

High Level African Ministerial Conference on Rice and Senegal Rice Day

Delivering on Commitments to Transform Africa's Rice Industry

September 2018

Dakar, Senegal

Background

1. The African Union (AU) Assembly of Heads of State and Government, in Maputo in 2003, established the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) to improve food and nutrition security and increase incomes in Africa's largely agriculture-based economies.
2. After 15 years of implementation of CAADP, the African Union (AU) Assembly of Heads of State and Government in 2014 committed¹ themselves to achieving accelerated agricultural growth and transformation for shared prosperity and improved livelihoods, based on key issues facing African agriculture in the coming decade, including the challenges of meeting the food and nutrition requirements of African populations, and reducing economic inequality and poverty. It was termed the "*The Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods*".
3. To operationalize this commitment, African Heads of State and Government agreed to prioritize specific commodities including rice amongst the list of commodities already agreed to as *Strategic Commodities* in the Abuja Food Security Summit held in 2006 in Abuja, Nigeria².
4. These prioritized strategic commodities are also among key commodities identified under the African Development Bank's agenda for Agricultural Transformation in Africa (ATA) and within the context of its *Feed Africa Strategy* as those that are necessary to foster agricultural development for achieving transformation.
5. Thus, in line with the objective of fast-tracking the transformation of Africa's agriculture and in particular attaining rice self-sufficiency on the Continent, African Heads of State and Government during the 26th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in January 2016, decided to effectively implement their earlier decisions taking a more focused approach on rice.
6. The Summit decided as follows: "*NOTING Africa's commitment to the Malabo Declaration to prioritize agricultural commodity value chains, and RECALLING the 2006 Abuja Food Security Summit resolutions with respect to promoting and protecting rice*

¹ See: http://pages.au.int/sites/default/files/Malabo_Declaration_20142026-.pdf

²"DECLARATION OF THE ABUJA FOOD SECURITY SUMMIT"; FS/Decl (I). Summit on Food Security in Africa December 4-7, 2006 Abuja, Nigeria. The Abuja Summit Declared: "...promoting and protecting rice, maize, legumes, cotton, oil palm, beef, dairy, poultry and fisheries products as strategic commodities at the continental level, and cassava, sorghum and millet at sub regional level without prejudice to focused attention being given also to products of particular national importance."

as a strategic commodity, REQUEST the NEPAD Agency and the African Union Commission (AUC) in collaboration with the AfDB, the Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice), the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and other relevant partners, to convene a Special AU Summit on Rice with a view to facilitating the attainment of continental self-sufficiency in rice by 2020. FURTHER REQUEST the NEPAD Agency and the African Union Commission (AUC) to implement this Decision and report to the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee (HSGOC) and Assembly during the January 2017 AU Summit.”

7. The FAO, AfDB and AfricaRice, in consultation with the AUC and NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) agreed to convene a High-Level African Ministerial Conference on Rice as a prelude to the organization of the Special African Heads of State Summit on Rice, which the Government of Senegal has graciously agreed to host.
8. Further consultations between the Chair of the AfricaRice Council of Ministers, the President of the African Development Bank, and the Director General of AfricaRice, in line with the preparation of the High Level Ministerial Conference, led to AfricaRice being mandated to lead the development of a Continental Investment Plan for accelerating Rice Self-Sufficiency in Africa (CIPRISSA).
9. So far, CIPRISSA has been developed for 10 African countries (Cameroon, Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana, Madagascar, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Uganda) and negotiations are still on-going with the objective of developing CIPRISSA for the remaining countries as well as detailed investment projects based on information obtained from CIPRISSA.
10. A Support System for Accelerating Rice Self-Sufficiency in Africa (SSARSSA) has been designed to enhance the CIPRISSA process and also to support evidence and outcome-based policy planning and implementation of national rice development strategies of countries in Africa. It will tap into the continental mandate and the technical expertise of AfricaRice, working with country units, to provide the requisite strategic and analytical information tailored towards each country’s priorities, as they strive to achieve rice self-sufficiency by 2025.

