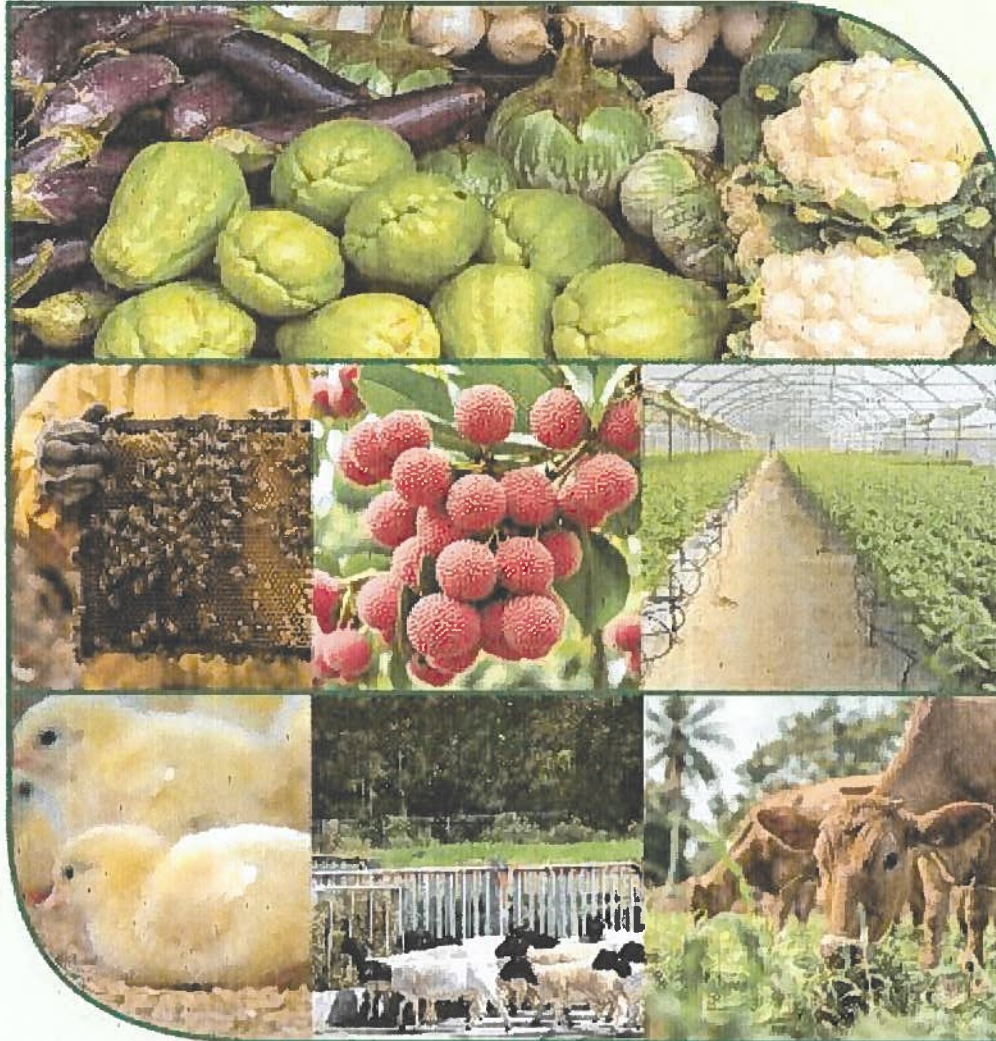




MINISTRY OF AGRO-INDUSTRY & FOOD SECURITY



ANNUAL REPORT

FINANCIAL YEAR
2023-2024

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Message from the Hon. Minister

It is a pleasure for me to present the 2023/2024 Annual Report of the Ministry. This report will provide our stakeholders visibility on the various projects and services which are being undertaken by the Ministry and Parastatals.

The Agricultural Sector has been crucial to the economic development of the country throughout the years and its importance is even more felt in recent times with global events affecting our food supply. There is need for building resilience in food production. We can only be satisfied with the strategies adopted so far and which led to positive outcomes.

For the period under review, Government's allocation to agriculture was around Rs 2.6 billion. Government through this Budget and the preceding ones, has been sustaining its investments to shore up support to the sector in order to boost our local food production and improve livelihoods of our farmers.

The National Wholesale Market (NMW) which was initiated in April 2017 became operationalized in July 2023. This project to the tune of some Rs 450 million, aims to modernise the sector and bring efficiency, market transparency and consumers satisfaction. The NWM aims at providing adequate wholesale and auction facilities for agricultural produce while improving the financial livelihood of planters in the non-sugarcane sector and providing quality produce at an affordable price to consumers.

I seize this opportunity to convey my appreciation to all members of the staff of the Ministry for their dedication and achievements during the period under review as well as the collaboration of all the stakeholders involved in the agricultural sector. I look forward to a more fruitful year in terms of project completion as well as fulfilling our quest to a more sustainable and resilient agricultural sector.



Hon. Mahen Kumar Seeruttun

Minister of Agro-Industry & Food Security

MESSAGE FROM THE PERMANENT SECRETARY

I am pleased to be associated with the publication of the Annual Report of the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security for the financial year 2023-2024. The Report outlines the achievements of the Ministry in the delivery of its mandate of ensuring the sustainable development and resilience of the agro-industrial sector for the consolidation of food security in Mauritius.

The past year has been marked by numerous challenges including the impacts of climate change, the outbreak of diseases and rising concerns over food security, especially in the livestock sector. Despite these constraints, the Ministry has maintained its unwavering commitment towards the achievement of its mission to boost agricultural productivity, support our farming communities, and secure a sustainable food supply for all Mauritians.

Among our key accomplishments this year, we place on record the implementation of innovative programs aimed at modernizing agricultural practices, the promotion of sustainable farming and the expansion of agro-processing businesses. Significant strides were also made in terms of access to quality inputs, financial assistance schemes to farmers, and strengthening our research and development capacity.

The Ministry has spearheaded several initiatives for the development of climate-smart agriculture. We have emphasised the conservation of our biodiversity to maintain the health of our eco-systems for future generations. We have also prioritised the sustainable management of our agricultural state lands and natural resources, to develop self-sufficiency in food production and reduce dependence on imports.

I extend my sincere gratitude to the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security for his leadership and trust. I also express my appreciation to all our development partners, stakeholders, and staff who have worked with zeal and dedication, to contribute to the Ministry's success. Our shared vision and values have been the cornerstone for the fulfilment of our common mission.

As we move forward, we reaffirm our commitment to deliver quality and timely services to the farming community for the development of a more vibrant, diversified and more inclusive agricultural sector in Mauritius.



Indira Rugjee

Permanent Secretary

Ministry of Agro-Industry & Food Security

List of Acronyms

Acronyms	Details
ACD	: Agricultural Chemistry Division
AGO	: Attorney Generals Office
AMB	: Agricultural Marketing Board
APAU	: Agricultural Policy Analysis Unit
APD	: Animal Production Division
ASO	: Agricultural Support Officer
BEC	: Bid Evaluation Committee
CGE	: Clean Green Ethical
CISD	: Central Information Systems Division
CITES	: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora
CRNS	: Cosmic Ray Neutron Sensor
CSCM	: Civil Service College Mauritius
EOI	: Expression of Interest
EPA	: Environment Protection Act
ESA	: Environmental Site Assessment
ESD	: Energy Services Division
EU	: European Union
FAO	: Food and Agriculture Organisation
FAREI	: Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute
GAHP	: Global Alliance on Health and Pollution
GAR	: Government Asset Register
IA	: Irrigation Authority
LA	: Lease Agreement
LDC	: Least Developed Countries
LUD	: Land Use Division
LVD	: Livestock and Veterinary Division
MACB	: Mauritius Agricultural Certifying Body
MAIFS	: Ministry of Agro Industry and Food Security
MCIA	: Mauritius Cane Industry Authority
MEAS	: Multilateral Environmental Agreements
MMA	: Mauritius Meat Authority
MPI	: Ministry of National Infrastructure and Community Development
MSAW	: Mauritius Society for Animal Welfare
NAO	: National Audit Office
NAPRO	: National Agricultural Products Regulatory Office
NFGB	: National Field Gene Bank

NLIS	:	National Livestock Information System
NPCS	:	National Parks and Conservation Service
NPVSO	:	National Plant Varieties and Seeds Office
NWM	:	National Wholesale Market
PAPE	:	Purchase of Agricultural and Processing Equipment
PRO	:	Pesticides Regulatory Office
PSO	:	Principal Scientific Officer
RBSE	:	Rose Belle Sugar Estate
RPMO	:	Rental of Government Property
SASO	:	Senior Agricultural Scientific Officer
SFWF	:	Small Farmers Welfare Fund
SME	:	Small and Medium Enterprise
SO	:	Scientific Officer
SSO	:	Senior Scientific Officer
SSRBG	:	Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanic Garden
TCP	:	Technical Cooperation Programme
UAT	:	User Acceptance Testing

PART I

ABOUT THE MINISTRY

VISION AND MISSION

Vision

To build a vibrant sugar and non-sugar agriculture and agri-business sector that:

- Utilize natural resources sustainably;
- Contribute significantly to national food security and safety;
- Empower producers to higher productivity gains; and
- Enhance the welfare of the farming community.

Mission

- To enable and facilitate the advancement of agriculture and the agri-business sector for improved food security and safety in line with requirements for sustainable agricultural development.

Overall Policy

Strengthening food security and sustainable agricultural development through:

- Improvements in productivity;
- Provision of safe food;
- Increased contribution of agriculture in the economy and;
- Creation of more awareness and interest for agriculture to enhance business and employment opportunities;

ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE MINISTRY

Role

The role of the Ministry is to devise and implement policies for the sustainable development of the agricultural sector in Mauritius and to support the farming community through different measures and schemes to enhance production of safe food and ensure food security as well as conserving the native biodiversity and ecosystem.

Functions

The Ministry maintains and also enhances agricultural production and food safety by exercising control, regulating, advising, and disseminating information through various Acts, policies and programmes. Besides, the Ministry supports the conservation, restoration and preservation of our native terrestrial biodiversity, ecosystems and forestry resources. A detailed list of all departments and parastatal bodies with their functions is provided below.

**Ministry of Agro- Industry
and Food Security**



Agricultural Services with 14 divisions:
(Agricultural Chemistry Div, Agricultural Information Division, Agronomy/ NPVSO ; Food Science and Technology Div, Entomology; Horticulture Division; Land Use Div; NAPRO; NPPO; Veterinary Services; APD; MUGS, PRO)



Forestry Services



National Parks and Conservation Service



13 Parastatal Bodies

Mauritius Cane Industry Authority

- Promotes the development of the cane sector and its clusters.
- Creates an enabling environment with innovative and efficient services, research and development in the sugar sector.

Sugar Investment Trust

- Advises on investment strategy spanning key economic sectors: from sugar milling and cane cultivation to energy, leisure, and property development.

Sugar Insurance Fund Board

- Provides insurance coverage to sugarcane planters and millers to mitigate financial losses caused by natural disasters such as cyclones, droughts, excessive rainfall, or fire.
- Assesses the extent of damage to sugarcane plantations after adverse climatic events and determines compensation for affected planters.
- Encourages the adoption of measures to reduce the risks associated with climatic events, such as proper irrigation systems, protective farming practices, and crop diversification.

Rose Belle Sugar Estate

- Manages the assets of the Rose Belle Sugar Estate Board efficiently and effectively for wealth generation, welfare and modernization, thus benefiting the employees, stakeholders and society at large.

Irrigation Authority

- Ensures that planters in irrigation zones are adequately supplied with water.
- Implements and manages irrigation projects.
- Maintains irrigation networks in good conditions.

**Food and Agricultural Research and
Extension Institute**

- Conducts research in non-sugar crops, livestock and agro forestry.
- Provides extension services to farmers.

Agricultural Marketing Board

- Expands the local production of strategic crops like onions, potatoes and garlicks.
- Operates or provides for the operation of such storage, handling and transport of processing facilities.
- Imports potatoes, onions and garlicks to ensure uninterrupted supply of these commodities on the local market.

