



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**

REPORT OF THE

**TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE
ASIA AND PACIFIC COMMISSION
ON AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS**

**Held in Vientiane, Lao PDR
18 – 21 February 2014**

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REPORT

of the

TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE ASIA AND PACIFIC COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS



18 – 21 February 2014

Vientiane, Lao PDR

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (RAP)
BANGKOK, 2014

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ACRONYMS

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADP	Accelerated Data Program
AFSIS	ASEAN Food Security Information System
ALIS	Agricultural Land Information System
AMIS	Agricultural Market Information System
APCAS	Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CAP	Country Action Plan
CoP	Cost of Production
CPC	Central Product Classification
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FBS	Food Balance Sheets
FDES	Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Geographic Positioning System
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
HS	Harmonized System
IAGFS	International Advisory Group on FAO Statistics
ICAS	International Conference on Agricultural Statistics
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IHSN	International Household Survey Network
LAMPS	Land Management Practices Survey
LSB	Lao Statistics Bureau
LSMS	Living Standards Measurement Studies
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries
MDER	Minimum Dietary Energy Requirement
NASA	National Academy of Statistical Administration
NSO	National Statistics Office
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PhilFSIS	Food Security Information System in the Philippines
PoU	Prevalence of Undernourishment
RAP	Regional Action Plan
SEAFDEC	Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center
SEEA-AGRI	System of Environmental Economic Accounting for Agriculture
SIAP	United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific
SUA	Supply Utilization Accounts
SQ	Standard Questionnaire
SSC	South-South Cooperation
TCP	Technical Cooperation Programme
TIP	Training Implementation Partners
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division
UNWOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WCA	World Programme for the Census of Agriculture

REPORT OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE ASIA AND PACIFIC COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

INTRODUCTION

1. The Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) hosted the Twenty-Fifth Session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics (APCAS) convened by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Vientiane, Lao PDR from 18 to 21 February 2014. A total of 87 participants including 64 delegates from 19 APCAS member countries, viz., Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United States of America and Viet Nam attended the session. Fifteen FAO staff and seven observers also participated the session representing Timor-Leste, the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS).

OPENING SESSION

2. Mr Xaypladeth Choulamany, Director-General, Department of Planning and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR welcomed all participants to Vientiane, and expressed the Lao PDR Government's gratitude to FAO for accepting Lao PDR's offer to host the 25th APCAS Session. Mr Choulamany thanked FAO for the support provided to enable the 25th APCAS Session to become a reality. He noted that APCAS has provided strong support for the development of agricultural statistics in the Asia and Pacific Region. Through its deliberations and recommendations APCAS has assisted FAO in deciding new programme initiatives and in setting priorities.

3. In his opening remarks, Mr Samaychanh Boupha, Head of the Lao Statistics Bureau (LSB), expressed a warm welcome to all delegates. In light of severe resource constraints he highlighted notable achievements in Lao PDR which have largely been possible through donor support. He recognized the need for a statistical development framework and noted the establishment of a steering committee and working group to advance this activity. In conclusion, he encouraged fruitful discussions among delegates in what is recognized as a very important regional forum.

4. The outgoing APCAS Chair, Mr Nguyen Van Lieu, Deputy Director-General, General Statistics Office of Viet Nam, expressed his sincere appreciation to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR and Lao Statistics Bureau for hosting the 25th APCAS Session. He noted that APCAS provides a unique forum for agricultural statisticians from the member countries to come together to deliberate on the technical issues and share their experiences and best practices to further improve statistics in the region to ensure food security and better nutrition. He was honoured

to chair the 24th APCAS Session and was confident that the 25th APCAS Session would be a success.

5. The speech of Mr Hiroyuki Konuma, Assistant Director-General and FAO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific was delivered by Mr Ole Pederson, a representative from the FAO Office in Lao PDR. The ADG thanked the Lao PDR Government, in particular the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry for hosting the session. It was noted that APCAS has completed 50 years and has made a valuable contribution by providing strong support and guidance for the development of agricultural statistics in the region. Reference was also made to a number of FAO programmes aimed at the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition as well as reduction of rural poverty and increasing the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises. These programmes include the “Zero Hunger Challenge” and the “Global Initiative on Food Loss and Waste Reduction” in collaboration with other partners. Looking forward, the speech highlighted the post 2015 development agenda which has “sustainable development” as its core, and noted that the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics is already addressing this. The promotion of South-South Cooperation was seen as an important agenda item.

6. Mr Josef Schmidhuber, Deputy Director, Statistics Division FAO, addressed the Commission thanking the Lao PDR Government and Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry for hosting this session. He noted that the structural changes in FAO had increased the profile of statistics and outlined the benefits from greater internal coordination. Mr Schmidhuber highlighted the growing importance placed by the international community on strengthening agricultural statistical systems in developing countries and the role played by the Global Strategy in that context. He also noted the direct assistance being provided to countries in the region, as well as developments in FAO which will have direct impacts and benefits for Asia and the Pacific. He encouraged the Commission to exchange views in a constructive and open manner, and to widely share the wealth of knowledge and experience present in the region for the benefit of all.

7. Delivering the inaugural address to the Commission, His Excellency Mr Vilayvanh Phomkhe, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR, expressed his sincere thanks to the organizers for the opportunity to open such an important event, and to the Commission for accepting the invitation for Lao PDR to host the 25th APCAS session. He noted two major challenges of food security and climate change and the need for urgent responses which would require strong coordination and cooperation. Mr Phomkhe recognized that agricultural statistics play an important role in agriculture and rural development in areas of policy, strategy and planning and wished delegates every success in deliberations aimed at improving agricultural statistics systems.

8. Mr Mukesh Srivastava, APCAS Secretary, gave a vote of thanks to members of the Lao PDR organizing committee and their staff for their dedicated work to making this event successful. He also thanked officers of FAO Regional Office Bangkok, FAO Headquarters in Rome and local FAO representatives for their assistance in formulating the agenda, preparing papers and supporting the organization of the event.

ELECTION OF CHAIR, VICE-CHAIR AND DRAFTING COMMITTEE

(Item 2 of the Agenda)

9. The outgoing Chair, Mr Nguyen Van Lieu, Deputy Director-General, General Statistics Office of Viet Nam presided over the election of the Chair, Vice-Chair and Drafting Committee. Mr Xaypladeth Choulamany, Director General, Planning and Cooperation Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR, was unanimously elected Chair of the 25th APCAS Session. Mr Muhammad Akram Khan, Agricultural Census Commissioner, Pakistan, was elected Vice-Chair.

10. The Commission then constituted a Drafting Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr Romeo Recide (Philippines) with Messrs Kencho Thinley (Bhutan), Savanh Hanephom (Lao PDR) and Ms Louise Hawker (Australia) and Ms Sera Bose (Fiji) as members of the Committee.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

(Item 3 of the Agenda)

11. The Commission adopted the agenda given in Appendix A as well as the associated timetable. The list of delegates and observers is in Appendix B and the list of documents is in Appendix C. The speeches delivered in the Opening Sessions are in Appendices D, E, F, G, H, I, and J. The list of member countries of the Commission, as of February 2014, is in Appendix L.

FAO ACTIVITIES IN FOOD AND AGRICULTURE STATISTICS IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC SINCE THE LAST SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

(Item 4 of the Agenda)

Overview of FAO Activities in Asia and the Pacific Region since the 24th Session of APCAS

(Item 4.1 of the Agenda)

12. Mr Mukesh Srivastava, APCAS Secretary, introduced Document APCAS/14/4.1 "Overview of FAO Activities in Asia and the Pacific Region since the 24th Session of APCAS". He informed that while only fifteen months have passed since the last APCAS a number of normative works and project related activities have been undertaken. These activities included: (a) preparation of the regional statistical yearbook; (b) monthly publication of the "Asia Pacific Food Price and Policy Monitoring" newsletter; (c) development of a website to highlight ongoing activities in agricultural statistics in the region; (d) backstopping fifteen operational statistical projects in the region; (e) organization of, and participation in, various sessions of relevant meetings including ICAS VI; and (f) finalization of a Regional Action Plan of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics, and start of in country work under the Global Strategy. He referred to various sessions under which FAO's activities will be presented and discussed in detail.

13. Mr Josef Schmidhuber, FAO, then made a presentation on Document APCAS/14/4.2. The Commission was provided with an outline of FAO's new strategic framework that adopts a matrix structure for the delivery of FAO's Programme of Work

through five Strategic Objectives and an additional sixth technical objective – focused on technical quality, knowledge and services and statistics. The new framework in effect better aligns FAO's Programme of Work with its organizational setup that is multidisciplinary in practice. To improve internal governance of FAO's statistical system, the post of "Chief Statistician" has been established to coordinate the full statistical work programme of FAO. Changes have also been initiated to improve FAO's external governance. These include formation of an International Advisory Group on FAO Statistics (IAGFS). A proposal for establishment of a Global Commission on Agricultural Statistics is at hand. The Commission was presented with information on this proposal to establish a Global Commission on Agricultural Statistics which aims to: (a) ensure better coordination and standardization of the statistical activities ongoing in the Regions; (b) provide a global forum for Country Representatives to review and endorse methodological and other normative work; and (c) create a peer-review process for data published and methodologies used by FAO. There was some concern about how this new forum would interact with other existing fora, both at regional and global level, and what the implications were for these existing fora. The Commission supported the establishment of the Global Commission and requested further information on its establishment.

14. Document APCAS/14/4.3 "FAO Statistical Yearbook" was introduced to the Commission by Ms Amy Heyman, FAO, as a re-launched publication consolidating four previous FAO publications – with a refocused agenda to provide a greater analytical perspective to the major trends and factors shaping the global food and agricultural landscape, along broader environmental, social, and economic dimensions. The Global Yearbook was noted to be immediately available online with the regional yearbooks following closely within the next few months. This presentation was followed by an on-line demonstration of the new FAOSTAT.

