



2021 Annual Report

The World Union of Wholesale Markets

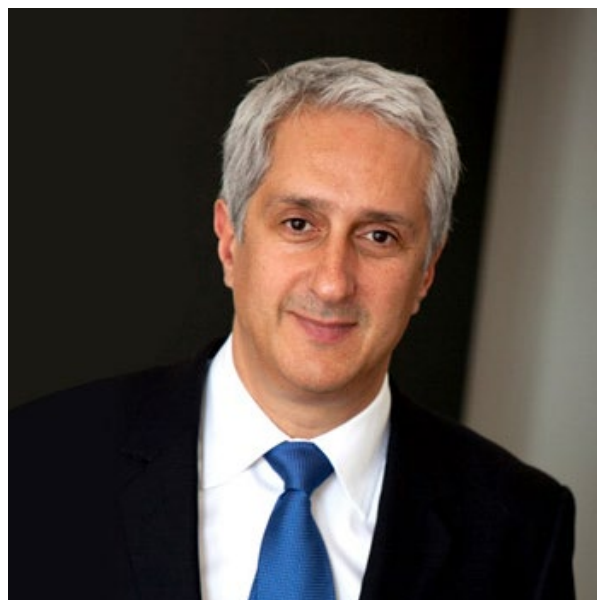




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Foreword

Chairman's review

An important and challenging year for our sector is drawing to a close. 2021 shed light on the weakness of global food supply chains and showed how transitioning to sustainable and resilient food systems is one of the most pressing challenges for humanity in the coming decades. Since becoming chair of the World Union of Wholesale Markets, my objective has been to take our organization to the forefront of major discussions in our sector. I am proud to say that we have been invited to the highest-level platforms to discuss these topics (UNFSS, COP26, G20, Milano Pact). WUWM actively shares its expertise and works to build coalitions and pathways with the aim of being a driving force of the sector.

- 4 We believe that the transition to sustainable food systems should be among the top priorities of our sector for the coming years. And I believe that wholesale markets can play a key role in the success of this transition. WUWM is fully engaged in this process by helping our members with expertise, sharing cutting-edge innovations and best practices, and taking part in high-level platforms to foster actions and innovative policies towards sustainable food systems that reinforce the availability of fresh produce.

In the past three years, with the help of former chairman Zengjun Ma, WUWM was successfully reformed. We have now a fresh new identity that helped to reach out to a lot of partner organizations and gave WUWM credibility, elevating the international profile of our organization.

Since the beginning of the year, we have signed strong collaborations with the most relevant actors of our sector (such as UN-HABITAT, GAIN, the Global Food Banking Network, the European Commission and MIT) and pursued long-term partnerships with organizations such as the FAO and AIAM5.

I am delighted to see that the efforts and importance of our organization is being recognized by more and more big players in the food sector. The challenges that we want to address requires that all the actors of the agri-food chain will work together with a systemic approach. That's why our organization will strengthen these collaborations and build coalitions with all the actors aiming to ensure the transition to sustainability of food systems and aiming to achieve a carbon-neutral food sector.

It fills me with joy to see that our organization has been so present in international platforms and events in 2021. We look forward to continuing this journey with all of you in the coming years!

Yours sincerely,

Stephane Layani,
WUWM Acting Chairman

Review by the Secretary-General

The year 2021 clearly exceeded our expectations in terms of what we would achieve as an organization. Thanks to our new communication strategy, based in a fresher image and the development of new communication tools (such as a new website, a high-quality monthly newsletter, and a strong social media presence) we managed to give the organization a modern face in line with our mission and goals. This new outreach strategy allowed us to strengthen our relationship with our members, bringing them more insightful information, and to develop many new and important collaborations with international institutions, universities and NGOs of the fresh food sector.



After being forced to cancel the 2020 conference edition, we were able to co-organize with Mercafir a successful and cutting-edge Global Conference in Florence, Italy, focusing in the future of food in the post-Covid world. The conference was a breakthrough event for WUWM, as it was the first time that we were organizing a hybrid (on site and online conference) and was attended by more than 350 participants. The attendance of very high-ranking speakers at our conference, such as Mr. Qu Dongyu, FAO's Director-General and the Executive Officer of UN-Habitat, showed that our organization is increasingly well-known by important international actors.

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WUWM was also able to host for the first time a series of webinars and independent dialogues organized within the frame of the United Nations food system Summit. Five independent dialogues were organized – in Latin America, Europe, Asia and in Africa with the support of UNHABITAT. The dialogues entitled: "Making nutritious and healthy diets available to all: Empowering a sustainable and resilient fresh food supply chain worldwide" mobilized around 250 stakeholders from across the food sector. WUWM also actively collaborated with the FAO in a global 35 case-study about wholesale markets and in different initiatives to foster food safety and reduce food waste around the world. All these events are the sign of the new momentum of our organization, and our determination to become amid the driving forces of innovation and sustainability of our sector.

WUWM was invited to participate for the first time in major international events, such as the UN Food Systems Summit in New York, the Milan Pact's 7th Global Forum on Urban Food Policy in Barcelona, and the IFURL conference in China. We also successfully launched the "Love Your Local Market" campaign supporting our markets and bringing back citizens into sustainable food ecosystems where they can have an easier access to healthy fresh food.

The various Memorandums of Understanding signed this year with key organizations, as well as our inclusion in bodies such as the European Union Platform on Food Loss and Waste, will provide us with the opportunity to strengthen our work and find pathways to succeed the major transformations that our sector must undertake.

Aiming to foster our impact we are working to grow our finances, that have been significantly strengthened this year with the arrival of several new sponsors, and hopefully grow the WUWM team.

For the coming years, we want to stay true to our mission and continue the strong presence WUWM has built consolidating our organization as a major stakeholder of the food systems transition, bringing more services to our members and developing partnerships that will allow us to enhance the transition into sustainability of our sector.

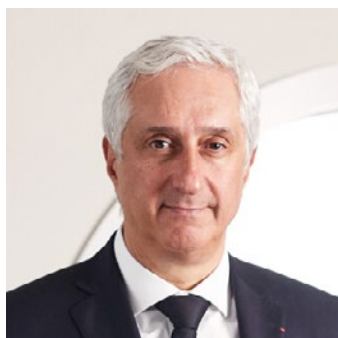
I look forward to continuing this exciting journey with all of you and wish you a Happy New Year.

Yours sincere,

Eugenia Carrara
WUWM Secretary-General

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

WUWM Board of Directors 2021



STÉPHANE LAYANI - Chairman

Mr. Layani is WUWM Chairman and the CEO of Semmaris, the company managing Rungis International Market - the largest wholesale food market in the world. He is also a French expert at the Directorate General of Health and Consumer Protection of the European Commission. Mr. Layani created the French Economic Committee of Medicine and was Deputy Director for the Consulates Chambers. Mr. Layani is an alumnus of the ENA (French National Administration School) and the IEP (Institute of Political Studies) in Paris. Throughout his career as a civil servant, he has been confronted with challenges to food businesses, in particular during the period where he served at the French Ministry of Economics and in the European Commission working in the area of European agreement about distribution-consumption during the adoption of the Euro.



IOANNIS TRIANTAFYLLIS - Director and Vice Chairman

Mr. Triantafyllis is WUWM Vice Chairman and Managing Director of the Central Markets and Fishing Organization in Greece, an organization with two wholesale markets and eleven wholesale fish markets. Mr. Triantafyllis is currently a PhD candidate in the Department of Planning and Regional Development of the University of Thessaly, Greece, researching how food markets are incorporated in the urban fabric. Mr. Triantafyllis has expertise in wholesale trade and has been a counselor to various committees under the Greek Ministry of Commerce.



ZENGJUN MA - Director and Asia-Pacific Group Chairman

Beside his role within WUWM, Mr. Ma also acts as Chairman of China Agricultural Wholesale Market Association (CAWA). He is an expert on market operations and regulation and is employed by the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China. In addition, he is a member of the expert group of the National Standards Committee on the building and coordination of agricultural products standards system, a member of National Wholesale and Retail Markets Standardization Technical Committee, Vice Chairman of the Food Logistics Technology Branch of the China Food Science and Technology Institute, a member of the National Business Automation Standardization Technical Committee and a visiting professor at the Harbin University of Commerce.



EVA MARONE - Director and Africa Group Chair

Since this year, Eva Marone has held the position of WUWM Director and Chair of the WUWM Africa Regional Group. After working in the financial sector for different companies, as well as in the European institutions, Ms. Marone became a special advisor to the Ministry of Agriculture in Ivory Coast in 2020. She holds a degree in Management from ESCP-Europe Business School.



ARTURO SALVADOR FERNANDEZ MARTINEZ - Director and Americas Group Chairman

Besides his function as Chairman of the Americas Group of WUWM, Mr Fernandez Martinez also serves as president the "Federacion Latino-Americana de Mercados de Abastecimiento" (FLAMA). He has been President of the Boards of the wholesale markets Ecatepec, Miguel Hidalgo, and Tultitlan as well as of the Executive Committee of the Confederación Nacional de Agrupaciones de Comerciantes de Centros de Abasto, A.C. (CONACCA).



FABIO MASSIMO PALLOTTINI - Director and European Group Chairman

In addition to his role as Chairman of the WUWM European Working Group, Mr. Pallottini serves as president of ITALMERCATI, a network of the most important Italian agribusiness centers. Mr. Pallottini is an economist, with specific expertise in issues concerning economic and territorial development. He is also the Managing Director of CAR SCpA, the company that manages Rome's wholesale market.

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MICHAL KOSTELECKI - Director

Mr. Kostelecki the Market Director of Silesia Wholesale Flower Market in Poland as well as Vice President of the Polish Association of Wholesale Markets. He holds degrees in International Business and Economics from Bocconi and St Andrew's University.



DR. JAGVIR SINGH YADAV - Director

Dr. J.S. Yadav holds a Ph.D. in Economics and has over 40 years of experience in training, research and consultancy in agricultural marketing and agribusiness. Currently, he holds the positions of Managing Director at Haryana International Horticultural Marketing Corporation Ltd. (Panchkula, Haryana) and the National Council of State Agricultural Marketing Boards of India (COSAMB) (New Delhi, India), and he is a WUWM Director. He specializes in strategic planning, profit center operations, business development, policy formulation, general administration, and agribusiness. Dr. Yadav is the author of a large number of relevant books and papers and has also worked on more than a hundred projects related to agricultural marketing.



ELIANE STEINMEYER - Director

Eliane Steinmeyer is a WUWM Director and Managing Director of the Hamburg Wholesale Market, one of the leading wholesalers in Germany. Ms. Steinmeyer holds a degree in fiscal studies and has previously worked for the German Ministry of Finance. She is also an active member of the non-profit Association for the Promotion of the Interests of German Fresh Food Markets (GFI).



JEAN-PAUL AUGUSTE - Director and Retail Chairman

Besides being Chairman of WUWM's Retail Group, Mr. Auguste also acts as Chairman of Group GERAUD, an organization that conceives, develops, finances, and manages various public facilities, covered or open-air retail markets, and carparks. Group GERAUD originated in France, and currently operates 50% of its activity outside of France, mainly in the United Kingdom (UK) and Sweden.