Small Farmers Welfare Fund

- Promotes the economic and social welfare of small farmers and their families.
- Registers farmers and delivers farmers cards.
- Implements schemes for the benefit of small farmers.

Mauritius Meat Authority

- Is responsible for slaughter, dressing and transportation of cattle, goats, pigs, sheep and deer meat to markets.

Veterinary Council

- Regulates and controls the profession of veterinary services surgeons.
- Promotes advancement in the field of veterinary medicine and surgery.

Mauritius Society for Animal Welfare

- Controls catches and nurtures stray dogs and cats.
- Provides humane education for the prevention of cruelty to animals.
- Promotes the welfare and good treatment of animals.
- Conducts sterilization campaigns to prevent cruelty of animals.

**Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam
Botanic Garden**

- Proper maintenance of biological garden
- Conservation and research of biodiversity
- Education programmes

Vallée d'Osterlog

- **Jewel of biodiversity and is one of the last preserved nature sanctuaries of Mauritius**

Legislations

Sugarcane Sector
The Mauritius Cane Industry Authority Act 2011
The Irrigation Authority 1978
The Rose Belle Sugar Estate Board Act 1973
Sugar Insurance Fund Act 1974
The Sugar Industry Efficiency Act 2001
Non- Sugar Sector (Crop Sector)
Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (FAREI) FAREI ACT 2013
Small Farmers Welfare Fund (SFWF) Small Framers Welfare Fund Act
Agricultural Marketing Board (AMB) Mauritius Agricultural Marketing Act Mauritius Agricultural Marketing (Controlled Products) Regulations 2013- Gazette of Mauritius No. 106 of 28 November 2013
The Seeds Act 2013 and Seeds (Registration of Seed Dealer and Seed Producer) Regulations 2022- Seeds (Regulation of Variety) Regulations 2022 Seeds (Seed Production and Certification) Regulation 2022 Seeds (Marketing Regulations 2022 Seeds (Sampling and Testing) Regulations 2022 Seeds (Import and Export) REGULATIONS 2022 Seeds (Appeal Board) Regulations 2022
The Agricultural Chemistry Act 1979
National Agricultural Products Regulatory Office Act 2013
National Agricultural Products Regulations 2013
National Agricultural Products (Amendment No. 2) Regulations 2016
State Land Act
Plant Protection Act
Use of Pesticides Act
Livestock Sector
Animal Disease Act 1925
Animal Feed Control Act 1977
Animal Welfare Act 2013
Meat Act 1974
The Artificial Insemination of Animals (Control) Act 1946
Veterinary Council Act 1946
Forestry
The Forests and Reserve Act 1983

Forests and Reserves (Amendment of Schedule) Regulation 2021
Shooting and Fishing Leases Act
The Shooting and Fishing Leases (Amendment) Act 2017
Shooting and Fishing Lease (Amendment of schedule) Regulation 2018
Shooting and Fishing Leases (Eco-tourism Activities) (Fees) Regulations 2018
Wood Exploitation License Regulations 1992
Wood Exploitation License (Amendment) Regulations 2013
Biodiversity
The Native Terrestrial Biodiversity and National Parks Act
The Vallee D'Osterlog Endemic Garden Foundation Bill
The Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanic Garden Trust Act 1999

GENDER STATEMENT

The Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security is committed to gender equality and empowerment as part of its mission to enhance food security and sustainable agricultural development, protection of forests and conservation of biodiversity in Mauritius. It is actively implementing gender-responsive agricultural and related policies, strategies, and programmes that ensure fairness in representation, participation, and benefits for both women and men. These initiatives address the specific needs of each gender, leading to governance and policy outcomes that are responsive to gender concerns, promote inclusivity, and contribute positively to socio-economic development. The Ministry is also committed to provide the equal opportunities for all to engage in decision-making processes, ensuring equitable access to employment, to both genders in the agricultural sector and creating economic opportunities that support decent livelihoods and advancement within the agricultural value chain. The Gender Statement reflects the Ministry's commitment to mainstream gender in the agricultural, forestry, livestock and biodiversity sectors through improvement in productivity and the provision of safe food. It aims to foster a more inclusive and productive agricultural sector that contributes to food security, conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems, poverty reduction, and hence increasing the sector's contribution to the economy.

ABOUT OUR PEOPLE

People are of paramount importance in an organisation as they lead and manage it. Officers of the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security, through their strategic thinking capability, vision, creativity and innovation strive to turn challenges into opportunities. They also devise strategies to strengthen sustainability, resilience, effectiveness and responsiveness of the Ministry's service delivery in the face of key challenges such as climate change, Covid 19 and Russia-Ukraine war. The effectiveness of the Ministry in achieving its purpose, depends largely on its people and its financial allotment.

All this rests upon sound industrial relations which have been maintained through regular meetings with trade unions. At the same time, health and safety of officers are constantly taken care of by implementing recommendations of Health and Safety Committee on various aspects to ensure safe and healthy working environments for all employees of the Ministry. The total workforce was 1,893 and three Advisers were attached to the Ministry. Some three interns were also posted at the Ministry.

Organizational Structure

The Ministry's decisions and objectives are relayed from top management to functional levels without dilution or delay.

The overall administration of the Ministry falls under the responsibility of the Permanent Secretary, who is assisted by four Deputy Permanent Secretaries and eight Assistant Permanent Secretaries on the administrative side. On the technical side, support is provided by the following:

- Director Agricultural Services;
- Assistant Director, Livestock and Veterinary and Officer-in-Charge for the Livestock and Veterinary Sector;
- Assistant Director, Agricultural Services and Officer-in-Charge for the Crop and Agri-Food Sector;
- Conservator of Forests;
- Director, National Parks and Conservation Service; and
- Agricultural Planning and Policy Analysis Unit.

Support services are provided by officers of the Human Resource Cadre, Finance Cadre, Procurement and Supply Cadre, General Services Grades and Workmen's Group.

Senior Management Team

Section	Title	Contact Details
	Permanent Secretary	Mrs Indira RUGJEE Email: irugjee@govmu.org Phone: 210 2713 Fax: 212 4427
	Deputy Permanent Secretary	Mrs Geetawantee RAMNAUTH Email: gramnauth@govmu.org Phone: 210 1042 Fax: 214 9737

Administration	Deputy Permanent Secretary	Mr Keshwarao GOVIND Email: kgovind@govmu.org Phone: 213 2576 Fax: 211 6448
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	Assistant Permanent Secretary	Mr Rakshiteswar RAMSAHA rramsaha@govmu.org Phone: 213 3947
	Assistant Permanent Secretary	Ms Deepti BEEHARRY PANRAY debpanray@govmu.org Phone: 214 4538
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		Mrs Bibi Khadijah

	Assistant Permanent Secretary	PENGWAH – JOOMUN joomunkhadiijah@gmail.com 2143361
	Assistant Permanent Secretary	Mrs Meenakah Devi SEEGOOLAM-SUMBHOO msumbhoo@govmu.org 2113484
Agricultural Planning and Policy Analysis Unit (APAU)	Chief Agricultural Policy and Programme Development Officer	Dr Krishna CHIKHURI Email: nitin.chikhuri@yahoo.com Phone: 213 6380
Agricultural Services	Assistant Director, Livestock and Veterinary	Dr Pitambarsingh BEEHARRY Officer-in-Charge for the Livestock and Veterinary Sector Email: rpbeeharry@gmail.com Phone: 401 2800 / 454 1016
	Assistant Director, Agricultural Services	Dr Preaduth SOOKAR Officer-in-Charge for the Crop and Agri-Food Sector Email: psookar@govmu.org Phone: 401 2800 / 464 5304
Section	Title	Contact Details
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	Deputy Conservator of	Mrs Cecily CYPARSADE

	Forests	Email: ccyparsade@govmu.org Phone: 670 7254 / 55 Fax: 674 3449
National Parks and Conservation Service	Director, National Parks and Conservation Service	Mr Kevin RUHOMAUN Email: kruhomaun@govmu.org Npcs@govmu.org Phone : 464 2993 / 464 4053 Fax : 466 0453
	Deputy Director, National Parks and Conservation Service	Mr Vinehswar Sharma GOPAL Email: svsgopal@gmail.com Phone: 464 4053 Fax: 466 0453

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Training and development is a vital component of the Human Resource Development and part of an overall strategy for creating a pool of readily available employees and adequate replacements for personnel who may leave or move up in the Ministry. During the financial year 2023/2024, an amount of Rs 2,246,750 was disbursed in job-related courses that would equip officers with the necessary skills, knowledge and mindset for providing quality services to the public. Some 39 courses were organized for the benefit of some 433 officers. The training areas included: First Aid Training, Effective Performance Appraisal, Risk Assessment.

PART II

Achievements and Challenges

ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

- The production and yield of cane which has known a constant decrease since 2015 has improved for crop 2023, with a total production of 2.45 M tons of cane and yield of 68.39 tons of cane per hectare. The comparative figure for crop 2022 was 2.25 M tons of cane and yield being 57.57 tons cane per hectare. This can be attributed to cane replantation schemes, higher yielding cane varieties, soil health and fertilization, irrigation, late cane harvest and improved cultural practices.
- As at end June of 2024, 732 planters have benefitted from the Cane Replantation Schemes (ALMS grant scheme and Cane Revolving Fund Loan scheme) and 3,044ha of fields have been replanted. As for rehabilitation of abandoned lands, same was pursued under these Schemes and 438 ha belonging to some 150 planters have been replanted.
- For crop 2023, the total revenue of Rs 36,125.86 per ton sugar derived by planters taking into consideration revenue sugar, bagasse and molasses exceeded the guaranteed price of Rs 27,500 per ton sugar. As such Government support was not required.
- The ex-syndicate price of sugar for crop 2023 paid to planters and producers reached a peak price of Rs 30,951.09 per ton sugar. This represents a further increase of 21% over the previous crop's price of Rs 25,554 per ton sugar.
- The Biomass Framework is being implemented with coordination meetings being held at several levels with all stakeholders. The Central Electricity Board had agreed that wood can be combusted in the sugar industry-based power plants on a commercial basis as from May 2024.
- A cash compensation amounting to a total of Rs 134,509,737 was paid to 101 beneficiaries on December 2023 and May 2024 by the Rose Belle Sugar Estate Board in the context of the Voluntary Retire Scheme scheme monitored by the MCIA.
- Planters producing up to 60 tons of sugar were entitled to a 50% subsidy on the advance made for the purchase of fertilizers for Crop 2023. The scheme was launched in September 2023. The issue of vouchers for crop 2023 started in September 2023 and was extended till 11 February 2024.
- Vouchers for 4,474 tonnes fertilizers were issued concerning 6,194 planters at 15 July 2024 who benefitted from the scheme. A sum of Rs 125,000,000 was disbursed by the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development from the National Resilience Fund in January 2024.
- Machinery services were provided to 1045 planters which allowed land preparation works to be completed on 2109 Arpents for sugar cane planters. This service was also extended to food crop planters where land preparation works were completed on 674 Arpents benefitting 249 planters.

