

Q2 | IMPACT REPORT

April – June 2026

Building Resilience in an Interconnected World

WAF's Second Quarter in 2026



Advancing thought leadership, Policy
Agenda, Advocacy, Knowledge,
global dialogue, and implementation
across agri-food systems



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Foreword

The second quarter of 2026 has been a period of deepening relevance for the World Agriculture Forum. As global food systems face converging pressures from geopolitical disruption and climate volatility to biodiversity loss and demographic change the demand for platforms that can translate complexity into clarity, and dialogue into action, has never been greater.

This report documents WAF's work during April, May and June 2026. It is a record of activities, but it is also a reflection of a broader conviction: that Agri-food systems transformation will not be achieved through isolated interventions or single-sector solutions. It will depend on the quality of the conversations we hold, the diversity of the voices we bring together, and the robustness of the partnerships we build.

During this period, WAF strengthened its intellectual contributions through a growing body of thought leadership and policy analysis; deepened its global presence through the establishment of Country Councils across four continents; convened five global dialogues that connected scientific insight with policy ambition; and worked towards building new coalitions most notably the Global Soil Health Coalition, which is designed to translate collective commitment into coordinated action.

We also invested in the future of the organisation through new leadership appointments and the launch of the Global Doctoral Internship Program, ensuring that the next generation of voices is shaping tomorrow's food systems



"The future of food systems will be defined not only by the challenges we face, but by our willingness to work across boundaries, disciplines, and geographies to address them together."

Prof. Rudy Rabbinge, Board Chairman, World Agriculture Forum

Q2 2026 at a Glance

April, May and June 2026 marked a significant phase in WAF's Journey as a globally connected platform for dialogue, knowledge, partnerships and action across agri-food systems



Executive Summary



Against a backdrop of increasing geopolitical uncertainty, climate pressures, biodiversity loss, soil degradation and shifting global trade dynamics, WAF continued during Q2 2026 to elevate agriculture as a strategic pillar of economic resilience, environmental sustainability and global cooperation. Through a combination of policy research, multi-stakeholder dialogues, institutional expansion and strategic partnerships, WAF advanced practical pathways for addressing some of the most pressing challenges facing food systems today.

A major focus during the reporting period was strengthening thought leadership through the publication of knowledge products, including policy briefs, issue papers and analytical reports, examining food security, trade disruptions, soil health, digital transformation, nutrition and youth engagement in agriculture. Collectively, these publications reinforced a central message: the future of food systems will depend on the ability to manage the growing interconnections between agriculture, climate, trade, technology and natural resources.

WAF also convened high-level global policy dialogues addressing soil health, youth in agriculture, biodiversity, plant-based protein systems and the blue economy. Bringing together leading scientists, policymakers, practitioners and industry experts, these discussions highlighted the importance of integrated approaches that connect scientific innovation with policy action and implementation.

At the institutional level, WAF strengthened its global presence through the establishment and expansion of Country Councils in Nigeria, Kenya, Morocco and the United States, alongside strategic stakeholder engagements across Africa and Europe. The reporting period also saw new strategic partnerships, including a collaboration with Indigram Labs Foundation to advance agricultural innovation and entrepreneurship across Africa.

Together, these achievements reflect WAF's continued transition from a platform for dialogue to a catalyst for action promoting collaboration, advancing evidence-based solutions and building the partnerships needed to create more resilient, inclusive and sustainable agri-food systems worldwide

Dr. MJ Khan, Executive Director, World Agriculture Forum

1. Advancing Thought Leadership and Knowledge Production

During Q2 2026, WAF continued to strengthen its role as a source of strategic analysis and thought leadership on the interconnected challenges shaping global agri-food systems. Through policy briefs, issue papers and analytical reports, WAF explored the implications of geopolitical disruption, shifting trade dynamics, digital transformation, soil degradation, nutrition security and generational renewal in agriculture.

Collectively, these publications reinforced a central message: the future of agriculture will be determined not only by what happens on farms, but by how effectively societies navigate the interdependencies between food systems, climate, trade, technology and natural resources.

1.1 Policy and Issue Briefs

Policy Briefs:

1. Global Food Security & Trade Shifts | May 2026

As trade patterns continue to evolve in response to geopolitical fragmentation and changing economic priorities, this brief explored emerging risks and opportunities for global food systems. The publication introduced the concept of Intelligent Interdependence - a framework that balances domestic resilience with strategic international cooperation. Rather than advocating for either self-sufficiency or unfettered globalisation, the brief argued for a more adaptive approach that strengthens national food security while preserving the benefits of open and diversified trade.

KEY INSIGHT

The future of food security will depend on building resilient systems that combine local capacity with trusted international partnerships.

