



OFFICIAL THEMATIC SESSION #17

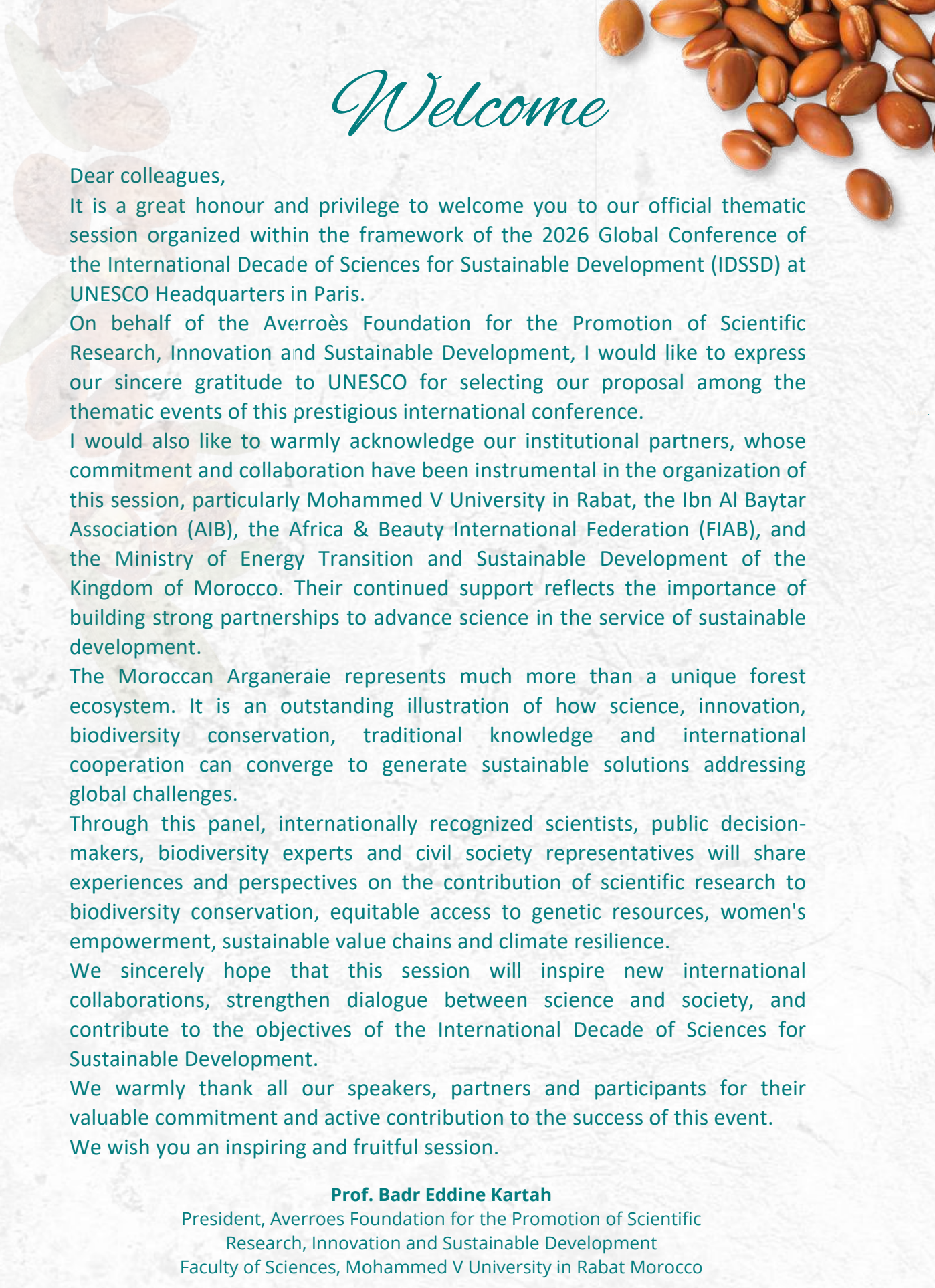
THE ARGANERAIE

AS A MODEL OF SCIENCE IN ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT


17 JULY 2026
15:55 - 17:15
UNESCO
Headquarters - Paris
ROOM VI**HYBRID SESSION**
Scan to Register Online participation via
UNESCO Zoom Platform

PARTNERS





Welcome

Dear colleagues,

It is a great honour and privilege to welcome you to our official thematic session organized within the framework of the 2026 Global Conference of the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development (IDSSD) at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris.

On behalf of the Averroès Foundation for the Promotion of Scientific Research, Innovation and Sustainable Development, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to UNESCO for selecting our proposal among the thematic events of this prestigious international conference.

