

REPORT OF THE

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

**Held in Siem Reap, Cambodia
26 – 30 April 2010**



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26 – 30 April 2010

Siem Reap, Cambodia

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (RAP)
BANGKOK, 2010

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ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AFSIS	ASEAN Food security Information System
APCAS	Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics
APFSU	Asia Pacific Food Situation Update
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CSES	Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey
DMC	Developing Member Country
ECO	Economic Cooperation Organization
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESS	FAO Statistics Division
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FRA	Forest Resources Assessment
GASF	Gender and Agricultural Statistics Framework
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPS	Global Positioning System
ICAR	Indian Council of Agricultural Research
ICAS	International Conference on Agricultural Statistics
IT	Information Technology
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MSF	Master Sample Frame
NASS	National Agricultural Statistics Service
NSDS	National Strategy for Development of Statistics
NSO	National Statistics Office
RAP	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
RDES	Regional Data Exchange System
RFMO	Regional Fishery Management Organization
SDD	Sex-Disaggregated Data
SIAP	Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SNA	System of National Accounts
SMP	Statistical Master Plan
SMS	Short Message Service
SUA	Supply Utilisation Accounts
TCP	Technical Cooperation Project
UN	United Nations
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
UNSC	United Nations Statistical Commission
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division
WB	World Bank
WCA	World Programme for the Census of Agriculture

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

INTRODUCTION

1. The Government of Cambodia hosted the Twenty-Third Session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics (APCAS) convened by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Siem Reap, Cambodia from 26 to 30 April 2010. Sixty delegates from 16 APCAS member countries and eight FAO representatives participated in the session. Three observers representing Timor-Leste, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) also attended.

OPENING SESSION

(Item 1 of the Agenda)

2. Mr Hong Narit, Acting Director, Department of Planning and Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Cambodia welcomed all participants to Siem Reap, Cambodia and expressed the Cambodian Government's gratitude to FAO for accepting Cambodia's offer to host this APCAS session. He hoped that the session, organised by FAO and MAFF, would address important agricultural statistics issues.

3. The outgoing APCAS Chair, Mr Hj Ismail Yusoff welcomed delegates to the Commission and thanked the Commission and FAO for giving Malaysia the opportunity to host the 22nd APCAS session in 2008. Mr Hj Ismail reminded delegates that the last session discussed a number of interesting issues including metadata for national agricultural statistics, the World Census of Agriculture 2010 and Food Balance Sheets. These agricultural statistics issues would continue to play an important role in Malaysia, he added, noting the emphasis on food security and the importance of agricultural statistics in understanding that issue. He mentioned recent statistical developments in Malaysia including Supply Utilisation Accounts (SUAs), and planning for the 2012 Agricultural Census which would use an updated frame of agricultural households derived from the 2010 Population Census. He looked forward to fruitful discussions during the 23rd APCAS session.

4. Mr Hiek Som, Deputy Director, Statistics Division, FAO thanked the Cambodian Government and MAFF for hosting this session, noting that the province of Siem Reap, rich in agriculture, forestry and fisheries resources, was an appropriate venue. He thanked His Excellency, the Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries for taking time from his busy schedule to be present at the session. Mr Som noted it was the first time that APCAS was being held in Cambodia. It was also after many years that both a Minister and the FAO Assistant Director-General were present at APCAS. FAO accorded high importance to sessions like APCAS to share experiences and discuss emerging issues, and many important initiatives had originated in such sessions, he added.

5. Mr Som informed that major changes in statistics at FAO headquarters, supported by significant extra funds, had resulted in an improved focus on capacity building. The five priorities of the FAO Statistics Division (ESS) in 2010-2011 were to: (a) restore the credibility of FAOSTAT; (b) re-establish FAO as the global leader in food and agricultural statistics; (c) support countries' food and agricultural statistical systems; (d) strengthen data analysis and support departmental flagship publications; and (e) coordinate FAO statistical systems. In conclusion, Mr Som looked forward to a rich exchange of ideas during the discussions and wished delegates a successful meeting.

6. Mr Hiroyuki Konuma, Assistant Director-General and FAO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific extended a warm welcome to the Twenty-Third Session of APCAS on behalf of the FAO Director-General. He expressed gratitude to the Government of Cambodia for its generosity in hosting this session in the historic city of Siem Reap and for providing excellent facilities and an environment conducive to fruitful and productive discussions. He also thanked the Minister for devoting his valuable time to inaugurate the Twenty-Third Session of APCAS.

7. Mr Konuma recalled FAO's main mandate to combat hunger and monitor progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). He noted that despite its rapid economic transformation, the Asia and Pacific region still accounted for more than 60 percent of the world's undernourished people due to its large population and relatively low per capita incomes. He added that the international financial crisis of 2008, combined with the food prices crisis preceding it, was a major setback to regional progress towards the MDGs.

8. Mr Konuma noted several relevant and interesting agenda items and reminded delegates that since its establishment 47 years ago, APCAS was continuing to provide strong support for the development of agricultural statistics in the region. The Commission not only monitored progress in the development of agricultural statistics, taking cognisance of countries' needs, but also set directions for further developments in statistical systems by providing a platform to share country initiatives. FAO looked to its member countries in deciding new programme initiatives and setting priorities for FAO reform. He assured that the FAO Regional Office in Bangkok was always ready to extend technical assistance to member countries.

9. Mr Konuma concluded by wishing delegates success in their deliberations and a pleasant stay in the ancient and beautiful city of Siem Reap, the gateway to the magnificent Angkor Wat and Tonle Sap Lake.

10. Delivering the inaugural address to the Commission, His Excellency Minister Chan Sarun, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of the Kingdom of Cambodia, welcomed all delegates and participants, and thanked FAO for allowing Cambodia to host this APCAS session.

11. The Minister noted that statistical information on food and agriculture was critical for policy- and decision-makers as well as researchers for policy planning and programme formulation to promote agricultural development. He reminded that there was no need to emphasise the importance of agriculture in national socio-economic

development as most member countries were predominantly agrarian and understood this. In Cambodia, the agriculture sector was clearly defined as the dynamic foundation for accelerating national economic growth and poverty reduction by focusing on improved agricultural productivity and diversification.

12. The Minister noted that external factors such as climate change and the financial crisis had led to a renewed focus on food security. In this context, he was pleased to inform that Cambodia had produced a significant rice surplus in 2009. He added that Cambodia's agricultural statistics still needed improvement, with financial and technical support required for capacity development. He hoped that this APCAS session would produce new ideas for improved statistical activities.

13. In conclusion, the Minister expressed his sincere appreciation to the organisers and all participants for making this session possible. Wishing all participants a pleasant stay, he formally declared open the Twenty-Third Session of APCAS.

ELECTION OF CHAIR, VICE-CHAIRS AND DRAFTING COMMITTEE

(Item 2 of the Agenda)

14. The outgoing Chair, Mr Hj Ismail Yusoff, Deputy Chief Statistician, Department of Statistics, Malaysia presided over the election of the Chair, Vice-Chairs and Drafting Committee. Mr Hong Narit, Acting Director, Department of Planning and Statistics, MAFF, Cambodia and Head of the Cambodian delegation, was unanimously elected Chair of the Twenty-Third APCAS Session. Mr Nguyen Van Lieu, Deputy Director-General, General Statistics Office, Viet Nam was elected First Vice-Chair and Mr Savanh Hanephom, Deputy Director-General, Planning Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR, Second Vice-Chair.

15. The Commission then constituted a Drafting Committee. Messrs David Brereton (Australia), Robert Hale (United States of America), Hansdeep Khaira (FAO Headquarters), Jairo Castano (APCAS Secretary) and Allan Nicholls (Consultant, FAO) were co-opted as members of the Committee.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

(Item 3 of the Agenda)

16. The Commission adopted the agenda given in Appendix A as well as the 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 Session are in Appendices D, E and F. The list of member countries of the Commission, as of April 2010, is in Appendix G.

FAO'S 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's Activities in Asia and the Pacific Region since the 22nd Session of APCAS

(Item 4a of the Agenda)

17. Mr Jairo Castano, APCAS Secretary, introduced Document APCAS/10/3 "Overview of FAO's Activities in Asia and the Pacific Region since the 22nd Session of APCAS". He informed that FAO activities in the region involved both normative and project work. These included serving as APCAS Secretariat, annual publication of "Selected Indicators of Food and Agricultural Development in the Asia-Pacific Region" and other publications, project backstopping and formulation, organization of or participation in meetings, and cooperation with agencies such as ESCAP, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and PARIS21.

18. The Commission was informed of the electronic APCAS newsgroup set up in late 2008. The APCAS-List had improved FAO's communication with senior statistics officials in APCAS and other FAO member countries in the Asia and Pacific region. The Commission took note of the new monthly newsletter "Asia Pacific Food Situation Update" (APFSU) which was produced by the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) as part of FAO's regional response to the food price crisis.

19. The Commission appreciated that the number of operational projects had increased from two in 2008 to nine in 2010. Technical backstopping was provided to one statistics project each in Fiji, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan and Timor-Leste, and two each in Afghanistan and Lao PDR. Projects were also formulated for Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Fiji, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste. Two regional projects were also prepared.

20. The Commission noted that RAP's support to statistical capacity building in the region was mainly limited to TCP projects and regional workshops or meetings. A single Trust Fund project was operational in Afghanistan, reflecting the low donor priority to statistical capacity building in the region.

21. Mr Konuma informed the Commission that many countries were working to implement an agricultural census but financial difficulties were a major constraint for some in successfully holding it. The Commission appreciated FAO efforts to support countries with funding through its TCP programme, and also Mr Konuma's offer to assist countries in approaching external donor organizations for funding.

Expert Consultation on Statistics in Support of Policies to Empower Small Farmers

(Item 4b of the Agenda)

22. The APCAS Secretary introduced Document APCAS/10/4 "Expert Consultation on Statistics in Support of Policies to Empower Small Farmers". The Commission noted that the Expert Consultation was organised in Bangkok in September 2009 as

a follow-up to one of the recommendations of the last APCAS session on statisticians' role in assisting policy-makers in formulating timely and corrective responses to food market crises. Sixteen experts from APCAS member countries and FAO participated in the Expert Consultation.