2. Hormuz and Global Food Security: A Cascading Risk Assessment | May 2026

Authored by Mr Rakesh K Chitkara, UAE Country Director, this policy brief examined how disruptions across energy, fertilisers, trade and finance are converging into a global food security crisis. By examining cascading risks across interconnected systems, the paper reinforced the importance of resilient trade corridors, diversified supply chains and proactive policy responses in an increasingly volatile geopolitical environment.

KEY INSIGHT

Food security is no longer a supply chain issue, it is a matter of national security.

3. Millets for Climate and Nutrition | May 2026

This publication examined the untapped potential of millets to address pressing challenges facing food systems, including climate resilience, dietary diversity and sustainable production. The brief argued that the primary barriers to millet adoption are no longer scientific or agronomic, but institutional and market-related, calling for stronger policy support, investment

Issue Briefs :

4. Soil Health and Carbon-Positive Food Systems | April 2026

Released ahead of Earth Day, this issue brief positioned soil health as one of the most underappreciated yet strategic assets in addressing climate change, food security, biodiversity loss and agricultural productivity. The publication asserted that restoring soil is not simply an agricultural objective - it is a climate, environmental and economic imperative requiring coordinated action across sectors.

5. Engaging Youth in the Future of Agriculture | May 2026

Against the backdrop of ageing farming populations and increasing rural migration, this brief explored the opportunities and barriers facing young people in agriculture. The analysis highlighted persistent challenges related to land access, finance, skills and social perceptions, while identifying emerging opportunities in agribusiness, technology and entrepreneurship.

KEY INSIGHT

The future of food systems depends on making agriculture a sector of opportunity, innovation and aspiration for the next generation.

6. Plant-Based Pathways for Protein Security | June 2026

Co-published with the Plant Based Treaty to mark World Environment Day, this issue brief examined the environmental, health, food security and economic case for plant-based pathways as a critical component of food systems transformation. The evidence presented demonstrated that shifting toward diversified protein systems can reduce emissions, ease pressure on land and water resources, improve public health and strengthen food security.

1.2 Featured Knowledge Report

The Next Crop: The Water–Energy–Food–Environment Nexus | April 2026

This flagship analytical report explored the growing interdependencies between food production, water resources, energy systems and environmental sustainability. The report argued that many of today's agricultural challenges stem from fragmented decision-making and called for integrated governance approaches capable of managing trade-offs across sectors. The publication positioned the nexus not merely as a conceptual framework but as an operational imperative for governments, institutions and investors.

KEY INSIGHT

Future food security will depend on our ability to govern interconnected systems rather than isolated sectors.

1.3 Expert Analysis and Commentary

WAF's network of Country Directors also contributed expert analysis on emerging policy issues. A brief examining the India–Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) explored how the agreement advances strategic connectivity, supply-chain resilience, investment opportunities and energy security, with direct implications for regional agri-food trade.

Separately, an analytical article by WAF's Executive Director, Dr MJ Khan examined the long-term cost of chemical fertiliser subsidies and argued that current policy structures are simultaneously driving food production and undermining soil health, making the shift toward outcome-based, eco-agriculture incentives an urgent governance priority.

"WAF's publications do not treat food security, climate resilience, technology, trade and natural resource management as separate challenges, they highlight the interconnected nature of these issues and the need for integrated solutions."

2. Convening Global Policy Dialogues

At a time when Agriculture and food systems face mounting pressures from climate change, biodiversity loss, resource degradation and demographic shifts, WAF served as a platform for bringing together scientists, policymakers, industry leaders, farmers and innovators to explore practical pathways forward. Five global policy dialogues were convened during Q2 2026, reflecting a common theme: addressing complex agricultural challenges requires integrated solutions that connect science, policy, investment and implementation.

2.1 Dialogue Summaries

22 APRIL 2026 | EARTH DAY GLOBAL POLICY DIALOGUE

Building Carbon-Positive Food Systems Through Soil Health

To mark Earth Day, WAF convened a distinguished panel of global experts including Prof Rattan Lal, Dr Carla Portugal, Prof Ray Weil, Dr Daman Walia, Dr Padmaja Karanam, Mr Antonis Angelatakis and Ms Maggie Munthali-Nkosi, to examine the role of soil health in climate mitigation, ecosystem restoration and long-term food security. The discussion highlighted growing recognition that soil is not merely a production asset, but a strategic

natural resource capable of improving resilience, restoring biodiversity, enhancing water retention and contributing to carbon sequestration. A defining outcome was the positioning of the Global Soil Health Coalition, establishing a collaborative platform to advance action on soil restoration globally.

KEY INSIGHT

Restoring soil health is not simply an agricultural objective, it is a climate, environmental and economic imperative that requires coordinated action across sectors, disciplines and borders.

