



## FAO resources contribute to knowledge on food and agriculture

*The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has made critical contributions to technical knowledge and analysis on food and agriculture with its knowledge products and services, thus strengthening the evidence base for policies and programmes in this area, according to a recently completed evaluation report.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, FAO needs to improve user-orientation in the design and dissemination of these knowledge products, the report suggested.*



The evaluation, which was conducted by the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) in 2015, assessed the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of FAO's knowledge products and services that were deployed in the period 2011–2014.

It found that FAO produces a broad range of knowledge products and services, which largely respond to the Organization's mandate and stakeholder needs. These products and services are recognized for their technical excellence, for enhancing technical knowledge on food security and agriculture, and for providing evidence base for policies and programmes.

Some of the resources, such as FAOSTAT<sup>2</sup>, the State of Food and Agriculture<sup>3</sup>, the Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition<sup>4</sup> and the Núcleo de Capacitación en Políticas Públicas<sup>5</sup>, are widely accessed and consulted by a large proportion of the target groups. Some of them are also heavily cited and referenced online and in peer-reviewed publications.

### Citations and web references of selected FAO databases

Knowledge product	Owner	Web references		Number of citations	
		Link hit estimate	Site hit estimate	Google Scholar	Scopus cites
FAOSTAT	FAO	3 612	1 377	44 400	12 967
data.worldbank.org	The World Bank	353	191	21 400	4 752
data.un.org	United Nations	861	445	2 720	585

Source: *Assessment of FAO databases, 2015*

1 Evaluation of FAO's contribution to knowledge on food and agriculture. The Office of Evaluation of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). September 2015. The evaluation report and the management response can be accessed at: <http://www.fao.org/evaluation/oed-documents-and-reports/en/>  
2 <http://faostat.fao.org/>  
3 <http://www.fao.org/economic/es-home/sofa/es/#.VkNj3arS1s>  
4 <http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/>  
5 <http://www.fao.org/in-action/capacitacion-politicas-publicas/es/>



The evaluation also found that international organizations, national governments, research and academia benefit the most from FAO data and knowledge products.

However, country-level users, especially from developing regions with poorer internet connectivity and/or language coverage said they often face difficulties accessing FAO data, analyses and resources. They demanded that the products and services be better targeted and made more context-relevant.

To meet this demand, the evaluation recommends that FAO pay greater attention to users' and learners' needs, as well as to improving ease of use and expansion of the influence of the resources to a broader audience.

The evaluation suggests that in the modern era of data and information overload, FAO should step up its use of new technologies and approaches for knowledge sharing to ensure that the Organization continuously meets emerging and changing user needs and expectations.

To address recommendations from the evaluation, FAO management says it will develop a new business model that will facilitate greater accessibility and findability of its diverse knowledge products and services and allow better monitoring and understanding of users' and learners' needs. FAO will also review existing guidelines and quality assurance mechanisms in order to develop a more comprehensive and user-oriented system that will be applied to all of the Organization's knowledge products and services.

For further information on this evaluation,  
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The full report of this and other evaluations  
is available online at [www.fao.org/evaluation](http://www.fao.org/evaluation)

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