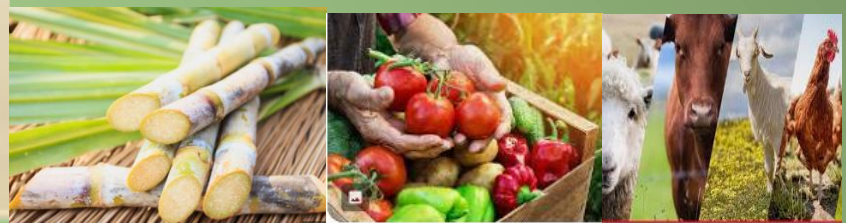


**MINISTRY OF  
AGRO-  
INDUSTRY &  
FOOD SECURITY**

**Annual Report  
for the Financial  
Year 2022/2023**





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**PART I - ABOUT THE MINISTRY/DEPARTMENT**  
**VISION AND MISSION**

**Overall Policy**

Strengthening food security and sustainable agricultural development through:

- improvements in productivity;
- provision of safe food;
- increased contribution of agriculture in the economy;
- creating more awareness and interest for agriculture to enhance business and employment opportunities; and
- sustainable use of natural and genetic resources.

**Vision**

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

- utilise 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

## Message from the Hon. Minister

I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security for the Financial Year 2022-2023. The Ministry has a crucial role in addressing food security, forestry, and biodiversity issues.

This Annual Report showcases the efforts and commitment of the Ministry during the financial year 2022-2023 to strengthen the agricultural sector, make it more responsive to the country's socio-economic needs while also focusing on youth empowerment and enhancing our food self-sufficiency. Measures have also been taken to address challenges in the agricultural sector, specifically regarding land abandonment issues in the cane industry.

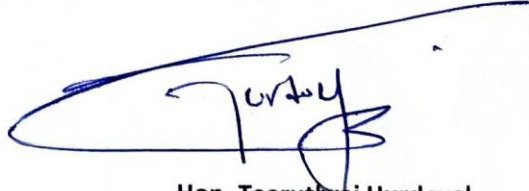
The Foodcrop-sector has also encountered unprecedented challenges, including rising input prices like fertilizers and the impact of climate change. To tackle these challenges, the Ministry has increased subsidies to support the agricultural community through various government-approved schemes.

Another vital aspect of our agricultural sector is the Cane industry. The Ministry has received valuable recommendations from the World Bank to ensure the industry's sustainability. One of the key recommendations implemented is the formulation of the National Biomass Framework.

As the Minister of Agro Industry and Food Security, my vision is to create an agricultural sector that is not only productive and sustainable but also resilient in the face of uncertainties. I am fully conscious that the journey to turning this vision into a reality will not be easy.

It is only through fostering strong partnerships and engaging stakeholders at every level that we can address the challenges that may arise and make substantial strides towards achieving our objectives and create a sustainable and prosperous future for our agricultural industry.

I seize this opportunity to express my appreciation to the dedicated staff of the Ministry, the units and departments, parastatal bodies under the Ministry's oversight, as well as regional and international agencies for their contributions to the agricultural sector.



**Hon. Teeruthraj Hurdoyal**  
**Minister of Agro-Industry & Food Security**



## Message from the Senior Chief Executive

I am pleased to present the annual report of the Ministry of Agro-Industry & Food Security for the period 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

In this report, we also provide information on the allocation and use of human and financial resources made available to the Ministry, the achievements reached and the challenges ahead. Stakeholders and the public at large are also being informed on the services offered by the Ministry.

The Ministry of Agro-Industry & Food Security has a long, prosperous, successful, and proud history of working with others institutions, NGOs and other stakeholders to ensure food security and safety for our population. This report bears also a demonstration to the hard work, endeavor, and commitment by a great number of people who are working together to achieve strategic objectives of this Ministry.

Our farmers necessitate assistance in order to ensure their effective mainstreaming to drive socio-economic change and national development. In view of assisting the farming community, stakeholders and the public at large are continuously being informed on the services offered by the Ministry. In so doing, we have to use proper allocation and use of human and financial resources made available to the Ministry. The impact of our policies, projects and schemes is elaborated in the achievements reached.

I wish to conclude by thanking all the staff of the Ministry for their dedication and hard work which is fundamental for the implementation of the projects and service delivery of the Ministry.



Mrs. M. Nathoo

Senior Chief Executive

## **Roles and Functions of the Ministry / Department**

### **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 described below.

# Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security



**Agricultural Services with 11 Departments**



**Forestry Services**



**National Parks and Conservation Service**



**8 Parastatal bodies**



1. Agricultural Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical arm of the MAIFS</li> <li>• Regulatory and policy functions</li> <li>• Supply inputs to the farming community</li> </ul>
2. Mauritius Cane Industry Authority (MCIA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote the development of the cane sector and its clusters</li> <li>• create an enabling environment with innovative and efficient services, research and development in the sugar sector</li> </ul>
3. Forestry Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• management of the State Forest Lands including 'native' forests and Nature Reserves</li> <li>• protection as well as raising awareness about forest conservation and protection</li> <li>• promotion of ecotourism</li> </ul>
4. National Parks and Conservation Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sustainable management and restoration through in-situ and ex-situ conservation,</li> <li>• ecosystem restoration, public awareness,</li> <li>• research and implementation of international conventions</li> </ul>
5. National Agricultural Products Regulatory Office (NAPRO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• control and regulate the import, export, production and sale of meat, tea, tobacco and derived products as well as their preparation, processing, manufacturing and packing.</li> </ul>
6. Small Farmers Welfare Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the economic and social welfare of small farmers and their families.</li> <li>• Register farmers and deliver farmers' cards</li> <li>• Implement schemes for the benefit of small farmers.</li> </ul>
7. Mauritius Society for Animal Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catching and disposal of stray dogs and cats,</li> <li>• Humane education and the prevention of cruelty to animals,</li> <li>• Promotion of the welfare and good treatment of animals</li> <li>• conducting sterilisation campaign</li> </ul>

<p>8. Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (FAREI)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•conduct research in non-sugarcane crops, livestock, agro-forestry</li> <li>•provide extension services to farmers</li> </ul>
<p>9. Mauritius Meat Authority (MMA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•slaughter, dressing and transportation of cattle, goats, pigs, sheep and deer meat to markets</li> </ul>
<p>10. Irrigation Authority</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•ensure that planters in irrigation zones are adequately supplied with water</li> <li>•implement and manage irrigation projects</li> <li>• maintain irrigation networks in good conditions.</li> </ul>
<p>11. Agricultural Marketing Board (AMB)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•expand the local production of strategic crops like onions, potatoes and garlic</li> <li>•operate or provide for the operation of such storage, handling, transport processing facilities</li> <li>•import potatoes, onions and garlic to ensure uninterrupted supply of these commodities on the local market.</li> </ul>
<p>12. Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanical Garden Trust (SSRBG)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Proper maintenance of biological garden</li> <li>•Conservation and Research of biodiversity</li> <li>•Education Programmes.</li> </ul>
<p>13. Rose Belle Sugar Estate Board</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•manage the assets of the Rose Belle Sugar Estate Board efficiently and effectively for wealth generation, welfare and modernisation, thus benefiting the employees, stakeholders and society at large</li> </ul>

## Gender Statement

The Ministry of Agro Industry and Food Security complies with all legislations and policies of government in the context of gender equality and empowerment. Women play a central role in the agricultural sector, engaging in a myriad of ways as producers, managers, marketers, and entrepreneurs and hence, contributes to sustainable agricultural development. The Ministry recognizes the pivotal role of women in the agricultural sector and advocates for their empowerment.

As such, women in the agricultural sector are being empowered with various production and processing techniques as well as entrepreneurial skills to enable them to contribute in boosting up our food production and ensure food security, at the same time rendering them more independent and enabling them to contribute into the national economy.

With a view to addressing gender gaps in the agricultural sector, the Ministry has:

- (a) raised awareness on gender mainstreaming among its staff at all levels;
- (b) carried out capacity building programmes for women in sustainable agricultural production and innovative agricultural practices such as hydroponics, vertical gardening, aquaponics, roof top gardening and livestock production;
- (c) put in place several schemes and incentives for the farming community in order to boost up food production and enhancing food security and;
- (d) acted as a facilitator in fostering knowledge and technology transfer and promoting innovative farm technologies.

In addition, to further mainstream gender in our projects and policies, the Ministry will encourage more women to engage in agro-processing and transformation of the agricultural products as well as in agro-forestry to contribute further to food security

## 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, Covid19 and Russia-Ukraine war. The effectiveness of the Ministry in achieving its purpose, depends entirely 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 namely regarding the fire certificates of our buildings.

### **Organizational Structure**

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

The overall administration of the Ministry falls under the responsibility of the Senior Chief Executive, who is assisted by four Deputy Permanent Secretaries and seven Assistant Permanent Secretaries on the administrative side. On the technical side, support is provided by Heads of three main Divisions:

- Agricultural Services;
- Forestry Services; and
- National Parks and Conservation Service.

As well as the Agricultural Planning and Policy Analysis Unit (APAU). Support services are provided from officers of the Human Resource Cadre, Finance Cadre, Procurement Cadre, General Services Grades and Workmen's Group.

## Senior Management Team

Section	Title	Contact Details
Administration	Senior Chief Executive	Mrs Moheenee NATHOO
	Deputy Permanent Secretary	Mrs Soondaree Devi SOBORUN
	Deputy Permanent Secretary	Mrs Geetawantee RAMNAUTH
	Acting Deputy Permanent Secretary	Mr Keshwarao GOVIND
Administration	Acting Deputy Permanent Secretary	Mrs Drithy Emabye Ouma Krishna HASSEA
Agricultural Planning and Policy Analysis Unit (APAU)	Chief Agricultural Policy and Programme Development Officer	Mr R. BAHADOOR
Agricultural Services	Assistant Director	Officer in Charge for Livestock & Veterinary Sector Dr Pitambarsing Beeharry

Forestry Services	Conservator of Forests	Assistant Director, Agriculture Services and officer in charge for the tea crop and Agri- Food sector Dr Preaduth Sookar
	Deputy Conservator of Forests	Mrs Cecily Cyparsad ccyparsade@govmu.org
National Parks and Conservation Service	Director	Mr K. RUHOMAUN Phone: 4662116 <a href="mailto:kruhomaun@govmu.org">kruhomaun@govmu.org</a>
	Ag. Deputy Director	Mr V. S. GOPAL Phone: 464 4016 <a href="mailto:svsgopal@gmail.com">svsgopal@gmail.com</a>

### **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. The Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security, had, during the financial year 2021/2022, disbursed Rs 790,850.00 in training sponsorship to provide learning opportunities in terms of job-related courses that would equip officers with the necessary skills, knowledge and mindset for providing quality services to the public.



