

# **The Follow-up of the Implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action**

## **SECTION I: BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

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## **SECTION II: PRIORITY FOOD SECURITY ISSUES AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD FOOD SUMMIT PLAN OF ACTION**

During the recent years, the Slovak Republic has undergone numerous changes connected with the integration into the European Union and the NATO, which have become positively reflected in also the country's macro-economic parameters.

As of 1 May 2004, the Slovak Republic becomes an EU Member State, and it will take over all the principles of the Common Agricultural Policy aimed at sustainable development.

Elementary education and primary health care are accessible to 100% of the population. Care of orphans is the responsibility of the state, and the law does not permit children to keep households. Mortality of contagious diseases is kept permanently at low levels.

In general, the country is characterized by food security corresponding to international hygiene standards. In recent years, the distribution networks have changed due to the penetration of business chains. The range of imported products, including various functional foods, has become pronouncedly extended. On the other hand, smaller food retailers become closed out, and this will require the introduction of mobile shops, in particular in some rural areas.

The population spends about one quarter of their income on food. Due to the unknown shares of people relying on self-supplies/production of food in rural areas, it is but difficult to acquire an exact picture of the actual consumption of food.

The government pays significant attention to secure food not harmful to health. From the aspect of the recommended dietary intakes, the structure of the consumption still shows some drawbacks, although – thanks to the measures under the National Programme of Health Promotion – there is a discernible positive trend. Also favourable has been the information campaign for the broad public aiming at spreading scientific knowledge on nutrition as a key factor in the strategy of population's health improvement.

The relatively high unemployment rates have been showing decreasing trends in recent years, with nevertheless about 2% of the population still living below the poverty line. The affordability of food to the socially most disadvantaged layers remains limited, with a potential for the occurrence of manifestations of malnutrition. The groups at the greatest risk include the homeless and a certain portion of the Roma population which receive attention on the part of the government through development programmes.

WFS Action Plan is being implemented in the SR based on democratic principles of governance and on scientifically based development programmes aiming at the reform of the public service, tax system, health service and the system of pensions, employment policy and labour market, promotion of investment cooperation, international trade development, promotion of population's health, development of information technologies, promotion of education and learning, rural development, environmental protection, optimisation of land, forests and water resources management, as well as support of related research activities. Also, to the extent allowed by its potential, the SR participates in the provision of food aid under the World Food Programme, and cooperates with non-governmental organisations in securing resources for food and material assistance. The implementation of the WFS Action Plan is among the important priorities of the Slovak Government, with all sectors and the whole society being involved in it.

### SECTION III: RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FOR EACH COMMITMENT AND MEASURES TAKEN

#### COMMITMENT ONE

*We will ensure the enabling political, social, and economic environment intended to create the best conditions for eradication of poverty and for durable peace, based on full and equal participation of women and men, which is the most conducive environment for achievement of sustainable food security for all.*

The establishment of the independent Slovak Republic (1993) has been characterised by the introduction of parliamentary democracy with continuous successful reinforcement. The political, social and economic environment has been shaped based on numerous laws, decrees and decisions that create an environment for long-term development and prosperity of the country. As an element of direct democracy, also the referendum option, being a nation-wide vote, was laid down in the Constitution of the Slovak Republic. The May 2003 referendum clearly reflected the wish of Slovakia's citizens to become members of the European Union.

The political, social and economic reform undertaken by the government during the past years and supported by Slovakia's citizens mouthed, during the first half of 2004, into the final stage of Slovakia's (SR) integration in the North-Atlantic Treaty (NATO) and the European Union (EU). EU and NATO membership is being perceived by the SR as the tool of a long-term guarantee of security and prosperity. The life standard of Slovakia's population is expected to gradually more and more rapidly approach that of the EU citizens. Also, several bilateral problems could be resolved and a number of reforms have been undertaken.

As the result of a long-term effort, reform of public service was undertaken directed above all towards decentralisation of political powers; the preparatory phase was accompanied by broad-based public discussions. The strongest supporter of the reform was the Association of Towns and Villages, an organisation associating almost all Slovakia's towns and villages. The successful start of the public service reform process brought in settlement of the relationships between the civil service, territorial and special-interest local governments and the private sector, having at its basis a strengthened civil society, the subsidiary principle, efficiency, transparency and flexibility.

Slovakia's legislation lays down principles of democracy and protection of basic rights and freedoms of all citizens. The institute of government plenipotentiary to address problems of citizens in need of special assistance, including solutions to problems of the Roma community, was established at the Government of the SR. The government adopted policy principles in relation to the Roma, with emphasis being laid on improving of the level of education of the Roma minority, utilisation of their human and working potential, improvement of conditions of life of the Roma colonies, improvement of the level of the civil and legal knowledge of the Roma, and raising their participation in public life and administration of public matters. Numbers of projects addressing the above mentioned issues are gradually increasing, and funds are being allocated for these areas by both the Slovak Government and the EU. The Roma community in Slovakia shows gradual amalgamation, and they have started establishing their own organisational structures.