14 MAY 2026 | GLOBAL POLICY DIALOGUE

Engaging the Next Generation of Agricultural Leaders

With youth unemployment, rural migration and ageing farming populations becoming increasingly urgent concerns, WAF convened a global dialogue focused on the future role of young people in agriculture. Panellists explored barriers to land access, finance, technology and entrepreneurship while highlighting opportunities for youth-led innovation across agri-food systems. A key takeaway was that attracting young people to agriculture will require not only investment and policy reform, but a fundamental shift in how agriculture is perceived as a sector of innovation, opportunity and impact.

KEY INSIGHT

The transition to sustainable food systems will only succeed if the next generation is empowered to lead it — with access to land, finance, knowledge and markets.



22 MAY 2026 | INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Reintegrating Biodiversity into Agri-Food Systems

Held in recognition of the International Day for Biological Diversity, this dialogue explored how biodiversity can be restored as a functional component of agricultural systems rather than treated as a separate environmental objective. Discussions focused on regenerative approaches, ecosystem services, landscape management and the importance of aligning agricultural productivity with ecological resilience. The session reinforced the view that biodiversity conservation and food production are mutually reinforcing goals that must be pursued together, requiring governance frameworks capable of managing their interdependencies.

KEY INSIGHT

Biodiversity is not a competing land use — it is the ecological infrastructure upon which sustainable food production depends.

5 JUNE 2026 | WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

Plant-Based Pathways for Protein Security

In partnership with the Plant Based Treaty, WAF hosted a global dialogue bringing together over 120 participants from across regions to examine policy frameworks, investment opportunities, consumer awareness and inno-



vation pathways that support sustainable protein transitions. The accompanying issue brief highlighted the environmental, health and economic benefits of diversified protein systems and emphasised the importance of balancing nutritional needs with ecological sustainability.

KEY INSIGHT

Protein security and environmental sustainability are increasingly interconnected challenges requiring integrated policy, investment and behavioural approaches.

30 JUNE 2026 | GLOBAL POLICY DIALOGUE

Blue Economy Rising: Oceans, Aquaculture and the Future of Food

As global food systems confront mounting pressures on land, water and natural resources, WAF convened a high-level dialogue examining the role of oceans and aquatic food systems in supporting future food security.



The discussion explored sustainable aquaculture, marine innovation, blue economy investment opportunities, governance frameworks and the development of resilient aquatic food value chains. Particular attention was given to ensuring that the transition toward blue food systems remains inclusive, equitable and environmentally sustainable.

KEY INSIGHT

Future food security strategies must increasingly consider oceans and aquatic ecosystems as integral components of resilient, diversified food systems.

3. Expanding Regional Presence and Country Networks

A defining feature of Q2 2026 was WAF's continued transition from a global convening platform to a more deeply embedded institutional presence across regions. Through the establishment of new Country Councils, stakeholder consultations and strategic outreach missions, WAF strengthened its ability to connect global priorities with local realities and create platforms for long-term collaborative engagement.

3.1 Country Council Launches

Nigeria Country Council - Abuja | 27 April 2026

WAF formally launched its 50-member Nigeria Country Council, bringing together government leaders, farmer organisations, agribusiness representatives and development partners. With more than 100 participants in attendance, the event demonstrated strong institutional momentum for building a collaborative platform capable of advancing agricultural innovation, investment and policy dialogue within one of Africa's largest agricultural economies.



Kenya Country Council — Nairobi | May 2026

The 30-member Kenya Country Council was formally inaugurated by Prof Shaukat Abdulrazak, Principal Secretary for Science, Research and Innovations, Government of Kenya, at the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), with participation from senior government officials and leaders from the scientific and innovation communities. A dedicated session on Artificial Intelligence in Agriculture, chaired by Council Chairman Mr Wilson Songa, underscored Kenya's growing role as a regional innovation hub. The Government of Kenya's invitation for WAF to establish a permanent presence in Nairobi represented a significant milestone in the organisation's expansion strategy.



USA Country Council — Washington, D.C. · June 2026

A major institutional milestone during the quarter was the launch of the 40-member WAF USA Country Council. Bringing together leaders from agriculture, business, research and development sectors, the Council has been designed as a model for future country-level governance structures across the WAF network, with a mandate to support international collaboration on innovation, trade, sustainability and food systems transformation.

Morocco Country Council — Meknes · May 2026

On the sidelines of Africa's largest agricultural exhibition, WAF formalised the establishment of its Morocco Country Council through a Memorandum of Understanding signed between WAF Executive Director Dr MJ Khan and Mr Faissal S, Director of the WAF Morocco Council. The agreement strengthens WAF's engagement across North Africa and creates new opportunities for collaboration on sustainable agriculture, innovation and investment.



4. High-Level Stakeholder Consultations

WAF's leadership undertook a series of high-level outreach missions and stakeholder consultations spanning three continents and multiple government partners. These engagements combined in-person missions with strategic online consultations, reflecting WAF's approach to building institutional relationships across diverse geographies.