23. The Commission took note of the following recommendations of the Expert Consultation on Statistics in Support of Policies to Empower Small Farmers: (a) countries should adopt the 18 farm sizes classification recommended by FAO; (b) given the region's diverse agro-ecological profile, countries could consider sub-categorization of small farmers, taking into account factors such as productivity, cropping intensity and irrigation; (c) countries might consider using equipment such as compass, tape and GPS for objective measurement of crop area; (d) ensuring confidentiality of individual farmer information during dissemination of data; (e) governments should support the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics and its implementation; (f) countries should use simple market information tools such as FAO's "simple price monitoring tool" and Thailand's "farm price speedometer" to alert policy-makers to changing and abnormal market conditions; (g) providing market information to small farmers and their communities to enable them to operate and integrate effectively into the market; (h) developing community-level information systems using a mix of traditional and modern mass media; and (i) making information readily and freely available through radio broadcasts, village notices, cooperatives, farmers' associations and extension officers, and advocating its use.

ADB-FAO Workshop on Agricultural Statistics and Agricultural Census (Item 4c of the Agenda)

24. The APCAS Secretary introduced Document APCAS/10/5 "ADB-FAO Workshop on Agricultural Statistics and Agricultural Census". The Commission noted that ADB and FAO had jointly organized a Workshop on Agricultural Statistics and Agriculture Census in the region in Bangkok in November 2009 which was attended by 21 delegates from the ministries of agriculture, national statistics offices and planning agencies, representing data users and producers from all seven ADB developing member countries (DMCs).

25. The Commission was informed of the following four sessions in the workshop: (a) System of Food and Agricultural Statistics in the Participating Countries; (b) The Role of Agricultural Statistics in Planning for Agriculture and Food Security; (c) Food Security Statistics; and (d) Agricultural Surveys and Census Methods. Presentations were made in each workshop session by resource persons on concepts, methods, and international recommendations, followed by country presentations and open discussions.

26. The Commission was also informed of the 20 separate findings and one recommendation by the workshop. The workshop recommended conducting national household expenditure and income surveys on a periodic basis to facilitate food security and vulnerability assessment.

Roundtable Meeting on Programme for the 2010 Round of Censuses of Agriculture

(Item 4d of the Agenda)

27. Document APCAS/10/6 “Roundtable Meeting on Programme for the 2010 Round of Censuses of Agriculture” was presented to the Commission by the APCAS Secretary. He informed that the objectives of the meeting, held in Samoa for Pacific Countries, were to: (a) provide in-depth knowledge of the new World Programme for the Census of Agriculture 2010 (WCA 2010), in particular, innovations and new features of the programme, to potential census leaders from selected countries; (b) promote exchange of experiences among countries; and (c) review countries’ plans for implementing the agricultural census and surveys.

28. The Commission was informed that the Pacific meeting included 12 sessions, each comprising two roundtable discussions and focused on a specific technical aspect of WCA 2010. The highly interactive sessions were mostly chaired by country participants with every session including a lead FAO presentation, followed by presentations by selected countries. A total of 29 technical papers were presented and discussed.

29. The Commission was pleased to learn that participants unanimously appreciated the usefulness and effectiveness of the roundtable meeting for the development of structural agricultural statistics in the Pacific. The Commission noted that the meeting resulted in a range of conclusions, issues and recommendations.

New Developments in the FAO Statistics Division

(Item 4e of the Agenda)

30. Document APCAS/10/07 “New Developments in the FAO Statistics Division” was presented to the Commission by Mr Hiek Som, FAO. The Commission was informed of six major developments. The first was an independent evaluation in 2008 of FAO’s role and work in statistics which found that: (a) the countries’ response rate to FAO statistical questionnaires was steadily declining since the 1980s; (b) there was a large reduction in FAO’s statistics budget over the last 15 years; (c) FAO’s influence in agricultural statistics was reduced; and (d) there was little coordination among different units producing statistics within FAO. The recommendations by the evaluation included strengthening capacities to produce country-level agricultural statistics, increasing resources for FAO’s statistics work in support of national capacity building and methodology development, and creating a mechanism for coordination of statistical activities within FAO.

31. The Commission was informed that the second major development was the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics. This was implemented under the auspices of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC), with FAO in a leading role and with the cooperation of development partners, developed and developing countries. The Global Strategy was developed during 2008 and 2009 and its final version was endorsed by the 41st UNSC Session in New York in February 2010. A separate paper on the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics was presented under agenda item 6 of this Session.

32. The Commission noted that the third major development related to statistics resources at FAO. Following the recommendation of the independent evaluation of FAO statistics, eight new statistician posts were created in the Statistics Division (ESS) as part of FAO's Regular Programme Budget for the biennium 2010-2011. In addition, as part of the structural reorganization of its budget programming exercise, FAO created seven Impact Focus Areas to mobilize extra budgetary resources. One of these was titled "Impact Focus Area on Capacity Building in Information and Statistics".

33. The Commission was informed that the fourth major development was identification of the following five priority areas of the FAO Statistics Division for the biennium 2010-2011: (a) Restoring the credibility of FAOSTAT; (b) Re-establishing FAO as the global leader in food and agricultural statistics; (c) Supporting countries' food and agricultural statistical system; (d) Strengthening data analysis and supporting departmental flagship publications; and (e) Coordinating FAO Statistical systems.

34. The Commission learned that the fifth major development was a re-organization of the ESS structure, the main part being implemented in early 2010. The main feature of the new management objective was results-based work planning and programming. The Division's structure was outputs-oriented with the following five teams, each responsible for one set of priority outputs: Production and Trade Statistics Team; Census and Surveys and National Systems of Statistics Team; Supply Utilization Accounts, Food Security and Social Statistics Team; Economic and Environmental Statistics Team; and CountrySTAT, Statistics Systems and Data Dissemination Team.

35. The Commission noted that the final major development was the creation of the following two internal bodies for the coordination of statistics programmes and activities: (a) Statistics Programme Coordination Committee; and (b) Coordination of Statistical Activities Working Group, both of which had become active.

Other Information Items (projects in the region, other activities)

(Item 4f of the Agenda)

36. The Commission sought clarification on the reason for the lack of donor interest in statistical activities. Noting that this was a complex question, Mr Castano suggested that donors themselves were affected by the financial crisis resulting in reduced capacity to assist countries, and, therefore, needed to re-assess funding priorities. He also noted that donors preferred funding projects with good scope for sustainability. Most funding required for statistical work was for one-off activities such as agricultural censuses. Mr Som added that this situation might change shortly in the context of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics. Mr Smit, ESCAP, commented that proposals to donors needed to demonstrate that these would contribute to long-term strengthening of the statistical system and the resulting statistics would assist policy decisions.

37. The Commission further noted that another reason for the lack of donor interest was the impression that current statistical data was under-utilised.

38. The Commission recommended that countries should strive to ensure that donor assistance would have a long-term impact on their statistical systems and that statistical data was used to its fullest potential. This could be achieved by improving access to data through better dissemination, adding value to the data and demonstrating to donors the costs of not having the data.

STATE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS IN COUNTRIES OF THE REGION

(Item 5 of the Agenda)

Report on the Situation Based on Responses to Country Reports

(Item 5a of the Agenda)

39. Presenting the Document APCAS/10/8 “Report on the Situation Based on Responses to Country Reports”, Mr Allan Nicholls, FAO consultant, informed the Commission that the report summarised the main findings of individual country reports. Countries had reported a wide range of changes in statistical organizations related to food and agriculture, mainly to improve efficiency. These involved consolidation of either similar activities or statistical processes into a single unit. It was noted that India recently enacted legislation to strengthen statistics collection.

40. The Commission noted that among statistical systems used in APCAS member countries, 30 percent were centralized, 50 percent were decentralized with institutionalised coordination mechanisms and the rest were decentralized without institutionalised coordinating mechanisms. Agricultural statistics were the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture in most countries, and of the National Statistical Office (NSO) in others. In five countries, NSOs were responsible for the Agricultural Census and the Ministry of Agriculture for current agricultural statistics.

41. The Commission was informed that more than half of the member countries reported having a comprehensive statistics law governing the development, direction and delineation of responsibilities and activities of the national statistical system. Some member countries lacked such comprehensive legislation and relied on *ad hoc* orders from either the Head of State or Parliament mandating specific statistical activities to be undertaken by line ministries. About two-thirds of countries had an advisory body to oversee the statistical programme.

42. The Commission was informed that many member countries had undertaken at least one census of agriculture and some were planning for their first. In many developing member countries, agricultural censuses, especially the first, were conducted with support from development partners and donors. Some countries reported conducting an agricultural census every five years, instead of ten. Others had organized subject-specific censuses such as livestock censuses, agricultural machinery censuses, fisheries censuses or village censuses. It was noted that the country updates did not mention if the planned agricultural censuses included thematic modules suggested in the WCA 2010 Programme.

43. The Commission was informed that almost all countries reported conducting production and stocks surveys. The collection arrangements varied markedly across

countries and some countries planned to review these to ensure greater efficiency. Differences were noted in the production survey costs reported by a few countries. Some annual surveys covered only main commodities while others changed the commodities covered every year according to need. A diverse range of other surveys were also reported by countries.

44. The Commission was informed that, generally, low-income countries reported very little statistical activity, major statistical activity was usually only possible with donor support and there were concerns about the sustainability of the activities.

45. The Commission learned about a wide range of innovative activities undertaken by countries. These included infrastructure initiatives such as system re-engineering, data collection initiatives such as greater use of Internet and mail collection instead of enumerator-based collection, and initiatives to provide users with easier access to as much data as possible.

46. The Commission noted that weak statistical infrastructure was a major concern in many countries with low-skilled staff, inadequate tools and poor data management systems being key issues. These countries also reported the need to improve the accuracy, reliability and timeliness of data as well as a lack of adequate data analysis and dissemination.

47. The Commission concluded that there were a wide variety of issues, problems and innovations across member countries, and sharing these experiences could help them improve their statistical capacity.

Evaluation of the Countries' Responses to FAO Data Questionnaires

(Item 5b of the Agenda)

48. Document APCAS/10/9 "Evaluation of the Countries' Responses to FAO Data Questionnaires" was introduced to the Commission by Mr Hansdeep Khaira, FAO. The presentation highlighted the importance given by FAO to data collection from its members and briefly described various FAO data collection methods.

