

## ICBA, Saudi Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture partner to develop biosaline agriculture in Saudi Arabia

Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, 28 August 2019 – The International Center for Biosaline Agriculture ([ICBA](#)) and the [Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture](#), the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, have agreed to work together on agricultural development and environmental sustainability in Saudi Arabia.

ICBA and the Ministry signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to this effect in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, today in the presence of senior officials from the Government of Saudi Arabia, the Islamic Development Bank ([IsDB](#)), and the [UAE Office of Food Security](#).

The agreement was signed by His Excellency Eng. Abdulrahman Al Fadley, Minister of Environment, Water and Agriculture, Saudi Arabia, and Dr. Ismahane Elouafi, Director General of ICBA.

The agreement is aimed to strengthen cooperation between ICBA and the Ministry to develop biosaline agriculture research and systems, preserve the environment and natural resources, and manage them sustainably.

The Ministry said: “The MoU includes making use of ICBA’s expertise in capacity development, and agricultural and environmental research, especially in the field of vegetation development, combating desertification, and climate change adaptation.”

“It also includes training programs for Saudi technicians and farmers, in addition to localizing, implementing and developing biosaline agriculture research and production systems for both crops and forestation, which contributes to environmental and agricultural integration,” the Ministry added.

Commenting on the agreement, Dr. Ismahane Elouafi said: “We are extremely happy to join our forces with Saudi Arabia’s Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture to boost biosaline agriculture research in the Kingdom. Through this partnership, ICBA will partner with the Ministry to support their strategies and programs within the Kingdom’s Vision (2030).”

The agreement also stresses upon the need to prepare proposals for the Ministry’s projects involving plant production, drought monitoring systems, development of promising local crop and forestation varieties, and conservation of plant genetic resources.

Moreover, under the agreement, ICBA and the Ministry will work together to implement projects, programs, and technologies that can achieve sustainable environmental and agricultural development and help in the preservation of water resources in the Kingdom; also cooperate in the preparation of studies and reports of common interest and will hold joint working sessions and scientific conferences.

Established in 1999 through the visionary leadership of the Government of the UAE and the IsDB, ICBA has been working with partners in more than 30 countries to introduce crop varieties and technologies that have performed well during trials under local conditions. With this new partnership, ICBA aims to share its two decades of extensive technical knowhow and applied experience and develop tailor-made solutions to boost biosaline agriculture research and production in Saudi Arabia.

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**About ICBA**

The International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) is a unique applied agricultural research center in the world with a focus on marginal areas where an estimated 1.7 billion people live. It identifies, tests and introduces resource-efficient, climate-smart crops and technologies that are best suited to different regions affected by salinity, water scarcity and drought. Through its work, ICBA helps to improve food security and livelihoods for some of the poorest rural communities around the world.

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