



## **Regional Workshop on CropWatch Innovative Cooperation Programme**

### **“Advancing satellite-based crop monitoring to increase resilience in the face of global food insecurity.”**

7 - 10 August 2023  
Port Louis, Mauritius

#### **Concept note**

##### **Overview**

Crop monitoring with earth observation on a massive scale are neither easy nor inexpensive exercises. However, both hold immense potential for better food security planning and progress toward Sustainable Development Goals. Yet, many developing countries do not have access to the required tools due to technology deficits or associated costs.

To overcome this, the CropWatch Innovative Cooperation Programme (CropWatch ICP) was launched in 2021 by the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Alliance of International Science Organizations (ANSO), and the Aerospace Information Research Institute (AIR) of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS). The program could enhance capacities for food security early warning using the Earth observation satellite system for crop monitoring in developing countries. The CropWatch ICP programme aims to enable developing countries to conduct earth observation-based crop monitoring at a national and sub-national scale without additional investment in storage and computing facilities, allowing for better food security planning and achieving Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 2: Zero Hunger.

In 2021, a 2-month online intensive training was held for the 12 participating countries, along with a subsequent follow-up for the 5 countries (Algeria, Syria, Thailand, Mauritius and Nigeria) that expressed interest in implementing the CropWatch system. Mauritius and Algeria have now completed field data gathering work, which will enable local customization of the crop monitoring system, while Nigeria is preparing for similar field work. Syria completed its own fieldwork virtually.

Against this background, a regional workshop will be organized in Mauritius to bring together technicians, policymakers and other stakeholders from beneficiary countries to receive training to use the CropWatch system. Participants are given access to the technology (both during and after the programme), and provided with training to use it, including being shown how to customize it to specific local requirements. The meeting will be hosted by the Food and Agricultural Research Extension Institute (FAREI) of Mauritius in collaboration with UNCTAD, ANSO, and AIR-CAS.

## **Objectives**

The main objective of this workshop is to facilitate and stimulate agricultural monitoring in the beneficiary countries for the advancement of the SDG goal of zero hunger. Specifically, the workshop aims to:

1. Train and educate participants to use the technology and tools made available to them under the CropWatch ICP project, enabling them to apply it in their countries to help achieve SDG 2: Zero Hunger, through better crop monitoring for food security purposes, and through the increase in export of crops resulting from enhanced agricultural production.
2. Share knowledge alongside technology, providing participants from beneficiary countries with the skills and knowledge required to fully adopt the CropWatch system for their regular crop monitoring activities in the long-term, continuing to use the technology for crop monitoring autonomously after the project is finished.

## **Target Audience**

The workshop will include 15-20 participants from the ministries of agriculture or space agencies of beneficiary African and MENA countries. Interested participants from another region will be considered upon a formal request to UNCTAD and AIR-CAS. Priority will be given to those that participated in the online training in 2021 and are still working in the relevant field.