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International Commodity Bodies (ICBs)

Intergovernmental cooperation between producers and consumers of commodities takes place in the form of international commodity agreements (ICAs), administered through corresponding international commodity organizations and international study groups (ISGs) that have been set up as a result of UN Conferences on the respective commodities. All of them, as well as the FAO Intergovernmental Groups and Sub-Groups on individual commodities, have been designated by the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC) as International Commodity Bodies (ICBs) eligible for CFC-financed projects. The ICBs, as independent and autonomous intergovernmental bodies, have their respective Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure and have a Board as the highest authority. They represent the interests of specific commodities, mainly through consultations between consumers and producers and analyses of market developments and trends.

I. International Commodity Organizations (ICOs)

The ICOs described in this section have been established to administer the provisions of the corresponding International Commodity Agreements that were set up as a result of UN Conferences on the respective commodities. All ICAs currently in force are mainly administrative in nature, serving as fora for producer-consumer cooperation and consultations, market transparency, development projects and sources of statistics.

International Cocoa Organization (ICCO)

http://www.icco.org/

The International Cocoa Organization (ICCO) is an intergovernmental organization, composed of cocoa producing and cocoa consuming countries. Located in London, ICCO was established in 1973 to put into effect the first International Cocoa Agreement which was negotiated in Geneva at a United Nations International Cocoa Conference. There have since been 7 Agreements. At the moment the second two-year extension of the 2001 International Cocoa Agreement is in force, while the seventh International Cocoa Agreement (that of 2010) will enter into force in October 2012 for a period of 10 years, and can be further extended for two additional four-year periods. ICCO currently has 44 members (15 exporting and 29 importing countries), together accounting for over 60% of world cocoa consumption and more than 80% of world cocoa production. The 2010 Agreement has so far been joined by Indonesia, Ghana, Costa Rica, Sierra Leone and Togo (on the exporting side) and by Switzerland and the 27 EU members (on the importing side).

The primary objective of the ICCO is the development and strengthening of international cooperation between producers and consumers. Its explicit mandate is to work towards a sustainable world cocoa economy, by addressing social, economic and environmental dimensions in both production and consumption. In this respect, it works on issues covering cocoa-related customs tariffs on imports, (indirect) taxes on consumption and processing, production costs, market information, and price risk management for farmers through co-operatives. ICCO (a) serves as a platform of discussion for important issues of the world cocoa economy, with participants of both governments and the private sector; (b) promotes market transparency through the collection, processing and publication of statistics; (c) develops and implements projects relating to the cocoa economy; (d) works for the promotion of cocoa and chocolate consumption in emerging markets; and (e) facilitates the information flow on cocoa and chocolate to all interested parties by the functioning of the Cocoa Information Centre.

Members:
(As at 10/2010, for the 2001 ICA) Exporting: Brazil, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Gabon, Ghana, Malaysia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela. Importing: EU, Russian Federation and Switzerland.

International Coffee Organization (ICO)
http://www.ico.org/

The International Coffee Organization (ICO) is the main intergovernmental organization for coffee. It is based in London and was established in 1963 under the auspices of the United Nations when the first International Coffee Agreement (ICA) entered into force in 1962. It has continued to operate under the 7 successive Agreements negotiated since then (the latest one being ICA 2007, which entered into force on 2 February 2011). It has 65 members (33 exporters and 32 importers), representing the 97% of world coffee production and over 80% of world consumption. ICO's mission is to strengthen the global coffee sector and to promote its sustainable expansion in a market-based environment, while its basic aim is to contribute to an increase in the living standards of all coffee sector participants. In this respect, it (a) provides a platform of discussion on the problems, potential and challenges of the sector that facilitates international cooperation and coordination of policies; (b) promotes market transparency through a wide range of relevant statistics; (c) undertakes innovative market development activities to deepen the coffee market; (d) promotes training and information programmes on production, financing and other activities; and (e) implements projects.

Members:
(As of 3/8/2011) Exporting: Angola, Brazil, Burundi, Central African Republic, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, European Union (all 27 member countries), Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Liberia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Uganda, Vietnam, Yemen, Zambia. Importing: Norway, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey and United States.