- Drone spraying has been mastered and developed for application of herbicides and ripeners in sugarcane; ripeners were applied over some 100 ha in 2023 with planters using ripeners being paid some 7 kg of sugar per ton of cane as additional remuneration.
- Irrigation facilities were extended to some 500 ha of lands and producing some 3040 ha of sugarcane fields and some 719 ha of vegetable plantations.
- Building irrigation infrastructure at Solitude I and II and Pointe aux Piments Drip Irrigation Projects over an area of around 200 ha under GCCA (Global Climate Change Alliance) + Flagship Initiative - Supporting Climate Smart Agriculture for Smallholders in the Republic of Mauritius.
- Handing over in December 2023 of 158,000 km of dripper lines and associated fittings to planters under GCCA (Global Climate Change Alliance) + Flagship Initiative - Supporting Climate Smart Agriculture for Smallholders in the Republic of Mauritius.
- Replacement of filter station (Triolet) to supply water to some 150 ha of irrigated land comprising sugar cane and vegetable plantations, belonging to some 440 small planters.
- Setting up of a new centre pivot following land conversion at Plaine des Papayes.
- New pumps for small scale projects (Cressonville, Palma Riviere du Rempart and Belle Mare) have been acquired in December 2023.
- A Cosmic Ray Neutron Sensor (CRNS) has been installed at Plaine des Papayes in October 2023 to measure topsoil water content over an area of 30 hectares to address the needs for large-scale soil moisture measurement.
- Foodcrop research have been found promising: a potato clone (142/161/4) demonstrated superior performance in terms of yield and late blight disease resistance compared to commercial varieties and is further being evaluated and four onion varieties (Amit F1, ON 3350, Ngwazi, and Agrippa) were found promising; three heat tolerant bean varieties (AP82, CHITEDZE 2 and CHITEDZE 4) were found promising in terms of yield and 5 kg nucleus seeds of the four heat tolerant varieties were produced and three pea breeding lines (LA 8, LA 51, LA 77) were selected for further evaluation, along with LA 138 chosen for its dwarfism and pod characteristics.
- A semi-commercial aquaponics system was successfully set up at Réduit Crop Research Station and is being used for research, demonstration and training of farmers.
- 107 varieties of vegetable crops including tomato, chilli, Kailaan, Chinese cabbage, Swiss chard and spinach were evaluated in open field. 22 varieties were selected and will be recommended.
- Introduction of planting materials for the flower and fruit industry (young grafted rose plants, plants of gerbera, succulent, chrysanthemum, grapes amongst others).
- Implementation of Single Maritime Window for online clearance of incoming ships in September 2023 by the National Plant Protection Office. This significantly reduce clearance time for shipping companies to enter the Mauritian Port.
- FAO Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) started in August 2023 as a support for the Biomolecular Laboratory to be fully operational and initiate tests such as GMO testing,

species identification and rapid microbiological testing. It is expected to be completed in 2025.

- Development of food products- dehydrated herbs and vegetables, vegetable soup, biscuits and cookies using cassava, beetroot and pumpkin
- New traps targeting potential regulated quarantine pests have been procured for placement in line with phytosanitary requirements. The target pests are cryptophlebia leucotreta (False codling moth) and Keiferia lycopersicella (Tomato pin worm).
- 204 potential beekeepers and current beekeepers received training on beekeeping at Reduit and on apiary sites at Albion Experimental Station and University of Mauritius Farm, Reduit (practical session).
- A locally developed testing kit to screen sub-clinical mastitis in dairy cows was promoted and recommendations were made to reduce its incidence.
- A 45 m3 concrete WASAZA fixed dome biodigester system has been set up to demonstrate waste management system in livestock enterprises.
- Some 106 agri-business enterprises benefitted free advisory services and product development, while 77 protocols were developed/revised for processed food products.
- A total of 430 applications for schemes aiming at modernising the agricultural sector was approved for a total amount of Rs 70 M. Some Rs 59.8 M were disbursed to 676 beneficiaries, which included payment for replacement of plastic sheet and net cover post cyclone/calamity.
- 50% subsidy was provided, under the Fruit Protection Scheme, for purchase of anti-bird net and plastic bags under banana bagging scheme. An amount of Rs 4.23M was disbursed to 661 beneficiaries.
- Creation of a Healing Forest in 2023: An area of (2) two hectares of State Forest Land was revitalized with approximately 1296 mixed plantations of native, exotic, and ornamental plants for FY 23/24 to achieve both social and environmental benefits, attracting people from every stratum of the society to find a place of respite.
- Restoration of Pas Geometriques Virginia Coastal Forests land in 2023: To mitigate coastal land degradation and to preserve our coastal forests heritage, the Forestry Service restored 3 ha of coastal land at PG Virginia, also known as 'Pont Naturelle', in collaboration with NGO mru_2025 in December 2023. The restoration project was funded by the US Embassy to the tune of USD 5000 and consisted of reintroducing 2005 native plants on the targeted site.
- Creation of The Beemanique Remembrance Forest in 2024.

STATUS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF BUDGET MEASURES

Budget Paragraph	Budget Measures	Progress/ Achievements
77	<p>(a) The grant of 50 percent, up to a maximum of Rs 500,000 for the construction of up to two sheltered farms;</p> <p>(b) The 50 percent subsidy for purchase of fertilisers; and</p> <p>(c) The 75 percent subsidy on potato seeds to SMEs and cooperatives.</p>	<p><u>(a) Sheltered Farming Scheme:</u> No. of applications received: 120 No. of payments effected: 142 (22 payments brought forward from FY 2022/2023) Total disbursement for FY 2023/2024: Rs 51,173,306.44</p> <p><u>(b) Fertilizer Subsidy Scheme:</u> No. of applications received 5449 planters and Rs 135,966,000 has been disbursed.</p>
78	<p>(a) The grant for purchase of equipment by small planters increased from Rs 150,000 to Rs 250,000;</p>	<p><u>Purchase of agricultural and processing equipment (PAPE)</u></p> <p><u>PAPE (Crop):</u> No. of applications received for FY 2023/2024: 178 No. of payments effected for same period: 53 Total disbursement for FY 2023/2024: Rs 3,741,620.08</p> <p><u>PAPE (Livestock):</u> No. of applications received for FY 2023/2024: 20 No. of payments effected for same period: 5 Total disbursement for FY 2023/2024: Rs 290,715</p>
79	<p>(a) A 75 percent subsidy on seeds for Cabbage, Calabash, Pumpkin, Cucumber and Carrot;</p>	<p>Modalities are being worked out</p>

Budget Paragraph	Budget Measures	Progress/ Achievements
80	To encourage plantation by households, we are increasing the maximum grant for micro gardens from Rs 15,000 to Rs 25,000.	<u>Aquaponics/Household Gardening:</u> 200 beneficiaries have been selected. A total of 12 trainings have been carried out as follows: Mapou Demonstration Centre (3), Flacq Model Farm (3), Plaisance Demonstration Centre (2) and Rivière des Anguilles Model Farm (1), Centre-West (3). 167 vouchers have been issued to the beneficiaries for the setting-up of the aquaponics system. Total disbursement: Rs 75,000
81	To sustain the dynamism in the tea sector, we will increase the winter allowance to tea growers by 25 percent to Rs 2.50 per kg.	960 tea planters have benefited from the scheme for a total amount of Rs 9,112,585.44.
86	Provision of Rs 75 million under the Cane Replantation Scheme.	Contracts were signed for 670.7ha involving 935 planters. Land preparation and replantation is complete on 539.8ha and 472.4ha respectively. 70.4% replantation is completed. 703 planters have benefitted from this scheme at end of June 2024. A total sum of Rs 75 M was disbursed on 19 October 2023 to the MCIA for implementation of this scheme.
88	The Cane Revolving Fund Scheme is being increased from Rs 200 million to Rs 500 million.	This acreage corresponds to loans disbursed in FY 2022/23 as well as FY 2023/24. For FY 2023/2024 13 companies and three free planters have applied for the loan for a sum of Rs 131.3 M.

Budget Paragraph	Budget Measures	Progress/ Achievements
89	Rs 22 million is being earmarked for the maintenance of irrigation networks in Pointe-aux-Piments, St-Felix and Plaisance.	Three contracts have already been awarded for rehabilitation works on the Pointe aux Piments, St Felix and Plaisance irrigation projects. At the St Felix project, installation of new hydrant risers has already started and desilting of the weirs has almost been completed. Survey and clearance of site are ongoing at Pointe aux Piments. Works at Plaisance will start as soon as desilting at St Felix is completed.
90 (a)	Provision of a 50 percent subsidy on purchase of fertilisers for planters producing up to 60 tons of sugar.	As at end of June 2024, 4,474 tonnes of fertilisers had been issued benefiting 6,194 planters. A total sum of Rs 125 M was disbursed to the MCIA on 30 January 2024 for implementation of this scheme.
90 (c)	Provision of a financial assistance of Rs 150,000 for purchase of drip irrigation systems for planters producing up to 60 tons of sugar.	34 planters have benefitted from the purchase of the irrigation system under this scheme and an amount of Rs 2,880,000 was disbursed as at 30 June 2024.
95 (a)	The maximum grant for the purchase of cows will be increased by 50 percent to Rs 225,000 and extended to goats, pigs and sheep	Cattle Breeding/Calf Purchase Scheme No. of applications received for FY 2023/2024: 3 No. of payments effected for same period: 2 Total disbursement for FY 2023/2024: Rs 120,000
95 (b)	A subsidy of Rs 1,000 on the cost of private veterinary services for goats, pigs and sheep.	No offer was received at the closing date of the EOI which was set on 10th January 2024. As at June 2024, the Scheme was reviewed.
95 (c)	We will provide financial assistance of Rs 200,000 for construction and upgrading of sheds and purchase of goats and sheep	<u>Upgrading of Livestock Farm Scheme</u> No. Of applications received for FY 2023/2024: 14 No. Of payments effected for same period: 7 Total disbursement for FY 2023/2024: Rs 1,110,526.09
95 (d)	Cattle Productivity Incentive Scheme (CPIS) Increasing the grant paid to calf breeders by 33 percent to Rs 10,000. Merging of the two schemes, that is, Heifer Productivity Incentive Scheme and Incentives for Milk Production Schemes so that a	<u>Mauritius:</u> Application received for 518 calves. Payment has already been made to 182 breeders for 431 calves to the tune of Rs 6,465,000. <u>Rodrigues:</u> Application received for 144 calves. Payment has already been made to 3 breeders for 10 calves to the tune of Rs 150,000.

Budget Paragraph	Budget Measures	Progress/ Achievements
	single payment of Rs 15,000 is made to the small breeders	
97	Increasing the subsidy on animal feed by 50 percent to Rs 15 per kilogram.	Operational modalities were being worked out

STATUS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF KEY ACTIONS

Outcome		Outcome Indicator	Target 2023/24	Achievement as at 30 June 2024
Improved food security level with increased local production of all non-sugar crops [food crops, vegetables, fruits]		Local production of food crops including sheltered and bio farming systems (tonnes)	>118,000	157,976
Delivery Unit	Main Service	Key Performance Indicator	Target 2023/24	Achievement as at 30 June 2024
FAREI	Promote climate resilient/protected culture	Production under protected culture (tonnes)	12,500	10,434
Agricultural Marketing Board	Encourage local production of strategic crop	Production of potatoes (tonnes)	18,000	13,774
Small Farmers Welfare Fund	Provide support to small farmers	Area under agricultural land mechanisation support (Arpents)	2,670	3,228
Mauritius Cane Industry Authority	Increase production of sugar	Sugar production (tonnes)	250,000	241,430
Mauritius Cane Industry Authority	Implement land mechanisation and cane replantation programme	Extent of land under sugar cane replanted annually (Ha)	7,000	2,862.70
Agricultural Services	Provide accompanying measures to boost tea production	Tea Production (tonnes)	1,150	1201.6
Entomology Division	Promote of apiculture through training of beekeepers	Volume of honey produced (tonnes)	35	35

Animal Production Division	Supply breeding stock (combination of Cattle, Goat, Sheep)	Number of calves, lambs and goat kids produced	75	80
National Parks and Conservation Service	Conserve of native biodiversity	Land under conservation management & restoration (Cumulative Ha)	1,045	815
Forestry Service	Maintain of forest ecosystem services	Area of forests rehabilitated (Ha)	100	98.44

Status on implementation of Government Programme 2020/2024			
Para No.	Measure	Activities/ Milestones	Status
1.	Creation of a network of hiking trails to an extent of 150 km.	Hiking Trails to be set up	Completed
2.	Increase in Conservation area from 800 ha to 1400 ha.	Currently a total of 790 hectares of land (as at March 2024) is under conservation management and restored at Bras D'Eau, Ile d'Ambre and Black River Gorges National Park as well as around 210 hectares of those land where maintenance weeding is undertaken. Maintenance weeding needs to be undertaken given that existing restored sites have been reinfested with invasive plant species	Ongoing