Ghana | April 2026

Executive Director Dr MJ Khan, accompanied by Global Council Members, participated in a stakeholder convening hosted by Country Director Mr Dennis O Carter. The visit included engagement with key agricultural stakeholders and a site visit to a 100-hectare modern fish farm, reinforcing WAF's interest in the intersection between aquaculture, food security and the blue economy across West Africa.



Ethiopia | April 2026

A stakeholder meeting was convened in Addis Ababa to explore the launch of the Ethiopia Country Council and the proposed Africa Agribusiness and Investment Summit. The meeting was attended by Mr Birhanu M Lenjiso, Director-General of the Oromia Agriculture Authority, and Mr Bogale Temesgen of UNIDO. The Government of Ethiopia expressed strong interest in hosting the Africa Summit in Addis Ababa, opening a significant opportunity for continental collaboration.

Malta and Spain | April 2026

Executive Director Dr MJ Khan conducted a four-day mission across Malta and Spain. In Malta, he attended the Malta Agri Fair, met H E the President of Malta Dr Myriam Spiteri Debono and held discussions with the Minister for Agriculture, the Hon Anton Refalo. In Spain, he engaged with leadership at the Polytechnic University of Madrid,



the Ministry of Agriculture and industry representatives from Rovensa and ETG, exploring collaboration on agri-tech innovation and research partnerships.

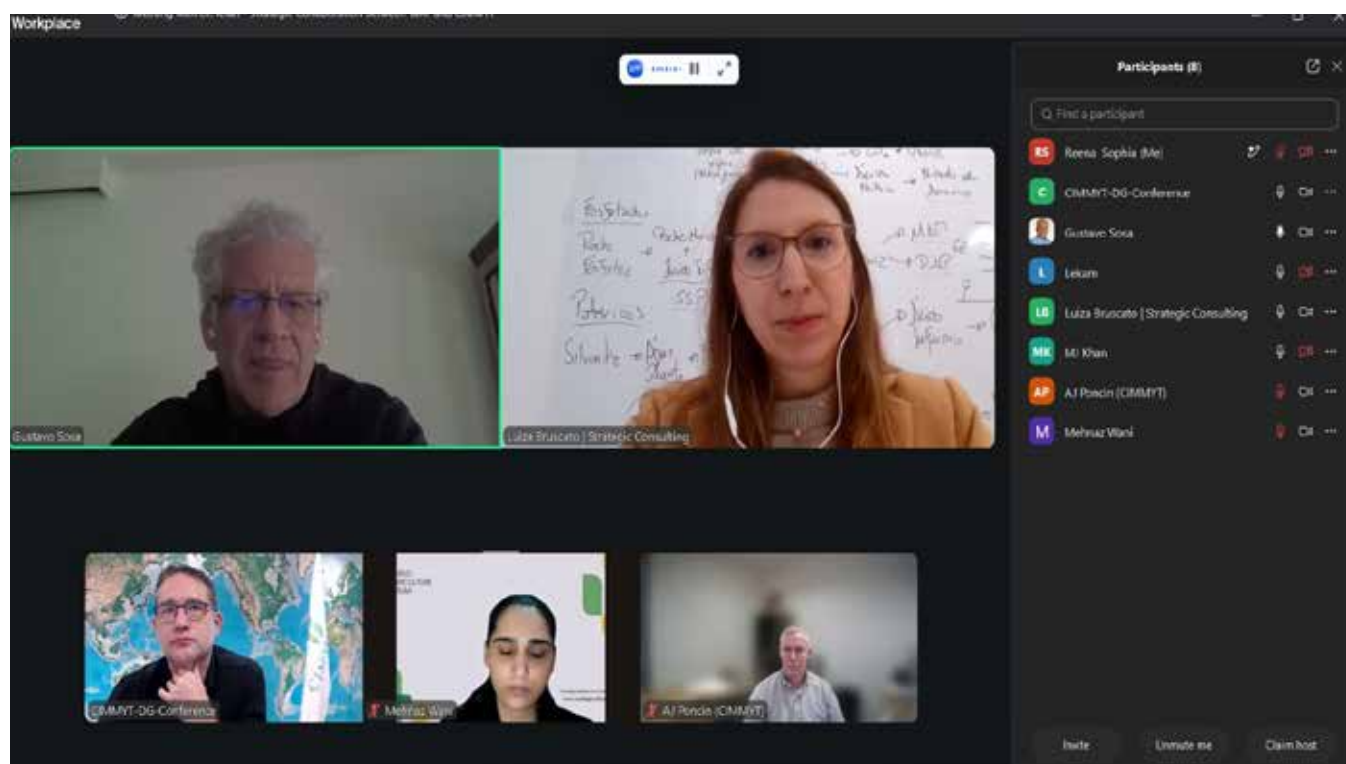
“WAF’s Country Councils are not simply representative bodies, they are platforms for action, designed to translate global priorities into locally driven agendas for collaboration, investment and policy reform.”