International Grains Council (IGC)
http://www.igc.int/

The International Grains Council (IGC), established in London in 1995, is the intergovernmental organization administering the 1995 Grains Trade Convention (GTC 1995). It was originally established in 1942 in Washington, as the International Wheat Council (IWC)[1]; the main body that facilitated the formation and implementation of the numerous International Wheat Agreements, which from 1967 onwards consisted of two legally separate but linked instruments: a Wheat Trade Convention (WTC) and a Food Aid Convention (FAC). The latest in this long series of multilateral cooperation instruments is the International Grains Agreement 1995, incorporating both the GTC 1995 and the FAC 1999, which are currently in force. The GTC 1995 applies to trade in wheat, coarse grains, maize, barley, sorghum and other grains, oilseeds and since July 2009, in rice.

IGC, which serves as a forum for cooperation in grains trade matters, consists of all parties to the Grains Trade Convention. It has 52 members (35 exporters and 17 importers). It seeks to

[1] Which in turn superseded the Wheat Advisory Committee set up in 1933.

further international cooperation in grains trade; promote expansion, openness and fairness in the grains sector; contribute to grain market stability and enhance world food security. These objectives are sought by improving market transparency through information-sharing, analysis and consultation. Its functions are to oversee the implementation of the GTC; to discuss current and prospective world grain market developments; to monitor changes in national grain policies and their market implications; and to develop and sponsor projects in member countries for financing by the CFC.

The IGC Secretariat provides administrative services for both the International Grains Council and the Food Aid Committee. It provides an independent source of information and analyses of world grain and oilseed market developments, and monitors operations under the Food Aid Convention. In ICG's most recent meeting of June 2011, the Council agreed to conduct a review of the 1995 GTC in order to re-examine some of its provisions.

Members:
(as of July 2011) Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Egypt (Arab Rep.), European Union, India, Iran (Islamic Rep.), Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Korea (Rep.), Morocco, Norway, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United States and Vatican City.

International Olive Council (IOC)
http://www.internationaloliveoil.org/

The International Olive Council (IOC) is an intergovernmental organization based in Madrid, Spain, established in 1959 under the auspices of the United Nations in order to administer the succession of international commodity agreements on olive oil and table olives. It used to be known as the International Olive Oil Council (IOOC) until 2006, when its name was changed to IOC. It has 43 member states, including the leading international producers and exporters of olive oil and table olives. IOC producer members account for 98% of the world olive production, located primarily in the Mediterranean region. IOC promotes olive oil by tracking production, defining quality standards and monitoring authenticity. It aims to contribute to the sustainable development of olive growing and serves as a world forum for discussing policymaking issues and tackling emerging challenges. In this respect, and working in close partnership with the private sector, it (a) encourages international technical cooperation on research and development projects, training and technology transfer; (b) encourages the expansion of international trade in olive oil and table olives, by setting and updating trade standards and improving quality; (c) enhances the environmental impact of the industry; (d) promotes world consumption of olive oil and table olives through innovative campaigns and action plans; (e) supplies information and statistics; and (f) provides a forum for discussion.

IOC has administered five international commodity agreements, the most recent one being the International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives, 2005, which became operational on 25 May 2007 and will normally remain in force until 31 December 2014. This agreement places emphasis on building closer relations with the private sector, attaches more importance to product quality, and highlights the need to improve the environmental impact of olive growing and the olive/olive oil industry.

Members:
(December 2010) Albania, Algeria, Argentina, European Union, Croatia, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey.

International Sugar Organization (ISO)
http://www.isosugar.org/

The International Sugar Organization (ISO) is an intergovernmental organization, based in London, established by the International Sugar Agreement of 1968. It has 86 members and according to its 2009 data, its member states represent 83% of world sugar production, 69% of world consumption, 95% of world exports and 47% of world imports. ISO aims to (a) ensure enhanced international cooperation in world sugar matters by providing a forum for intergovernmental consultations in order to improve conditions on the world sugar market, and (b) to facilitate trade by collecting and providing information on the world sugar. It is the body responsible for the implementation of the International Sugar Agreement, 1992, which remains into force until 31 December 2011 and for which a two-year extension (up to 31 December 2013) is into consideration by the International Sugar Council.

Members:
Argentina, Australia, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Brazil, Cameroon, Chad, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, EU, Fiji, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, , Islamic Republic of Iran, Jamaica, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Malawi, Mauritius, Mexico, Republic of Moldova, Morocco, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Russian Federation, Serbia, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)
http://www.itto.int/

The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), based in Yokohama, Japan, is an intergovernmental organization promoting the conservation, sustainable management, use and trade of tropical forest resources. It was established under the auspices of the United Nations in 1986 by the first International Tropical Timber Agreement of 1983, which was twice re-negotiated (1994, 2006). It has 59 member countries (33 producers and 26 consumers) representing about 80% of the world's tropical forests and 90% of the global tropical timber trade. It currently works under the International Tropical Timber Agreement, 2006, in force until 2016 with the possibility of two successive extensions of five and three years respectively.

