consumption patterns, bridging it with science offers the potential to create more resilient food systems. However, there is an ongoing transition from indigenous to Western-influenced food systems in developing and middle- income countries, increasing the risk of losing indigenous knowledge and traditional agricultural practices. Furthermore, this shift is also associated with westernized diets which increases the risk of obesity as well as micronutrient deficiencies.

This side event will outline that an integration between traditional knowledge and science is essential not only for scientific progress in food systems research but also for the valuation and preservation of traditional knowledge. It will exemplify how both knowledge bases can be connected on the operational level introducing examples of research or NGO activities. The multiplicity of traditional knowledge including its context specificity (culture, landscape, climate etc.) will be underlined. The existence and strengthening of local research institutions in the global South as key requirement to maximizing the integration potential between traditional knowledge and science will be highlighted.

The side event will focus on the nexus of indigenous knowledge and science with insights from four different continents (Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America). The keynotes will present insights on the leading question of how this nexus can be achieved including corresponding challenges. Furthermore, a theoretical framing of the nexus of indigenous knowledge and science will be outlined. Subsequently, the side event will provide four case studies from India, Bolivia, Mali and Tanzania, focusing on selected aspects of food systems in different geographical and cultural contexts. Finally, a guided Q&A session will allow all participants to further deepen their knowledge of this complex issue.

Date: 06.07.2021 4pm - 5:30pm (CEST)

Zoom link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84316319155> (password: 405120)

Convenor: Dr. Katharina Löhr & Dr. Constance Rybak (Leibniz Center of Agricultural Landscape Research), Prof. Dr. Hettie Schönfeldt (University of Pretoria), Dr. Harry Hoffmann (Welthungerhilfe)

Speakers: Prof. Dr. Hettie Schönfeldt, University of Pretoria (South Africa); Dr. David Ludwig, Wageningen University (Netherlands); Dr. Dhanya Vijayan, Leibniz Center for Agricultural Landscape Research (Germany); Carlos Vacaflores, San Andrés Agricultural Institute (Bolivia); Ulla Santara, Welthungerhilfe Mali; Dr. Hadijah Ally Mbwana, Sokoine University of Agriculture (Tanzania)

Contact: katharina.loehr@zalf.de; constance.rybak@zalf.de

ZOOM LINK:



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