49. The Commission was informed about the assessment of countries' responses to FAO data requests relating to production, trade, producer prices and agricultural resources. For the APCAS member countries in general, the evaluation showed that the rate of response had been quite satisfactory. However, more effort was needed on the part of members to provide data of good quality adhering to international standards and also in adequate quantity through complete responses to the questionnaires.

50. The Commission was reminded that ESS was prepared to provide technical assistance to APCAS members in several areas, including enhancing statistical methodology, improving data collection and processing, and harmonising national statistical systems with international standards.

51. The Commission was asked to provide guidance to ESS on: (a) intensified collaboration between FAO and NSOs to improve data collection; (b) harmonisation of national methodologies with international standards; and (c) creating interactive data exchange systems.

52. The Commission was informed there were many reasons for the inadequate responses by some countries to FAO requests for data and that ESS was keen to work with countries to improve the response rate.

53. The Commission welcomed FAO's offer of assistance and recommended that international agencies needed to coordinate their data requests to avoid duplication of efforts on the part of NSOs which received requests for the same data from different agencies.

Evaluation of Countries' Responses to FAO Questionnaires on the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector

(Item 5c of the Agenda)

54. Document APCAS/10/10 "Evaluation of Countries' Responses to FAO Questionnaires on the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector" was introduced to the Commission by Ms Sachiko Tsuji who presented an overview of the responses.

55. The Commission was informed that fisheries and aquaculture played a substantial role in the region's food security and economy. Asia was the world's predominant producer and consumer of fish and fish products, including crustaceans and molluscs, but not plants, while Oceania had the world's highest per capita consumption and export of fish and fish products, with many relying heavily on fish for protein intake. It was important that food and agriculture policy and statistics give adequate attention to the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

56. The Commission was reminded that FAO collects information through questionnaires on capture and aquaculture production, commodities, disposition, employment (number of fishers or fish farmers) and fishing fleets. The response rates of countries had gradually improved over the last 15 years with a recent average rate of 70 percent and 60 percent for capture and aquaculture production, respectively, and 50 percent and below for other components. There was a need to improve the level of detail reported in general, although this was better for aquaculture production than for other components.

57. The Commission was informed that response rates and data quality reported by Asian countries were similar to the global response, while those from Oceania were less satisfactory. The low response from Pacific island countries and inadequate data disaggregation, especially from countries with substantial fisheries production, were main problems in recent years. The Commission recommended that members assess and take steps to help improve their response rates where necessary. In this context, the Commission was informed of a wide range of information resources to assist understanding of how to complete questionnaires.

Recent Developments in Agricultural Statistics in the Countries of the Region (update by member countries on selected topics)

(Item 5d of the Agenda)

58. The Commission invited member countries to highlight issues in their reports and expand the information provided. Several delegates reported problems with the current funding of their agricultural statistical programmes. This was compounded by

demands for new statistical data, including in areas such as environmental and climate change issues. Noting a number of different approaches to improving efficiency and coping with reduced resources, the Commission observed that in such circumstances, capacity building was even more important. The Commission recommended that members raise awareness among policy-makers of the value of agricultural statistics and, in this context, further recommended the development of close relations between statistical providers and key stakeholders and industry.

59. The Commission also noted countries' experiences with data dissemination, sample rotation, urban and rural classification, welfare indicators for fishermen, small area estimation and strengthening of laws relating to statistical collections.

60. The Commission was reminded that FAO was available to assist with the range of issues faced by countries.

GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL STATISTICS

(Item 6 of the Agenda)

Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics

(Item 6a of the Agenda)

61. Document APCAS/10/35 "Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics" was presented to the Commission by Mr Hiek Som, FAO. The Commission learned that there were a number of reasons for the inadequate basis for agricultural development and food security policy-making, monitoring and evaluation in many countries. Basic data requirements were not met in developing countries; a new conceptual framework was required for emerging data needs linking economic, environmental and social dimensions; agricultural statistics were not integrated in the National Statistical System; and there was a lack of coordination between some NSOs and Ministries of Agriculture resulting in duplicated efforts and conflicting estimates. Thus, a global strategy was needed.

62. The Commission was informed that the Global Strategy was an initiative of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC), involving a partnership of international agencies with developed and developing countries. The Strategy was feasible and sustainable for developing countries and the basis for a renewed capacity-building initiative in agricultural statistics and resources mobilisation. The key components of the Global Strategy were: (a) defining minimum core national data items; (b) integrating agriculture into national statistical systems; and (c) using integrated databases (data warehouse) for easy data access. The idea of a "Master Sample Frame" to assist integration was included in the Strategy and Commission members felt that this concept needed further explanation and consideration.

63. The Commission noted that the conceptual framework linked and recognised a cause-and-effect relationship between the economic, environmental and social dimensions of agriculture. These, in turn, related to agricultural production, processing and markets as well as income allocation and distribution, accumulation and consumption.

64. The Commission was informed that the Global Strategy was developed through worldwide consultations in a range of fora, both at FAO and international level, as well as by inviting written comments from NSOs, Ministries of Agriculture and development partners to ensure widespread support for the Strategy. The final document was endorsed by UNSC in February 2010. UNSC had endorsed the technical content and strategic directions of the Global Strategy and urged FAO and Friends of the Chair to expedite development of its Implementation Plan.

65. The Commission was informed that there would be opportunities for all members and partner agencies to be involved in formulating the implementation plans. The core data set was large. It was noted that 15 commodities represented 95 percent of global agricultural production and that the Global Strategy recognised specific national needs.

66. The Commission noted that one of the aims of the Global Strategy was capacity building, starting with coordination, and that given general support for the Strategy, additional donor resources were expected to assist with its implementation.

67. The Commission noted that the core indicators were selected taking into account the need for international comparison. The importance of flexibility was stressed in setting up the list of core indicators, allowing countries emphasise their priority areas. For example, if changing food consumption pattern was a priority for some countries, they could add related indicators to the minimum list.

68. The Commission stressed the importance of formulating the Implementation Plan of the Global Strategy as soon as possible. It recommended that the Plan give prominence to capacity building for national statistical systems, including human resource development, with due attention to the different stages of their statistical development.

Implementation Plan of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics

(Item 6b of the Agenda)

69. Document APCAS/10/12 "Implementation Plan of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics" was presented to the Commission by Mr Hiek Som. The Commission was informed that the Plan's key elements were: (a) a statistical capacity development strategy including technical assistance, training and research, linked to the three pillars of the Global Strategy; (b) a governance structure for the Implementation Plan at national, regional and global levels; and (c) a process to develop the Plan based on the roles of the Friends of the Chair and on experiences in implementing the Global Strategy in Africa.

70. The Commission noted that it was recognised that more data was needed for information requirements and the conceptual framework than many countries could provide. There was a need to reduce the response burden and define a minimum set of internationally comparable core data that countries should produce and report on a regular basis. It was also acknowledged that core items should be evaluated from a national perspective, with irrelevant items replaced by items of national economic

importance. Guidelines would be developed to establish core and additional items to be included in national statistical system, their scope and coverage, and the frequency with which these would be provided.

71. The Commission was informed that the Global Strategy provided reasons and methodological tools for integrating agriculture with the National Statistical System. Three main approaches were proposed: (a) a Master Sample Frame (MSF) for agriculture surveys; (b) an integrated data collection and survey framework; and (c) an integrated database. The Strategy also offered guidelines for governance arrangements at national, regional and global levels.

72. The Commission noted that FAO had started preparations for the Implementation Plan of the Global Strategy. Delegates sought clarification on and discussed a number of aspects of the Strategy, particularly the MSF concept and the difficulties of data integration and ownership issues associated with integrated databases. It was felt that it might be difficult for all countries to adopt the concept of a data warehouse because of diverse data sources in many countries. However, the Commission noted that data dissemination might be integrated on a gradual basis and not necessarily for all data items.

73. The Commission observed that a data warehouse could be a virtual system and that statistics producers could retain ownership and control of their data domains.

74. The Commission noted that the Implementation Plan would be further developed in 2010 for review at the Fifth International Conference on Agricultural Statistics (ICAS-V), in Uganda in October 2010, while the final Plan would be submitted for final endorsement to UNSC in February 2011. Meanwhile, an implementation plan for Africa was expected to be finalized by October 2010 for presentation at ICAS-V. The Commission recommended that as many countries as possible from Asia and the Pacific be closely associated with the formulation process. The Commission also recommended increased donor funding for the implementation of the Global Strategy given its importance for monitoring the MDGs and food security. The Commission further recommended FAO and other development partners to increase technical assistance on capacity-building.

Integration of Agriculture into the National Strategy for Development of Statistics (NSDS)

(Item 6c of the Agenda)

75. Mr Hiek Som presented Document APCAS/10/13 "Integration of Agriculture into the National Strategy for Development of Statistics (NSDS)" to the Commission. He noted the availability of the draft FAO-PARIS21 guidelines on integrating agricultural statistics into the NSDS.

76. The Commission was informed that a bottom-up approach was suggested, starting with sectoral plans as NSDS building blocks. The scope of each sector would be delineated, including identification of institutions responsible for agricultural statistics and links to other statistical domains for agricultural development policies, such as environment, climate change, land and water use, poverty and hunger. The sectoral plans would then be integrated into the NSDS to avoid duplication and develop synergies.

77. The Commission understood the need to establish governance issues, both at sector level, to coordinate various data producers, and across sectors. Existing governance structures should be used where possible.

78. The Commission noted that a review and revision of legal frameworks might be needed for a clear designation of responsibilities of different institutions, and each institution's role should build on its technical strengths and knowledge of subject matter.

79. The Commission was informed that integration methods and timing should be based on the development level of the NSDS and that three countries were undertaking pilot programmes, including Lao PDR from this region, as well as Mozambique and Peru.

80. The Commission appreciated the necessity of mainstreaming agricultural statistics in the NSDS. However, it found that integration of agriculture into the NSDS might be complicated due to diverse conditions in different agricultural sub-sectors and their variance from the central statistics system. The Commission recommended dialogue and cooperation among data producers to avoid duplicated efforts in the integration of agriculture into the NSDS. The Commission further recommended that integration cover national priorities and be flexible so that other statistics could be produced for sub-sectors' specific needs.

