

GHI MATTERS

Vol. 02 - February 2026

Welcome to the February edition of the Global Harmonization Initiative (GHI) Newsletter. As our community continues to expand in reach (soon we will celebrate 2000 members), expertise, and impact, we're excited to bring you our news that reflects the momentum behind GHI's mission. Each month, we will share highlights from our global network – updates on projects, achievements from our members and partners, and insights into the work driving science-based food safety and regulatory harmonization. This newsletter is your connection point to GHI's efforts in research, innovation, education, and capacity building. Through these stories, we aim to strengthen collaboration across regions and disciplines while showcasing the collective progress of our community.

We are pleased to share that 2026 marks an important year of evolution for GHI. Our new logo is now officially in use, representing a modern and unified identity for the organization. In addition, a completely redesigned GHI website will launch in April, offering improved functionality, clearer navigation, and enhanced digital tools to better support our members and partners. The GHI Congress website will welcome abstract submissions in May.

We look forward to unveiling these developments and keeping you informed as they roll out throughout the year. GHI's work thrives on partnership. We welcome organizations, institutions, and individuals who wish to support or sponsor GHI initiatives and join us in advancing global food science and technology. If you are interested in collaborating with us, we would be delighted to hear from you and connect.

GHI President message

Dear Members of the Global Harmonization Initiative,

The global food landscape continues to evolve at a remarkable pace. Food systems around the world are being reshaped by shifting geopolitical dynamics, climate-related pressures, rapid technological innovation, and growing expectations for transparency and sustainability. These forces are influencing not only how food is produced and distributed, but also how it is governed, communicated, and trusted. In this environment, science-based harmonization is not a fixed destination – it is an ongoing commitment that requires agility, cooperation, and shared responsibility.

This month, many communities around the world celebrate the Lunar New Year, welcoming the Year of the Fire Horse. Traditionally associated with boldness, transformation, and forward momentum, the Fire Horse offers a fitting metaphor for the challenges and opportunities ahead. Its symbolism resonates strongly with the food sector: the need for renewed energy in addressing food security, the courage to adopt innovative technologies responsibly, and the drive to strengthen resilience in the face of climate-driven disruptions. It is a timely reminder that progress often requires both determination and collective action.

Within this global context, GHI continues to advance initiatives that support harmonized, trustworthy, and future-ready food

systems. Our new logo – now officially in use – reflects a refreshed identity for our growing community. In April, we will introduce the redesigned GHI website, which will serve as a more dynamic platform for knowledge exchange, collaboration, and engagement with partners across regions.

The coming months will also bring several major international gatherings focused on food safety, digital traceability, climate-resilient agriculture, sustainability, and innovation including UN Food Systems Transformation Meetings, Codex Alimentarius Commission Meetings, and COP31, which will bring experts, policymakers, and industry leaders together. These events provide important opportunities for GHI to contribute scientific perspectives, strengthen partnerships, and support the alignment of regulatory approaches worldwide. We are actively exploring avenues for participation and collaboration to ensure that harmonization remains central to global dialogue.

Preparations for the next Global Harmonization Initiative Congress, scheduled for 5–6 July 2027, are also moving forward with our abstract submission starting on 1 May 2026. While still in the early stages, the planning process is gaining momentum, and we anticipate a vibrant program that reflects the breadth of expertise within our network and beyond.

As always, I am grateful for the dedication and insight our members, our working groups leaders and ambassadors across the world bring to this work. Your contributions – across disciplines, sectors, and regions – continue to strengthen GHI's impact and reinforce the importance of global cooperation in building resilient and harmonized food systems.

Dr. Diana Bogueva
President, Global Harmonization Initiative



For more information:

Website: <https://www.globalharmonization.net>

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/global-harmonization-initiative/posts/?feedView=all>

New GHI logo launch

We are pleased to unveil the new logo of the Global Harmonization Initiative – a refreshed visual identity that reflects who we are today and the direction we are moving as a global community. While the design has evolved, our mission remains steadfast. The new GHI logo is more than a modern graphic; it is a symbol of what our network makes possible every day:

- Connecting regions
- Aligning systems
- Advancing science-based cooperation
- Strengthening global food systems

At its center sits a globe, representing the simple truth that harmonization has no borders. Surrounding it are human figures, reminding us that alignment is only achieved through partnership, dialogue, and shared purpose. Its forward-moving form conveys trust, momentum, and the credibility that underpins all science-based progress. And its grounding in food systems, represented by the grains, reflects our commitment to practical, sustainable solutions that support global well-being. This new identity is a declaration of purpose – a clearer voice for the work GHI champions across continents.