Colombia | Q2 2026

WAF held a strategic online consultation with senior officials of the Colombian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, including Ms Ana Maria Sierra Blanco and Mr Sergio David Murcia Coca. Discussions explored opportunities for collaboration in sustainable agriculture, food security, agribusiness development, innovation and institutional partnerships. Both sides recognised Colombia’s significant potential in climate-smart agriculture and agri-food value chains and explored the possibility of establishing a WAF Country Council to facilitate long-term engagement and regional cooperation across Latin America. The meeting marks an important step in WAF’s strategy to deepen its presence across the Americas beyond North America.

Malaysia | Q2 2026

WAF held an online consultation with the Director General and senior officials from Malaysia’s Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. The WAF delegation was led by Executive Director Dr MJ Khan and included Mr Lekam Ofem, Director, Mr Steve Monty, Senior Director, and Ms Michelle Dennis, Director of Communications. Discussions covered opportunities for strategic collaboration in sustainable agriculture, food security, innovation, climate resilience and agricultural trade. Both sides explored Malaysia’s potential role as a regional hub for WAF’s activities in Southeast Asia, including future policy dialogues, institutional partnerships, knowledge exchange and international events. The engagement reflects WAF’s growing ambition to establish a coordinated presence across the Asia-Pacific region.



5. Strategic Partnerships and Institutional Engagements

Transforming agri-food systems requires more than strong policies, it requires institutions capable of working across disciplines, sectors and borders. During Q2 2026, WAF significantly expanded its network of strategic partnerships, engaging with multilateral institutions, intergovernmental bodies, leading research organisations and major private sector actors across four continents. The breadth of this quarter's engagement, spanning the World Bank, WOA, the Committee on World Food Security, CIMMYT, Syngenta and Bayer CropScience alongside three formal partnership agreements, signals the growing recognition of WAF as a credible and strategic partner among the world's leading agricultural institutions.

5.1 Strategic Partnership with Indigam Labs Foundation

In May 2026, WAF signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Indigam Labs Foundation (ILF) to advance AgTech innovation, startup incubation and accelerator programmes across ten African countries. By combining WAF's global convening platform with ILF's extensive experience in nurturing agri-startups, the partnership aims to support more than 500 agri-entrepreneurs annually and strengthen innovation ecosystems across emerging markets. The collaboration reflects a shared conviction that agricultural transformation requires not only policy change but a vibrant ecosystem of entrepreneurship, technology and investment.

5.2 USDA Engagement — United States

A high-level WAF delegation met with senior officials at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), including leadership from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The discussions covered a range of strategic priorities at the intersection of agricultural sustainability and economic development, including approaches to soil health and carbon systems, frameworks for enhancing farmer and landowner income, market-based and farmer-centric development models, and pathways for deepened global agricultural collaboration.

The engagement represented a meaningful step in WAF's effort to connect its global convening work with one of the world's most influential agricultural institutions. The USDA's emphasis on farmer-centred, outcome-based approaches aligned closely with WAF's own programmatic

direction, and the meeting laid the groundwork for continued dialogue on shared priorities across soil restoration, carbon markets and rural economic resilience.



5.3 American University, Washington D.C. — Research and Innovation Collaboration

WAF engaged with leadership at American University, Washington D.C. to explore a formal cooperation framework spanning food security research, environmental sustainability, policy innovation and knowledge exchange. A particular area of mutual interest was the application of artificial intelligence to agricultural transformation; an



emerging field in which both institutions see significant potential to improve decision-making, resource efficiency and smallholder outcomes at scale.

This collaboration reflects WAF's broader strategy of strengthening the interface between research, policy, and implementation. By combining academic excellence with WAF's global policy platform and international network, the partnership seeks to accelerate the generation of evidence-based solutions and support the translation of emerging technologies into practical approaches that advance resilient, sustainable, and inclusive agrifood systems.

5.4 Multilateral and Intergovernmental Organisations

World Bank - Washington, D.C.

WAF held a high-level meeting at World Bank Headquarters with Mr Parmesh Shah and Mr Sunil Madan from the Rural Development team. The WAF delegation comprised Dr DS Walia, Director, and Mr Patrick Hayden, Country Director USA. Discussions focused on strengthening collaboration between WAF and the World Bank in advancing global agriculture and rural development, covering climate-resilient agriculture, farmer livelihoods, digital agriculture, food systems transformation and investment partnerships. Both sides explored opportunities to leverage WAF's global platform to support inclusive and sustainable agricultural development, with particular interest in how WAF's Country Council network could complement World Bank country-level programming.

