

Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice)

RESOLUTIONS OF COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

**29th Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers
N'Djamena, Chad
10-11 December 2013**

The Council of Ministers of the Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice) during its 29th Ordinary Session, which took place in N'Djamena, Chad, from the 10th to 11th December 2013,

After having listened to the presentations by the interim Director General of the Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice) and his main collaborators;

After having noted:

- The rapid growth in rice production in Sub-Saharan Africa (8.4% per year) resulting from key investments made by farmers, governments, the private sector and the donor community following the 2007–2008 global food crisis;
- That despite this rapid growth, the African continent continues to rely heavily on the world market to satisfy its increasing demand for rice consumption, with imports reaching 12 million tonnes of milled rice in 2012, and costing more than US\$ 5 billion;
- That long-term food security in Sub-Saharan Africa cannot depend on rice imports and that the African continent has the resources to feed itself in terms of rice and eventually to export rice;
- To improve the competitiveness of local rice vis-à-vis imported rice, it is important to make additional investments in the transformation and commercialization of local rice;

Adopts the following resolutions:

Resolution 1: Adhesion of countries that benefit from AfricaRice activities

The Council of Ministers,

- Urges AfricaRice management to visit non-member countries that benefit from AfricaRice's activities to encourage such countries to become members.

Resolution 2: Participation of the African Union (AU) in AfricaRice's activities

The Council of Ministers,

- Recommends that AfricaRice involve the AU in its activities, based on the Memorandum of Agreement signed between the two institutions.

Resolution 3: Recovery of Member State Contributions

The Council of Ministers,

- Congratulates member states that have paid their contributions and encourages the Management of AfricaRice to continue its efforts to urge member countries to pay their contributions;
- Recommends also that wherever possible, member states make yearly budgetary allocations to their national agricultural research systems for the timely settlement of contributions to AfricaRice.

Resolution 4: Seed Systems

The Council of Ministers,

- Recommends that AfricaRice explores the possibility of assisting member states to constitute strategic reserves of breeder and foundation seed in sufficient quantities to respond to emergency situations;
- Recommends that AfricaRice reflects on the ways and means of being more involved in the implementation of the different seed production initiatives across the continent, in order to create synergies and to develop viable seed systems.

Resolution 5: Collaboration with WAAPP and EAAPP

The Council of Ministers,

- Recommends that AfricaRice continues to work with the West African Agricultural Productivity Program (WAAPP) and the East African Agricultural Productivity Program (EAAPP) to strengthen and create synergies between the national centers of specialization working on rice and ensure joint research activities by inviting the WAAPP and EAAPP coordinators to participate in the AfricaRice Science Week.

Resolution 6: Return to Côte d'Ivoire

The Council of Ministers,

- Notes with satisfaction the intention of AfricaRice to commence its return to Côte d'Ivoire by June 2014;
- Requests that the socio-economic consequences related to the departure of some of the AfricaRice staff from Benin are properly managed;
- Exhorts the Ivorian Government to meet its commitments for AfricaRice's rapid return (allocate appropriate infrastructure in Abidjan to serve as AfricaRice's headquarters; revision of the host country agreement; provide a financial contribution to the tune of US\$ 6M to support the cost of the return).

Resolution 7: Rotation of Chairmanship of Council of Ministers

In conformity with the principle of regional rotation of the Chairmanship of the Council of Ministers, Eastern Africa has been chosen as the region to next assume the Chairmanship of the Council of Ministers;

The Council of Ministers,

- Decides on the choice of Uganda to assume the chairmanship of the Council of Ministers.

Resolution 8: Central Africa

The Council of Ministers,

- Notes with satisfaction the intention of the AfricaRice to open a regional center in Central Africa;
- Recommends that the outgoing Chair of Council and the Minister of the Republic of Congo mobilize CEMAC and CEEAC to assist with the establishment of a regional rice research center in Central Africa based on criteria identified by AfricaRice.

Resolution 9: Rice Sector Development Hubs

The Council of Ministers,

- Recognizes the importance of the Rice Sector Development Hubs to achieve greater efficacy and to ensure greater impact and outcomes in rice research;
- Urges the NARS to operationalize activities in the Hubs by establishing Innovation Platforms in the hubs regrouping the research and development partners;
- Urges the NARS to envision clearly the results expected from the rice sector development hubs within the next five years and to start activities immediately to achieve the desired outcomes.

Resolution 10: Capacity Building

The Council of Ministers,

- Recognizes the efforts made by AfricaRice to enhance the capacity for rice research and development in Sub-Saharan Africa;
- Recommends that AfricaRice takes the initiative in the mentoring of young scientists and uses the Regional Training Center in St. Louis, Senegal, for individual and group training to bridge the knowledge gap across the entire rice value chain and provide opportunities for employment of the youth.

Resolution 11: Recruitment of the Director General

The Council of Ministers,

After its deliberations in closed session on the recruitment process for the Director General of AfricaRice;

Recommends,

- The official transmittal of the vacancy announcement to the member states through the competent authorities (titular Ministers in charge of AfricaRice in the member countries) and readjustment of the closing date for receipt of applications;
- Revision of the composition of the Selection Committee to ensure parity in the number of Board representatives from member states versus non-member states and withdrawal of the Board Chair as a member of the Selection Committee;
- Finalization of the recruitment process for the Director General of AfricaRice by September 2014 and submission of the name of the selected candidate to the Council of Ministers for approval;
- The new DG effectively taking office from 1 January 2015.

- Exhorts the Board of Trustees and Management of AfricaRice to prepare and submit for approval by the Council of Ministers, texts for application or internal procedures which specify the roles and responsibilities of the different organs of governance (Management, Board of Trustees and the Council of Ministers).

Motion of Congratulations to the former and interim Directors General and staff of the Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice)

Considering the remarkable achievements by the Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice) and the results which have been obtained by the Center, for example:

- A historic jump of about 30% in average rice yields in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA);
- An 8.4% increase per year in the growth rate of paddy production in SSA;
- The effective implementation of AfricaRice's Strategic Plan;
- Increased ownership of the Center by member states through the payment of contributions, which amount to 10 times more than that collected in previous years;
- The launch of a new generation of high performing rice varieties called "ARICAS";
- The introduction of a network of rice sector development hubs across the continent in order to achieve greater impact.

Considering with satisfaction the excellent work accomplished by the former Director General of AfricaRice, Dr. Papa Abdoulaye Seck, and the Interim Director General, Dr. Adama Traore, in obtaining these important results that have contributed to increasing the visibility and the international reputation of the Center, and ensuring the successful mobilization of resources through the support of the donors;

The Council of Ministers,

- Congratulates the former DG, the interim DG and the entire staff of the Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice).

Vote of Thanks

Considering the important resources and excellent facilities placed at the disposal of the organizers by the President of the Republic of Chad and Head of State, His Excellency Mr. Idriss Deby Itno, and his Government;

Considering the successful organization of the Council of Ministers meeting;

- Expresses its sincere gratitude and thanks to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Chad and the People of Chad for the warm welcome extended to all the participants.

Done in N'Djamena on 11th December 2013

The Council of Ministers

Signed:

Hon. Moussa Mahamat Agré

Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation of the Republic of Chad

Chair of the Council of Ministers of the Africa Rice Center, 2011-2013