GLOBAL HARMONIZATION INITIATIVE

Join us on Instagram

As part of this refreshed identity, we are also expanding our digital presence. GHI now has an official Instagram account, where we will share updates, visuals, member stories, event highlights, and global food-system insights. We invite all members, partners, and supporters to follow us, engage with our posts, and help us grow this new channel.

Follow us on Instagram:
<https://www.instagram.com/globalharmonizationinitiative/>

Celebrating Prof. Dr h.c. Huub Lelieveld's 82nd Birthday

The GHI community recently marked a special occasion: the 82nd birthday of our founder and Honorary President, Prof. Dr h.c. Huub Lelieveld. GHI President Dr Diana Bogueva joined Dr Peter Overbosch, Chair of the Food Safety Ethics Working Group, Peter's wife Renee, Dr Adina Baicu, GHI Board Member and Chair of the Food Safety Law Working Group, Huub's wife Paula, and Mark Sandow, GHI Board Member and leader of GHI NextGen, and Diana's daughter Lily, to celebrate this milestone together. Huub's lifelong dedication to advancing science-based harmonization continues to inspire our global network. We warmly wish him many more healthy, productive, and fulfilling years, and we thank him for the vision and leadership that continue to guide GHI forward.



Call for Contributions Special Collection on Herbal Interventions for Diabetes (Springer Journal)

An important publication opportunity for researchers within the GHI network. The Springer Nature journal *Clinical Phytoscience* has opened submissions for a new article collection titled: "Herbal Interventions for Diabetes: Advances in Clinical Research".



The special issue is led by our GHI Nutrition working group co-chair Viduranga Waisundara.

This collection focuses on emerging evidence and scientific progress on the use of herbal and plant-based interventions for diabetes, with particular emphasis on:

- Clinical trials and intervention studies
- Ethnopharmacological insights
- Systematic reviews and meta-analyses
- Mechanistic and pharmacological research
- Novel herbal formulations and therapeutic strategies
- Safety, toxicity, and regulatory considerations
- Translational research bridging traditional knowledge and modern clinical practice

Researchers working in these areas – or planning new studies – are warmly encouraged to submit their manuscripts. Submission details and the official call for papers are available at:

<https://link.springer.com/journal/40816/updates>

We also invite you to share this opportunity with colleagues and collaborators who may be interested in contributing to this important and timely collection.



Member Spotlight: Congratulations to Peter Overbosch

We are delighted to celebrate the success of Peter Overbosch, whose work continues to bring creativity and scientific curiosity together in unexpected ways. Peter recently participated in the Photo of the Year competition organized by the Photo Club Schagen in his hometown in the Netherlands – and his striking image of a fossilized seafood specimen earned 2nd place.

This remarkable photograph, which blends natural history with artistic expression, has now been selected to advance to the Netherlands Photo Association's annual national competition. With entries from around 130 photo clubs across the country, this next stage represents a significant achievement and an exciting opportunity for wider recognition. National results are expected in April or May.

We congratulate Peter on this well-deserved honour and look forward to following the progress of his work as it reaches a broader audience.

March Focus: Nutrition, Health, and the Power of Science-Based Food Systems

Each March, the global community turns its attention to nutrition, health, and the role that food systems have in shaping well-being. Two major awareness campaigns anchor this month: National Nutrition Month and World Obesity Day (March 4). Together, they offer an important opportunity to highlight the value of healthy diets, transparent food information, and evidence-based public health policies.

National Nutrition Month 2026: “Fuel for the Future”

This year's theme, “Fuel for the Future,” emphasizes the importance of nourishing diets that support long-term health, environmental sustainability, and resilient food systems. The campaign encourages individuals and communities to make informed food choices, understand the science behind nutrition, and adopt habits that promote lifelong well-being. Key messages include:

- choosing nutrient-dense foods
- understanding food labels and ingredient lists
- reducing food waste through mindful planning
- supporting sustainable food production
- promoting equitable access to healthy foods

For GHI, this theme aligns closely with our mission: ensuring that nutrition guidance, food safety standards, and regulatory frameworks are grounded in science and harmonized across regions.

World Obesity Day (March 4): “Changing Perspectives: Let's Talk About Obesity”

The 2026 World Obesity Day theme, “Changing Perspectives: Let's Talk About Obesity,” focuses on shifting the global conversation toward understanding obesity as a complex, multifactorial condition influenced by biology, environment, and food systems – not simply individual choice.

This year's campaign highlights:

- the importance of clear, science-based food labelling
- the role of food environments in shaping dietary behaviour
- the need for policies that support healthier choices

- reducing stigma and improving access to care
- the impact of ultra-processed foods and marketing on public health

These discussions reinforce the need for harmonized regulations, transparent communication, and coordinated global action—areas where GHI continues to contribute expertise and leadership.

