



Cultivating Solutions for a Sustainable Future

Report on the
**PRESENTATION OF THE
2ND WORLD AGRICULTURE PRIZE 2024**



September 18, 2024, Mumbai, India



2nd WORLD AGRICULTURE PRIZE 2024

presented to



Mr. Eknath Shinde
Chief Minister of Maharashtra, India

Climate change has crossed the critical threshold levels thereby endangering global food security and threatening the survival of humans and other species. According to the UN Secretary General, “the era of warming has ended and boiling has begun” that calls for urgent action. The scientists are giving a clarion call to a world which requires immediate and strong actions on the ground. Maharashtra State in India, under the vision and dynamic leadership of the chief minister, Mr. Eknath Shinde has shown the way to world on how to fight the climate change through massive scale schemes and innovative developmental programmes.

The State decided to fight climate change on its own terms by adopting sustainable agriculture development strategies and climate resilient crops, including the world’s largest bamboo cultivation program, aiming to cover 2.1 million hectare, and promoting micro millets clusters on a massive scale. The world is discussing sustainable agriculture as the solution to fighting climate change. The visionary leader decided to confront the challenge using innovative technology solutions, providing nano fertilisers to over 4.60 million farmers. The state’s 123 mega irrigation projects have brought 1.7 million hectares under assured irrigation. Nanaji Deshmukh Krushi Sanjiwani project with an allocation of 1.2 billion US dollars further demonstrate the commitment of the government to make agriculture more resilient and sustainable. The Chief Minister, Eknath Shinde is turning the adversities into opportunities and creating the Green Gold led evergreen revolution in agriculture and to bring about rural prosperity and smile on the face of every farmer.

The World is talking about the impact of climate change but, Mr. Shinde Government realised the danger and with a sense of urgency took upon the task of translating talk into action on the ground through innovative means and measures, creating massive impact and giving the world a unique model to fight challenge of climate change to save the planet, plants and humans.

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Overview

The **2nd World Agriculture Prize 2024** was presented to Shri Eknath Shinde, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Maharashtra, India during the "Norman Borlaug Global Dialogue on Climate Change and Food Security," held on **September 18, 2024, in Mumbai, India**. This prestigious award, established in 2018, recognizes exceptional achievements in agriculture that significantly impact food security, climate resilience, and rural development. The award highlights pioneering efforts in the agriculture sector to address global challenges.

This year's recipient, **Shri Eknath Shinde** was recognized for his transformative policies in sustainable agriculture and rural development, which have placed Maharashtra at the forefront of agricultural innovation.

Purpose

The World Agriculture Prize recognizes the individuals and institutions with exceptionally significant and globally impacting achievements in the field of agriculture, including but not limited to breeding, food production; plant and animal science, food science and technology; nutrition; rural development; water and the environment; natural resource conservation; bio based products, poverty elimination; finance, investments or budgetary allocations; policy, industry and agribusiness, programs or economic interventions, and public advocacy.



Event Highlights

The 2nd World Agriculture Prize was presented to the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, India in the presence of a diverse and global audience outnumbering the capacity of the NCPA Theatres in Nariman Point, Mumbai.

Welcome Address

Dr William Dar, Vice-Chair of the WAF Board, Former Secretary of Agriculture, Philippines and Former Director General, ICRISAT, welcomed the attendees, including dignitaries such as the Governor of Maharashtra, C. P. Radhakrishnan; the award recipient, Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri Eknath Shinde; as well as policymakers, scientists, and agricultural practitioners.

Dr Dar emphasized the legacy of Dr Norman Borlaug and Prof. M.S. Swaminathan, whose work revolutionized agriculture and inspired global action on food security. He called for collective efforts to address pressing challenges such as climate change and global food insecurity amidst climate and geopolitical challenges.

Presentation of the Award



Prof. Rudy Rabbinge Chairman, WAF Board, Former Senate Member, The Netherlands, and Former Chairman, Science Council, CGIAR presented the Award and emphasized the critical global challenges of sustainable development and food security, highlighting the urgent need for agriculture to balance optimization and minimization—maximizing productivity while reducing the environmental impact. He acknowledged the dual threats of unsustainability, caused by both resource misuse and poverty, which limit access to essential agricultural inputs.

Recognizing Maharashtra's transformative initiatives under Chief Minister Shri Eknath Shinde, Prof. Rabbinge praised the state's large-scale programs in sustainable agriculture, including bamboo cultivation, millet clusters, advanced irrigation systems, and nano-fertilizer distribution. These efforts have turned challenges posed by climate change into opportunities, creating a model for climate-resilient agriculture.