Thanks to the policies of the government, Slovakia witnesses one of the most rapid economic developments of all the Central European countries. The employment policy concept and priorities of the labour market policy were officially adopted and are being implemented, due to which unemployment rates dropped significantly, and more than 80,000 new jobs could be

created. Several laws and regulations clearly rule legal relationships concerning employment, with both genders (men and women) having equal rights and responsibilities.

There have been principal changes in the development of foreign trade, and the country has been successful in attracting significant foreign investments. So, in the context of the national strategy of investment promotion adopted by the SR Government in December 2003, agreements on co-operation in investments area were signed with the companies PSA Peugeot-Citroen and Hyundai Kia Automotive Group, which mark prospective creation of further job opportunities. Macro-economic stability could be achieved, as witnessed by the favourable exchange rate of the Slovak currency and the low interest rates. A contribution to economic invigoration was the reduced tax burden upon legal entities, restructuring and recovery of the banking sector. Slovakia was accepted as the OECD member in December 2000. The positive results achieved in the area of economy were also appreciated by the renown rating agencies: in the recent two years, they raised the rating of Slovakia's economy twice, and a further mark-up from positive to investment level is expected.

The Slovak Republic initiated and hosted the international conference „Enlarged Europe: New Agenda“ held in Bratislava in March 2004. The conference was attended by representatives of the V4 countries, the Vilnius group (V10) as well as those from a number of other countries, NGOs and institutions, and space was offered for interchange of experiences from the establishment of democratic institutions and the civil society; in this context, the Slovak Republic demonstrated its co-responsibility for the further developments on the European continent.

## **COMMITMENT TWO**

***We will implement policies aimed at eradication poverty and inequality and improvement of physical and economical access by all at all times, to sufficient nutritionally adequate and safe foods and their effective utilisation.***

In 2000, urban population in the SR accounted for 57.4 % of the total population, and this share is expected to grow to reach 60% by 2010. The share of women with earning activities in the SR (45.6 % in 2001) approximately corresponds to the demographic structure of the population.

Expenditures on food account for approximately 25 % of all expenditures of private households. Inequality of access to food is determined by the income of the various groups of the population and the unemployment rates, the latter remaining relatively high (17.8 % in 2002), although showing a decreasing trend in recent years, in accordance with the implementation of the government employment policy. Its gratifying to see that job vacancies increase in parallel: according to the data provided by the Office of Statistics, there was an increase from 5,709 to 17,238 between 1999 and 2002. When it comes to the qualification structure, it is labourers that have the biggest share. In the context of government priorities and activities however, unemployment rates are expected to keep increasing further.

The structure of households by income is reflected in the quality of nutrition and thus in the health status of the population. With respect to eating habits of Slovakia's population, the greatest setback has been high consumption of fats, with a favourably decreasing tendency: per capita fat consumption decreased from 114 g in 1998 to 107 g in 2001. Despite of the slightly increasing trends in the consumption of milk and dairy products (from per capita 160 kg in 2000

to 165 kg to 2002) there is still insufficient intake of calcium (753 mg/person in 2001), vitamins B1, B2, B6, C, and fibre.

Studies into the nutritional status of the population by social categories showed that nutrition is above all affected by the level of education; it should be stressed that elementary education and primary health care are available to 100% of the population. The most endangered group of population from nutritional aspect are children and young people with a critically low calcium intake (with intakes of but 50–60% of the recommended dietary intake on the average). Unsatisfactory are the intakes of zinc, copper and antioxidant vitamins, in particular beta-carotene and vitamin C. Also less than sufficient are intakes of vitamins B1, B2 and B6. Relatively satisfactory is the intake of iron, and partially also of vitamin E. Supply of iodine is taken care of by fortification of regular salt; in connection with the recommendations to restrict consumption of salt, fortification with iodine of also other foodstuffs is being considered.

Slovakia's food legislation has already been fully harmonised with the European Union requirements and the quality of food corresponds to the international criteria of the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius. Activities in this area go on, by taking over new standards, regulations and directives to the national legislation.

National Health Promotion Programme (NPPZ) has been implemented in the SR since 1994. Under it, Programme of Slovakia Population's Nutrition Improvement (NPPZ) was adopted by the government and the parliament in 1999. The Programme is directed towards comprehensive addressing of nutritional issues with respect to the various population groups, taking into account recent nutrition-related trends, and having the following specific objectives: improvement of the nutrition standard of the population, establishment of preconditions for primary agricultural production and processing of food harmless to health, directing by legislation a new concept of the development of all forms of catering, change in eating habits of the people, and change in citizens' attitudes towards their own health.