58.	Government will further invest in and promote cutting edge technologies, including Artificial Intelligence, robotics, blockchain and Internet of Things, as our country embraces the dictates of the fourth industrial revolution.	The use of Drone technology in the cane sector.	
		(i) Acquisition of drone	Completed
		(ii) Development of softwares	Completed
		(iii) Trials prior to use of drones for application of herbicides, artificial ripeners, determination of field gappiness	Completed
		Development of aquaponics (GCCA+ initiative project)	
		(i) Setting up of an aquaponics unit at FAREI	Completed
		(ii) To conduct training with staff and other government institutions and entrepreneur	Completed
		(iii) Support to encourage new entrants – setting up of scheme	Completed
		Vertical Farming (DeSIRA Project)	

	(i) Vertical Farming Unit set up	Completed
	(ii) Training of potential entrepreneur	
	Modern recirculating hydroponics system (DeSIRA)	
	(i) Recirculating hydroponic system set up.	No funds allocated
(ii) To conduct training		
A new reform package will be implemented for the cane industry while encouraging the shift to modern organic and niche production in agriculture. A plan for optimising agricultural land will be developed	Reform of the sugar sector	
	(i) Conduct of a study on the sugar sector by the World Bank	Completed
	(ii) Submission of report	Completed
	(iii) Implementation of the recommendations of the study, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remuneration of Bagasse• Reduction of sugar handling and storage logistic cost• Mechanization of operations of small planters;• Increase share of special sugars.	Completed
	Three of the recommendations of the World Bank Report are implemented through budget measures namely:	

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(a)	Remuneration of bagasse at an increased rate of Rs 3300/T of sugar produced since 2021	Ongoing	
(b)	Reduction of Sugar Export logistics costs. For this purpose, a modern sugar storage facility of 150,000 tons of sugar is being set up at Riche Terre	Currently bid document is at level of CPB for further amendments. Bids will be floated tentatively by June 2024.	
(c)	The MCIA is providing modern/high-tech tractors to planters for mechanical activities against fees at subsidized rates: 1) Renewal of tractor fleets at MCIA; and 2) Procurement of cane harvestors for operation by MCAF	Ongoing	
(d)	Increase production of special sugars from 120,000 t to 200,000 t	The contracted tonnages for the 2023/24 Marketing Year for special sugar is 127,177 tonnes. Various schemes are being contemplated by MCIA to increase tonnage of sugar.	
	Shift to organic sugar production		

	MCIA is working in collaboration with Terra by carrying out trials on organic herbicides and fertilisers over an extent of 55ha belonging to Terra	Ongoing
	Optimising the use of agricultural land.	
	<p>Schemes to encourage planters to remain in cultivation and to reduce abandoned land. These schemes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Cane Replantation; (ii) Fertiliser Scheme; and (iii) Cane Replantation Revolving Fund. 	Over the last 3 financial years 100 % of the budgeted amount has been utilised
	<p>Development of IPDM(Integrated Pest and Disease Management) strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -9 Biological control agents of key pests identified - IPM package DBM on crucifer revamped for production of parasitoids at field level. 	On going
	Implementation of organic agriculture started in 2017 over an area of 27.83ha,	

initially allocated to 10 beneficiaries at Britannia Organic Zone		
111.	Government will develop a biomass policy and encourage the production of energy with bagasse through incentives to small planters. It will promote research on new renewable energy technologies.	(i) Increase in production of organic produce
		On going
		(ii) Enactment of Organic Bill
		Drafting stage
		Completed
		Development of the biomass framework by MCIA based on potentials
		Completed
		Adoption of the Framework by Government for Implementation
		Development of Implementation Plan through setting up of committees.
		3 Committees have been set up and Terms of Reference finalized. A calendar of activities at request of Inter-Ministerial Meeting was drawn synchronising activities between CEB and MCIA. Approval of Government would be sought on same by MEPU for implementation.

			MCIA has initiated actions for setting up of a Laboratory and procurement of equipment is in progress. Irrigation Authority is following progress on irrigation systems.
		Mid Term Review around 2026 with Ministry-of Energy and Public Utilities	In the pipeline
142.	Government is committed to adopting a responsible and environmentally sustainable development policy	Sustainable Crop Disease Management	
		(i) Evaluation of bioproducts/fungicides against major diseases of fruits and vegetables	On going
		(ii) Use of bacteriophage for the control of Ralstonia solanacearum in solanaceous crop	On going
		(iii) Improving landraces of crucifers and carrot through the use of nuclear techniques for mutation breeding and technology	On going

		(iv) Evaluation of vegetable and fruit crop germplasm for tolerance to major diseases	On going
		Promote macadamia cultivation	
		Produce and disseminate macadamia planting materials	Completed
		Development of Climate smart water saving technologies	
		<u>Deliverables:</u> Water saving technologies installed on farm	Completed
		Breeding and selection of high yielding crop varieties tolerant to biotic and abiotic stresses	
		<u>Deliverables:</u> Two varieties of cauliflower programmed for release in 2025	On-going
		New Endemic gardens have been created:	
144.	Ensure sustainability and responsible investment, Mauritius aims at championing this new development policy based on four pillars: (111) Mitigating risks from climate change		
160.	Three new endemic forests will be created and existing ones		

<p>restored.</p> <p>These forests will be accessible for hiking and nature walk.</p>	(i) State Land Beermanique on an extent of 9.2 ha in 2021	Completed
	(ii) Inauguration of Belle Vue Forest Trail on an extent of 9.2ha	Completed
	(iii) Creation of two Mini forests have been created La Prairie Mini-Forest Extent: 1.2ha Year: Oct 2022 Malenga Mini-Forest Extent: 0.1ha Year: Nov 2022	Completed
	(iv) Creation of a Healing Forest and Endemic Garden at Grand Bassin Year: 2023 Inauguration is due.	Ongoing (Only placement of benches <i>in-situ</i> left to complete)
	Restoration and maintenance of Mini-forests and Nature Walks	

	-Petit Sable Mini Forest (2016)	Initial weeding completed
	-Bel Air Mini Forest (2018)	Ongoing Maintenance
	-Peri-Urban Mini-Forest (2019).	Weeding & Restoration Works
	-Mon Vert Nature Walk	Accessible to the public
	-Plaine Sophie Nature Walk	
	-Pamplemousses Nature Walk	
	Restoration work at Gabriel Island.	Ongoing (Only placement of benches <i>in-situ</i> left to complete)
	Extension of endemic forests at Petit Sable.	Initial weeding completed

	Restoration and proclamation of new Nature Reserves at State Land Les Mariannes.	Ongoing of Maintenance Weeding & Restoration Works Accessible to the Public
	Creation of new endemic Garden at State land at Bouille Laganne.	Pipeline
	Proposed sites for restoration/creation of nature walk (subject to availability of financial and human resources) include: Chamarel, La Nicoliere, Le Pouce Nature Reserves, Mont Brisée at Anse Jonchée)	Pipeline
	Purchase of motorized equipment for 428,000 MUR for forest maintenance and restoration work	Completed (Under previous budget 2022-2023)

		Amendment to Act Shooting & Fishing Act has been amended to include Ecotourism, Agroforestry, SFM & Biodiversity Conservation under the Special Purpose Lease.	Completed in the Financial Bill (2023-24)
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RISK MANAGEMENT, CITIZEN ORIENTED INITIATIVES & GOOD GOVERNANCE

In a highly dynamic socio-economic environment replete with challenges, the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security is mindful of the need to prioritise risk management as a crucial element of its strategic management. In addition, as a responsible and responsive organisation, the Ministry has sustained the momentum of progress in the implementation of schemes and programmes for the support and empowerment of breeders and farmers.

The Ministry has also ensured compliance with the provisions of all applicable laws in the exercise of its functions and activities and consistently ensured enforcement of legislation under its purview.

The following initiatives have also been undertaken:

- Monitoring and evaluating service delivery and standards with a view to continuous improvement;
- Ensuring timely, efficient and quality public services;
- Safeguarding assets and data of the organisation in accordance with the Data Protection Act;
- Transforming the processes through digital transformation for improved service delivery;
- Enhancing the ethics and integrity infrastructure;
- Ensuring compliance with risk management key performance indicators;
- Addressing shortcomings identified as a result of the corruption risk assessment exercises conducted; and

Generic and technical training to staff to embrace and integrate the organisational culture.

The Audit Committees (AC) of the Ministry has fully complied with the provisions of the AC charter and has diligently fulfilled its function of assisting the Accounting Officer in the monitoring and reviewing of both the control mechanisms and governance processes. The AC has monitored the implementation of recommendations of the National Audit Office, Internal Control and Public Accounts Committee. Seven (7) meetings of the AC were held for the financial year 2023-24.

The customers of the Ministry are:

- All Ministries and Parastatal Organisations;
- Planters (sugar cane, tea, crop, and flowers);
- Farmers/Breeders;
- Sugar Companies;
- Tea Companies and Cooperatives;
- Cooperative Federations and societies;
- Trade Unions and Federations of planters and farmers;
- Planters' Associations Farmers;
- Importers and Exporters;
- Monkey and CITES Registered Breeders Company;

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- Public, tourist and students; and
- Private companies (hotels and other entity in the Biosphere Reserve), NGO and Local Authorities;

The commitment of the Ministry to its customers

- Proper service delivery to all stakeholders and capacity building of the farming community.
- Adheres to all the principles and commitment of the Strategic Plan and Customer Charter of the Ministry.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN - DIRECTOR OF AUDIT COMMENTS

Please refer to Annex - Action Plan of Audit Committee for Year 2023/24

PART III

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

For the 2023/2024 Budget Estimates, the Vote of the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security is made up of six Sub-Heads as follows:

- **13-401 General;**
- **13-402 Competitiveness of the Sugar Cane Sector;**
- **13-403 Development of Non-Sugar (Crop) Sector;**
- **13-404 Livestock Production and Development;**
- **13-405 Forests; and**
- **13-406 National Parks and Conservation Service**

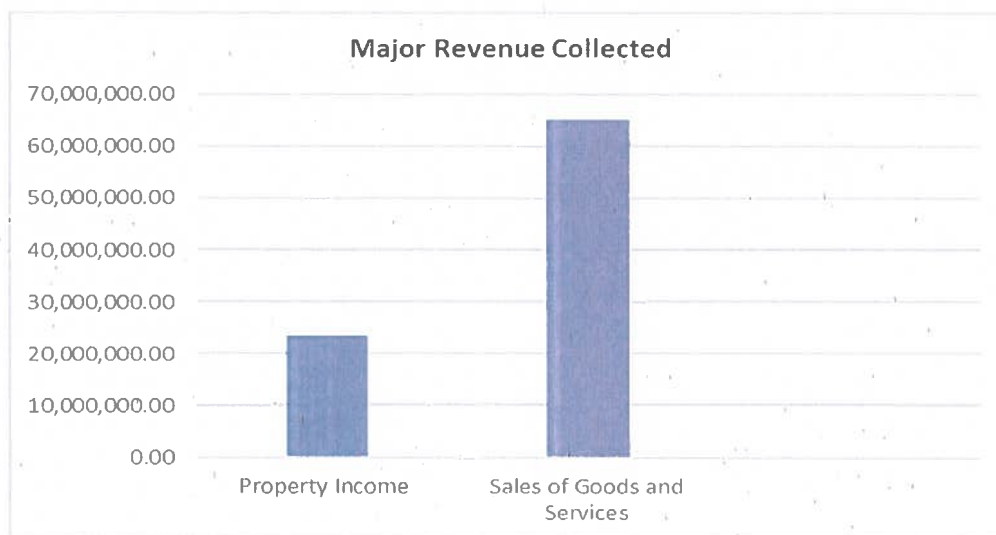
STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE

During the year under review, total revenue for the Ministry amounted to Rs. 88,612,476.96 and falls under three broad categories:

- Property Income (other land lease, shooting and fishing rights);
- Sales of Goods and Services (Clearance fees for tea and tobacco, Sales of Plants, seeds, fruits and agricultural produce etc.); and
- Miscellaneous revenues (Other Miscellaneous, incl. Unidentified Revenues)