ITTO's mission is to facilitate discussion, consultation and international cooperation on issues relating to the international trade and utilization of tropical timber and the sustainable management of its resource base. In this respect, it: (a) develops internationally agreed policy documents to promote sustainable forest management and forest conservation and assists tropical member countries to adapt and implement such policies through projects; (b) collects, analyses and disseminates data; and (c) funds projects and other actions aimed at developing industries at both community and industrial scales. In the framework of its functions, it safeguards an equal partnership between producing members and consuming members, ensures the participation of civil society and trade organizations and undertakes projects in producing member countries, using mostly local expertise.

ITTO manages its own program of projects and other activities, which is funded by voluntary contributions, mostly from consuming member countries. Since it became operational in

1987, ITTO has funded more than 700 projects, pre-projects and activities valued at more than US$280 million. The total amount allocated for financing such activities during the year 2010 was almost US$ 17,5 million.

Members:
Producing: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Togo, Cambodia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Thailand, Vanuatu, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela. Consuming: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the United States.

II. International Study Groups (ISGs)

The ISGs are established to administer the provisions of the UN Agreements laying down their respective Terms of Reference. In many aspects, they are quite similar to the current ICAs, and their main objectives refer to the provision of a discussion platform, the dissemination of information and statistical data, the economic and market analysis of new developments and the design and implementation of projects. In the following list only the ISGs referring to agricultural commodities are included.

International Rubber Study Group (IRSG)
http://www.rubberstudy.com/

The International Rubber Study Group (IRSG) was established in 1944 in London, following the termination of the International Rubber Regulation Scheme that had operated from 1934. It is an intergovernmental organization bringing together the world’s rubber producing and consuming stakeholders. It currently has 16 member countries. The aim of the Group is to provide a forum for discussing problems affecting the economy of natural and synthetic rubbers and to collect and disseminate statistics on the industry. The Group can provide advice and issue recommendations, but these are not binding on member governments. In order to facilitate the interaction between the industry and the Group, a Panel of Associates with members of organizations involved in the rubber industry has been established.

The IRSG has collected the heritage of the former International Natural Rubber Organisation liquidated in late '90s, an organization established in 1980 to operate the International Natural Rubber Agreement which was devoted to market stabilisation through buffer stock interventions.

Members:
Belgium, Republic of Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Thailand and United States of America

International Jute Study Group (IJSG)
http://www.jute.org/

The International Jute Study Group (IJSG), based in Dhaka, Bangladesh, is an intergovernmental body established under the aegis of UNCTAD to function as the ICB for jute, kenaf and other allied fibres. Originally set up in the 1980s as the International Jute Organisation to administer the International Agreements on Jute and Jute Products, 1982 and 1989, after the liquidation of the latter in 2000, the new IJSG was established in 2002, by the 2001Agreement on IJSG's Terms of Reference. It has 30 members and it represents over 60% of the world jute trade.

Apart of providing a basis for international cooperation on the jute sector and a forum for the private sector participation, IJSG's objectives refer to (a) the expansion of the sector; (b) the improvement of the living conditions for those involved in the sector; (c) the improvement of the sector's structural conditions; (d) the promotion of jute as a environmentally friendly, renewable and biodegradable natural fibre; and (e) the facilitation of market transparency. In this respect, the Group functions encompass: (a) the development of strategies improving jute economy, focusing on the promotion of jute products; (b) consultations and exchanges of information; (c) the development and monitoring of projects; (d) the provision of statistics; (e) the undertaking of studies; and (f) the consideration of issues relevant to international jute economy.

Members:
Bangladesh, India, Switzerland, European Union.

III. Other Commodity Bodies designated as ICBs
Apart from the ICOs and ISGs which have been emerged as the result of UN Conferences, there are other intergovernmental commodity bodies with specific Terms of Reference established by international agreements that have been designated as ICBs.