World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH)

WAF held a strategic online meeting with a five-member WOAH delegation led by Special Advisor to the Director General, to explore collaboration in advancing global animal health, livestock development and the One Health approach. The WAF delegation was led by Executive Director Dr MJ Khan and comprised Mr Lekam Ofem, Director, Dr Oscar Magneya, Country Director Kenya, and Ms Mehnaz Wani, Senior Manager Policy Research and Knowledge Management. Discussions centred on partnering for the Global Animal Health Summit planned for

27–29 October 2026 at ILRI, Nairobi, as well as opportunities to jointly convene global dialogues, technical exchanges and collaborative initiatives aimed at promoting healthier livestock systems and improving food security through stronger international cooperation.

Committee on World Food Security (CFS)

WAF held an online meeting with the Chairman and senior representatives of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) to explore opportunities for collaboration on global food security, inclusive policy dialogue and multi-stakeholder engagement. The WAF delegation was led by Executive Director Dr MJ Khan and included Mr Lekam Ofem, Director, Mr Jeff Peet, Senior Director, and Ms Michelle Dennis, Director of Communications. Discussions focused on strengthening cooperation around sustainable food systems, nutrition, resilience and evidence-based policymaking, including opportunities for knowledge exchange, participation in global policy processes and collaboration through international dialogues that bring together governments, civil society, research institutions, development organisations and the private sector.

5.5 Research and Science Institutions

CIMMYT — Mexico

WAF held an online meeting with CIMMYT Director General Dr Bram Govaerts and other senior representatives to explore collaboration in climate-resilient agriculture, sustainable crop production, seed systems, regenerative farming and food security. Discussions emphasised the importance of strengthening research partnerships, technology dissemination and farmer-centric innovation to address emerging global agricultural challenges. Both organisations explored opportunities for joint programmes, policy dialogues, knowledge sharing and collaborative initiatives that could accelerate the adoption of science-based solutions for improving agricultural productivity and resilience, particularly across developing countries.

5.6 Private Sector Engagements

Syngenta — Washington, D.C.

During WAF's Washington D.C. visit, the team met with Mr Saswato Das, Director at Syngenta, to explore opportunities for strategic collaboration. The WAF delegation comprised Dr DS Walia, Director, and Mr Patrick Hayden, Country Director USA. Discussions focused on sustainable crop production, climate-smart agriculture, innovation, digital technologies, farmer capacity building and public-private partnerships. Both sides explored opportunities to leverage Syngenta's global technical expertise alongside WAF's international platform to promote innovation, knowledge exchange and collaborative initiatives supporting resilient and sustainable food systems.

Bayer CropScience

WAF held an online meeting with the Bayer CropScience team, led by Vice President Ms Gabriela Burian, to discuss opportunities for collaboration in sustainable agriculture, climate resilience, crop health, digital agriculture and farmer empowerment. The WAF delegation was led by Executive Director Dr MJ Khan and comprised Mr Lekam Ofem, Director, Mr Jeff Peet, Senior Director, and Ms Michelle Dennis, Director of Communications. Both organisations explored the potential for collaborative initiatives, global dialogues and knowledge-sharing platforms that could contribute to sustainable agricultural transformation while improving productivity, environmental stewardship and farmer livelihoods across diverse regions.

6. Strengthening Institutional Leadership and Capacity

As WAF's global footprint continued to expand, the organisation invested in the leadership, talent and systems needed to sustain and deepen its impact.

6.1 Senior Leadership Appointments

WAF welcomed three senior leaders to its core team during Q2. Mr Jeff Peet joined as Senior Director, Programs and International Affairs, bringing expertise in international engagement and multilateral programme management. Dr Priyanka Gupta was appointed as Associate Director, Policy and Research, enhancing the organisation's capacity for evidence-based analysis and strategic policy work. Mr. Steve Monty, Senior Director and global coordinator of Farmer Plus will help lead WAF's efforts to build a strong Farmer Support Ecosystem through the FarmerPlus model by bringing together key stakeholders across the agriculture value chain.

6.2 Expanding the Global Country Director Network

During Q2 2026, WAF appointed Country Directors across Africa, Europe, Asia and North America, significantly expanding its global network of national representatives. New appointments were confirmed for Italy, Algeria, Kosovo, Rwanda, the Philippines, Angola, Poland, Ghana, the United States, Spain, Lesotho, Brazil and Côte d'Ivoire. These leaders bring deep sectoral expertise and strong national networks, strengthening WAF's ability to connect global priorities with local realities.

These appointments complement the existing network of Country Directors serving Morocco, Egypt, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Senegal, Ireland, Kenya, Chile, Zambia, Malaysia, Pakistan, the UAE and others, collectively forming one of the most geographically diverse leadership networks in global agriculture.

7. Strengthening Institutional Leadership and Capacity

7.1 FarmerPlus: A Farmer-Centred Transformation Ecosystem

During Q2, WAF advanced the development of FarmerPlus, a farmer-focused ecosystem designed to strengthen productivity, improve access to finance, enhance market integration and support digital inclusion. The initiative seeks to create a scalable framework connecting farmers with inputs, advisory services, markets, investors and institutions through an integrated support platform. FarmerPlus reflects WAF's broader commitment to ensuring that smallholder farmers remain at the centre of agricultural transformation — not as beneficiaries of innovation, but as active agents within it.

