

IGTC Meeting Report

Dialogue with the chairs and participants of Policy Teams and Working Groups on current IGTC Action Areas

10 November, 2023

9h30-12h30

COFCO International, Geneva and online

Meeting Chair: Gary C. Martin, IGTC President

Session 1 – Expanding Scope and Impact Priorities and Actions

Meeting objective: Expand the international effort to provide representation and share expertise on the commercial requirements and economics of the world's food, feed and processing industries will be considered. Remarks from COFCO International, the Government of Egypt and World Trade Organization (WTO) covered themes including sustainability, finance, development, investment, food security needs of consumers and providing for reliable, responsible food systems.

WTO provided insights regarding the current state of negotiations on the Agreement on Agriculture, addressing some longstanding issues (support to producers, public stockholding, etc), the politicization of trade and sensitivities around current and upcoming Ministerial Conference (MC13-14) decisions. It was noted that WTO members see the issue of global food security from numerous different angles, including that of trade. Sustainability is an issue of increasing importance at WTO that impacts all of these discussions. A demonstration was also presented on the WTO/IGC wheat tracking platform, the Global Trade Data Portal.

Session 2 – Focus on Africa and the Middle East

Meeting objective: Provide a valuable opportunity for thought and decision leaders, particularly those based in North Africa and the Middle East, to join IGTC in its mission and global action. Speakers including COFCO International, the Government of Egypt, Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Regional Office for Near East and North Africa considered today's geopolitical circumstances and the need to facilitate trade and investment.

The efforts of the Government of Egypt to ensure food security, particularly in grain imports, specifically wheat, were highlighted along with the need for infrastructure improvements and storage facilities. Egypt has the potential to serve as a major point of grain storage for Africa and is the biggest wheat importer.

ICDT presented its current work on global food security and signalled that it is open to cooperate with relevant partners including those from the private sector.

International Grain Trade Association (IGTC) ©

Avenue Krieg 40, Geneva CH-1208,

+41 (0) 22 789 34 66 | www.igtglobal.org | e: secretariat@igtglobal.org

All users of IGTC Information and Services Expressly Understand and Agree to indemnify and hold harmless, IGTC, its Participants (Members and Stakeholders) Officers, Employees and Agents from any and all liability including claims, demands, losses, costs damages, and expenses of every kind and description, or damages to persons or property arising out of or in connections with or occurring during the course of interaction with IGTC.

The accuracy of the information reported and interpreted in this communication is not guaranteed. All contents are subject to correction and revision.

FAO provided a comprehensive overview of the food security situation in the region, focusing on challenges, pertinent restrictive trade policies, and FAO's work in the area. In response, several IGTC participants commented on the diversity of needs and challenges in Africa.

During the meeting, IGTC representatives took steps to build on recent successful meetings in East and South Africa, Europe, and the UK earlier this year, particularly with a focus on resilience and innovation.

Session 3 – Planning for 2024

Meeting objective: Focus attention on opportunities for engagement in 2024. Speakers including COFCO International, Government of Egypt, International Grains Council (IGC) and World Trade Organization (WTO) provided inspiration for IGTC to renew its efforts to support a global rules-based trading system with the aim facilitating trade and serving the global population with its complex food security needs.

WTO presented thoughts on the multi layered participation of actors in global food security discussions and highlighted engagement opportunities such as the Trade Dialogues and AgriFood Business Day, emphasizing the WTO's openness to suggestions and willingness to engage.

IGC's focus was on data collection, identifying gaps, and interpreting its implications. Transparency of data is crucial and IGC believes it can play a role in improving this. There is much work to be done in increasing the flow of information on trade of grains, particularly from importing nations. Another valuable course of action is strengthening dialogue between consumers and exporters. IGC and its government-led membership is looking forward to participating in another successful London Grains Week in June 2024, with the grain trade and specifically IGTC counted as valuable partners.