He highlighted the global significance of Maharashtra's achievements as one of the largest and most important agriculture powerhouses in India, and applauded its role in promoting farmer welfare, environmental sustainability, and rural development. Concluding his remarks, Prof. Rabbinge commended Chief Minister's visionary leadership and formally presented him with the **2nd World Agriculture Prize**, symbolizing global recognition of Maharashtra's pioneering contributions to agriculture, both in terms of sustainable production as well as technological advancements in processing and trade support.

Notable initiatives from the CM of Maharashtra include:

- **World's Largest Bamboo Cultivation Program:** Encompassing an impressive 2.1 million hectares
- **Micro-Millet Clusters:** Promoting climate-resilient crops to enhance food security and support farmers amidst changing climatic conditions
- **Nano Fertilizer Distribution:** Benefiting over 4.16 million farmers
- **123 Mega Irrigation Projects:** ensuring irrigation to 1.7 million hectares of irrigated land

The award, a silver and gold-plated memento, was presented to Shri Shinde by Governor Dr C.P. Radhakrishnan alongside Prof. Rabbinge and other dignitaries. The cash Prize has been declined given the political office held by this year's recipient.

Chief Minister Shri Eknath Shinde's Acceptance Speech

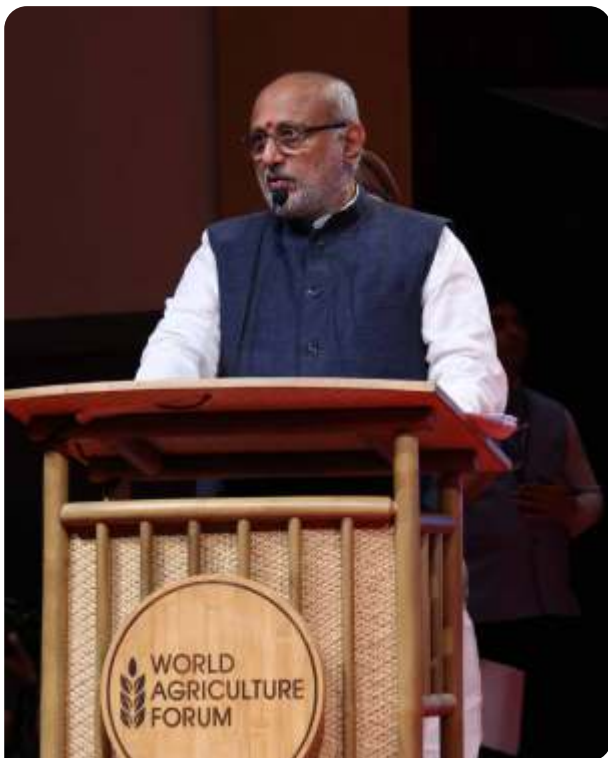
In his acceptance speech, Shri Shinde began by thanking the World Agriculture Forum, particularly Prof. Rudy Rabbinge, for honouring him with the 2nd World Agriculture Prize. He dedicated the award to the state's farmers whom he called the "Annadatas" (providers of food) mentioning about that their hard work and resilience. He highlighted the coincidence of the event with World Bamboo Day, aligning with Maharashtra's efforts to promote bamboo cultivation as a sustainable income source for farmers.

He highlighted Maharashtra's unique role as a growth engine for India, contributing significantly to GDP, foreign investments, and employment. Acknowledging the resilience of Maharashtra's farmers, he lauded their adaptability to changing times and contribution to the state's growth.



Outlining key initiatives, he emphasized Maharashtra's focus on sustainable agriculture, including bamboo plantations across 2.1 million hectares, promoting millet crops, and enhancing the agricultural value chain. He mentioned that his government has launched irrigation projects, targeted solar energy expansion for 24/7 electricity, and introduced 5 lakh agricultural pumps to support farmers. An environment task force has also been established to address climate change challenges. He reaffirmed Maharashtra's commitment to sustainable development and concluded with gratitude, emphasizing the collective responsibility to ensure global food security and to tackle climate change.

Address by the Honourable Governor of Maharashtra, Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan



The Honourable Governor Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan congratulated state of Maharashtra on winning the prestigious World Agriculture Prize 2024, highlighting the state's achievements in sustainable agriculture under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Shri Eknath Shinde. He commended the Chief Minister for spearheading initiatives that have placed Maharashtra at the forefront of agricultural innovation and environmental sustainability, giving the state global recognition.

Reflecting on India's progress, he noted that while the country once faced widespread starvation, its resilient farmers have ensured food security for a population of 1.4 billion, despite challenges like droughts, floods, and climate change. He lauded Maharashtra for adopting dry-land farming technology, empowering farmers with modern tools, and promoting practices like drip irrigation and water conservation, with 60% of the state's agricultural land now covered under such methods.

The Governor praised Maharashtra's focus on high-value horticulture, leading India in fruit and vegetable exports. Initiatives like bamboo plantations and collaborations with agricultural universities were highlighted as prime examples of sustainable and innovative development. He also emphasized the importance of integrating modern science with traditional farming practices, acknowledging the role of agricultural universities in advancing research and exports.