**Major Achievements**

**Sugar Sector**

- As at end June 2023, 654 planters have benefitted from the Cane Replantation Scheme and 441 ha of fields have been replanted. As for rehabilitation of abandoned lands, same was pursued under this Scheme and 93.1 ha belonging to 150 planters have been replanted.
- For crop 2022, the total revenue derived by planters taking into consideration revenue sugar, bagasse and molasses exceeded the guaranteed price of Rs 25,000 per ton sugar. As such the Government support was not required.
- The ex-syndicate price of sugar for crop 2022 paid to planters and producers reached a peak price of Rs 27,764.4 per ton sugar. This represents a remarkable increase of 52% over the previous crop's price of Rs 16,765 per ton sugar.
- The National Biomass Framework was made public on 26 June 2023 highlighting that there is a potential to produce some 22% Renewable Energy to come from biomass sources (Bagasse, cane trash and wood) out of the 60% target set by Government for Renewable Energy in the energy mix of the country by 2030.
- Planters producing up to 60 tons of sugar were entitled to a 50% subsidy on the advance made for the purchase of fertilisers for Crop 2022. The scheme was launched in September 2022. Issue of vouchers for crop 2022 started in September 2022 and was extended till 11 February 2023. For Crop 2022, vouchers for 4427.55 t fertilizers were issued concerning 6734 planters at 4 July 2023 who benefitted from scheme. Rs 124,057,000 was disbursed by the Ministry of Finance Economic Planning and Development from the National Resilience Fund.
- Irrigation facilities to some 500 ha of lands and producing some 3040 ha of sugarcane fields and some 719 ha of vegetable plantations.

### Plantations on-Sugar Sector

- Necessary measures were taken to ensure continuous availability of strategic crops such as potato, onion and garlic in the market despite soaring prices of these products in the international market and rising freight costs.
- The total number of conserved germplasm at the National Plant Genetic Resources Centre amounts to 678 accessions.
- In view to reducing the population of Melon Fly (*Zeugodacus cucurbitae*) in planters' field, 42 625 L of protein bait have been applied as spot sprays by dedicated spraying teams of Reduit, Mapou and Flacq Sub offices in the Northern, Eastern and Central Regions; 20, 040 Methyl eugenol pheromone blocks have been placed for mass trapping in specific regions for control of the Oriental fruit fly (*Bactrocera dorsalis*) during the mango season in the East; 18 694 Methyl eugenol pheromone blocks and 2641.1 L of protein bait have been distributed freely to the public to sustain the ongoing fruit fly control programmes. Distribution sites are: Reduit (Entomology Division), Port Louis (NPF), Riviere des Anguilles (FAREI), Mapou, Flacq sub offices; 7 Million sterile flies have been released in planters' fields (L'Esperance Quartier, Rose Belle) under the SIT project for suppression of the melon fly.

- **Pest surveillance programme**

49 traps have been placed across the island to monitor a new pest *Drosophila Suzuki*, that is known to affect soft fruits (strawberries, guava, wild berries...). No significant population or damage have been observed.

- **Boosting of the Apiculture Sector in Mauritius**

- - A rise in honey production from 30 T to 33 T has been achieved.
- 216 persons have followed training in beekeeping;
- 81 new beekeepers have been registered at the Entomology Division;
- 35 new beekeepers have been given access in the dedicated bee reserve zones at La Ferme, Bras D'eau and Petit Sable. 13 new plots have been demarcated (12 in Bras B'eau; 1 in La Ferme), and approved to be handed over to 13 beekeepers on waiting lists. A new melliferous plant '*Tetranium danielli*', the Bee tree has been introduced. 3 plants were given symbolically to 3 dedicated beekeepers on World Bee Day 2023, to be

planted on their apiary site. Propagation of bee trees are underway at the Barkly Experimental Station

- Celebration of International Day Biosphere Reserve at Bel Ombre
- Tree planting Campaign under Mauritius Ridge to Reef(R2R) Project
- Celebration of world Wetlands Day 2023
- Training of Trainers Course on The Flyway Approach to The Conservation and Wise Use of Waterbirds and Wetland
- Celebration International Day for Biological Diversity 2023 and Inauguration of Black River Peak trail at Black River Gorges View Point
- The Small Farmers Welfare Fund has organised activities to enhance the welfare/quality of life of farmers. Under the Educational Achiever Award Schemes, there was a total of 50 awardees for PSAC, School Certificate, Higher School Certificate and Laureate for Mauritius. For Rodrigues there was 1 awardee for PSAC, 3 awardees for School Certificate and 1 Laureate.
- 5321 planters have been paid a financial assistance to the tune of Rs 47,171,718 as relief measures following cyclone Batsirai and heavy rainfall on 31 January 2022-03 February 2022, while 298 planters have been paid a financial assistance to the tune of Rs 3,756,174 as relief measures following cyclone Emnati and heavy rainfall on 18-20 February 2022.
- A New Planters Protection Scheme has been approved in replacement of the Agricultural Calamities Solidarity Scheme (ACASS) and the Crop Loss Compensation Scheme (CLCS). Under the new Scheme, planters will receive a maximum assistance of Rs 6,000 per arpent for open field whereas planters undertaking sheltered farming, will receive a compensation of Rs 6,000 per unit of 500 m<sup>2</sup>.
- The Fertiliser Subsidy Scheme for planters of crop (other than sugar) was devised. 50 % subsidy on the cost of fertiliser has been provided to planters. A total of Rs 75,056,715 has been provided to 4,617 planters.
- At the Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (FAREI), applications were processed in respect of the various schemes and 459 have been approved for an amount of Rs 56,716,780. Advanced Fertilizer Scheme for planters producing up to 60 T of sugar. A total amount of Rs

126.5M was disbursed representing the 50% subsidy given to the 6,981 beneficiary planters.

- In order to protect Fruit trees, a subsidy of 75 % on purchase of anti-bird net up to a maximum of 12 rolls for orchard and 5 pieces for backyard trees was provided. For the year 2021/2022, there was a total number of 3163 beneficiaries amounting to Rs 24,662,499.67.
- New varieties have been developed and released Green pea variety Green Beauty and Edible podded pea variety Sweet Snow Pea and several promising varieties recommended.
- Novel water saving irrigation systems the KSNM Drip Irrigation, the KSNM Spray Irrigation and the Exudative Tube Application (ETA) promoted among growers.
- A total of 177 extension activities were organized and were attended by 1 818 farmers/entrepreneurs. As per recent years, the major thrusts were to promote safe food production while reducing the use of chemicals in food crop production and adoption of agro-ecological principles.
- Twenty agri-business enterprises benefitted free advisory services on process and product improvement; 139 protocols developed or upgraded for processed food products.
- The Rose Belle Sugar Estate Board (RBSEB) has initiated the plantation of Avocado plants on an extent of 4A, Kumquat/Limes/Lucuma on an extent of 5A, Macadamia trees on an extent of 50 Perches, Strawberry plants on an extent of 75 Perches as well as the production of 20,000 pots of Orchid flower plants by year 2024.
- The Seed Purchase Scheme, Freight Rebate Scheme and Subsidies were maintained to assist growers and promote production of strategic crops. Some Rs 35 M has been disbursed.
- Some 3277 lease of land have been allocated for various activities related to agriculture production which represents an acreage of 7500 arpents.
- In order to enhance tea cultivation, some 55 arpents of land have been cleared and planted with tea plantlets and additional land of 31 arpents leased to tea growers at Grande Chartreuse.
- Some 52,102 plants of fruit/ornamental/medicinal crops of which 35,913 and 16,189 were produced by conventional and tissue culture methods respectively. In order to promote propagation, the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security has also signed an MoU with the Prison

department for the production of propagating materials of various fruit species at the Prison Service.

- Research and risk assessment activities to sustain government's efforts for a safer food from farm to fork have been undertaken. During the financial year 2021/2022, some 2,695 microbiological tests on food, feed, water and milk samples and 320 chemical tests on milk samples, were conducted
- Afforestation programme was carried out over an extent of 1.2 Ha. over the island of Mauritius (PG La Prairie).
- Reforestation programme was carried out over an extent of 6.75 Ha. over the island of Mauritius (SL Asset and SL Salazie).
- Creation of Healing Forest (SL Grand Bassin) over an extent of 2.00 Ha

## Status on implementation of budget measures

Paragraph	Budget Measures	Progress/ achievements
50(a& b)	Providing a grant of 50 percent, up to a maximum of Rs 500,000, for the purchase of a sheltered farm for hydroponics and extending the purchase of a second sheltered farm	In FY 2022/23 some 149 applications processed for a total amount of MUR 74.5 M. The measure is being maintained for FY 2022/23. There has been an increase in production under protected culture by 51% from 6,111 tonnes in 2021 to 9,237 tonnes in 2022. As at end of FY , MUR 25 627 461.00 were disbursed to 105 planters.
50 ( c)	Increasing the subsidy on Onion, Potato, Garlic and Bean seeds sold by the Agricultural Marketing Board (AMB) from  50 percent to 75 percent;	For campaign 2022, some 200 growers who purchased seeds after 24 <sup>th</sup> June 2022 have already benefited from the 75% subsidy.
50 (d)	Introducing a Minimum Guaranteed Price, for planters, of Rs 38,000 per tonne for onions, Rs 33,000 per tonne for potatoes and Rs 50,000 per tonne for beans.	The minimum floor / guaranteed prices for onions and potatoes were offered to growers as from July 2022 to Dec 2022.



51	Encourage them to bring back abandoned land under cultivation through a “Crop Replantation Fund” at the DBM at an annual preferential rate of 2.5 percent	More sensitization campaigns at level of Ministry of Agro/SFWF to inform planters of the incentives
53 (a)	<b>53(a)</b> A grant of 50 percent up to a maximum of Rs 500,000, for the setting up of fruit ripening facilities (FAREI)	Scheme may need to be reviewed. More sensitization campaigns need to be done at the level of FAREI Some Rs 500,000 to be disbursed by end of this FY
53 (b)	To support fruit and flower growers, a maximum grant of Rs 100,000 for procurement of planting materials. (FAREI)	Scheme may need to be reviewed. More sensitization campaigns need to be done at the level of FAREI  The approval of the Ministry was obtained on the 23 May 2023, for the SFWF to proceed with the construction of the sixteen (16) culverts amounting to Rs 4.8 million. Project will be implemented in FY 2023/24