I would also like to warmly acknowledge our institutional partners, whose commitment and collaboration have been instrumental in the organization of this session, particularly Mohammed V University in Rabat, the Ibn Al Baytar Association (AIB), the Africa & Beauty International Federation (FIAB), and the Ministry of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development of the Kingdom of Morocco. Their continued support reflects the importance of building strong partnerships to advance science in the service of sustainable development.

The Moroccan Arganeraie represents much more than a unique forest ecosystem. It is an outstanding illustration of how science, innovation, biodiversity conservation, traditional knowledge and international cooperation can converge to generate sustainable solutions addressing global challenges.

Through this panel, internationally recognized scientists, public decision-makers, biodiversity experts and civil society representatives will share experiences and perspectives on the contribution of scientific research to biodiversity conservation, equitable access to genetic resources, women's empowerment, sustainable value chains and climate resilience.

We sincerely hope that this session will inspire new international collaborations, strengthen dialogue between science and society, and contribute to the objectives of the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development.

We warmly thank all our speakers, partners and participants for their valuable commitment and active contribution to the success of this event.

We wish you an inspiring and fruitful session.

Prof. Badr Eddine Kartah

President, Averroes Foundation for the Promotion of Scientific
Research, Innovation and Sustainable Development
Faculty of Sciences, Mohammed V University in Rabat Morocco



ABOUT THE SESSION

Science in Action for Sustainable Development

The International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development (2024–2033), proclaimed by the United Nations and led by **UNESCO**, aims to reinforce the contribution of science to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by strengthening cooperation between scientists, governments, civil society and local communities.

Within this global initiative, the **Moroccan Arganeraie** stands as an internationally recognized model demonstrating how scientific research can directly contribute to biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, sustainable economic development and social inclusion.

Recognized by **UNESCO** as a Biosphere Reserve, the Arganeraie combines exceptional biological diversity with centuries of traditional knowledge. Continuous scientific research has transformed this unique ecosystem into an international reference for sustainable resource management, green innovation and equitable value creation benefiting local communities.

This thematic session will explore how interdisciplinary research, science diplomacy and nature-based solutions can contribute to addressing today's environmental and socio-economic challenges while supporting the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Bringing together leading scientists, governmental representatives, international organizations and development practitioners, the session will encourage dialogue on biodiversity governance, responsible innovation and international cooperation in support of sustainable development.

Background

Science plays a central role in achieving sustainable development by generating innovative solutions that address environmental, social and economic challenges.

The Moroccan Arganeraie represents one of the world's most successful examples of science translated into concrete societal benefits through biodiversity conservation, sustainable resource management, scientific innovation and local community empowerment.

Over the past decades, scientific research has significantly contributed to improving the sustainable management of argan ecosystems, promoting responsible commercialization of argan products, strengthening women's cooperatives and supporting the implementation of international biodiversity agreements, particularly the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing.

Today, the Arganeraie illustrates how scientific excellence, indigenous knowledge and international cooperation can jointly accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

Objectives

The thematic session aims to:

- Present the Moroccan Arganeraie as an international model of Science in Action for Sustainable Development;
- Highlight the contribution of scientific research to biodiversity conservation and climate resilience;
- Promote nature-based solutions and traditional knowledge as complementary drivers of sustainable development;
- Discuss equitable access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing under the Nagoya Protocol;
- Strengthen North–South and South–South scientific cooperation;
- Foster dialogue between researchers, governments, international organizations and civil society;

Expected Impact

The session will contribute to strengthening international scientific cooperation, promoting responsible biodiversity governance and encouraging innovative partnerships linking science, policy and society. It will also showcase the Moroccan experience as an inspiring example of how interdisciplinary science can generate tangible environmental, economic and social impacts while advancing the Sustainable Development Goals.



PROGRAMME

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AS A MODEL OF SCIENCE IN ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



17 JULY 2026



15:55 – 17:15
(Paris Time)



UNESCO Headquarters
Paris



ROOM VI

TIME	ACTIVITY	SPEAKER(S) / MODERATOR
15:55 – 16:00	WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS	 Prof. Badr Eddine Kartah , President, Averroes Foundation for the Promotion of Scientific Research, Innovation and Sustainable Development (Morocco).
16:00 – 16:05	INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT SETTING	 Prof. Lalla Amina Ouzzaoui , Moderator of the Session, Mohammed V University in Rabat / Averroes Foundation.
16:05 – 17:00	HIGH-LEVEL PANEL DISCUSSION	 Prof. Hanae El Monfalouti, Mohammed V University in Rabat / Averroes Foundation.  Prof. Zoubida Charrouf, President, Ibn Baytar Association / UM5 Rabat.  Ms. Celina Rocquet, Africa and Beauty International Federation (FIAB), France.  Ms. Saida Jay (remote intervention), National Focal Point of the Nagoya Protocol, Ministry of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development, Morocco.  Mr. Ali Benrayane, SDI Global Consult – Former UNDP Expert.  Dr. Marc Olivier (remote intervention), International Expert, Burkina Faso.
17:00 – 17:10	INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION WITH PARTICIPANTS	 Open dialogue between speakers and participants on key scientific, environmental and societal challenges related to arganeraie and its contribution to sustainable development.
17:10 – 17:13	READING OF THE PARIS DECLARATION	 Official reading of the Paris Declaration on Sustainable Governance of Genetic Resources and Sustainable Development.
17:13 – 17:15	KEY MESSAGES AND CLOSING REMARKS	 Summary of key messages and recommendations by the Moderator, followed by thanks and official closing.



