Finnish Southern Africa Cooperation Institute Symposium on Desert Agriculture and Food Security

9–10 October 2025

Namibia Scientific Society, Windhoek, Namibia

Organizers: Finnish Southern Africa Cooperation Institute (FSAI), Embassy of Finland Windhoek, FinNam Research Academy, and University of Namibia

Day 1 – Thursday, 9 October 2025

8:30 - 9:00	Arrival and registration
9:00-10:30	Opening Ceremony and the Launch of the Finnish Southern Africa Cooperation Institute
10:30-11:00	Coffee and Tea Break

Session 1: Food and Feed: Pathways towards food security

Chair: Prof. Ahmad Cheikhyoussef, University of Namibia

11:00-11:20	Prof. Baoru Yang, University of Turku: Valorizing the side streams to improve sustainability and food security
11:20-11:40	Prof. Geremew Bultosa, Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Resources: Food safety—role of education: African/Southern Africa perspectives (online)
11:40-12:00	Prof. John Mupangwa, University of Namibia: Can the encroacher bush contribute to feed-food security as an innovative and sustainable feed resource in Namibia?
12:00-12:20	Prof. Ndegwa Henry Maina, Associate Professor, University of Helsinki: Unlocking the potential of plant-based foods: insights from Finland and opportunities for Africa (online)

12:20-13:00 Launch of the BAORULA Network's 1st Book on Baobab and Marula as solutions for food security in Africa: Prof. Ahmad Cheikhyoussef, Mr. Risto Isomäki (online), Dr. Kletus Likuwa, Prof. Joyce Lepetu, and Dr. Annika Sarto, BAORULA Network (online)

13:00-14:00 Lunch Break

Session 2: Food; from One Health to Biosphere wellbeing

Chair: Prof. Ahmad Cheikhyoussef

14:00-14:20 Prof. Percy Chimwamurombe, Namibia University of Science and Technology: Dryland agriculture challenges in Southern Africa: opportunities to harness collaboration sensu lato

14:20-14:40 Prof. Moez Rhimi, Institute Nationale de la Recherche Agronomique: Potential of African food for nutrition and health supplement for European market (online)

14:40-15:00 Prof. Baoru Yang, University of Turku: The blue product national innovation programme for value-addition to Baltic sea fish resource

15:00-15:45 Round Table: How we could improve food security through international collaboration

- Prof. Ahmad Cheikhyoussef
- Prof. Baoru Yang
- Prof. Petri Pellikka
- Ms. Kalihulu Shapwa; Manager: Compliance and Laboratory Meatco
- Ms. Leonie Hartmann, CEO, AvaGro

Moderator: Prof. John Mupangwa

15:45-16:15 Poster session with Coffee and Tea

16.15-17:45 **Special Panel: Historians Without Borders**

Moderator: Blanche Susline Goreses

Day 2 Friday, 10 October 2025

8:30 - 9:00 Arrival and registration

Session 3: Desert Agriculture Potential for Africa's Food Security

Chair: Dr. Hupenyu Allan Mupambwa

9:00-9:20 Prof. Petri Pellikka, University of Helsinki and FSAI: Climatic impacts of land use and land cover change in sub-Saharan Africa

9.20-9.40 Dr. Moammar Dayoub, FSAI: Economic potential of desert agriculture

9.40-10.00	Dr. Mamohau Thamae, National University of Lesotho: Combating soil degradation and improving water use efficiency in Lesotho: pathways to desert agriculture success
10:00–10:20	Mr. Andrew Ardington, CEO Regenerative Agriculture Association of South Africa: Regenerative Agriculture - Driving back Desertification
10.20-10.50	Coffee and Tea break
10.50-11.10	Dr. Hupenyu Allan Mupambwa, University of Namibia: Organic nutrient management through vermitechnology and its opportunities in desert agriculture
11.10-11.30	Prof. Joyce Lepetu, Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Resources: Agroforestry for land restoration and food security in Botswana: opportunities and constraints
11.30-11.50	Mrs. Natasha Kaphuka, founder of Umodzi Green Collect, Malawi: A social enterprise in waste management
11.50-12.10	Prof. Rhoda Birech, University of Namibia: Domestication of desert species
12.10-12.30	Mr. Soroush Moradi Zavie Kord, University of Helsinki: Evaluating sustainable practices in dryland soil-crop systems
12:30-13:30	Lunch Break

Session 4: Industry-Academia Collaboration

Chair: Prof. Joyce Lepetu

13.30-13.50	Mr. Antti Pohjola, CEO Solar Water Solution LTD: Solar-powered clean water production (online)
13.50-14.10	Mr. Jussi Mälkiä, CEO Meriaura Group & Ms. Magano Shivolo: Carbon sequestration using a circular economy technologies
14.10-14.30	Mr. Charlie Paton, CEO and Founder, Seawater Greenhouse Ltd, Ingenia Org: Water - a climate recipe (online)
14:30-15:00	Coffee and Tea break
15.00-16.00	Industry-Academia Collaboration on Desert Agriculture: Examples from Finland and African Countries - Prof. Petri Pellikka - Prof. Ahmad Cheikhyoussef - Prof. Baoru Yang - Mr. Jussi Mälkiä - Ms. Leonie Hartmann Moderator: Dr. Hupenyu Allan Mupambwa

16.00	Vote of thanks and Closure (Finnish Southern Africa Cooperation Institute Director)

Live-stream available – the symposium can be followed online https://zoom.us/j/8023841980
Event Address: *Namibia Scientific Society,* 110 Robert Mugabe Ave., Windhoek, Namibia
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