International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC)
http://www.icac.org/

The International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC) is an association of governments of cotton producing, consuming and trading countries which acts as the international commodity body for cotton and cotton textiles. It was established at the International Cotton Meeting held in Washington in 1939 by ten producing countries to discuss problems of over-production, rising stocks and falling prices. The principal objective was to take concerted international action to avoid chaotic developments in the world cotton economy. The membership was, at first, limited to cotton producing countries, but it was afterwards extended to all other United Nations interested in the production, export or import of cotton. Today, it has 43 members (with Peru being the newest one). All of the top five cotton exporting nations are members. ICAC has an annual budget of US$1.98 million (for fiscal year 2011/12), of which about 85 percent come from government assessments and 15 percent from the sale of subscriptions and participant fees at meetings and seminars.

ICAC's mission is to assist governments in fostering a healthy world cotton economy. Its key mandate refers to the monitoring of the world cotton situation and the achievement of international cooperation. It, furthermore, contributes to raising awareness on emerging issues of the cotton economy and to the provision of information. In this respect it: (a) provides statistics and identifies emerging changes in the structure of the world cotton market, (b) serves as a clearing house for technical information about cotton and cotton textiles, (c) provides a forum for discussion, (d) represents the international cotton industry before UN agencies and other international organizations, and (e) sponsors projects for financing by the Common Fund for Commodities (since the Fund became operational in the early 1990s, a total of 22 cotton projects valued at $70 million have been supported).

Members:
(As of 9/2011) Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, China (Taiwan), Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, India, Iran, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Korea Rep., Mali, Mozambique, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Switzerland, Syria, Tanzania, Togo, Turkey, Uganda, United States, Uzbekistan, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR)
http://www.inbar.int/

The International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR) is an intergovernmental organization) based in Beijing and established in 1997 by treaty deposited with the UN. It has 37 member countries, all of them producers of bamboo and/or rattan except Canada. While INBAR is an intergovernmental organization since 1997, its existence as a network started in 1993. Its objective is to develop and promote innovative solutions to poverty and environmental sustainability using bamboo and rattan. It is estimated that 1,5 billion people depend directly or indirectly from bamboo and so its utilisation for trade purposes plays a key role for poor inhabitants of rural areas in tropics and subtropics. In this context, INBAR with its activities pursues to improve the contribution bamboo and rattan make to rural livelihoods within the framework of a sustainable natural resource management. Its strategic goals refer to poverty alleviation, preservation of environment and biodiversity, fairer trade and the establishment of an extended network of stakeholders. In this respect, it: (a) supports strategic and adaptive research and development; (b) disseminates knowledge on the ways in which bamboo and rattan can enhance poverty reduction and sustainable natural resource management; and (c) facilitates development interventions through trade policy, statistical compilation, standard setting and direct community-based interventions.

Members:
(As of April 2011): Argentina, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Panama, Peru, Rwanda, The Philippines, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Surinam, Tanzania, Togo, Tonga, Uganda, Venezuela and Vietnam.

International Organisation on Vine and Wine (OIV)
http://www.oiv.int/

The International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV), which replaced the International Vine and Wine Office created by the international agreement of 1924, was established in Paris by the Agreement of 3 April 2001. The OIV is an intergovernmental organization of a scientific and technical nature with competence on vines, wine, wine-based beverages, table grapes, raisins and other vine-based products. It has 45 member countries.

OIV has the objective to: (a) inform its members of measures for which the concerns of producers, consumers and other stakeholders may be taken into consideration; (b) assist other international organizations, especially those which carry out standardisation activities; (c) contribute to the international harmonisation of existing practices and standards and the preparation of new international standards. OIV’s activities include: (a) harmonisation, standardisation, mutual recognition, (b) collaboration, cooperation and international mediation, (c) research and scientific monitoring, (d) viticulture production and plant varieties, (e) oenological practices and methods of analysis, (f) marketing and consumer information, (g) protection of geographical indications, (h) consumer health and food safety, (i) heritage, culture, history and environment, and (j) training and communication.

Members:
(As of July 2011): Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Luxemburg, FYR Macedonia, Malta, Moldavia, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Uruguay

IV. FAO Intergovernmental Groups and Subcommittees

http://www.fao.org/unfao/govbodies/gsbhome/committee-cp/en/
http://www.fao.org/fishery/about/cofi/en/

FAO Intergovernmental Groups (IGGs) on individual commodities have been established by FAO's CCP as subsidiary bodies. Nine of the FAO IGGs have been designated by the CFC as ICBs, responsible for defining commodity-specific development strategies and for initiating, prioritizing and supervising projects for the commodities concerned. The ICB status has also been granted to 2 subcommittees of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), also a subsidiary body of the FAO Council.