54 (a)	Winter allowance is being increased from Rs 1.50 to Rs 2.00 per kg	Completed
54 (b)	Rs 6 million is being provided to rehabilitate roads and build appropriate drainage systems in tea plantations at Nouvelle France, Grand Bois and Bois Cheri	The approval of the Ministry was obtained on the 23 May 2023, for the SFWF to proceed with the construction of the sixteen (16) culverts amounting to Rs 4.8 million. Project will be implemented in FY 2023/24
54 (c)	10,000 tea plantlets will be provided free of charge	Completed
55 (a)	A subsidy of Rs 500 per Bee queen will be provided to beekeepers up to a maximum of 10 queens	7 applications received for purchase of queen bees and 6 applications received for supply of queen bees which is being processed by the entomology section of the Ministry of Agro-Industry.
55 (b)	A one-off grant of Rs 150,000 per beekeeper will be	24 applications received and being processed by the entomology division

	provided to secure the Bee keeping zones	
55 (c)	<p>AMB will import beeswax in bulk and re-sell to bee keepers</p> <p>at an affordable price;</p>	<p>The Agricultural Marketing Board (AMB) has started the import formalities. Samples have been received from India and Egypt. Analysis of samples is being carried out.</p> <p>A registration exercise has also been done. Some 25 beekeepers have registered</p>
55 (d)	The scheme for acquisition of CCTV camera will be extended to bee honey producers (FAREI)	36 applications have been received. 20 applications have been processed and examined. Funds disbursed for 14 beneficiaries for an amount of Rs 319,576. 6 applications are kept in abeyance.
55 (e)	New mellifluous plants will be introduced to enable year-round honey production	New melliferous plants have been introduced and are being propagated at Barkly Experimental Station
57 (a)	Rs 75 million is being provided to registered planters to cover 50 percent of their cost of fertilisers	For tea growers, an amount of RS 19 M has already been disbursed for some 1,100 planters & for Crop growers, Rs 70 M has been disbursed for some 2,500 crop growers

<b>57 (b)</b>	Subsidy of 75 percent will be provided on the purchase of liquid fertilisers, bio-fertilisers and composts produced by cooperatives	<p>The scheme was officially launched on 21 December 2022 and is ongoing.</p> <p>120 applications received for compost and 30 for concentrated Molasses stilage. 4 Suppliers have been enlisted for supply of liquid Fertiliser, Bio-Fertiliser, compost and Jivarutram (natural fertiliser)</p>
<b>57 (d)</b>	A Micro Propagation and Seed Production scheme is being introduced whereby seed producers will benefit from a grant of 50 percent of their cost)	The scheme is proposed to support Entrepreneurs in the setting up of plant invitro facility. It will cover cost of equipment and producers of seed. Beneficiaries will be provided a grant up to 500,000 of the cost of investment. AMB. No application received
<b>59</b>	<p>To finance this Agri-Transformation Programme, the IFCM will offer</p> <p>(a) a preferential lease of 2.5 percent to Cooperatives for the purchase of mini-tractors;</p>	<p>No. of applications received: 1 for a total amount of Rs 35,786,000.</p> <p>1 application made for 4 different leases under Rs 25M :2 crawler tractor + 1 wheel tractor + 1 Double cab)</p>

	(b)offer Leasing facilities of up to Rs 25 million with an annual interest rate of 3.5 percent.	No. of applications approved: 1 for a total approved amount Rs 35,786,000.
<b>330</b>	Slaughterhouse at Bai Diamant in Rodrigues building (electrical, plumbing, openings, tiling and other minor works) 2. Supply and installation of equipment for slaughter of cattle, goat and sheep	Instead, proposal was made for the setting up of HACCP certified slaughter house with processing and cold rooms near feedlots at Deep River, Bel Ombre/Baie du Cap and Yemen. Halal certification will also be sought.
<b>63</b>	National Biomass Framework	Measure operational in FY 2022/23. Cabinet approved the National Biomass Framework report on 26 May 2023
	Remuneration of Rs 3,300 per Tonnes of sugar for bagasse to all planters and producers of sugar.	Sugar cane planters and producers including millers have been accordingly remunerated for a total amount of Rs. 848.7M. Measure being maintained for FY 2022/23
<b>64 (a)</b>	Maintain the minimum guaranteed price of Rs 25,000 per	To provide a revenue guarantee of Rs 25,000 per ton of sugar to planters producing up to 60 tons of sugar, inclusive of all revenue streams from sugar, bagasse and

	tonne for planters producing up to 60 tons of sugar	molasses.
<b>64 (b) &amp; 64 (c)</b>	A waiver on insurance premium payable to Sugar Insurance Fund Board by planters	<p>Planters producing up to 60 tons of sugar will be exempted from paying the insurance premium to the SIFB for Crop 2021.</p> <p>There was a decision from the Ministry of Finance in October 2022 that no deduction will be made from the Rs 25,000 per tonne sugar in respect of the SIFB premium and CESS for small planters for crop 2022.</p>
<b>65 (a)</b>	<p>The grant under the Cane Replantation Scheme will be</p> <p>increased by 43 percent from Rs 35,000 to Rs 50,000 per arpent</p>	<p>For FY 2022/23, contracts have been signed for 482 ha. Land preparation has been completed on 245Ha and replantation completed on 156Ha. For FY2021/22 - As at 28 February 2023 a total of 437 ha land has been prepared and a total extent of 416 ha has been replanted. Some 24 ha remains to be replanted.</p>
<b>65 (b)</b>	Cane Replantation Revolving Fund" will be introduced	A total of 11 companies applied for the loan at DBM covering an extent of 6303 Arpent to be replanted. The MCIA has so far approved 2296 arpent as extent eligible



	by the DBM to provide loans at an annual preferential rate of 2.5 percent	for loan.  No. of applications received: 13 for a total amount of Rs 367,798,983  No. of applications approved: 6 for a total approved amount Rs 96,218,000  Amount disbursed Rs 450,000 to 1 beneficiary
<b>68 (b)</b>	Subsidy on animal feed to Rs 10 per kilogram.	completed
<b>68 (c)</b>	Cattle Breeding Scheme is being extended to importers of cattle	completed
<b>68 (d)</b>	A grant of Rs 15,000 will be provided to breeders to purchase calves of less than 1 year	completed
<b>70</b>	Provide a 30 percent subsidy on the purchase of equipment for production of locally produced pasteurized milk	completed
<b>71 (b)</b>	Rs 15 million is earmarked for setting up of	Under National Environment Climate Change Fund od

	waste treatment facilities at Bassin-Requin and St Martin	MOFEPD Waste treatment facility at Bassin Requin : Contract awarded Waste treatment facility at St Martin Phase 1- Cleaning & Rehabilitation of waste water system completed in October 2022 Phase 2 is under consideration
73	Organisation of a "Salon de L'Agriculture" to promote Mauritian agriculture	Some Rs 6 M disbursed for the event

### Status on Implementation of Key Actions

Outcome		Outcome Indicator	Target 2022/2023	Achievements as at 30 June 2023	Remarks
Improved food security level with increased local production of all non-sugar crops (food crops, vegetables, fruits) and livestock		Increased local production of food crops (tonnes)	>120,000	137,314	Food crops include production under sheltered farming and hydroponics
Delivery Unit	Main Service	Key Performance Indicator	Target 2022/2023	Achievements as at 30 June 2023	Remarks
FAREI	Promote climate resilient/protected culture	Production under protected culture (tonnes)	16,500	9,979	Production was affected due to unfavourable agro-climatic condition. Tomato and sweet pepper production were impacted by insect pest (Tuta Absoluta & thrips)

Mauritius Cane Industry Authority	Aggressive marketing strategy geared towards increasing exports of value-added sugar	Exports of Special sugars (tonnes)	150,000	138,282	Under performance due to rising prices resulting in reduced demand. 138,282 tons of Special Sugars have been exported for the period July 2022 to June 2023.  Note: 100,423 tons of White Refined Sugar have been exported in addition to the special sugars
	Implement Cane Replantation Scheme	Extent of land replanted annually under the Cane Replantation Programme (Ha)	1,600	1,351	Under performance due to limitation in capacity (low productivity of machinery). For the period July 2022 to June 2023: 471.5 ha for ALMS and 879 ha for Cane Replantation Revolving Fund completed

Agricultural Marketing Board	Encourage local production of strategic crops	Operationalisation of the National Wholesale Market	Dec-22	Jul-23	The National Wholesale Market was inaugurated on 27 July 2023. Delays were due to the fact that additional works had to be carried out including sewerage system, drainage system and electrical works
Agricultural Services Division	Provide accompanying measures to boost tea production	Tea production (tonnes)	1,600	1,293	Low production due to labour shortage, demographic age profile of tea growers and high cost of labour.
Entomology Division	Promotion of Apiculture	Volume of honey produced (tonnes)	35	33	Reduced production due to presence of devastating pests of honey bees, decrease in the area of melliferous plants and unfavourable weather conditions.

Horticulture Division	Increase availability of local seeds	Volume of seeds produced under Quality Declared Seeds (Kg)	540	220	Planters incurred substantial crop losses (50%) following the occurrence of torrential rainfall in January and February 2023
Small Farmers Welfare Fund	Provide support to small farmers	Area under Agricultural land mechanization support (arpents)	3,000	2,967	An amount of Rs 8.9 M has been disbursed for 1244 beneficiaries covering 3039 arpents of land
Livestock Division	Supply of breeding stock (combination of Cattle, Goat, Sheep)	Number of calves, lambs and goat kids produced	200	133	Limitation in availability of breeding animals. The figure provided relates to the number of calves and lambs produced by Melrose and Salazie Farms
Forestry service	Maintenance of forest ecosystem services	Area of forests rehabilitated (Ha)	100	57	Delays in recruiting general workers - Recrutement done in November 2022 and April 2023 which delayed the forest rehabilitation programme



## **Risk Management, Citizen Oriented Initiatives & Good Governance**

### **The customers of the Ministry are:**

- All Ministries and Parastatal Organisations
- Planters (sugar cane, tea, crop, and flowers)
- Farmers/Breeders
- Sugar Companies
- Tea Companies
- Cooperative Federations and societies
- Trade Unions and Federations of planters and farmers
- Planters' Associations
- Importers and Exporters
- Monkey and CITES Registered Breeders Company
- Public, tourist and students
- 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 1- Action Plan of Audit Committee for year 2022/23**



## PART III - FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The 2022/2023 Budget Estimates, the Vote of the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security is 13-4 and 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**

**13-406 National Parks and Conservation Service**

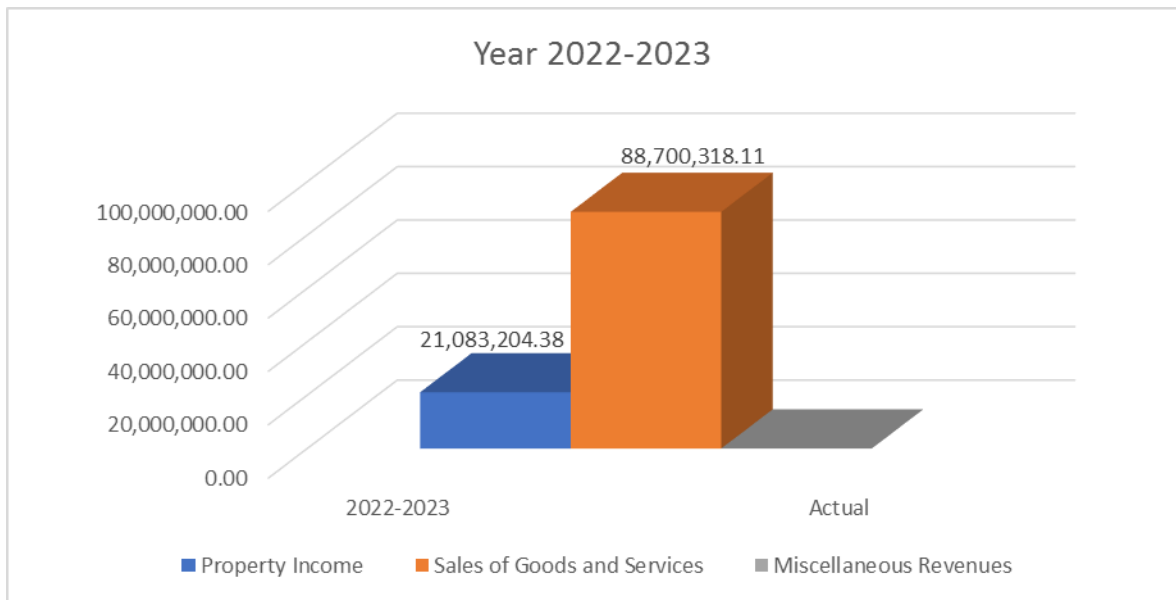
### Statement of Revenue and Expenditure

During the year under review, total revenue for the Ministry amounted to Rs. 93,126,305.27 and falls under two 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.)