The Programme has been specifically directed towards the young generation and improvement of the information level of the population on the principles of healthy nutrition, and towards the education of selected groups of the population. Specifically, energy intake, intake of fats, cholesterol, proteins of animal origin, saccharose and sodium chloride have to be reduced by 2010, along with an improved structure of fats consumed, increased intake of vitamins C, E, and beta-carotene, polysaccharides, fibre, n-3 unsaturated fatty acids, magnesium, calcium, zinc and selenium. The desired increase of the intake of some nutrients by young people, in particular of calcium, is addressed by one of the sections of the Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture of the SR (April 2004) that allows subsidies to be granted to support milk to be consumed by children of school age (mandatory school attendance).

NPPZ includes several research projects focusing on topical issues of nutrition, such as the project Monitoring of Intake by Slovakia's Population of Additives in Food, the objective of which is to provide a real picture of the population's exposure to various additives and the feedback to legislation, as well as to provide the population with general information about the issue. Also, continuous monitoring of environmental contamination is going on with similar objectives, including the utilisation of the results for urgent interventions to eliminate sources of contamination. The results of the monitoring are being used for also the international GEMS/Food programme.

Also, several activities following from media policy, activities of health consultancies and support of activities of non-governmental organisations oriented towards education of the population to healthy nutrition represent tools to implement NPPZ. Education of the population to healthy nutrition is also being supported by various activities of the scientific community, such as Flair-Flow 4 Project, in which 24 European countries participated. The project focused on spreading of the most recent scientific information, including results of the European Commission-funded food survey, among consumers and experts in the health sector and food production. The Slovak Republic was part of the Project within 2001-2003, and information was spread by several ways: brief 1-page documents, information booklets, workshops and electronic media. These activities have been going on also after the financing of the Project was terminated.

### **COMMITMENT THREE**

*We will search for resources of the reliable food supplies at the household, national, regional and global levels, and chances to combat pests, drought and desertification, considering the multifunctional character of agriculture.*

Upon joining the EU on 1 May, 2004, Slovakia will adopt all the principles of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), aiming at sustainable development, applicable in the EU since 1992. The tool intended for pre-accession assistance to agriculture in accordance with CAP objectives is the SAPARD Programme (Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development), focusing on priorities and specific issues of sustainable development of rural areas and on adoption of the Acquis Communautaire in accordance with the speeding up of the preparation of candidate countries for EU accession. Multi-year Financial Agreement between the SR and the EU was signed in March 2001, laying down the technical, legal and administrative framework of the Programme implementation (throughout 2006). Its implementation is being guaranteed by the Monitoring Board of the SAPARD Programme established at the Ministry of Agriculture of the SR.

Preparation of projects, provision of counselling and drafting of training programmes are the responsibilities of Rural Development Agency (ARVI), which has been closely collaborating with the Ministry of Agriculture and the SAPARD Agency. Activities under the national Village Renewal Programme have been focusing on counselling for micro-regions, non-governmental organisations and individual villages. ARVI is focusing on support to enterprises in rural tourism and agri-tourism, support of women entrepreneurs in rural areas, etc. During the preceding period, activities under the PHARE Project 98-5142 „Support of Rural Development in Slovakia Through Sustainable Use of Forest Potential“ were developed aiming at comprehensive uses of the forestry stock.

Promotion Programme of Agrarian Development of Rural Areas has been implemented as part of the concept of agricultural and food policy adopted by the SR Government on 13 October 2000. Grants may be obtained from State Agricultural and Food Promotion Fund for e.g.:

- support of farming in less favoured areas and for growing of special crops,
- business in agriculture directed towards preservation and care of the genetic stock of animals,

- research and development to preserve and care of the genetic stock of plants, including collections of fruit, vegetables, cereals, oil seeds and various other plants, including decorative plants, grasses and the wild flora of the Slovak Republic,
- research and development to preserve and extend the genetic base of cultivated plants,
- using of irrigation, including costs of remedying emergencies on drainage facilities and irrigation systems,
- coverage of a portion of interest on long-term loans for the purchase of agricultural, food and forestry technologies, for rehabilitation of production buildings, rationalisation of energy management, purchase of agricultural and forest land,
- coverage of a portion of the insurance premium for losses concerning forests and plant production due to unfavourable climatic conditions, as well as losses of livestock due to diseases of farming animals,
- coverage of losses in plant production as a result of drought, water logging, plant diseases or effects of plant pests, as well as to cover losses due to endemics of animal diseases,
- forest improvements to protect forest plantations against biotic pests, setting up of gene resources and preservation of endangered genetic stock of the forest dendroflora,
- flood-, avalanche- and erosion-preventing measures on forest land,
- chemical and biological reclamation of land, preparation of areas for afforestation, afforestation after calamities, and preventive fire-fighting measures in forests,
- testing of propagation materials for viral, mycoplasma and bacterial diseases of vine.