Why These Campaigns Matter for GHI

Nutrition is not isolated issues; it is deeply connected to:

- food safety
- regulatory alignment
- sustainability
- innovation in food production
- consumer trust

As new foods, technologies, and dietary patterns emerge, the role of science-based harmonization becomes even more necessary. Ensuring that consumers receive accurate information, that food systems remain resilient, and that policies reflect the best available evidence is central to GHI's work. Throughout March, we encourage our members and partners to engage with these campaigns, share insights from their regions, and contribute to the global dialogue on nutrition and health. Together, we can help advance a future where safe, nutritious, and sustainable food is accessible to all.



New GHI Working Group on Sustainable Food Systems and Food Security



GHI is pleased to announce the establishment of a new Working Group on Sustainable Food Systems and Food Security, chaired by Dr Gohar Badalyan. This initiative comes at a critical moment, as global food systems face mounting pressures from climate change, environmental degradation, conflict, and economic inequality. With more than 735 million people experiencing hunger and billions unable to afford a healthy diet, the need for coordinated, science-based action has never been greater.

The Working Group will serve as a collaborative platform connecting science, policy, and practice, with the goal of accelerating the transition toward inclusive, resilient, and sustainable food systems. Through policy development, capacity-building, research, advocacy, and global engagement, the Working Group will contribute to shaping food systems that ensure long-term food and nutrition security while safeguarding planetary health. We look forward to sharing updates as this important initiative begins its work.

Welcoming the Newest Members of the GHI Family

We are delighted to share joyful news from within our GHI community. Our General Secretary Adriana Sterian and her husband, GHI Graphic Designer Alex Surugiu, have welcomed a baby boy, Marc. We wish him a happy, healthy childhood and extend our warmest congratulations to the proud parents and sister Ava.

We are also pleased to celebrate the arrival of Alexander at the end of last year, the baby boy of our Denmark Ambassador Alina-Ioana Gostin. We send our heartfelt wishes to Alexander and his family, hoping he grows strong, joyful, and kind to his parents.

We hope we did not miss any babies. Please keep sharing this and other wonderful news with us. These wonderful milestones remind us that GHI is not only a global scientific network but also a community that shares in one another's celebrations.



CEFood 2026
CONGRESS

UNIVERSITY OF FOOD TECHNOLOGIES (UFT)

23 – 26 September
Radisson Hotel
Plovdiv - Bulgaria



SAVE THE DATE

👉 Register here: https://cmebg.com/sabitia/cefood_2026/

Upcoming GHI Ambassadors Meeting – Strengthening Our Global Engagement

We are pleased to share that GHI will convene two virtual meetings (to cover all time zones) with all GHI Ambassadors in March. This gathering will provide an important opportunity to reconnect, exchange updates, and discuss how we can further strengthen the role of Ambassadors across regions.

Our Ambassadors are essential to GHI's global presence. They help build bridges between countries, institutions, and scientific communities, ensuring that harmonization efforts are grounded in local realities while contributing to global progress. This meeting will focus on:

- enhancing Ambassador involvement in ongoing and upcoming GHI activities
- identifying regional priorities and opportunities for collaboration
- strengthening communication channels between Ambassadors and the GHI Board
- supporting outreach, visibility, and engagement within national and regional networks

An important topic will be also the promotion of the 2027 Global Harmonization Initiative Congress in Konya, Türkiye, where Ambassadors will have an important role in raising awareness, encouraging participation, and helping to highlight regional achievements and challenges. Their leadership will be instrumental in ensuring that the Congress reflects the diversity, expertise, and global reach of the GHI community. Our GHI Ambassador director Dr Matilda Freund will be contacting you with further details about the meeting dates. We look forward to a productive and inspiring discussion in March, and we thank all Ambassadors for their continued commitment to advancing GHI's mission around the world.

Share Your News With Us

Our strength as a global network comes from the knowledge, achievements, and initiatives of our members. If you have:

- project updates
- event announcements
- publications
- regional activities
- food safety or harmonization news

...we encourage you to send them to us. Your contributions help keep the GHI community informed, connected, and inspired.

NEW!

The official GHI journal:
Quality Assurance and Safety of Crops & Foods (QASCF)

published by:



Discounts and Waivers - 25% APC discount to GHI members. Additional waivers or discounts for authors from low-income countries or for special GHI-led initiatives.

We extend our sincere appreciation to Dr Mark Sandow for the newsletter design, Prof. Joe Regenstein for editing and content review, and Dr Nicola Stanley for managing the distribution of the newsletter.

Email us

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