LAURENT NYS - Director

Mr. Nys is the General Manager of the Brussels Wholesale market MABRU. Mr. Nys is mainly focused on operational and strategic leadership. He is also a judge at the Brussels Commercial Court, and an active member of the board of directors of the Brussels Chamber of Commerce (BECI).



RAUL GIBOUDOT - Director

Mr. Giboudot is WUWM Director in Argentina and Secretary-General of the 'Federación Latinoamericana de Mercados de Abastecimiento (F.L.A.M.A.): At the same time, he is the CEO of WUWM member market Berazetegui in Buenos Aires. Mr. Giboudot is also active within the public sector and acts as a National Public Accountant and Professor of Taxation at the Catholic University of Bernal in Buenos Aires. He is a founding member of the Union of Markets of Mercosur.



NATASA PUTNIK - Director

In 2021, Mrs. Putnik was elected as WUWM Director located in Serbia. Since 2018, she has been the CEO of Belgrade Wholesale Market and is active in various projects within this role. She is a member of the working group for the development of the Smart City Project and works for the USAID Competitive Economy Project where she cooperates between the Serbian Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management and USAID. Since 2018, she has been a Member of the Board of Directors of the Institute for Environmental Protection and Plants in Belgrade. Mrs. Putnik holds two Master's degrees, one in Management Engineering and one in Public Procurement Management.



WUWM Membership Overview 2021

Membership Statistics (on 31 December 2021)

Number of individual wholesale markets:	140
Number of individual retail markets:	12
Retail market associations:	16
Associate organizations (retail and wholesale):	7
Associate consultants:	16
Associate individuals:	9
Honorary chairman:	4
Honorary members:	6
Total number of WUWM members:	217
Total number of countries represented:	40

Members that joined WUWM in 2021:

- Fruits and Veggies Global, Nigeria
-

Financial overview and appreciation

WUWM generates its income through four main sources: namely annual membership fees, the annual conferences, advertisements, and sponsorships. In 2021, WUWM entered the year with some uncertainty due to the on-going Covid-19 pandemic that put the whole global food system (and also some of our members) in an unprecedentedly difficult position. Nevertheless, through a more efficient expense strategy, the budget for the year was well-distributed. WUWM managed to organize a large and successful global conference - as well as other events like a series of webinars and the independent dialogues to the UNFSS.

One of the main financial challenges is, as in previous years, unpaid membership fees. This effectively results in a lower total annual income than should be expected according to the number of members. However, the general willingness to pay the membership fees has improved, compared to the uncertain year of 2020. While last year the percentage of unpaid fees amounted to 25% of all members, this year unpaid fees declined to 13% (as of 9 December 2021). At the same time, WUWM increased its income through sponsorships and received some partial payment of debts from previous years. Thus, it was thereby able to lift the organization's budget close to the pre-pandemic level of 2019.

Despite limited financial leeway, the organization does its best to deliver value to its members by having established a framework of plans for the next years and will continue to foster relations with academic and international institutions. With a constantly changing environment, WUWM applies a conservative spending approach and a flexible payment policy for its members. With ambitious plans for 2022, the organization is trying to increase the income amount from sponsorships in order to reach a stable budget that will allow WUWM to be even more active and have a strong and present secretariat!

Meetings of the Board of Directors

The WUWM Board of Directors held two meetings in 2021. The first one was as an online conference, on 18 February, and the second one took place in a hybrid modalities (in-person and online) on the 24th of June during the WUWM Global Conference in Florence.

The **February meeting** discussed the year 2020 and approved the financial budget of the organization for the year 2021. Furthermore, the new WUWM website and the new design of the WUWM newsletters were officially presented, and we discussed how the organization would present itself in a more modern way in the coming year.

The Board also discussed planned international relationships with institutions such as FAO in addition to the fulfillment of numerous other collaborations.

Due to uncertainties related to the pandemic, the Board decided not to hold the conference in Guadalajara, Mexico, planned for October 2021, and to focus, if possible, on a conference in Florence in June.

Eugenia Carrara was officially elected as Permanent Secretary-General of the World Union of Wholesale Markets at this meeting. We also agreed to share information about activities in the regional groups in order to coordinate the global relations of the membership.

The **second meeting** during the WUWM Global Conference in Florence followed on from the first meeting and welcomed the new Board members who were elected through electronic vote by WUWM Members (with a turnout of 82% of WUWM members). The Chairman welcomed Raul Giboudot, Jose Ramon Sempere, Natasha Putnik and Eva Marone to the Board and proposed Ms. Marone as the new Africa Group Chair, which the Board approved.

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Stéphane Layani was officially designed as WUWM Chairman for a period of four years.

Chairman Stéphane Layani underlined the outreach work of the organization in the first half of 2021, which had succeeded in attracting such high-level speakers as the Director-General of the FAO and the Executive Director of UN-Habitat to WUWM's conference. Mr. Layani noted that as Chairman he will continue to strongly pursue his vision for WUWM and that he sees great opportunities for WUWM's growth once the pandemic restrictions ease.

Aiming to have a stronger regional executive body that allows the organization to grow and provide more accurate services and coalitions at regional level Mr. Layani proposed to create a Bureau.

It was noted that sponsorship contributions have increased sharply since 2020, but the number of membership fees has slightly decreased, which can be explained by the unfavorable situation caused by the pandemic for many markets. However, the Chairman was optimistic about the increase in the membership pool for the coming years, as many markets are showing a strong interest in WUWM.

Ms. Eugenia Carrara stated that the organization has created a lot of new outreach materials in the past months. As they went fully digital, this strategy attracted more sponsors. WUWM now has a new website, new logo, newsletter offered in 5 languages (English, French, Portuguese, Mandarin and Spanish) in which WUWM's activities and agenda are described, new brochures – for members and sponsors- and accounts on major social media platforms.

There were also updates on international relations, such as relations with the EU Commission, the FAO, the collaboration with GAIN, the research project with MIT, the involvement in the UN Food Systems Summit and the MoU with UN-Habitat signed at the conference.

The location of the 2022 Global Conference was also discussed. The Minister of Agriculture of Ivory Coast said he would be very pleased to welcome WUWM next year. The cancelled conference in Mexico is planned for 2023.

WUWM
Organizational Chart
 2022-2023



WUWM Elections

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After an online election that took place from Monday 7th to Thursday 10th of June 2021 a new Board of Directors of the World Union of Wholesale Markets was elected. 113 of 138 eligible member markets voted in total (82% of the eligible voters)

According to the results of the ballots the Board of Directors 2021-2025 is composed of:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| 1. Stéphane Layani - Chairman | 8. Eliane Steinmeyer |
| 2. Ioannis Triantafyllis - Vice-Chairman | 9. Zengjun Ma |
| 3. Fabio Massimo Pallottini | 10. Laurent Nys |
| 4. Arturo Fernandez | 11. Natasa Putnik |
| 5. José Ramón Sempere | 12. Eva Marone |
| 6. Raul Giboudot | 13. Jean-Paul Auguste |
| 7. Michal Kostelecki | 14. Dr Yadav |

Honorary chairmen : Mr. Estrada, Mr. Spielrein, Mr. Darnall





2021 AT A GLANCE

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January - March

18 January: Launch of WUWM's new website: Design and innovation experts at Terre de Sienne created the website in collaboration with our Secretariat. We are proud of the result and the positive feedback about it.

18 January: WUWM started a collaboration with the FAO Investment Center on developing and mutually disseminating guidelines to upgrade wholesale markets.

25 February: WUWM participated in the United Nations Food Systems Summit Action Track 1 Public Forum. Together with other participants we are aiming at ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all!

10 - 31 March: WUWM participated as permanent taskforce member in meetings for the development of the European Code of Conduct for Responsible Business and Marketing Practices

12 March: WUWM started an exchange of collaboration with the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) discussing how to improve the responses of markets to the pandemic, research on food sources in developing countries, and how to make food more nutritious.

18 March: WUWM met with the OECD's Centre for Responsible Business Conduct to learn more about *OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains*. We think these guidelines could help improve markets around the world, and we will examine further promotion and implementation in wholesale markets.

29 March: Acting Chairman Stéphane Layani participated at the Third UN FSS CEO Consultation together with many influential CEOs in the food sector and led by Dr. Agnes Kalibata, UN Special Envoy to the Food Systems Summit, and Peter Bakker, CEO of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development

April - June

6 April: WUWM organized a webinar on food safety in Latin America with the FAO food safety unit. Ten WUWM members in Latin American countries were present. We are happy to see that our members are truly committed to collaborating for a better and more sustainable future.

8 April: The steering committee of a research project conducted by the FAO's Investment Centre in collaboration with WUWM came together to discuss the progress made and remaining challenges on the development of guidelines to upgrade food wholesale markets.

8 April – 3 May: WUWM organized its independent dialogues that led towards the UNFSS in a series titled: *Making Nutritious and Healthy Diets Available to All: Empowering a Sustainable and Resilient Fresh Food Supply Chain Worldwide*.

Successful events were held for the Latin American, Asian-Pacific, African (in collaboration with UN-Habitat) and European food sectors and attracted over 280 participants in total.

7 June: WUWM Chairman Mr. Layani participated in the 4th Food Systems Summit CEO Consultation and connected with influential CEOs finding pathways to sustainable food systems.

17 June: WUWM's Secretary-General spoke at the European Food Forum and showed the commitment of wholesale markets to support the Code of Conduct for Responsible Business and Marketing Practices.

21 June: WUWM attended the FAO's Green Cities Initiative signing ceremony. Our organization fully stands behind this initiative by the FAO to create sustainable green cities around the world and will support it in any way we can.

24-26 June: WUWM's conference in Florence, Italy was a major success with over 400 participants, of whom 350 people were participating online and around 70 on-site. Thank you to our wholesale market member Mercafir for making this possible!

28 June: WUWM participated in the UN Food Systems Summit Global Dialogue which brought together important food sector stakeholders to promote significant actions and commitments towards sustainable urban food systems transformation.

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July - September

5 July: WUWM participated on the high-level launch of the *European Code of Conduct for Responsible Food Marketing and Business Practices*. WUWM has supported the development of the Code as one of the 11 permanent taskforce members. WUWM was also among the first organizations to sign the Code.

16 July: WUWM participated in the food safety working group of the UNFSS, led by GAIN, and discussed the details of setting up a food safety coalition.

26-28 July: WUWM attended and participated in the UNFSS Pre-Summit which was organized in Rome, Italy, while most participation was virtual. The pre-summit was a great success and brought together many stakeholders working on essential goals and commitments to improve our food systems.

29 July: WUWM Secretary-General Ms. Carrara presented on the topic of European wholesale market best practices and challenges at an FAO webinar on food loss and waste.

6 September: WUWM's African Chair Ms. Eva Marone spoke at the Agribusiness Deal Room organized by the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA).