81. It was felt that UN Regional Commissions could play an important role in the integration of agriculture into the NSDS and should be associated in the process to ensure appropriate coordination at all levels.

Fisheries and the Global Strategy: Integration of Fisheries and Aquaculture into the NSDS

(Item 6d of the Agenda)

82. Ms Sachiko Tsuji presented Document APCAS/10/14 "Fisheries and the Global Strategy: Integration of Fisheries and Aquaculture into the NSDS" to the Commission. Ms Tsuji explained the importance of the Global Strategy for the fisheries and aquaculture sector. The management of the fisheries and aquaculture sector required a broad range of data, from detailed catch and stock assessment efforts to the sector's social, economic and environmental impacts and contribution.

83. The Commission noted that the Global Strategy provided a framework to link and integrate statistics from various domains into one comparable system, enabling enhanced monitoring of the sector, particularly its social and economic aspects. The aquaculture and fishery domains should be treated differently in the application of the Strategy which could be applied to aquaculture in the same way as the other agriculture domains with minimal modification. Substantial elaboration would be needed to implement the Strategy to capture fisheries. Land-based concepts might have to be expanded to include water bodies in order to link the aquaculture and capture fisheries domains consistently with other domains. The population census was considered the best option for collecting frame information to link an existing monitoring frame with a MSF developed under the Strategy. The Commission

recommended that, as an initial step, countries with substantial capture production should be strongly encouraged to identify fishers as a separate occupation in the population census.

84. The Commission noted the increasing requirement of data provisions in international fisheries fora. It was explained that stock and fishery management of highly migratory species and straddling stocks was well defined as a responsibility of the relevant Regional Fishery Management Organizations (RFMOs) where all measures and data requirements were to be agreed among their members and FAO has no role in this aspect of data collection. It was explained that social and economic factors could be taken into account when developing management measures but not at the time of stock assessment.

Agriculture in the Statistical Master Plan (SMP) and the National Strategy for Development of Statistics (NSDS): Report by Countries

(Item 6e of the Agenda)

85. A summary of country responses on Agriculture in the Statistical Master Plan (SMP) and the National Strategy for Development of Statistics (NSDS) was presented by Mr Allan Nicholls. The Commission was informed that five countries had specifically mentioned the SMP or NSDS in their reports. Others reported that agriculture was recognised as a significant sector, requiring a broad range of accurate and timely statistics. Some of these countries had formal agriculture statistics development plans, although known by other names.

86. The Commission noted that SMP and NSDS were in different stages of development in each country and there was variation in the level of detail provided about country plans and strategies. Members were referred to country reports and encouraged to talk to participants for more information. The Commission recognised the importance of the SMP and NSDS for the development of the national agricultural statistics system and recommended that countries ensure these were fully operational.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS ON STATISTICAL CAPACITY BUILDING

(Item 7 of the Agenda)

87. Mr Romeo Recide, the Philippines, moderated the roundtable discussion, commenting that statistical capacity building was a continuing need, both because of changing statistical requirements and staff turnover. Four papers were presented before the roundtable discussion.

Approaches and Programmes for Statistical Capacity Building – FAO Statistics Division Capacity Building Strategy

(Item 7a of the Agenda)

88. Document APCAS/10/15 “Approaches and Programmes for Statistical Capacity Building – FAO Statistics Division Capacity Building Strategy” was presented to the meeting by Mr Hiek Som. The Commission noted the following seven key principles of the FAO Statistics Division’s capacity building strategy: it should (a) be based on the findings and orientations of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural

Statistics; (b) adopt an integrated approach to statistical capacity building; (c) adopt a modular approach; (d) be flexible to adapt activities to the level of development of the National Statistical System; (e) be sustainable; (f) be able to coordinate with future national and global statistical initiatives; and (g) involve a partnership approach.

89. The Commission was informed that the strategy would be modular. Each module would stand on its own with specific activities, outputs and inputs per country, although the NSDS module was core and common to all countries. There were synergies, linkages and complementarities between the modules. The Core Module – Integration of agricultural statistics into NSDS – supported preparation of technical guidelines and field missions to ensure that agricultural statistics was mainstreamed in the NSDS and effective coordination bodies and mechanisms were in place and functioning. The other modules were – Module 1: Classification and Economic and Environmental Accounts; Module 2: Advanced Data Collection Methods; Module 3: Food Security; Module 4: Agricultural Prices; and Module 5: CountrySTAT.

90. Mr Som informed the Commission that the strategy placed emphasis on effective partnership with recipient countries, capacity building and national ownership of products. It recommended outputs for each module at global, regional and country levels. In conclusion, the Commission was informed that an implementation plan was in place with strong FAO leadership and involvement.

ESCAP's Role in Statistics Development in Asia and the Pacific

(Item 7b of the Agenda)

91. Mr Jan Smit presented Document APCAS/10/16 "ESCAP's Role in Statistics Development in Asia and the Pacific" to the Commission. Mr Smit briefly outlined the role of ESCAP in the development of statistics in the region while addressing, on the one hand, the urgent policy demand for better measurement and data and, on the other, the persistent need to strengthen basic national statistical capacities.

92. The Commission noted ESCAP's ongoing work on developing a Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics. The programme's rationale was explained as well as the involvement of relevant partners at national, subregional, regional and global levels, including FAO, through a technical advisory group and other fora. The Commission was informed that a set of core economic statistics was being developed as part of the regional programme and in the context of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics.

Human Resource Development Efforts by the ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS)

(Item 7c of the Agenda)

93. Document APCAS/10/17 "Human Resource Development Efforts by the ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS)" was presented to the Commission by Ms Suraporn Issardetkul, Office of Agricultural Economics, Thailand, which is leading the project. The Commission was informed that the project objective was to strengthen regional food security and the three main activities undertaken in 2008-2009 were: (a) the development of an information network; (b) human resource development; and (c) a mid-term project evaluation.

94. The Commission learned that human resource development under the project involved the organization of seven regional training courses, mutual technical cooperation among six member states and organization of a regional workshop. The training courses covered: (a) the food security information system; (b) agricultural statistical data collection, analysis and dissemination; (c) training on Early Warning Information and agricultural commodity outlook development; (d) basic knowledge and techniques for agricultural statistics planning; (e) the ASEAN Food Security Information System; and (f) development of agricultural production information.

95. The Commission noted that mutual technical cooperation was implemented in two phases and involved partnering resource and recipient countries based on skills and needs. In the first phase, country resource experts providing training in the recipient partner country on subjects of importance to it. In the second phase, recipient country staff visited the resource country to build on the first phase learning.

96. The Commission recognized the value and importance of the mutual cooperation and partnership approach to capacity building in the Asia and Pacific region and noted that the project was continuing in 2010.

Trade Statistics Capacity Building in the Pacific

(Item 7d of the Agenda)

97. Document APCAS/10/18 "Trade Statistics Capacity Building in the Pacific" was presented to the Commission by Mr Rajhnael Deo, SPC. The Commission was informed that FAO and SPC had formed a partnership to address problems in the collection, processing and dissemination of trade data which had created an information gap, undermining trade negotiations and policy analysis in the region. The SPC was a regional node for collecting and processing regional trade data from member countries and disseminating this to other users such as FAO, UNSD (United Nations Statistics Division) and agencies of the Committee of Regional Organizations in the Pacific.

98. The Commission noted that the first phase of the project established a data gathering system. The next phase would assist member countries in trade negotiations and identify new export opportunities as well as import substitution opportunities, with emphasis on improving food security.

99. The Commission was informed that SPC had proposed the development of a country version of FAO's 'statistical validation' software which would enable member countries to standardize and validate national trade statistics, improve trade data-processing capacity and increase trade data quality. This would provide additional motivation to countries to remain in the regional trade statistics programme.

100. The Commission was told that the trade database would help in compiling the Food Balance Sheets for assessing progress towards the MDGs. It would also help to identify potential data sources on food and agricultural production, agricultural stocks and utilization of agricultural commodities, including seed, feed and other uses. By expanding the database to include new Pacific island countries, and working directly with country stakeholders to improve their capacity to process and improve national data, the project could improve the Pacific region's trade statistical capacity.

Roundtable Discussion

(Item 7e of the Agenda)

101. Mr Romeo Recide, the Philippines, facilitated the roundtable discussion. As an introduction to the discussion, Mr Nicholls presented a summary of capacity-building requirements identified in the country reports. The Commission was informed of the overwhelming need for training on all aspects of the operations of a statistical organization, including basic training of field staff, training in a range of IT skills and management training. The Commission was told there was apparent scope to develop training courses and materials to benefit a number of countries.

102. The Commission noted that agricultural statistics were in an early stage of development in some countries with a high need for capacity building in several areas. The Commission also noted that countries needed support to overcome issues related to equipment shortages, lack of coordination and poor communication.

103. Each country elaborated on its capacity-building requirements and Mr Recide summarised the discussion on the current state of capacity building in agricultural statistics in the region, focusing on countries' training needs and constraints.

104. The Roundtable recognized that capacity building was a continuing concern. The stock knowledge and skills of staff needed to be updated and improved to keep pace with new developments and challenges in the implementation and application of data systems. The high turnover of statistical personnel also contributed to capacity degradation in many national statistical agencies. In some cases, the institutional memory lost following the departure of staff was irreplaceable. The Commission recommended that capacity building should be a continuing activity.

105. National statistical systems in the region were at various levels of development with wide-ranging training requirements. The areas listed by countries for personnel skills and knowledge enhancement, included basic statistical concepts and applications in survey sampling methodologies; advanced analytical tools including forecasting techniques; report writing; quality assessment; statistical frameworks such as the System of National Accounts (SNA) and Supply Utilisation Accounts (SUA); and applications of latest technologies like ICT, GIS, remote sensing and GPS.

