

# 12TH GFRAS ANNUAL MEETING

**OVERCOMING COVID-19: HOW  
AGROECOLOGY AND RURAL ADVISORY  
SERVICES CAN SUPPORT RECOVERY AND  
STRONGER VALUE CHAINS**

**30 NOVEMBER - 3 DECEMBER 2021  
ONLINE - HOSTED IN BELGRADE, SERBIA**

## Meeting Organisers

### **Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS)**

c/o AGRIDEA, Jordils 1, CH-1001  
Lausanne, Switzerland  
[www.g-fras.org](http://www.g-fras.org)  
[info@g-fras.org](mailto:info@g-fras.org)

### **Institute for Science Application in Agriculture (IPN)**

11000 Belgrade, Serbia  
[www.ipn.bg.ac.rs](http://www.ipn.bg.ac.rs)  
[office@ipn.bg.ac.rs](mailto:office@ipn.bg.ac.rs)

### **South Eastern Europe Advisory Services Network (SEASN)**

10000 Zagreb, Croatia  
[www.seasn.com.hr](http://www.seasn.com.hr)  
[igor.hrovatic@kgzs.si](mailto:igor.hrovatic@kgzs.si)

## Online Meeting

To be held via Zoom

## Contact

Contact GFRAS Secretariat:  
[info@g-fras.org](mailto:info@g-fras.org)

Annual Meeting website:  
<https://www.g-fras.org/en/eventseng/2021-gfras-annual-meeting.html>

## Social Media Channels

Follow the meeting on  
Twitter and Instagram using the  
hashtags #gfras21 and #gfras2021  
or on the GFRAS Facebook Group.



# Agenda

Kindly note that the entire schedule is based on the Swiss Time, which is GMT+1. Please keep that in mind when calculating at what time events will take place in your region. Small changes are expected to take place until the beginning of the meeting. An updated version of this agenda, if applicable, will be sent to participants before the beginning of the GAM.

The first day of the GAM, November 30th, is reserved for side events. Side events are organised by partner organisations that are present at the GFRAS Annual Meeting and want to profit of the members of the RAS community to discuss select topics.

## TUESDAY, 30 NOVEMBER

09:30-11:30

### Side Event

**Title: The Tropical Agriculture Platform towards the Future Advisory Services and Agroecology**

**Organizer: Rural Advisory Services for Southeast Asia (RAS-SEA)**

Agriculture in tropical regions has a unique agro-ecology and socio-economic impact on the community. Unprecedented changes related to nature and human activities have affected the agri-food value chains. Considering the challenges of agriculture in the tropics, RAS-SEA organizes an event to share the idea and social innovation on transformation of agriculture/rural advisory services in the new normal era and fast development of digital technology. All stakeholders should have a clear vision for the future of agriculture/rural advisory services. The question is how TAP as a platform can assist farmers, female farmers, and youth to meet their needs? How could extension and advisory services become more professional, sustainable, and agro-ecology oriented?

**Registration: <https://bit.ly/The12thGFRASAnnualMeetingSideEvent>**

12:00-13:30

### Side Event

**Title: Pathways and Instruments for Sustainable Intensification - Lessons for Extension Advisory Services from CoSAI**

**Organizer: Commission on Sustainable Agriculture Intensification (CoSAI)**

The event dialogue will take the emerging findings from three CoSAI studies – the Innovation Pathways Study (IPS), the Approaches and Instruments Study (AIS), and the adjunct to the Investment Gap Study (IGS). Currently, extension services interact with a small number of pathways to innovation and use a restricted number of instruments related to agricultural innovation, which limits its capacity to contribute to impact and change. The event aims to familiarise the extension audience with a wide range of tools and broaden the understanding of how extension can engage with and contribute to the broader set of instruments in order to effectuate change and make impact.

**Registration: <https://www.tinyurl.com/4wkrars>**

## TUESDAY, 30 NOVEMBER

14:00-16:00

### Side Event

**Title: Extension and Advisory Services Competencies - Research Results & Implications**

**Organizers: IFPRI, CAEPNet, UFS, UWI, UP, AFAAS, GFRAS**

Public and private extension and rural advisory services are key to sustainable agriculture, resilient livelihoods, and inclusive growth. The Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) has called for “the new extensionist” (Davis & Sulaiman, 2014), emphasizing the functional competencies needed to help clientele cope with complex challenges such as climate change and nutrition. However, the effectiveness of the GFRAS New Extensionist Learning Kit (NELK) learning has never been measured. Researchers thus analyzed learning outcomes of NELK learners globally, as well as their digital readiness, and the links between level of digital readiness and learning outcomes.

**Registration: <https://tinyurl.com/5xmt85xb>**

15:00-16:00

### Side Event

**Title: Importance of Youth Engagement in Extension and Rural Advisory Services**

**Organizers: YPARD & YEUFRAS**

Youth employment and livelihoods in agriculture is crucial in order to support the food producers of today and tomorrow. There are many challenges to employing youth in agriculture, including rural to urban migration, negative associations working in agriculture, and lack of empowerment experienced by food producers. Extension and Advisory services are crucial in keeping current farmers and future farmers interested in producing food and contributing to food security. However, extension and advisory agents face similar challenges to young farmers in entering and staying in the sector, including access to opportunities, credibility, and support. The proposed YPARD-YEUFRAS Extension and Rural Advisory Services side event aims to discuss the importance of youth in having a career in extension services and more specifically, to understand the value of being in RAS and their contribution to food security, as well as current challenges faced by youth.