15. In the final presentation of the Session, Mr Jairo Castano of FAO presented to the Commission Document APCAS/14/4.4 "Issues in the collection of FAO data". The presentation highlighted a number of issues FAO faces in populating FAOSTAT and its role in ensuring the quality of data in the region for policy related decisions. In particular, the issue of non-response to the annual FAO questionnaires was raised, which was the main channel of getting the country level data to the FAOSTAT database. Member countries were encouraged to work with FAO to ensure that their country data in FAOSTAT was up to date and well documented. *The Commission recommended that the following measures should be adopted to improve low response rates by countries to FAO questionnaires: (i) identifying and designating single focal points at national level, wherever possible; (ii) improving coordination mechanisms with the National Statistical System; and (iii) organizing specific training and workshops addressing data related issues. The Commission welcomed FAO's intention to continue with training workshops on questionnaires and imputation techniques, promote online data collection and improve country consultation via a Global Commission on Agricultural Statistics.*

PROGRESS AND VISION ON WORLD PROGRAMME FOR THE CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE (WCA) 2020

(Item 5 of the Agenda)

16. Seven presentations were made during the session. The agenda was introduced by the Document APCAS/14/5.1 “Lessons learnt from the WCA 2010 in Asia and the Pacific Region and update on the preparations for WCA 2020” presented by Mr Jairo Castano, FAO. Mr Castano described the status of implementation of the WCA 2010 in countries, with participation at similar levels to the WCA 2000. He also reminded the Commission of the key features of WCA 2010 and noted that feedback from countries was that the flexibility offered by the modular approach was very useful, that linkages with the Population Census offered some advantages and that there were many benefits in collecting community-level data. The need for strengthening the guidelines on community-level data in WCA 2020 was noted. The Commission was advised that WCA 2020 would build and improve on these key features, including the provision of supplementary guidelines by the Global Strategy initiative. Areas to be addressed include dissemination of results and anonymised micro-data, use of new technologies, building a master sampling frame, and updates of concepts and classifications. The Commission endorsed the conceptual framework and the strategy proposed for the development of the WCA 2020. It welcomed FAO’s plans to prepare and publish supplementary guidelines, including on the use of new technologies, such as GPS and Computer Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI) for collecting census and survey data.

17. This was followed by a number of papers which described country experiences. The Commission reviewed the presentations on plans for change to the next agricultural census in Japan by Mr Masaki Sakai (APCAS/14/5.2); as well as descriptions of recent agricultural censuses and surveys from Lao PDR by Mr Souksavanh Intharack (APCAS/14/5.3); Cambodia by Ms Meas Sotheavy (APCAS/14/5.4); Pakistan by Mr Muhammad Arram Khan (APCAS/14/5.5); Indonesia by Mr Happy Hardjo (APCAS/14/5.6) and Thailand by Ms Nongnooch Deetae (APCAS/14/5.7). The presentations highlighted the range of different approaches and methodologies used to plan and conduct agricultural censuses. Changes in agricultural census of Japan were driven by the need to understand the changing agricultural scenario and the impact of farm management policies in the context of issues like de-population of rural areas and ageing of population, reducing numbers of family farms which offer self-employment, increasing corporate farms and farm employment. The design and scope of agricultural censuses in other countries also varied according to data need and availability of resources. Complete enumeration of households was common, though sample surveys were also used either for the core module or for supplementary modules. A number of countries also collect village level data, in line with WCA 2010 recommendations. The Commission noted that in some cases, but not always, corporate farms were included, and FAO advised the countries that in order to be comprehensive, agricultural censuses should also capture the non-household sector. The issue of linkages with Population Censuses and alignment of timing was also discussed. The Commission noted the need for guidelines on the effective use of new technologies to reduce processing time.

PROMOTING TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL STATISTICS TO BUILD COUNTRY CAPACITY

(Item 6 of the Agenda)

18. FAO, Japan and India made presentations under this agenda item. The first presentation, APCAS/14/6.1 “South-South Cooperation (SSC) to Build Country Capacity to Produce Agricultural and Rural Statistics” presented by Mr Mukesh Srivastava, FAO, highlighted the growing expectations of member countries and the wider development community for FAO to undertake concrete initiatives to promote SSC in the region and the need for augmenting resources to implement country proposals for assistance under the Global Strategy. Mr Srivastava informed that FAO is working on development of modalities for SSC and has established a special unit on the subject. The FAO’s new SSC strategy entails a more flexible approach which can accommodate different sets of donor and recipient requirements including multi-agency partnerships. FAO considered its role in the SSC as that of a technical expertise provider and a catalytic agent to build complementarities and partnerships and promote bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation in the region. A few recent examples of SSC projects implemented by FAO were presented. It was highlighted that Asia and the Pacific region is composed of countries with a wide range of statistical capacity – from advanced systems to countries which do not have any institution to provide even the basic education in statistics. This situation presents ample scope for promotion of cooperation within the region.

19. The second Document, APCAS/14/6.2 “Japanese Technical Cooperation through FAO and AFSIS in ASEAN Region” was presented by Mr Masaki Sakai, who highlighted another example of assistance through the AFSIS project where expertise is shared by various countries on development of food security information systems. Mr Sakai expressed willingness of Government of Japan, subject to availability of funds, to upscale its assistance to other countries in the region to improve their agricultural statistics system, following the model of AFSIS.

20. Mr Janardan Yadav, India, introduced Document APCAS/14/6.3 “Indian Initiatives on International Cooperation in Statistics”. The Commission was informed about the training and technical assistance being provided by India through its National Academy of Statistical Administration (NASA) and other programmes for Asian and African countries; and its willingness to share its experience/expertise for development of statistical systems in other countries.

21. During the subsequent round table discussions on the agenda, most countries were supportive of the idea of SSC in the field of agricultural statistics and acknowledged the need for FAO to work out the modalities for promoting exchange of technical assistance and training resources in the region. Some countries also acknowledged the assistance provided to them from outside of the region and other international donors. Countries recognized the need for increased technical assistance and training and saw funding as a constraint which south-south cooperation might help to overcome through triangular cooperation. After discussions, the Commission (a) supported FAO’s work to develop the modalities for south-south and triangular cooperation for pooling of technical assistance and training resources in the region, (b) encouraged FAO to liaise with select member countries who expressed willingness

to contribute towards SSC and implementation of the Global Strategy, and (c) encouraged countries to consider providing their contributions to FAO's efforts to build country capacities in the region under south-south cooperation arrangements.

IMPLEMENTATION OF GLOBAL STRATEGY TO IMPROVE AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL STATISTICS IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

(Item 7 of the Agenda)

22. The session began with a report from Implementing Partners on progress in implementing the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics in Asia and the Pacific region during 2013, and upcoming planned work for 2014 (APCAS/14/7.1).

23. Mr Allan Nicholls, Regional Coordinator of the Global Strategy in Asia and the Pacific, FAO, informed the Commission of the work being done by the Regional Office, including: (a) the finalization of the Regional Action Plan (RAP) in 2013 and, (b) the establishment and support of regional governance structures (including a Regional Steering Committee) for the Global Strategy in Asia and the Pacific. Additional work during 2014 will include finalization of the 2014 workplan and budget; ensuring coordination between implementing partners at regional level; and communication/advocacy activities for resource mobilization.

24. In line with the technical assistance component of the Global Strategy, Mr Nicholls informed the Commission of the work being done for the in-depth country assessments in the selected target countries (Bhutan, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Samoa and Bangladesh) in 2013; and preparation work being done for an additional four countries (Fiji, Georgia, Lao PDR and Myanmar) in 2014.

25. Ms Margarita Guerrero, Director of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) then provided an update on the activities of SIAP as the agency responsible for implementing the training component of the Global Strategy in the region. These activities, undertaken in collaboration with the network of Training Implementation Partners (TIP), included a series of training workshops aimed at building training resources for improving agricultural and rural statistics. The SIAP 2014 work programme includes a range of activities including: producing standardized curricula and training materials, strengthening the capacity of national and regional training institutions; and the establishment of a regional network for training of trainers.

26. Ms Dalisay Maligalig of the Asian Development Bank also updated members on work being undertaken by the ADB in the region in support of the goals of the Global Strategy and RAP. Work is underway in four pilot countries (Bhutan, Lao PDR, Maldives, and Viet Nam) to identify capacity gaps and to develop Country Action Plans to address these. Methodological research projects are also underway in a number of countries, such as support for adoption of the ALIS in the Philippines, comparative analysis of existing data sources and sample survey applications in two countries (Lao PDR and Viet Nam), and application of emerging technologies such as remote sensing for estimation of crop area and production (Lao PDR, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam).

27. The Commission endorsed the 2014 Work Plan for the Global Strategy in Asia Pacific Region.

28. Ms Dalisay Maligalig, ADB, then presented the Conclusions of the FAO-ADB Expert Meeting on “Crop Monitoring for Improved Food Security” APCAS/14/7.2. The Commission noted the conclusions reached at the expert meeting, which included the potential use of ICT and remotely sensed data for improving crop area and yield estimates and the benefits to statistical systems. The Commission cautioned that national statistical systems should be careful in adopting it as a full replacement of their existing data collection methods for crop monitoring. The Commission recommended that research institutions, space technology agencies and national statistical systems should continue to regularly exchange ideas and experiences for improving crop monitoring, and the technical papers and presentations on the methods that were discussed in the meeting should be widely disseminated.

