

AGRICULTURAL MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEM (AMIS)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. AMIS is an initiative of the G20¹. It is a global agricultural market information system that concerns itself, at least initially, with matters relating to wheat, maize (corn), rice and soybeans. It is designed to:
 - a. improve agricultural market information, analyses and forecasts at both national and international levels;
 - b. report on *abnormal*² international market conditions, including structural weaknesses, as appropriate and strengthen global early warning capacity on these movements;
 - c. collect and analyse policy information, promote dialogue and responses, and international policy coordination;
 - d. build data collection capacity in participating countries.

This is an open initiative. However, in a first step it will be the result of a collaborative effort between main producing, exporting and importing countries, in association with international organizations and involving the private sector in conditions to be defined by participating countries. The participation of any new country is approved by the participants. The Chair of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) is a Permanent Observer in AMIS. AMIS operates, to the extent possible, by electronic means in order to promote efficiency.

2. In order to ensure the effective discharge of the functions of AMIS, participants commit to provide to the AMIS Secretariat, as far as practicable, in a regular and timely manner, data and information as requested by the Information Group. This includes:

¹ Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Republic of Korea, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America, and the European Union.

² The Secretariat will convene, as early as possible, a meeting of experts from international organisations to clarify the concept and definition of “abnormal international market conditions” and to work towards the development of a set of indicators to measure such movements.

- National data and relevant supporting information on production, consumption, import, export, stocks and prices for the selected commodities and information concerning the short-term information outlook;
- Information concerning policy changes likely to impact on the production and trade of the selected commodities;
- Participation in meetings of the information Group and Forum;
- Liaison with the information Group and secretariat in the improvement of statistics and information.

3. To carry out its functions, AMIS is composed of:

a) **The Secretariat** The Secretariat is formed by the following international organizations and entities: FAO, IFAD, IFPRI, IGC, WFP, OECD, World Bank, WTO, the UN High Level Task Force (UN-HLTF) and UNCTAD³. Organizations contributing financial or staff resources to AMIS have a decision-making role with respect to the overall planning and day-to-day implementation of AMIS. Contributions from the International Organizations to the fulfilment of the functions of the Secretariat will reflect those organizations' comparative advantage and expertise. The Secretariat is housed in FAO headquarters in Rome, supports all functions of the Forum and the Information Group of AMIS, and fulfills the following functions:

- i. organizes the meetings of AMIS and prepares documents for the Forum and the Information Group;
- ii. assesses the quality of data provided by participating countries and produces high quality market outlook information products for frequent dissemination;
- iii. assesses capacity development needs in member countries, in coordination with relevant International Organisations, Regional Organisations and supports development of national market information systems; AMIS efforts in capacity building will focus on:
 - a manual defining best practices and methodologies for agricultural market data collection and analysis;
 - a series of regional training sessions to enhance data collection capacity and to assist in the development of methodologies for food market outlook; and,

³ To date, FAO, OECD, WFP and World Bank have taken the lead in setting up the Secretariat. Other international organizations have indicated their commitment.

- the identification, design and implementation of special projects, aiming at enhancing data collection, analysis and outlooks.
 - iv. ensures liaison and regular information exchange with its members organisations, other international organisations and market monitoring agencies;
 - v. develops appropriate methodologies and global indicators in collaboration with the Information Group;
 - vi. if warranted, and where there is a particular urgency for policy coordination, draws the attention of the Rapid Response Forum ('Forum'), on the basis of the work described in point i.i. above;
 - vii. in collaboration with the Chair, ensures liaison and regular exchange of information with the Secretariat and Bureau of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS);
 - viii. receives information on food security assessments in vulnerable countries from national, regional and international early warning systems, including the FAO Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) and the Food Security Analysis Service (VAM) of the WFP;
 - ix. issues press communiqués concerning the activities of AMIS, in consultation with the Chair of the Information Group and the Forum;
 - x. undertakes such other functions in support of AMIS, as required;
 - xi. acquires funds for the operation and activities of AMIS in conformity with the Financial Regulations of FAO and in accordance with the principles set out in the Action Plan; and
 - xii. inform the the Information Group and the Forum regarding its main activities and outputs.
- b) **The Global Food Market Information Group ('Information Group')** The Information Group consists of technical representatives from countries participating in AMIS. The field of competence of the Information Group covers production, stocks, trade, utilization and prices (including futures prices). Its members fulfill the following functions:
- i. provide regular reliable, accurate, timely and comparable data regarding the supply and demand position and its probable short term development, as well as

- regarding prices, of the four commodities covered by AMIS with the view to support its early warning aspects;
- ii. organize the timely collection of national policy developments that could impact the market situation and outlook and collation of reports covering agricultural markets, in particular for commodities covered by AMIS;
 - iii. promote the improvement of statistics and information, including the enhancement of national information systems as well as related databases;
 - iv. act as a conduit to each AMIS member country to facilitate the sharing of data and market information;
 - v. share improvements on data collection methods and provide the Secretariat with guidance on capacity building; and
 - vi. work closely with the AMIS Secretariat, exchanging relevant information on a timely basis and representing their country at AMIS meetings.
- c) **The Rapid Response Forum ('Forum')** The Forum is composed by Senior Officials from countries participating in AMIS. It is designed to promote early discussion among decision-level officials about *abnormal* international market conditions to encourage the coordination of policies and the development of common strategies. In particular, it:
- i. promotes early information exchange and discussion on crisis prevention and responses among policy-makers;
 - ii. assists in mobilizing wide and rapid political support for appropriate policy response and actions on issues affecting agricultural production and markets in times of crisis, without seeking to influence humanitarian responses; and
 - iii. briefs and maintains a two-way dialogue with the Secretariat and the Bureau of the Committee of World Food Security on the deliberations of the Forum.