Revenue	2023-2024 Actual(Rs)
Property Income	23,400,750.72
Sales of Goods and Services	65,210,887.95
Miscellaneous Revenues	838.29
Total Revenue from property Income, User Fees and other Sources	88,612,476.96

Figure 1 below provides an illustration of revenue collected by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security

Figure 1: Revenue collected by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security**STATEMENT OF REVENUE**

Revenue	2021-2022 Actual(Rs)	2022-2023 Actual(Rs)	2023-2024 Actual (Rs)
Property Income	17,514,398.63	21,083,204.38	23,400,750.72
Sales of Goods and Services	75,611,906.64	88,700,318.11	65,210,887.95
Fines, Penalties and Forfeits			
Miscellaneous Revenues		14,518.21	838.29
Total Revenue from property Income, User Fees and other Sources	93,126,305.27	109,798,040.70	88,612,476.96

NOTE	2023-2024 Actual(Rs)
Property Income includes:	
Other Land Leases	<u>4,552,864.00</u>
Sales of Goods and Services includes:	
Rental of Government Property (Building) (RPMO)	3,310,480.00
Overpayment Made In Previous Years (RGEN)	901,598.32
Commission on Salary Deductions (RGEN)	14,261.12
Miscellaneous (General) (RGEN)	0.00
Total	<u>4,226,339.44</u>

STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE

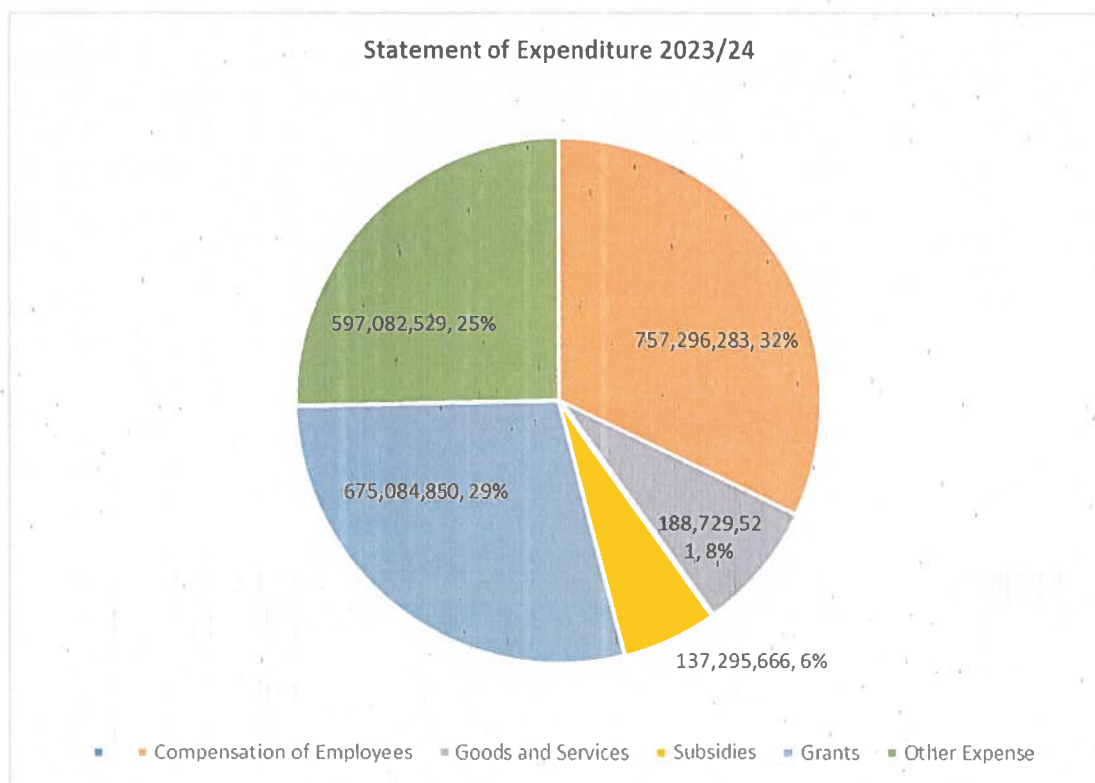
On the expenditure side, the original estimates were Rs. 2,630,000,000.

The total expenditure for 2023/2024 amounted to Rs 2,428,949,781.

Economic Classification	Head/Sub-Head of Expenditure	2021-2022 Estimates (Rs)	2022-2023 Actual (Rs)	2023-2024 Actual (Rs)	% Spent on total Est. 23-24 Actual
21	Compensation of Employees	709,055,125	758,116,479	757,296,283	31%
22	Goods and Services	164,852,606	145,933,201	188,729,521	8%
25	Subsidies	178,725,697	60,577,989	137,295,666	6%
26	Grants	555,067,732	665,313,639	675,084,850	28%
28	Other Expense	550,350,922	529,838,648	597,082,529	24%
31	Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets	17,411,772	19,337,479	73,460,932	3%
Total Expenditure Recurrent & Capital		2,175,463,854	2,179,117,435	2,428,949,781	100%

Figure 2 below provides an illustration of expenditure incurred by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security under vote 13-4 in Financial Year 2023/2024.

Figure 2: Expenditure by the Ministry



Special Fund

“The National Parks and Conservation Fund” is the only Special Fund falling under the purview of the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security. This Fund is established under Section 46 of the Native Terrestrial Biodiversity and National Parks Act 2015. Expenditure incurred during the year **2023/2024** has been to the tune of **Rs. 20,555,546.21**

PART IV

WAY FORWARD

WAY FORWARD

SUGAR SECTOR: TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

STRENGTHS

- **Multiplier effect** - Although sugar revenues are only 1% of the country's GDP and the employment generated by the sugarcane sector is less than 2% of the country's labor force, the sector has a large multiplier effect in the economy.
- **Multifunctional Role** - The sugar cane sector still plays an important multifunctional role in the economy and is an important net foreign exchange earner especially during the periods of economic difficulties such as COVID-19 in 2020.
 - The industry supports the development of the economy as well as the environment and social fabric of the country.
 - The industry has acquired hands-on expertise in R&D, cane cultivation, technology transfer and production of value-added sugars as well as co-products development.
- **Diversification**-The sugarcane industry has diversified through the production of special and refined sugars, electricity cogeneration from bagasse and ethanol from molasses.
 - The sugarcane sector also contributes to the production of electricity through the use of bagasse and coal. Government has the target to phase out the use of coal by 2030 to give a greater importance to renewable sources of energy. Biomass is of particular interest to the sugar sector for the production of firm power.
 - Proven expertise in the production of sugar, especially value-added sugars, allows for its exportation on more remunerative foreign niche markets.
 - "Made in Mauritius" is a label of quality for special sugars. As one of the leading world exporters, Mauritius exported 97,456 tons of special sugar in the FY 2023/2024 to some 40 destinations worldwide comprising 20 countries in the European Union, the United States, Canada, the Middle East, Australasia and Eastern Europe, thereby becoming a reference on these niche markets.
- **Environment** -The sugar cane plant assists in the preservation of our local environment and natural sceneries as well as the prevention of soil erosion thereby safeguarding our beaches and lagoons. It also acts as a carbon sequestrator and contributes in mitigating the negative effects of global warming.

WEAKNESSES

- **Production decline** - The area under sugarcane cultivation has declined significantly during the past decades due to rapid urbanization and developments. Recently, reduction in extent under cane cultivation is attributed to revenue decline from sugar due to a drop in international sugar prices.
- **Export based** - The local consumption represents a small fraction of sugar production; a larger quantity thereof is thus being exported to the rest of the world. Exportation of sugar is affected by external factors such as currency fluctuation and high degree of competition from other countries.
- **High production costs** - At present, the cost of sugar cane production in Mauritius is among the highest due to a low milling capacity (5,900 tons cane crushed per day by the existing mills), a short milling season (an average of only 127 days per year), and a high ratio of labour to total production costs with field labour making up to 80% of the total labour cost. Owing to the high production costs (due to the increasing labour cost, cost of agricultural inputs and transport costs) coupled with the decreasing sugar proceeds and lack of labour, many vulnerable small individual sugarcane planters are abandoning their cultivations or are diversifying out of sugar.
 - There are rigidities and uncertainties in the labour market for this sector compared with other emerging sectors of the economy.
 - Mauritius is limited and constrained in the availability of land and other resources to expand its production in case there is a need.
- **Government support** - Public expenditures supporting the sugarcane sector were 0.75% of the total Government budget (Rs1.7 billion of a total public budget of Rs227 billion) in 2023.

Opportunities

- **Value addition** - There is the possibility to invest in R&D and innovate further in other value-added co-products of the industry which can increase the revenue of producers and maintain the viability and sustainability of the sector.
 - Some small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have emerged to produce, for instance, value added sugar cubes and spice-scented sugars.
 - The industrial set-up that has been established could allow further value addition through a "filière" approach, which was not possible until recently, when the industry still exported raw sugar mainly.
 - The development and implementation of a renewable sugarcane industry based National Biomass Framework will also foster the promotion of energy from biomass, including sugarcane, cane trash, high fibre cane, fuel canes, gramineae and other related biomass, generated by the sugarcane industry.
 - The development of a Sugar Based Agro Industry Framework will assist in the promotion of a sugar based agro industry which will in turn generate value added sugar or other sugar products through the use of local raw materials.

- **Regional markets**-The ability for Mauritius to divert sugar from the EU to remunerative regional markets is an important means of mitigating the loss of EU preference.
- **Certification**-The Fairtrade and Bonsucro Initiative has helped certified small cooperative planters and producers to continue growing cane and support the supply of cane to mills. Possibilities should be explored to increase the volume of sugar exported under this label, and to extend same to large growers. Market opportunities should be tapped on other sugar label including organic sugars.

Threats

- **Sugar prices**-The number of hectares (ha) planted to sugarcane in Mauritius has historically been above 70,000. Since the 1990s, production started to drop at an initial rate of 0.8% per year, followed by a yearly accelerated rate of 3.61% as from 2002 due to the drop in international sugar prices and the rollback of the European Union (EU) sugar protocol in 2008 which eliminated the preferential access of Mauritian sugar on the EU market in 2017.
- **Cost of production** -Increasing production costs (labour, transport and agricultural inputs especially fertiliser and diesel), diminishing revenue and difficulties to export sugar on current and more remunerative markets coupled with surplus production of sugar on the world market, and the continued distortion and decrease in the world market price result in a very tough and competitive market for sugar commodities.
 - The continued decline in cane supply would result in a real threat to the viability of the industrial set-up, which has a large fixed cost asset that underpins the country's agro-energy base.
 - The non-availability of water for irrigation of sugarcane fields at the growth stage of the plant is a serious threat impacting directly on production despite heavy investments undertaken by Government and corporate growers on irrigation logistics.
- **Competition**- Threat of competition from lease development countries sugar producing countries supplying sugars on the EU market with abolition of sugar regime.
 - During the past years, a decline in the sale of Mauritian special sugars has been recorded on the EU. This has resulted from greater competition in this niche market, especially since the EU granted access to countries from Central and South America under recent Free Trade Areas (FTAs). Although the sugars are not of the same quality, they are close substitutes with special sugars and compete with Mauritian sugars, resulting in a loss of market share for ACP(African Caribbean Pacific Group of State) producers.
- **Labour costs** - Wages in the sugarcane sector are 23% higher than in the manufacturing sector (Digest of Labor Statistics, 2018). Labour costs have also been increasing at more than double the rate of inflation since 2010. Sugarcane workers benefit from contributions to the National Pension Fund and to the Sugar Industry Pension Fund.
 - The problem in the labour sector is characterised by three elements: an ageing labour force; a mechanism whereby yearly increases in remuneration exceed the inflation rate against a backdrop of lower sugar prices; and lengthy procedure to have recourse to foreign labour, in particular, for small planters.

- Further reduction of the extent under cane due to the declining revenue on the sugar proceeds post the abolition of production quota on the EU market.

NON-SUGAR SECTOR: TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

Strengths

- Schemes proposed by the Government to assist farmers and new entrepreneurs in the implementation of their agri-business.
- With the support of an experienced farming community and the diversification programme of the private sector, Mauritius is self-sufficient in fresh vegetable production.