<b>Revenue (Rs)</b>	<b>2022-2023 Actual</b>
Property Income	21,083,204.38
Sales of Goods and Services	88,700,318.11
Miscellaneous Revenues	14,518.21
<b>Total Revenue from property Income, User Fees and other Sources</b>	<b>109,798,040.70</b>

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



*Statement of Revenue*

Revenue (Rs)	2019-2020 Actual	2020-2021 Actual	2021-2022 Actual
Property Income	12,332,260.61	17,514,398.63	21,083,204.38
Sales of Goods and Services	191,068,301.50	75,611,906.64	88,700,318.11
Fines, Penalties and Forfeits			
Miscellaneous Revenues			14,518.21
<b>Total Revenue from property Income, User Fees and other Sources</b>	<b>203,400,562.11</b>	<b>93,126,305.27</b>	<b>109,798,040.70</b>

<b>NOTE:</b>	<b>2021-2022 Actual</b>
<b>Property Income includes:</b>	
Other Land Leases (RHOU)	<u>5,302,115.06</u>
<b>Sales of Goods and Services includes:</b>	
Rental of Government Property (Building) (RPMO)	5,732,480.00
Overpayment Made In Previous Years (RGEN)	1,108,739.29
Commission on Salary Deductions (RGEN)	16,569.30
Miscellaneous (General) (RGEN)	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<u><b>6,857,788.59</b></u>

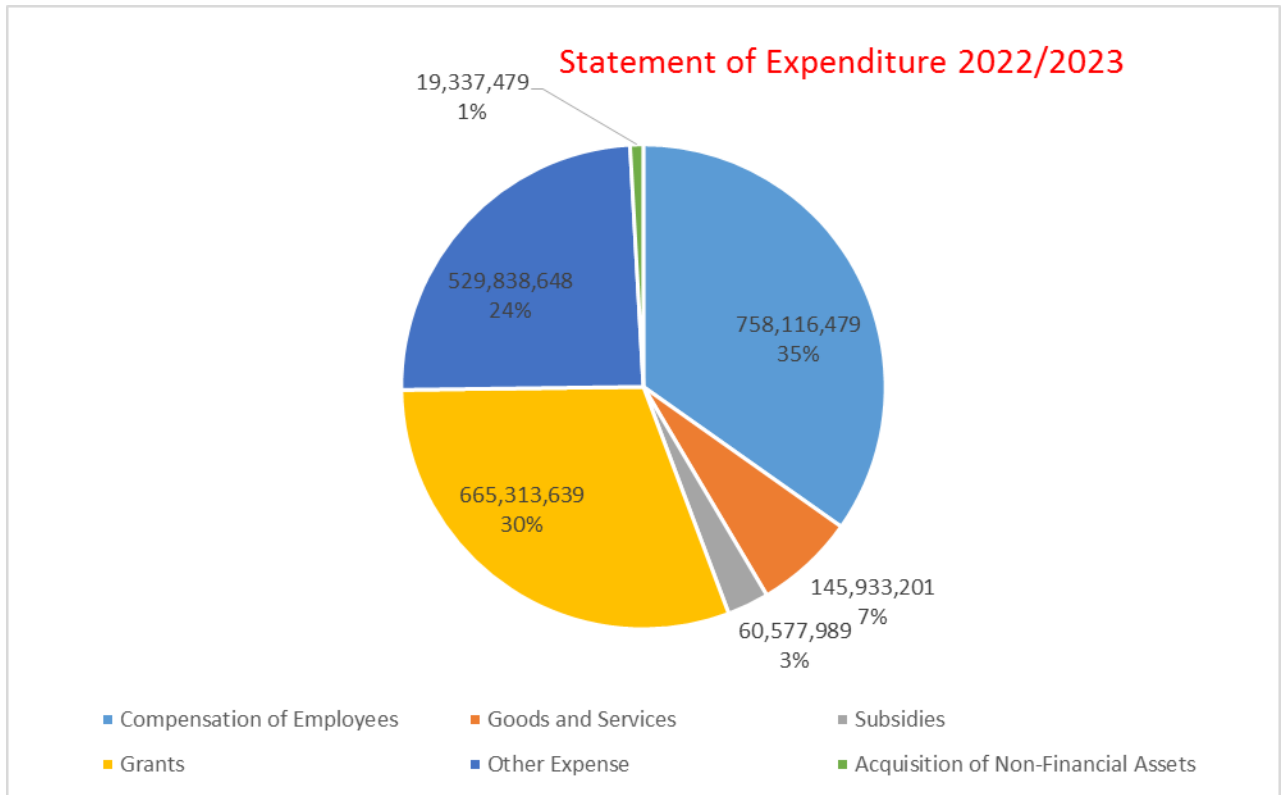
### Statement of Expenditure

On the expenditure side, the original estimates were Rs. 2,410,000,000.

The total expenditure for 2022/2023 amounted to Rs 2,179,117,435

Economic Classification	Head/Sub-Head of Expenditure	2019-2020 Estimates (Rs)	2020-2021 Estimates (Rs)	2021-2022 Actual (Rs)	% Spent on total Est. 21-22 Actual
21	Compensation of Employees	663,082,543	709,055,125	758,116,479	35%
22	Goods and Services	167,219,021	164,852,606	145,933,201	7%
25	Subsidies	84,541,515	178,725,697	60,577,989	3%
26	Grants	515,946,039	555,067,732	665,313,639	30%
28	Other Expense	1,050,674,516	550,350,922	529,838,648	24%
31	Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets	135,210,249	17,411,772	19,337,479	1%
<b>Total Expenditure Recurrent &amp; Capital</b>		<b>2,616,673,883</b>	<b>2,175,463,854</b>	<b>2,179,117,435</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figure 2 below provides an illustration of expenditure incurred by Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security under vote 13-4 in 2022/2023.



### 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 **2022/2023** has been to the tune of **Rs. 15,752,973.68**

### 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 sugar cane 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 138,282 tons of special sugar in FY 2022/23 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 extent 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 127days 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 0.74% of the total Government budget (Rs1.6 billion of a total public budget of Rs216 billion) in 2022

### 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, graminiae 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 LDCs 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 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.
- 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;

- A pool of highly qualified and experienced scientists manned the research, extension and support institutions under the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security

### **Weaknesses**

- Limited land for large scale development
- Mechanisation inappropriate for small size of land holdings
- High cost associated with implementation of new production techniques
- Ageing labour force, shortage of skilled and unskilled labour and high cost of manual labour
- High cost of agricultural inputs
- Marketing channels are unstructured with absence of norms and standards
- Inadequate investment in research, intensive technologies and capacity development;
- An ageing farming community and no succession plan.

### **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 market 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 youngster for Agri-farming
- Land erosion 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

- Several strategies for Biodiversity conservation already exist namely the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan produced as an obligation of the CBD, 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 as the most important ones. The Native terrestrial Biodiversity and National Parks Act being a recent enactment in 2015, is more up to date.
- NPCS works while adhering to recommendations of Multilateral Environment 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) among others.
- 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 to promote the synergy and coordination required to undertake the sustainable management of forests and its resources.
- NPCS is a specialized de which has developed expertise in certain fields on native terrestrial biodiversity management and conservation, wetlands conservation, flora and fauna conservation and control of Invasive Alien Species supported by 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 falls under the jurisdiction of NPCS under the Ministry.

### 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 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 might be venomous eg. Reptiles).
- Inadequate information sharing between institutions and stakeholders which leads to duplication of work and responsibilities.
- 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 on 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.
- Existence of the National Parks and Conservation Fund.

- 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 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 jeopardise 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

### **Preserve terrestrial biodiversity**

Enhance forest ecosystem services and national parks through:

- restoration and reforestation programmes
- protection of the unique flora and fauna from invasive species.

### **Improve quarantine activities and phytosanitary border controls**

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

## **Annex 1: Implementation of Director of Audit Comments**

### **1. Melrose Livestock Zone Project- Lapses in Project Management.**

#### **Recommendations**

- i) Delay in setting up of the Livestock Zone.*
- ii) Livestock Zone Project set aside by the Ministry.*

*(iii) Merging Process of the Infrastructure of the Livestock Zone not completed*

### **Remedial Action**

For Items (i), (ii) and (iii):

Due to issues encountered in construction, the Livestock Zone project at Melrose was reassessed and 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 previous financial year, as follows: Vehicle dip, drains and access roads ; Reconditioning of exercise yards ;Fencing works. The letter of acceptance has been issued on 23 March 2023 for an amount of Rs 2,700,000.00 excluding VAT. The handing over of site has been done on 20.04.2023 by officers of Engineering Division and APD.

Electricity network

- A cost estimate of Rs 6.3 M has been submitted by Energy Services Division (ESD) in December 2022. As an estimated cost of Rs 3 M excluding VAT and contingency was provided by ESD in January 2022, only this amount is available in budget for financial year 2022/2023. Hence, an additional amount of Rs 3.3 M is required to enable procurement exercise.
- a) Setting up of milking parlor
- f) Purchase and installation of cooling tank.

## **2. The Albion Duck Farm-Reduction in Operational Activities.**

### **Recommendation**

Reduction in the Number of Parent Stock of Ducks

### **Remedial Action**

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.



Livestock and Veterinary Division (LVD) are crucial, in view of diseases, especially Avian Flu as our Poultry Industry is well established and risk assessment has to be made 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.

It is to be highlighted that APD cannot lose the existing breeding line while working on a new one. Furthermore, APD cannot sell the first hybrids obtained from new genetics.

Trials have to be performed on the hybrids, on the rearing/fattening phase to ensure no complaints from the public once they are sold to the breeders

(ii) Commissioning and testing has been completed on 20 April 2022.

iii) To address biosecurity issues in view of the open duck farm, mitigating measures have been put in place since 2017, namely:

(a) An ongoing surveillance programme has been put in place whereby samples of duck eggs from all pens are sent to the Food Technology Laboratory (FTL), on a monthly basis, for analysis. Moreover, Veterinary Officers of the Livestock and Veterinary Division (LVD) also carry out swab tests to ensure no issue of Salmonella is encountered in the pens at Albion Farm.

