

Think tank "Agora Agriculture" begins its work

The newly founded organization develops strategies and policy proposals for the transformation to sustainable food, agriculture, and forestry.

Berlin, 17 May 2022. With today's launch of Agora Agriculture, the independent think tank begins its work on sustainable food, agriculture, and forestry in Germany and the EU. These areas are central to climate protection, biodiversity conservation, and to achieving other sustainability goals at national and international levels. The new organization joins Agora Energiewende, Agora Verkehrswende, and Agora Industry, covering another sector that is central to achieving climate neutrality. The food system as a whole is responsible for about a quarter of greenhouse gas emissions in Germany. In addition, agriculture and forestry are of particular importance for biodiversity due to their share of about 80 percent of Germany's land area.

Agora Agriculture aims to develop science-based policy proposals for sustainable food, agriculture, and forestry. Through sound analysis and the organization of dialogues, the think tank will support political negotiation processes to achieve key sustainability goals. The focus of Agora Agriculture's work includes restructuring of livestock farming, sustainability in arable farming and sustainable land use, the rewetting of peatlands, sustainable forest use, and healthier and more sustainable diets.

The think tank is co-chaired by agricultural experts Christine Chemnitz and Harald Grethe. "Food, agricultural, and forestry policies need to be oriented towards key sustainability goals," said Harald Grethe, Director of Agora Agriculture. "The areas that require urgent political action are well known. With our work, we want to help ensure that political decision makers shape the transformation in a knowledge-based, transparent way and with a long-term perspective."

"Contributing to solving the climate and biodiversity crisis holds great opportunities for the sectors involved and for society as a whole – also in politically uncertain times," said Agora Agriculture Director Christine Chemnitz. "Agora Agriculture is committed to preserving production resources such as soil and water, developing new sources of income, and increasing societal appreciation of agriculture and forestry."

An important foundation of Agora Agriculture's work is its integrated approach to key sustainability dimensions. This, together with the cooperation with Agora Energiewende, Agora Industry, and Agora Verkehrswende, enables a holistic view of synergies and conflicting goals in the context of future land use. "We are very pleased that with the launch of Agora Agriculture, the Agora think tanks now cover another essential area in the

For inquiries

Christine Chemnitz, Harald Grethe
Directors Agora Agriculture
E: presse@agora-agrar.de

Agora Agriculture
Anna-Louisa-Karsch-Str. 2
10178 Berlin | Germany
www.agora-agriculture.org

transformation to climate neutrality," said Markus Steigenberger, Managing Director of Agora Energiewende.

Chemnitz and Grethe will head Agora Agriculture and build an interdisciplinary 14-member team. Both have many years of professional experience in the fields of agricultural and food policy: Christine Chemnitz was previously Head of the Unit on International Agricultural Policy at the Heinrich-Böll-Foundation for more than 15 years. Harald Grethe heads the International Agricultural Trade and Development Group at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and was Chairman of the Scientific Advisory Board for Agricultural Policy, Food and Consumer Health Protection at the Federal Ministry for Food and Agriculture from 2012 to 2020.

Agora Agriculture works independently of economic and partisan interests and is supported by funding from private foundations. These include the Robert Bosch Stiftung, Porticus, the European Climate Foundation and the Michael Otto Environmental Foundation. The Mercator Foundation is also among its supporters.

About Agora Agriculture

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