SESSION MODERATOR



Prof. Lalla Amina Ouzaouit
Professor of Geology
Faculty of Sciences
Mohammed V University in Rabat
Morocco

Professor Lalla Amina Ouzaouit is Professor of Geology at Mohammed V University in Rabat. She obtained her Doctorate in **Mineral Engineering** from the Mohammadia School of Engineers and has developed extensive expertise in geothermal energy, environmental sciences and sustainable energy transitions. Her research focuses on **geothermal resource modelling, environmental management and sustainable development**. She has supervised engineering research projects, published numerous scientific papers and actively contributes to scientific conferences and doctoral training. She is a member of several national and international scientific associations and regularly moderates scientific events and high-level academic meetings.



SPEAKER



National Focal Point for the Nagoya Protocol and the Cartagena Protocol
Ministry of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development
Kingdom of Morocco

SMs. Saida El Jai is Head of the Genetic Resources and Biotechnology Risk Prevention Service at the Ministry of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development of the Kingdom of Morocco. She serves as Morocco's National Focal Point for both the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, playing a key role in implementing international biodiversity agreements and strengthening national policies on genetic resources and biotechnology governance.

She holds a PhD in Applied Microbiology and Molecular Biology and has extensive expertise in biodiversity conservation, biosafety, genetic resources management, and environmental governance. Her multidisciplinary background and strong cross-cutting competencies enable her to effectively address complex issues related to genetic resources, biotechnology, and sustainable development while fostering collaboration among governmental institutions, the scientific community, and international partners.



SPEAKER



Prof. Zoubida Charrouf
President of both the Ibn Al Baytar Association (AIB) and the Africa & Beauty International Federation (FIAB)

Professor Zoubida Charrouf is an internationally recognized pioneer in argan research and one of the world's leading experts on the Argan tree. For more than forty years, her scientific work has significantly contributed to the sustainable development of the Argan Biosphere Reserve through research, innovation and international cooperation. Founder of the first women's argan oil cooperatives and President of both the Ibn Al Baytar Association (AIB) and the Africa & Beauty International Federation (FIAB), she has played a leading role in promoting the argan ecosystem as a model for biodiversity conservation, women's empowerment and sustainable development at both national and international levels. She has coordinated numerous international development projects with organizations including FAO, GIZ and the World Bank. She has authored more than 200 scientific publications, holds five patents, and has received numerous national and international awards recognizing her outstanding scientific achievements and lifelong commitment to rural development, innovation and the valorization of Morocco's natural heritage.

SPEAKER



Mrs. Celina Rocquet-Bassiri
Africa & Beauty
International Federation
(FIAB)
France

Dr. Celina Rocquet-Bassiri is an expert in biotechnology, molecular biology and sustainable agriculture. Her work focuses on the interface between science, biodiversity and innovation, promoting sustainable agricultural systems, medicinal plants and plant-based healthcare. She advocates cutting-edge technologies, including vertical farming, controlled-environment agriculture, plant biotechnology and bioreactor systems to support food security and environmental sustainability. Through her international activities, she promotes science-driven solutions that integrate biodiversity conservation, technological innovation and responsible resource management for a more resilient and sustainable future.



SPEAKER



Mr. Ali Benrayane
International Expert in Biodiversity
Governance
Former Expert, United Nations
Development Programme (UNDP)
Morocco

Ali Benrayane is an internationally recognized expert in biodiversity governance, environmental policy and sustainable development. Throughout his career, he has contributed to numerous national and international initiatives supporting the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing. His expertise encompasses biodiversity governance, ecosystem management, environmental legislation and international cooperation. He actively promotes science-based public policies and multi-stakeholder dialogue to strengthen biodiversity conservation while supporting sustainable socio-economic development.