(b) An ongoing rodent control program is also in place at Albion Duck Farm and the contract is relaunched every year. Presently, the contract has been awarded to Pest Handlers Ltd. as from 01 July 2022 up till 30 June 2023.

(c) To address the issue of an open farm, whereby a closed structure is recommended to prevent entry of wild animals, funds have been requested in past financial years but same has not yet been provided by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.

### **3. Closing Down of Richelieu Quarantine leading to Unavailability of a Government Quarantine for Imported Animals**

#### **Recommendation**

*(i) Unavailability of a Government Quarantine for Imported Animals*

*(ii) Richelieu Quarantine left in an abandoned state.*

### **Remedial Action**

Imported animals are kept at the isolation facility of the importers which have been registered by the Livestock and Veterinary Division. It is noted that the premises of Richelieu Quarantine have been put at the disposal of the Metro Express Ltd.

## **4. Construction of a National Wholesale Market -Delay in Construction Works and Operation of the Market**

### **Recommendation**

*(i) EOT not assessed Resulting in Non-application of Liquidated damages*

*(ii) Additional /Variation Works incurred due to initial project value reviewed downwards*

*(iii) Regulations for the operation of the NWM not finalised*

### **Remedial Action**

As at date, construction works with respect to the building, have been completed as per the Contract Document. However, its operation depends on the completion of the following additional works.

(i) Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Standby Generator (not completed as specifications not obtained from consultant. However, now works would be undertaken by AMB as the NWM building has been handed over to the AMB);

(ii) Drilling of Borehole (drilling works completed and water pumps need to be installed by the Water Research Co. Ltd); and

(iii) Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Sewer Treatment Plant (not completed as specifications not obtained from consultant. However, now works would be undertaken by AMB as the NWM building has been handed over to the AMB);

In view of the above, Liquidated Damages cannot be applied when construction works for the main building have already been completed.

These additional works are vital for the operation of the National Wholesale Market.

(a) Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Standby Generator

(b) Drilling of Borehole

(c) Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Sewer Treatment Plant

Draft Regulations was submitted to SLO. However, it is being reworked by AMB.

## **5. Government Asset Register not properly maintained.**

### **Recommendation**

*(i) Non-compliance with Deadline for submission of GAR Template and delay in Clearing Backlog.*

*(ii) incomplete Records of Non-Financial Assets.*

*(iii) Surveys of Assets-Dormant, Unserviceable and Unrecorded Assets were found.*

### **Remedial Actions**

#### **Forestry Services**

(i) Assets are being updated on the GAR.

ii) NFA record submitted to the Accountant General on 31/08/2022 for FY 21/22

iii) Unserviceable ledger available in each Forest Office for the Assets-Dormant, Unserviceable and Unrecorded Assets.

#### **B. NPCS**

Already submitted to the Treasury

#### **C. Agricultural Services**

Agricultural Chemistry Division

(i) Completed as at September 2022

(ii) Completed

Agricultural Information Division

(i) Non-compliance with Deadline for submission of GAR Template and delay in Clearing Backlog.

(ii) incomplete Records of Non-Financial Assets

iii) Surveys of Assets-Dormant, Unserviceable and Unrecorded Assets were found.

#### **Agronomy Head Office**

(i) All backlog has been cleared.

(ii) All assets purchased are being recorded on ADI.

(iii) A list is being prepared for write-off.

#### **Agronomy National Field Gene Bank (NFGB) Nouvelle Decouverte**

(i) Records updated upon receipt of Goods Form 1 and Invoices.

(ii) Dormant items

#### **Agronomy NPVSO**

(i) The Procurement Section provided copies of the Goods Form 1 and Invoices. Thus, the records have been updated accordingly.

(ii) All assets purchased are being recorded.

(iii) The list has been prepared.

#### **National Seed Gene Bank-Agronomy Division**

(i) 2021-2022 inputs were submitted on excel template.

(ii) Surveys of Assets-Dormant, Unserviceable and Unrecorded Assets

#### **Albion Experiment Station- Agronomy Division**

(i) 2021-2022 inputs were submitted on excel template.

(iii) To be completed after updating of store ledgers by newly-posted Technical Assistant

#### **Animal Production Division (APD)**

- (i) Completed GAR Template with no Backlogs was submitted with a slight delay
- (ii) Records of NFA in GAR system and store ledgers were updated.
- (iii) Dormant and Unserviceable Assets were updated and submitted to Stores in appropriate store form. Awaiting necessary actions by Stores.

### **Engineering Division**

- (i) Non-compliance with Deadline for submission of GAR Template and delay in Clearing Backlog.
- (ii) incomplete Records of Non-Financial Assets.
- (iii) Surveys of Assets-Dormant, Unserviceable and Unrecorded Assets were found.

### **Entomology Division**

- (i) Completed on excel sheet as at October 2022
- (ii) Completed

### **Food Science and Technology Division**

- (i) The GAR system is already updated at FSTD since last year. GAR template was submitted on time and backlog cleared last year.
- (ii) Records have been updated except for store ledgers in custody of Procurement and Supply Office.
- (iii) Lists of dormant and unserviceable assets have been submitted on the required store form. awaiting necessary action by Stores; assets have been inventoried

### **Horticulture Division**

- (i) Completed as at 31 December 2022
- (ii) Completed as at 31 December 2022
- (iii) Dormant and Unserviceable Assets have been included in GAR Templates

## **Head Office- Agricultural Services**

(i) 2021-2022 inputs were submitted on the GAR software

Maintenance and Ground Unit (MUGS)

National Plant Protection Office (NPPO)

(i) 2021-2022 inputs were submitted on excel sheet.

(ii) completed

(iii) Still awaiting for disposal, a team have check the unserviceable goods  
National Agricultural Products Regulatory Office (NAPRO)

(i) No backlog for NAPRO Transport

(i) completed as at 31 December 2022

## **Livestock and Veterinary Services**

(i) Non-compliance with Deadline for submission of GAR Template and delay in  
Clearing Backlog

## **Pesticides regulatory Office (PRO)**

(i) January 2022 to June 2022

## **Land Use & Survey Office**

(i) Inputs for State land at 100%

(ii) Input has been completed for 2020-2021

## **6. Continuation of Service beyond Compulsory Retirement Age of 65 years-relevant prior approval not sought and some Rs 438,000 overpaid.**

Recommendation

*In the absence of relevant approvals, an amount totalling Rs 208,235 was overpaid to him, for the period 14 July 2020 to 31 December 2020.*

*The Ministry should initiate action to recover the total amount overpaid of Rs 438,605.*

## **Remedial Action**

According to the Manager Human Resource, the officer ought to retire from the service on 14 July 2020, but due to an administrative error, he worked beyond that date.

After discovering the error, he was retired forthwith on 11 December 2020.

The Ministry of Public Service, Administrative Reforms was consulted and the advice tendered was as follows: -

(i) the error was an administrative one over which the officer did not have least control and for which he cannot be penalised;

Salary to be paid up to 10 December 2020, i.e last date at work; and cash in lieu of vacation leave (as at 13 July 2020) be paid.

The question of overpayment /recovering an amount of Rs 438,605 does not arise.

## **7. Governance Issues- Non-Compliance with Legislation.**

*(i) Non-Submission of Financial Statements for Audit*

*(ii) Annual Reports not laid before the National Assembly.*

*(iii) Special Fund-Financial Statements not submitted for audit and audited financial statements not laid before the National Assembly.*

*As of 13 January 2022, the National Parks and Conservation Fund falling under the purview of the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security, had not yet submitted its Financial Statements for financial year 2020-21 for audit.*

(i) **The Vallee d'osterlog Endemic Garden** Foundation has not submitted its Financial Statements for the period 2020-2021 to the National Audit office for auditing purpose as same has not been finalized as per IPSAS standard.

(ii) **The Small Farmers Welfare Fund** informed that the Financial Statements for year 2018-2019 has already been prepared and is currently being audited by the National Audit Office.

The Financial Statements for 2019-2020 & 2020-2021 are actually being prepared and will be sent to National Audit Office at the earliest.

(iii) **Mauritius Meat Authority (MMA)** informed that Financial statement for year 2014 & 2015 is under process.

On 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022, a letter has been sent to the treasury to request the assistance with the Financial statements under the IPSAS protocol.

Once they received the above confirmation, we shall submit a draft to the Parent Ministry.

**(iv) Mauritius Society for Animal Welfare (MSAW)**

MSAW informed that the Financial statement for year 2014 & 2015 is under process.

On 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022, a letter has been sent to the treasury to request the assistance with the Financial statements under the IPSAS protocol.

Once they received the above confirmation, we shall submit a draft to the Parent Ministry.

**(v) Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanical (SSRBG)**

(i) Annual Report for year 2013 and 2014 have already been prepared but not yet submitted;

(ii) Last Financial Statement which has already been audited and certificate of Directors of Audit is for Financial year ended 30 June 2018;

(iv) Financial Statements ended 30 June 2019 and 30 June 2020 has already been sent to NAO for auditing purpose; and

(v) Financial Statement ended 30 June 2021 and 30 June 2022 is in process by accounting firm Forten berry Corporate Services.

**(vi) Sugar Cane Planters Trust**

(Financial Year 2007-08,2008-09& 01.07.2009-24.07.2010)

(i) The AMB informed that it received its Annual Report for the financial year 2019-2020 on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021 from the National Audit office. Same was approved by the Board on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021. The Annual Report was sent to the Printing Company in October 2021.

However due to high level of absenteeism in Agricultural Marketing Board and the Printing Company because of Covid 19, the printing of the Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2020 was finalized in January 2022 and in February 2022



one copy of the AMB's Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2020 including the soft version of same was sent to be laid on the Table of the National Assembly.

(ii) **The Small Farmers Welfare Fund (SFWF)** informed that the annual report for the period January 2016 to June 2017 has been sent to the National Assembly on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

National Parks and Conservation Fund has already submitted in September 2022.

**8. Pesticide Regulatory Office, (PRO) Regulate, control and monitor the use of pesticides in or on any agricultural product.**

## **Recommendations:**

- I.** *The Principal Scientific Officer (PSO) should liaise with; Small Farmers Welfare Fund to have the list of planters and FAREI to know the harvest period of the commodities according to which the plan of work regarding site visits should be prepared by the Scientific Officer (SO) and approved by the Principal Scientific Officer*
- II.** *Weighing scale should be provided to the unit to collect fruits and vegetables as per Para 7.2 (a) of the Use of Pesticide Act 2018.*
- III.** *The National Identification Card number of the planters should be recorded in the Notice of Collection forms and their names should be written as per their NIC.*
- IV.** *The Planters should acknowledge the amount and the type of commodities collected from them on the Notice of Collection Forms.*
- V.** *The Ministry should review the whole process of collecting commodities to issue of improvement so as to eliminate bottleneck; Time limit should be set at different stages*
- VI.** *In order to reduce the bottleneck of the time taken, the PRO should be under the supervision of the PSO of Agricultural Chemistry Division.*
- VII.** *Relevant training should be provided to staffs of the office.*
- VIII.** *Action plan regarding sensitization campaign should be made in collaboration with FAREI.*
- I IX.** *Paragraph 10.2 of the Use of pesticides Act 2018 should be adhered to: (the office should request for relevant certificates from suppliers).*
- X.** *The Use of Pesticides Act 2018 should be amended in order to include regulations regarding imported commodities.*
- XI.** *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.*
- XII.** *With the help of State Law Office (SLO), the Use of Pesticides Act 2018 should be amended whereby the procedures should be clearly stipulated.*
- XIII.** *The possibility to directly fine the planter at fault should be considered instead of continuously issuing improvement notice.*

*XIV. The fines should be charged in a progressive manner based on the amount of excess pesticides that have been found in the commodities.*

### **Remedial Action**

Monthly plan prepared

Weighing scale being used

Names only recorded since all growers do not have NIC in field

Signature of grower inserted

Results and improvement notices issued within 1 week after receipt of results

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.