7.2 Global Doctoral Internship Program 2026–27

Applications for WAF's Global Doctoral Internship Program opened in May 2026, offering PhD scholars and postdoctoral researchers the opportunity to engage in global policy dialogues, research and innovation for agri-food systems transformation. The programme reflects WAF's investment in the next generation of agricultural leaders and researchers, ensuring that emerging scientific voices are part of the global conversations that will shape the future of food systems.

8. Media Engagement and Public Discourse

WAF continued to contribute to global conversations on food security and agricultural resilience through strategic media engagement. Executive Director Dr MJ Khan engaged with media on the emerging global fertiliser crisis, advising that the situation should be viewed as an opportunity to rationalise input use, restore balanced nutrient application and accelerate adoption of bio-fertilisers and sustainable alternatives. Expert commentary from WAF's Country Director network further reinforced the organisation's voice in debates on global food security and supply-chain resilience.

6. Strategic Insights Shaping the Future of Agri-Food Systems

The dialogues, publications, partnerships and engagements undertaken during Q2 2026 point to a number of broader shifts reshaping the global agriculture and food systems landscape. While diverse in focus, these developments collectively highlight emerging realities that will increasingly influence policy, investment, innovation and international cooperation in the years ahead.

1.) Food Security Is Increasingly Defined by Geopolitical Resilience

Food systems are becoming more exposed to geopolitical dynamics far beyond the agricultural sector itself. Disruptions to energy markets, maritime trade routes, fertiliser supply chains and financial systems now have direct implications for food production, affordability and availability. The growing interconnectedness of these risks suggests that food security can no longer be viewed solely through the lens of agricultural output — it has become a strategic consideration linked to economic resilience, trade stability and national security.

2.) Soil Is Emerging as a Strategic Asset

The growing emphasis on soil health, biodiversity and ecosystem restoration reflects a broader shift in how agricultural resilience is understood. Natural resources are increasingly being recognised not simply as environmental assets, but as foundational infrastructure underpinning productivity, climate adaptation, water security and long-term food system sustainability.

3.) The Next Transformation in Agriculture Will Be Human-Centred

Technology, innovation and investment remain critical drivers of change, but the long-term success of food systems transformation will ultimately depend on people. Youth engagement emerged as a particularly significant theme during Q2, highlighting the need to create viable pathways for the next generation through access to knowledge, entrepreneurship, finance and leadership opportunities. The future of agriculture will be shaped not only by new technologies, but by who is empowered to use, adapt and lead them.

4.) The Value of Technology Will Be Determined by Inclusion and Trust

The rapid expansion of artificial intelligence, digital advisory systems and data-driven agriculture presents unprecedented opportunities to improve decision-making and productivity. However, technology is not inherently transformative. Its impact will depend on governance, accessibility, digital literacy and farmer confidence.

5.) Collaboration is Agriculture's Most Important Enabler

The complexity of contemporary food system challenges increasingly exceeds the capacity of any single institution, sector or country to address them alone. Progress will depend on stronger coalitions that connect science, policy, finance, industry and farming communities around shared objectives. The growing momentum behind partnerships, country-level platforms and collaborative initiatives reflects a broader recognition that transformation is not primarily a technical challenge — it is a coordination challenge.

6.) The Future of Agriculture Will Be Determined by Systems Thinking

A recurring theme across WAF's work during Q2 was the recognition that agriculture can no longer be addressed in isolation. Food security is inseparable from water availability, energy systems, trade networks, environmental health and social inclusion. The most effective solutions will be those that move beyond sectoral thinking and embrace systems-based approaches capable of managing interdependencies, trade-offs and long-term resilience.

7. Looking Ahead: Strategic Priorities for Q3 2026

Building on the momentum generated during Q2, WAF will continue to strengthen its role as a platform that connects global priorities with regional implementation. Several strategic priorities will guide the organisation's work in the months ahead.

Q3 2026 Commitments

Priority Area	Q3 Commitment	Indicative Target
Country Councils & Networks	Establish additional councils across Asia, Africa and Latin America	4+ New Councils
Country Directors	Appoint Country Directors across Southeast Asia, Africa and Latin America	4 New Country Directors
Policy Research & Thought Leadership	Publish policy briefs and thematic reports on Q3 dialogue themes	4 Reports / 2 Briefs
Global Policy Dialogues	Convene dialogues on climate, indigenous peoples, animal health and Africa agribusiness	4 dialogues
Strategic Partnerships	Formalize collaboration agreements with research and government partners	3 new MoUs
Youth & Research Capacity	Onboard inaugural Global Doctoral Internship cohort	5+ scholars
GSHC Development	Advance coalition governance and founding institutional members	25+ partners

Upcoming Global Dialogues :

- *El Niño, Climate Extremes and Agri-Food System Resilience: Strengthening Policy Frameworks for Early Warning, Preparedness and Action* | 23rd July | 3:00 pm CEST
- *Animal Health in Rangelands and Pastoral Systems: A One Health Approach to Strengthening Resilience, Livelihoods and Food Security* | August 2026
- *Africa Agribusiness and Investment Continental Dialogue* | September 2026
- *Global Animal Health Summit* | 27–29 October 2026 · Nairobi, Kenya

WAF Global Footprint

As of 30 June 2026, WAF maintains an active institutional presence across five continents through Country Councils, Country Directors, thematic coalitions and strategic partnerships.

