



Bhutan Agrifood Trade and Investment Forum 2024

Programme



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BHUTAN AGRIFOOD TRADE AND INVESTMENT FORUM 2024

STARTS: 15 MAY 2024

ENDS: 19 MAY 2024



15 May 2024 (Day 1) Morning Session: Pemako



0830 - 0930 h	Registration
0930 - 0950 h	Grand Opening Ceremony with offering of Marchang
0950 - 0955 h	Welcome Remarks by Thinley Namgyel, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
0955 - 1005 h	Remarks by Ken Shimizu, FAO Representative for Bhutan and Nepal
1005 - 1015 h	Remarks by Mario Ronconi, Delegation of the European Union
1015 - 1025 h	Remarks by Karla Robin Hershey, UN Resident Coordinator
1025 - 1040 h	Keynote Address by H.E. Dasho Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister
1040 - 1045 h	Vote of thanks by Tshering Wangmo, Officiating Director General, Department of Agricultural Marketing and Cooperatives, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock

→ 1045 - 1115 h Photo Session and High Tea

Day 1 Theme ***Enabling Policies for Investment in Agrifood Systems Transformation in Bhutan***

1115 - 1130 h Policy Context for Bhutan's Agrifood Systems by H.E. Younten Phuntsho, Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock

Plenary
Presentation

1130 - 1145 h Invest Bhutan: Economic Transformation through Bhutan's Revised FDI Policy by H.E. Namgyal Dorji, Minister, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment

Plenary
Presentation

→ 1145 h onwards: B2B sessions

BHUTAN AGRIFOOD TRADE AND INVESTMENT FORUM 2024

15 May 2024 (Day 1) Morning Session: Pemako



1145 - 1215 h

Food Systems Transformation: A Global, Regional and National Perspective by Stefanos Fotiou, Director, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub

Technical
Presentation

1215 - 1245 h

Leveraging Opportunities for Investment in Bhutan by Tshering Wangmo, Officiating Director General, Department of Agricultural Marketing and Cooperatives, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock

Technical
Presentation

→ 1300 - 1400 h Networking Lunch



BHUTAN AGRIFOOD TRADE AND INVESTMENT FORUM 2024

15 May 2024 (Day 1)

Afternoon Session: Centenary and Coronation Park

1200 - 2100 h Exhibition and Food Fair

1430 – 1530 h Launch of Exhibition and Food Fair: A showcase of Bhutan’s unique agricultural products and food stalls serving traditional and fusion recipes.

Remarks by Chief Guest H.E. Younten Phuntsho, Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock

Product Launches:

- **New agrifood products by Bhutanese entrepreneurs/companies**

Reception Dinner (By Invite Only): Pemako

1800 - 1900 h Welcome Reception Dinner hosted by Hon’ble Prime Minister of Bhutan

Launch of Country Programming Framework of FAO Bhutan

Remarks by Ken Shimizu, FAO Representative for Bhutan and Nepal

Launch of One Country One Priority Product (OCOP) of Bhutan

Remarks by Dr. Xuan Li, Regional Coordinator for OCOP, FAO

Launch of IFC Smallholders Handbook

Remarks by Ernest Bethe, Lead, Agribusiness and Services (MAS) Asia Upstream Advisory, IFC

Remarks by H.E. Dasho Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister

1900 - 2030 h Dinner and Cultural Program

END

BHUTAN AGRIFOOD TRADE AND INVESTMENT FORUM 2024

Day 2 Theme *Innovative Financing and Trade Facilitation for Agrifood Sector Growth*



16 May 2024 (Day 2) Morning Session: Pemako

0930 - 1000 h **Global Trade and Investment in the Agrifood Sector by Maximo Torero Cullen, Chief Economist, FAO**

**Technical
Presentation**

1000 - 1030 h **Transforming Bhutan's Trade in the 21st Century by Kinley Yangzom, Chief, Export Promotion Division, Department of Trade, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment**

**Technical
Presentation**

1030 - 1145 h **Market Linkages and Bhutanese Agrifood Sector: Challenges and Opportunities**

**Panel
Discussion**

Speakers:
Gyem Bidha, Director, Bhutan Food and Drug Authority, Ministry of Health
Tai Seng Yee, Team Leader, Zenxin Organics
Sheu Salau, Senior Agriculture Economist, World Bank
Dr. Xuan Li, Senior Policy Officer, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
Leki Tenzin, Chief Marketing and Economic Development Officer, Department of Agricultural Marketing and Cooperatives, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock

Moderator: Dr. Tashi Samdup, Former Director General of the Bhutan Agriculture & Food Regulatory Authority

1145 - 1315 h **Plenary Presentation by the Royal Monetary Authority**

**Panel
Discussion**

Innovative Financing for Agrifood Sector

Speakers:
Leki Wangmo, Secretary, Ministry of Finance
Dr. Adama Coulibaly, Country Representative Bhutan, World Bank
Jiang Xiaoruo, Sr Policy Officer, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
Diane Jegam, Regional Director, Proporco (French Development Finance Institute partner to IFC)
Sean Watson, CEO, Mountain Hazelnuts