#### **COMMITMENT FOUR**

***We will strive to ensure that food industry, agricultural trade and the entire trade policy will promote food security for all by means of a fair and market-oriented world trade system.***

During 2003, the Slovak Republic continued liberalising the conditions of its domestic as well as foreign trade, with the priority being harmonisation of the mechanisms and of legislative measures of the SR with the conditions applicable in the European Union. Upon Slovakia's joining the EU, also the domestic and international trade in the sector of agriculture will start to be ruled by the conditions laid down by the EU legislation. The principal definitions and the conditions of the common market regulation, as well as the system of measures determining supports that may be provided, are laid down in the European Union Treaty and the relevant EU legislation, and they also were laid down in the Accession Agreement between the Slovak Republic and the European Union.

At the basis of the EU functioning is customs union which relates to the whole trade in goods, and thus securing free movement of goods within the Community. The so-called common/single market is being applied among the EU Member States, which relates to also agriculture and trade in agricultural products. The operation and the development of the single market in agricultural products is regulated by Common Agricultural Policy whose objectives

include raising of the productivity, securing of a reasonable standard of life to the farming community, securing of regular supplies, securing of supplies of goods to consumers at reasonable prices, and – above all – stabilisation of markets. To achieve these objectives, the EU introduced common regulation of the agricultural market, in particular by introducing common rules of competition, mandatory regulation of markets within the national systems, and regulation at the European level. This common market regulation may include any measures needed to achieve the objectives mentioned, in particular price regulation, support of the production and sales of various products, warehousing, temporary measures, and common mechanisms to stabilise imports or exports of agricultural products.

Among the stabilisation factors of imports and exports of agricultural products, a system of business mechanisms may be applied. Under it, import and export licenses are granted for agricultural products, and export subsidies may be paid on agricultural and food products (also referred to in the EU as processed agricultural products or Non-Annex I products). The objective of export subsidies is to make up for the price differences between world markets and the Community, and thus to enable exports of agricultural products to third countries at world market prices. This measure helps achieving competitiveness of EU products at world markets.

The world Trade Organisation (WTO) plays an important role in the liberalisation of the world trade. The Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference (Qatar, November 2001) marked the start of a new round of negotiations concerning further liberalisation of the world trade, laying down starting points for three major UK GATT commitments: substantially improved market access (including reduction of duties), reduction of export subsidies with the prospect of their complete phasing out, and substantial reduction of deals distorted by domestic subsidies. At the same time, developing and least developed countries will enjoy special treatment, and non-business interests will also be taken into account. The CEFTA countries, supported by the Baltic States and Croatia, being countries associated to the EU, and its partners, were instrumental in railroading the issue of non-business interests which account for the multifunctionality of agriculture and regional development.

To the extent allowed by the financial potential of the SR, the government supports exports, in particular of excess agricultural commodities, as one of the market regulation tools. With respect to supporting the sales of domestic products in the domestic market, primary focus should be upon targets expected to efficiently influence the growth of sales of agri-food products of domestic origin. For the time being, the priority should be agricultural and food production directed towards the structure of goods required by the market, including support of the development and maximum utilisation of the own distribution networks of producers, improved quality of agri-food production, and establishment of associations of producers and sellers of agricultural and food products. In this context, the priority task for the civil service was the adoption of legislation to direct the procedures of the retail systems with respect to the misuse of their economic power vis-à-vis their suppliers, the individual producers of agricultural and food products. The Business Chains Act adopted by the National Council of the Slovak Republic in 2003, addresses all the issues of significance for the supplier – retail systems relationship.

Another important tool in the area of the promotion of sales of agri-food products of domestic origin in the domestic markets is the seal of quality and origin. Consequently, Ministry of Agriculture opened in 2003 a public tender for the design of a logo to characterize quality and origin of Slovak products.

Market organisations were developed in 2003 for 6 commodities, including milk, beef and pig meat, sugar, cereals, and potatoes. For each commodity, a group of experts attempted to find the model of market regulation most appropriate for the pre-accession period. In parallel, principles of market regulation and products subject of market regulation in 2003, corresponding to the market organisations designed, were presented to Slovak Government's session. Action Plan was developed to address the issue of competences with respect to the administration of the various tools of the Common Agricultural Policy.

Pursuant to article 20 and article 21 par. 5 of the Accession Agreement between the SR and the EU, the parties agreed to explore the opportunities for the granting of mutual concessions in trade, taking account of the mutual trade in processed agricultural products. Based on this, the first round of negotiations with the EU Commission was held in 2001 on the liberalisation of trade in processed agricultural products. Trade concessions as the result of the negotiations mentioned were adopted by the Slovak Government by its Resolution No. 486/2001 of 30 May 2001.

Because of the long-lasting approval process in the European Union and also in agreement with the requirement of some European Union Member States for upgrading and/or extension of trade concessions agreed in 2001, both parties agreed to continue the negotiations about further potential mutual concessions concerning trade in processed agricultural products to extend the already agreed bilateral trade concessions in this area, and thus to gradually eliminate barriers to mutual trade. The EU Commission presented a proposal for further liberalisation of trade in processed agricultural products suggesting that the level of liberalisation should match the generally accepted WTO standards for free trade. As before, the main principle will be gradual opening up of the market so as to make both parties, in particular the associated countries, well prepared for the single market within the enlarged Community.