FAO-IGG and FAO-COFI subcommittees do not have separate membership structures. Membership is open to all 192 country members of FAO and to Associate Members, and can also be granted to interested non-Member States that are Members of the UN or its Specialized Agencies. The groups do not have separate councils and generally meet every two years, as are their parent bodies, CCP and COFI.

Intergovernmental Group on Bananas and Tropical Fruits

Established by the CCP at is 62nd Session (1999), it replaced the former Intergovernmental Group on Bananas. Its objectives are: (a) to provide a forum for consultations; (b) provide statistics and information; (c) study the possibilities of increasing world consumption; the efficiency and social aspect of the industry; and the economic problems of the relevant value chains.

Intergovernmental Group on Citrus Fruit

Established by the CCP at its 32nd Session (1959) for a period of two years, and then extended indefinitely by the CCP at its 38th Session (1965). Its main purpose is to study the problems affecting the long-term equilibrium of production and consumption and those arising from the perishable nature of citrus fruit.

Intergovernmental Group on Grains

Established by the CCP at its 28th Session (1957). Its purpose is to consider matters relating to all grains, other than rice, including review of national grain policies and their international effect and to study the production, consumption and trade in grains.

Intergovernmental Group on Hard Fibers

Established by the CCP at its 40th Session (1966). Its purpose is to (a) provide a forum for consultation and studies on the economy of abaca, sisal, henequen and other hard fibres; (b) study the improvement of marketing practices and the causes of disequilibrium between production and consumption;

Intergovernmental Group on on Jute, Kenaf and Allied Fibres

Established by the CCP at its 36th Session (1963) with the purpose of providing a forum for consultations and studies on the economy of jute, kenaf and allied fibres. Its aims mainly to study the improvement of marketing practices and to consider the causes of disequilibrium between production and consumption.

Intergovernmental Group on Meat and Dairy Products

Established by the CCP at its 45th Session (1970), it was originally called the Study Group on Meat. It mainly aims to: (a) provide a forum for consultations and studies; (b) analyse programmes related to the expansion of meat production; (c) analyse short-, medium- and long-term prospects; (d) exchange information on techniques improving, while adhering to strict meat hygiene and veterinary and sanitary regulations; and (e) inform the competent bodies of the scope and magnitude of identified problem.

Intergovernmental Group on Oils, Oilseeds and Fats

Established by the CCP at its 38th Session (1965), this body superseded the Group on Coconut and Coconut Products, whose terms of reference were widened to cover oilseeds, oils and fats. It aims to provide a forum for studies and consultations, identify specific problems calling for short-term action and consider measures which could facilitate the solution of medium- and long-term problems.

Intergovernmental Group on Rice

Established by the CCP at its 26th Session (1955), the IGG-Rice was originally called the Consultative Sub-Committee on the Economic Aspects of Rice and later the Study Group on Rice. Its main purpose is to provide a forum for consultations, paying particular attention to any special difficulties which exist or are likely to arise in the international trade in rice

Intergovernmental Group on Tea

Established by the CCP at its 44th Session (1969) as the Consultative Committee on Tea, following a series of ad hoc intergovernmental consultations under FAO auspices beginning in 1965 and an emergency meeting of tea-exporting countries in 1969. The title of this Body was changed in 1971 to the current Intergovernmental Group on Tea. It represents a forum for intergovernmental consultation on tea. The Group (a) conducts a continuing review of short and long term developments; (b) studies market structure and the promotion of tea consumption; (c) considers international action; and (d) prepares proposals for submission to Governments.

FAO - Consultative Sub-Committee on Surplus Disposal (CSSD)
http://www.fao.org/unfao/govbodies/gsb-search/detail/en/?dyna_fef[backuri]=%2Funfao%2Fgovbodies%2Fgsb-search%2Fresult%2Fen%2F%3Fno_cache%3D1&dyna_fef[uid]=312

The CSSD was established by the CCP at its 23rd Session (1954), as a subsidiary body, to monitor international shipments of surplus agricultural commodities used as food aid in order to minimize the harmful impact of these shipments on commercial trade and agricultural production. According to its terms of reference, CSSD works to: (a) keep developments in the disposal of agricultural surpluses under review, (b) to assist Member Nations in developing suitable means of surplus disposal and (c) to provide a forum for consultations and notifications of food aid transactions of Member Nations. The Sub-Committee meets approximately four times per year in Washington, D.C.