Weaknesses

- Food security challenges especially in the wake of soaring food prices and increasing cost of freight.
- Climate change related impacts, such as torrential rains, heat waves and drought.
- New pests and diseases/outbreak of existing ones.
- Indiscriminate use of agro-chemicals and veterinary drugs.
- Competition for resources (human, land, water) from other economic activity sources.
- Ageing of the farming community and labour shortage.
- Lack of interest from the young generation to embark in farming activities.
- High cost of labour and agricultural inputs (seeds, breeding stock, feeds, fertiliser, pesticides and equipment).
- Small size of land holdings and reluctance of farmers to cluster
- Lack to benefit from economies of scale.
- Limited agricultural infrastructure for production and processing.
- Competition from cheaper imports.
- Lack of capacity to comply with stringent environmental and sanitary laws.
- Unavailability of good breeding animals.
- Increasing awareness of consumers for healthy and pesticide/drug free products.
- Lack of market information and market intelligence.

- Lack of security and increase in cases of theft at farm levels.
- Quality and safe food production, and
- New technology (AI, use of drone in agriculture)

Opportunities

- Well-established institutions under the umbrella of the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security to assist the farming community.
- Foreign investors in collaboration with local entrepreneurs' willingness to invest in innovative agricultural projects.
- Possibility of re-allocation of abandoned sugarcane lands for other agricultural projects.
- Interest among new entrepreneurs for new production techniques and organic farming. Niche markets for nutritious food and convenience products to match modern lifestyle of the population and the growing tourism industry.

Threats

- Fragmentation of land holdings as an outcome of inheritance issues.
- Lack of interest among youngsters for Agri-farming.
- Land conversion to cater for urban development.
- Impact of adverse agro-climatic conditions.
- Risks associated with climate change.
- Competition from imported goods.
- Emergence of new pests and diseases.

FORESTRY AND BIODIVERSITY: TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

Strengths

- Contributes in the preservation and conservation of the native and endemic flora and fauna of Mauritius.
- Contributes in the increase of good quality forest in Mauritius.
- Several strategies for biodiversity conservation already exist such as the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan produced as an obligation of the Convention on

Biological Diversity, a Protected Area Network Expansion Strategy to protect and restore native biodiversity and habitats, management plan for Black River Gorges and Bras d'Eau National Parks. The Native Terrestrial Biodiversity and National Parks being a recent enactment in 2015, is more up to date.

- The NPCS works while adhering to recommendations of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).
- Strong Collaborations with international institutions such as the United Nations Development Programme, l'Agence Francaise de Développement, the Missouri Botanical Garden and the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, private sectors and NGOs and the major institutions operating under the Ministry promotes the synergy and coordination required to undertake the sustainable management of forests and its resources.
- There are specialized departments within the Ministry such as the NPCS which have developed expertise in certain fields on native terrestrial biodiversity management and conservation, wetlands conservation, flora and fauna conservation and control of Invasive Alien Species
- There are specialized centres for native flora and fauna namely the Native Plant Propagation Centre and Gerald Durrell Endemic Wildlife Sanctuary.
- Management of International Designated sites such as Ramsar sites and Black River Gorges Bel Ombre Biosphere Reserve, Key Biodiversity Areas and Important Bird Areas falling under the jurisdiction of NPCS under the Ministry.
- Existence of the National Parks and Conservation Fund.

WEAKNESSES

- Some terrestrial Protected Areas having rich biodiversity and ecosystem do not fall under the purview of the NPCS. Some of the areas are located within the private sector and other public institutions.
- Lack of national, regional and international knowledge-sharing platforms, and technology transfer in the biodiversity sector. Networks have to be set up and strengthened to allow the adoption of new technologies.
- Knowledge gaps on certain scarcity areas such as freshwater biodiversity and rescue of wildlife during a disaster occurrence.
- Limited capacity as well as shortage of qualified staff in scarcity areas such as capture of invasive species, seizure of specimen (some of which might be venomous e.g. reptiles).
- Inadequate information sharing between institutions and stakeholders which leads to duplication of work and responsibilities.

ANNUAL REPORT

- Lack of adequate infrastructure and facilities.
- Limited legal provisions and institutional arrangements for protecting native species and ecosystems, including wetlands.
- Poor visibility and lack of awareness of the work of the Ministry in this sector.
- Very limited chapters devoted on native biodiversity in the curriculum of schools.
- Institutional staffing has been a major source of concern and slow institutional learning capacity in a rapidly changing world remains a major weakness to tackle forestry matters on time.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Regroup responsibilities under the aegis of a sole institution.
- Revision of the Forest Code and Institutional Reform.
- Recruitment and training of staff.
- COVID 19 has showcased our resilience and the opportunities to tap on shifting priorities to serve society better through enhanced socio-economic focus in terms of recreation, food production, energy plantations and supply of raw materials to the industry is an opportunity not to be missed, especially through the new Forest Bill, will lessen the financial burden on the functioning of the sector.
- Collaboration with specialised local and international institutions.
- Funding, capacity-building and technology transfer opportunities through various MEAs.
- Call for volunteers and youth to participate and contribute to the conservation of biodiversity.

THREATS

- Deforestation/ forest degradation and fragmentation due to urban development.
- Destruction of wetlands and other Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) for development purposes
- Threats to native biodiversity including competition and predation pressure from invasive species and outbreaks of pests and diseases.
- Vulnerability to climate change and extreme weather events.
- Lack of evidence-based planning and project implementation and inability to adopt an adaptive management model may jeopardize sound government investments in the sector. Post COVID era may also see a shift on donor agency priorities away from the biodiversity sector.
- Illegal trade of wildlife species and biosecurity issues

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Build resilience of the sugar cane industry

- Increase cane industry revenue:
 - Through the implementation of the Biomass framework
 - From premium and certified sugars, bagasse-based and other co-products including the implementation of the ethanol framework
- Diversify sugar export markets to reduce overdependence in EU markets
- Increase production of speciality and premium sugar (e.g. Fairtrade & Organic)

Increase production of high value crops

- Expand climate resilient agriculture, with a focus on high-value products, better performing varieties, bio-farming and sheltered farming systems
- Set up entrepreneurship programmes that focus on innovation
- Develop additional dedicated bee reserve zones and provide specialized training for potential bee keepers
- Improve productivity through use of modern eco-friendly farming practices including:
 - Hydroponics/Aquaponics
 - advanced innovative technologies and
 - ICT for efficient use of resource
 - supply chain management to reduce food loss and food wastage
- adoption of good agricultural practices and certification

Smarter agricultural land use

- Encourage cultivation on abandoned lands through innovative approaches
- Consolidate the centralized land data bank to ensure optimal utilization of prime agricultural lands
- Invest in high tech farming
- Adoption of Disruptive Agricultural Technologies so as to address agricultural challenges

Improve quarantine activities and phytosanitary border controls

Strengthen quarantine surveillance activities and phytosanitary border controls related to import and export inspections

Build resilience of non-sugar crops

- Breeding/introduction and evaluation of new varieties/crops

- Pest and disease management
- Introduction and development of novel technologies
- Capacity building in new technologies

Encourage sustainable production system

- Promote organic/biopharming and GAP/GAHP and climate smart practices
- Promote integrated pest and disease management
- Promote Clean Green and Ethical (CGE) animal production
- Create consumer awareness

Promote value addition

- Increase production
- Training in agro processing
- Develop and upgrade protocols for product development
- Provide incubator facilities to new entrepreneurs

Preserve forestry & terrestrial biodiversity

- Enhance forest ecosystem services and national parks through:
 - Restoration and reforestation programmes
 - Protection of the unique flora and fauna from invasive species.

ANNEX

ANNEX 1: IMPLEMENTATION OF DIRECTOR OF AUDIT COMMENTS

	Comments	Actions
1.1	Legislations and Conditions of Deed of Lease not always complied with:	
	<p>I) Arrears of Rent of the Forestry Service understated.</p> <p>Recommendations: The Accounting Officer should ensure that the shooting and Fishing Leases Act and the terms and conditions of the deeds of lease are complied with.</p>	<p>The Forestry Service is undertaking all necessary actions to recover the rental within the prescribed time frame. Reminders are being sent for the non-payment.</p> <p>The Forestry Service submits its recommendations to cancel the leases in case of default in payment within the timeframe.</p> <p>Legal actions may also be initiated to recover the due rentals.</p>
	<p>(ii) Granting of Lease exceeding 14 years.</p> <p>Recommendations: The Shooting and Fishing Leases Act, enacted 57 years back, should be amended to promote the principles of good governance in the allocation/renewal of leases. The Accounting Officer should also consider the two other methods, namely public auction or call for tenders for the grant of a new lease.</p>	<p>As per the Shooting and Fishing Lease Act, the maximum period of lease is up to 14 years. The Forestry Service has not recommended 2 of the leases exceeding 14 years, for example, Chassee Riviere du Poste and Salazie Ltd.</p>
	<p>(iii) Non-compliance with Legislations and Conditions of Deed of Lease.</p> <p>Recommendations: The terms and conditions of the deed of lease and relevant legislations are complied with by the lessees;</p> <p>The officers of the Forestry Service carry out regular patrols and take appropriate prompt actions in case offences are committed by the lessees.</p>	<p>The Forestry Service regularly monitors the leases through site visits which are undertaken by the officers and reports are submitted for any breach to the conditions laid in the lease agreement.</p> <p>The Forestry Service requires additional support by way of digitization of the system to have the reports and data compiled in a system for verification and follow up.</p>

	<p>(iv) Enjoyment of Rights by Lessees still owing rentals/rentals being paid with delay.</p> <p>Recommendations: The Conservator of Forests should ensure that the provisions of the Shooting and Fishing Leases Act are always complied with by the lessees.</p>	<p>The Forestry Service is undertaking all necessary action to recover the rentals in a timely manner.</p> <p>The Forestry Service claiming the rent on all expired leases in terms of use and occupation of State land.</p> <p>In case the rentals are not recovered, the Forestry Service informs the Ministry and advises to terminate the lease.</p>
	<p>(v) Late Signature of Deed of Lease/Deed of Lease not seen.</p> <p>Recommendations: To ensure that the deeds of the lease are signed both by the Ministry and the lessees within one month of the commencement of the lease; and the Conservator of Forests to properly keep all deed of the lease.</p>	<p>The Forestry Service issues the Letter of Intent once the application is approved by the Ministry. Accordingly, the Forestry Service prepares the Letter of Intent for necessary payments to be effected by the lease prior to the signature of the lease agreement.</p> <p>The leases are normally issued within a month; however, the delays are mainly due to the late payment by the lessees and also the issue of PIN from the Ministry of Housing and Land Use planning.</p> <p>Presently, the Letter of Intent includes a timeframe for the payment of rental and also includes the condition that in case of non-payment, the offer of the lease will be cancelled. Regarding the PIN, the Forestry Service will issue a official letter to the Ministry of Housing and Land use planning, to issue the PIN within the prescribed timeframe.</p>
1.2	Lapses in the Operational Activities of the Cattle Reproduction Farm:	
	<p><u>Depletion of the Parental Stock.</u></p> <p>Recommendations: To ensure that the Director, Agricultural Services take appropriate measures to import new breeding stock at regular time intervals and Procure additional bulls to increase animal production.</p>	<p>The contract for the Procurement of breeding stock was awarded to Messrs. Noordali on 21 June 2023. However, the contract was terminated due to non-performance of the supplier.</p> <p>Owing to unavailability of funds in the budget 2024/25, approval has been solicited to use the advance account of the MMA for procurement of animals. A reply is being awaited.</p>
1.3	Non-compliance with Governance Issues:	

	<p>(i) Strategic Overview – Targets not achieved.</p> <p>As at 30 June 2023, the targets set for KPIs and deliverable to improve food security level by increasing local production of all non-sugar crops and livestock were partly achieved by nine Delivery Units as follows:</p> <p>AMB, Horticulture, FAREI, Agricultural Services, LVD, Forestry, MCIA, Entomology, SFWF.</p> <p>Recommendations: To ensure that the Monitoring Committee closely monitors the targets sets by the Ministry.</p>	<p>Monthly Project Monitoring Committee is being held since March 2023 to monitor the progress level for each sector.</p>
	<p>(ii) Internal Audit – Audit Plan not completed.</p> <p>Some 30 per cent of the auditable areas of the Annual Internal Audit Plan for financial year 2022-23 were not done.</p> <p>Recommendations: The AC should ensure that all audible areas in the Annual Internal Audit Plan are achieved.</p>	<p>77% achieved for Financial year 2023/24</p> <p>Adhoc urgent assignment from management has an incidence on the all auditable areas in the Annual Internal Audit Plan.</p>
1.4	Governance Issues- Non-Compliance with Legislation.	