6 September: WUWM's Chairman Mr. Layani, European Chair Mr. Pallottini and Former Chairman Mr. Ma spoke at the Sustainable Development Conference of International Agricultural Markets organized by WUWM Chinese members collective, the Chinese Agricultural Wholesale Markets Association (CAWA).

23 September: WUWM participated on the *United Nations Food Systems Summit*. WUWM Chairman Stéphane Layani expressed WUWM's registered commitment to the UNFSS by video message.

October - December

19 October: WUWM, Mercabarna and the city of Barcelona organized a session during the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact 7th Global Forum in Barcelona, further highlighting the importance of sustainable fresh food systems in cities. Secretary-General Eugenia Carrara also attended the rest of the MUFPP and was able to meet many important food systems stakeholders and city government officials.

20 October: WUWM Asia-Pacific Chairman and Chinese Agriculture Wholesale Market Association (CAWA) Chairman Mr. Ma spoke at the International Forum on Urban-Rural Linkages organized by UN-Habitat.

22 October: WUWM organized the launch of the Love Your Local Market campaign at the Mercat de Mercats in Barcelona with many important stakeholders in attendance.

28 October: WUWM's Bureau leadership met virtually to discuss the way forward, determine strategic pillars, and to look ahead at WUWM's activities in 2022.

31 October – 12 November: WUWM attended various relevant webinars on the role of food systems in reducing global emissions at the COP26.

15 November: The European Commission declared WUWM as a permanent member of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Waste.

17-18 November: WUWM took part in the 2nd Summit on Food Losses and Waste.

18 November: WUWM signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Global Food Banking Network.

24 November: WUWM Secretary-General Eugenia Carrara held a meeting with representatives from the World Bank on future collaboration and joint activities of mutual benefit.

14 25 November: WUWM and UN-Habitat met for a further meeting regarding the common Action Plan of the two organizations under their Memorandum of Understanding.

30 November: WUWM presented the 'Gourmand Awards – Best of the Best' prize to chef and world-renowned cook writer Claudia Rodin during the 'Week of World Cuisine' in Paris.

1 December: WUWM attended a webinar on tax incentives regarding food donation policies, organized by the Harvard Food Law & Policy Clinic.

2 December: WUWM participated in the ENRD workshop to launch the European Commission Forum on Best Practice in the agri-food supply chain

1 - 8 December: WUWM virtually attended the Nutrition for Growth Summit in Tokyo

8 December: WUWM launched the kick off collaboration meeting with the MIT Food and retail operations Lab

14 December: WUWM participated in the first Meeting of the Signatories group of the European Code of Conduct for responsible business of the food sector

14 December: WUWM participated in the European Food Bank association annual meeting



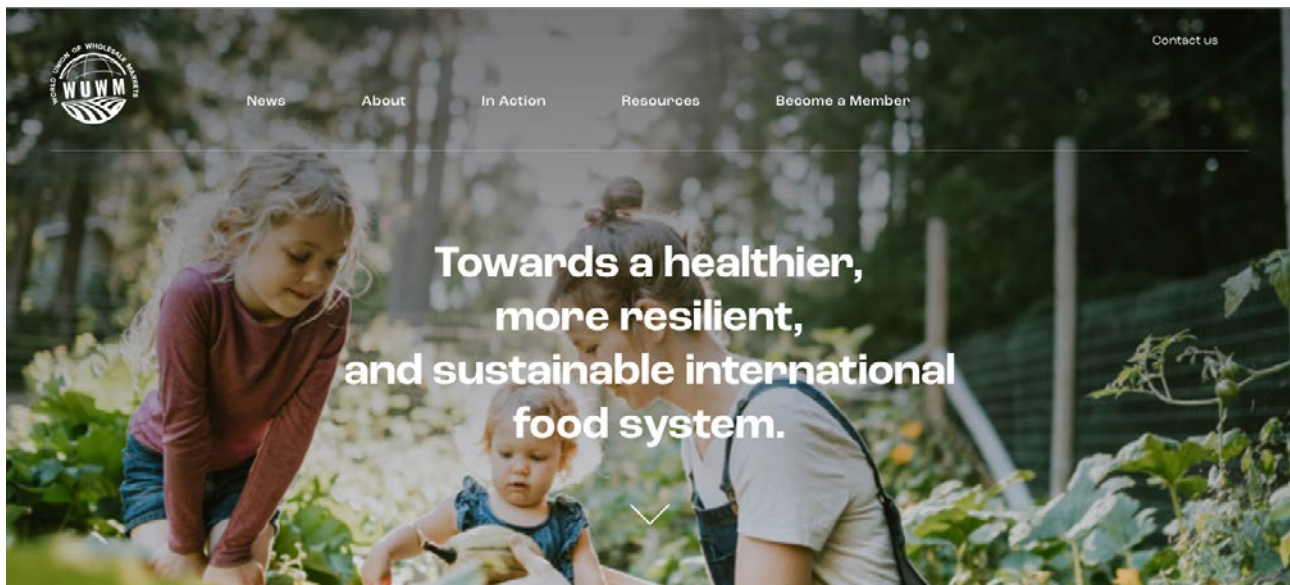


WUWM GOES FRESH!

WUWM REFRESHES ITS IMAGE WITH A NEW COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Since the beginning of 2021, WUWM has increasingly strived for multidimensional communication via various digital channels. WUWM worked with the renowned agency 'Terre de Sienne' to create a new website, design a new logo and develop various communication materials to give our organization a fresher look. The WUWM website presents an image that corresponds to a continuity of our values - but in a new form and with new content. We want to offer more insightful information to our members and we want to be easily identified as an important stakeholder in our sector. This is only possible with a strong and confident digital presence, which is actively updated at the same time. We are proud that we are succeeding with all our new and modern innovations!

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The WUWM Website

On 18 January 2021, WUWM officially launched its new website. In the weeks and months leading to that, design and innovation experts at Terre de Sienne, a globally active graphic-design house, created the website in collaboration with our Secretariat. The website contains of the five sections 'News', 'About', 'In Action', 'Resources' and 'Become a Member', on which the visitor can find news about WUWM, see a collection of the monthly newsletters, recent actions and involvements of the organization, and is able to fill out an online application for membership to the organization.

We are proud of the result and the positive feedback about the WUWM website, and we will continue adding valuable content to it that could benefit our members.

In Action! WUWM Newsletter

Since January 2021, at the beginning of every month, the World Union of Wholesale Markets publishes an extensive newsletter for all our members, partners, and a large number of relevant people in the food sector. The document is written in five different languages (English, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Mandarin) and reaches over 3,000 persons every month. It is published on the WUWM website, and every edition is sent to our audience in the form of an email communication.

Each newsletter begins with a foreword by WUWM Chairman Stéphane Layani with the aim of strengthening the relationship between the organization and the members. The articles covers insightful approaches about the most pressing challenges of our sector and news about WUWM activities - such as new partnerships, participation in projects and events, and innovations and best practices by our members-. In addition, each month we propose a newsletter with a focus on major events or subjects of our sector (such the UN Food Systems Summit or the Global Forum of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact), and numerous statistical facts. Another integral part of the monthly paper are interviews with high-ranking personalities, experts and members on various topics of our sector. This year, for example, we were able to interview the EU Commissioner for Agriculture, FAO's Director-General Qu Dongyu and the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the 2021 Food Systems Summit.

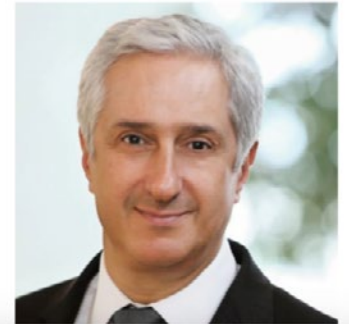
The WUWM newsletter has become an integral part of our organization's publications and we are excited to see how many people it reaches each month and how positive the feedback is.



In a foreword

Dear readers,

1 It has been of great importance for WUWM to gather the global fresh food sector together in our three independent regional dialogues aiming to make our voice heard in the forthcoming United Nations 2021 Food System Summit. This moment was unique for collectively identifying challenges and finding pathways to a sustainable food sector by 2030.

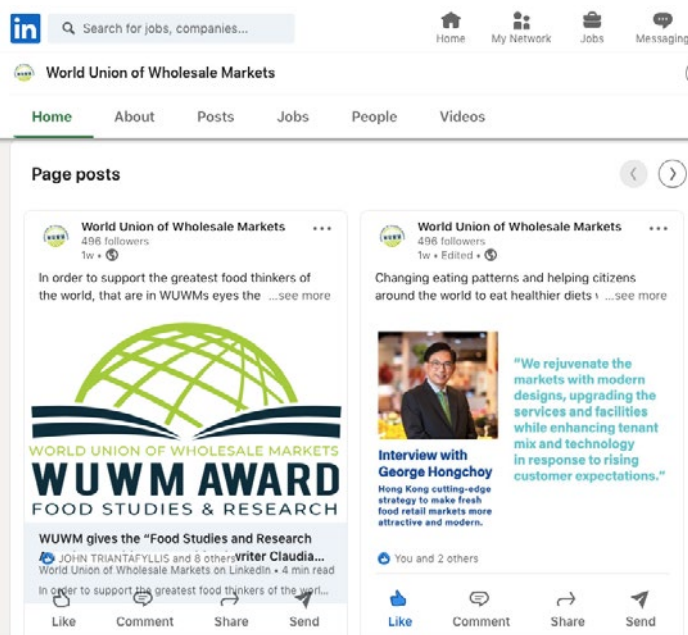


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WUWM goes to social media!

WUWM is also now present and active on different social media channels - such as Instagram, twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook - aiming to reach large audiences.

In general, WUWM is present on social media to have another way to communicate beyond the newsletter and official communications. This can inform the public about our organization and developments in the field of international food systems in a easier and faster way. We are pleased that the number of followers and reactions on all social media platforms is steadily increasing!



WUWM creates the “Food research and food studies” award

In order to support the greatest food thinkers of the world, that are in WUWMs eyes the ambassadors of fresh food and gastronomy as an Intangible cultural heritage of humanity, WUWM decided to join forces with the “Gourmand Awards celebration” and create a new price dedicated to the best cooking book of the year in the category “Food studies and research”.

WUWM strongly believes that to succeed the transition of food systems we also need to transition to better eating patterns. In this sense, our organization believe that cook-authors and chefs are the best ambassadors to spread among citizens around the world the know-how to eat better and help people to reconnect with the pleasure of eating. Books have an essential role to influence people cooking habits teaching them how to use fresh produce with daily, easy and fresh recipes and also spreading precious culinary traditions that might otherwise disappear.

In 2021 WUWM Chairman, granted WUWM award to the book “Med: A Cookbook”, last book of author Claudia Roden. The Award ceremony took place on November 30, 2021 during the World Cuisines Week at the Réfectoire des Cordeliers.

