

## **ICBA Receives Global Technical Recognition from FAO for Leadership in Sustainable Plant Production and Protection**

**Rome / Dubai – 18 October 2025:** The International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) has been recognized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for its pioneering contributions to sustainable plant production and protection. The recognition was conferred during FAO's first-ever Global Technical Recognition Ceremony, held at FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy, on 15 October 2025, as part of the organization's 80th anniversary and World Food Day 2025 celebrations.

The recognition was presented by **Dr. Qu Dongyu, FAO Director-General**, to **Dr. Tarifa Alzaabi, Director General of ICBA**, acknowledging the Center's leadership in developing sustainable, climate-resilient agriculture in saline and arid environments. As FAO's first Global Technical Recognition, the initiative honors institutions transforming agrifood systems through science-driven innovation and impact. Held alongside World Food Day 2025 under the theme "Hand in hand for better food and a better future", it celebrates progress toward sustainable production, efficient resource use, and climate resilience in line with FAO's Four Betters.

**Dr. Tarifa Alzaabi, Director General of ICBA**, said: "We are deeply honored by this recognition from FAO, which underscores the power of collaborative science and innovation in addressing global agricultural challenges. It reflects the dedication of



our scientists, experts, and partners who work together to build resilient and sustainable food systems. We dedicate this achievement to the founders of the Center — the Government of the United Arab Emirates and the Islamic Development Bank — whose vision and continued support laid the foundation for ICBA’s mission. This recognition also stands as a testament to the trust and commitment of our partners and funders who enable us to advance research, partnerships, and knowledge exchange that empower communities, strengthen livelihoods, and contribute to global food security and sustainability.”

For nearly 25 years, the Center has advanced sustainable plant production systems that improve soil health, optimize water use, and boost productivity. Through its work conserving and utilizing diverse crop germplasm, ICBA has developed stress-tolerant crops creating new opportunities for food and income security in regions affected by salinity and drought.

Based in the United Arab Emirates and active in over 40 countries, ICBA leads efforts to integrate science, technology, and policy to tackle water scarcity, soil degradation, and food insecurity. This recognition comes as the Center advances its 2024–2034 strategy, focused on science-based solutions that boost productivity and climate resilience in arid and saline environments, while strengthening global partnerships for lasting impact.

**-ENDS-**