

FAOSTAT2 Project: Revising the Conceptual Statistics Frameworks, Underlying Statistical Methodologies, Database System and Processes

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The modernization of FAOSTAT (the major statistical database in FAO's information system) will provide improved methodologies and data quality, streamlined system processes, improved user access to statistical data and a stable and reliable technical environment. This paper outlines the aims and structure of the FAOSTAT2 Project and introduces the subproject, CountrySTAT, which will be developed in parallel to FAOSTAT2.

CountrySTAT, a scaled-down version of FAOSTAT2, will provide satellite statistical modules for countries to implement as required. The major objectives for the CountrySTAT project are statistical capacity building; improved statistical data; and the facilitation of data use by national policy-makers. CountrySTAT will assist countries in developing a statistical information system containing available data and metadata relevant to agricultural policy.

The FAOSTAT2 Project will provide internal statistical frameworks as well as mechanisms for ensuring coordination and consistency of statistical methodologies and policies in FAO throughout the statistical process. This will include the development of integrated conceptual statistical frameworks for the major substantive domains of: Food Account (Production, Trade, Population, Food Security); Resource Account (Inputs and Production); and Economic Account (Inputs, Production, Prices). The structure of the system will also allow for satellite statistical modules to be included in the overall framework.

The major objectives of the FAOSTAT2 Project are:

- to facilitate data use by national policy-makers and support decision-making in member countries through the provision of statistical information and assessments and fostering of knowledge management for food and agriculture statistics;
- to improve national and international statistics and strengthen and enhance existing frameworks for the development of statistical systems in order to advocate international cooperation and resource sharing among countries and the international community;
- to directly contribute to national capacity building and policy analysis through the development of an agricultural statistical framework and resource (CountrySTAT);
- to achieve greater efficiencies in the statistical system through inter-linking and data exchange between databases in FAO, other international offices and with national offices;
- to provide access to statistical data in FAO across statistical and substantive domains via a statistical data warehouse;
- to provide a consolidated statistical metadata system that will enhance understanding of any given data item within the system by documenting related concepts, definitions, sources, history of values, methodology used in collection, national contacts, data quality, etc.; and
- to develop integrated methodological statistical systems for the collection, production, consolidation and organization of selected data into the modules and conceptual frameworks of the FAOSTAT statistical system.