Moderator: Amy Heyman, Economist, Office of the Chief Economist, FAO

➔ **0930 h onwards B2B sessions**

➔ **1315 - 1400 h Lunch**

BHUTAN AGRIFOOD TRADE AND INVESTMENT FORUM 2024

16 May 2024 (Day 2) Afternoon Session: Centenary and Coronation Park



1200 - 2100 h **Exhibition and Food Fair Continues**

1400 - 1600 h **Recipe Contest: with the theme “Quinoa and Potato for better nutrition, food security, and income.”**

1400 - 1405 h **Welcome Remarks by Chief Guest H.E. Tandin Wangchuk, Minister, Ministry of Health**

1405 - 1425 h **Introduction of judges and participants**

1425 - 1525 h **Recipe contest commences**

1525 - 1545 h **Compilation and declaration of results**

1545 h **Awarding of prizes**



END

BHUTAN AGRIFOOD TRADE AND INVESTMENT FORUM 2024

Day 3 Theme *Leveraging Partnerships and Technology for Resilient Agrifood Systems*

17 May 2024 (Day 3) Morning Session: Pemako

0900 - 1015 h **Climate Resilience and Agrifood systems: What Can Bhutan Offer?**

**Panel
Discussion**

Speakers:

Damcho Rinzin, Officiating Director General, Department of Tourism, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment

Chencho Norbu, Former Executive Director, Asian Forest Cooperation Organization/Formal Secretary, National Environment Commission Secretariat

Ernest Bethe, Lead, Agribusiness and Services (MAS) Asia Upstream Advisory, IFC

Filippo Dibari, Nutrition Team Leader, WFP

Karma Tshering, Chief, Policy and Planning Division, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock

Stella Quek, Founder, Table of Plenty

Moderator: Sonam P. Wangdi, Former Secretary, National Environment Commission Secretariat

1015 - 1145 h **Plenary Presentation by Government Technology (GovTech) Agency**

**Panel
Discussion**

Upscaling Digital and Tech Solutions for the Agrifood Sector

Speakers:

Phuntsho Namgay, Officiating Director, DHI InnoTech

Pema Wangchug, Associate Director, DHI Drive

Dinakar Radhakrishnan, Senior Program Manager, Delegation of the EU to India and Bhutan

Ngawang Gyeltshen, Founder, Guu.AI

Moderator: Jigme Tenzing, Secretary, Government Technology (GovTech) Agency

→ 0930 h onwards B2B sessions

BHUTAN AGRIFOOD TRADE AND INVESTMENT FORUM 2024

Day 3 Theme *Leveraging Partnerships and Technology for Resilient Agrifood Systems*

17 May 2024 (Day 3) Morning Session: Pemako

1145 - 1300 h **Fostering Constructive Dialogue: Examining the Role of Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration for Agrifood Trade and Investments in Bhutan**

**Panel
Discussion**

Speakers:

Ken Shimizu, FAO Representative for Bhutan and Nepal

Tomoyuki Yamada, Chief Representative, JICA

Laurent le Danois, Team Leader, Delegation of the EU to India and Bhutan

Sonam Chopel, CEO, CSI Market

RosaLaura Romeo, Coordinator, International Mountain Partnership

Moderator: Thinley Namgyel, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock

→ 1300 - 1400 h Lunch

1400 - 1600 h Goodwill Marketing and Strategic Networking Session

1400 - 1410 h **Welcome Remarks by Tandy Wangchuk, President, Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry**

1410 - 1420 h **Remarks by Jayesh Bhatia, Managing Director, Intellectap Advisory on Investment Readiness Bootcamp**

1420 - 1430 h **Remarks by Bhutanese entrepreneurs on their journey**

1430 - 1440 h **Keynote Remarks by Siddhant Pandey, Chairman and CEO, Business Oxygen and Chairperson of Nepal Private Equity Association**

1440 - 1545 h **Networking session**

BHUTAN AGRIFOOD TRADE AND INVESTMENT FORUM 2024

Day 3 Theme *Leveraging Partnerships and Technology for Resilient Agrifood Systems*

17 May 2024 (Day 3)

1600 - 1630 h **Closing Ceremony**

1600 - 1615 h **Remarks from Investors**

1615 - 1625 h **Remarks by Ken Shimizu, FAO Representative for Bhutan and Nepal**

1625 - 1630 h **Closing Remarks by H.E. Younten Phuntsho, Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock**





BHUTAN AGRIFOOD TRADE AND INVESTMENT FORUM 2024

17 May 2024 (Day 3) **Afternoon Session: Centenary and Coronation Park**

1200 - 2100 h **Exhibition and Food Fair continues**



END



BHUTAN AGRIFOOD TRADE AND INVESTMENT FORUM 2024

18 - 19 May 2024 (Day 4 and 5) Field Trips



Group 1 Thimphu- Punakha- Wangdue- Thimphu

18th May:

- Depart from Thimphu for Punakha.
- Visit Punakha Dzong.
- Enroute stop at Mendeygang to interact with vegetable vendors.
- Night Halt in Punakha.

19th May

- Explore Agriculture Research and Development Center, Bajo/Chimipang (enroute to Chimi Lhakhang)
- Travel from Wangdue back to Thimphu.

Group 2 Thimphu-Haa- Paro

18th May:

- Depart from Thimphu to Haa.
- Enroute see Rinpung Dzong and National Post Harvest Center
- Travel to Haa via Chele-la, brief halt at Chele-la.
- Night Halt in Haa.