106. National statistical capacity-building needs were being addressed in various ways. Some countries were doing this internally, using local resources and expertise. However, many others needed external support, either in the form of funds from donors like the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the ASEAN Trust Funds, or as capacity-building support from regional programmes and institutes such as ESCAP/SIAP (Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific), AFSIS, Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), and National Academy of Statistical Administration (India). In this respect, the Commission recommended that countries conduct a thorough assessment of their capacity-building requirements and package these for assistance. The Commission further recommended such assessment should give due consideration to special needs, such

as economies in transition or countries facing conflict. Moreover, statistical capacity building should be viewed in the context of improving the entire national statistical system, not just agricultural statistics.

107. The Roundtable accorded special attention to unstructured or informal initiatives whereby countries or offices bilaterally arranged to share knowledge and materials on specific areas of mutual concern through study visits, seminars, workshops or simple correspondence. The AFSIS project's mutual cooperation component, which matched the training needs of one country with the comparative advantage of another and provided mechanisms to transfer knowledge between personnel in the two countries through study visits and seminars, was cited as a good arrangement for informal technical assistance. Another example was that of study visits by agricultural statistical staff of countries in the region to Thailand and the Philippines.

108. The Roundtable concluded with the observation that a complete appreciation of statistical capacity building in the region rested on a full accounting of the strengths of national statistical systems as well as their needs. This would rationalise and make more effective, statistical capacity-building activities in the region. Pursuing this observation, the Commission recommended FAO initiatives to prepare an inventory of statistical capacity-building strengths and needs of countries in the region and utilize this to design appropriate projects by matching strengths with needs.

109. The Commission noted that the commitment of participants was critical to effective knowledge and transfer of skills, and recommended that countries raise awareness among participants to maximise the benefits of participation in training and staff development activities.

110. The Commission urged regional training institutions like the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) to conduct regular training programmes on agricultural statistics.

WORLD PROGRAMME FOR THE CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE 2010 (WCA 2010) (Item 8 of the Agenda)

Implementation of FAO World Programme for the Census of Agriculture (WCA) in Asia and the Pacific Region (Item 8a of the Agenda)

111. Document APCAS/10/19 "Overview of the Implementation of the World Programme for the Census of Agriculture 2010 in Asia and the Pacific Region" was presented to the Commission by Mr Hiek Som.

112. The important new features of this programme were highlighted before the Commission to obtain feedback on countries' plans. The new WCA 2010 features included: (a) a modular approach including a core census on a limited range of data items covering all agricultural holdings, followed by detailed inquiries in the form of supplementary modules or follow-up sample surveys based on sampling frames obtained from the core census; (b) guidance on community-level data collection as

part of the agricultural census; (c) integration of the agricultural census into the National Statistical System; (d) the option of integrating national agricultural and population censuses for greater synergy in field work, cost-effectiveness, increased scope of data analysis and complete coverage of agriculture; (e) the option to include issues consistent with the global agenda; and (f) the possibility to monitor progress towards MDGs, specifically those linked to poverty and hunger, universal primary education, gender equality and environmental sustainability.

113. The Commission was informed of the participation record of member countries in previous WCA rounds as well as known plans of member countries' participation in WCA 2010. The Commission was pleased to note that of the 24 APCAS member countries, 19 countries (Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, People's Republic of China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam), had prepared concrete plans for participating in the WCA 2010 Programme.

114. The Commission was updated by member countries on their plans for the 2010 round of agricultural censuses. Indonesia confirmed its plan for different censuses for a ten-year period, including its next agricultural census in 2013 which would again have a village potentials module. Indonesia also reported planning a cattle census. Lao PDR confirmed it would undertake an agricultural census in 2011 with multi-donor support and planned to include a poverty module. Japan informed the Commission of its five-year cycle agricultural census which included a community-level statistics module. Cambodia reported postponing its first agricultural census to 2012 due to lack of funding and conflict with the 2011 economic census. It planned to include a community-level module in response to data needs of the country's commune councils. Viet Nam indicated it was holding an agricultural census every five years; the last was in 2006 and the next would be organised 2011.

115. Some countries reported including agriculture items in their population census to identify agricultural holdings. Thus, Malaysia included agriculture items in its 2010 population census to identify agricultural households in preparation for its 2012 agricultural census. Malaysia also planned to incorporate data items on small and medium-size enterprises in the agricultural census. Thailand would combine its 2013 agricultural census with a marine fishery census. The Commission was informed that Afghanistan intended to participate in the current WCA round and was planning to identify agricultural holdings in its 2011 population census.

116. Noting that many countries were still preparing for their next agricultural census, the Commission recommended that agricultural census be included again in the agenda of its next session in 2012.

Selected Countries' Experiences on the Conduct of Census of Agriculture: Challenges and Lessons Learnt (by member countries)

(Item 8b of the Agenda)

The Use of Area Frames for Agricultural Census

(Item 8b(1) of the Agenda)

117. Document APCAS/10/20 "The Use of Area Frames for Agricultural Census" was presented to the Commission by Mr Robert Hale, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The Commission learned about the use of area frames in a census when the preferred method of completely listing enumeration areas was not feasible. Delineating only the sampled enumeration areas could save preparation costs and data collection from only a sample of units, saved enumeration costs.

118. The Commission learned that results were improved with the addition of a list frame of large and/or speciality commodity producers. The multiple frame approach drew on the strengths of both frames to produce accurate and statistically defensible results.

The Use of Remote Sensing for Area Estimation

(Item 8b(2) of the Agenda)

119. Document APCAS/10/21 "The Use of Remote Sensing for Area Estimation" was presented to the Commission by Mr Robert Hale. The Commission was informed that the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) used remote sensing for area estimation in the United States. The Commission was provided with basic terminology for beginners. The minimum inputs needed were current satellite imagery and related ground data. However, ancillary data would be useful in improving the accuracy of results. Area estimation was based on regression equations derived from the relationship of the dedicated area to a particular cover in the ground data and the number of pixels classified to the same cover. A valuable by-product of the process was classified satellite imagery, providing the location of various crops or the estimated land cover area.

120. The Commission noted that several member countries were evaluating or using remote sensing in part of the agricultural statistics programme. The Commission noted the following challenges in implementing remote sensing in some member countries: (a) cloud cover limiting the availability of usable satellite imagery; (b) field sizes smaller than the pixel size of satellite imagery; and (c) multiple harvests within the same year.

Geo-coding and Spatial Display of Data from the Australian Agricultural Census

(Item 8b(3) of the Agenda)

121. Document APCAS/10/22 "Geo-coding and Spatial Display of Data from the Australian Agricultural Census" was presented to the Commission by Mr David Brereton of the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The Commission was informed of the processes used for capturing and geo-coding agricultural property addresses reported in the Australian Agricultural Census of 2005-2006. Information was provided on using

geo-coded addresses to facilitate the production of spatial outputs in formats other than the standard tabular format, including static maps with greater detail and animated presentations. There were also opportunities to utilise similar spatial data representation to improve data quality during editing processes.

122. The Commission noted the benefits of geo-coding of agricultural units to mesh-block level and to a spatial reference (latitude/longitude) point in the delivery and presentation of data for non-standard or user-defined areas of interest.

Agriculture Census – Indian Experience

(Item 8b(4) of the Agenda)

123. Document APCAS/10/23 “Agriculture Census – Indian Experience” was presented to the Commission by Mr Arvind K. Srivastava, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, India. Mr Srivastava outlined India’s agricultural profile, including that of farmers and land use information.

124. The Commission was informed that India’s comprehensive Land Records System provided a frame for agricultural censuses and some surveys in the country. The Commission learned about major surveys and that the objectives of the Agriculture Census were to: (a) describe the agricultural structure and related characteristics through statistical data on operational holdings, including land utilisation, livestock, agricultural machinery and implements, and fertilizer use; (b) provide benchmark data for formulating and monitoring new agricultural development programmes; (c) provide basic household and operational holding frames for future agricultural surveys; and (d) lay the basis for developing an integrated programme for current agricultural statistics.

125. The Commission noted organisational and operational issues in the conduct of the Agriculture Census, as well as activities undertaken in the three phases of the Agriculture Census. The Commission was informed of aspects of census data processing, dissemination and use.

126. In conclusion, the Commission noted that India also conducted an independent five-yearly Livestock Census in addition to the Agriculture Census.

Agricultural Census in Myanmar

(Item 8b(5) of the Agenda)

127. Document APCAS/10/24 “Agricultural Census in Myanmar” was presented to the Commission by Mr Kyaw Nyein Aung, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, Myanmar. The Commission was informed that the agricultural sector was a major contributor to the gross domestic product (GDP) in Myanmar and regarded as the base for all-round development of other sectors. The Commission was provided with an overview of agricultural statistics as well as information on previous agricultural censuses in Myanmar.

128. Myanmar was planning another Agricultural Census in 2010 and the Commission was informed of related activities to date. The Commission noted that FAO was assisting Myanmar through a TCP project to ensure that its agricultural census was in full conformity with the WCA 2010 Programme.

GENDER STATISTICS

(Item 9 of the Agenda)

Gender Statistics for Agricultural and Rural Development in the Asia-Pacific Region

(Item 9a of the Agenda)

129. Document APCAS/10/25 “Developing a Gender and Agricultural Statistics Framework for the Asia-Pacific Region” was presented to the Commission by Mr Jairo Castano, on behalf of Mr John Curry, FAO. The Commission was informed about the Gender and Agricultural Statistics Framework (GASF) being used by FAO in Lao PDR, Viet Nam and Cambodia under the SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency)-FAO Strategic Partnership on Rural Development (2008-2009) project. The framework was designed to provide guidance to national statistics systems and producers of agricultural statistics on producing sex-disaggregated data (SDD) for agriculture and rural policy.

130. The Commission noted the various stages of the framework, including: (a) identification of gender issues; (b) listing of relevant statistics and indicators; (c) identification of data sources; (d) SDD data production and analysis; and (e) presentation and dissemination of results. The Commission was informed of the results of framework implementation in the three countries. The gender profiling results showed that female-headed households comprised 10 to 20 percent of total households in the three countries and that female heads of households, on average, were older than male household heads. In addition, male-headed households had better access to land than female-headed households.

131. The Commission learned of the project team’s experience in conducting the GASF in the three countries which found issues related to data accuracy and reliability, and the need for continued technical support to countries for SDD data production and analysis. The Commission noted several project recommendations, including integrating gender statistics and GASF with existing CountrySTAT programmes using GASF elements in the preparatory phase of the agricultural censuses, enhancing practical SDD production skills, analysis and dissemination and up-scaling the GASF approach in the region.