The role of CSSD has been questioned by a recent paper[2] (June 2011) reviewing the global food assistance mechanisms, the authors of which actually recommend the closing down of the subcommittee as nowadays the vast majority of food aid shipments are now for emergencies and thus exempted from the CSSD's scrutiny and as donor food aid shipments are reported through alternative channels.

COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade

Established by COFI at its 16th Session (1985). It provides a forum for consultations on technical and economic aspects of international trade in fish and fishery products. Its work includes: (a) reviews on the situation and outlook of principal fishery commodity; (b) discussion of fish trade problems and possible solutions; (c) discussion of measures promoting international trade; (d) recommendations for the promotion of international quality standards and the harmonization of quality control and inspection procedures; and (e) recommendations for fishery commodity development.

FAO - COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture

Established by COFI at its 24th Session in 2001. It provides a forum for consultation and discussion on aquaculture and advises COFI on technical and policy matters related to aquaculture. The Sub-Committee: (a) discuss major issues in global aquaculture development; (b) identifies the issues requiring action in order to increase the contribution of aquaculture to food security, economic development and poverty alleviation; (c) provides recommendations for international action to address aquaculture development needs; (d) advises on the preparation of technical reviews.

Other International Organisations working on Commodities

[2] Barrett, C.B, et al (2011), Uniting on Food Assistance: Action Paper, Global Public Policy Institute and Cornell University.

In addition to the international bodies listed above, there are a number of international organisations that conduct commodity work -in the form of studies, analyses, short-medium and long term projections- and that maintain relevant databases. Apart of FAO's *Trade and Markets Division*, which includes in its regular work program publications such as the "Food Outlook" and the "Crop Prospects and Food Situation" and facilitates meetings of bodies such as the CCP and IGGs, UNCTAD's recently reformed *Special Unit on Commodities (SUC),* World Bank's *Development Prospects Group*, and OECD's *Trade and Agriculture Department* has also been working on issues pertaining to the economies of specific agricultural commodities.

UNCTAD's flagship publication on commodities is intended to be the 2012 forthcoming "*Commodities and Development Report*" which will be followed by the "*Commodity Policy Review*". Relevant statistics are provided through its quarterly "*Commodities at a Glance*" and the UNCTADStat database. SUC's commodity work includes the facilitation of the "Multi-year Expert Meeting on Commodities and Development" and the organization of the Global Commodities Forum. UNCTAD's work on commodities was evaluated in 2009. According to the review[3,] commodities work within UNCTAD had slowly but steadily lose its former importance and recommended that the newly formed SUC should invest in high quality innovative research, redefine its technical assistance thrust and enhance collaboration with institutions outside UNCTAD.

World Bank provides on-line high-frequency publications pertaining to agricultural and non-agricultural commodities. It provides historical commodity data in the *Commodity Price Data*, a review of the main developments in commodity markets in the *Commodity Markets Review*, an analysis of the markets and price forecasts in the *Global Commodity Markets* and a semi-annual update on selected commodities in the *Individual Commodity Briefs*. According to a report prepared for the CFC (2011)[4], however, the World Bank's analytical capacity and activity in the area of commodities has been reduced since the 1980s when it used to be a major focus of its activities.

OECD's work on individual commodities mainly refer to the annual Agricultural Outlook, jointly prepared by OECD and FAO on the basis of the jointly developed Aglink-COSIMO modeling system, which provides assessments and medium term projections over a ten-year period for a number of commodities. Commodities are also the focus of the "International Trade by Commodity Statistics" database, which provides trade data on an annual basis for specific commodities for OECD, selected non-OECD countries, and main country groups. Apart from these two outputs, work on commodities could be considered rather sporadic.

As regards the operational aspect of commodities work, it is mainly the Common Fund for Commodities that concentrates its activities on commodity development projects financed from its resources. Projects for funding by CFC can be developed by any interested party, but must all be endorsed and submitted to the CFC by an ICB. CFC-funded projects now cover over 40 commodities but it could potentially support about 120 commodities covered by ICBs.

[3] Divvaakar, S.V., D. Kurek and G. Kashitiku (2009) In-depth external evaluation of UNCTAD's commodities programme. TD/B/WP/213 and 214.

[4] "Commodities and their Common Fund", Kees Burger, Report written for the Common Fund for Commodities, March 2011.