Opportunities for Investment and Growth of the Rice Sector in Africa

11. In 2015, Africa consumed 27.4 million metric tons (MT) of rice of which 9.8 MT (36%) was imported at a cost of US\$ 4.1 billion³. The projected need by 2020 is 31.2 MT of milled rice against local production of 19.9 MT, if nothing is done urgently. The cost of importing the difference will be US\$ 4.8 billion. By 2025, Africa will need 34.9 MT of milled rice against local production of 22.3 MT. Africa would thus be importing 12.6 MT of milled rice at a price of US\$ 5.5 billion annually. The attainment of rice self-sufficiency in Africa will drastically reduce this huge import bill while the concomitant foreign exchange savings could be re-invested in other sectors of the economy, thereby increasing employment opportunities for the youth, women and other vulnerable groups. Rice consumption in Africa is expected to continue growing in the foreseeable future because of three main factors: African population growth,

³FAOSTAT, 2017.

increasing per capita consumption, and a shifting consumer preference toward 'premium' rice as urbanization increases. Twenty-two of the 43 rice-producing countries in Africa import between 10% and 93% of their domestic rice requirements. Some of these countries show growing gaps in the local rice balance sheet, creating strong market opportunities for both existing and new investors in the rice industry.

12. Given the huge rice import bill, self-sufficiency in rice production in Africa would save the rice importing countries immense financial resources that could be invested in other daunting challenges. With an appropriate enabling environment in place, increased investments along the rice value chain can create millions of jobs for the youth, women and other vulnerable groups.
13. With the huge potential benefits for investments in Africa's rice sector, the urgency of implementing appropriate strategies to realize the opportunities provided by Africa's strategic commodities cannot be overemphasised.

Objectives of the High Level Ministerial Conference

14. The **objective** of the High-Level Ministerial Conference is to generate a more collective policy direction and support for enhancing the implementation of investment programs geared towards the attainment of rice self-sufficiency in African countries and the creation of gainful employment for the youth and women along the entire rice value chain.
15. The Conference will hinge on the AfDB's Feed Africa Strategy for rice within the framework of the Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT) program also spearheaded by the AfDB. It will highlight the needed technical expertise, technologies, investment opportunities including private sector investments and the role of different actors required to reach the goal of rice self-sufficiency in Africa. African countries will therefore, need to commit to creating and rigorously implementing favourable policy regimes for rice self-sufficiency and sustaining growth in Africa's rice industry. This should significantly reduce the risk of food crises. Policy commitments and public and private sector investments are needed to be focused on three priority areas resulting from the initial results of the completed studies on the Continental Investment Plans for accelerating rice self-sufficiency in Africa (CIPriSSA) and the investment plans carried out in the 10 CIPriSSA countries. The areas are i) rice seed systems and associated farm inputs, ii) out scaling of rice technologies and innovations and iii) small-scale mechanization.
16. For rice seed systems, emphasis would be placed on the development and/or sustenance of entrepreneurial multiplication and distribution systems for seeds of improved rice varieties and accompanying inputs. These should be available to Africa's rice production areas thus facilitating access of smallholders to improved seeds and accompanying inputs. Rice sector development should move beyond the current focus on milled rice for direct human consumption and should exploit higher stream industrial uses and products. This would help create the demand necessary for a more

dynamic seed sector growth. AfricaRice would be expected to play a coordinating role in constituting a rice seed capital for African countries in the form of breeder and foundation seed production.

17. For the dissemination and out-scaling of agricultural technologies, emphasis would be placed on widespread availability, access to and use of elite rice varieties, accompanying Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and decision support tools (e.g., RiceAdvice and Weed Manager) plus post-harvest and processing technologies leading to outcomes and impacts.
18. The third area of focus (i.e., small-scale mechanization in rice production in Africa) will highlight how to and what type of mechanization, the local fabrication of machinery in Africa and distribution by the private sector, upscaling replication and ownership of technological innovation and capacity development (emphasizing models that will impact youth unemployment).

Outputs of the High-Level Ministerial Conference

19. The expected outputs of the HLM are:
 - i) Leveraging resources and investments for constituting a rice seed capital (from breeder to certified seed stocks) for the countries, and for the dissemination of proven technological innovations, whose application contribute directly to the optimization of development outcomes and impact.
 - ii) Endorsement and signing of CIPriSSA compacts by all African countries that consider rice a priority food security commodity.
 - iii) Identification of major bottlenecks for the country-focused area of SSARSSA (support system for rice self-sufficiency).

Participants

20. Academia, rice millers, rice producer organisations, research organizations, donors

Co-Organizers

21. The Government of Senegal, FAO, AfDB, NEPAD/AUC and AfricaRice

Date and Venue

22. The date for the High-Level Ministerial Conference is 25 September 2018 in Dakar, Senegal.