19th May:

- Visit National Yak Farm and National Cold Water Fishery
- Explore Lhakhang Karpo.
- Travel from Haa to Paro.
- Night Halt in Paro.



END



BHUTAN AGRIFOOD TRADE AND INVESTMENT FORUM 2024

18 - 19 May 2024 (Day 4 and 5) IFC Investment Readiness Bootcamp Hotel Pemako

0900 - 1730 h

The Investment Readiness training is hosted by the International Finance Corporation (IFC), in partnership with the European Union's Accelerating Climate-Smart and Inclusive Infrastructure in South Asia (ACSIIS). It is tailored specifically for growth - oriented Bhutanese businesses eager to expand. The training will introduce you to the fundamental art of raising capital, explore the avenues of investment and equip yourself with the essential tools to assess and enhance your investor readiness.

Experts from Intellect Advisory Services will be present to guide participants about managing their business finances.

[Note: This workshop is by invitation only.]

END

Session and Speaker Details



Enabling Policies for Investment in Agrifood Systems Transformation in Bhutan

DAY 1

PLENARY PRESENTATION

THE POLICY CONTEXT FOR BHUTAN'S AGRIFOOD SYSTEM

1115 - 1130 H

This keynote presentation will delve into the macro policy framework shaping Bhutan's agrifood systems. This session will explore the strategic initiatives and policies driving sustainable agriculture, food security, and economic prosperity in Bhutan, especially in the context of Bhutan's 13th Five-Year Plan outlook as well as key policy documents that inform the agrifood sector at large in Bhutan. From harnessing traditional wisdom to embracing innovative technologies, this discussion will highlight the holistic approach Bhutan is taking to ensure the resilience and sustainability of its agrifood systems.

Speaker: H.E. Younten Phuntsho, Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock

PLENARY PRESENTATION

INVEST BHUTAN: ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION THROUGH BHUTAN'S REVISED FDI POLICY

1130 - 1145 H

Major transformations have abounded within the Bhutanese government to accelerate Bhutan's economic aspirations as a developed nation by 2040. This session will, for the first time on a public platform, present the reforms within Bhutan's FDI policy. The presentation will be tailored to trade expansion in the agricultural sector designed to attract and nurture foreign investment in Bhutan's agrifood sector. From exploring the regulatory environment to understanding incentives and opportunities for investors, the presentation will dissect the mechanisms driving sustainable growth and prosperity. This intends to provide insights into Bhutan's strategic vision for agrifood trade development, and uncover the untapped potential awaiting entrepreneurs and investors alike.

Speaker: H.E. Namgyal Dorji, Minister, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment

Enabling Policies for Investment in Agrifood Systems Transformation in Bhutan

DAY 1

TECHNICAL PRESENTATION:

FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION: A GLOBAL AND REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

1145 - 1215 H

This session aims to delve into the intricate interplay between global, regional, and national dynamics shaping the future of our food systems. It will explore the latest trends, challenges, and opportunities driving this transformation on a global scale, as we examine the critical role of sustainable practices, technological innovation, and policy frameworks in ensuring food security and resilience. At the regional perspective, the session will uncover the unique factors influencing food systems across different geographical contexts. From economic landscapes to cultural nuances, discover how regional dynamics shape agricultural production, trade, and consumption patterns, this presentation will provide a global perspective on innovative initiatives, best practices, and policy interventions driving positive change.

Speaker: Stefanos Fotiou, Director, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub



TECHNICAL PRESENTATION

LEVERAGING OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVESTMENT IN BHUTAN

1215 - 1245 H

Bhutan continues to offer untapped potential in its agrifood industry with unique advantages and promising prospects awaiting investors. From organic farming to niche product development, discover how strategic investments can drive innovation, create jobs, and foster economic development while promoting environmental stewardship. This session will present the diverse array of investment opportunities spanning agricultural production, processing, distribution, and export for participants to gain knowledge into Bhutan's agrifood landscape, highlighting key sectors primed for investment and growth.

Speaker: Tshering Wangmo, Officiating Director General, Department of Agricultural Marketing and Cooperatives, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock

Innovative Financing and Trade Facilitation for Agrifood Sector Growth

DAY 2

TECHNICAL PRESENTATION

GLOBAL TRADE AND INVESTMENT IN THE AGRIFOOD TRADE SECTOR

0930 - 1000 H

This session is an exploration of the dynamic landscape of international trade and investment opportunities within the agrifood industry focusing on the latest trends, challenges, and emerging opportunities shaping global agrifood trade and investment. From market dynamics to policy frameworks, delve into the intricacies of navigating international markets and capitalizing on investment prospects. This session is a primer for innovative strategies for market access, supply chain optimization, and value chain integration, essential for maximizing returns on agrifood investments.

Speaker: Maximo Torero Cullen, Chief Economist, FAO



TECHNICAL PRESENTATION

TRANSFORMING BHUTAN'S TRADE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

1000 - 1030 H

How is Bhutan reshaping its trade landscape and how will global forces, in turn, shape Bhutan's trade opportunities? With a particular focus on the agrifood sector, this session will delve into how Bhutan is poised to harness the opportunities of the 21st century global economy - from tapping into digital technologies to enhancing infrastructure and streamlining regulatory frameworks to enhancing market access, promoting value addition, and strengthen trade linkages both regionally and internationally in the agrifood trade sector.