29. Mr Mukesh Srivastava, FAO, then presented Document APCAS/14/7.3 “Assessing and Monitoring Country Capacity to Produce Statistics: Framework for Agricultural and Rural Statistics”, which outlined the work undertaken under the FAO leadership during the last two years to establish a standard framework for assessing country capacity to produce agricultural and rural statistics. Capacity assessments are a critical component of the Global Strategy. The framework defines statistical capacity as having four dimensions: institutional infrastructure, resources, statistical methods/practices and available statistical information, which in turn are broken down into a series of elements. The indicators on these elements and dimensions can be used to monitor progress overtime and to compare country capacity. The indicators are built on the basis of responses to a self-assessment Standard Questionnaire (SQ), which is based on past APCAS questionnaires. It was informed that global guidelines on this tool will soon be available in published form and the regions have been provided the flexibility to adjust the questionnaire as per their regional requirements without altering its key questions. The Commission recommended that a working group be formed to review the content of the SQ to derive a regional version, which would be used for reporting to the next APCAS.

30. Ms Vivanh Souvannamethy, Lao PDR presented APCAS/14/7.4 “Action Plan for Improving Agricultural and Rural Statistics in Lao PDR 2013-2020”. The Commission was informed of the current situation of agricultural statistics in the country and of the work done (with support of the Asian Development Bank) to develop a Country Action Plan (CAP). The CAP was derived from an extensive consultation process with stakeholders and involved the identification of a minimum set of core indicators as well as a results-based monitoring framework to describe the plan. Implementation of the plan is intended to start soon and a schedule of activities has been drawn up through to 2018.

31. Four member countries gave presentations on their experiences with undertaking in-depth country assessments (IdCAs) these were: Bhutan (Mr Kencho Thinley, APCAS/14/7.5), Sri Lanka (Ms Champika De Silva, APCAS/14/7.6), Indonesia (Mr Happy Hardjo, APCAS/14/7.7) and Bangladesh (Mr Bidhan Baral, APCAS/14/7.8). It was clear that the IdCA process provided considerable benefits to these countries, including assisting them to identify, prioritize and address technical capacity gaps.

However, a number of common issues were faced by these countries including: difficulties in effectively coordinating between stakeholders in the statistical system; the need to improve data quality and rigour especially in administrative systems; and human resource capacity issues. Further work will be undertaken by these countries in collaboration with implementing partners of the Global Strategy to continue to build capacity and realize the outcomes of improved statistical systems for informed decision-making.

METHODOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN FOOD SECURITY STATISTICS

(Item 8 of the Agenda)

32. Mr Josef Schmidhuber, FAO, opened the session with a presentation on Document APCAS/14/8.1. He provided a review of the current foundations and calculations of the Food Balance Sheets (FBS) and the drivers for the recent review and updating of these methods. He then explained the new methods to estimate utilization of key components in the FBS, which include livestock feed demand, food losses, stocks, food (human consumption), industrial use and seed. Member countries were encouraged to collect and disseminate timely and reliable data on food supplies in conformity with international classification schemes. The Commission encouraged countries to produce their own Food Balance Sheets (FBS), with special emphasis on producing reliable and detailed information on food utilization. In this regard, FAO would assist countries in: (a) the FBS compilation process; (b) the adoption of the most recent methodological improvements; and (c) the development of necessary statistical capacity.

33. Mr Piero Conforti, FAO, presented a report on “Revision of the methodology for the estimation of the Prevalence of Undernourishment” (APCAS/14/8.2). The objective of the presentation was to highlight the most important characteristics of the methodology, and inform the Commission on recent and ongoing developments, especially the 2011/12 revisions to the data and methodology. The Prevalence of Undernourishment (PoU) was described as the probability that a randomly selected individual consumes an amount of calories insufficient for conducting an active and healthy life. The methodology for estimating the PoU is based on the comparison of a probability distribution of habitual daily Dietary Energy Consumption, and the Minimum Dietary Energy Requirement (MDER). Mr Conforti described the parametric model employed after the revision of 2011 and 2012, based on the skewed-log normal distribution, and its advantages compared to the previous log-normal model. Mr Conforti then explained the improved data used, which is based on the refinement of evidence on food losses and a wider use of household surveys to compute distributional parameters.

34. The Commission noted the need to create more opportunities for exchanging views on the FAO methodology on estimating the Prevalence of Undernourishment (PoU). The Commission recommended that countries share all available micro-data required for estimating the PoU and other information contained in the suite of food security indicators working with FAO. The Commission encouraged countries to work in collaboration with the relevant international initiatives that attempt at harmonizing standards and tools used when designing and implementing household surveys, such

as the International Household Survey Network (IHSN) and the ADePT, the software platform prepared by collaboration of FAO and the World Bank, for automated economic analysis.

35. Document APCAS/14/8.3 “New Approaches to the Measurement of Food Security” was presented by Mr Piero Conforti, FAO. He presented the suite of indicators – first released in the State of Food Insecurity 2013 – which help capture the multiple dimensions of food security. He then described ongoing efforts to build an aggregated food security index. He discussed the weights employed to aggregate over different indicators, which have been derived through Principal Component Analysis within indicators for the same dimension of food security, and other methodologies that are being tested to aggregate summary indicators for each component.

36. Mr Conforti also briefed the delegates on the Voices of the Hungry project. He highlighted the advantages of experience-based indicators in terms of timeliness, ability to capture different levels of food insecurity and to target individuals. The new indicator from the project will become part of the suite of food security indicators once enough coverage is achieved.

37. The Commission endorsed the work on the suite of food security indicators and the compilation of a composite Food Security index. Countries have been asked to provide feedback on the proposed set of indicators and indices, potential data collection challenges and country-level sensitivities. The Commission endorsed the approach of identifying multiple dimensions of the measurement of food insecurity to allow mainstreaming of food security within countries’ policy frameworks, and the approach proposed with the Voices of the Hungry project.

38. Mr Jairo Castano, FAO, presented “International Product Classifications for Agricultural Statistics: A Brief Report of Activities in 2012-2013” (APCAS/14/8.4). Mr Castano briefed the Commission on progress made towards harmonizing international product classifications for agricultural statistics. He reviewed CPC 2.1 and CPC expanded for agricultural statistics, and HS 2012 and 2017. He also gave an overview of integration of these classifications in the Asia and Pacific region based on a 2011/12 survey conducted by FAO. The Commission recommended that countries adopt CPC 2.1 and HS 2012, and other international standard classifications, and noted that FAO is committed to provide assistance to this process. The Commission noted the progress made by FAO in integrating agriculture, fishery and forestry into major international product classifications. The Commission encouraged member countries and regional organizations to strengthen partnerships and collaboration on international classifications. The Commission recommended that member countries complete the FAO survey on national classifications for agricultural statistics which was circulated in 2012.

ANALYSIS AND DISSEMINATION OF FOOD SECURITY STATISTICS IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC REGION

(Item 9 of the Agenda)

39. Mr Piero Conforti, FAO, introduced “The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2013: An Overview” (APCAS/14/9.1) summarizing the key indicators and outputs of the recent FAO publication “State of Food Insecurity in the World 2013”. The latest edition of the publication noted good progress in decreasing the number of undernourished people in the world from 868 million reported earlier in 2010-2012 to 842 million in 2011-2013, though it recognized that the World Food Summit target was not achievable by 2015. It was noted that it would be possible in principle to achieve the Millennium Development Goal One hunger target. However, this requires an immediate acceleration of efforts in the coming months. A key message from the report is the need to include nutrition-based interventions among country’s policy responses, as the data indicate that under-nutrition is a larger problem than that of under-nourishment. The Commission welcomed the prominent use of food security indicators and its contributing role to policy planning throughout the region.

40. Mr Kraisd Tontisirin, Thailand, presented to the Commission Document APCAS/14/9.2 “Nutrition Impact of Agriculture and Food System in Thailand”. The successes of Thailand’s community based nutrition programme were presented noting the linkages between nutritional food systems and agricultural production and how it played a role in achieving food security and greater nutritional awareness in Thailand.

41. APCAS/14/9.3 “Report on Activities of FAO TCP Regional Project of Food Security” was introduced to the Commission by Mr Seevalingum Ramasawmy, FAO. The presentation focused on the work being done under FAO’s technical programme to identify agricultural and food data sources for the estimation of Supply Utilization Accounts (SUA) and the compilation of an annual national Food Balance Sheet; and secondly, to assist countries in food security analysis and the estimation of food security and nutrition indicators at national and sub-national levels. The Commission welcomed the outcomes of the project and recommended that FAO pursue a similar initiative in additional countries either through technical assistance or through south-south cooperation.

42. Country experiences from both Pakistan and the Philippines in producing and analyzing food security indicators were then introduced to the Commission as Documents APCAS/14/9.4 “Trend Assessment of Food Insecurity in Pakistan 2005-2011” by Mr Syed Jawad Ali and APCAS/14/9.5 “Presentation of Food Security Information System of the Philippines (PhilFSIS)” by Mr Romeo Recide. In Pakistan, a trend assessment of the household consumption survey was presented, comparing surveys done in 2010-2011 and 2011-2012, showing the progress of household consumption habits towards a well-balanced diet in line with the WHO guidelines. The Philippines then presented the progress being made in establishing a Food Security Information System in the Philippines (PhilFSIS) at the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics with the assistance from FAO. The system is a coordinated effort to organize a single window food security system that updates and disseminates timely food security data with advanced methodologies and techniques used for analysis. The Commission welcomed the efforts being carried out in the Philippines and

recommended that FAO explore possibilities for the implementation of similar systems in additional countries.