Expert negotiations with the EU Commission were completed in April 2003. Both parties committed themselves to apply the trade concessions as agreed, in the form of autonomous measures as of 1 June, 2003.

The EU Commission's approach to liberalisation of trade in the field of processed agricultural products under the 2nd round of negotiations is based on the Double Profit principle, i.e. elimination of customs duties and export subsidies on both sides and, on the EU part, elimination of the agricultural component with respect to all processed agricultural products, with the exception of specified products sensitive from the viewpoint of both the EU and the SR.

#### **COMMITMENT FIVE**

***We will endeavour to prevent and be prepared for natural disasters and man-made emergencies, to meet transitory and emergency food requirements in ways that encourage recovery, rehabilitation, development and capacity to meet the future needs.***

The major objectives of sustainable water management policy in the Slovak Republic, adopted by the Slovak Government include securing of drinking water supplies, securing of water for other economic purposes, prevention and mitigation of consequences of floods and droughts, and environmental protection.

The series of the major measures to achieve water management objectives in 2003 concerned floods and became reflected in the following areas of activities:

- care of water flows and regulation of their regime,
- optimisation of water management systems management and management of runoffs within catchment areas,
- design of preventive flood measures,
- care of groundwater sources,
- meeting the needs of water users within sustainable limits,
- guaranteeing of a safe and reliable operation of waterworks,
- water management, forestry and agricultural measures with respect to the care of runoff in the landscape and in the regulation of the soil water status.

The key factor with respect to landscape protection against natural disasters in the Slovak Republic is flood protection. Ministry of the Environment of the SR takes care of operational activities via Hydrology Information and Forecasting Service (HIPS) at the Slovak Institute of Hydrometeorology (SHMÚ). Warning and information service is then organised according to the information about the current hydrological situation and its expected development.

## SHMÚ

- processes current hydro meteorological data from the whole country and the neighbouring countries,
- evaluates hydro meteorological situation within the catchment areas of all Slovak rivers,
- develops forecasts of water levels and water flows,
- monitors the expected development of hydro meteorological situation on Slovakia's rivers.

On a daily basis, HIPS processes data from 79 hydro-forecast stations from the whole of Slovakia. Current information is available at [www.shmu.sk/hips/](http://www.shmu.sk/hips/). Also, operational hydrological information needed to determine the status and the development of hydro meteorological situation is being exchanged with the countries along the Danube catchment area as well as with countries which the river hydrologically communicates with.

Slovak Environmental Agency (SAŽP) is a professional body with nation-wide operation; its activities are directed towards environmental protection and creation on the principles of sustainable development. Its founder is Ministry of the Environment of the SR, and its responsibilities include development of environmental awareness among Slovakia's population. Via its technical units and environmental education centres (SEV) under methodological guidance by Environmental Education and Promotion Centre (CEVaP), they implement out-of-school education in matters of environmental protection and creation at all the levels of the society. In 2003, the main activities focused on the drafting of methodological documents for out-of-school environmental education, organisation of methodological days of environmental education for educators, counselling for teachers and students, practical training in environmental protection through national competitions in natural sciences, supervision of nation-wide programmes and projects implemented with a variety of partner entities. The Slovak Republic was awarded the silver Green Award for the Project „Live Nature“, which was

handed over to SAŽP representatives by the representative of the UK Department of Trade and Industry at the House of Commons in London on 6 November 2003, on behalf of The Green Organisation.

## **COMMITMENT SIX**

***We will promote optimal allocation and use of public and private investments to foster human resources, sustainable food, agriculture, fisheries and forestry systems, and rural development, in high and low potential areas.***

By its areas covered by forests (approx. 2 million ha), the Slovak Republic is among the European countries with the largest proportions of forests. Economically used forests make up 67 %, protective forests 15 %, and special purpose forests 18% of the overall area of forests in Slovakia. Changes in forest management, in particular the decision concerning the priority of the shelter wood system have influenced the goals and the objectives of forest management, which currently has a share of about 60 %. Also positively can be assessed the growing share of natural renewal, linked with the cleared areas. Coniferous wood species are represented in Slovakia's forests by approximately 41 %, the deciduous trees make up almost 59 %. There was an increase in average stocking during the period concerned, with also a positive development in the extent of the areas covered by trees of the various age categories; this can also show in the future decades with respect to slight increases of the felling potential. This is also confirmed by increasing timber supply on the stump, representing currently 396 million m<sup>3</sup> (206 m<sup>3</sup>/ha).

These positive facts have also been appreciated by non-governmental organisations (WWF), stating that Slovakia ranks third in Europe when it comes to the standard and management of forests (after Switzerland and Finland).

