

**Terms of reference (ToR) for the 33rd ordinary session of AfricaRice
Council of Ministers**

Antananarivo, Madagascar, 13 – 15 November 2024

Background and rationale

1. Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice) is both a pan-African intergovernmental research association, comprising 28 member states, and a member of the CGIAR System. As an intergovernmental association, AfricaRice has a Council of Ministers (COM) representative of all the association's member states. The COM is AfricaRice's highest governing body. AfricaRice is mandated by the COM to support member state governments in collaborative research and development of rice-based agri-food systems, and the appropriate adoption of high-performance technologies, to ensure Africa's rice self-sufficiency and the consumption of healthier rice.
2. The National Experts Committee (NEC), composed of appointed representatives of National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs) from member states, is the technical advisory body to the COM. It submits recommendations to the COM on strategic orientations for AfricaRice, based on proposals made by AfricaRice's management and Board of Trustees (BoT).
3. AfricaRice's mission is to: "To deliver rice-based innovations and transformed rice-based agri-food systems that contribute to the transformation of food, land and water systems in the face of climate change."
4. The 33rd ordinary session of AfricaRice Council of Ministers will be held in Antananarivo (Madagascar), on November 14-15 November 2024. This session is crucial to assess overall progress since the 32nd session held in Cairo, Egypt, on March 31, 2022, and to plan next steps needed to transform rice sector in Africa. It aims to bolster commitments agreed during previous conferences, including the High-Level Ministerial Conference on Rice held in Diamniadio, Senegal, in September 2018.

Expected outcomes of this session

5. The following outcomes are expected:

- a. Approval, during the 33rd CM ordinary session, of the proposed amendment to AfricaRice Constitution made during the 56th ordinary session of AfricaRice Board of Trustees.
- b. Approval, during the 33rd COM ordinary session, of the proposed 2023 CEN declaration calling on member states to systematically include AfricaRice in their rice development projects.
- c. Adoption, during the 33rd COM ordinary session, of the Director General's biennial report on strategic achievements and ongoing progress.
- d. A renewed commitment by the COM to the requirements of the Constitution in terms of policy and institutional support to AfricaRice.
- e. Strategic guidelines from the COM in response to challenges: Identify and analyze critical challenges affecting the rice sector, including climate change impacts, food security and funding issues.
- f. Strengthening partnerships: Promote strategic partnerships with key partners, including financial institutions, NGOs and the private sector, to support research and innovation in the rice sector.
- g. Election of a new Chair of AfricaRice COM.

Methodology and process - the process leading up to the 33rd COM ordinary session will include the following steps:

6. The NEC meeting is planned for October 24, 2024 (see NEC meeting agenda). This meeting, which will be chaired by the DG of FOFIFA, will aim to:

- a. Review all relevant documents prior to the 33rd COM ordinary session; and

- b. Make recommendations to the COM, during its 33rd ordinary session, for approval in the form of resolutions and approvals.
7. A high-level ministerial conference to be held on October 25, 2024 (see the conference concept note) including the following activities:
 - Perspectives from a keynote speaker on sustainable rice-based agri-food sovereignty in Africa.
 - Two panels organized as follows: a) **Panel 1** – Transforming rice-based systems for food and nutrition security in Africa in the face of climate change (technical dimension of the subject to be discussed - i.e. technologies and innovations); b) **Panel 2** – Transforming rice-based systems for food and nutrition security in Africa in the face of climate change.
8. COM 33rd ordinary session planned for November 15, 2024 (see agenda). The session will be chaired by H.E. the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock of Madagascar.
9. Madagascar Day – November 14, 2024: This will mainly consist of a presentation on the progress made by Madagascar and its partners in the rice-based agri-food value chain. The activity will be kicked off by representatives of the Malagasy Government.
10. Simultaneous interpretation into French and English will be provided for all sessions.

Duration of Session

11. The session will run over two days, November 14 – 15, 2024, with reviews and discussions planned for each day.

Estimated budget

12. A detailed budget will be drafted to cover the costs associated with organizing the session, including travel, accommodation, logistics and resources for the meetings.

Draft agenda

13. **Day 1 (November 13, 2024) Technical meeting :**
 - a. Technical meeting
 - b. High-Level Ministerial meeting
14. **Day 2 (October 2024):**
 - a. National Experts Committee meeting
 - b. Madagascar Day. Exhibitions will be open throughout the day
15. **Day 3 (October 25, 2024):**
 - a. 33rd Council of Ministers ordinary session.

Place, date and arrangements

16. **Place:** Antananarivo, Madagascar.
17. **Date:** November 13 - 15, 2024.
18. **Arrangements:** The session will be organized by AfricaRice in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Madagascar, the National Centre of Applied Research for Rural Development (FOFIFA), and regional/international partners.