Author Claudia Roden was born and brought up in Cairo, but was educated in Paris and in London, where she has lived for many years. Roden is widely recognized amid the world’s greatest cookbook author. Often considered an anthropologist or a historian she dedicated her life to study and popularizing food traditions.

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With more than 14 million books sold worldwide, Claudia Roden has built a universal bibliography whose common thread is to link the cuisines of different countries (particularly middle-eastern and Mediterranean cuisine). Her work is recognized as a plea for friendship between nations around their culinary traditions.

The GOURMAND AWARDS were founded in 1995 by Edouard Cointreau. Every year, they honor the best food and wine books, printed or digital, as well as food television. In 2020, entries from 225 countries and regions participate in these prestigious awards, the only international competition of the sector. Every year, Gourmand gives the awards in a very special location for gastronomy.



WUWM IN EVENTS

For WUWM, 2021 was an incredibly productive and special year since we could resume our annual conference after being forced to cancel this important event in the previous year. In addition to that, WUWM participated actively at the forefront of major international and regional events such as the UN Food Systems Summit, the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact Forum and the 2nd FAO/IDB Summit on Food Losses and Waste, to name just a few. The following subchapters will give you a more detailed indication about the major take-aways from these important events.



WUWM Global Conference in Florence 2021

On the 25th of June, our organization organized a Global Conference in Florence, entitled “Fresh food distribution in the post Covid-19 world: Challenges, opportunities and pathways to ensure resilient and sustainable food systems and access to healthy diets”. It was a unique opportunity to gather over 70 people on-site and 350 online, covering a wide-range of agri-food stakeholders, from wholesale and retail markets representatives, logisticians, start-ups, academia, governments officials, international organizations, NGOs, the private sector, and many more.

The diversity of participants enabled us to collectively reflect on potential “game-changing solutions” addressing multi-dimensional challenges in a systemic way, such as the promotion of healthy diets, food systems transformation, the future of food in the Covid-19 aftermath, fresh food logistics, and innovation for resilience.

We had the opportunity to open the conference with high-level speakers in the plenary session, including FAO's Director-General Qu Dongyu, UN-Habitat Executive Director Maimunah Mohd Sharif, the Mayor of Florence and President of Eurocities Dario Nardella, Executive Director of GAIN Lawrence Haddad, Deputy to the Special Envoy of the Food Systems Summit Martin Frick, FAO's Director of Food Systems and Food Safety Jamie Morrison, Professor of International Agricultural Policy Andrea Segrè, Author and expert Carolyn Steel, Chairman of WUWM Stéphane Layani, Chairman of Italmercati Fabio Massimo Pallottini, Chairman of China Agricultural Wholesale Market Association (CAWA) Ma Zengjun, and President of Mercafir Giacomo Lucibello.

Together, they highlighted that the Covid-19 pandemic sheds a light on how fragile our food systems are and how complex it is to ensure affordable healthy diets to all. FAO has estimated that around 3 billion people cannot afford a stable intake of healthy food. FAO's Director-General, Qu Dongyu, stated that risks in terms of affordability and accessibility of healthy fresh food are to be worsened if a systemic approach and food systems transition are not undertaken.

All of this is part of the purpose of the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit, which invited nations around the world to brainstorm some strategies on how to reshape a food system that can ensure a secure, sustainable and healthy food sector by 2030. WUWM's conference was fully aligned with the 2021 UNFSS's goal: to leave no one behind in the transition to an affordable, accessible and sustainable food supply.

The Conference was divided into two high-level plenary sessions and four roundtables, with the following topics:

- **High-level plenary session 1:** *Healthy Diets for the Planet: Challenges and pathways to ensure sustainable food systems worldwide*
- **High-level plenary session 2:** *The future of food in the post-Covid-19 world*, with Carolyn Steel, Food system expert and Author of *Sitopia – How food can change the world*
- **Roundtable 1:** *Tackling the challenges of Covid-19: Lessons learned and opportunities to improve sustainability in the food system*
- **Roundtable 2:** *Fostering healthy food consumption patterns post-Covid-19*
- **Roundtable 3:** *Fresh food logistics during the pandemic and beyond: strategies to ensure reliability, safety and efficiency*
- **Roundtable 4:** *Innovating for resilience in the food supply chain*

In general terms, speakers at the WUWM Conference agreed upon the fact that modern wholesale markets are fundamental players in ensuring the availability of large volumes of healthy food on a regular basis. This is particularly in a world where 75% of the population will live in cities, and a resilient and regular supply of adequate volumes of fresh food is needed. Participants noted that wholesale markets acted like a buffer during the pandemic, limiting the impact of the restrictions in food distribution to urban areas.

Wholesale markets are also the only platforms ensuring wide availability of fresh produce – some wholesale markets have more than 1 million references of fresh produce- they are therefore key actors to promote agricultural biodiversity and to help to facilitate an easier access to healthier (non-processed, sugar free) diets. Additionally, they can have a crucial role in drastically diminishing food waste. However, being generally invisible to the public in many countries, they often suffer from a lack of institutional recognition of their role, thus leading to a lack of investment to do such things as renew their infrastructure.

“Covid-19 sheds a light on the weaknesses of the food sector; the need for significant investments in upgrading essential food market infrastructures and all the challenges that the sector has to tackle in order to successfully achieve the transition towards sustainability and resilience”

-Mr. Qu Dongyu

**“Wholesale markets play a crucial role in structuring upstream and downstream fresh food actors, shortening supply chains and providing easier access to markets for farmers”
- Mr. Layani**

Among potential pathways to ensure sustainable food systems worldwide, it was recognized that we need to upgrade market infrastructure to be more efficient, sustainable, and inclusive to better strengthen the agri-food sector. Beyond all the challenges that the pandemic brought, it also represented an opportunity for the agri-food sector to reinvent itself and to develop resilient and sustainable food systems, to reconnect territories and people with their food environments. And at the heart of this transformation are wholesale markets. Post-Covid-19 food systems are systems in which innovation, digitalization and e-commerce are proliferating. Such reconfiguration of distribution, flows and spaces, implies the development of new frameworks to improve quality control procedures and food safety. Tomorrow's food systems should be more localized, with shorter supply chains with low carbon footprints, adapted to food cultures, inclusive, promote accessibility, and drastically reduce food waste and losses.

WUWM Global Conference was a crucial event, in which wholesale markets were often referred to as the “hidden middle” of the food supply chain. They are at the epicenter of food systems transitions towards resilience and sustainability. We are delighted to share with you a glimpse of these fruitful presentations and discussions that we hope will make a significant difference for our future!

WUWM summarized the main outcomes and conclusions reached during Conference in the “Florence Conference Report”, which can be found [here](#) and on our website.

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WUWM Independent Dialogues to the UNFSS 2021



In anticipation of the United Nations Food System Summit that took place on 23 September 2021, in April and May 2021, WUWM organized five independent dialogues entitled: “Making nutritious and healthy diets available to all: Empowering a sustainable and resilient fresh food supply chain worldwide”, which was constituted in four regional sessions (Asia, Europe, Latin America and Africa). Over 250 stakeholders from across the food sector were present and contributed to meaningful discussions, which were compiled in five different reports presented upon each dialogue’s conclusion.

The aim of the UNFSS was to foster a “People’s Summit” by creating multi stakeholders dialogues that could find coalitions and new pathways to food systems transformation. According to data from the United Nations, 1,640 independent food systems summit dialogues with more than 108,000 participants in 148 countries have been held to date. These dialogues provided the opportunity for stakeholders around the globe to discuss and collaborate on key issues of the sector.

Recognizing the importance of this Summit, as well as in building a multi-stakeholder systemic approach in order to succeed the transition of food systems WUWM fully engaged in the UNFSS proposal and organized five independent dialogues for the Asia-Pacific, African, European and Latin-American regions.

The WUWM dialogues were equally successful in their dynamism and wide reach, since they brought together key food actors from major organizations; such as MIT, FAO, GAIN and the WWF; officials; researchers; wholesale markets; logisticians; and wholesalers among many others - representing various sectors and all the regions of the world. These dialogues provided insightful and “game-changing solutions” to envision the path to building a resilient and sustainable food system adapted to regional complexities and realities. Several proposals from WUWM were included in the final report that was submitted to member states to have a common ground to debate and exchange.

Major outcomes of the African Dialogue

During the African Dialogue, it was outlined that food insecurity remains the core issue of the region, and particularly in the Sub-Saharan region. Owing to the continued multi-dimensional upheavals triggered by rapid growing urbanization, climate change, persistent poverty, and now the Covid-19 pandemic, the need to shift from a sectoral approach to a systemic one to ensure a resilient and solid food supply was emphasized. Hence, noted was the need for governments and local municipalities to reinforce their capacity in food governance, urban planning, and upgrade all the basic infrastructures to ensure food security.

Regarding wholesale markets, better linkages with (smallholder) farmers should be established and preserved to ensure resilient systems throughout Africa. This can be achieved through things such as better roads, online platforms, or improved logistics.

Moreover, local authorities should focus on improving access to clean water and electricity as they are important for both rural communities and for urban (wholesale) markets and communities. Likewise, recognizing and encouraging linkages between rural and urban communities is essential.

Major outcomes of the Asian-Pacific dialogue

21 The Asian-Pacific region is the most populated region of the world; therefore, to ensure nutritious diets for all by enhancing and upgrading infrastructures and raising awareness of the health benefits of nutritious and fresh diets must be the top priority in the region. With the rapid increase of megacities throughout the region, participants raised the need to bolster governance and policy coherence, such as by strengthening linkages or building new connections between stakeholders of food sector. The role of digital tools to ensure food safety and improve fresh food flows was pointed out. Finally, as some countries record more than 50% of food losses, participants agreed on the need to improve services along the food value chain and reduction of food waste.

Major outcomes of the European dialogue

Despite the recognized leadership role of the European wholesale markets in fresh food distribution around the region, the dialogue participants highlighted the need to reconnect people to healthy food and to make people aware of the health benefits of and the need for quality and sustainability in fresh food systems. Wholesales markets can help with this in two ways: First, by encouraging increased consumption of fruits and vegetables, wholegrain cereals, and nuts and pulse (particularly locally produced varieties). The second is by providing and promoting more sustainably produced food products and meals. To ensure a sustainable European food sector, fresh food markets should be supported to invest in modernizing their structures, with a focus on green energy. The promotion of short supply chains and reducing food waste through circular economy strategies were two main topics. Actors concluded that wholesale markets can play a major role in greening European food systems.

Major outcomes of the Latin American dialogue

In its dialogue, the key need identified in Latin America was to connect food system stakeholders to improve different areas to ensure a more resilient supply, better urban planning, and the prevention of food loss. Investment in high-quality infrastructure was said to be necessary to strengthen local value chains, increase access to healthy foods and implement better traceability. To increase uptake of healthy diets across the Latin American population, the experts outlined that more focus within education should go to the health benefits of cooking with fresh fruits and vegetables and that those foods should be included in school menus.