STATISTICS OF SUB-SECTORS OF AGRICULTURE

(Item 10 of the Agenda)

43. The discussion on statistics of sub-sectors of agriculture was related mainly to the domains of fishery and livestock statistics, while forestry statistics was noted as an information item. Ms Sachiko Tsuji, FAO, presented on the “Strategy toward Integrated Fishery and Aquaculture Data Collection”, APCAS/14/10.1, as a follow up action to the 23rd and 24th APCAS recommendations for FAO to develop guidelines and methodologies to integrate fisheries and aquaculture into censuses to improve regular fishery and aquaculture data. The need to have separate fishery and aquaculture data was expressed as they form major components of the food basket and also make a significant contribution to the economy. The proposed framework integrates data from existing and new sources, including census, periodic surveys, administrative records and case studies. A draft concept note of the proposed framework and two survey modules would be sent to countries for their comments soon. Ms Tsuji sought collaboration from countries in this work which is being done within the framework of the Global Strategy.

44. Ms Ismayanti from Indonesia and Mr Md. Rokib Uddin Biswas from Bangladesh presented on the fisheries and aquaculture statistics in their respective countries (Documents APCAS/14/10.2 and APCAS/14/10.3 respectively). The presentations mainly touched on their present data collection methods, their limitations and their plans to improve them in the future. They stressed the need for a proper statistics system for fishery and aquaculture to balance the needs to save endangered species while at the same time making fishing a sustainable economic activity – given that fishery provides livelihoods to large segments of the population. Caution was expressed with regards to ensuring sustainable management of fish stocks when setting higher targets and there was some discussion of the potential to include cost of production in fisheries and aquaculture data.

45. The other theme of discussion was on APCAS/14/10.4 “Recent Advancements in Livestock Statistics: Animal diseases, Technical conversion factors and Survey questionnaires”. Mr Florian Blum, presenting on behalf of FAO, highlighted the need for (a) the collection of Animal Health Data as a core indicator as defined by the Global Strategy, (b) estimation of Livestock Technical Conversion Factors, since their accuracy is crucial to measure livestock productivity and value added, and (c) a Specialized Livestock Survey as one of the periodic surveys proposed by the integrated survey framework of Global Strategy. The Commission noted his proposals.

ARCHIVING AND DISSEMINATION OF DATA FROM CENSUS AND SURVEYS

(Item 11 of the Agenda)

46. APCAS/14/11.1 “Presentation on Micro-data: Options and issues of archiving and dissemination” was presented by Mr Josef Schmidhuber, FAO. Mr Schmidhuber noted that there is growing demand for and availability of micro-data from agricultural

data collections, yet access is often difficult. The International Household Survey Network (IHSN), and its Accelerated Data Program (ADP), are already working with countries to strengthen their micro-data documentation and archiving efforts, including conducting regional level training in partnership with ADB and SIAP. The ADP also helps develop capacities to handle micro-data at the country level. FAO is committed to playing a greater role in assisting countries with the archiving of their agricultural micro-data. This should result in greater visibility, accessibility, reliability, relevance, and comparability of their data.

47. The Commission expressed support for FAO, SIAP, ADB, and the World Bank's efforts and work in helping countries with the archiving, documenting, and analysis of micro-data. It also supported the effort to archive, document and analyze micro-data collected in the context of the WCA 2010. FAO will also explore the possibility of having a central depository for micro-data for agricultural surveys and censuses in cooperation with the IHSN.

48. APCAS/14/11.2 "Data Dissemination Strategy of Lao PDR and Presentation of Related IT Applications" was presented by Ms Soulaphanh Phimphaphongsavath, Lao PDR. Ms Phimphaphongsavath spoke about Lao PDR's national statistical system, current and future strategies, and challenges that the country faces in its dissemination activities. She also introduced the Commission to current dissemination products, which include printed publications, a website, and LaoInfo, and this was followed by a presentation on the LaoInfo Database system by Mr Vilaysook Sisoulath.

49. APCAS/14/11.3 "Presentation of CountrySTAT – An Integrated System for National Food and Agriculture Statistics" was presented by Ms Amy Heyman, FAO. CountrySTAT is a web-based information technology system for food and agriculture statistics. CountrySTAT centralizes, harmonizes, standardizes, integrates and validates data on food and agriculture from different sources while ensuring country ownership and sustainability of the system by building capacity within countries. Josef Schmidhuber, FAO, then gave a demonstration of the new CountrySTAT platform. In particular, it was highlighted the phone application for collection of prices data as well as the mapping tool for sub-national data on poverty.

50. The Commission recommended countries, where CountrySTAT or no other suitable platform is available, to establish it as a standard platform. The Commission also suggested that countries consider CountrySTAT as the recommended platform for the integration, management and dissemination of official statistics for food and agriculture.

RECENT ADVANCES IN ENVIRONMENTAL STATISTICS RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

(Item 12 of the Agenda)

51. APCAS/14/12.1 "Towards a System of Environmental Economic Accounting for Agriculture (SEEA-AGRI)" was presented by Ms Sachiko Tsuji, FAO. Ms Tsuji noted that such a system was needed because of the specific relationship between agriculture and the environment, and outlined some aspects of that relationship. SEEA-AGRI is seen as a comprehensive and standard satellite account for the

integration of agricultural and environmental data based upon internationally agreed concepts, definitions, classifications and inter-related tables and accounts that are universally valid, regardless of the stage of economic development reached by the country. SEEA-AGRI aims to translate policy issues into data needs. SEEA-AGRI is currently under development and issues currently faced include the fact that a large amount of data will be required, and that data is currently in different dimensions, different databases and a range of structures.

52. APCAS/14/12.2 “Land management statistics – informing the relationship between Australian agriculture and rural environment: ABS)” was presented by Ms Louise Hawker, Australia. Ms Hawker presented on Australia’s efforts on informing the relationship between their agriculture and the rural environment. The importance and history of this type of data was shared and it was noted that there has been strong demand within Australia for regular data series linking agricultural practices and the environment. Recently the Australian Bureau of Statistics in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture has begun a biennial Land Management Practices Survey (LAMPS) to meet policy needs. Results from the first LAMPS have been disseminated and the second LAMPS is underway. Some highlights from the first LAMPS were shared. Future opportunities and challenges will include potential integration with the agricultural census, tools and methods for confidentialising data, and alternative data collection methods, including remote sensing. Australia remains engaged with the Global Strategy and other international developments to meet the needs for land management practices statistics in agriculture.

53. APCAS/14/12.3 “The FAOSTAT Emissions Database” was presented by Mr Josef Schmidhuber, FAO, who briefly described the history of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission reporting. Starting in 2014, countries will be asked to report GHG emissions on a biennial basis. Various data from the FAO Emissions database were presented showing that Asia has the largest GHG emissions from agriculture and is also growing at the fastest rate.

54. FAO offers workshops to developing countries for capacity development of reporting GHG emissions as well as identifying mitigating options.

55. The Commission recognized the FAOSTAT Emissions database as a platform for achieving coherency in national reporting and supporting commitments under international climate policy (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change). The Commission recommended that FAO take a strong role for capacity development to fill gaps, and develop methods for improving agriculture and land use change statistics and GHG estimations. The Commission recommended follow-up regional activities, with proposals for FAO to work further with Member Countries in Asia and the Pacific, to meet challenges of current climate policy requirements and develop robust national data systems.

56. APCAS/14/12.4 “Agri-environmental indicators and the recently adopted Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics – FDES” was presented by Mr Piero Conforti, FAO. Mr Conforti shared the broad content of agri-environmental indicators and described the recently revised Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES) as adopted by the UN Statistical Commission in 2013.

The Commission heard that the FDES has six components which were briefly described. It was noted that FAO has much of the information needed and that the new organization of indicators is more consistent with Eurostat and OECD frameworks. Commission members were invited to consider the list of indicators provided and the capacity of their statistical system to produce the basic data required to produce the indicators. The Commission endorsed the work undertaken by FAO in developing an agri-environmental indicators database in FAOSTAT, and suggested that FAO work with member countries in developing agri-environmental indicators that are integrated with the FDES and SEEA.

RECENT ADVANCES IN ECONOMIC STATISTICS RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

(Item 13 of the Agenda)

57. APCAS/14/13.1 “Agricultural cost of production statistics – update on the recent expert group meeting in Rome and next milestones” was presented by Mr Romeo Recide, Philippines. The Commission recommended that FAO continue its work on Cost of Production (CoP) in agriculture, and encouraged countries to critically review emerging methodological issues, provide feedback and contributions to the CoP Handbook and participate in the field-testing of components of the Handbook.

58. APCAS/14/13.2 “Recent advancements in Agricultural Economic Statistics – Price and Investment domains” was presented by Mr Piero Conforti, FAO. The presentation outlined the frameworks and methodologies for collecting FAO’s price and investment statistics. The Commission recommended that FAO continue its work on measuring agricultural investment; encouraged member countries to share information on other data sources at country level that could improve agricultural investment financing datasets; and recommended that FAO continue its work on measuring producer and consumer prices and price transmission and volatility and encouraged member countries to provide feedback on the methodological developments regarding agricultural price statistics.

59. APCAS/14/13.3 “Implementation of Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) in India” was presented by Mr Janardan Yadav, India. The presentation identified issues and challenges in the compilation of AMIS data for India. There was some discussion on the need to improve availability of data sources for the AMIS in the implementing countries as currently only half of countries supply acceptable data. The Commission recommended that FAO explore capacity building activities related to forecasting methodologies, dynamic food balance sheets, and other required inputs needed to fill the requirements of the AMIS Secretariat.

SOCIAL AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

(Item 14 of the Agenda)

60. APCAS/14/14.1 “Application of spatial information technology in crop production survey in China” was presented by Mr Ge Wei, People’s Republic of China. The Commission was informed that spatial information technology includes three aspects, namely, remote Sensing, GIS and GPS and that the core of the space information

technology is information integration from the “sky, ground and person”, in a system of collection, management and analysis with spatial characteristics, complete information and accurate positioning. The application to the Crop Production Survey involves a combination of an Area Frame Survey and remote sensing of crop area measurement and yield trend estimation. It was explained that the quality control component also includes the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles.

