

The Future of Modern Agriculture Conference (FMA)

The Institute on Science for Global Policy (ISGP)

Hybrid In-Person/Internet Format

September 22, 2020 in Rome, Italy



While the world's food and agricultural systems have benefited from vast scientific and technological progress in the past decades, the current global food system continues to face critical gaps in achieving food security in many regions of the world. Existing disparities risk being exacerbated in the coming decades of population growth and environmental stressors. This is exemplified by the current threats posed to food security by COVID-19. Both scientific and technological innovations as well as traditional approaches (often rooted in cultural knowledge and agro-ecological methods) provide promise for alleviating growing pressure on agricultural systems worldwide. Realizing these opportunities is key to addressing the challenge of achieving global food security while simultaneously improving environmental resilience.

The **Future of Modern Agriculture (ISGP/FMA) conference**, organized and convened by the ISGP with support from the U.S. Department of State in coordination with its U.S. Mission to the United Nations Agencies in Rome, is scheduled to convene on the 22nd of September in Rome, Italy. Due to health and travel concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ISGP/FMA program will be held in a hybrid in-person/internet format to optimize global participation. The conference seeks to engage major public, private, and third sector communities involved in global food and agricultural systems to evaluate the roles of modern agricultural technologies and agroecology in meeting the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

The critical debate and extended caucus format pioneered by the ISGP has been used for over a decade to promote the candid exchange of ideas and clarity of priorities required for real-world decisions on a wide range of topics (<http://scienceforglobalpolicy.org/>). The hybrid format of the ISGP/FMA conference has been adapted to maintain this robust and effective discussion model. As a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3), nonpartisan organization, the ISGP does not itself independently express opinions nor lobby on any issue. The invitation-only ISGP/FMA conference, convened in a not-for-attribution environment defined by the Chatham House Rule, seeks to address the diverse views held by stakeholders and subject-matter experts engaged throughout global food/agricultural systems.

Conference Structure: The first session of the ISGP/FMA conference is devoted to two 60-minute debates of two concise position papers prepared and defended by internationally recognized subject-matter experts. The content of these papers is debated by approximately 50 invited debaters, comprised of stakeholders from the public, private, and third sector communities. Following the debates, two Commentators summarize and review the position papers and debate discussions. Finally, a plenary caucus discussion will draw from these results to outline *Evidence-Based Options* and *Actionable Next Steps* for "The Future of Modern Agriculture." Outcomes, position papers, and not-for-attribution summaries of all debates will be published by the ISGP for free public distribution.