Speaker: Kinley Yangzom, Chief, Export Promotion Division, Department of Trade, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment

Innovative Financing and Trade Facilitation for Agrifood Sector Growth

DAY 2

1030 - 1145 H

PANEL DISCUSSION

MARKET LINKAGES AND BHUTANESE AGRIFOOD SECTOR: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Various things need to be in place to ensure the efficiency and value of agrifood products. This involves standards and certifications to enhance the quality and competitiveness of Bhutan's agricultural products streamlining agricultural logistics, climate-smart production systems, establishing agrifood-based industries and strategically located logistics centers and storage infrastructures are imperative for success in the agrifood sector. The panel will bring together speakers who will speak to these aspects and discuss the unique challenges and solutions tailored to Bhutan's context.

Speakers:

Gyem Bidha, Director, Bhutan Food and Drug Authority, Ministry of Health

Tai Seng Yee, Team Leader, Zenxin Organics

Sheu Salau, Senior Agriculture Economist, World Bank

Dr. Xuan Li, Senior Policy Officer, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Leki Tenzin, Chief Marketing and Economic Development Officer, Department of Agricultural Marketing and Cooperatives, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock

Moderator: Dr. Tashi Samdup, Former Director General of the Bhutan Agriculture & Food Regulatory Authority



Innovative Financing and Trade Facilitation for Agrifood Sector Growth

DAY 2

PANEL DISCUSSION

INNOVATIVE FINANCING FOR AGRIFOOD SECTOR

PLENARY PRESENTATION BY ROYAL MONETARY AUTHORITY

1145 - 1315 H

Financial instruments can ensure social safety for farmers as well as enable players to economically benefit from the agritrade sector. In the face of dwindling public sector commitments and funds, innovative and market-based mechanisms can be leveraged to mobilize funds to benefit players in the Agri-Trade sector. Such instruments include carbon financing, strengthening existing agri-food-related financial institutions, and developing mechanisms and modalities for the establishment of insurance funds.

Speakers:

Leki Wangmo, Secretary, Ministry of Finance

Dr. Adama Coulibaly, Country Representative Bhutan, World Bank

Jiang Xiaoruo, Sr Policy Officer, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Diane Jegam, Regional Director, Proporc (French Development Finance Institute partner to IFC)

Sean Watson, CEO, Mountain Hazelnuts

Moderator: Amy Heyman, Economist, Office of the Chief Economist, FAO



Leveraging Partnerships and Technology for Resilient Agrifood Systems

DAY 3

PANEL DISCUSSION

CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND AGRIFOOD SYSTEMS: WHAT CAN BHUTAN OFFER?

0900 - 1015 H

Bhutan confronts a multifaceted array of challenges in its agricultural sector, compounded by the looming threat of climate change. In addressing these challenges, Bhutan has developed a suite of climate policies, including its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), Low Emission Development Strategies (LEDS), and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs). This Panel will examine how Bhutan can integrate climate-smart agricultural practices, such as sustainable land management, crop diversification, and water conservation, into its policy framework to enhance agricultural resilience. Moreover, the panel will spotlight the potential of agro-eco-food tourism as a transformative opportunity for Bhutan's agricultural sector. By leveraging its pristine natural environment, rich cultural heritage, and commitment to environmental stewardship, Bhutan can develop sustainable tourism initiatives that not only promote economic growth but also foster environmental conservation and community development.

Speakers:

Damcho Rinzin, Officiating Director General, Department of Tourism, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment

Chencho Norbu, Former Executive Director, Asian Forest Cooperation Organization/Formal Secretary, National Environment Commission Secretariat

Ernest Bethe, Lead, Agribusiness and Services (MAS) Asia Upstream Advisory, IFC

Karma Tshering, Chief, Policy and Planning Division, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock

Stella Quek, Founder, Table of Plenty

Moderator: Sonam P. Wangdi, Former Secretary, National Environment Commission Secretariat



Leveraging Partnerships and Technology for Resilient Agrifood Systems

DAY 3

PANEL DISCUSSION

UPSCALING DIGITAL AND TECH SOLUTIONS FOR THE AGRIFOOD SECTOR

PLENARY PRESENTATION BY GOVERNMENT TECHNOLOGY (GOVTECH) AGENCY

1015 - 1145 H

This Panel discusses the intersection of technology, policymaking, and agricultural innovation, offering valuable insights into how digital solutions can drive transformative change in Bhutan's agrifood sector. From precision farming and remote sensing to blockchain and data analytics, how can cutting-edge technologies revolutionise agricultural practices, enhance productivity, and promote resilience in the agrifood sector? Panelists will provide insights into the policy frameworks and regulatory mechanisms necessary to foster innovation, promote digital literacy, and ensure equitable access to technology across the agrifood value chain.

