



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



PRESS RELEASE

Nitrogen Challenges in Agri-Food Systems: Halve Nitrogen Waste by 2030

A Webinar in Preparation for UN FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT 2021 and implementation of UN ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 4/14 ON SUSTAINABLE NITROGEN MANAGEMENT

The Secretary-General of United Nations will convene the UN Food Systems Summit 2021 to launch bold new actions to transform the way the world produces and consumes food, delivering progress on all 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA4) adopted a landmark resolution on Sustainable Nitrogen Management in March 2019.

In preparation for the 2021 Summit and implementation of the UNEA4 resolution, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) jointly organized a webinar on “Nitrogen Challenges in Agri-Food Systems: Halve Nitrogen Waste by 2030” on 7 December 2020. The webinar focused on the nitrogen challenges, potential technical solutions and policies in agri-food systems highlighting the ongoing efforts to better manage nitrogen. It provided an opportunity to learn about the multiple roles of nitrogen in agri-food systems and on how different stakeholders can help to achieve sustainable nitrogen management. A subsequent Webinar is planned in March 2021, following the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

Recognizing Sri Lanka’s diplomatic leadership in championing the “Colombo Declaration on Sustainable Nitrogen Management” and its ambition of halving nitrogen waste by 2030, Hon. Mahinda Amaraweera, Minister of Environment was invited to deliver the keynote remarks. While identifying agriculture as a key sector which can exert an iceberg effect, he said “to reach halve nitrogen waste ambition, I believe that there are two key strategies. One is to realign the cropping seasons to the natural nitrogen flux and the other is to increase fertilizer use efficiency during off cropping seasons”.

Sustainable nitrogen management covers a wide scope including agriculture, health, transport, research/innovation where environment plays the strategic cross cutting role in bringing together all sectors towards the halving nitrogen waste by 2030 ambition. The Ministry of Environment intends to take a joined-up approach with the Ministry of Agriculture and related line Ministries to achieve this ambition.