

Agri-DENZ

Dialogue on climate and agriculture between New Zealand and Germany

Newsletter #1, October 2024

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Welcome

Nau mai, haere mai, Herzlich Willkommen! A very warm welcome to the first newsletter of the Agri-DENZ project: “An Alliance for the Climate - Dialogue on climate and agriculture between New Zealand and Germany”. We’ll be producing one every six months to give an overview of all our key activities and collaboration opportunities in one place.

In this first issue you’ll find:

- A brief history of this project
- The structure, aims, and some of the key people who will be ensuring the project makes an impact
- Some contributions in the global effort to advance low emission and climate-resilient agricultural and food systems.

We hope you enjoy!

Matthew Barnett and Nina Grassnick

(Agri-DENZ project management unit)

A brief history of Agri-DENZ

In November 2022, the German Minister of Food and Agriculture met with his New Zealand counterpart at the OECD Agriculture Ministers Meeting in Paris where they discussed opportunities for further cooperation between New Zealand and Germany on agriculture and climate.

This was followed by a Joint Declaration of Intent (the declaration) between Germany and New Zealand, building on existing contacts through our shared membership of the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases (GRA), and with the support of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) and the New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI), Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The declaration was signed in September 2023 during the visit of a German delegation to New Zealand, and the foundations for the new project were established.



L-R: Nina Graßnick (Thünen Institute); Anne Roth and Lisa Jäckering (BMEL); Trish Ranstead and Matthew Barnett (MPI) and Ulrike Müller (GFA Consulting) at MPI offices in Wellington with the signed declaration.

The project has since been developed to deliver the key aims of the declaration. These are to deepen cooperation between Germany and New Zealand in the agricultural sector and collaboratively respond to the urgent need to find solutions to address the global climate impact of/on agricultural production systems for our two countries, and globally. The project aims at linking up existing international initiatives and projects of New Zealand and Germany in the domain of agriculture and climate change to use synergy effects and to increase impact. This will involve regular exchange with third-party countries with a focus on the Global South on scientific results of common interest aimed at testing and/or refining low-emission and climate-friendly approaches, such as contribution to standardize farm-level GHG accounting in order to enable access to climate finance and to improve national GHG inventories

The Agri-DENZ project's goals are deeply rooted in international climate agreements, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Kyoto Protocol,

and the Paris Agreement. Additionally, it aligns with multiple SDGs, demonstrating a holistic commitment to sustainable development, climate action and global collaboration.

An official project kick-off meeting was held online on the 15th of August 2024. During this meeting, the project partners agreed the first priority topic areas of food loss and waste, soil carbon, climate change mitigation in dairy production systems, farm level climate change mitigation strategies (with specific focus Africa) and greenhouse gas accounting tools and confirmed our commitment to establish a work plan.

Agri-DENZ – what is it?

To give this its full name: “An Alliance for the Climate – Dialogue on climate and agriculture between New Zealand and Germany.” The purpose of the project is exactly as the name suggests: Germany and New Zealand working more closely together in order to develop solutions for the global climate impact of/on agricultural production systems. This will be achieved through three key result areas: scientific exchange and research collaboration; science-policy dialogues; and working with third countries, particularly in the global south.

These areas will be directed through the Project Steering Group (PSG) made up of key staff from each of the organisations involved in the project, with support from the Project Management Unit (PMU), as shown in the project structure diagram below.

Programme structure



Key participating organisations

- German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL): A balanced, healthy diet, safe food, clear consumer information when buying food and a strong and sustainable agricultural, forestry and fisheries sector are among BMEL's most important goals. At the same time, BMEL is committed to creating good prospects in Germany's rural regions, to promoting animal welfare and to improving global food security. https://www.bmel.de/EN/Home/home_node.html
- New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI): MPI is helping to identify export opportunities for New Zealand's primary industries, improve sector productivity, ensure the food produced is safe, increase sustainable resource use, and protect New Zealand from biological risk. <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/>
- Thünen Institute: The Johann Heinrich von Thünen Institute, Federal Research Institute for Rural Areas, Forestry and Fisheries – Thünen Institute in brief – consists of 15 specialized institutes with socioeconomic, ecological and technological expertise. The Thünen Institute conducts research and policy advice related to rural areas, agriculture, forests and fisheries. <https://www.thuenen.de/en/>
- New Zealand Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Research Centre (NZAGRC): The NZAGRC is funded by the New Zealand Government to invest in and coordinate research aimed at generating ideas and technologies to reduce GHG emissions from New Zealand's unique farm systems and environments. <https://www.nzagrc.org.nz/>
- GFA Consulting Group GmbH: GFA is the General Agent for the Bilateral Cooperation Program (BKP) of the BMEL. GFA's primary responsibilities include the provision of program management expertise to the Ministry, the development of new projects, the monitoring of ongoing projects and the collaboration with project implementation partners. <https://www.gfa-group.de/>

For more information about the Agri-DENZ project, please check our website:

www.agri-denz.com

Recent and upcoming activities

Food Loss and Waste (FLW) Workshop in Kenya, 17-18 April 2024

The annual "Meetings of Agricultural Chief Scientists of G20 States (MACS-G20)" have taken place since 2012. These are based on an initiative of the agricultural ministers of the G20 Members to address central questions around agriculture and nutrition that require global solutions.

