



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

# Proposal to Establish a Global FAO Commission on Statistics



Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations

# Proposal for a Global FAO Commission on Statistics

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- Introduction and Background
- Current External Governance Structure and Limitations
- Implications of the Global Commission
- Recommendations
- Feedback and Questions



# Introduction and Background (1)

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- Important and urgent to strengthen governance of external statistics
- Absence of global international platform for country involvement in strategic discussions on agricultural statistics has serious consequences:
  - Limits FAO leverage to facilitate adoption and implementation of statistical norms and standards.
  - Statistical capacity development priorities not established in consultation with countries, resulting in gaps, overlaps and inconsistencies across initiatives.
- Strong support for establishment of a global body on statistics from statistical regional bodies.
- Also acknowledged as a possible priority by FAO's Member Countries.

More specifically:



# Introduction and Background (2)

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- Establishing a Global Body on Agricultural Statistics:
  - **Recommended** by 26<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO-OEA/CIE-IICA Working Group on Agricultural and Livestock Statistics for the Latin America and the Caribbean (2013) and **Re-iterated** at the 27<sup>th</sup> Session (2015)
  - **Recommended** by 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the African Commission on Agricultural Statistics (2013)
  - **Supported** by 25<sup>th</sup> Session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics (2014)
- Proposal and recommendations from Regional Statistical bodies **noted** by FAO Regional Conferences; recommendation **endorsed** by African Regional Conference (2014).
- Proposal **contemplated** in the FAO Medium Term Plan 2014-17 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2014-201



# Introduction and Background (3)

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- Proposal **reviewed** by Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) at its Ninety-ninth Session (October 2014)
  - Recognized that a FAO body dedicated to addressing statistical matters at global level could be useful
  - Requested clarification on the relationship between existing regional statistical bodies and the global one
- 150th Session of the FAO Council “*noted that the CCLM agreed to consider the proposal to establish the Commission on Statistics at a future session.*” (December 2014)



# Current External Governance Structure for FAO Statistics

AFCAS

African Commission on Agricultural Statistics

Established under Article VI-1 of the Constitution

APCAS

Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics

Established under Article VI-1 of the Constitution

FAO/OEA-CIE/IICA Joint Working Group for Latin America & the Caribbean

Joint Working Group on Agricultural and Livestock statistics

Established in partnership with the Organization of American States (OEA) and Inter-American Institute for Aquaculture (IICA).

Mandated by Article VI-2 of the FAO Constitution

FAO/ECE/CES Joint Study Group for Europe

Joint Study Group on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Europe

Established in partnership with Agricultural Division of UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and Secretariat of Conference of European Statisticians (CES).

**Has been discontinued!**

International Advisory Group on FAO Statistics - *an informal advisory body*



## Low Visibility:

- No formal/strong reporting to FAO Governing Bodies (FAO Conference and FAO Council)

## Inequities:

- differential bodies across regions;
- absence in near Middle East and Europe;
- limited dialogue and coordination amongst current bodies;
- limited/informal role for International Advisory Group on FAO Statistics (IAGFS) with limited/incomplete membership

# Limitations of Current Structure

## Inefficiencies:

- Overlap/repetition of agenda items in current regional meetings;
- Intensive administrative support from FAO Statistics Division

## Absence of country role in global coordination

- Limited dialogue & coordination among current regional bodies
- No international platform for country involvement and participation in strategic discussions on agricultural statistics

# Implications of the Global Commission (1)

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- FAO Conference resolution 11/2015 recognized the need “to enhance the efficiency of the organization and its governance” and requested the Director-General “to continue to explore methods to enhance cost efficiencies for statutory bodies, in particular, in relation to the meetings of such bodies”
- As noted by the CCLM, the current external governance structure needs to be reviewed and modified, particularly to avoid duplication of effort while exploring opportunities for efficiency and effectiveness gains



# Implications of the Global Commission (2)

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Advantages of greater Statistics focus at the Global Level:

- More visible and higher-level platform for providing national inputs and expressing statistical needs
  - Greater possibility to influence agenda and the decisions taken by FAO Governing Bodies, such as Council and Conference
  - Potential for a bigger role for the Regional Conferences in addressing statistical matters
- Opportunity for knowledge exchange/interaction across regions
- Improves overall efficiency by:
  - eliminating duplication across the existing bodies
  - lowering costs in view of fewer meetings to coordinate
  - Streamlining current & differential mechanisms to address regional statistical issues, some which have not been reviewed or updated for over 45 years



# Implications of the Global Commission (3)

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- Proposal: two-tiered approach that leverages the strengths of a Global focus with significant interaction at Regional Level:
  1. Invite all members of regional bodies to participate in the Global Commission
    - One representative from each Region to serve on the Intersession Bureau of the Commission
    - Create dedicated agenda items for the Global Commission focusing on particular regional issues and needs, with the benefit of potential interaction with Members of other regions having similar interests.
      - Upon request, organize regionally-focused side-events as an integral part of the Global Commission's agenda
  2. Create permanent Regional Working Groups of Global Commission in place of the existing regional bodies and to cover regions without any mechanism.
    - To address regional issues raised at the FAO Global Commission on Statistics, the FAO Conference, the Council or the Regional Conferences, and to report back with advice and recommendations
    - As needed, include agenda item and/or side-event on Statistics at a given FAO Regional Conference that is of unique relevance to that region



# Recommendations

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- The 24th Session of the African Commission on Agricultural Statistics is invited to:
  - Re-iterate the recommendation made at the 23rd Session in 2013 to establish a FAO Global Commission on Statistics.
  - Endorse the two-tiered approach to integrate the current statistical governance arrangements within a single Global Statistics Commission, with permanent Regional Working Groups and designated regional representation on the Intersession Bureau of the Global Commission.
  - Include these two recommendations in its final report and to forward them to FAO Regional Conference for Africa.



# Comments and Questions

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*Thank you*