Speakers:

Filippo Dibari, Nutrition Team Leader, WFP

Phuntsho Namgay, Officiating Director, DHI InnoTech

Pema Wangchug, Associate Director, DHI Drive

Dinakar Radhakrishnan, Senior Program Manager, Delegation of the EU to India and Bhutan

Ngawang Gyeltshen, Founder, Guu.AI

Moderator: Jigme Tenzing, Secretary, Government Technology (GovTech) Agency



Leveraging Partnerships and Technology for Resilient Agrifood Systems

DAY 3

PANEL DISCUSSION

FOSTERING CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE: EXAMINING THE ROLE OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION FOR AGRIFOOD TRADE AND INVESTMENTS IN BHUTAN

1145 - 1300 H

How can effective dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders— from government agencies and private enterprises to farmers' cooperatives and civil society organizations— unlock opportunities, address challenges, and catalyze positive change in the agrifood sector? This panel will discuss how inclusive decision-making processes and participatory approaches can lead to more resilient, equitable, and environmentally sustainable food systems. This panel, comprising representatives from diverse sectors and backgrounds, will share insights, experiences, and success stories of stakeholder engagement and collaboration in Bhutan's agrifood trade and investment landscape, bringing focus on innovative partnerships, multi-stakeholder platforms, and community-led initiatives that are driving tangible impacts and fostering greater social and economic inclusion.

Speakers:

Ken Shimizu, FAO Representative for Bhutan and Nepal

Tomoyuki Yamada, Chief Representative, JICA

Laurent le Danois, Team Leader, Delegation of the EU to India and Bhutan

Sonam Chopel, CEO, CSI Market

RosaLaura Romeo, Coordinator, International Mountain Partnership

Moderator: Thinley Namgyel, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock



DAY 3

GOODWILL MARKETING AND STRATEGIC NETWORKING SESSION

1400 - 1600 H

Welcome Remarks by **Tandy Wangchuk, President, BCCI**

Remarks by **Jayesh Bhatia, MD, Intellectap Advisory on Investment Readiness Bootcamp**

Remarks by Bhutanese entrepreneurs on their journey

Keynote Remarks by **Siddhant Pandey, Chairman and CEO, Business Oxygen (Nepal) and Chairperson of Nepal Private Equity Association (NEPA)**

Welcome to a structured networking session to further facilitate linkages at the BATIF 2024. Participants will engage with inspiring individuals about their entrepreneurial journey in the business and agrifood sector as well as connect with different stakeholders.



SPEAKERS



H.E. Dasho Tshering Tobgay Prime Minister of Bhutan

His Excellency Dasho Tshering Tobgay is the Prime Minister of Bhutan. He served as the Opposition Leader in the first democratically elected Government and as the Prime Minister from 2013 to 2018. Prior to joining politics, H.E. worked as a public servant in various capacities. Dasho is an environmentalist and cultural advocate. He studied at the Harvard Kennedy School and the University of Pittsburgh Swanson School of Engineering.



H.E. Younten Phuntsho Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock

His Excellency Younten Phuntsho is the Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock. He has Masters of Environment Management from Yale University, USA and MSc in Forestry Management and Administration from Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy Dehradun, India. His expertise is in the area of Natural Resource Management, Climate Change, Environment and Forestry. Prior to his appointment as the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, he worked with the Department of Forest and Park Services and in the World Wildlife Fund, Bhutan.

SPEAKERS



H.E. Namgyal Dorji
Minister, Ministry of Industry,
Commerce & Employment

His Excellency Namgyal Dorji is the Minister, Ministry of Industry, Commerce & Employment. Prior to joining politics, he served in various capacities in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade. He has a master degree in International Relations and Diplomacy from the Australian National University.



Thinley Namgyel
Secretary, Ministry of
Agriculture and Livestock

Thinley is the Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock. Prior to his appointment, Thinley served as the Secretary of the Gross National Happiness Commission Secretariat (GNHCS) and the Ministry of Finance. He joined the GNHCS as a Chief Planning Officer and later as the GNHC Director. Thinley has a Bachelor degree in Commerce from the Sherubtse College and MBA from the University of Canberra.

SPEAKERS



Jigme Tenzing
Secretary, Government
Technology (GovTech) Agency

Jigme is the Secretary of the Government Technology (GovTech) Agency. He has been working in IT in the Public Sector and has focused on the adoption of IT in government, helping to define and shape the path of IT development in the country. His skills and experience enables him to guide and motivate the ICT fraternity to digitally transform public services in Bhutan, while also strengthening the domestic ICT & telecom Industry. He holds MSc in Information and Computer Science from the University of Oregon in the USA.



Leki Wangmo
Secretary, Ministry of Finance

Leki is the Secretary of the Ministry of Finance. She started her career in the Ministry of Finance and the Druk Holding and Investments in the areas of business development and investments. Later, she joined the National Pension and Provident Fund to lead the investment team, managing close to Nu 50 billion in asset management spread over debt, equity, real estate, and other investment avenues. She holds a Master Degree in Business Administration specializing in Finance from The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.

SPEAKERS



Karla Hershey
UN Resident Coordinator for Bhutan

Karla is the UN Resident Coordinator for Bhutan, bringing more than 30 years of experience in development coordination, international relations, resource mobilization, change management and humanitarian affairs, which she has acquired at the United Nations and externally, to the position. At the United Nations, she most recently served as the Representative and Country Director of the World Food Programme (WFP) in Liberia.



Ken Shimizu
FAO Representative for Bhutan and Nepal

Ken is the FAO Representative for Bhutan and Nepal. Prior to this appointment, Ken worked as the FAO Representative for Papua New Guinea. He has 24 years of experience in food security, agricultural and rural development, natural resources management, climate change, disaster risk reduction and emergency coordination, primarily with FAO and other UN agencies in Asia and the Pacific as well as the Caribbean. Ken is from Japan, and holds a Masters in Environmental Planning from Cornell University in the USA.