61. APCAS/14/14.2 “Strengthening the collection and analysis of sex disaggregated data on land ownership in agricultural censuses” was presented by Mr Jairo Castano, FAO. In partnership with UNSD and UNWOMEN, FAO was conducting methodological work on sex-disaggregated data (SDD) on land ownership. The work took stock of the methodologies adopted in the WCA 2010 round and approaches adopted by survey programmes, such as national household surveys and the Living Standards Measurement Studies (LSMS). The presentation informed that the WCA 2010 round showed that *Management of the Holding* (Theme 12) – which includes identification of sub-holdings, sub-holders and their sex – was difficult to implement due to ambiguous definition of concepts. Some preliminary conclusions were presented, including exploring the gender dimension of land ownership/management at the parcel/plot level, using the data items contained in the supplementary module on Land (Theme 01). If the Demographic and Social Characteristics theme (Theme 07) is also administered, the identification of the household members can be used to link the parcel/plot level information with the sex of the household member, thus avoiding duplication.

62. The Commission recommended that FAO strengthens its analysis of gender disaggregated data and continues efforts to work with countries to improve the collection of gender disaggregated data in censuses and surveys and recommended that countries include items regarding land ownership and/or management, wherever appropriate, and requested that FAO provide clearer guidance about their collection in the WCA 2020 guidelines.

63. APCAS/14/14.3 “Gender Aspects of the Lao Agricultural Census” was presented by Ms Nami Ishihara, Lao PDR. The Lao Agricultural Census enabled a considerable amount of analysis by gender and Ms Ishihara provided a range of interesting examples to the Commission. The Commission congratulated Lao PDR on the extensive amount of information available by gender from the Agricultural Census.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(Item 11 of the Agenda)

Venue, Date and Topics for the Next APCAS Session

64. Bhutan confirmed its readiness to host the Twenty-sixth Session during 2016. Pakistan also expressed willingness to host a future session pending further discussions with its governmental authorities. The Secretary committed to pursue the matter with relevant authorities in these countries.

65. The APCAS Secretary sought suggestions for topics for the next Session of APCAS. The topics proposed by member countries included: (a) Fisheries, (b) Forestry,

(c) Environment Statistics, (d) Cost of Production Statistics, (e) Statistical governance in countries and best practices used for coordination, (f) Food Security and Nutrition, (g) Measurement of seed, feed, and waste, and (h) SEEA-Agri country experiences.

66. Members were advised that additional topics should be referred to the Secretary for consideration.

Other Matters

67. Members of the Commission expressed some concern about the number of documents which needed to be considered at this APCAS Session in a relatively short time. Members felt that there was insufficient time to consider and discuss each of the papers and the Commission recommended that in future a better balance be found between the number of papers and the time available for the session preferably by extending the session to five days.

68. The Commission recommended that more notice be provided of session dates and agenda and that papers be provided in advance of the session to enable member countries to consider issues in papers before the start of the session.

69. The Commission recommended that the start of each APCAS should begin with a presentation on the review of recommendations made at the previous APCAS.

70. The Commission discussed the availability of guidelines on conducting cost of production surveys and noted that the draft guidelines have been prepared and shall be made widely available after further validation. There was also an expression of need for technical assistance on this subject.

71. The Host Government, Lao PDR, arranged a field visit for the delegates to the Agricultural Research Center (ARC) in Phonethong Village.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT AND CLOSING OF THE SESSION

(Items 12 and 13 of the Agenda)

72. The Commission concluded the Twenty-Fifth Session on 21 February 2014 after considering and adopting the report prepared by the Drafting Committee, with amendments.

AGENDA

- I. Opening Ceremony**
- II. Election of Officers** (Chair, Vice-Chair and Drafting Committee)
- III. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable**
- IV. FAO's Activities in Food and Agriculture Statistics in Asia and the Pacific since the last Session of the Commission**
 1. Overview of FAO Activities in the Asia and Pacific Region since the 24th Session of APCAS
 2. FAO, the New Strategic Framework, and the Role of Statistics
 3. FAO Statistical Yearbook
 4. On-line presentation of the New FAOSTAT Platform
 5. Issues in the collection of FAO data
- V. Progress and Vision on World Programme for the Census of Agriculture (WCA) 2020**
 1. Lessons learnt from the WCA 2010 in Asia and the Pacific Region and update on the preparations for WCA 2020
 2. Changes in 2015 Census of Agriculture and Forestry in Japan
 3. Report Second Lao Census of Agriculture 2010/11
 4. First Agricultural Census of Cambodia
 5. Pakistan Agricultural Census 2010 and Pakistan Village Census 2008
 6. Indonesian 2013 Agricultural Census
 7. Agriculture Census of Thailand
- VI. Promoting Technical Cooperation in the field of Agricultural Statistics to build Country Capacity**
 1. South-South Co-operation to Build Country Capacity to Produce Agricultural and Rural Statistics
 2. Japanese Technical Cooperation through FAO and AFSIS in ASEAN Region
 3. Indian Initiatives on International Cooperation in Statistics

(Round Table discussion on modalities for promoting South-South Cooperation to build country capacity to produce agricultural and rural statistics in the region)
- VII. Implementation of Global Strategy to improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics in Asia and the Pacific**
 1. Implementation of Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics in Asia and the Pacific: Reports from Implementing Partners on their activities and work plan for 2014

2. Presentation of the Conclusions of the FAO-ADB Expert Meeting on “Crop Monitoring for Improved Food Security”
3. Assessing and Monitoring Country Capacity to Produce Statistics: Framework for Agricultural and Rural Statistics
4. Action Plan for Improving Agricultural and Rural Statistics in Lao PDR 2013-2020
5. In-depth Country Assessments – Bhutan experience
6. Experiences of Sri Lanka in Agriculture Statistics
7. In-depth Country Assessment – Indonesian experience
8. Presentation from Bangladesh

VIII. Methodological Developments in Food Security Statistics

1. A New Approach to Food Balance Sheet Methods and Design
2. Revision of the methodology for the estimation of the Prevalence of Undernourishment
3. New Approaches to the Measurement of Food Security
4. International Product Classifications for Agricultural Statistics: A Brief Report of Activities in 2012-2013

IX. Analysis and Dissemination of Food Security Statistics in Asia and the Pacific Region

1. The States of Food Insecurity in the World 2013: An Overview
2. Nutrition Impact of Agriculture and Food System in Thailand
3. Report on Activities of FAO TCP Regional Project of Food Security
4. Trend Assessment of Food Insecurity in Pakistan 2005-2011
5. Presentation of Food Security Information System of the Philippines (PhilFISIS)

X. Statistics of Sub-sectors of Agriculture

1. Strategy toward Integrated Fishery and Aquaculture Data Collection
2. Statistics of Fishery and Aquaculture in Indonesia
3. Status of Fisheries and Aquaculture Statistics in Bangladesh: Issues and Plans for Improvement
4. Recent Advancements in Livestock Statistics: Animal diseases, Technical conversion factors and Survey questionnaires
5. Supporting Sustainable Forest Management through the Global Forest Resources Assessment

(Discussion to focus on specific sub-sector issues and possible strategies for integration in data collection efforts in sub-sector for promotion of sustainable practices in agricultural and rural sector)

XI. Archiving and dissemination of data from census and surveys

1. Presentation on Micro-data: Options and issues of archiving and dissemination

2. Data Dissemination Strategy of Lao PDR and Presentation of Related IT Applications
3. Presentation of CountrySTAT – An Integrated System for National Food and Agricultural Statistics
4. On-line demonstration of the New CountrySTAT platform

(Discussions to focus on the good practices to be promoted and appropriateness of available IT tools for different situation for data archiving and dissemination)

XII. Recent advances in Environmental Statistics relating to Agricultural Sector

1. Towards a System of Environmental Economic Accounting for Agriculture (SEEA-AGRI)
2. Land management statistics – informing the relationship between Australian agriculture and rural environment: ABS
3. The FAOSTAT Emissions Database
4. Agri-environmental indicators and the recently adopted Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics – FDES

XIII. Recent advances in Economic Statistics relating to Agricultural Sector

1. Agricultural cost of production statistics – update on the recent expert group meeting in Rome and next milestones
2. Recent advancement in Agricultural Economic Statistics – Price and Investment domains
3. Implementation of Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) in India

XIV. Social and other Agricultural Statistics

1. Application of spatial information technology in crop production survey in China
2. Strengthening the collection and analysis of sex disaggregated data on land ownership in agricultural censuses
3. Gender Aspects of the Lao Agricultural Census

XV. Any other business

Other Matters

Venue, Date and Topics for the Next APCAS Session

XVI. Adoption of the Report of the Commission

XVII. Closing of the Session

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WELCOME ADDRESS

By

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Director-General, Department of Planning and Cooperation
In his capacity of Chairman

at

**The Twenty-fifth Session of the
Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics**
Vientiane, Lao PDR
18 – 21 February 2014

.....

H.E Vilayvanh PHOMKHE, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR

FAO Representatives, Development Partners

Mr. Mukesh Srivastava, Secretary of the Commission, FAO

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning!

Firstly, it is indeed my privilege and honor, on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, to extend our warmest welcome to all of you of the 25th APCAS, and may I take this opportunity to thank FAO for the support and commitment rendered to make this event a reality. And especially welcome H.E. Vilayvanh PHOMKHE, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR to the opening ceremony of the 25th Session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics this morning. We are please that you have courteously accepted our invitation to deliver the opening address and to officiate the opening of the session.