WUWM Chairman at the UNFSS CEOs Meeting

In the frame of the United Nations Food System Summit WUWM was invited by the secretariat of the UN Food Systems Summit to participate in a CEO consultation platform. The CEOs consultations consist in a series of CEO-level private sector consultations to prepare for the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit (FSS) with a particular focus on emerging private sector solutions to advance commitments and actions.

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Chairman Stéphane Layani was invited to participate in all the six meetings of this high-level platform.

Mr. Layani was invited to speak alongside several influential CEOs in the global food sector to find pathways for a healthier and more sustainable world. Various meetings were led by UN's Special Envoy for the Food Systems Summit, Dr. Agnes Kalibata, and by the CEO of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), Peter Bakker.

Mr. Layani represented the voice of wholesale markets speaking on topics such as the necessity to improve logistics and the cold chain worldwide, he proposed to create an innovation fund for food system actors and a framework to reduce global food loss and waste, and also to enhance concrete actions to promote among citizens healthy and sustainable diets.

"Cities are growing at very fast rates, and in 2050 almost 70% of the world population is expected to be living in cities! There is an urgent need to ensure accurate supply, smart logistics, improvements in urban planning, and major investments in food infrastructures. Together we can build a vibrant ecosystem that can continuously offer safe, quality, affordable, healthy, and sustainable food to cities," Mr. Layani said during one of the plenary sessions.

The meetings gave birth to the "Private sector declaration for the UNFSS", that WUWM signed, and proposed further focus in business leadership on specific solution spaces where coalitions for action can be formed. WUWM remain engaged and still participating in the CEOs platform that is now working on the topic "shaping the food systems agenda for 2022 and beyond".



Launch of Love Your Local Market Campaign 2021

On 22 October 2021, WUWM launched this year "Love Your Local Market" (LYLM) campaign at «Mercat de Mercats» in Barcelona. The campaign is an annual event celebrated in thousands of outdoor and indoor fresh food street markets around the world. It aims to bring more citizens to street markets by organizing concerts, demonstrate cooking with seasonal products as well as other attractive activities. We celebrated it with a special launch event in Barcelona which took place right after the MUFPP. WUWM was particularly honored to launch the campaign in Barcelona, as the city was distinguished as the "World capital of sustainable eating" this year, recognizing the city's success in structuring their fresh food supply to ensure a better access to healthier diets to its citizens. This was a concrete way for WUWM to show the impact of good urban food policies - as most of the street markets are owned and regulated by local governments and mostly supplied by wholesale markets.



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The launch event was divided into two parts: in the morning, MUFPP delegates, mayors and city representatives from around the world visited Barcelona's Mercabarna wholesale market; and in the afternoon, the LYLM campaign was officially launched with speeches from representatives of the Barcelona City Council, the director of Mercabarna, the director of the WUWM retail markets group, and Eugenia Carrara, WUWM Secretary-General at the Mercat de Mercats.

Around the world, markets participating in the campaign galvanized and organized various activities which sought to promote easier access to healthy and sustainable food, while bringing members of the community together.

The successful launch of LYLM enabled participants to not only highlight the importance of markets as community assets but also to create conditions to enable cities to take action towards fostering sustainable food environments. As wholesale markets are set to ensure fresh food availability, retail markets are able to effectively distribute to consumers healthy and sustainable products to local consumers. By joining forces, the LYLM campaign was able to bring together local retail markets and wholesale markets and successfully promoted sustainable, healthy diets with a return to in-person shopping, allowing citizens to have easier access to diversified, fresh, and healthier products.



Furthermore, this year's launch was able to join forces with the United Nations which specifically promoted the «International Year of Fruits and Vegetables» (#IYFV). The UN declared 2021 as the Year of Fruits and Vegetables to highlight the need for increased consumption of fruits and vegetables for improved nutrition and more sustainable diets. A study published in 2019 in The Lancet medical journal showed that inadequate consumption

of fruits and vegetables accounts for one in every five deaths globally. The FAO released a comprehensive Action Plan for the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables to promote healthy diets, and WUWM supported the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables through the Love Your Local Market campaign. In addition, the LYLM was part of FAO's World Food Day, one of its main corporate campaigns and one of the most celebrated days in the UN calendar.

The first global event coordinated by WUWM was launched in 2014 with a core group of retail markets in several cities in Europe. The international campaign has grown to more than 3,000 participating markets from 17 countries, both within and outside Europe.



WUWM at the 7th Global Forum of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact

Over one hundred cities from every continent signed the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) at EXPO 2015 in Milan, Italy. The MUFPP is a non-binding agreement on urban food policies “designed by cities for cities”.

During the launching event, themed “Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life”, city mayors committed to developing sustainable and resilient food systems with nutritious and accessible food for all. They also pledged to protect biodiversity and fight against food waste. Focus on this initiative revealed an urgency to define models for an integrated approach to urban food systems.

The MUUFPP pact illustrates the role of cities in contributing towards sustainable food systems, proposing a “Framework of Action” that articulates 37 recommended actions organized within six categories (1. governance 2. sustainable diets and nutrition 3. social and economic equity 4. food production (including urban-rural linkages) 5. food supply and distribution 6. food waste).

Since its creation the MUFPP has been deeply committed to bringing food related issues to the forefront and integrating them into urban and local political agendas. Today, the pact represents a framework for collaboration to identify challenges, best practices and pathways for localizing food systems in a resilient and sustainable manner. With 68% of world population expected to live in urban areas by 2050, and 60% yet to be built, it is urgent to put cities first, in order to build resilient and sustainable food systems coherently embedded within local, national, regional and global contexts.

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Covid-19 demonstrated that cities provide rapid answers in case of external shock, and they continue to provide residents with basic services such as food on a regular basis. WUWM was invited to participate in the 7th MUFPP meeting in Barcelona, around the theme of “Growing resilience: sustainable food to tackle the climate emergency”. This topic is of primary importance, since cities play a vital role in combining energy transitions with actions relating to food issues. Even if cities only occupy 2% of the planet’s territories, 80% of the total global energy is absorbed by them and 70% of the world food supply is consumed in urban areas. Therefore, cities are at the forefront of designing and implementing tomorrow’s urban areas so that they are livable and sustainable and ensure healthy, nutritious and affordable diets to all.

While cities have become more involved and increasingly recognize their role in this process, full understanding of the complexity of food systems and the ABC’s of how to ensure resilient and sustainable food environments are still lacking in a lot of countries around the world.

WUWM was invited to co-organize, with the City of Barcelona, a session addressing the theme: ‘The future of food in the post-Covid-19 world: the role of wholesale markets in ensuring healthy food availability and transitioning food systems towards resilience and sustainability.’ The session highlighted the importance of wholesale markets in creating sustainable urban foodscapes, as they are crucial infrastructures to ensure availability of fresh produce at a consumer level. Attendees of this session included city mayors, officials, and important food systems stakeholders from around the world. The key take-aways from this session were that wholesale markets are major actors to structure the fresh food supply in cities: They are the essential link of the food supply chain. They also play an important social role: as trade volumes enable the provision of a cheaper supply of fresh produce in cities, giving lower-income households access to healthier diets.



Stéphane Layani, Chairman of WUWM, participated in the panel discussion along with other WUWM member directors: Zengjun Ma, from the Chinese Agriculture Wholesale Market Association, Jordi Valls, Director of Barcelona’s wholesale market (Mercabarna), Cesare Ferrero, Milan’s Foody Wholesale Market Director, and Buenos Aires Central Wholesale Market Director Nahuel Levaggi.

WUWM at the Second International Forum on Urban-Rural Linkages organized by UN-Habitat

On October 19th and 20th, the 2nd International Forum on Urban-Rural Linkages took place in Lishui City, in the Chinese province of Zhejiang, and brought together 32 guest speakers and over 200 participants from more than 20 international organizations representing 17 different countries. The International Forum on Urban-Rural Linkages is one of the key activities of the UN-Habitat Urban-Rural Linkages program, which aims to promote rural-urban cooperation in order to reduce regional inequalities and to increase resource efficiency.

The conference was entitled “Integrating Health and Territorial Development for Sustainable Livelihoods”. It is aimed at promoting sustainable development and wellbeing across the urban-rural continuum. Representing WUWM, Mr. Zengjun Ma, the Director of the WUWM Asia-Pacific Regional Group, was a guest speaker in a thematic session about “Public Health, Sustainable Healthy Diets and Food Systems.”

As healthy environments and populations around the globe are essential to reaching the UN’s objective towards building healthy and sustainable communities, the importance of wholesale markets continues to grow. During the conference, Mr. Zengjun Ma discussed the importance of fresh food circulation in cities through the use of wholesale markets.

Ma discussed how wholesale markets not only enhance the circulation of fresh food to communities but aid in stabilizing the prices of goods and reduce the levels of rural disparity through the efficient distribution of healthy produce. WUWM’s participation was able to successfully re-examine health through the lens of food and urban linkages, through which wholesale markets serve can address pressing global challenges.

The second International Forum on Urban-Rural Linkages aimed to provide all participants with an opportunity and a platform to learn from each other, share case studies of different countries, share innovative methods and measures, as well as some insights on rural development and health issues. Its purpose was to strengthen urban-rural linkages, promote sustainable development, improve the well-being of people in the process of urban-rural integration, and ensure better and more sustainable environments in regard to the goals and requirements of the “New Urban Agenda” and other international agendas. Our keynote was entitled “Ensure the Sustainable Supply of Fresh Agricultural Produce via Wholesale Markets”.

We learned about the views and perspectives on urban-rural linkage and urban-rural construction in China and other countries, particularly highlighted by the sustainable development best practice case of Songyang’s urban-rural linkage. More than 300 officials, experts, scholars, and media practitioners from 44 countries and 19 international organizations gained knowledge about healthy urban-rural development.

“This event has helped countries recognize the function of wholesale markets in guaranteeing sustainable supply of fresh agri-products, and increase the influence of the wholesale market industry worldwide.”

WUWM at the 2nd Summit on food waste reduction by the Inter-American Development Bank and the FAO

The 2nd Food Loss and Waste Reduction Summit for Latin America and the Caribbean – 2a Cumbre sobre Reducción de Pérdidas y Desperdicios de Alimentos en América Latina y el Caribe, organized by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) took place on 17 and 18 November in an online format.

During these two days, numerous actors, experts and stakeholders of the food supply chain were brought together with the aim of sharing good practices, successful public policies, and innovative solutions among every step of the food supply chain to reduce food loss and waste in Latin America. In total, eleven-panel sessions were held, which were attended by governmental officials, international organization representatives, consultants, researchers, urban administrators, and other key actors of the food value chain.

Several WUWM members were invited to participate in the Summit during a session titled: "Reduction of food loss and waste in wholesale markets. During her presentation WUWM Secretary-General Eugenia Carrara shared that the FAO Investment Center is carrying out, in collaboration with WUWM, a worldwide unprecedented case study on wholesale markets. This will be the first serious and in-depth study on such a scale.

Ms. Carrara pointed out that wholesale markets were for a long time invisible for many actors, as they acted in "the hidden middle." Nevertheless, the pandemic has made clear to all major stakeholders and governments the role of wholesale markets in ensuring the fresh food supply, with shorter value chains, more local products, and more small and medium-sized producers.