**Link to join: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84145770589>**

## WEDNESDAY, 01 DECEMBER

13:00-13:05

**Opening of the GFRAS Annual Meeting**

13:05-13:20

**Address by Branislav Nedimović, Serbian Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, and Water Economy**

13:20-13:40

**Greetings from the Organizers**

- Video from Serbian Advisory Services

13:40-14:40

**Keynote Speeches & Facilitated Discussion**

- **Nevena Alexandrova, FAO:** Transforming RAS to meet the sustainable food systems' challenge: lessons learned from COVID-19 pandemic
- **Rasheed Sulaiman, AESA/GFRAS:** How to encourage the adoption of agroecology in Rural Advisory Services (RAS)
- Followed by a panel discussion moderated by Dragana Tar, SEEDEV

14:40-15:00

**Coffee break with entertainment video**

15:00-16:10

**Session 1: The COVID-19 pandemic influence on the agriculture sector: what may grow from the crisis**

- **Prof. Vladimir Crnojević, BIOSENSE:** How COVID-19 sped up digitalization in agriculture
- **Igor Hrovatič, SEASN:** Position on the European response to the COVID-19 pandemic: one year later
- Followed by a panel discussion moderated by Cosmin Salasan

16:10-16:30

**Coffee Break**

16:30-17:40

**Poster Session 1**

The topics of the presentations will be announced a week prior to the GAM

17:40-18:00

**Conclusions and Closing of Day 1**

## THURSDAY, 02 DECEMBER

13:00-13:05

**Opening Day 2**

13:05-14:35

**Session 2: Agroecology - Acquiring new relevance and a path to reconstruct a post-COVID-19 agriculture**

- **Ricardo Borsatto, UFSCar:** Agroecology - Challenges when promoting agroecology via Rural Advisory Services: a case-study in Brazil
- **Nagy Anikó, NAK:** Practical tools for rural advisors to become facilitators of essential agroecological development processes such as short food supply chain or agroecology
- **Miguel de Porras, FiBL Europe:** Agroecology and Living Labs, the ALL-Ready project
- Followed by a panel discussion moderated by Dragana Tar, SEEDEV

14:35-14:55

**Coffee break with entertainment video**

14:55-16:15

**Poster Session 2**

The topics of the presentations will be announced a week prior to the GAM

16:15-17:15

**Reflections on Agroecology Policy: How to integrate agroecology in government policy, and what are the challenges?**

17:15-17:30

**Conclusions and Closing Day 2**

## FRIDAY, 03 DECEMBER

13:00-13:05

**Opening Day 3**

13:05-14:30

### **Session 2: Need for Speed - Accelerating the Processes and the Transformation of RAS**

- **Sylvain Sturel, APCA:** Connecting advisers to boost interactive innovation in agriculture and forestry - i2connect
- **Eelke Wielinga, ZLTO:** Innovation as an expanding network
- **Andrea Knierim & Fanos Birke, UHOH:** AKIS diagnosis in selected EU member states: synthesis of patterns, trends, and learnings
- Followed by a panel discussion moderated by Hrvoje Horvat

14:30-14:50

**Coffee break with entertainment video**

14:50-15:20

**Meeting Serbian Farmers**

15:20-15:40

**The Future of Supply Chains**

15:40-16:40

### **GFRAS Regional Networks Exchange Session: Cross-Learning**

- Identifying hot topics in the regions
- Working in a digital era
- Upscaling agroecological practices

16:40-17:00

**Wrap Up and Closing GAM**

# Reporting & Sharing

Do you want to share the contents of the meeting with colleagues, extensionists, farmers, programme implementers, policy makers, and/or others in the agricultural innovation system in your country or region? Or do you want to make sure your learnings and personal key messages make it back home with you? The following reporting activities, processes, and templates will help you with this during and after the meeting.

## During the Meeting

Share impressions of the meeting through **social media channels**:

Twitter #gfras21 or #gfras2021 also on Facebook  
(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gfras/>)

**Personal meeting assessments forms:**

Keep track of your very personal most important learnings and highlights, contacts you made, websites you want to visit, etc.

**Collaborative note-taking:** links to shared Google docs will be promoted, where participants can take notes about the different sessions.

## After the Meeting

Find the following documents on the Annual Meeting website after the meeting has concluded:

- The **final agenda** and **final participants list**
- A **short meeting report**, including **key recommendations** for various actors related to RAS
- **All opening and closing remarks, presentations, and keynotes** in their original form
- **Video** of selected plenary inputs
- **Detailed summaries** of all sessions and **side events**



# Partners



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

**Swiss Agency for Development  
and Cooperation SDC**



Republic of Serbia  
Ministry of Agriculture,  
Forestry and Water management



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# **Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services GFRAS**

**c/o AGRIDEA, Jordils 1, CP 1080  
CH-1001 Lausanne, Switzerland  
[www.g-fras.org](http://www.g-fras.org)  
[info@g-fras.org](mailto:info@g-fras.org)**