Drawing inspiration from Dr Norman Borlaug's legacy, he stressed the importance of addressing contemporary food security challenges amidst climate extremes. He concluded by honouring Maharashtra's farmers, calling the award a collective achievement, and urging continued efforts toward sustainable agriculture and prosperity.

Vote of Thanks

Dr MJ Khan, Country Director, WAF, India and Special Advisor to the WAF Board, extended heartfelt gratitude to the jury and board members of the World Agriculture Forum, who travelled from across the globe to participate in this momentous event in Maharashtra, the land of the legendary Shivaji Maharaj and the vibrant city of Mumbai.

He also expressed sincere appreciation to the 12 Padma Shri awardee farmers who joined from various parts of the country to grace the occasion. Their presence symbolized the resilience and innovative spirit that propel agricultural progress in India.



Dr Khan specially mentioned the distinguished jury for selecting a leader whose work embodies the principles of sustainable development. He highlighted the exemplary efforts of Chief Minister Shri Eknath Shinde, whose initiatives align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, transforming visionary aspirations into tangible, impactful outcomes.

In his closing remarks, Dr Khan emphasized his deep appreciation for the collective commitment demonstrated by all attendees, underscoring the importance of collaborative efforts in driving meaningful and lasting change in the field of agriculture.

Impact and Significance

Maharashtra's Leadership in Agriculture

The award reaffirms Maharashtra's position as a leader in sustainable agriculture, with forward-thinking policies that seamlessly integrate innovation with traditional wisdom to benefit farmers and the environment. Initiatives like promoting bamboo and millet farming are not only addressing pressing climate challenges but also opening diversified income opportunities for farmers. These efforts showcase a commitment to both environmental sustainability and rural prosperity.

Global Implications

The 2nd World Agriculture Prize 2024, awarded to Maharashtra's Chief Minister Shri Eknath Shinde, extend beyond recognition and carry a transformative message for global agricultural practices and policies. Here are the key global implications:

- **A Blueprint for Climate-Resilient Agriculture:** Maharashtra's successful implementation of initiatives like bamboo cultivation and millet farming provides a replicable model for addressing climate challenges. These programs highlight the potential of combining indigenous knowledge with modern practices to mitigate the impacts of climate change while fostering sustainable livelihoods.
- **Inspiration for Global Policymakers:** The award showcases the tangible benefits of prioritizing climate-resilient agriculture. It is likely to influence governments and policymakers worldwide to adopt similar strategies, focusing on resource optimization, water conservation, and sustainable cropping systems to ensure food security in their regions.
- **Strengthening Global Food Security Efforts:** With growing concerns about food security due to climate change and geopolitical instability, Maharashtra's approach demonstrates how localized agricultural innovation can have far-reaching impacts. This recognition amplifies the urgency of developing resilient food systems worldwide.
- **Advancing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** Maharashtra's agricultural advancements align with several United Nations SDGs, particularly those related to zero hunger (SDG 2), clean water (SDG 6), and climate action (SDG 13). The award signals the importance of scaling such initiatives globally to accelerate progress toward these goals.
- **Encouraging Public-Private Collaboration:** The recognition highlights the role of collaborative efforts in advancing agriculture, from government initiatives to partnerships with research institutions and the private sector. This serves as a call for global stakeholders to pool resources and expertise for agricultural innovation.
- **Influencing International Funding and Investments:** Awards like this can direct global attention and funding toward agricultural transformation, particularly in emerging economies.

International organizations and financial institutions may be encouraged to invest in programs similar to Maharashtra's, promoting scalable and sustainable solutions.

- **Promoting Knowledge Exchange:** The global spotlight on Maharashtra fosters opportunities for knowledge-sharing between nations. Innovations such as nano fertilizers, large-scale bamboo cultivation, and climate-resilient crops can inspire international collaboration and research in agricultural sciences.

In conclusion, this award transcends individual recognition, serving as a clarion call for collective global action to tackle the challenges of climate change, food security, and sustainable development through innovative and inclusive agricultural practices.

Policy Advancements

The event is expected to drive further investments and influence progressive agricultural policies at both the national and international levels. Discussions during the event laid the groundwork for shaping frameworks that could transform sustainable agricultural ecosystems globally. These dialogues underline the importance of aligning local initiatives with global goals to address universal challenges

Conclusion

The 2nd World Agriculture Prize 2024 not only honoured the transformative work of Shri Eknath Shinde but also spotlighted Maharashtra's critical role in advancing sustainable agriculture. This recognition is a testament to the resilience, ingenuity, and dedication of its farmers and the innovative vision of its leadership. As the world faces the dual challenges of climate change and food security, events like this highlight the importance of collaborative efforts to create sustainable solutions for future generations.

Glimpses of Event





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