132. The Commission underscored the need to include gender statistics in national statistical programmes while expressing concern over the inclusion of gender-related information in censuses which might be already burdened with information. The Commission noted Viet Nam’s continued interest in participating in the project and the interest expressed by Indonesia in adopting GASF to produce SDD for agriculture and rural policy.

Gender Profile in Agricultural Households in Cambodia 2008

(Item 9b of the Agenda)

133. Document APCAS/10/26 “Gender Profile in Agricultural Households in Cambodia 2008” was presented to the Commission by Mr Pich Pothy, National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Cambodia. The Commission noted that

inadequate gender-disaggregated data was a major constraint to a full understanding of the roles and responsibilities of women in the agricultural sector, and, despite a number of national surveys in the country, gender data related to agriculture had not been sufficiently analyzed, tabulated and disseminated.

134. The Commission noted that the gender profile was one of the outputs of the FAO-SIDA partnership discussed in the previous agenda item. The Commission was provided background information on the Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey 2008 which formed the basis for the analysis presented to the Commission. The Commission was also provided with a wide range of gender-disaggregated data, demonstrating the potential extent of data.

135. Despite the wide range of data presented, the Commission recognized that important gender statistics were still missing or unreliable and acknowledged the need to produce gender statistics for the agricultural and other sectors for monitoring and planning purposes.

STATISTICS AND SMALLHOLDERS

(Item 10 of the Agenda)

Collection and Dissemination of Data for the Benefit of Small Farmers at Community Level

(Item 10a of the Agenda)

136. Document APCAS/10/27 “Collection and Dissemination of Data for the Benefit of Small Farmers at Community Level” was presented to the Commission by Mr Hiek Som.

137. The Commission was informed that community-level data was needed for the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of agricultural and rural development policies and programmes. The WCA 2010 recommended using the village or commune as the unit for collecting data at community level related to geography; socio-economic conditions; community infrastructure and services; and development programmes. Recommendations were made about data item categories under each of these domains.

138. The Commission noted a wide range of potential uses of community-level data, including identification of food shortage pockets. The Commission was informed of experiences in a number of countries, including Indonesia and Cambodia, as well as methods of disseminating community-level data to small farmers.

139. Noting the advantages of community-level data, the Commission recommended including a community module in the agricultural census as this could be done with limited additional cost, resulting in data appreciated by development partners which would ultimately benefit the country.

140. The Commission noted that the village potentials module in Indonesia’s censuses was highly useful for government pro-poor policies. The country reported the following problems in implementing the village potentials module: (a) the

respondents were village leaders who had difficulty reporting accurate data; and (b) the village monograph used for the module contained inaccurate information.

141. The Commission was informed of the use of SMS to transmit price information across the country. Indonesia reported setting up community tele-centres where small farmers could learn the use of computers and the Internet. Community SMS centres were also set up. The Commission was informed that community-level statistics were highly useful for Cambodia's decentralization policy which entrusted commune councils with local development responsibilities. Cambodia reported training district-level statistical officials as trainers for collecting community-level statistics. It also informed the Commission that MAFF was disseminating prices of agricultural commodities using radio and SMS, in addition to bulletins for policy-makers.

142. The Commission urged countries to collect community-level statistics for policy makers and disseminate data, including community-level agricultural prices, for the benefit of small farmers.

Characterisation of Small Farmers in Asia and the Pacific

(Item 10b of the Agenda)

143. Document APCAS/10/28 "Characterisation of Small Farmers in Asia and the Pacific" was presented to the Commission by Mr Hiek Som. The Commission was provided with information highlighting the importance of small farmers in Asia and the Pacific and the nature of small-scale agriculture.

144. The Commission was informed of the need for a definition for a small farm or holding and to provide a standard size classification for tabulations, and noted the FAO WCA recommendation for 15 size classes of operated area.

145. The Commission learned that practical and cost considerations required setting a minimum size for agricultural holdings included in an agricultural census, and that contributions of farms below the minimum size might be significant for the agriculture sector and food security. The Commission noted the recommendation for a follow-up survey of such units to obtain full knowledge of the distribution of holdings.

146. The Commission took note of the following recommendations by the Expert Consultation on Statistics to Empower Small Farmers, held in Bangkok in September 2009: (a) preferring the use of different smallholder definitions in different subregions; and (b) sub-categorization in the definition of smallholder.

147. In conclusion, the Commission was informed that: (a) the detailed tabulation of data by size class was recommended to derive the distribution of the number and area of holdings according to standard size classes; (b) the additional cost of tabulating census data for policy-making to empower small farmers was marginal; and (c) different small farm definitions might be appropriate in different subregions.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATISTICS AND COUNTRYSTAT

(Item 11 of the Agenda)

Collecting and Compiling Food and Agricultural Prices in the APCAS Member Countries: Current Status and Future Directions

(Item 11a of Agenda)

148. Document APCAS/10/29 “Collecting and Compiling Food and Agricultural Prices in the Asia-Pacific Region – Current Status and Future Directions” was presented to the Commission by Mr Hansdeep Khaira, FAO. The Commission was informed of the various uses of food and agricultural price statistics, including policy formulation and assessment, monitoring food security, facilitating trade and investment decisions, and compiling national accounts. The Commission learned about FAO price-related databases covering producer, retail and international prices of food and agricultural products.

149. The Commission was informed of the status of producer price data reported to FAO by APCAS member countries through annual questionnaires. Only half of the member countries had responded to the FAO producer price questionnaires. The responses were also often incomplete, with 54 percent of requested data being reported. The Commission noted that metadata was often lacking in responses by member countries and there was a decline in the number of countries reporting to FAO.

150. The Commission learned that FAO often found it difficult to process the price data reported by countries mainly due to issues of data relevance and accuracy, reporting punctuality and compilation methodology. The Commission was informed of several likely constraints faced by countries in generating producer price data, including high demand on time and resources, lower priority to producer compared to wholesale or retail prices, and lack of resources and technical capacity of NSOs.

151. The Commission noted that member countries could seek FAO assistance to strengthen capacities related to producer price statistics through training on principles and best practices of data collection and processing techniques, establishing data quality frameworks, producing relevant indicators to enhance the analytical value of raw data, and providing a platform for integrating price-related national data sets.

152. The Commission recommended FAO assistance in the areas of price data collection and processing, and close coordination between NSOs and FAO to determine ways to mainstream producer prices in national statistical systems.

The Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey (CSES)

(Item 11b of the Agenda)

153. Document APCAS/10/30 “The Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey (CSES)” was presented to the Commission by Mr Soeum Seng, National Institute of Statistics, Cambodia. The Commission noted that the CSES had two components – a large sample survey of 12 000 households conducted every five years and a smaller annual survey covering 3 600 households.

154. The Commission was informed of CSES details, including the sampling frame based on the Population Census and sample and questionnaire designs comprising 18 modules. The Commission also noted the survey's main uses, including pro-poor policy and developing a range of social indicators.

155. The Commission noted several steps taken to ensure data quality including: (a) simplified questions to reduce the respondent burden; (b) training of supervisors and interviewers; and (c) attention to all aspects of data processing, covering data entry, coding and editing.

156. The Commission acknowledged the contribution of donor support to the CSES.

CountrySTAT in the Asia and Pacific Region: Implementation and Prospects (Item 11c of the Agenda)

157. Document APCAS/10/31 "CountrySTAT in the Asia and Pacific region: Implementation and Prospects" was presented to the Commission by Mr Hiek Som. The Commission was reminded that CountrySTAT was an Internet-based information system for food and agricultural statistics at national and sub-national levels.

158. The Commission was given a presentation of CountrySTAT content for the Philippines and Bhutan, with a live demonstration of the Philippines' CountrySTAT website. The Commission was informed of the networking potential between CountrySTAT and FAOSTAT, as well as its link to the Regional Data Exchange System (RDES).

159. The Commission commended the Philippines and Bhutan for having successfully set up CountrySTAT with the technical assistance of FAO. It noted that the CountrySTAT framework used PC-Axis software which could be purchased from Statistics Sweden at a reasonable price.

160. The Commission noted the many useful functions of CountrySTAT, including pivoting result tables and presenting results in graphical and map form. It noted that Iran had initiated action to establish CountrySTAT at the Iran Statistics Centre and that the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) had requested FAO assistance with CountrySTAT.

161. The Commission noted that the CountrySTAT framework was harmonized with the FAOSTAT database.

162. Noting the interest expressed by several countries, including Afghanistan, Malaysia, Indonesia and Viet Nam, the Commission recommended that members adopt CountrySTAT for use in their countries. It noted the acquisition and implementation costs of CountrySTAT and recognised that donor support might be necessary for full implementation.

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT

(Item 12 of the Agenda)

Agri-Environmental Statistics and Indicators: Current Developments and Future Directions

(Item 12a of the Agenda)

163. Document APCAS/10/32 “Agri-Environmental Statistics and Indicators: Current Developments and Future Directions” was presented to the Commission by Mr Hansdeep Khaira. The Commission noted increasing global awareness of the environmental impact of agriculture and the need to produce statistics to assist policy-makers and others in assessing this.

164. The Commission was informed that data collected and disseminated by FAO could be used for a general assessment of the environmental impact of agricultural activities and this could be used to develop indicators to measure the impact. The data was collected through annual questionnaires to NSOs on land use, pesticides and fertilizers. The Commission learned of several other activities related to agri-environmental statistics being planned by FAO’s Statistics Division. These included the Division’s active role in the development of agri-environmental indicators within the framework of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics, FAO collaboration with other international agencies in developing agri-environmental indicators, and the collection and dissemination of information related to organic production.

165. The Commission noted that while data reporting by APCAS member countries to the FAO land use, fertilizer and pesticides questionnaires was improving, it was still not satisfactory in terms of data quantity and metadata. In this regard, the Commission was informed that FAO was prepared to provide technical assistance to countries in the areas of data collection, compilation and dissemination, methodology, standards and concepts.

166. The Commission noted that agri-environmental statistics were becoming increasingly important and recommended FAO technical assistance to member countries, particularly in data collection and analysis.