All ASOs have been given basic training

Sensitisation done by FAREI and PRO during field visits

Amendments already done in Finance Miscellaneous Act 2022

(Para 10.2 refers to certificate of pesticide residue analysis to be submitted by every importer. Definition of agricultural produce has already been amended to include imported produce which was not catered in the Act. Until Regulations with list of imported produce and pesticides with MRLs are not promulgated, this recommendation cannot be implemented)

Regulations submitted to SLO for finalization.

Regulations with respect to imported produce submitted to SLO for finalization.

(Cannot be implemented until Regulations regarding imported produce are not promulgated)

Inputs submitted for including procedures in Act

(XII to XIV refer to prosecution and fines to be charged in case of offence. Inputs were submitted for prosecution but not retained for amendments. PRO cannot carry out prosecution)

(Provision already available in act for fining in case of non-compliance to Improvement Notice but cannot be implemented since no amendment has been made for prosecution)

Provision already available in Act

(Cannot be implemented since no amendment has been made for prosecution)

## **9. Engineering Division Richelieu**

*Engineering Workshop*

*Servicing of Government Vehicles*

*Procurement Unit*

*Collection of Spare Parts by a Store Attendant*

*Warehousing Unit*

*Conversion Voucher*

### **Recommendations**

- I. The PAE should assess whether it is cost effective to send government vehicles having more than 5 years for servicing/repair to outside garages;
- II. Procurement procedures should be carried out for the procurement of towing, radiator, wheel balancing & alignment, AC repair and so on;
- III. The AMPS should instruct the Management Support Officers (MSOs) posted at the workshop how to effect posting in the Tyre and Battery Registers;
- IV. GF 5 used for indenting of tyres and batteries should be cross-referenced with the Tyre and Battery Registers.
- V. The old and worn out Tyre and Battery registers should be replaced and pre-numbered.
- VI. The Job cards should be signed by all officers concerned;
- VII. A PSO/SPSO should be posted to the Procurement Unit for collection of materials and spare parts;

- VIII. Internet facility should be provided to the Procurement Unit so that the E-Procurement System could be used for procurement exercises;
- IX. The Fax machine use for receipt of informal quotations should be kept in a cupboard with three keyholes having different keys. The keys of each keyhole should be kept by three different responsible persons (PAE, AMPS & AS) and should be opened only after the closing date and time for submission of bids;
- X. A Bid register should be kept in order to record the date & time of the bids openings, number of bids received, preliminary examination of the bids and any other relevant information;
- XI. Arrangement should be made to keep a duplicate key of the Procurement Unit and Warehousing Section so as same can be opened in case of emergency;
- XII. Para 30.3.43 and 30.3.44 of the FMM should be adhered to for the issue of raw materials to the Workshop.

Para 30.2.6(f) of the FMM should be adhered to; posting in ledgers of the Warehousing section should be done as soon as possible

### **Remedial Action**

*Bid register is being kept.*

*All other recommendations have been implemented.*

### **10.Entomology Division**

#### **High Stock Level of items**

#### **Recommendations:**

- I. *A board of survey should be held to examine the stores and appropriate action taken.*
- II. *II Para 30.3.17, 30.3.58 and 30.3.59 of the FMM should be adhered to where a Maximum, Minimum and Re-order level should be set by Stores Officers responsible for procurement and monitored on a regular basis to ensure that they remain appropriate in order to maintain a cost-effective level of stock to meet anticipated requirements.*

**Items were issued without proper authorization**

**Recommendation:**

III. *Para 30.6.8 of the FMM should be adhered to where "Issues should be made only on the authority of a Combined Indent, Issue Note and Receipt Voucher (Store Forms Nos. 5, 6 or 7) signed at part I by an authorized Officer and completed by the responsible Stores Officer."*

**Lack of proper recording and control over mat blocks at different levels**

**Recommendations:**

IV. *The issuing and receiving officer should not be the same person.*

V. *Para 30.3.44 of the FMM should be adhered to; "Conversion Vouchers should be prepared, and submitted to the Stores Officer concerned, in triplicate and the Stores Officer should retain the original, countersigned by the Officer taking delivery of the raw materials, to support the issue entry in stores ledger."*

VI. *Para 30.3.43 of the FMM should be complied with. All conversions should be solely Departmental and should be carried out on Conversion Vouchers. (Store Form No. 8)."*

**Inconsistency in recording the number of mat blocks distributed**

**Recommendations:**

VII. *Para 30.3.16(f) of the FMM Chapter should be adhered to where no unauthorized person should have access to storeroom. The Store should always be under lock and key.*

VIII. *A survey should be carried out at the earliest to ascertain the exact number of baits and mat blocks in stock and the Ledger updated accordingly.*

IX. *The number of mat blocks taken from the Store Entomology Head office and sent for distribution should be recorded in the Register "Distribution Port-Louis" and the "Bait Solution and Mat blocks Distribution" Register.*

X. *The preparation unit should be under the supervision of a Scientific Officer, who should review their books and ensure proper recording is done.*

XI. *Only one denomination should be used either mat blocks or packets for recording in the Ledgers.*

XII. *The Opening and Closing balance should be recorded in the Stock of Materials – Bait and Mat Store 2020 Register.*

XIII. *As far as possible, one officer should be assigned for the distribution of bait solution and mat blocks to the customer and he/she should his/her name in that Register together with his/her signature.*

### **Unattended complaints regarding pest control**

#### **Recommendations:**

XIV. *The Complaints Book should be amended where two columns namely "Attended by" and "Date attended" should be included therein and it should be regularly reviewed by a higher officer.*

XV. *An intervention report should be introduced and should include the following information: Date and Time, Type of Treatment, Performed By, Address, any technical advice provided, Comments of customer, and Signature of customer and officer*

XVI. *A hard cover book should be kept as Movement Book and it should be serially numbered.*

XVII. *Work plan should be prepared by the officer in charge to ensure that all complaints are attended and all unattended cases should be justified.*

XVIII. *The unit may introduce feedback forms that customers may be called upon to fill in.*

### **Remedial Action**

Items are issued with authorization.

Records are kept on distribution of MAT blocks.

Issuing and receiving officer is not the same.

Necessary actions being taken to ensure traceability of raw materials and end product via conversion vouchers.

Records on distribution of MAT blocks being kept.

Store room is kept under lock and key

Survey is carried out on a daily basis and record kept

Record being kept in ledge 'Stock of Materials'

Only one denomination being used.

Record is being kept in Register.

One officer has been assigned this duty.

A Scientific Officer has been designated to attend to the complaints.

Intervention sheet prepared and is being us

Hard cover book is being used.

Weekly work plan is being prepared by Scientific Officer.

### **Food Laboratory Technology**

- *Tests conducted by FSTD*
- *Issue of Medias and disposable items*
- *FTL Store and Issue of Equipment*
- *Government Asset Register and Inventory Sheet*
- *Unserviceable and Dormant Equipment*
- *Timely repairs, Usage and Replacement Plan of equipment*

### Recommendations

- I.** *All tests carried out should have its corresponding request*
- II.** *Each issue of media and disposable items should be acknowledged by the receiver and same should be approved by a Senior Officer on a daily basis.*
- III.** *FMM Chap 30.6.8 which states that "Issues should be made only on the authority of a Combined Indent, Issue Note and Receipt Voucher (Store Forms Nos. 5, 6 or 7) signed at part I by an authorised Officer and completed by the responsible Stores Officer" should be adhered to.*
- IV.** *An officer in the grade of Procurement and Supply Officer should be posted at FTL at least twice weekly in order to have a better control and monitoring over the issues and receipts of all items and equipment.*



- V.** *FTL should have their own Combined Indent, Issue Note and Receipt Voucher Booklet (GF 5) which should be indented by the Principal Scientific Officer.*
- VI.** *Paragraph 30.3.16 (l) and 30.3.17 (e), (f) of FMM should be adhered to.*
- VII.** *The Officer in Charge of the FSTD should ensure that each equipment should have a unique FTL ID N0. A survey should be carried out to identify equipment having same FTL ID N0. And appropriate action should be taken.*
- VIII.** *A board of Survey should be conducted as per FMM Chap 30.8 - Board of Survey and Store Ledgers should be updated accordingly.*
- IX.** *The Government Asset register should be updated.*
- X.** *F.M.M 30.10.15 should be adhered to whereby an OME should conduct physical survey of all assets within FSTD and update the Inventory Sheets.*
- XI.** *The GF 12 should be duly filled whereby the serial number, make/model, ledger/inventory records, original value and date of receipt of the items should be recorded therein.*
- XII.** *FMM Chapter 30.3.40 and FMM Chapter 30.3.41 should be adhered to and a list of all dormant equipment should be circularised to all Ministries and Departments.*
- XIII.** *The Engineering Division along with the PSO should ensure that equipment is repaired on a timely basis, necessary follow-up actions are carried out and all information should be recorded in a log book rather than the History Card which is a flying sheet.*
- XIV.** *Log books should be introduced for each equipment. The 1<sup>st</sup> page of the History Card should be affixed in the Log book's 1<sup>st</sup> page and additional information such as Goods Form 1 No. and the cost of the equipment should be recorded therein.*
- XV.** *The Log book should be regularly reviewed by higher officer.*

Recommendations:

V. A board of survey should be held to examine the stores and appropriate action taken.

II Para 30.3.17, 30.3.58 and 30.3.59 of the FMM should be adhered to where a Maximum, Minimum and Re-order level should be set by Stores Officers responsible for procurement and monitored on a regular basis to ensure that they remain appropriate in order to maintain a cost-effective level of stock to meet anticipated requirements.

Items were issued without proper authorization

Recommendation:

Para 30.6.8 of the FMM should be adhered to where "Issues should be made only on the authority of a Combined Indent, Issue Note and Receipt Voucher (Store Forms Nos. 5, 6 or 7) signed at part I by an authorized Officer and completed by the responsible Stores Officer."