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we all aware that the APCAS is a biennial event and it has provided strong support for the development of Agricultural Statistics in the Asia and Pacific Region throughout its about 50 years of existence. The commission is also responsible to set directions for further developments of statistical systems by working as platform for sharing country initiatives, thus assisting FAO in deciding new programme initiatives and setting priorities in the course of FAO reform. Lao PDR has been given the opportunity to host the 25th Session, where it provides an avenue to review the development in agricultural statistics since the last session held in Dalat, Viet Nam in 2012. Besides, this meeting facilitates the exchange of ideas with the presence of experts from FAO

and other organization regarding the state of Food and Agricultural statistics in the region.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to thank the FAO Secretary, APCAS Commission for selecting Vientiane as the venue for this wonderful meeting. Thank you all delegates, guests and representatives from various international organizations for your kindness in travelling overseas to attend this meeting. Please enjoy your staying in Vientiane. You will be able to spare time to visit our cultural site and the night market along the river Mekong which are not so far from this Hotel.

- Thank you and Welcome -

OPENING REMARKS

By

Dr Samaychanh Boupha,

Head, Lao Statistics Bureau (LSB), Ministry of Planning and Investment

at

**The Twenty-fifth Session of the
Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics**

Vientiane, Lao PDR

18 – 21 February 2014

.....

His Excellency Dr Vilayvanh Phomkhe, Minister of Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry;

Mr Mukesh Srivastava, Secretary of the Commission, FAO;

Distinguish Country Delegates,

Colleague Heads of National Statistical agencies)

Representatives of International Organizations,

Ladies and Gentlemen!

It gives me great delighted to extend to you all distinguish delegates for a very warm welcome on behalf of the Lao Statistics Bureau (LSB), Ministry of Planning and Investment and to say how grateful we are to have you here to convene this very importance event of the 25th Session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics (APCAS) in a small and charms Vientiane Capital City of the Lao PDR.

The Session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics (APCAS), which is conducted every two years, has always been considered a very important forum for Regional Statistical Community as well as the National Statistics System to assess current status, consult-exchange experiences, lesson learnt and propose a framework and solutions to improve and strengthen the agricultural statistics for better evidence-base policies as well as the way-toward the best practices in the process of the implementation of the ten (10) fundamental principles of official statistics which was endorsed in 1994 and reaffirmed in 29 January 2014 (revised preamble only), and will be endorsed by UN General Assembly to its 45th commission session. As it is clearly stated in the working agenda of the Session which will focus on the wide range of important and relevant topics, the achievements in the past two years since the 24th Session, Da Lat, Viet Nam will be reviewed and discussed as stated by Director General of Planning and Cooperation Department. Given the

importance and contents of the Session, it is a great honour for LSB to work and coordinating with Ministry of Agriculture and with FAO to organize this important forum.

Excellences; Ladies and Gentlemen!

It has become commonplace to say, and repeat saying, that scarcity of resources is the most severe constraint to the development in general and in particular for the statistical development, these resource constraints have meant that statistical development is often given low priority, even though statistics are needed to make sound policy decisions and well-targeted and realistic interventions. On the other hand, our statistical agencies have not managed to take full advantage of the changing tide by effectively demonstrating and disseminating statistics and provide good statistics on timely manner to deliver on the Nation's Development Goals. However, in practices, no matter how much we can do by ourselves on the national level as well as at the regional level, whether it be development on the data sources, production and dissemination to improve official statistics, it is never enough, there is always a long way to go, as the demands has been changed rapidly overtime and it is involve both quantity and quality in accordance to the economic-social and environmental development aspects.

In the case of Lao PDR, the increasing on national and international demands on the quality official statistics to support evident-base policies formulation as well as the process of monitoring and evaluation provide us opportunities and at the same time also big challenges for National Statistics System.

Excellences; Ladies and Gentlemen!

Given the needs, it is appropriate recall some of the notable achievements, we have received considerable of government supports thru the legislation and institutional arrangement: statistics law approved by the National Assembly in June 2010 after the Strategy for Development of National Statistics System 2010-2020 endorsed in May 2010 by the Government of Lao PDR. Number of staff for LSB, Province and District Office Statistics and Line Ministry has been gradually increased. National budget support for Statistics Activities, in particular the data collection and capacity building programme for the National Statistical System also has been considerable increased. In addition we also received the technical and financial support from the development partners and international donors.

The LSB has become the coordinating body of production and dissemination of statistics and information within the Vertical and Horizontal National statistical system. How do we coordinate? The Statistical Steering Committee created to oversee the implementation of SDNSS (chaired by Head of Lao Statistics Bureau (LSB) and include member of Multi Development Agencies (MDAs) (DG/DDG level). We plan to set up a *Statistics Working Group (SWG)*, which will be platform for donor coordination, which is under the Macroeconomic Sector Working Group. Departments at LSB work and serve as secretary to SSC and lead the implementation of four key strategic objectives and 12 working programmes SDNSS 2020. The National Implementation and Coordination Team designated each supporting project and report to the Project Steering Committee.

In regards to the Agriculture Statistics, as we all acknowledged that is one of main national statistic in Lao PDR as a developing country; the rural population accounts for nearly 75 percent and relies on agriculture for living. Developing Agriculture Statistics is also being taken to account in our strategy of development statistics under working program No. 9 out of 12 working programmes from SD NSS 2020. Agricultural Statistical Indicators, data sources and report timeline has been identified in the indicators development framework. Action Plan for National Agriculture Statistics prepared with the support from ADB under the implementation of Regional action plan of Global Strategy to improve Agriculture and Rural Statistics and endorsed by Ministry of Agriculture.

In addition to its administrative data collection and reporting system, LSB together with The Department of Planning and Corporation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) conducted agriculture census 2 times in 1998/99 and in 2011, which obtained a great amount of scientific, reliable and valuable data and filled in the many blanks of basic data. Those data is expedient for government to monitor social-economic performance in rural areas and provide a basis for decision-making for the timely progress and achievement of policies for agriculture and rural areas. Moreover those data is also valuable information for international organization and other public users. You will hear more about the Lao Agriculture Census thru the later session including its dissemination.

Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Despite advantage that we have gain, it is importance to note that the successful implementation of SD NSS 2020 will require enormous commitment, comprehensive institutional arrangement, capacity building programme; good coordination mechanism, sufficient human resources and financial support from the Government, Development Partners, International Donors and other stakeholders to perform work programmes is critical.

LSB and the NSS including the Ministry of Agriculture in transition, it is required considerable amount of time and investment to strengthen the organization. The essential role the agricultural statistics play in promoting agricultural development and overall socio-economic development of our people in the Lao PDR have been repeatedly highlighted. *The law is not enough for statistics, we need a good development framework and plan and very importance is how strategizing to effectively implement it.*

In a spirit of true cooperation and collaboration, we in this region of the world, proud of cultivating all past and present civilizations and cultures, must join in an action-oriented effort to addressing and solve the problems that beset to the better quality of Agricultural Statistics Development.

We greatly encouraged by the presence at this meeting of outstanding statisticians who will no doubt bring their expertises and wide experiences to bear on discussions of these very important topics. We are therefore confident that the decisions and recommendations of this meeting will effectively address the problems at hand and lay the necessary foundation for the development and improvement in the collection

and utilisation of agricultural statistics and set the stage for the socio-economic development and the general well-being of the people of Asia and Pacific in the coming years.

We are aware that this is a great opportunity for LSB and Ministry Agricultural colleagues to renew contacts and discuss issues, problems of mutual interest in particular to share and learn experiences with colleagues from different countries in the Asia Pacific Region, international organizations and advanced statistics countries in the context of Lao PDR integration into the regional and global statistics community.

For the international participants, we hope that your stay will be a memorable one. For those who have been here before we hope your stay this time would be more pleasant than the previous ones and get to know more of the local culture and customs of our country.

Lastly, we would also take this opportunity to express our appreciation to our development partners and international donors who have provided support for the development of the strategic plan and contributing to its implementation and for their support with Government to our statistics development and in institutional building.

On behalf of LSB and organisers, we wish the APCAS meeting has a great success and fruitful deliberations throughout the next four days.

Thank you

OUTGOING CHAIR'S ADDRESS

By

Mr Nguyen Van Lieu,
Deputy Director General, General Statistics Office, Viet Nam

at

**The Twenty-fifth Session of the
Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics**
Vientiane, Lao PDR
18 – 21 February 2014

.....

His Excellency Mr Vilayvanh Phomkhe, Minister of Agriculture, Lao PDR

Dr Samaychanh Boupha, Head, Lao Statistics Bureau

**Mr Xaypladeth Choulamany, Director General, Department of Planning and
Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR**

Mr Josef Schmidhuber, Deputy Director, FAO Statistics Division

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR and Lao Statistics Bureau to host this 25th Session of Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics in collaboration with FAO.

APCAS provides a unique forum for the agricultural statisticians from the member countries to come together to deliberate on the technical issues and share their experiences and best practices to further improve statistics in the region for greater cause of ensuring Food Security and better nutrition.

It was a great honor for me to have the opportunity to take the Chairmanship at a time when APCAS was completing its golden 50 years of existence since its constitution in 1963. I must emphasise that the Commission has performed its duties with highest technical standards and provided strong support and guidance for the development of agricultural statistics in the region. This has been made possible through active cooperation of all its members. I note that the agenda for this session is quite comprehensive and addresses important strategic issues like promoting South-South cooperation in agricultural statistics, besides emerging technical issues.