Fisheries Statistics and Information Collection in Cambodia

(Item 12b of the Agenda)

167. Document APCAS/10/33 “Fisheries Statistics and Information Collection in Cambodia” was presented to the Commission by Mr Ngor Peng Bun, Inland Fisheries Research and Development Institute, Cambodia. The Commission was provided with an overview of the inland and marine fisheries situation in Cambodia, including various habitat types and water resources, and the types of fisheries in Cambodia.

168. The Commission was informed about the fisheries data and reporting system, the history and development of inland capture fisheries production data collection over the last 70 years. Time series estimates over the last seven years showed reasonably consistent growth of inland and marine capture fish production, strong growth in aquaculture production and a considerable reduction in exports.

169. The Commission noted challenges faced in Cambodia's fisheries data collection and data gaps needing to be filled by new collection activity. The Commission further noted steps proposed to improve fisheries statistics.

An Overview of the Global Forest Resources Assessment FRA 2010 (Item 12c of the Agenda)

170. Document APCAS/10/34 "An overview of the Global Forest Resources Assessment FRA 2010" was presented to the Commission by Ms Monica Garzuglia, FAO. The Commission was informed that regular information on the status and trends of global forest resources had to be provided as one of FAO's mandates, reconfirmed by recent decisions of its governing bodies.

171. The Commission learned that FAO was finalizing its assessment of the world's forests for the period 1990-2010 through the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010 (FRA 2010). The information for FRA 2010 was provided by a network of officially nominated national correspondents through comprehensive country reports. The country reports to FRA 2010 were based on a common methodology to ensure globally consistent and comparable data. The Commission learned about the reporting methodology and some of the most important FRA 2010 findings for the Asia and Pacific region.

172. Delegates sought information and clarifications on several aspects of the assessment, including data sources used by countries, the availability of disaggregated data at biome levels as well as information on deforestation.

173. The Commission was informed that a separate FRA 2000 study found that deforestation in Africa was mainly caused by forest conversion to small-scale permanent agriculture while in Latin America, this was caused by forest conversion to large-scale permanent agriculture, including livestock pasture and crop production. The picture was more mixed in Asia.

174. The Commission was informed that more information on subregional and biome levels, and on forest dynamics was expected from the complementary FRA 2010 global remote sensing survey due by the end of 2011. FRA 2010 was expected to provide crucial forest-related information for the MDGs, including forest area. Information for this indicator would be in the form of a traffic light graph with each colour indicating a different forest area trend estimate for the year 2015.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Item 13 of the Agenda)

Venues of the Twenty-Fourth, Twenty-Fifth and Twenty-Sixth Sessions of APCAS

175. Viet Nam confirmed its readiness to host the Twenty-Fourth Session in September 2012, with either Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh City as possible venues. Lao PDR expressed willingness to host the Twenty-Fifth Session in 2014. There were no offers to host the Twenty-Sixth Session. The Secretary committed to pursue the matter with relevant authorities in these countries.

Other Matters

176. The APCAS Secretary sought suggestions for topics for the next Session of APCAS. The topics proposed by member countries included: (a) food and nutrition security, specifically statistics on food availability and quality; (b) agriculture index and compilation; (c) agriculture statistics and climate change, including impact of agriculture and techniques for evaluation of impact; (d) expert discussion on trade-related matters; (e) statistical methods and impact on policy debates on tariffs, volume exports, commodity utilisation; (f) implementation of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics; (g) collection and compilation of agricultural statistics in terms of data quality; (h) agricultural census – country experiences; and (i) country capacity building reports to identify and focus on strengths and opportunities for sharing with other countries.

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

178. The Host Government, Cambodia, arranged a field visit for the delegates to some interesting sites in Siem Reap, including Angkor Wat and other temples.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT AND CLOSING OF THE SESSION

(Items 14 and 15 of the Agenda)

179. The Commission concluded the Twenty-Third Session on 30 April 2010 after considering and adopting the report prepared by the Drafting Committee, with amendments.

**ASIA AND PACIFIC COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS
TWENTY-THIRD SESSION**

AGENDA

- I. Opening Ceremony**
- II. Election of Officers (Chair, Vice-Chair and Drafting Committee)**
- III. Adoption of Agenda**
- 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's activities in the Asia and Pacific Region since the 22nd Session of APCAS
 2. Expert consultation on Statistics in Support of Policies to Empower Small Farmers
 3. ADB-FAO Workshop on Agricultural Statistics and Agricultural Census
 4. Roundtable Meeting on Programme for the 2010 Round of Censuses of Agriculture
 5. New Developments in the FAO Statistics Division
 6. Other Information Items (projects in the region, other activities)
- V. State of Food and Agricultural Statistics in Countries of the Region**
 1. Report on the Situation Based on Responses to Country Reports
 2. Evaluation of the Countries' Responses to FAO Data Questionnaires
 3. Evaluation of Countries' Responses to the FAO Questionnaires on the Fisheries and Aquaculture sector
 4. Recent Developments in Agricultural Statistics in the Countries of the Region (update by Member Countries on selected Topics)
- VI. Global Strategy for the Improvement of Agricultural and Rural Statistics**
 1. Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics
 2. Implementation Plan of the Global Agricultural and Rural Statistics
 3. Integration of Agriculture into the National Strategy for Development of Statistical (NSDS)
 4. Fisheries and the Global Strategy: Integration of Fisheries and Aquaculture into the NSDS
 5. Agriculture in the Statistical Master Plan (SMP) and the National Strategy for Development of Statistics (NSDS): Report by Countries

VII. Roundtable Discussions on Statistical Capacity Building

1. Statistical Capacity Building by FAO: Past and Current Efforts
2. ESCAP's Role in Statistics Development in Asia and the Pacific
3. Human Resource Development Efforts by the ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS)
4. Trade Statistics Capacity Building in the Pacific
5. Roundtable Discussion

VIII. World Programme for the Census of Agriculture 2010 (WCA 2010)

1. Implementation of FAO World Programme for the Census of Agriculture (WCA) in Asia and the Pacific Region
2. Selected Countries' Experiences on the Conduct of Census of Agriculture: Challenges and Lessons Learnt
 - i. The Use of Area Frames for Agricultural Census
 - ii. The Use of Remote Sensing for Area Estimation
 - iii. Geo-coding and Spatial Display of Data from the Australian Agricultural Census
 - iv. Agriculture Census – Indian Experience
 - v. Agricultural Census in Myanmar

IX. Gender Statistics

1. Gender Statistics for Agricultural and Rural Development in Asia-Pacific
2. Gender Profile in Agricultural Households in Cambodia 2008

X. Statistics and Small Holders

1. Collection and dissemination of Data for the Benefits of Small Farmers at Community level
2. Characterisation of Small Farmers in Asia and the Pacific

XI. Socio-Economic Statistics and CountrySTAT

1. Collecting and Compiling Food and Agricultural Prices in the Asia-Pacific Region – Current Status and Future Directions
2. The Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey (CSES)
3. CountrySTAT in the Asia and Pacific Region: Implementation and Prospects

XII. Agricultural Statistics Relating to the Environment

1. Agri-environmental Statistics and Indicators: Current Developments and Future Directions
2. Fisheries Statistics and Information Collection in Cambodia

XIII. Any Other Business

Venue, Date and Topics for the Next APCAS Session

XIV. Adoption of the Report

XV. Closing of the Session

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INAUGURAL ADDRESS

By

H.E. Dr CHAN SARUN

Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of
the Kingdom of Cambodia

at

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

Siem Reap, Cambodia
26-30 April 2010

.....

His Excellency Sou Phirin, Governor of Siem Reap Province,

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

**His Excellency Kit Seng, Under-secretary of State of Ministry of Agriculture,
Forestry and Fisheries,**

FAO Representatives,

**Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen!**

Good Morning

It is a greater honor and pleasure for me to be with you in the Opening Session of the Twenty-Third Session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics, which is held from 26-30 April 2010 in a historical and cultural Angkor City, Siem Reap, Cambodia.

I feel greatly honoured to deliver this Inaugural Address to the gathering of distinguished agricultural statisticians, and other honourable guests and participants at this biennial meeting. On behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, I would like to welcome all delegates and participants from the countries in the region for being with us today to attend this Session which is jointly organized by Department of Planning and Statistics of Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). I trust you have had good rest after your journey here and are eager to make your valuable contributions so that at the end of the event, our meeting will conclude with fruitful results. I also would like to express my high appreciation and deep thanks to the FAO for its entrusted support to choose Cambodia as a host for, and its collaboration to organize this Session.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen!

As you all know that this 5-day Session will be held from this morning until Friday and it will be concentrate on the discussion on issues related to the current situation and improvement of agricultural statistic system among the countries in the region. It is noted that the statistics on food and agriculture is critical information needed by policy and decision makers as well as researchers for policy planning and programme formulation to enhance the agricultural development.

The importance of agriculture in socio-economic development needs no emphasis, for the countries in the region, and especially for Cambodia as an agrarian country with its economic foundation still being largely based on agriculture sector, in which about 85 percent of the population live in rural areas and make their livings in agriculture. The Royal Government of Cambodia's Rectangular Strategy-II clearly defines the enhancement of agriculture sector as the dynamic foundation for accelerating the Cambodian economic growth and poverty reduction by focusing on the improvement of agricultural productivity and diversification. The agriculture sector does not only contribute to the economic growth but it also contributes to social development, especially help reducing poverty for the people, particularly for those who are living in the rural areas.

In the recent years, besides the effects from regular cyclical occurrence of flood, drought and disease; climate change is also significant factors that we have to consider. The climate change can cause unsuitable conditions for crop production while the increase in demand for bio-fuel can reduce the supply of food crops. The incident of soaring prices of major food crops in world market, especially under circumstance of world economic downturn, brought about more public awareness of these factors on world food supply. Accordingly, food security has become the urgent issue that is frequently discussed at national and international levels in order to find appropriate solutions to lessen the adverse effects on the living standard of the people.

