

The UK Food Group announces its new Co-ordinator

The UK Food Group*, the UK civil society network concerned with global food and farming issues, is pleased to announce the appointment of **María Arce-Moreira** as its new Co-ordinator.



María Arce-Moreira representing the IFRTD at an expert panel held in the United Nations, New York.

(Photo credit: IISD/ENB)

Maria will be responsible for driving forward the work of the network, strengthening its activities and ensuring its financial sustainability. Maria will work with the UKFG Management Group to develop a programme of work that responds to current priorities and members' interests.

Announcing the appointment, **Dr Angela Wright**, co-Chair of the UKFG, said: *"We are delighted to welcome Maria to the UK Food Group. Her knowledge and considerable experience will be invaluable in progressing the Group's vision of a world with a fair and sustainable food system that can end hunger, restore the environment and improve social justice. The current UN Decade of Action on Nutrition and, closer to home, Brexit, provide great opportunities for the UK Food Group and its member organisations to make a real difference in advancing the case for food security, food sovereignty and sustainable agroecological practices - both globally and locally - under Maria's stewardship."*

Maria brings extensive international co-ordination and management experience developed with global NGO networks including as Executive Director of the UK-based International Forum for Rural Transport and Development (IFRTD) and the Netherlands-based Gender and Water Alliance and also the World Council of Optometry. Maria has experience in fundraising for core and programmatic work from bilateral donors, UN agencies and corporates as well as in organising international events.

With strong family ties in Bolivia but based in the UK since 2006, Maria has over 20 years' experience in international development with a strong emphasis on environmental issues in both urban and rural settings. In the UK she worked as a climate change and agriculture policy adviser for Practical Action during which her experience in facilitating networks was also reflected when she was appointed as Chair of Bond's Development and Environment Group. Before settling in the UK, María worked with, among others, the Environment Liaison Centre International based in Kenya and Greenpeace International based in the Netherlands. She has experience with advocacy and has engaged in several UN processes.

Maria commented: *"I am thrilled to be joining the UK Food Group at this exciting time. After working with international networks, I welcome the opportunity to transfer my experiences on networking, fundraising and coalition building to such an important national platform dealing with the globally significant issues of food and agriculture, in which the rights of people to food, livelihoods, a sustainable environment and local control, I personally feel passionate about. I look forward to working closely with the UK Food Group and its members to strengthen the role of civil society at all levels in this important debate."*

Richie Alford, co-Chair of the UKFG, added: *"With so many in the world uneasy about recent political events, and with so much uncertainty about the future direction of areas of policy, never has it been more necessary for such a network as the UK Food Group to shed light and bring clarity on the complex local and global systemic issues of food justice, climate change, production systems, etc.. Maria will help advance our work building on the strong foundation by Jean Blaylock the previous coordinator and all who have gone before."*

==ends==

(For Footnote and Contacts, see next page)

Footnote:

* The UK Food Group is the civil society network of about 50 UK development, environment, farming and academic organisations working on global food and agriculture issues. Our vision is a world with a fair and sustainable food system that can end hunger, restore the environment and improve social justice. The UK Food Group works to strengthen advocacy in the UK, the EU, the UN - especially the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) - and other international bodies for a global food system that can achieve our vision. We are in solidarity with the networks of those most vulnerable to hunger, including social movements of small-scale farmers, herders and fishers in the global South. We support their right to be part of decision making in the global food system at all levels. We always try to identify the underlying causes of problems in the global food system.

URL: www.ukfg.org.uk

For further information please contact:

Dr Angela Wright angela.wright@ciwf.org.uk or

Richie Alford richie.alford@sendacow.org