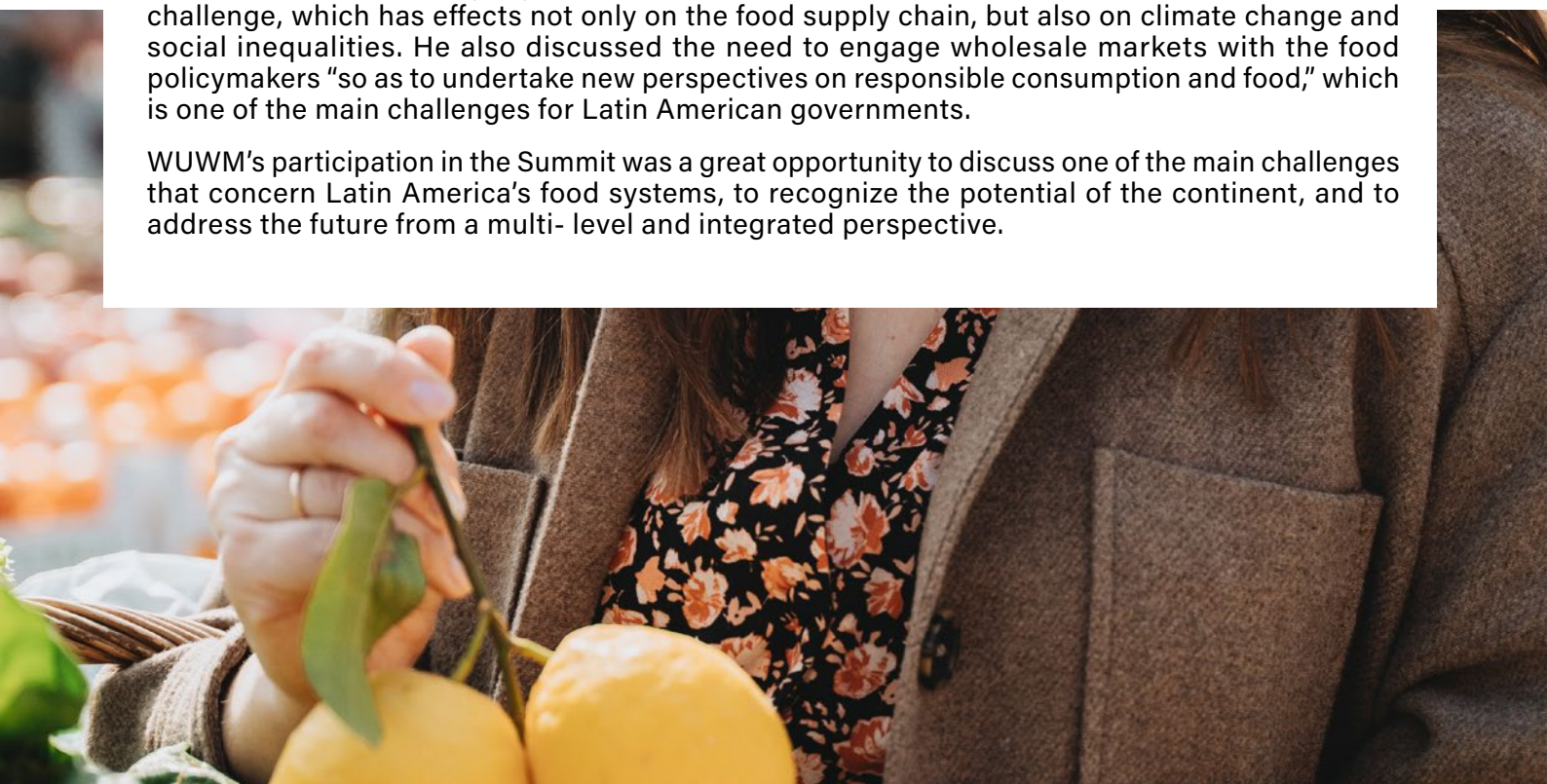
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Regarding food waste, wholesale markets have the best infrastructure to support efficient trade of perishable products, as they participate in the good handling of agricultural products supporting turnover in high quantities.

In Mexico, some wholesalers work with producers to forecast planting and diversify produce according to clients' demands. Investment in innovations (like AI and big data solutions) could be a real tool to anticipate prices, encourage the provision of certain products, and have better coordination of food flows to reduce food waste and avoid seasonal produce overflows.

Mr. Arturo Fernández, FLAMA (Latin America Federation of Wholesale Markets) President and WUWM Director, highlighted the multi-dimensional character of the food loss and waste challenge, which has effects not only on the food supply chain, but also on climate change and social inequalities. He also discussed the need to engage wholesale markets with the food policymakers "so as to undertake new perspectives on responsible consumption and food," which is one of the main challenges for Latin American governments.

WUWM's participation in the Summit was a great opportunity to discuss one of the main challenges that concern Latin America's food systems, to recognize the potential of the continent, and to address the future from a multi-level and integrated perspective.





IN FOCUS

UN Food Systems Summit

2021 was an important year for the transformation of food systems and the organizations promoting it. Many fruitful events on the topic were held, and the first ever UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS), organized by the FAO, clearly stood out among all these. On September 23rd, more than 90 world leaders globally convened in New York to create action plans regarding global food systems, aimed at reaching the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This Summit was announced in 2019 by the UN Secretary General, António Guterres, and created dialogues all over the world. More than 100,000 people participated in such dialogues, culminating in a three-day pre-summit that ran from 26-28 July.

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The UNFSS, followed decades of various international efforts attempting to address the problems associated with food security and nutrition. Around 3 billion people around the world still struggle to afford or access healthy food, and the need to ramp up protocols to address this challenge remains evident. UN Secretary-General António Guterres said in his opening statement, "We need to ramp up emergency food and nutrition systems in areas affected by conflict or climate emergencies. We need to invest in early-warning famine prevention systems, and we need to shockproof all of the systems that contribute to nutrition."

The UNFSS discussed the importance in tackling climate change and highlighted that sustainable food systems should be recognized at the highest levels of cooperation and policymaking. This means that the UN, world leaders, NGOs, and major stakeholders understand how crucial it is to reform global food systems. It also means that they are committed to bring about change, and, even if past commitments from states have not always been upheld to their fullest potential, it is an undeniable step in the right direction. The UNFSS shows that the lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic have been learned and that actors worldwide want to create sustainable and resilient food systems that provide people with equitable, healthy and affordable food.

In an effort to mitigate the challenges associated with our international food systems, the UNFSS developed five action plans listed in table 1. The five action plans were developed as a means to bring together key stakeholders and players within the international community to draw expertise from actors in various food systems.

Action Plan 1	Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
Action Plan 2	Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
Action Plan 3	Boost nature-positive production
Action Plan 4	Advance equitable livelihoods
Action Plan 5	Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

Table 1: UNFSS Action Plan

The UNFSS action plan framework works to target all facets within the international food system network. Through cross coordinating with actors within the food system, the UN seeks to eradicate hunger, ensure decent work for food system workers, financing sustainable food systems, and maintain soil health through carbon sequestration projects. The UNFSS recognized the role and involvement of wholesale markets as critical players in this action plan.

WUWM is fully engaged to achieve the SDGs, and we think that modern wholesale markets have the capability to be a centerpiece of reaching a sustainable and effective food system transition.

Our organization participated in the elaboration of proposals for several actions tracks and adhere to multiple coalitions that are now in charge to make the follow up of Summit.

World Food Day 2021

World Food Day (WFD) was held on October 16 with major events organized by the FAO. WFD has been taking place for decades, and events all over the world commemorated one of the UN's oldest and most celebrated days. Over 150 countries joined in on the festivities, wherein actors from all parts of civil society reiterated their belief in a world where everyone can be fed healthily.

WFD has always been an important event for global food systems. Yet, it was made all the more crucial this year by the fact that the first-ever UN Food System Summit (UNFSS) had taken place just weeks prior. As such, WFD had the mission to not only create more awareness on issues related to our food systems, but also further a vital trend started by the UNFSS. It also took place in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, where the shortcomings of our food systems became apparent to all. That is why WFD 2021 was a centerpiece for the promotion of sustainable and resilient food systems, healthy and affordable food access, and fair and equitable food distribution.

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Of particular importance to WUWM was that October's "Love Your Local Market" (LYLM) campaign was added to the WFD agenda. The LYLM campaign was launched on 22 October in Barcelona, which was crowned the World Capital of Sustainable Food for the year 2021. WUWM was delighted with this news, given the common values that we share with the FAO and WFD, and we believe that this collaboration can be further deepened in the future.





WUWM JOINING FORCES!

2021 showed to our sector the complexity and interdependence of actors required to succeed in the transition of our food systems. If we want to achieve concrete change and reach the objectives of carbon neutrality, sustainability and resilience of our sector we cannot work anymore in silos. Only through collaborative methods that include all the stakeholders of the food systems we would be able to make this transition while leaving no one behind. We firmly believe that that all relevant players must collaborate through comprehensive actions to develop clear and long-term answers to our sector's most critical concerns. As a result, it is critical to exchange viewpoints and knowledge and to work together to address this. For these reasons, WUWM is pleased to have increased its worldwide relationships with significant and important players in 2021, as well as to have launched collaborations and signed memoranda of understanding with several organizations.

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WUWM signs a Memorandum of Understanding with UN-Habitat

During the WUWM Global Conference in Florence on 24 June 2021, WUWM and UN-Habitat joined forces signing a Memorandum of Understanding during our Global Conference in Florence. This Memorandum was signed by Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, the Executive Director of the United Nations Settlements Program (UN-Habitat), and Mr. Stéphane Layani, Acting Chairman of the World Union of Wholesale Markets (WUWM).

In the context of achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda, this partnership will improve urban-rural linkages for resilient, inclusive, and sustainable local food systems, as key component of sustainable cities.



Our new partner organization, UN-Habitat, is the UN Agency that supports more inclusive, resilient, safe and sustainable cities and human settlements globally. Their vision is to build "a better quality of life for all in an urbanized world". They work in over 90 countries and promote transformative change in cities and human settlements through knowledge, policy advice, technical assistance and collaborative action.



Markets and food systems are aligned with and supported by various areas of the work of UN-Habitat, especially through their work in wholesale markets. Wholesale markets are a crucial provider of fresh food in major and intermediary cities and in peri-urban and rural area. This makes them part of a complex web of physical spaces, where flows of people, goods, and services occur daily between rural and urban communities and through a variety of parallel distribution systems.

That is why we are glad to announce our cooperation with UN-Habitat, which starts with a Memorandum of Understanding

(MoU) that we have signed in the context of multi-level and multi-sector approaches to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda.

The main objective of this MoU is to provide a framework of collaboration on the development and implementation of joint action programs, projects, initiatives, campaigns, and events of common interest - with an emphasis on projects involving urban-rural linkages, planning of food systems, networks of public markets, and energy and solid waste management in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America.