In order to overcome the adverse impacts as described above, Cambodia has attempted to accelerate the agriculture sector's development and as result an agricultural growth accounted about 5.4 percent in 2009, according to the preliminary assessment for the growth in the sector. The total rice cultivated area was 2.71 million hectares, with the production amount of about 7.58 million metric tones and produced a surplus of 2.24 million metric tones of milled rice, accounting for about 3.50 million metric tones of paddy rice. Thus, it is a great success that also means Cambodia can share their staple food with some other food deficit countries.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Cambodian agricultural statistics still needs more improvement and requires financial and technical support to build its capacity, and to design statistical model and system, and carry out statistical surveys. In this connection, Cambodia's first agricultural census is necessary and this exercise will require huge local and external resources to put in place to make it a reality. We have known that FAO has had long experiences for this exercise and we need the technical and financial assistance from

FAO and our development partners to carry out the Cambodian Agricultural Census in the future.

As we all agreed that sufficiency and accuracy of the statistical data is very important for the policy makers and concerned stakeholders in developing agriculture sector. The absence of reliable data leaves them no choice other than guest estimates according to their own common sense or convenience. This results in poor planning and decision making, and thus not achieving targeted production and development. It is therefore very important that our participants actively deliberate to bring about new ideas to improve the current statistical exercise, I strongly hope they will.

According to the Agenda, in this Session, we will be informed of the experiences which to be shared and the activities of various statistical organizations and agencies in order to improve the statistical system for food security and agricultural and rural development among the countries in the region. There will be presentations by FAO experts and member countries statisticians, on agricultural statistics and the agricultural statistics' situation and related measures in developing and improving the agricultural statistic system. This will allow us to learn and discuss about the food and agricultural statistics and the efforts for improvement; so that, we can plan for future actions to work with the others to achieve the overall goals for the improvement of food and agricultural statistics.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen!

May I conclude by expressing my sincere appreciation to the organizers and all participants for their efforts to make this event happened. It is no doubt in my mind that our experts will work together to discuss and produce fruitful results to fulfill the expectations of our common interests that will enable us to accommodate the requirements and improvements of agricultural statistics. I wish you all a pleasant stay in the homeland of Angkor, the land of the world's great wonder. I am sure you will bring home with unforgettable, fond memories of you stay and work in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

On this note, with my great pleasure I declare the official opening of the Twenty-Third Session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics.

Thank you for your kind attention!

OPENING ADDRESS

By

Hiroyuki Konuma

Assistant Director-General and
FAO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific

Delivered at the

23rd Session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics

Siem Reap, Cambodia

26-30 April 2010

.....

His Excellency Mr Minister Chan Sarun, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Cambodia,

Mr Hong Narit, Acting Director, Department of Planning and Statistics, Ministry of Forestry and Fisheries, Cambodia, and Chairman of the APCAS Organizing Committee

**Distinguished Delegates and Dignitaries,
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

It is a great pleasure to extend, on behalf of the Director-General of FAO and on my own behalf, a warm welcome to the Twenty-third session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics (APCAS).

I am especially grateful to the Government of Cambodia for its generosity in hosting this session in the historic city of Siem Reap and for providing excellent facilities and an environment conducive to fruitful and productive discussions. I am personally grateful to you, Your Honourable, for devoting your valuable time to inaugurate this 23rd Session of APCAS.

I am delighted to note that some 71 delegates from 17 member countries are attending the meeting. I am particularly happy to note the participation of one observer from Timor-Leste which is not yet an APCAS member and two observers from the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). I am thankful for your continued keen interest in the work of the Commission and in the activities of FAO. Your active involvement is significant as reliable food and agricultural statistics are more essential than ever for proper planning and decision-making.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Since the establishment of APCAS as a statutory FAO body in 1963 and the first Session of the Commission in Tokyo, Japan in 1966, 22 meetings have been held in 13 different countries. APCAS provides a forum for senior statistics officials from

member countries to review recent developments in agricultural statistical systems and exchange ideas with experts from FAO and other bodies on the state of food and agricultural statistics in Asia and the Pacific.

This Commission serves to effectively synthesize the opinions and recommendations of member countries within the region and these are then brought to the attention of all member countries at the FAO regional and general conferences. Therefore, APCAS provides a unique opportunity to put forward proposals that may contribute to the further development of agricultural statistics in the Asia-Pacific region.

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, Target two, aimed at reducing extreme hunger by half by 2015. Despite the rapid transformation of economies in the region, it still accounts for more than 60 percent of the world's undernourished¹ population due to its large population and relatively low per capita incomes when compared with the Latin American and the Near East and North Africa regions. FAO advance assessments show that 642 million people faced chronic hunger in Asia and the Pacific in 2009 compared to about 566 million during the 2004-2006 period.²

The international financial crisis which broke out in 2008, combined with the food prices crisis preceding it has been a major setback to regional progress towards the MDGs, making an estimated additional 144 million people food-insecure globally by 2009, of which 76 million, or 53 percent were from the Asia-Pacific region.

The proportion of hungry out of the total population increased to nearly 18 percent in 2009 from 16 percent in 2006, the first time since the green revolution started in the 1960s.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We are meeting amidst the historic grandeur that surrounds Siem Reap to discuss and review a range of technical and policy issues to be tabled during this APCAS Session which are highly relevant for the economic and social well-being of the Asia-Pacific region.

One of these issues relates to FAO activities since the last APCAS Session, ranging from publications, meetings and training workshops, to project activities. FAO will also brief you about changes in the structure of the FAO Statistics Division which are being implemented as part of the ongoing FAO reform.

A summary report of the country reports prepared by you will be tabled and discussed. FAO will also provide you with feedback on the countries' responses to the FAO questionnaires.

¹ FAO, *The state of food insecurity in the world 2009*.

² Ibid

An interesting agenda item is the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics which is currently under way in several countries. FAO will provide an update on this subject and will discuss efforts made to integrate agriculture into the National Strategy for Development of Statistics (NSDS).

Another salient feature of the agenda is a Roundtable Discussion on Statistical Capacity Building. FAO and development partners such as UN ESCAP, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) will present current and planned efforts to spark the roundtable discussion.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

As you may recall, in 2005 FAO launched the World Programme for the Census of Agriculture 2010 (WCA 2010), FAO's ninth Census round. Several countries have undertaken the Census of agriculture while preparations are under way in other countries. The Session will review the implementation of WCA 2010 in Asia and the Pacific and some relevant country case studies.

The Session will also benefit from presentations by relevant government departments in Cambodia relating to the socio-economic survey as well as gender and fisheries statistics. Other important topics will include food and agricultural prices, agri-environmental statistics, the Forest Resource Assessment and characterisation of small farmers in the Asia-Pacific region.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Agricultural statistics have become increasingly important, especially at a time when policy-makers require timely and reliable information for decision-making.

APCAS has provided strong support for the development of agricultural statistics in the region throughout its 47 years of existence. The Commission works not only to monitor progress in the development of agricultural statistics and takes cognizance of the needs of countries, but also sets directions for further developments in statistical systems by providing a platform for sharing country initiatives. FAO looks to its member countries in deciding new programme initiatives and for setting priorities in the course of FAO reform. I request that you observe how previous undertakings have been implemented and recommend directions for our future actions. FAO looks to you for this guidance. In turn, I wish to assure you that we at the FAO Regional Office in Bangkok are always ready to extend technical assistance to our member countries to the best of our expert capability.

Finally, let me again convey my sincere gratitude to the Government of Cambodia for hosting this session of the Commission. I wish to convey my special gratitude to the Minister H.E. Chan Sarun for his participation at this meeting despite his busy schedule. I acknowledge the hard work of the secretariat staff from the Department of Planning and Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Cambodia, in the preparation and organization of this meeting. I would also like to thank Mr Jay Castano, APCAS Secretary, and my colleagues from FAO

headquarters and the regional office for their technical contributions and managerial efforts for making this meeting valuable and productive. I would also like to knowledge the technical contributions from our partners UN ESCAP, ASEAN and SPC as well as the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Myanmar's Settlement and Land Records Department and the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

I wish you all success in your deliberations and a pleasant stay in the ancient and beautiful city of Siem Reap, gateway to the magnificent Angkor Wat and the incredible Tonle Sap Lake.

Thank you.

WELCOME ADDRESS

By

Mr Hong Narit

Acting Director, Department of Planning and Statistics
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

at

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

Siem Reap, Cambodia
26-30 April 2010

.....

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His Excellency Mao Vuthy, Deputy Governor of Siem Reap Province,

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

**His Excellency Kit Seng, Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Agriculture,
Forestry and Fisheries,**

**Distinguished Delegates and Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

Good Morning!

With the permission from His Excellency Dr Chan Sarun, Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and our organizers, I have great pleasure and honor to welcome you most warmly to Siem Reap, and to the Twenty-Third Session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics. Department of Planning and Statistics of Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Cambodia is happy and honored to host this biennial meeting, to discuss matters of improving member countries' access to reliable and up-to-date agricultural data to formulate agricultural and rural development policies and programme in a more effective way.

Taking this opportunity, please allow me to extend my deepest thanks to His Excellency Dr Chan Sarun, Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, for taking his already scheduled time off to officiate the opening of the Session. I also would like to thank His Excellency Mao Vuthy, Deputy Governor of Siem Reap Province, for his attendance and giving us support to organize this gathering in the most beautiful, charm city of Angkor. Thank you to all our Delegates and Guests-from countries of the Asia and Pacific Region-for coming to attend our Session, and we know that you have traveled along way to reach here. My special thanks are also due to our

organizers and FAO Delegates and Representatives, who made the arrangement and facilitation, and also will join us to present valuable agricultural statistics topics. Without their commitment, professional approach and personal efforts, this Session would have not been realized.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates and Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen!

In this 5-day meeting, where many experts and competent officials have gathered to present matters and share their experience regarding current agricultural and food data, and situation of the implementation of their respective country practice of agricultural statistics system, and ways of the system improvement, we strongly hope that we can achieve more far-reaching results, through our deliberation and active interaction with a spirit of strengthened friendship among us.

I could go on my elaboration but these few words of mine, I believe, illustrate the breadth and the depth of our commitment, and our follow-through to the ground results of our concern.

Thank you again, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, for honoring us with your presence. I wish you a happy work and a pleasant stay to experience the sights and sound of Angkor Land, the Kingdom of Wonders.

Thank you!

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**DATES AND PLACES OF SESSIONS OF THE
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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
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Twenty-third	–	Siem Reap, Cambodia, 26 – 30 April 2010

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