Lack of proper recording and control over mat blocks at different levels

Recommendations:

IV. The issuing and receiving officer should not be the same person.

V. Para 30.3.44 of the FMM should be adhered to; "Conversion Vouchers should be prepared, and submitted to the Stores Officer concerned, in triplicate and the Stores Officer should retain the original, countersigned by the Officer taking delivery of the raw materials, to support the issue entry in stores ledger."

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Inconsistency in recording the number of mat blocks distributed

Recommendations:

VII. Para 30.3.16(f) of the FMM Chapter should be adhered to where no unauthorized person should have access to storeroom. The Store should always be under lock and key.

VIII. A survey should be carried out at the earliest to ascertain the exact number of baits and mat blocks in stock and the Ledger updated accordingly.

IX. The number of mat blocks taken from the Store Entomology Head office and sent for distribution should be recorded in the Register "Distribution Port-Louis" and the "Bait Solution and Mat blocks Distribution" Register.

X. The preparation unit should be under the supervision of a Scientific Officer, who should review their books and ensure proper recording is done.

XI. Only one denomination should be used either mat blocks or packets for recording in the <sup>67</sup>Ledgers.

XII. The Opening and Closing balance should be recorded in the Stock of Materials – Bait and Mat Store 2020 Register.

XVIII. *The unit may introduce feedback forms that customers may be called upon to fill in.*

## **Livestock and Veterinary Division**

### **Files and Records poorly kept at the Trade Unit**

#### **Recommendation**

- *The Trade Unit should prepare a manual of procedures at the DVS. This will ensure that there is a standardize process and all documents will be documented on file.*
- *Appropriate action should be taken to remove the files from the storeroom and keep them in an orderly manner in a more convenient place.*

*Missing signature of ASO/SASO and the date received of the application for Import Permit for Pet.*

#### **Recommendation**

*The checklist attached with the application form should be amended to include the name and signature of the verifier and the date verified.*

*No segregation of duties at the Trade Unit*

#### **Recommendation**

- *Another officer should be posted to the unit to shoulder part of the duties performed by the GDW.*
- *The payment voucher should be counter checked by a higher officer.*

*The information on the MNS System not completed.*

#### **Recommendation**

*All documents relating to importation of horses should be properly filed, referenced and where possible uploaded on the MNS System.*

*Shortcomings in Quarantine Ledger*

#### **Recommendation**

*2 additional columns be added to the ledger to record for the amount paid and the receipt number.*

Recommendation

- *The Trade Unit should prepare a manual of procedures at the DVS. This will ensure that there is a standardize process and all documents will be documented on file.*
- *Appropriate action should be taken to remove the files from the storeroom and keep them in an orderly manner in a more convenient place.*

*Missing signature of ASO/SASO and the date received of the application for Import Permit for Pet.*

Recommendation

*The checklist attached with the application form should be amended to include the name and signature of the verifier and the date verified.*

*No segregation of duties at the Trade Unit*

Recommendation

- *Another officer should be posted to the unit to shoulder part of the duties performed by the GDW.*
- *The payment voucher should be counter checked by a higher officer.*

*The information on the MNS System not completed.*

Recommendation

*All documents relating to importation of horses should be properly filed, referenced and where possible uploaded on the MNS System.*

*Shortcomings in Quarantine Ledger*

Recommendation

**Remedial Action**

*2 additional columns be added to the ledger to record for the amount paid and the receipt number.*

*The preparation of the manual is in progress.*

*Files kept on shelves in store room in an orderly manner*

*Action already taken. Checklist has been amended accordingly.*

*Action already taken-payment voucher are being issued by ASO/SASO*

Action already taken. All documents related to import of horses are already being uploaded from the time MNS System was being used.

Action already taken-ledger has been amended.

### **National Agricultural Product Regulatory Office**

#### **Special Assignment - Attendance at La Brasserie Experimental Station & NAPRO Tea Nursery**

##### **Recommendations**

- a) *The Principal Scientific Officer of NAPRO is requested to monitor the attendance and the work performed by the workers at NAPRO Tea Nursery on a regular basis. General Guidelines on the Monitoring of the Attendance Register at APPENDIX 2A, Paragraph 2.2.9 should be adhered to.*
- b) *The Principal Scientific Officer of NAPRO is requested to look at the electricity issues at NAPRO Tea Nursery at the earliest so as to implement the ETR.*
- c) *All workers are requested to inform and seek approval of their senior officer before leaving the premises during the working hours and they should record their movement in the Movement Book which should be readily available.*

*It is the responsibility of the HR to oversee the attendance and ensure good practice of the workers. The HR section is requested to do regular surprise check and monitoring of attendance of the workers at the different units of the Ministry.*

##### **Remedial Action**

Activities at Tea Nursery have ceased since February 2022.

Only 2 staff posted at nursery. Attendance book already available for monitoring of attendance. Additionally, as instructed by Ag. Director, attendance will also be monitored through ETR at Curepipe ES.

Work performed is being monitored by NAPRO.

Leaves are being monitored by NAPRO.

As decided by Ag. Director, building will be transferred to Horticulture Division since only 2 staff posted at Tea Nursery

Movement book available and prior approval for movement required

### **National Parks and Conservation Service**

**The Process for the application of Ramsar Clearance.**

**No specific Policy/Regulations regarding wetlands and its protection.**

### **Recommendations**

*No specific Policy/Regulations regarding wetlands and its protection.*

- *The Wetland Bill should be finalised at the earliest.*

*Site visit Form*

- *All site visit forms should be properly filled with all relevant details.*

*Training for staff posted*

- *Management should consider training for the staff posted at this Unit.*

*Duplication of file records at the NPCS*

- *Each application together with its respective correspondences should be treated in a unique file for proper follow up and same kept in the Registry.*

*Programme of works*

- *Programme of work should be prepared on a yearly basis and approved by the Director NPCS following regular inspections of sites that needs maintenance.*
- *Close monitoring of contractor 's works should be performed by the Park Rangers on site and appropriate action be taken against those who delay to report same.*
- *Park Rangers on site should ensure that contactors are on site and inform Management if there is any irregularity.*

- *A work completion form should be prepared by Park Ranger and agreed with contractor for each completed task and same kept in the contractor's file.*

*The programme of work format should include a column to indicate the date that the contractor has completed the task and with whom it was verified.*

### **Recommendation**

Risk Management & Control

Procurement and Supply Division

Risk Management & Control

Fraud and misconduct

Annual Reports

Governance Structures

Values & Ethics

### **Remedial Action**

Internal Control Unit will carry out a special assignment on Procurement and Supply Section.

- To schedule follow-up meetings of the Risk Committee
- To draft the Risk Assessment Plan
- To implement the actions identified to mitigate the risks.
- Review policy and arrangements for whistle blower complaints.
- Review systems and controls for the prevention of bribery
- Review significant cases of conflict of interest, misconduct or fraud, or any other unethical activity by employees of the Ministry/ Department.
- Review interim and annual Reports of the Ministry/Department
- Provide inputs on AC performance

To compile legislations pertaining to the Ministry and to review same.

Agricultural Services submitted the following:

- 1) Fertiliser – draft submitted to Ministry
- 2) Organic Agriculture- draft submitted to Ministry
- 3) Animal Health and Livestock Production –under review at SLO

Forestry Services

- 1) Forest and Reserves Act – has been worked out for revision into a Forest Act.
- 2) Shooting and Fishing Lease Act.

- To review the values and ethics of the Ministry.
- To affix code of ethics conspicuously in the Ministry/Sub-Sections.
- To organise a training in accountability, ethics in collaboration with the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC).

### **1. Cattle Reproduction Farm at Melrose – Operations delayed due to lack of proper planning**

#### **Recommendations**

- (a) *Construction of the farm was delayed.*
- (b) *Essential amenities were omitted in the construction contract.*
- (c) *A feasibility study was not carried out before construction of the farm*

#### **Remedial Actions**

(a) and (b) Electrical and water networks have been installed and the farm has been operational since 26 December 2019. Presently, there are 72 animals on farm. As decision has been taken to convert the Heifer farm into a Cattle Reproduction Farm, additional infrastructure is required. where animals at



different stages need to be kept separately, new amenities like maternity unit, milking unit, nursery unit, cooling tank, sales point are required.

The project "Construction of Vehicle Dip, Drains and Track Roads at Melrose Cattle Reproduction Farm" has been awarded at the cost of Rs 3,966,400 (VAT excl.) to New Horizons Builders Ltd.

Handing over of the site was done on 19 January 2022 and the start date of the site was scheduled on 03 February 2022. The project duration is 6 months and the scheduled completion date is 03 August 2022. The project has already encountered an initial delay and is being supervised by Engineering Division.

*Action to be taken:*

(i) The keys for Livestock Zone at Melrose have been given to APD, on 05 May 2021 to cater for additional infrastructure. However, given that there is no electrical and water network as well as security issues, the buildings cannot not be used.

(ii) Engineering Division has been contacted for the installation of water network and a sum of approximately Rs 270,000 has been estimated for the project as the work will be carried out by officers of Engineering Division. Needful is being done, at the level of Procurement and Supply Division for e-procurement of materials required.

(iii) The compound housing the Livestock Zone buildings has to be fenced to address security issues. A sum of approximately Rs 2 M has been worked out by officers of Engineering Division. Funds are unavailable to proceed with this project.

In this financial year, only Rs 5 M has been allocated to Vote Item Heifer Farm and this amount has been earmarked for the construction of vehicle dip, drains and track roads at Melrose Cattle Reproduction Farm.

(iv) APD and Engineering Division is also working on the rehabilitation of Livestock Zone buildings to accommodate the nursery, maternity pens etc.

(v) Conditioning of exercise yards (approx. cost Rs1,250,000) - Sent to Procurement and Supply Division on 16 March 2022

(vi) Electrical works for lighting of compound, buildings and others - The Energy Services Division (ESD) has assessed the extent of the electrical works to be undertaken and has informed that the estimated cost shall be Rs 3 M excluding

VAT and contingency. ESD is awaiting approval of SCE and confirmation of availability of funds through the “Cluster Protocol” to prepare specifications and scope of work.

(vii) Acquisition of cooling tank (approx. Rs 500,000) and chest chiller (approx. Rs 75,000). Bids being relaunched.

## **2. Sheep Production Farm at Salazie – Project objectives not achieved**

### **Recommendations**

*As at November 2020, the sale of sheep had not yet been effected.*

*A review of the operational activities of the Sheep Reproduction Farm revealed the following shortcomings:*

*(i) Fodder plantation was not yet completed; and*

*(ii) Maternity pen was still under construction*

### **Remedial Actions**

Approval of the price of produce has been obtained on 06.08.21. Further to this, site visits to applicants have been held to ascertain that they are bona fide farmers. Thereon, multiple sale exercises have been effected.

(i) Owing to the shortage of labour, fodder plantation is at a standstill. The station is managing by harvesting fodder from the vicinity.

Maternity pen has already been completed and is fully operation.