I thank all of our colleagues in the region who have worked tirelessly to improve agricultural statistics in their respective countries. I am glad to note that good progress

has been made since the endorsement of Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics in the last APCAS at Da Lat, barely fifteen months ago. The implantation of plan has now started in 4 out of the 8 priority countries identified in 2013 through collaborative efforts of FAO, ADB and SIAP. Capacity building events have also been organized to implement the Regional Action Plan. To fulfil the research needs an Expert Meeting on Crop Monitoring has also been organized. I am sure we are on good track of progress.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As outgoing chairman of APCAS, I am sure that under our next chairman's leadership and guidance, we will continue to work together with renewed vigour for achieving our shared goal of promoting quantity and quality of agricultural statistics.

Finally, I take this opportunity to convey my heartfelt thanks to our host Lao PDR for their warmest hospitality extended to us in this beautiful city of Vientiane. I hope and believe that all other distinguished delegates also share the same feelings.

I wish the new APCAS host Lao PDR and FAO a successful 25th Session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on the Agricultural Statistics.

Thank you!

SPEECH

By

Mr Hiroyuki Konuma,
Assistant Director-General and
FAO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific

at

**The Twenty-fifth Session of the
Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics**
Vientiane, Lao PDR
18 – 21 February 2014

.....

**His Excellency Mr Vilayvanh Phomkhe, Honorable Minister of Agriculture,
Lao PDR**

**Mr Xaypladeth Choulamany, Director-General, Department of Planning and
Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR**

Dr Samaychanh Boupcha, Head of Lao Statistics Bureau,

**Mr Nguyen Van Lieu, Deputy Director-General, GSO, Viet Nam and Chairman of
the APCAS**

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Director-General of FAO and on my own behalf, I take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to all the participants of the Twenty-fifth Session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics (APCAS).

I am especially grateful to the Government of Lao PDR for its generosity in hosting this silver jubilee Session of APCAS in this beautiful city of Vientiane and for providing excellent facilities and an environment conducive to fruitful and productive discussions. I am personally grateful to you, Honourable Minister, **Mr Vilayvanh Phomkhe** for sparing your valuable time to inaugurate this Session of APCAS.

I am delighted to note that some 90 delegates and participants from 20 countries are attending the meeting. I am thankful for your continued keen interest in the work of the Commission and in the activities of FAO. Your active involvement in the activities of FAO, particularly for giving direction to its work, is of vital importance as reliable food and agricultural statistics are more needed than ever before for ensuring adequate and nutritious food to population.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

APCAS has now completed 50 years of its remarkable existence and during all these years, it has made valuable contribution by providing strong support and guidance for the development of agricultural statistics in the region. The Commission works not only to monitor progress in the development of agricultural statistics and takes cognizance of the needs of countries in changing times, but also sets directions for further developments in the statistical systems by providing a platform for exchanging ideas, sharing country initiatives and best practices. FAO looks forward to receiving your priorities and directions for our future actions. In turn, I wish to assure you that we at the FAO Regional Office in Bangkok are always ready to extend our expert advice and technical support to the efforts of our member countries for improving their agricultural and rural statistics systems.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

You are well aware that FAO's main mandate is to combat hunger and monitor progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, especially MDG one, aimed at reducing extreme hunger by half by 2015. It is heartening to note that the Asia region as a whole is nearly on track to achieve the MDG hunger target. In 2012 itself, seven countries, viz. Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Fiji, Maldives, Thailand and Viet Nam achieved MDG target. In 2013, China achieved MDG target and the situation further improved in Thailand and Viet Nam. However, progress in Southern Asia has been slower, especially in terms of the number of people undernourished. Most of the world's undernourished people are still to be found in Southern Asia, closely followed by sub-Saharan Africa.

Besides eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition, FAO's new Strategic Objectives focus on sustainability of agriculture, reduction of rural poverty, and increasing resilience of livelihoods to threats and crisis. Above all, our activities are now to be aligned to meeting the "Zero Hunger" challenge. FAO works with governments, civil society and the private sector aiming to bring about durable improvements in the lives of the poor. For sustainable food security, FAO recently organized a "Consultative Meeting on Rice Strategy for Asia and the Pacific," which was attended by more than 40 participants from some 17 countries of the region and representatives from development partners. FAO's Global Initiative on Food Loss and Waste Reduction in collaboration with other partners also aims at combating hunger and malnutrition.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you may be aware, in 2012, the Secretary General of the United Nations constituted a High Level Panel of Eminent Persons to carve a development agenda in the post 2015 Scenario. The Panel's report "**A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development**" was recently submitted to the Secretary General. In its report, the Panel has set new development agenda to carry forward the spirit of the Millennium Declaration which envisaged integrating and promoting the economic, social, and environmental aspects of sustainable development with a practical focus on things like poverty, hunger, water,

sanitation, education and healthcare. I would like highlight that “sustainable development” is the core of new development agenda, which is foreseen to be achieved through partnerships.

As we can foresee, the need for integrating economic, social and environmental dimensions of development will place additional demands on the statistical systems. You will also appreciate that Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics has already embarked on this path of taking an integrated approach for development of national statistical systems to meet the emerging requirements.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are meeting amidst the historic grandeur and beautiful surroundings of the Vientiane city. A number of agenda items have been lined up for consideration of the Commission which are highly relevant for improving the quantity and quality of agricultural statistics in this region. Besides the issues relating to its activities since the last APCAS Session, FAO will provide an update on implementation of Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics in Bhutan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Samoa and Sri Lanka. We are working on this in collaboration with our partners ADB and ESCAP and we propose to take up implementation of the Global Strategy in 4 more countries in 2014.

Another very relevant and timely agenda item before you is promoting South-South Cooperation to build country capacity to produce reliable agricultural statistics. FAO solicits support of all member countries to make their contribution to his effort. The New FAO Strategy on South-South Cooperation offers enough flexibility to accommodate different modalities for enhancing cooperation. Based upon your valuable guidance and contribution, FAO will undertake necessary follow-up action to further promote technical cooperation in the region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

World Programme for the Census of Agriculture started in 1930, and implemented under the leadership of FAO since 1950 had made remarkable contribution in improvement of agriculture statistics. In the last decadal round some 125 countries undertook an agricultural census, which provides the foundation of an agricultural statistics system. This Session will review the vision for WCA Programme 2020 in the light of the country experiences in implementation of WCA 2010 in Asia and the Pacific region.

The Session will also benefit from a number of presentations on various topics including recent advances in economic, social and environmental statistics, agro-environmental indicators, system of environmental and economic accounting for agriculture, and agricultural market information system. The Commission will also have an occasion to review the conclusion of an Expert Meeting on “Crop Monitoring for Food Security” which was a side event to take stock of current methodological practices and to identify issues for further development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This Commission provides a unique opportunity to senior statistics officials from member countries to come together to deliberate on important technical issues. I am confident these 4 days of deliberations and the resulting recommendations of the Commission would help member countries to align their statistical activities to the global standards.

Finally, let me once again convey my sincere gratitude to the Government of Lao PDR for hosting this Session of the Commission. I wish to convey again my special gratitude to the Hon'ble Minister for his interest in agricultural statistics. I would also like to thank the governments of all the countries who have sent their delegations to this Session of APCAS. I acknowledge the hard work of the Secretariat of this Commission, particularly the Secretary and the Liaison Officer, in the preparation and organization of this meeting. I wish to thank my colleagues from FAO headquarters and the regional office for their technical contributions in making this meeting productive and successful. Recognition is also due to institution like Asian Development Bank (ADB), Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP), and US Department of Agriculture (USDA) who are our partners in development of agricultural and rural statistics in the region.

I wish you all success in your deliberations and a pleasant stay in this beautiful city of Vientiane.

Thank you.

ADDRESS

By

Mr Josef Schmidhuber,
Deputy Director, FAO Statistics Division

at

**The Twenty-fifth Session of the
Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics**
Vientiane, Lao PDR
18 – 21 February 2014

.....

**Your Excellency, Mr Vilayvanh Phomkhe, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry,
Lao PDR**

**Mr Nguyen Van Lieu, Outgoing Chairman of the 24th Session of APCAS, Deputy
Director-General, General Statistics Office, Viet Nam**

Dr Samaychanh Boupfa, Head, Lao Statistics Bureau

**Mr Xaypladeth Choulamany, Director-General, Department of Planning and
Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR**

Dear FAO colleagues,

Distinguished Delegates,

Honourable Guests,

It is both a privilege and a pleasure for me to welcome you all to the Twenty-fifth Session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics.

At the outset, I would like to thank the Government of Lao PDR for assisting FAO in hosting this Commission Session. We are particularly grateful to our colleagues from the Department of Planning and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, who worked closely with the staff of the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, to complete on time all organizational and logistical arrangements. We would also like to extend our warm welcome to the Delegates who, in spite of the long journeys, are attending this Commission Session in large number.

This is the first time that the Commission meets in Lao PDR, 48 years after the first APCAS meeting in 1966. And importantly, Lao PDR did not only host the meeting of the Commission, it also organized an important side event back-to-back with APCAS, focusing on crop monitoring for improved food security. At this point it shall suffice to say that the event was carefully and professionally organized and rendered results

way in excess of our expectations. My colleagues from FAO will provide you with a more detailed account of the outcomes later in the Session.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to highlight here some of the key developments in the area of agricultural statistics that have emerged since the last APCAS Session in October 2012.

Within FAO, statistics continues to gain higher priority and benefits from greater internal coordination. The Director of the Statistics Division, Mr Pietro Gennari, is now also the Chief Statistician of FAO. He coordinates FAO work at headquarters through an Inter-departmental Working Group on statistics and receives external advice from the International Advisory Group on FAO Statistics (IAGFS); this advisory group met in Rome in September last year and provided a comprehensive and new set of recommendations on statistical priorities, best practices, and on the design and implementation of major FAO statistical projects and capacity development programmes.