Overall, the scope of planting and growing works and protective measures however influences the costs of the forest management. Long-term imissions, that in particular the forests in Slovakia's mountains have been exposed to, have an untoward effect on their health condition, and have far-reaching consequences showing as reduced increment rates, quality and thus also reduced revenues from timber. Also, this is a key position with respect to the coverage of the costs mentioned. The consequences of the effects of anthropogenic factors also showed in 2003: random production markedly increased, making up in excess of 50% of the entire production. Of significance were wind throw disasters and snow throws as well as the spreading of wood borers and insects living under the bark.

Currently, also requirements on full-fledged application of the public functions of forests are on the increase, some of them exceeding reasonable extent. Problems connected with the transformation of the woodworking industry and trade in timber increase. A huge interest concerns some product ranges made of timber of coniferous trees, while there is disinterest in and excess of products of hardwood species, and the significant receivables from trade significantly influence the economics of forest owners and, in the end effect, also the present standing of Slovakia's forestry.

In accordance with the "Forestry Policy Concept of the SR through 2005", the activities were focusing in 2003 upon:

- addressing principal issues of forest administration and uses in Slovakia in the interest of securing sustainable benefits for their owners and of fulfilling of their functions of public benefit,
- mitigation and elimination of the consequences to forests of significant anthropogenic harmful factors, in particular imission from domestic and foreign sources,
- optimum uses of the production potential of forests, in particular production potential aiming at generating sufficient funds (resources) to cover the costs of raising activities,
- generating additional revenue sources by complementary activities in forest management and payments for services of public benefit,
- maintaining employment and securing stability and rural development in regions with significant proportions of forests,
- reinforcing supervision of management in forests, raising the standard of their management and protection,
- development of international relations and compatibility in the principal issues of forestry among the European Union Member States.

## **COMMITMENT SEVEN**

***We will implement, monitor, and follow-up this Plan of Action at all levels in co-operation with the international community.***

Since 1996, the Slovak Government has been voluntarily granting annual support to address global food insecurity through the World Food Programme (WFP). Experts from Slovakia have been taking part in FAO projects directed towards developmental aid, in particular concerning food safety and security, setting up of food and forestry databases. The monitoring and guidance of activities as well as regular reviews of activities (at six-month intervals) are the responsibility of the Board of the Slovak Republic on the implementation of the World Food Summit Action Plan, operating at the SR FAO Commission.

The Slovak Republic has been taking part in several programmes and projects of the FAO, of which the following may be referred to for 2003:

- Fight Against Hunger – global programme,
- Fish marketing, investment tasks, European and sub-regional information system – establishment of EASTFISH-European project,
- Strengthening national capacities for monitoring and evaluation of the SAPARD programme,
- Integrated pest management for Western corn rootworm in maize cropping system,
- Spruce stand control in the Kysuce region,
- Animal genetic resources in the Slovak Republic,
- Strategy for active conservation of the dual-purpose Pinzgau Cattle Breed,
- Sub-regional training in meat inspection and meat technology.

The care of the WFS Action Plan in the Slovak Republic is based on scientific foundations. Scientific research activities directed towards the development of the concept and strategy of

science in the area of agriculture, food industries, veterinary medicine, forestry and water management in the Slovak Republic are roofed by the Slovak Academy of Agricultural Sciences (SAPV). The scope of the Academy's interest also covers counselling, expertise and training of new scientists. Comprehensive technical positions on the solutions to various problems are being discussed and published in books of proceedings that also serve as source for the development and implementation of state and sectoral policies in the sector of agriculture. The topics developed are closely linked to the implementation of the WFS Action Plan in the SR. The following are worth of being mentioned:

- Optimisation of the utilisation of Slovakia's natural resources for the purposes of food production
- Utilisation of mountain areas for production and non-production purposes
- Utilisation and preservation of water resources
- Soil and reclamation in the transition process of Slovakia's agriculture
- Effects of ownership and user structure on the condition of the forests and the economy of their management
- Rural development and rural population issues
- Production and ecological systems securing sustainable development of agriculture in Slovakia's regions
- Genetics and morphogenetics of farming animals
- Human resources as the major factor in agriculture
- Nutritional and production-related issues in the Slovak Republic
- Food security and healthy nutrition of the population
- Slovakia's agricultural policy concept and multifunctional agriculture
- Agriculture and quality of life of the population
- Current trends of development and utilisation of genetically modified organisms
- Expected changes in climate and their possible impacts upon the water cycle, agriculture and forest management in the SR
- Slovakia's Agricultural policy during the EU pre-accession period, etc.

On a continuous basis, the Slovak Republic organizes workshops, seminars and courses, several of them with the participation of representatives of other FAO member states, directed on counselling and training in agriculture, soil sciences, plant and animal production, rural women and family, information systems, etc. There was a FAO workshop „Internet Food Safety Portal – Communication Systems for Food Safety and Consumer Confidence“ hosted in Nitra in March 2003, attended by representatives of some EU Member States and the European Commission. A significant contribution to food harmless issues within the European region was also the staging of the 23rd meeting of the Codex Alimentarius Regional Coordination Committee held in Bratislava in 2002; the next meeting will be held in Bratislava again, under the auspices of the Slovak Government.