SPEAKERS



Adama Coulibaly (PhD)
Country Representative,
Bhutan, South Asia, World
Bank

Adama is the Country Representative of World Bank to Bhutan. Adama is from Côte d'Ivoire and holds a PhD in Development Economics from Howard University, Washington, DC (USA). Before serving in Bhutan, he was the Resident Representative of the World Bank to Sudan, prior to which he served as the World Bank Resident Representative to Chad.



Tomoyuki Yamada
Chief Representative, JICA
Bhutan

Tomoyuki is the Chief Representative of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Bhutan Office. Prior to this appointment, he worked for JICA in the fields of economic development, infrastructure development, public private partnerships (PPP), TVET and education. Tomoyuki is a national of Japan, and holds a Master in Public Administration from Columbia University in the USA.

SPEAKERS



Gyem Bidha
Director, Bhutan Food and Drug Authority, Ministry of Health

Gyem is the Director of the Bhutan Food and Drug Authority, Ministry of Health. She has a MSc in Agriculture Systems and Engineering from the Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok, Thailand. Throughout her career, she has demonstrated dedication and leadership in the domains of food safety, biosecurity and laboratory management.



Stefanos Fotiou (PhD)
Director, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub

Stefanos is the Director of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub and the Director of the FAO Office of SDGs. He held various positions in the UN Secretariat. Before joining the UN, he had worked for the private sector and academia on issues of regional sustainable development. He holds a PhD in Natural Resource Economics, a MSc in Forestry and Natural Environment and a Master of Science in Information Systems.

SPEAKERS



Maximo Torero Cullen
Chief Economist, FAO

Maximo Torero Cullen joined FAO in January 2019 as Assistant Director-General for the Economic and Social Development Department. His major research work lies mostly in analyzing poverty, inequality, importance of geography and assets (private or public) in explaining poverty, and in policies oriented towards poverty alleviation based on the role played by infrastructure, institutions, and on how technological breakthroughs (or discontinuities) can improve the welfare of households and small farmers.



Jiang Xiaorou
Senior Policy Officer, FAO
Regional Task Force for Hand-in-Hand Initiative

Jiang joined FAO in 2019 and assumed the role of regional coordinator in the Office of the Director-General. During her tenure at FAO headquarters, Jiang acted as a crucial liaison between the Cabinet, the Organization, its Members, and external partners. Prior to her role at FAO, Jiang accumulated 16 years of experience at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of China, serving in various capacities.

SPEAKERS



Xuan Li (PhD)
Senior Policy Officer, Food and Agriculture Organization Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok

Xuan is a Senior Policy Officer with the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok. She is the Regional Coordinator for One Country One Priority Product Initiative and a Country Focal Point for Hand-in-Hand Initiative in Bhutan. She holds double PhD in Economics (University of St. Gallen, Switzerland) and International Law (University of Bern, Switzerland).



Tandy Wangchuk
President, Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Tandy has been serving as the President of Bhutan Chamber of Commerce & Industry (BCCI) since August 2021.

SPEAKERS



Ngawang Gyeltshen
Founder, Guu.ai

Ngawang is currently building his tech startup - Guu.ai and is the Founder and CEO of Bhutan Food, an agriculture ecosystem development startup with the vision to achieve food sovereignty for Bhutan through organic agriculture. As a stakeholder capitalist, he fervently believes in developing businesses that value creating positive developments in the society at large. Ngawang also sits on the Board of Trustees of Loden Foundation. He is a One Young World Peace Ambassador.



Amy Heyman (PhD)
Economist, Office of the Chief Economist, FAO

Amy is an Economist in the Office of the Chief Economist at the FAO. She is also currently part of global coordination for FAO Director General's flagship initiative, Hand-in-Hand, which focuses on bringing targeted investments to countries for resilient, sustainable and productive agrifood systems. Prior to joining FAO, Amy worked at the World Bank. Amy holds a master degree from Columbia University and a PhD in Economics from Bocconi.

SPEAKERS



Diane Jegam
Regional Director, Proparco
South Asia

Diane is the Regional Director of Proparco South Asia, covering the origination of both debt and equity investments in the region. She is a global impact investor, with 15 years of track record in banking and investing in impactful sectors. Since joining the French Development Agency in 2008, Diane held different positions within the group with a focus in Africa and has worked in numerous impactful sectors. Before this posting in India, she held the position of Deputy Director of the French Development Agency (AFD) in Dakar, one of the important offices of AFD Group network.



Sonam Chopel
CEO, CSI Market

Sonam is the founder of CSI (Cottage & Small Industry) Market, the largest dedicated platform for products made and grown in Bhutan. It is a joint collaboration between Druksell and the Department of Cottage and Small sector industry to promote, market, sell and distribute made & grown in Bhutan products both locally and internationally. The CSI Market offers a wide range of products, including daily essential groceries, food, tea, edible items, craft products and much more to support our local Bhutanese entrepreneurs and enterprises.

SPEAKERS



Ernest Bethe
Regional Agri Sector Lead , IFC
Manufacturing, Agribusiness
and Services (MAS)- Asia/MAS
Asia Upstream Advisory

Ernest is a Regional Agri Sector Lead for IFC Manufacturing, Agribusiness and Services based in Mumbai, India. He develops strategy and manages clients across Asia and build linkages among large corporates and small farmers and rural enterprises, as suppliers or customers. Ernest has an MSc in corporate finance and an undergraduate degree in financial management and English and American literature and language.



