

The Committee on World Food Security (CFS), 37th Session, 2011, endorsed the following recommendations on Price Volatility and Food Security.¹



The Committee stressed the need for concerted international efforts to address the structural causes of food price volatility and ensure that its impacts do not undermine small and marginal producers and consumers' right to food.

It expressed its appreciation for the efforts by the High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) for its work on price volatility and food security, and took note of its report on Price Volatility and Food Security and recommendations contained therein.

The CFS welcomed the Action Plan on Food Price Volatility and Agriculture of the G20 as a positive effort to address a number of the main causes and implications of food price volatility and would welcome its endorsement by the G20 Summit to be held in November 2011.

It welcomed the outcome of the Regional Multi-stakeholder Workshop on Food Security and Nutrition for the Near East and North Africa Region that took place on 3-4 Oct. 2011 in Cairo under the CFS umbrella and encouraged the Regional Members to deal with coordination issues at both regional and national levels.

The Committee took note of the assessment by FAO and other stakeholders of the positive and negative effects of different policy responses to high and volatile food prices, as discussed in the series of regional and subregional consultations organized by FAO in 2011.

It recommended the following action points, their development and implementation, by the appropriate parties and stakeholders: Actions to increase food production and availability, and to enhance resilience to shocks:

- Increase stable and sustainable public and private investment to strengthen smallholder production systems, boost agricultural productivity, foster

rural development and increase resilience with particular attention to smallholder agriculture;

- Promote a significant expansion of agricultural research and development, and its funding, including by strengthening the work of the reformed CGIAR, supporting national research systems, public universities and research institutions, and promoting technology transfer, sharing of knowledge and practices, including for family farming, and capacity building through North-South and South-South cooperation;
- Support the development, or review, by Member Countries, of comprehensive national food security strategies which are country-owned and led, evidence-based and inclusive of all key partners at national level, in particular civil society, women's and farmers' organizations, and which establish policy coherence in respective sectors, including national economic policies, to address food price volatility;
- Urge Member Countries to explore measures and incentives to reduce waste and losses in the food system, including addressing post harvest losses;

Actions to reduce volatility:

- Support the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) to enhance food market information and transparency, and urge

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**Price Volatility and Food Security
by the High Level Panel of Experts
on Food Security
& Nutrition**

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¹ Excerpt from the CFS 37 Final Report

the participating international organizations, private sector actors and governments to ensure the public dissemination of timely and quality food market information products;

- Acknowledging the need for countries to better coordinate responses in times of food price crises, support the establishment of the AMIS Rapid Response Forum and request the CFS Bureau to ensure appropriate links between that Forum and CFS;
- Improve transparency, regulation and supervision of agricultural derivative markets;
- Noting that a transparent and predictable international trade in food is crucial for reducing excessive price volatility and maintaining focus on building an accountable and rules-based multilateral trading system taking into account food security concerns, in particular those of the Least Developed and Net Food Importing Developing Countries. In that context, support an ambitious, balanced and comprehensive conclusion of the Doha Development Round in accordance with its mandate;
- Review biofuels policies - where applicable and if necessary - according to balanced science-based assessments of the opportunities and challenges they may present for food security so that biofuels can be produced where it is socially, economically and environmentally feasible to do so. In line with this, mandate the HLPE, with full consideration of resources and other CFS priorities, to conduct a science-based comparative literature analysis, taking into consideration the work produced by the FAO and Global Bioenergy Partnership (GBEP), of the positive and negative effects of biofuels on food security to be presented to CFS;
- Request relevant international organizations, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, to further assess the constraints and effectiveness of local, national and regional food reserves;

Actions to mitigate the negative impacts of volatility:

- Increase the role of the state, where appropriate, to mitigate the negative impacts of volatility, including through the development of stable, long-term national social protection strategies and safety nets, particularly addressing vulnerable categories of populations such as women and children, that can be leveraged and scaled-up in times of crisis. Reiterate, in this context, the

mandate for a HLPE study on the matter, requesting its presentation to the 38th Session of CFS;

- Recommend the use of national and local social safety nets and local purchase mechanisms, whenever appropriate, for the delivery of food aid, while taking time, market, production, institutional and other relevant factors into account, in accordance with the rules of the multilateral trading system;
- Endorse efforts requested by the G20 for WFP and other international organizations and partners (such as the Economic Community of West African States - ECOWAS) and West African countries, to support the development of a pilot project in West Africa, for a targeted regional emergency humanitarian food reserve, consistent with Annex 2 of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture;
- Request that the international organizations, in consultation with other relevant stakeholders, develop a framework for a draft voluntary code of conduct for emergency humanitarian food reserves management, for further consideration by CFS;
- Develop risk management instruments, including for mitigating the impact of price shocks, and recommend their mainstreaming into national food security strategies focused on mitigating risk for the most vulnerable against food price volatility. Attention should also be given to the inclusion of best practices and lessons learned for vulnerable small-scale food producers;
- Welcome the decision by the G20 to agree to remove food export restrictions or extraordinary taxes for food purchased for non-commercial humanitarian purposes by WFP and not to impose them in the future, and urge all Member States to agree to the same principle;
- Welcome increased international support for food assistance, especially in times of high and volatile food prices and based on need, including under the framework of the Food Aid Convention.

The Committee recommended that FAO, IFAD, WFP and other relevant international organizations and CFS stakeholders reinforce the policy dialogue among themselves and Member Countries with a view to enhancing adoption and implementation of the above recommendations at all appropriate levels;

It requested the CFS Secretariat to prepare, in collaboration with the Advisory Group and based on information made available by the relevant stakeholders, a general report on the state of implementation of all of the above recommendations and action points, to be presented to CFS at a date to be decided by the CFS Bureau.



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

CFS is the foremost inclusive international and inter-governmental platform for all stakeholders to work together in a coordinated way to ensure food security and nutrition for all. CFS endorses policy recommendations on a wide range of food security and nutrition topics.

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