Many workshops focusing on production and affordability of food, economics, trade and food safety are being organised at the initiative of professional and special-interest associations. Several books have dealt with the optimisation of the use of natural resources for the production

of food and addressed current issues in primary agricultural production. Also, targeted multi-media CDs are available.

Pursuant to Act No. 211/2000 on free access of information, mechanisms have been established in the SR to provide for information of all stakeholders with respect to the implementation of the WFS Action Plan. Publicly available are legislation-related, professional and statistical information, including extension services for every area, with the main and most used sources of information being various web pages which are being regularly updated. Agricultural market information (ATIS) has become a stable source of information for the professional agricultural public.

Electronic sources of information are being widely used under the informatisation programme of the society to pursue the goals of the World Food Programme and for the purposes of educating the public in issues of food safety and hygiene. Consumers are encouraged to buy Slovak products. Slovak products bearing the logo „Nutrition for Heart“ awarded to selected foods based on criteria defined under a common project with the government of Canada represent an important aid to the consumers in focusing on healthy nutrition. Comprehensive information for consumers and producers are available on the Internet. Also, the target of numerous additional activities is education of the consumer (web pages, presentations, workshops, publications), with many of them being implemented in cooperation with the Association of Slovak Consumers.

A permanent and ready-to-use source for the development of all the branches of agriculture and food industries remains the scientific research base. Government-supported research projects based on long-term directions and priorities of agriculture, food industries and economy of the agri-food complex are clearly directed towards securing accessibility and safety of food in the Slovak Republic.

Requirements of the agricultural sector on new experts are addressed via a variety of levels of training and education, including vocational establishments for apprentices, secondary vocational schools, post-secondary training courses, universities and doctoral programmes. A variety of re-training courses are being organised as part of additional educational and training activities, according to the needs of the market.

The state budget also allocated funds for extension services for businesses in the agricultural sector, food industries and sales services; they focus on the development and implementation of business, developmental and upgrading projects, a variety of trainings, publication of technological guides and booklets, as well as on individual extension services-related activities.

National celebrations of the World Food Day (16 October) are organised in the SR every year, with several accompanying events targeted at the implementation of the WFS tasks on the national level. In the framework of the celebrations in 2003, the national forum „International Alliance Against Famine“ was organised to discuss, a. o., issues of equality of chances for women in rural areas, and the national competition for young people was announced concerning the best www page on the issue of fighting famine, to be evaluated at the occasion of the World Food Day on 16 October 2004. As part of the festivities, there was also an exhibition on the 10th anniversary of the cooperation between the SR and the FAO, and a charity event (fundraising) to support nutrition of socially needy children and young people.

At the initiative of the FAO and under the auspices of the President of the Slovak Republic Mr. Rudolf Schuster, the national conference „Multifunctional Agriculture – a Tool of Sustainable Development of Mountain Regions of Slovakia“ was held in Zvolen in 2002.

In the pipeline is the 12th meeting of the European Commission on Agriculture's Working Party on Women and the Family in Rural Development, to be held under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture of the SR in Nitra, on 18-21 October 2004.

The previous activities of the Slovak Republic directed towards the implementation of the national WFS Action Plan were appreciated on the part of the FAO. FAO Director General conferred in 2003 the highest award – Agricola Medal 2002 – upon the President of the SR Mr. Rudolf Schuster. FAO medals and plaques were conferred upon: National Committee for FAO at the Ministry of Agriculture of the SR; Head of the AGRIS/CARIS Center in Nitra; and Director of Food Research Institute, Bratislava.

## FOOD SECURITY AND RELATED INDICATORS<sup>2</sup>

INDICATORS	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Source
<b>1. Food security indicators</b>									
• Availability									
Average per person dietary energy supply (kcal/day)	3276	3199	3106	3084	2919				Ministry of Agriculture SR
Food production index (1989-91=100)			79	74	62	69			FAOSTAT, World Bank World Development Indicators, 2002
Food self-sufficiency ratio	1.13	1.17	1.08	1.06	0.97	1.14	1.15	1.13	Research Institute of Agriculture Economics, Bratislava
Cereal supply per person (kg/year)*	143.8	137.3	136.1	133.5	132.7	128.2	127.7		Food Research Institute, Bratislava
Animal protein supply per person (g/day)	47.0	47.5	47.1	45.5	43.6	42.7	43.4		Food Research Institute, Bratislava
Value of food imports/export earnings	0.10	0.09	0.08	0.08	0.06	0.07	0.04	0.03	Research Institute of Agriculture Economics, Bratislava
Debt service ratio	0.38	0.21	0.25	0.26	0.14	0.09	0.21	0.17	Ministry of Finance SR
Value of gross investment in agriculture (in USD)	165.171	215.969	149.935	95.516	99.784	116.034	76.232	99.965	Research Institute of Agriculture Economics, Bratislava
• Stability									
Food price index	104.0	105.4	105.6	102.8	105.7	105.9	101.5	103.5	Research Institute of Agriculture Economics, Bratislava
Index of variability of food production	-13.9	-13.7	-0.2	-5.4	21.1	8.1	-1.9	5.9	Research Institute of Agriculture Economics, Bratislava
Ratio of national food reserves to domestic food consumption	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	Research Institute of Agriculture Economics, Bratislava
Export earnings instability	0.1	0.9	0.3	4.8	5.8	1.9	5.5	2.0	Research Institute of Agriculture Economics, Bratislava
• Access									