At the 2015 MACS-G20 meeting in Izmir, Turkey, a Collaboration Initiative on Food Losses & Food Wastes (FLW) was launched, with Germany given responsibility for coordinating the bi- and multilateral activities associated with the initiative. Annual FLW workshops have been organized as part of this initiative since 2017.

Climate change and protecting the environment are among the key challenges of our time, and FLW is a major theme common to both issues. It was therefore considered a logical topic of interest that the Agri-DENZ project could support. The project did so in April 2024, when the German Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) and the New Zealand Ministry of Primary

Industries (MPI) provided financial resources to implement a workshop outside of the "normal" annual series.

This special two-day workshop, "Food Loss and Waste Prevention in Sub-Saharan Africa," was jointly organised by the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases (GRA), The Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), the University of Nairobi, Kenya, and the Thünen Institute. It brought together 40 active food loss and waste stakeholders from across sub-Saharan Africa who discussed regional context and circumstances for action on FLW prevention, including the challenges and options for action at policy and practice level. It was also an excellent opportunity to strengthen the regional network, exchange experiences and to prepare the FLW workshop in cooperation with the G20 presidency of South Africa in 2025.



Participants at the Kenya FLW workshop gather on the terrace of the University of Nairobi towers. Photo © Rachel Collie



The national expert panel discussion was facilitated by distinguished colleagues from Zimbabwe, Mauritius, Tanzania, Zambia, and Ghana. © Felicitas Schneider



Participants of one of the excursion groups (including Dr Mwape, 2nd from left) supported Food Banking Kenya in distributing donated surplus food to victims of the floods in Nairobi © Felicitas Schneider

Despite the short preparation time the organizers put together an interesting and comprehensive program - with plenary lectures, a panel discussion, group work and an excursion. Prof Martin Banse and Dr Felicitas Schneider from the Thünen Institute played a key role in the organisation of the workshop, while Dr Ackim Mwape from the New Zealand Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Research Centre delivered a keynote address during the workshop opening, emphasizing the need to quantify the magnitude, composition, and geographical location of lost and discarded foods.

More information on the MACS-G20 FLW initiative, including the program, plenary presentations, and summary of the Kenyan special workshop, can be found here: <https://www.macs-g20.org/about-macs/macs-activities/collaboration-initiative-on-food-losses-food-waste-launched-at-macs-g20>

More detail on Dr Mwape's experience of the workshop can be found in this news story from the GRA's website:

<https://globalresearchalliance.org/n/new-zealand-supports-expert-exchange-on-food-loss-and-waste-prevention-in-sub-saharan-africa/>

The 8th Regional FLW workshop will be held from October 22 to 24, 2024 in Brasilia/Brazil and this will be featured in our next newsletter.

The International Research Symposium on Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Mitigation, Berlin, Germany, 21st – 23rd October 2024

ORGANIZER



IN COOPERATION WITH



The Agri-DENZ project is supporting the organization of the “International Research Symposium on Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Mitigation: From Research to Implementation” that is taking place from 21st – 23rd October 2024 in Berlin, Germany. The event, hosted by [BMEL](#), will foster international exchange on the implementation of climate mitigation measures and low-emission development strategies in agriculture, set new priorities and ideas for research cooperation and give new impetus to existing and emerging network activities. It is co-organised by [GRA](#), Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research ([CGIAR](#)) and the [Thünen](#) Institute.

Over 200 participants from over 40 countries will have the chance to listen to around 70 oral presentations and view 50 poster presentations. In addition, six invited keynote speeches, panel discussions with climate mitigation experts and round table sessions offer the opportunity for in-depth discussions on specific topics. This 2.5-day event will be complemented by several side-events taking place on 24th October.

There will be an online Livestream of the plenary sessions of the AgriGHG-2024 symposium. For more information on the Livestream and the symposium see: <https://www.agrighg-2024.de/>

First PSG meeting, Berlin, Germany, 25th October 2024

The first annual meeting of the PSG is scheduled for the 25th of October 2024 in Berlin, and it will coincide with the AgriGHG-2024 Symposium. The meeting will commence with a formal project opening which will include opening remarks from BMEL’s Deputy Director General, Sebastian Graf von Keyserlingk, and the New Zealand Ambassador to Germany, Craig Hawke. This will be followed by official confirmation of the program activities for the coming year (as had been established during the kick-off meeting) as well as discussion around potential activities beyond for the 2nd year of the project and establishing more detail around the key areas of focus, such as Food Loss and Waste (FLW), soil carbon in grassland areas, and on-farm GHG accounting tools

Meet the team



Hello, my name is Dr. Nina Grassnick. I am the Agri-DENZ project coordinator and working as a research associate at the coordination unit climate, soil, biodiversity at the Thünen Institute in Brunswick (Germany). My academic background is in international and agricultural economics.

In my previous job position I have been supporting the GRA Secretariat and co-leading the [GRA Farm To Regional Scale Integration network](#). My work aimed on strengthening research collaboration on mitigating climate change in agriculture at German, European and global level.

Therefore, I am very happy to build on this work and established relationships with partners in Germany, New Zealand and worldwide as Agri-DENZ project coordinator for the next 2.5 years.

Coming up in Issue 2

- FLW workshop in Brazil, 22nd – 24th October 2024
- Summary of first PSG meeting in Germany, 25th October 2024
- Science exchange: Dr. Thiagarajah Ramilan's visit to the Thünen Institute, 28th – 31st October 2024
- Policy dialogue on GHG accounting tools, Germany, 24th October 2024