	(i) Non-Submission of Financial Statements for Audit: SFWF, MSAW, SSRBG, Vallee Dosterlog	<p>The Small Farmers Welfare Fund: The Financial Statement for 2022-2023 are being prepared under IPSAS and will be submitted soon to the NAO.</p> <p>Mauritius Society for Animal Welfare: Financial Statement for 2016-2017 is in process and will followed by the financial statements for the other financial years.</p> <p>Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanical (SSRBG): The Financial Statements for years ended 30 June 2021 and 30 June 2022 are still in process at the level of the Accounting Firm.</p> <p>Vallee D'Osterlog Endemic Garden Foundation: The Financial Statements for years ended 30 June 2021 and 30 June 2022 are still in process at the level of the Accounting Firm.</p>
	(ii) Special Funds - Financial Statements not submitted for Audit: The National Park and Conservation Fund has not yet submitted the annual statement of receipts and payments and a balance sheet for the FY 2021-2022 and 2022-2023.	Financial Statement for 2021-2022 has been submitted on 07.06.2024 to the National Audit Office. Financial Statement for 2022-2023 is in process with the Accountant General to be submitted in IPSAS form.
2	Follow Up on the status of implementation of previous NAO – R 2021-2022	
2.1	National Livestock Information System (NLIS)	
	Delay in the Deliverables of Technical Co-operation Programme (TCP)	<p>The recruitment of the consultant is not under the purview of the Ministry. The Technical Cooperation Program (TCP) of the FAO was signed in August 2021 and is of two years' duration. The inception workshop was held in September 2021. The TOR for the consultant was prepared and submitted to FAO in October 2021. As from that date, all recruitment processes are undertaken by the FAO, the consultant was recruited in September 2022 and he has conducted a visit to Mauritius between 12-19 November 2022. However, his report was not conclusive and satisfactory. Moreover, a request for a no cost extension to the project has been submitted to the FAO. The TCP was concluded in December 2023. Regarding the information</p>

		<p>system (software), it is presently at User Acceptance Testing (UAT) with all stakeholders. A test version has gone live since 30 January 2024. Bugs that have been encountered are being addressed by the Supplier Naveo Ltd and the IT experts of FAO (Georgia).</p> <p>Further assistance has been proposed by the FAO Representation in Georgia for the development of a mobile app and supporting the development process up till 2026, subject to an official request being submitted to them. Correspondence was issued to FAO Georgia through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 23 May 2024.</p>
2.2	Administration of State Land for Agricultural Purposes – Ineffective Monitoring of Compliance with Lease Agreements.	
	(i) Agricultural State Lands not yet leased	<p>Out of 447 requests for State Land, 138 have been acceded to and some 280 Arp of State Land have already been allocated.</p> <p>Allocation of State Land is an ongoing activity.</p> <p>As at June 2023, some 3333 plots out 5023 plots under the purview of Land Use Division had been assigned Parcel Identification Number (PIN) after a survey exercise.</p> <p>As at December 2023, some 3674 plots of State Land have been assigned PIN and survey exercise is ongoing on the remaining 1349 plots.</p> <p>Only one survey Officer is posted at the Agricultural Services instead of two.</p> <p>Ministry has approved overtime during weekends to speed up the survey work, to survey 150 plots representing 300 arpents up to June 2025.</p> <p>Negotiations are ongoing with the Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms to look into the possibility to post more land surveyors in this Ministry.</p>
	(ii) Considerable Delay in Completion of Land Surveying Contract	<p>The Contract termination date was 30 April 2019 as such there is no contract management for state land.</p>

	<p>(iii) Non-compliance with Conditions of Lease Agreement</p> <p>(a) Case of Aadicon Biotechnologies Ltd;</p> <p>(b) Case of Cooperative Society at Petit Merlo;</p> <p>(c) Case of Cooperative at Mon Bois;</p> <p>(d) Case of illegal construction at Mare D'Albert</p>	<p>(a) The lease agreement in respect of Aadicon Biotechnologies Ltd over the 60 Arp of State Land at Piton Du Milieu is valid up to 2027</p> <p>In this case, advice of the SLO has been sought since 16 December 2022 to retrieve the unoccupied State Land and same is under process. A claim for the settlement of outstanding rent was made to the official receiver on 21 July 2022.</p> <p>Approval has been sought to cancel the lease agreement of Aadicon Biotechnologies Ltd</p> <p>(b) A final survey has been carried by FAREI, the Engineering Division and LUD based on which a decision will be taken with regards to the retrieval of land. Approval has been sought to cancel the lease agreement of Cooperative Society at Petit Merlo.</p> <p>(c) Lease agreement of cooperative society at Mon Bois has already been cancelled and State land retrieved and vested in Ministry of Housing and Land Use Planning for setting up of driver's school.</p> <p>(d) The lease agreement has already been signed by cooperative and built up structure is being used as watchman quarter/store.</p>
2.3	Experiment Stations – Significant Decrease in Operational Activities	
	<p>(i) Under-utilisation of cultivable land had led to a reduction in vegetable seeds, and propagating materials of flowers and fruits crops, and expiry of agrochemicals</p>	<p>Agronomy Division</p> <p>(i) Manual labour in the grades of casual general worker were recruited in October 2022. Mechanical Tractor needed for land preparation were under repair but parts are unavailable. Additional labour (50) is required.</p> <p>HR proposals will be made for FY 2024-2025.</p> <p>Old machinery needs to be replaced. Procedures for the purchase of a mini tractor (with implements) are ongoing for the financial year 2024-2025. An estimated cost of Rs 1.5 M was forwarded by Engineering Division on 26.04.2024</p>
	<p>Agronomy Division</p> <p>Four Casual General Workers have been posted at Albion Experiment</p>	<p>Only 4 General Workers were posted at the Albion Experiment Station. To make optimum use of the cultivable area of land, a minimum of 16 General Workers are required to be posted at the Albion Experiment Station.</p>

	Station since 10 th October 2022.	HR proposals have been made for forthcoming financial year 2024-2025
	(ii) Hydroponic sheds and anti-bird shed were left in abandoned state	<p>(ii) The anti-bird shed will be rehabilitated by the workshop unit of the Engineering Division as only minor works are required (replacement of bird net and replacement of a few galvanised pipes).</p> <p>Materials for rehabilitation of antibird shed has already been procured and a request has been made to the Engineering Division on 16 May 2024 to carry out the task.</p>
	(iii) Building infrastructures were not occupied	<p>(iii) The Office space is being shared by both Agronomy and Animal Production Staff.</p> <p>Part of activities at Curepipe the Seed Genebank Unit has already been shifted to Albion ES in March 2024. Staff of Agronomy Division is using the offices efficiently.</p>
2.4	Melrose Livestock Zone Project- Lapses in Project Management.	
	<p>(i) Delay in setting up of the Livestock Zone.</p> <p>(ii) Livestock Zone Project set aside by the Ministry.</p> <p>(iii) Merging Process of the Infrastructure of the Livestock Zone not completed</p>	<p>Due to issues encountered in construction, the Livestock Zone project at Melrose was reassessed and a decision was taken to merge the facilities with that of the Heifer Farm to create a Cattle Reproduction Farm. Infrastructural works were required for the merging of the Livestock Zone with the Heifer Farm and actions have been initiated since the previous financial year.</p> <p>In December 2023, the Engineering Division has submitted cost estimate and scope of works for the following projects:</p> <p>(i) Fixing of metal enclosures, shutters, rainwater harvesting system in Buildings B, C and D; and</p> <p>(ii) Concrete flooring of exercise yards, construction of ramps and setting up of waste disposal system. Proposals have been made for funding of projects in financial year 2024-2025.</p>
	Electricity network	An amount of Rs 6.3M was earmarked for electrical installation project in financial year 2023-2024. The first procurement exercise for the project was unsuccessful.

		Exercise in next financial year 2024-2025 provided funds are made available, based on amended scope of work from ESD.
	"Milking unit with cooling tank and fixed milking machine".	<p>For the preparation of the scope of works for a milking unit with cooling tank and fixed milking machine, the Engineering Division requested for a topographical plan on 7 December 2023.</p> <p>The existing topographical plan of Melrose site was sent to Engineering Division on 12 December 2023. On 03 January 2024, Engineering Division requested an amended and detailed topographical plan of Livestock zone site.</p> <p>C) Following clearing of land and a survey by the Land Surveyor, the Engineering Division is working on the estimated cost and scope of work.</p>
2.5	The Albion Duck Farm-Reduction in Operational Activities.	
	(i) Reduction in the Number of Parent Stock of Ducks	<p>(i) Presently with functional setters and hatchers, the number of parent's stock has stabilized.</p> <p>Research in new duck genetics has to be carried out to identify other type of parent stock that may be imported to increase production as the current parent stock is of local variety.</p> <p>In view of diseases, especially Avian Flu, risk assessment has to be carried out prior to importation of any new genetics. Concurrently, upon importation of new genetics, trials have to be performed and therefore a new independent team of officers has to be constituted due to biosecurity reasons.</p> <p>It is to be highlighted that Animal Production Division cannot lose the existing breeding line while working on a new one. Furthermore, APD cannot sell the first hybrids obtained from new genetics.</p>
2.6	Construction of a National Wholesale Market –Delay in Construction Works and Operation of the Market	

	<p>Extension of time not assessed Resulting in Non-application of Liquidated damages</p>	<p>Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Sewer Treatment Plant. The contract was awarded in April 2023 and the work was expected to be completed by December 2023 and testing/operational by January 2024.</p> <p>No provision was made in the tender document (MOAIFS) - STP equipment for electrical cabling works so as to feed the equipment with power supply.</p> <p>Additional funds will have to be earmarked for cabling works of STP equipment and additional manhole towards leaching field due to uneven ground. Leaching field was relocated 200 m away from STP building due to proximity of borehole.</p> <p>Work has been kept on hold at the NWM due to the above discrepancies and until further approval is obtained.</p> <p>AMB is awaiting a full comprehensive report from Profive Ltd together with cost estimate for additional works.</p> <p>Same will be submitted by end of April to MOAIFS and AMB for disbursement of fund.</p>
2.7	Government Asset Register not properly maintained.	
	<p>Non-compliance with Deadline for submission of GAR Template and delay in Clearing Backlog.</p>	
	<p><u>Agronomy National Field Gene Bank (NFGB) Nouvelle Découverte</u></p> <p>Records updated upon receipt of Goods Form 1 and Invoices.</p>	<p>Goods Form 1 for an old tractor received from Plaisance ES in December 2021 not available. Issue is still pending for updating GAR.</p> <p>No information is available for old equipment so far.</p>