Rate of growth in real GDP per person/per year (%)	5.9	4.4	4.1	1.4	1.9	4.0	4.6	4.2	SR Statistical year-book
Gini index of income distribution									
Percentage of population living below national poverty line (%)									
Percentage of population living on less than \$ 1 a day (%)	2	2	2	2	2	2			www.unicef.org
Percentage of income spent on food (%)	24.9	29.6	28.4	27.6	26.2	24.3	24.2	23.5	SR Statistical year-book
Consumer price index	4.3	6.1	6.7	10.6	12.0	7.3	3.3	8.5	SR Statistical year-book
Estimated number of undernourished people									

<sup>2</sup> Please refer to explanatory notes of these indicators at the end of this document.

INDICATORS	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Source
Percentage of population undernourished (%)									
Percentage of children under 5 that are underweight (%)									
Percentage of children under 5 that are stunted (%)									no data
Percentage of children under 5 that are wasted (%)									no data
<b>2. Social indicators</b>									
Life expectancy at birth (age)	72.84	72.81	72.68	72.99	73.18	73.57	73.74		SR Public Health Office
Under-5 mortality rate (%)	0.22	0.20	0.21	0.19	0.19	0.15	0.17		SR Public Health Office
Net school enrolment in primary education of children aged 5-12 (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	by law
Ratio of girls to boys in primary education	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.95	0.95	0.96	0.95		SR Statistical year-book
Adult literacy rate	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	

Total number of doctors, nurses and other health personnel per 100 000 people	5.9	6.4	6.6	6.8	7.0	7.0	7.5		SR Public Health Office
Infant mortality rate (%)	1.02	0.82	0.88	0.83	0.86	0.62	0.76		SR Public Health Office
Maternal mortality rate (%)	3	2	5	6	1	8	4		SR Public Health Office
Adult morbidity rate (%)	1.33	1.45	1.36	1.32	1.32	1.30	1.28		SR Public Health Office
Adult male mortality rate (%)	1.50	1.50	1.53	1.49	1.47	1.45	1.43		SR Public Health Office
Adult female mortality rate (%)	1.33	1.20	1.29	1.17	1.18	1.28	1.14		SR Public Health Office
<b>3. Infectious diseases and HIV/AIDS indicators</b>									
Death rate from infectious diseases (%)	0.00 5	0.00 3	0.00 3	0.00 4	0.00 3	0.00 4	0.00 3	0.00 4	Central Register
Death rate from HIV/AIDS (%)	0.00 3	0.00 1	0.00 5	0.00 0	0.00 3	0.00 7	0.00 3	0.00 1	Regional Public Health Authority, Bratislava
Percentage of population orphaned (%)	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6		SR Statistical year-book
Percentage of child-headed households (%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	by law
Average age of household head (age)									

INDICATORS	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Source
Rate of population with HIV/AIDS infection (%)	0.000 4	0.00 1	0.001 2	0.001 2	0.001 3	0.001 4	0.001 8	0.002 2	Regional Public Health Authority, Bratislava
<b>4. Economic and Trade</b>									
Proportion of total imports by value, excluding arms, from developing countries and from LDCs admitted free of duties <sup>/a</sup>									
Average tariffs imposed on agricultural products and textiles and clothing from developing countries <sup>/a</sup>									
Agricultural support estimate as percentage of	1.23	1.33	1.17	1.08	0.92	0.93	0.71	0.69	Research Institute of Agriculture Economics,

GDP <sup>a</sup>									Bratislava
Proportion of ODA provided to help build trade capacity <sup>/a</sup>									
Share of primary exports (value) of total exports earnings <sup>/b</sup>									not applicable
Share of manufactured exports (value) of total exports earnings <sup>/b</sup>									not applicable
Terms of trade <sup>/b</sup>									not applicable
External agricultural income terms of trade	90.2	105.9	97.4	103.5	97.6	101.1	107.7	111.0	Research Institute of Agriculture Economics, Bratislava
<b>5. Sustainability of natural resources</b>									
Proportion of land area under forest cover (%)	40.6	40.7	40.7	40.8	40.8	40.8	40.9		SR Statistical year-book
Proportion of area protected to maintain biological diversity (%)	19.6	19.6	19.5	19.8	19.8	19,8	19.4		SR Statistical year-book

a/ Applicable to developed countries

b/ Applicable to developing countries