SPEAKER



Prof. Hanae El Monfalouti
Faculty of Sciences
Mohammed V University in Rabat
Morocco
Vice-President for Sustainable
Development, Averroes Foundation

Prof. Hanae El Monfalouti is an Associate Professor of Phytochemistry and Natural Products at Mohammed V University in Rabat, Morocco. Her research focuses on the extraction, characterization and valorization of natural bioactive compounds for pharmaceutical, cosmetic and food applications, with particular emphasis on Moroccan biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources. She has developed recognized expertise in argan tree (*Argania spinosa*) research, particularly in the phytochemical characterization and valorization of argan-derived products and by-products, promoting the argan ecosystem as a model for sustainable innovation and biodiversity conservation. A TWAS Young Affiliate and Guest Editor of several international scientific journals, she has authored numerous peer-reviewed publications and supervised doctoral and master's students. She has extensive experience in multidisciplinary international research projects, promoting innovation, technology transfer and the valorization of natural products. She actively contributes to scientific diplomacy and international cooperation, fostering partnerships that support biodiversity conservation, sustainable development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



SPEAKER



Dr. Marc Olivier
International Expert in
Ethnobotany and Natural Products
Burkina Faso

Dr. Marc Olivier is an ethnobotanist and international consultant specializing in African medicinal and aromatic plants, biodiversity conservation and sustainable value chains. His work combines scientific research with traditional knowledge to promote the sustainable use of natural resources for cosmetic, pharmaceutical and nutraceutical applications. With extensive field experience across West Africa and the Sahel, he has developed innovative partnerships between local communities, researchers and industry, contributing to biodiversity conservation, ethical sourcing and sustainable economic development.



Interactive Dialogue

Following the keynote presentations, participants will engage in an **open discussion** addressing key scientific, environmental and policy issues related to biodiversity conservation, equitable access to genetic resources, implementation of the Nagoya Protocol, nature-based solutions and the contribution of science to sustainable development.

The discussion will encourage active exchanges between speakers, researchers, policy-makers, representatives of international organizations, civil society and participants, fostering new ideas, collaborations and future scientific partnerships within the framework of the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development.



ORGANIZING INSTITUTIONS

Lead Organizer

Averroes Foundation for the Promotion of Scientific Research, Innovation and Sustainable Development

The **Averroès Foundation** is an international non-profit organization committed to promoting scientific excellence, innovation and sustainable development. Through international conferences, research projects, capacity-building initiatives and strategic partnerships, the Foundation contributes to strengthening the dialogue between science, public policy and society. It actively supports interdisciplinary research, science diplomacy, biodiversity conservation and international scientific cooperation aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Africa & Beauty International Federation (FIAB)

The **Africa & Beauty International federation (FIAB)** is an international platform dedicated to promoting biodiversity, sustainable agriculture, natural resources and innovation. The Foundation encourages collaboration between scientists, industry, public institutions and local communities to develop sustainable value chains and nature-based solutions supporting environmental protection and human well-being.

Association Ibn Al Baytar (AIB)

The **Ibn Al Baytar Association** is a leading Moroccan non-governmental organization dedicated to biodiversity conservation, medicinal and aromatic plants, sustainable rural development and women's empowerment. Through scientific research, technology transfer and community-based initiatives, the Association has played a pioneering role in the sustainable development and international recognition of the Moroccan Arganeraie.



KEY MESSAGES OF THE SESSION

The thematic session highlighted the Moroccan Arganeraie as an internationally recognized model demonstrating how science can effectively contribute to sustainable development.

The discussions emphasized several strategic priorities:

- Science as a driver of sustainable development.
- Biodiversity conservation through interdisciplinary research.
- Nature-based solutions for climate resilience.
- Responsible implementation of the Nagoya Protocol.
- Fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources.
- Integration of traditional knowledge with modern scientific innovation.
- Women's empowerment through sustainable value chains.
- International scientific cooperation and science diplomacy.
- Responsible innovation supporting local communities.
- Strengthening partnerships to accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The organizers sincerely thank UNESCO for selecting this thematic event as part of the 2026 Global Conference of the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development (IDSSD).

We express our deepest appreciation to all invited speakers, moderators, institutional partners, researchers, governmental representatives and participants for their valuable contributions and commitment to advancing science in support of sustainable development.

Special thanks are extended to the Averroès Foundation, the Africa & Beauty International Foundation (FIAB), the Association Ibn Al Baytar (AIB), Mohammed V University in Rabat and all collaborating institutions whose support has made this event possible.



2024 - 2033
International Decade of
Sciences for Sustainable
Development

مؤسسة ابن رشد
AVERROES FOUNDATION



"Science alone cannot transform the world, but science working together with society, biodiversity, innovation and international cooperation can build a more sustainable future for all."

We hope that this thematic session will inspire new collaborations, strengthen international scientific partnerships and contribute to the implementation of the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development.

Thank you for your participation.



Contact person



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Partners

Averroes Foundation for the Promotion of Scientific Research,
Innovation and Sustainable Development

www.averroesfoundation.com

Ibn Al Baytar Association (AIB)

www.association-ibnalbaytar.org

Africa & Beauty International Federation (FIAB)

www.fiab.news

Faculty of Sciences – Mohammed V University in Rabat

www.fsr.ac.ma

Ministry of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development
Kingdom of Morocco

Website: www.mtedd.gov.ma