

**Press release**  
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## Global heatwave: How science and farmers' knowledge from developing world's drylands can help Europe cope with climate change

**Cairo, Egypt** – The scorching sun, lack of rain, yellowing grass, and declining yields many European countries have experienced this summer due to the global heatwave is a daily reality for many communities in the drylands. The drylands cover more than 43 percent of the planet's surface, where rainfall is limited or non-existent and farming is often the only source of income.

Here, communities are on a constant mission to adapt to climate change for survival. It is also here that scientists and farmers work together to develop new solutions to cope with the changing climate.

“There are solutions and ways forward for the drylands. And some of these solutions are becoming increasingly relevant for Europe and elsewhere in the developed world,” says Jacques Wery, ICARDA's chief scientist based in Cairo.

Examples abound: the wheat varieties that can tolerate very high temperatures; rainwater-harvesting techniques and solar-powered drip irrigation that make every drop of water more efficient; and the rotation of crops with pulses, reduced ploughing, and retention of some crop residues on the field can keep moisture in the soil. “These are ideas and scenarios that will become important to consider in Europe and other Western regions where climate change is happening,” Wery added.

ICARDA has been working in the non-tropical dry areas of the developing world for over 40 years, providing innovative, science-based solutions for rural communities. The funding for ICARDA's scientific partnerships and research projects comes from donors all over the world, and the innovations are freely available as international public goods. The genetic resources and research findings on breeding, agronomy, and processing of crops are designed to meet the need of dryland conditions. They are available to governments and farming communities that need improved seed varieties, new knowledge on crops, tools, and ways to work under extreme conditions.

“In short, we help vulnerable communities find simple solutions in areas with extreme temperatures and little water. If people in the dry areas cannot farm, if their sheep and goats do not adapt to high temperatures and seasonal feed shortages, they cannot feed their families or stay in their communities, even in their countries,” explained Wery.

ICARDA-led science partnerships were coordinated from Aleppo, Syria between 1977 and 2012. Since 2012, ICARDA has led its work from Beirut, Lebanon. With research stations, test fields, and genebanks, ICARDA's scientists work through global networks to enhance food and nutritional security by finding new approaches to farming.

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*The International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) is an international, autonomous non-profit research organization supported by CGIAR, a global research partnership for a food-secure future. ICARDA's mission is to reduce poverty, enhance food, water, and nutritional security, as well as environmental health in the face of global challenges, including climate change. We do this through innovative science, strategic partnerships, linking research to development and capacity development that take into account gender equality and the role of youth in transforming the dry areas. ICARDA works in partnership with governments, universities, civil society, national agricultural research organization, other CGIAR research Centers, and the private sector. With its temporary Headquarters in Beirut, Lebanon, ICARDA operates in regional and country offices across Africa, Asia and the Middle East. For more information: [www.icarda.org](http://www.icarda.org).*