Mario Ronconi
Head of Unit for South and
South East Asia, Directorate
General for International
Partnerships, European
Commission

Mario started his European Union career as a civil servant in 1997. Since then, he has held various positions coordinating bilateral and regional programmes. Educated in Italy and Poland, he has master degrees in Political Science (specialization in Macro-Economic policies) and in Economic and Juridical Studies.

SPEAKERS



Laurent de Danois
Team Leader of the
Cooperation Section at the
Delegation of the European
Union to India and Bhutan

Laurent is a Team Leader of the Cooperation Section at the Delegation of the European Union to India and Bhutan. He is an expert in the implementation of health and education policies, political economy analysis, the involvement of civil society in public policies, local governance, social inclusion as well as global partnerships, in particular the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) as well as the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and, more recently, the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI). He has a Master of Public Health (MPH) degree from the University of Liverpool.



Damcho Rinzin
Officiating Director,
Department of Tourism,
Ministry of Industry,
Commerce and Employment

Damcho is the Officiating Director General of the Department of Tourism, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment. He leads the Marketing and Promotion Division as a chief in the Department of Tourism. He has a Bachelor of Applied Management in Hospitality and Tourism from the University of New Brunswick, Canada. He completed his double master's degree from Australia in international tourism and business where he was awarded the Academic Excellence Medal by the university.

SPEAKERS



RosaLaura Romeo
Coordinator, Mountain Partnership Secretariat

Rosalaura, from Italy, holds MSc in Agriculture from the University of Tuscia and her expertise spans from agricultural and forestry research to international advocacy and donor relations. RosaLaura devoted a large part of her career to the sustainable development of mountain regions and had a crucial role in 2002 in the creation of the Mountain Partnership, the only Multi-stakeholder UN Alliance dedicated to improving the lives of mountain peoples and protecting mountain ecosystems, with over 400 members around the world.



Phuntsho Namgay
Officiating Director, Department of Innovation and Technology, Druk Holdings and Investments

Phuntsho is the Officiating Director of the Department of Innovation and Technology, Druk Holding and Investments. He leads the Department's efforts in developing Bhutan's Innovation Ecosystem for a tech-based economy by leveraging research and development for technology with values. With an MBA from the Australian Graduate School of Management, his experience ranges from Grass Root Innovations to Ecosystem building.

SPEAKERS



Pema Wangchug
Associate Director of the DHI Research and Innovation Venture Excellence (DRIVE) Division, Druk Holding and Investments

Pema is an Associate Director of the DHI Research and Innovation Venture Excellence (DRIVE) Division Druk Holding and Investments. DRIVE is working towards establishing collaborative applied and fundamental research initiatives in areas of science, technology, and innovation at both a national and international level. A Chevening Scholar, Pema has MSc in Business Analytics at Warwick Business School in the United Kingdom and graduated with Distinction.



Tashi Samdup (PhD)
Former Director General of the Bhutan Agriculture & Food Regulatory Authority

Tashi is the former Director General of the Bhutan Agriculture & Food Regulatory Authority in the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock. He has a PhD in Animal Production Systems, an MSc in Animal Science from Wageningen University, The Netherlands, and a Bachelor's in Veterinary Science from Kerala, India. Tashi has been instrumental in shaping agricultural policies, fostering innovation, and advocating for sustainable practices. influence extends beyond Bhutan's borders.

SPEAKERS



Tshering Wangmo
Officiating Director General,
Department of Agricultural
Marketing and Cooperatives,
Ministry of Agriculture and
Livestock

Tshering is the Officiating Director General of the Department of Agricultural Marketing and Cooperatives (DAMC) in the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock. She also leads the Cooperatives Development Division at the DAMC.

She has a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Canberra, Australia.



Leki Tenzin
Chief Marketing and Economic
Development Officer,
Department of Agricultural
Marketing and Cooperatives,
Ministry of Agriculture and
Livestock

Leki is the Chief Marketing and Economic Development Officer in the Department of Agricultural Marketing and Cooperatives in the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock. He holds master degree from Kasetsart University, Bangkok, Thailand and is a registered expert member for trade facilitation by the UNESCAP. He has served as the District Extension Officer, Deputy Chief Marketing Officer, and as Consul (Trade) for the Royal Bhutanese Consulate, Kolkata, India.

SPEAKERS



Jayesh Bhatia
Managing Director, Intellecap Advisory

Jayesh is the Managing Director of Intellecap Advisory. He has over 29 years of experience in the natural resources management and the rural development sector. With post graduate degrees from the prestigious Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal and University of Oxford, Jayesh has worked with a range of organisations and institutions in India. Jayesh is an expert in scaling up successful pilots across the range of sectors- NRM, WASH, and Rural Livelihood. He has worked extensively with UN organisations, JICA, DFID, the World Bank, State Government departments and Ministries of Government of India.



Siddhant Pandey
Chairman and CEO of Business Oxygen

Siddhant has been a banker for over two decades, having worked with Merrill Lynch and Riggs Bank in London. He was also CEO of Ace Development Bank, Nepal. He is also the Chairman of the Agribusiness Incubation Centre (NABIC), under the Ministry of Agriculture and also Chairs the Nepal Private Equity Association (NPEA). He is a member of the board of directors of Standard Chartered Bank. He has a BA degree from Virginia Tech (USA) and MSc. from University of Bristol (UK). He has attended Executive Programs in Global Finance at the London School of Economics.