We are generally pleased to see a growing importance placed by the international community on strengthening agricultural statistical systems in developing countries. For instance, the recent call by the High Level Panel of Experts that advises the Secretary General of the United Nations on the post-2015 development process for a “data revolution” could mark a turning point in recognizing the contribution that better data can make to improving people’s lives.

As another example, the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics has now moved into its implementation phase. The first in-depth assessments are underway in a number of countries of the region, inter alia, in Bhutan, India, Samoa, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. In addition, the Global Office in Rome is working on “quick wins” to improve and roll out new methods to collect, compile and analyze data. An illustration is a Handbook on Cost of Production, which will be presented in this Session, and finalized and field-tested later this year.

Since the last Commission Session, we have also continued to promote and assist countries in completing the implementation of the 2010 World Census of Agriculture programme. The FAO has helped countries in the region through Technical Cooperation and donor-funded Projects. 28 Asian and Pacific countries have completed their censuses during the 2010 WCA round, and another 6 plan to do so by 2015. Since the last meeting of the commission, 5 countries have started a census and another one plans to do so in the next year. The FAO has helped countries in the region such as Bangladesh (2008), Cambodia (2013), Cook Islands (2011/2012), Fiji (2009), Lao PDR (2010), Mongolia (2012), Myanmar (2010), Nepal (2011/2012), Niue (2009), Pakistan (2010), Sri Lanka (2013), Tonga (2014-ongoing) and Vanuatu (2007) through Technical Cooperation and donor-funded Projects.

There are also important developments underway at FAO Headquarters with direct impacts and benefits for Asia and the Pacific. For instance, FAO has completely overhauled the FAOSTAT platform and vastly extended its content. Its corporate database is now offering faster, easier and more user-friendly access to a rapidly growing set of data domains. These include databases on Agri-Environmental

Indicators, Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Agriculture, Forestry and land use change, government expenditures on agriculture, and producer and consumer prices and price indices. FAOSTAT will soon expand to include price volatility and transmission indicators, and statistics on capital stocks in agriculture and investment financing.

In parallel with the improved corporate information platform, FAO has put CountrySTAT onto a new, vastly improved and royalty-free IT system. CountrySTAT has only been adopted by a few countries of the region at the moment, but the positive feedback from these pilots has encouraged other countries to adopt the platform. There is already an agreement with Afghanistan and a request has recently been received by Viet Nam.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The 25th Session of the Commission has a comprehensive agenda to address. In addition to the topics mentioned above, papers will be presented on a vision for the 2020 round of the World Census of Agriculture, a new suite of food security statistics, a new framework for Food Balance Sheets and supply-utilization accounts, and proposals to improve the measurement of agriculture capital stocks and country-level investment profiles, or the System of Environmental – Economic Accounting (SEEA) to mention just a few.

The underlying documentation has been prepared by the secretariat and by member countries and has been made available in advance of the meeting for discussion and decision by the Commission.

I encourage the Commission to exchange views in a constructive and open manner, and to widely share the wealth of knowledge and experience present in the region for the benefit of all. We look forward to the Commission's recommendations which will assist FAO in orienting its work programme in food and agricultural statistics.

Finally, I wish you a successful meeting and a pleasant stay in Vientiane.

Thank you.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

By

H.E. Vilayvanh Phomkhe,
Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR

at

**The Twenty-fifth Session of the
Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics**
Vientiane, Lao PDR
18 – 21 February 2014

.....

FAO Representatives,

Development Partners

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure today to preside over the Opening Ceremony of the Twenty-fifth Session of for the year 2014.

Firstly, I would like to thank the organizers for giving me this opportunity to officiate the opening of the 25th Session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics or “APCAS”, on behalf of the Lao Government, I would like to express my gratitude to “FAO” for choosing Lao PDR as the venue for this round of session.

I would like to welcome all participants from the 25 participating countries to this Session, jointly organized by FAO, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Lao PDR and the Lao Statistics Bureau under the Ministry of Planning and Investment. I hope your visit here will be productive and enjoyable during your staying in Vientiane. Please take some time off to enjoy this beautiful country of ours, including our food and beverage and warm hospitality.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

The Lao Agriculture Sector records a continuous growth. But as you know the two greatest challenges the world faces today remains (1) food security and (2) climate change. Both challenges require urgent responses.

Fighting with these emerging issues requires strong coordination and cooperation among us including government institutions and local communities of our region. We need to continue to invest in farmers, connect them to market and make sure they have the needed policy and legal framework. We need to build a more competitive

agriculture and forestry sectors that would ensure greater development and progress in our region.

To effectively monitor the progress of development in the agricultural sector and to carry out effective agricultural planning, Government needs good statistics.

Agricultural statistics play an important role in agriculture and rural development sectors serving for making policy, strategy and planning, as well as implementation of the agricultural activities and information-data for the society at large.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

It is hoped that during this Session, participants will actively deliberate to bring about improvements and innovations in the management of agricultural statistical system which will assist in addressing issues, in light of the present challenges faced by various ministries concerned as well as National Statistics Offices.

Since you have a very busy schedule and taking into consideration during the Session, I would urge you all to do you utmost to conclude successfully on your deliberation within the spirit of our region solidarity. At the same time, I do hope that during your staying in Vientiane you will be able to enjoy our traditional lifestyle and hospitality.

May I wish you all a very productive meeting.

Thank you.

VOTE OF THANKS

By

Mr Mukesh Srivastava,
APCAS Secretary and Senior Statistician,
FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

at

**The Twenty-fifth Session of the
Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics**
Vientiane, Lao PDR
18 – 21 February 2014

.....

Honorable Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, H.E. Vilayvanh Phomkhe

**Mr Xaypladeth Choulamany, Director-General, Department of Planning and
Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry**

Mr Samaychanh Boupcha, Head of Lao Statistics Bureau

Mr Nguyen Van Lieu, DDG, GSO, Viet Nam

Mr. Josef Schmidhuber, Deputy Director, Statistics Division, FAO

Distinguished delegates,

Fellow Statisticians

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a privilege for me serves as the Secretary of this silver jubilee session of APCAS. I have taken over the responsibility as the Regional Statistician of FAO only recently, but am not totally new to the system. I already have long standing relationships with many of you and look forward to further broadening and deepening my relationships base for improving agricultural and rural statistics in the region.

It has been my pleasure to work together with colleagues in Lao PDR for organization of this event. I really appreciate the leadership provided by Mr Xaypladeth in organizing this event. Mr Savanh, Ms Vivanh, the APCAS Liaison Officer, and the team of young staff of Lao Government who are working behind the scene, often overnight, to make this event successful deserve my sincere thanks for their dedicated efforts.

I am grateful for the hard work put in by the members of Organizing Committee of our host Government. They have gone out of their way to facilitate travel of delegates

to their beautiful country and make their stay comfortable. The never-ending details that go into the planning for a Session of this level are known fully only to those actually involved in the process.

I want to extend my personal thanks to the delegates and observers attending this Session and look forward to your contributions to our discussions. My colleagues both in the FAO Regional Office and in the FAO Statistics Division in Rome made important contributions to formulation of the Agenda and to the preparation of discussion papers, and they deserve special thanks.

Last but not the least, my special thanks go to the officers and supporting staff from FAO Regional Office in Bangkok for their untiring assistance.

Finally, this event would not have been possible without the collaboration and effort of staff of Don Chan Palace Hotel.

Thank you.

**ASIA AND PACIFIC COMMISSION ON
AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS**

Members as of February 2014

Afghanistan	Lao PDR
Australia	Malaysia
Bangladesh	Myanmar
Bhutan	Nepal
Cambodia	New Zealand
China, People's Rep. of	Pakistan
Fiji	Philippines
France	Sri Lanka
India	Thailand
Indonesia	United Kingdom
Iran, Islamic Rep. of	United States of America
Japan	Viet Nam
Korea, Rep. of	

DATES AND PLACES OF SESSIONS OF THE ASIA AND PACIFIC COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

First	–	Tokyo, Japan, 26 September – 3 October 1966
Second	–	New Delhi, India, 9 – 14 December 1968
Third	–	Bangkok, Thailand, 26 – 31 October 1970
Fourth	–	Seoul, Korea, 6 – 12 October 1972
Fifth	–	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 16 – 20 July 1974
Sixth	–	Manila, Philippines, 25 – 31 March 1976
Seventh	–	Bangkok, Thailand, 17 – 23 August 1978
Eighth	–	Kathmandu, Nepal, 26 – 31 October 1980
Ninth	–	Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2 – 7 December 1982
Tenth	–	Jakarta, Indonesia, 26 July – 1 August 1984
Eleventh	–	Seoul, Korea, 29 May – 3 June 1986
Twelfth	–	Colombo, Sri Lanka, 10 – 16 August 1988
Thirteenth	–	Bangkok, Thailand, 29 October – 2 November 1990
Fourteenth	–	Beijing, China, 8 – 13 June 1992
Fifteenth	–	Manila, Philippines, 24 – 28 October 1994
Sixteenth	–	Tokyo, Japan, 28 October – 1 November 1996
Seventeenth	–	Hobart, Australia, 2 – 6 November 1998
Eighteenth	–	Bali, Indonesia, 6 – 10 November 2000
Nineteenth	–	Seoul, Republic of Korea, 21 – 25 October 2002
Twentieth	–	New Delhi, India, 20 – 24 September 2004
Twenty-first	–	Phuket, Thailand, 11 – 15 September 2006
Twenty-second	–	Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia, 9 – 13 June 2008
Twenty-third	–	Siem Reap, Cambodia, 26 – 30 April 2010
Twenty-fourth	–	Da Lat, Viet Nam, 8 – 12 October 2012
Twenty-fifth	–	Vientiane, Lao PDR, 18 – 21 February 2014

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