	<p><u>Agronomy NPVSO</u></p> <p>The GAR software is being updated as soon as the Goods Form 1 are received.</p>	<p>Still waiting for some Goods Form 1 from the Procurement Section for assets received from MACB some years back.</p> <p>No information is available for old equipment so far.</p> <p>Attached list of equipment has been received from Horticulture.</p>
	<p><u>National Seed Gene Bank-Agronomy Division</u></p> <p>Surveys of Assets-Dormant, Unserviceable and Unrecorded Assets completed but awaiting necessary actions by stores.</p>	<p>All goods recommended for destruction have been collected by the Procurement and Supply Division on 21.07.2023.</p> <p>Items meant for recycling will be collected by the Procurement and Supply Division by end of Year 2024.</p>
	<p>Horticulture Division</p> <p>Dormant and Unserviceable Assets have been included in GAR Templates</p>	<p>A survey of dormant and unserviceable assets to be carried out and list to be submitted to procurement and Supply Division.</p> <p>So far, the survey is still ongoing and will take some time to complete as there are many items and tasks involved in the process. At present the percentage completion is around 60%.</p>
	<p>Livestock and Veterinary Services</p> <p>(i) Non-compliance with Deadline for submission of GAR Template and delay in Clearing Backlog</p>	<p>There are technical issues for access to GAR software as</p> <p>JAVA file is not opening due to outdated windows.</p>
2.8	Governance Issues- Non-Compliance with Legislation.	
	<p>(i) Non-Submission of Financial Statements for Audit</p>	
	<p>(i) The Small Farmers Welfare Fund - the Financial Statements for year 2018-2019 has already been</p>	<p>Printing of Annual Report for submission to National Assembly is ongoing.</p>

	<p>audited by the National Audit Office;</p> <p>The FS for the period 2019-2020 is currently being audited by the National Audit Office (NAO). The Financial Statement for 2020-2021 is being prepared under IPSAS and will be submitted soon to the NAO.</p> <p>ii) Mauritius Meat Authority (MMA) – the Financial statement for year 2014 & 2015 has been transmitted to the NAO. 2021/2022 currently being audited</p> <p>iii) Mauritius Society for Animal Welfare (MSAW) - The Financial statement for the year 2016-2017 is under process.</p> <p>(iv) Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanical Garden(SSRBG) - Financial Statement ended 30 June 2021 and 30 June 2022 is in process by accounting firm Forten berry Corporate Services. Financial Statement has been prepared and is awaiting approval of SSRB Board.</p>	
3.	Follow up on the status of implementation of ICU	
3.1	Pesticide Regulatory Office, (PRO) Regulate, control and monitor the use of pesticides in or on any agricultural product.	
	<p>IC Recommendation</p> <p>(i) In order to reduce the bottleneck of the time taken, the PRO should be under the</p>	<p>PRO has been set up to implement and enforce the Use of Pesticides Act and as such PRO should be separate and under the supervision of the Officer in Charge.</p> <p>Agricultural Chemistry Division (ACD) and the PRO have two distinct</p>

	supervision of the PSO of Agricultural Chemistry Division.	mandates. The ACD is mandated to provide analytical services whereas the PRO is mandated to enforce the Use of Pesticides Act 2018. Hence, these two Divisions should be kept separate on ground of Good Governance.
	(ii) Paragraph 10.2 of the Use of pesticides Act 2018 should be adhered to: (the office should request for relevant certificates from suppliers).	Amendments already done in Finance Miscellaneous Act 2022 List of imported produce with pesticides and maximum residue level has already been submitted to the office of Attorney General's office and Regulations are being prepared
	(iii) The Use of Pesticides Act 2018 should be amended in order to include regulations regarding imported commodities.	Regulations at the level of the Attorney General's office.
	(iv) Paragraph 10.3 of the Act should be adhered to where the agricultural produce should be destroyed at the costs of the importer if the residue level of pesticides exceeds the required MRL.	Regulations are promulgated
	(v) With the help of State Law Office (SLO), the Use of Pesticides Act 2018 should be amended whereby the procedures should be clearly stipulated.	Amendment to the Act
	(vi) The possibility to directly fine the planter at fault should be considered instead of continuously issuing improvement notice.	Amendment to the Act
	(vii) The fines should be charged in a progressive manner based on the amount of excess pesticides that have been found in the commodities.	Provision already available in Act for fines Training required

3.2	National Parks and Conservation Service	
3.2	<p>The Process for the application of Ramsar Clearance.</p> <p>No specific Policy/Regulations regarding wetlands and its protection.</p>	<p>A consultancy for the development of Wetland Bill was carried out under the project "UNDP/GEF Mainstreaming Biodiversity into the Management of the Coastal Zone in the Republic of Mauritius.</p> <p>The draft bill has been prepared and submitted to the Ramsar Committee for views/comments</p>
	<p>(i) No specific Policy/Regulations regarding wetlands and its protection.</p> <p>The Wetland Bill should be finalised at the earliest.</p>	<p>The Final draft of the Wetland Bill and its Regulations have also been submitted to NPCS</p> <p>On 21 June 2023, Amendment was made to the Fourth Schedule of Environment Protection Act (EPA) where the Ministry of Agro Industry and Food Security to be the enforcement Agency for soil, compost and wetlands.</p> <p>The draft Wetland bill and the Wetland regulations have been sent to the Parent Ministry for submission to SLO. A Resource Mobilisation Plan has also been prepared by Mr J. Maureemootoo, consultant. The draft is being reviewed by NPCS.</p> <p>Draft Wetland Bill was circulated to the National Ramsar Committee members (Ministries, ngos, Academia) on 15 May 2024 for views and comments.</p> <p>Decision of National Ramsar Committee: a Technical Committee would be set up to compile and synthesize all the views and comments.</p>
	<p>(ii) Programme of works for Contract for maintenance of Track and Trail</p> <p>Programme of work should be prepared on a yearly basis and approved by the Director NPCS following regular inspections of sites that needs maintenance.</p>	<p>The Bid for maintenance of Track and trail has not been successful.</p> <p>Bids were relaunched after review of scope of work and cost estimates. The BEC has already been set up to examine the bids.</p> <p>Additional funding has to be secured and estimates to be reviewed.</p>

3.3	Internal Audit Report of Transport Section	
	IC Recommendation (i) Physical Surveys of boarded/condemned	Location is being identified to gather all vehicles in the auction list, once identified prior to the launching of bids.
	(ii) Regular repairs at Workshop/ Agricultural Superintendent has not enquired about the root cause	5- 4x4 double cabs vehicle have been procured in a view to renew the fleet of vehicles of the Ministry. As for those vehicles which are undergoing frequent repairs decision will be taken by the Engineering division whether to retain them in the fleet or to dispose them. It is proposed to renew the fleet of vehicle with 3 new vehicles yearly
	(iii) Accident of Government vehicles	<p>The case was reported by SO responsible for Melrose Outstation on 23 June 2022, which was clearly an oversight on the part of the APD officer. The reason given for late reporting was that he was not aware of the procedures as it was not a typical accident but the breaking of a window pane. Moreover, as per Para 20.10.23 of FMM, it is the officer exercising control over the vehicle that should complete a Motor Vehicle Accident Report Form, not later than one month from the date of accident but in this case, the officer exercising control over the vehicle is not known and not aware of responsibilities entailed. Henceforth, appropriate actions will be taken to ensure that no such oversight occurs again.</p> <p>Particulars have forwarded to the Accountant General, Director of Audit on 23 June 2023. Record has been updated in the Accident Report Book.</p> <p>MPI report is being requested from MPI (Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport)</p> <p>Return of accident is being sent to the Treasury on a semester basis.</p> <p>Accident book has been updated regarding column 'copy of Particulars dispatched on'.</p>
		<p>The officer exercising control of vehicles such as tractor, skid steer loader, damper and others should be clearly designated.</p> <p>Training should also be provided so that the staff is aware of responsibilities entailed with the assignment of duties.</p>
	(x) Fuel Management	Letter sent to the Finance section on 30 June 23, requesting for retrieval of the Missing ABF4 duplicates. Some Receipts are still missing

		<p>Average fuel consumption is calculated as MPI(Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport) circular April 2023.</p> <p>Finance section will retrieve missing duplicates.</p>
4	Governance Structures	
	<p><u>Agricultural Services</u> submitted the following:</p> <p>The Animal Health, Veterinary Public Health and Livestock Production Bill – Consultation to be held with AGO to finalise the Bill</p>	The draft bill is at the level of the AGO for vetting.
	<p>Organic Bill - Following Government approval on 21 March 2023, drafting Instructions were issued to the Attorney General's Office on 18 April 2023 and the draft bill is being awaited</p>	
	<p>Fertiliser Control Bill - Government approval would be sought by the first week of September 2023 in respect of drafting instructions to be issued to the Attorney General's Office.</p>	Working session to be held with AGO
	<p><u>Forestry Services</u> Forests and Reserves Bill - The Attorney General's Office informed on 17 August 2023 that the bill is being presently worked out</p>	Further to working session held, the amended version of the Forest and Reserves Bill was transmitted on 6 May 2024 for finalization at the Attorney General office.
	<p><u>NPCS</u> Wetlands Bill (Comments from part above to be taken instead. Ministry of Environment is only finalizing the ESA map to be subsequently used for the wetland BILL) - consultancy is being</p>	<p>Presentation to the Hon. Minister and SCE was scheduled on 16.01.2024 but was rescheduled due to cyclonic weather.</p> <p>Draft bill prepared and submitted for consultation to Ramsar Committee members for views/ comment. The services of a consultant will be enlisted to evaluate and advise on the same prior to submission to AGO'S office.</p> <p>Decision of National Ramsar Committee: a Technical Committee would be set up to compile and synthesize all the views and comments</p>

	launched by the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change, following which drafting instructions would be given to the Attorney General's Office after seeking Government approval	
5	Values & Ethics	
	To organise a training in accountability, ethics in collaboration with the ICAC/CSCM	A request has already been submitted to CSCM to mount the course.
6	Reviews carried out by OPSG	
	Review on the Allocation and Monitoring of Agricultural State Lands (Land Use Division)	
	<u>Organisation Structure of the Land Use Division:</u> Lack of Stability in the tenure of Office The Post of PSO and SSO need to be filled.	Action already initiated by Ministry – the most senior Scientific Officer has been assigned duties as Officer in Charge pending finalization of the scheme of service of PSO and SSO
	<u>Lease of Agricultural State Land:</u> Adequacy of experience in related purpose of lease/ FAREI needs to provide training to lessees (individuals) in order to increase their knowledge and skills. It should be mandatory to follow appropriate training from FAREI prior to signature of the Lease Agreement and to submit planter's card to the LUD at least 3 months after the signature.	FAREI has already started training in the first instance for those applicants whose requests for State Land have not been retained.

	Operation Management at the Land Use Division:	
	<p>A) Monitoring Section</p> <p>Filling of 4 vacant posts of ASO/SASO to be filled.</p> <p>ASO should be holders of Diploma in Agriculture.</p> <p>AS to follow up with the visit of ASO/SASO.</p>	<p>Two additional ASOs were posted to LUD on 03.09.2023 and 18.09.2023.</p> <p>The above officers hold degree in Agriculture Ministry will consider a recommendation.</p> <p>Filling of two more vacant posts of ASO.</p> <p>Alignment of the qualification of ASO posted at LUD.</p> <p>Posting of an AS (post presently vacant).</p>
	<p>A) Other Issues –</p> <p>Identification cards</p> <p>Drones</p>	<p>Action already initiated for obtaining of ID for all officers.</p> <p>Requested for 25 ID for officers of LUD and Survey Office.</p> <p>Procurement procedure is still in progress</p> <p>Ministry is working on the training of a pilot and software analyst which are required for use of Drones.</p> <p>Not yet implemented.</p>
	<p>B) Escalation of arrears of revenue and limited enforcement for collection of arrears</p> <p>LLMS to provide notification 1 month and 3 months after notice/warning is sent</p>	<p>Presently only 1st and Final notice to pay rent due is served to lessee (Inclusive of interest).</p> <p>Ministry has already initiated necessary action with CISC for an inbuilt reminder mechanism in LLMS and for reminders to be sent by SMS/WhatsApp instead of letters to defaulters.</p>
	<p>C) Lessees whose LA have been terminated on LLMS and who have rent due do not appear in report for arrears</p> <p>Expired LA:</p> <p>3 notifications prior to expiry of LA:</p> <p>3 months before expiry</p> <p>2 months before expiry</p>	<p>Action has already been initiated for CISC to provide an inbuilt reminder mechanism to provide necessary notifications.</p> <p>CISC was requested to update the Land Lease Management System which is already in use at LUD.</p>

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	1 month before expiry <u>Rent due:</u> System to provide notification 1 month and 3 months after notice/warning is sent	
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