SPEAKERS



Stella Quek, Founder, Table of Plenty

Stella is the founder of Table of Plenty. She is a certified Singapore Management Consultant, and founded Plenty in 2019 to work with governments, media, consumers and business partners to decipher their stories, and tell these stories to the world. Plenty specialises in the South-East Asian region.



Karma Tshering Chief, Policy and Planning Division, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock

Karma's major expertise lies in policy, plans and projects. (formulation, development, implementation, review, monitoring and evaluation). Karma currently serves as Board Member of Green Climate Fund in Songdo, South Korea from 2017. He is the National Designated Entity (NDE) of Bhutan to CTCN.

SPEAKERS



Sheu Salau
Senior Agriculture Economist,
World Bank

Currently, Sheu is leading policy dialogues on agriculture and food system transformation for the World Bank Agriculture and Global Food Practice (AGF) in various countries, including Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Pakistan, and several African nations. Sheu has extensive experience in agribusiness, commercial agriculture operations, and Advisory Services and Analytical (ASA) activities in Asia and Africa, including climate-smart agriculture, food security, agribusiness/value chain development, irrigation, public policy, and agriculture expenditure review.



Chencho Norbu
Former Executive Director,
Asian Forest Cooperation
Organization/Former
Secretary, National
Environment Commission
Secretariat

Chencho served as the first Executive Director of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO) and as the former Secretary, National Environment Commission Secretariat. He has served the Royal Government of Bhutan in various high-level positions in agriculture, forestry, and environmental sectors. During his service career with the government, he was one of the active negotiators from Asia and Pacific region, UNCCD in particular. He has a Masters degree in Soil Science from Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, USA.

SPEAKERS



Sonam Phuntsho Wangdi
Former Secretary, National Environment Commission Secretariat

Sonam served for 31 years in the Ministry of Economic Affairs before presiding as the Secretary of the National Environment Commission Secretariat where he chaired the LDC Group of negotiators in the UNFCCC climate negotiations from 2019 - 2022. Sonam was also the National Focal Point for the UNFCCC and UNEP from 2018 - 2022. He was the deputy chief negotiator for Bhutan in WTO negotiations from 2005 to 2012. He has graduated magna cum laude with a Master of International Law and Economics from the World Trade Institute, University of Bern.



Dinakar Radhakrishnan
Senior Programme Manager of the Cooperation Section at the Delegation of the European Union to India and Bhutan

Dinakar is a Senior Programme Manager of the Cooperation Section at the Delegation of the European Union to India and Bhutan. He has over 25 years of experience in the private sector, think-tanks and international agencies. He holds a master degree in Public Policy Management (Japan), a PG Diploma in Rural Management (IRMA), and a BSc in Life Sciences (Kerala University).

SPEAKERS



Kinley Yangzom
Chief Trade Officer, Export Promotion Division, Department of Trade, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment

Kinley is the Chief Trade Officer in the Export Promotion Division, Department of Trade under the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment, Royal Government of Bhutan. She has represented Bhutan in numerous important bilateral and multilateral trade negotiation meetings. She has also assisted hundreds of rural businesses by providing business related information and services. Kinley graduated from Sherubtse College in Bhutan and holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration from Curtin University, Western Australia.



Filippo Dibari (PhD)
Regional Senior Nutrition Advisor, WFP, United Nations Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok

Filippo is a Regional Senior Nutrition Advisor at the World Food Programme, Bangkok. Currently, he is providing strategic technical guidance to WFP Country Offices and their Governmental and Private Sector Partners (including donors) on how to fill the gap between evidence and policies, needed to prevent both over- and under-nutrition. Filippo made a mid-career change and obtained a master's degree in Public Health Nutrition (MSc) and then a PhD in nutritional implementation research (PhD).

SPEAKERS



Tai Seng Yee
Team Leader, Zenxin Organics

As Zenxin Organic's Food Team Leader, Tai Seng Yee oversees and manages the entire operations of Zenxin Organic Food in Singapore, Malaysia and China. Established in 2007, Zenxin Agri-Organic Food Singapore has been crucial in augmenting Zenxin organic produce in Singapore and propelling Zenxin Organic Food to be the leading organic fresh produce brand in Singapore, Malaysia and South East Asia region.



Sean Watson
**CEO, Mountain Hazelnut
Venture Private Limited**

Sean is the Chief Executive Officer of the Mountain Hazelnut Venture Private Limited in Bhutan. With innovative financing, Mountain Hazelnuts partners and innovates with over 8 000 smallholder farming households and community groups throughout Bhutan to generate long-term income, revitalize vulnerable communities, and enable sustainable land stewardship. Currently Mountain Hazelnuts is implementing one of the largest climate adaptation grafting programs to increase the resilience of the variety mix and improve yields with blended finance support.

SPEAKERS



Jurme Tenzin
Analyst, Department of
Financial Regulation and
Supervision, Royal Monetary
Authority

Jurme is an Analyst at the Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan. He is responsible for the regulation and supervision of Bhutan's financial system, ensuring its stability, soundness and integrity. Additionally, he oversees the development and advancement of green finance, highlighting a dedication to environmental sustainability and responsible financial practices.