Among the primary expected results of our cooperation, we believe, will be to ensure the following: greater awareness of the importance of food markets and equitable distribution of markets for economic development; increased human and financial capacity of local governments and other actors to optimize the use of public spaces for markets, local revenue generation, energy production, and enhancing value chains; and the development of advisory materials (e.g. tools, guides, training manuals), policies, governance and bylaws, and other regulatory and planning frameworks to support networks of markets and food systems.

We are at a decisive moment and believe that this collaboration with UN-Habitat will significantly contribute to transforming tomorrow's food systems and feed urban populations worldwide in a sustainable way.

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WUWM strengthens cooperation with the European Commission

The European Code of Conduct for Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices

The European Union (EU) Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices is one of the first deliverables of the European Union "Farm to Fork Strategy" and an integral part of its action plan.

The code sets out the actions that the actors 'between the farm and the fork', such as food processors, food service operators and retailers, would voluntarily commit to undertake to tangibly improve and communicate their sustainability performance. These actions can be directly relevant and implementable within their own operations or may encourage collaboration with industry peers and other food system stakeholders (such as farmers and consumers) to make similar changes.



WUWM was chosen by the European Commission to be part of the permanent task force to design the EU Code of Conduct for Responsible Business and Marketing under the framework of the Farm to Fork Strategy and the European Green Deal.

As one of the 11 permanent taskforce members to develop this Code, the WUWM was recognized as critical to shaping Europe's future food systems and spurring multi-stakeholder collaborations, thanks to its expertise and network.

The process to develop the Code of Conduct started in December 2020. WUWM was part of different working groups over five months in order to draft the Code of Conduct. Many major ideas submitted by our organization were adopted. Secretary-General Eugenia Carrara was present at the launch to express the commitment of wholesale markets towards signing the Code and to take note of the final version of the Code which WUWM took part in drafting. The Code entered into force on 5 July 2021 and was signed by WUWM.

The Code's essence is to find concrete pathways for the European food sector to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic and to effectively drive food system transition towards resilience, taking into consideration environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

There are seven aspirational objectives in the Code covering the three pillars of sustainability (environmental, social, economic):

1. Healthy, balanced and sustainable diets for all European consumers
2. Prevention and reduction of food loss and waste
3. A climate neutral food chain in Europe by 2050
4. An optimized circular and resource-efficient food chain
5. Sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all
6. Sustainable value creation in the European food supply chain through partnership
7. Sustainable sourcing in food supply chains

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WUWM Chairman, Stéphane Layani, pointed out that "wholesale markets have always played a key role within the European food chain, especially concerning the distribution of fresh products by carrying out the functions that link rural producers and the agricultural economy with downstream functions of the urban supply chain and, most importantly, by shortening the supply chain and enhancing its efficiency. (...) (They) are key actors to make it easier for everyone in Europe to have access to healthier diets". The European Section of WUWM represents the fresh food wholesale markets of the European Union (94 markets across Europe who supply nearly 200 million consumers a day, market 25 million tons of fresh produce (fruits and vegetables, fish and sea products, meat and meat products), with a value of 70 billion euros and generating nearly 150,000 jobs). Almost 50% of the fresh produce and 70% of EU's production consumed in Europe go through our wholesale market infrastructures.

WUWM's Director of the European Region, Fabio Massimo Pallottini noted that "WUWM is very pleased that the sector is coming together to foster quicker changes towards greener, healthier and sustainable diets. Everyone worked extremely hard (...) to make this happen. This Code will be key in the transition to a healthy and sustainable European food sector, not only because of the clear directions, indicators, and commitments this Code lays out for the sector, but for a great part also through the coming together of all the relevant actors".

To formally launch the process for developing the Code of Conduct, a High-level stakeholder event took place on 26 January 2021 with interventions from Executive Vice-President Frans Timmermans, Commissioner Stella Kyriakides, MEP Herbert Dorfmann (rapporteur for the Farm to Fork Strategy at the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development), MEP Sarah Wiener (shadow rapporteur for the Farm to Fork Strategy at the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety) and industry players, among them WUWM.

On 5 July 2021, a High-level celebratory stakeholder event formally launched the entry into force of the Code. On that day 65 signatories (23 associations and 42 companies) signed the Code and committed to help accelerate the needed transformation. WUWM makes part now of the "Signatories Group" of the Code and fork hand in hand with its members to make the code alive.

WUWM is designated as a Permanent Member of the European Union Platform on Food Losses and Waste

The World Union of Wholesale Markets was chosen by the European Commission to become a permanent member of the European Union Platform on Food Losses and Waste, starting from 2022. The EU Platform on Food Losses and Waste arose from the EU's and EU member countries' commitment to achieving the adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which include halving per capita food waste at retail and consumer levels by 2030 and reducing food losses along food production and supply chains.

According to the European Commission (EC), combating food waste entails collaborating with all key stakeholders from the public and private sectors to better identify, monitor, understand, and create solutions to reduce food losses and waste. The platform was officially established in 2016 with the goal of bringing together EU institutions, experts from EU countries, and relevant stakeholders who were chosen through an open call for applications, with the goal of addressing the main challenges that the sector is facing in order to reduce food waste and loss.

The Platform's goals are to help all stakeholders define food waste control methods, share best practices, and track progress over time. Following the Commission's public appeal for organizations to join the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste, the World Union of Wholesale Markets has agreed to participate for a 5-year period (2022-2026), with the first meeting scheduled for April 2022.

WUWM truly supports this initiative, as the transition of food systems toward sustainability, resilience, and inclusion will only be possible through multi-stakeholder collaboration and integrated action. Wholesale markets, located in the «hidden middle» of the food supply chain, are actively involved in decreasing food waste and food loss. As effective food centers, European wholesale markets enable improved logistics, a guarantee of cold chain compliance, and proper traceability and packaging measures - all of which are critical to reducing food waste.

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Furthermore, combining all of the fresh food supply in one location aids in the scaling up of circular economy initiatives to prevent food waste (many of our markets work with food banks to donate unsold produce that is still edible or to make biogas when the produce can no longer be used as food). Even if they account for only 5% of food loss, we believe that modern wholesale markets can have a positive ripple effect on all agri-food chain actors by facilitating trading times for perishable goods, improving logistics and cold chain food flows, and elevating standards that can lead to a longer life span of fresh produce.

In this sense, WUWM is committed to share with all stakeholders' cutting-edge strategies to reduce food losses and waste and to work hand-in-hand with all institutional actors, NGOs, companies, and universities pursuing this goal. We are sure that WUWM's participation in the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste will be meaningful, and we are eager to strengthen forces with the EU food sector to achieve the goal of zero waste together.

Collaboration with the FAO

In 2019, WUWM has signed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in which both parties agreed to develop concrete joint actions. These actions aim to provide better quality and healthier food for all and to fight food waste. The signing of this MoU shows that both organizations are committed to working together to find innovative and efficient ways to overcome the enormous challenges for global food systems. Amid several topics WUWM is collaborating with the FAO investment center on an innovative global case-study, that will be soon launched, and that will allow to develop operational guidelines to upgrade wholesale food markets.

The Covid-19 crisis has highlighted the importance of well-functioning wholesale markets and the need to upgrade or modernize markets for a resilient and high-performing food system. On 2021 WUWM worked in several projects with FAO with this objective that will be presented in the following paragraphs. We greatly value the MoU with the FAO and believe in the many positive outcomes of our combined efforts to ensure the sustainability our food systems in the forthcoming years!

WUWM's and FAO workshops with wholesale markets on exchanging best practices on food safety

WUWM, in collaboration with the FAO food safety unit organized two workshops - one in Asia and one for the Latin American region in order to have an overview of the major challenges concerning food safety in wholesale markets and to find tools for addressing these challenges.

With an estimated 600 million cases of foodborne illnesses per year, unsafe food is a threat to human health and economies globally. Ensuring food safety is a public health priority. Effective food safety and quality control systems are key, not only to safeguard the health and wellbeing of people, but also for economic development and improving livelihoods by promoting healthy diets from food markets all around the world.

Food safety means the correct handling, preparation, and storage of food to prevent food-borne illness. Doing this well preserves the quality of food and thereby prevents contamination and illnesses. Keeping food safe is a complex process that starts on the farm and ends with the consumer. It includes quality and safety through the entire food chain so that the health of the consumer is not endangered. The major factors that are a threat to food safety are inappropriate agricultural practices, poor hygiene at any stage of the food chain, lack of preventive controls during processing and preparation of food, incorrect use of chemical materials, contaminated raw materials, and inappropriate storage.

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On 5 April 2021, WUWM and FAO held a 2-hour online workshop on the food safety aspects of wholesale markets, which was attended by the members of WUWM Federation of Latin American Wholesale Markets (FLAMA), representing ten countries of Latin America region, namely Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, Dominican Republic, Uruguay, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Venezuela. The meeting was executed by the WUWM representatives and attended by several FAO officers.

The online workshop was attended by a total of 18 people.

On 26th May 2021, WUWM and FAO held a 2-hour online workshop on the food safety aspects of wholesale markets, which was attended by the members of WUWM representing 6 regional countries, namely Bangladesh, People's Republic of China, India, Nepal, Philippines and South Korea. The meeting was executed by the WUWM representatives and attended by several FAO officers. The online workshop was attended by a total of 24 people.

During the workshop WUWM Americas Group Chairman Arturo Fernandez concluded that the webinar allowed communication, dialogue and an insightful exchange of knowledge about the reality that each of us is going through, as well as the identification of experiences and success stories that can be replicated on a continental scale."

In the Asia-Pacific Working Group, Mr. Zengjun Ma, WUWM's Asia-Pacific Group Chairman, declared that "the sharing of experiences on food safety from various Asian wholesale markets at this webinar provided insights on developing and implementing food safety principles and infrastructure to its participants. In addition, we are delighted to answer the requests of FAO to showcase the first-hand experiences and expertise of our markets on food safety and COVID-19 measures. Wholesale markets from other Asian countries also described the national challenges on food safety, which was essential to unite the sector and strengthen our understanding. It will guide us to make commitments to supplying safe food and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations."

Taking into consideration the issues addressed during the meetings, the FAO defined the potential focus points in moving forward. The next step will be the development of food safety guidelines for wholesale markets – the guidelines should go with good practices shared by members. The guidelines can be used at the global level, but can also be tailored for specific regions so that they can be useful for regional/local authorities.



FAO Investment Centre

WUWM is collaborating with the FAO Investment Centre on an innovative study which will make in-depth interviews with CEOs and case studies in 35 markets in over 30 countries and look at wholesale markets ranging from traditional producer markets to more modern, multi-functional facilities.

The study, "Upgrading wholesale food markets for food system resilience in the 21st century" is directed by the FAO investment center but it will mobilize several FAO units, and with FAO's partner (such as the World bank, the BERD, and the African development bank). Through case studies examining and interviewing wholesale markets across the world, the study aims to identify investment areas to upgrade markets to resilient, modern wholesale food markets.