Region	Countries with Active WAF Presence
Africa	Nigeria · Kenya · Morocco · Ghana · Ethiopia · Egypt · Zimbabwe · Senegal · Rwanda · Angola · Zambia · Côte d'Ivoire · Lesotho
Asia & Pacific	India · Pakistan · Malaysia · Philippines · UAE
Europe	Ireland · Italy · Poland · Spain · Kosovo · Malta (engaged)
Americas	United States · Chile · Brazil

Network scope as at 30 June 2026. Additional country engagements are in active development. Contact info@worldagricultureforum.org for partnership and council enquiries.

Featured Article

Cost of Subsidising Chemical Fertilisers *and the Future of Food Security*



Food security has long been synonymous with increasing agricultural production. Post World War II, chemical fertilisers, particularly nitrogen, played a transformative role in helping countries overcome chronic food shortages. Fertiliser subsidies enabled millions of smallholder farmers to adopt modern inputs, dramatically increasing crop yields and preventing widespread hunger. There is little doubt that these policies contributed significantly to global food security. The question today, however, is no longer whether governments should support farmers. It is whether they are supporting them in the most effective way?

Global agriculture now produces nearly 3 billion tonnes of cereals annually,

supported by the application of almost 200 million tonnes of plant nutrients (N, P₂O₅ and K₂O) every year. While this has enabled the world to feed more than seven billion people, excessive and imbalanced fertiliser use has emerged as one of the greatest threats to the sustainability of food systems. Across both developing and developed countries, indiscriminate application of subsidised chemical fertilisers is degrading soils, polluting water resources, reducing biodiversity, increasing greenhouse gas emissions and compromising the long-term resilience of agriculture.

Governments collectively spend tens of billions of dollars every year subsidising chemical fertilisers. Although these

subsidies continue to protect farm incomes and help keep food prices affordable, they also distort nutrient pricing and encourage excessive application of certain fertilisers, particularly nitrogen. The environmental, economic and public health costs of these distortions are seldom accounted for, yet they are becoming increasingly difficult to ignore.

India perhaps presents the clearest illustration of this policy contradiction. The country spends approximately \$25–30 billion annually on fertiliser subsidies, making it one of the world's largest subsidy programmes. Urea continues to be sold to farmers at a fraction of its actual cost, with the Government absorbing nearly 90



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Conclusion

The activities undertaken during Q2 2026 reinforce a reality that is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore: the future of agriculture will be shaped as much by developments beyond the farm as by those within it. Climate change, geopolitical instability, shifting trade patterns, resource pressures, technological disruption and demographic transitions are converging in ways that are redefining the foundations of global food systems. Addressing these challenges requires a broader understanding of agriculture — not simply as a sector of production, but as a strategic system that sits at the intersection of economic resilience, environmental stewardship, public health and social stability.

Throughout Q2, WAF sought to contribute to this evolving conversation by bringing together diverse perspectives, generating actionable knowledge and strengthening the partnerships needed to move from discussion to delivery. Whether through policy research on emerging global risks, dialogues on soil health and biodiversity, initiatives to engage youth, or efforts to expand regional leadership, a common theme emerged: meaningful transformation will depend on our ability to think and act across systems rather than within silos.

What gives cause for optimism is the growing recognition among governments, researchers, businesses, development institutions and farming communities that many of the challenges confronting agriculture are shared — and that solutions must be equally collaborative. The launch of new partnerships, the expansion of WAF's global network, and the establishment of platforms such as the Global Soil Health Coalition reflect this momentum and the willingness of stakeholders to work toward common goals.

As WAF looks ahead, its focus remains clear: to continue fostering dialogue that informs action, strengthening networks that enable collaboration, and advancing ideas that support more resilient, inclusive and sustainable agri-food systems. The path forward will require persistence, innovation and collective leadership — and it presents a significant opportunity to reimagine agriculture not only as a means of producing food, but as a powerful driver of sustainable development, resilience and shared prosperity.

“We are grateful to our partners, members, speakers, researchers and stakeholders whose engagement continues to shape and strengthen this journey. Together, we will continue working toward food systems that are better equipped to meet the challenges of today while creating opportunities for generations to come.”

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