The result of the study is intended to give a clear overlook about wholesale markets, and investment in wholesale markets modernization to officers from International Financing Institutions, municipal and national officials, and market officials.

At the WUWM Global Conference in Florence in June 2021, James Tefft from FAO's Investment Centre presented the initial findings of the study that he is leading in collaboration with WUWM: Along with urbanization, food consumption and food demand are equally rising. It is therefore crucial to look at our food system infrastructure and its distribution channels.

In the FAO study, wholesale markets have been identified as critical in efficiently and resiliently supplying rapidly-growing cities and allowing food systems to be ready for crises. Mr. Tefft mentioned during Florence Conference that "countries with organized and upgraded food wholesale market infrastructure networks had a higher level of resilience and a better capacity to deal with disruptions"



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FAO in WUWM Conferences

We were pleased to see that the FAO was a frequent participant in events organized by WUWM in 2021. Not only was the FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu present as a speaker at our Global Conference in Florence, the FAO also attended several other important events co-organized by WUWM. Among these are the WUWM webinars on food safety in the Latin American region, held in cooperation with the FAO's food safety unit. Furthermore, representatives of the FAO attended the launch of the Love Your Local Market campaign by WUWM in Barcelona and also added the LYLM campaign to the official agenda of World Food Day.

In addition, the FAO also invited WUWM to its 2nd Summit on Food Waste Reduction run in cooperation with the Inter-American Development Bank. We are pleased to see that the common goals expressed in our Memorandum of Understanding with FAO are being implemented so effectively.



Memorandum of Understanding with the Global Food Banking Network



The **Global FoodBanking** Network®

WUWM is pleased to announce that our organization and the Global Food Banking Network have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 18 November 2021 that will strengthen and promote future collaboration and cooperation in the global fight against food waste.

The Global Food Banking Network's (GFN) mission is to feed the world's hungry by bolstering food banks and food bank networks. GFN achieves its global objective of feeding people in need by forming effective public-private partnerships, providing ecologically-friendly alternatives to food loss and waste, and promoting best practices in humanitarian food distribution and community development. GFN is the only global non-profit organization dedicated to establishing, sustaining, and strengthening food banks and food bank networks in order to alleviate hunger and ensure environmental sustainability. GFN works with over 900 food banks and national food bank networks in over 40 countries, providing food assistance to an estimated 27.6 million food-insecure people and distributing more than 1.1 billion kilograms of food from January to September 2020.

The main purpose of this MoU is the establishment and achievement of various common goals and objectives relating to the parties' shared interest in advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 2 – Zero Hunger and SDG 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production. This is set to be achieved through concrete projects to promote public-private partnerships to curb food loss and waste.

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This MoU offers another global approach to sharing innovations from wholesale markets and benefiting from exchanges with such an important organization as GFN and furthering the fight against food waste.

Collaboration with GAIN



The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) is a Switzerland-based foundation launched in 2002 that aims to tackle human suffering caused by malnutrition. Many people around the world have nutritionally insufficient diets that lack important vitamins, minerals, and other micronutrients such as iodine, calcium, and vitamin A. Low intake of micronutrients can lead to conditions like goiter, bone weakness, and rickets; and many of these diseases are prevalent in developing countries. GAIN works to promote the consumption of foods that can increase micronutrients in people's diets - including fruits and vegetables, eggs, and fortified foods, which have micronutrients added during production. GAIN's work targets some of the most vulnerable groups, including women and young children and has a special focus in countries with high levels of malnutrition.

GAIN uses a variety of models to educate consumers about healthier diets and to encourage governments supply more nutritious food. GAIN works through a number national, regional, and global alliances that provide technical, financial and policy support needed in each country and focuses attention on where people get their food from - markets. GAIN also works with small and medium enterprises to help them provide more nutritious food with good food safety practices and better management of waste.

WUWM started exchanging with GAIN at the beginning of the year and we are happy to announce that we are going to sign with them a Memorandum of Understanding to work toward our common goals of fighting malnutrition and food waste and making healthy diets more accessible. Our organizations will cooperate through the development of joint projects aiming to foster consumer education and working with local, national, and regional governments in food urban policies and food-ecosystem infrastructure development. We are sure that this partnership has the potential to improve the diets of millions of people facing food and nutrition insecurity!

WUWM starts collaboration with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Food and retail operations Lab

In order to strengthen the work of wholesale markets as key actors of the restructuring of our food systems we need to see evidence of the dynamics, economic, health, potential in terms of efficient logistics, treatability, circular economy and strengthen of local supply chains that our markets offer or could offer.

MIT is a top-tier research institute based in the United States with technical expertise in a variety of scientific fields. MIT "Food and retail operations Lab" puts together a network of experts from different top-universities around the world with the aim of providing applied research that could have a concrete impact to ensure food security, carbon-free and sustainable food supply chains.

This research initiative will focus on logistics and supply chain opportunities in wholesale markets, aiming to provide availability of important metrics to measure, control and predict performance in wholesale markets, enabling better classification of the products and facilitate the measurement of cohesiveness, equity, performance, time and waste for the markets by making available data accessible and examining, by case studies, upstream traceability and visibility for wholesale markets (wholesale market to distributors, farmer associations and growers) with a focus on supply as a key component to ensure produce availability at the right quantity, price and time.

This 8-month-long project, which is still in the planning phases, will also address key challenges and opportunities for wholesale markets to become the backstone of food systems transition. MIT will staff the project with a team of 15 researchers. Once this collaboration is finalized, it will result in the production of new knowledge regarding wholesale markets in the form of reports, surveys, and datasets, among other outputs. Updates on this partnership will be provided in early 2022.





REGIONAL WORKING GROUPS

Africa

With Eva Marone, the WUWM Board has elected a new, competent and young Director and Africa Regional Group Leader from Abidjan, Ivory Coast.

WUWM is planning to increase its activities in Africa and is happy to announce that the WUWM Global Conference in 2022 will be held in the Ivory Coast.

The Memorandum of Understanding between WUWM and UN-Habitat, with its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, is set to improve urban-rural linkages for resilient, inclusive and sustainable territorial food systems. The MoU entails a specific focus on the African continent, where cities are growing rapidly and ensuring food safety will be a large challenge. WUWM sees the role of wholesale markets in approaching this challenge as crucial and will be trying to gather more African members in order to tackle these issues. In addition to this, WUWM and UN-Habitat also collaborated in the organization of the independent dialogues for Africa prior to the UNFSS.

Furthermore, WUWM attended the African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) Summit in September, with a large number of interesting side events and high-ranking participants that discussed the transition of food systems on the African continent.

As for expanding relations with African countries, the WUWM had several work sessions with the Ministry of Agriculture of Sénégal, the Ministry of Agriculture of Côte d'Ivoire and is planning a series of meetings with the Ministries of Agriculture of Ghana, Burkina Faso and Niger.

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Europe

For the European Group of WUWM, 2021 has been a very successful year. Not only was WUWM at the forefront of working out the EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing in the first half of the year, the World Union of Wholesale Markets was also chosen by the European Commission to become a Permanent Member of the newly-created EU Platform on Food Losses and Waste. The membership begins in January 2022 and will result in a much stronger collaboration between European institutions and WUWM.

The European Group had three online meetings chaired by Massimo Pallottini. Both agendas mainly focused on how European wholesale and retail markets can work together to form a more united and resilient European network, how to improve communications with EU institutions, and how to benefit from the Farm to the Fork strategy. The vision of European wholesale markets is to promote a sustainable urban fresh food supply chain in order to meet the objectives of the European Green Deal to create a decarbonized continent by 2050. The European Union's Agriculture Ministers met from August 30 to September 1 to negotiate the next reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The new policy is due to come into force at the beginning of 2021. The new objectives are to simplify the CAP and provide it with greater ecological ambitions. The Farm to Fork Strategy will take into account distribution issues, making it important for European wholesale markets to become key stakeholders for EU institutions. European wholesale markets supply almost 200 million consumers, distribute 25 million tons of fresh products, and employ over 150,000 people.

Americas

The Americas Group, through their regional organization FLAMA, had several coordination meetings during 2021 to share good practices in wholesale markets. In addition, they maintained a strong collaboration with the FAO, thanks to which WUWM was able to be an active part in the 2nd Food Loss and Waste Reduction Summit for Latin America and the Caribbean.

As was done for the other Regional Groups, WUWM organized an Independent Dialogue to the UNFSS for the Americas Group, which was a very successful event and attracted 125 participants.

The Americas group is developing different guidelines and newsletters, and organizing a specific workshop about improving food safety in wholesale markets. Mr. Fernandez, Americas group chairman reported that 5 markets from Mexico are considering joining WUWM.

As a collective, they have also expressed their admiration and congratulations for the work that has been done by wholesale markets at a regional level to maintain the availability of food for the population. They are delivering when it is needed most.

Asia-Pacific

As the most populous continent in the world, Asia has to ensure nutritious diets for all by enhancing and upgrading infrastructures and raising awareness on the health benefits of nutritious and fresh diets. Furthermore, with the rapid growth of megacities throughout the region, the need to bolster governance and its coherence (e.g., by creating new linkages between stakeholders in the food sector and strengthening existing ones) is obvious. To achieve this, WUWM is pleased to have a high number of important members in the region who are committed to tackling these issues.

The WUWM Asia-Pacific Working Group under the lead of Regional Group Chairman Zengjun Ma, also Chairman of China Agricultural Wholesale Market Association (CAWA), has had an active year and was part of the important International Forum on Urban-Rural Linkages, in which Mr. Ma was one of the key speakers. In addition, the Secretariat of WUWM Asia-Pacific Working Group brought 20 delegates from China to participate in WUWM Conference held in Florence, Italy in June 2021, which greatly improved the reputation of WUWM in China and the Asia-Pacific region. With this opportunity, the APRG Secretariat conducted active and in-depth communication with members in this region represented by Thailand, Indonesia, Nepal, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, Australia and other countries.

In 2021, the Asia-Pacific Regional Working Group organized two international industrial conferences, the «2021 Sustainable Development Conference of International Agricultural Markets « held amid the China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) in September, and the «2021 International Conference of Agricultural Produce Distribution Industry & the 6th China Agricultural Products Supply Chain Conference» held in October in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, China. Both events received strong support from WUWM and WUWM members from European region, also diplomatic envoys from New Zealand, Thailand, and South Korea, as well as government officials from more than 30 countries and regions including the Asia-Pacific region. Industrial representatives participated both events through a combination of online and offline methods. At the conference, in order to enhance regional exchanges and cooperation, CAWA signed a memorandum of understanding with Japan Association for International Exchange on Agriculture and with Argentine Chinese Council online. Meanwhile, CAWA also supported Chinese members signing friendly markets with two WUWM Asia-Pacific members successfully, which are Shree Complex Pvt. Ltd from Nepal and Talaad Thai Market from Thailand.

Furthermore, the group was also part of the independent dialogues that led to the UN Food Systems Summit and provided us with significant information and articles for our media presence throughout the year.