*Action to be taken:*

No human resource available for fodder plantation. Awaiting recruitment of general workers

## **3. Mauritius Society for Animal Welfare – Non-submission of Annual Report since 2014**

### **Recommendations**

*The MSAW has not submitted its Annual Reports, incorporating the financial statements for audit purposes since it came into operation on 30 October 2013, contrary to the Statutory Bodies (Accounts and Audit) Act which requires the chief executive*

*officer to submit the annual report to the auditor, not later than four months after the end of every financial year.*

### **Remedial Actions**

The Council agreed to launch a tendering exercise, taking into consideration the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) protocol for the Period of 30.10.2013 to 30.06.2021. In view of the above, an expression of interest was published in the newspaper on the 27th, 28th, and 29th of May 2021.

-On 12 July 2021, a bid evaluation committee and procurement Committee was held. It has been concluded that the bidding documents received on 30 June 2021 did not meet the criteria as per the terms and conditions applicable.

-On its meeting on 20th July 2021, the Council approved the proposal to retender for the preparation of financial statements.

-Invitation for bids was relaunched on 10 August 2021, and was closed on 10 September 2021.

-On its meeting on 28th October 2021, the Council agreed that the Part-Time Accountant of MSAW to submit an action plan concerning for financial statements.

-Followed by the audit exercise conducted by the officers of the Office of Public Sector Governance (OPSG), the Council agreed to withdraw the offer to retain the services of the P/T Accountant for the preparation of Financial statement year 2013-2021. The exercise has been put on hold pending the recommendation of the audit exercise by the OPSG.

The above matter will be referred to the board for consideration.

## **4. New Slaughter House - Considerable delay in construction resulting in continuous resort to sub-standard 'Central Abattoir'**

### **Recommendations**

*Delay in submission of Built-Operator-Transfer (BOT) Structuring Report*

### **Remedial Actions**

Following meetings held with the Project Management Team by the Ministry, it was noted that since the new Slaughter House was meant for venison production

and the Budget 2021/22 had provided for mobile slaughter facilities for deer breeders, the construction of a new Slaughter House was not a priority.

In this context, the Ministry has decided to renovate the existing abattoir instead of the construction of a new Slaughter House, which would be less costly. Accordingly, the Mauritius Meat Authority (MMA) has submitted a report which included the recommendations of its Safety and Health Officer and Engineer on the renovation/improvement works following a survey carried out in the different sections of the abattoir. An estimated cost of Rs 37M will be required for the renovation works.

Subsequently, the Ministry conveyed its approval for the MMA to go ahead with the renovation works according to the recommendations made in its report.

## **5. Governance Issues – Non-compliance with Legislations**

### **Recommendations**

- i. Five statutory bodies falling under the aegis of the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security have not submitted their financial statements for audit as below;*
- ii. Small Farmers Welfare Fund (SFWF)*
- iii. Sugar Cane Planters Trust*
- iv. Mauritius Society for Animal Welfare (MSAW)*
- v. Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanical Garden Trust (SSRBGT)*
- vi. Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanical Garden Trust (SSRBGT)*

### **Remedial Actions**

(i) Small Farmers Welfare Fund (SFWF)

Service of an accountant to accelerate the completion of FS.

FY 2017/2018

FS has been completed and will soon be audited by NAO.

FY 2018-2019

SFWF has started working on FS 2018-2019

(iii) Mauritius Society for Animal Welfare (MSAW)

-The Council agreed to launch a tendering exercise, taking into consideration the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) protocol for the Period of 30.10.2013 to 30.06.2021.

-In view of the above, an expression of interest was published in the newspaper on the 27th, 28th, and 29th of May 2021.

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-Followed by the audit exercise conducted by the officers of Public Sector Governance (OPSG), the Council agreed to withdraw the offer to retain the services of the P/T Accountant for the preparation of Financial statement year 2013-2021. The exercise has been put on hold pending the recommendation of the audit exercise by the OPSG:

Actions still required:

The above matter will be referred to the board for consideration.

(iv) Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanical

a) Financial Statement for the year ended 30 June has already been audited and management letter has been sent to SSRBG Trust.

b) Financial Statement for the year ended 30 June 2019 and 30 June 2020 has already been prepared but awaiting for certificate of Audit from National Audit Office for the Financial Statement ended 30 June 2018 to input opening balance.

c) Financial Statement for the year ended 30 June 2021 has already been prepared and still waiting for certificate of Audit Report from the Financial Statement ended 30 June 2020 to input opening balance.

Actions still required for SSRBG.

-Response to the Management Letter 2018 received from National Audit Office is in process.

Financial Statement for both years, i.e. 2019 & 2020 will be sent for board approval after having received the opening balance.

(v) Vallée d'Osterlog Endemic Garden Foundation

Financial Statements for the year 2019/2020 had been submitted to NAO for auditing on 19 May 2021.

## **6. Seeds Production – Inefficiencies in Seeds Production Activities**

### **Recommendations**

- a) Seeds production has decreased over the years.*
- b) Cost of production of seeds exceeds revenue over 26 folds*
- c) Poor recording of Seeds Operation Activities*
- d) Inefficient use of Human Resources*
- e) Underutilisation of cultivable lands*
- f) The NAO recommended that the Ministry should consider mechanization of the seeds production process.*

### **Remedial Actions**

This was due to the significant decrease in the labour force, particularly in all stations: **from 104 (31.12.2016) to 31 (presently).**

**The recruitment of general workers was proposed.**

Action still required:

The recruitment of general workers is still being awaited.

The revenue collected for the period January to November was significantly underestimated by NAO. Accordingly, the cost exceeds revenue by significantly less folds (14.6) than that reported by NAO (26).

The low revenue was due to the following:

- (i) Seeds and plants are sold at highly subsidised prices which has not been reviewed since December 2012;
- ii) The visit of cyclone (Gelena 8-9.02.19) and excessive rainfall during the summer months have affected plant growth and development, occurrence of pests and diseases and yield of plantations in 2019.

(iii) Donation of seeds to planters after adverse climatic conditions, e.g. 220 kg of vegetable seeds were donated to Rodrigues Regional Assembly after the passage of cyclones Gelena and Joahinha in 2019;

(iv) Donation of plants to other institutions/organizations in relation to the implementation of various national project e.g agroforestry, apiculture, etc in 2019

(v) Sale of plants and seeds at reduced prices during the celebration of World Food Day in October.

(vi) 200 packets of bean seeds were handed over to FAREI for free distribution to planters.

The high cost of production is mainly attributed to the fact that apart from general workers, several other grades of personnel, notably Sanitary Attendant, Store Attendant, Implement Operator, Field Supervisor, Insecticide sprayer Operator, irrigation operator, Pumping Station Operator, Gardener Nursery Attendant, Security Guards, clerical cadre, store cadre and technical cadre, necessitating additional costs are involved in seed production in outstations.

**An increase in the prices of seeds and plants was proposed to increase revenue.**

Action still required:

Policy decision of the Ministry to increase prices of seeds and plants.

The Seed Production Book in each station is under the custody of the Agricultural Support Officer (ASO) of the Field Section where seed crops are grown.

The incomplete recording in the Seed Production Book during the preceding years was mainly due to the lack of this grade in the Field Section.

With the recruitment of ASOs in stations, the entry of data in the Seed Production Book is being done systematically.

Seed production is composed of several integrated activities which are conducted by different grades of manual workers. Presently the acute shortage of general workers has restricted the area over which seed crops can be grown. This, in turn, has resulted in a decrease in the workload of other grades of manual workers in different stations.

Nonetheless, newly recruited ASOs are ensuring proper supervision of work to ensure that adequate amount of works are being performed by manual workers in various stations.

Action still required:

Recruitment of general workers.

Cultivable lands in different stations are exclusively used for growing of crops for seed production purposes.

The area of land that can be cultivated is directly related to the availability of general workers in various stations of the Agricultural Services. With the drastic decrease in the number of general workers in the stations, the utilisation of cultivable lands has decreased significantly.

The recruitment of general workers is the only rational solution that can have a significant impact in increasing the utilization of land in various stations.

Action still required:

Recruitment of general workers.

Mechanisation is already being used for land preparation and furrowing and for processing of seeds after harvest.

Additionally, innovative agronomic practices are being used to minimize the use of labour in the fields, e.g. Use of weed mat/other organic materials or light rotovator between rows of plants to control weed in plantations, as weeding is labour intensive.

## **7. Construction of Wholesale Market – Delay in project completion**

### **Recommendations**

- (a) There was extension of the contractual completion date*
- (b) Eight essential items were not included in Phase I of the project due to financial constraints*
- (c) The Generator and Sewer Treatment Plant considered important for the operational activities of the market were excluded in the scope of works.*



## **Remedial Actions**

Building works for the NWM has been completed as awarded to Tranli Construction Co Ltd.

These works were excluded from the initial scope of works which was estimated at Rs 707 as advised by the Central Procurement Board so as to obtain clearance to call for bids without having recourse to a prequalification exercise from the Procurement Policy Office.

As at date the contact for the supply of the Standby Generator needs to be re launched as none of the bidders could meet the given requirements. The consultant has been asked to revise the scope of work since 25 January 2022. As regards, the Installation of a Sewer Treatment Plant (STP), tender for the mechanical and electrical component has been allocated to New Horizon Builders Ltd. However, since Civil works need to be undertaken to have this mechanical and electrical component, the contractor has not yet started works. Civil works for housing this component did not form part of the main contract and the bidding documents for STP specialised package did not indicate any builders' works. In this respect, tender exercise for the Civil works needs to be launched and the consultant has been requested to submit the Terms of Reference /Scope of Works for the project since 17 December 2012.

## **8. Performance Audit Report: Food Production – Are Agricultural State Lands optimally utilised?**

### **Recommendations**

- i. An end date for the contract with the private surveyor should be fixed. The performance security should be renewed. A close monitoring of the works undertaken will have to be effected. Penalties provided in the contract should be applied where and when necessary.*
- ii. A new legislation for organic agriculture/bio-farming covering all aspects of organic farming should be developed.*
- iii. Service delivery by LUD's Survey Office needs to be enhanced so that more plots of lands are surveyed.*
- iv. The Ministry should address the reasons for land abandonment in the Tea Sector*
- v. Prompt adequate actions need to be taken and appropriate support provided to ensure the viability of the sugar sector*

## **Remedial Actions**

- (a) Work of the private surveyor has been promptly monitored by the LUD and all discrepancies pointed out for necessary amendments.
- (b) 1st draft bill has been prepared
- (c) Monitoring of work is being done on a fortnightly basis.
- (d) The services of the World Bank were enlisted in January 2020 for a study on the long-term viability of the Sugar Sector. The report has been received in late December 2020.

## **9. Land Use Division: MSPA Lands Scheme**

### **Recommendations**

#### Land Acquisition/Housing Development Units of MHL for the last chunk of 61 arpents.

*At paragraph 14.3.6 of the Audit Report for the 18-month period 1 January 2015 to 30 June 2016, it was reported on the agreement signed in April 2008, between Government and the MSPA whereby sugar cane land of an extent of 2,000 arpents would be granted to Government by Corporate Planters who are members of the MSPA. Land would be released as and when required during the period of the lease, which was valid up to 31 December 2017.*

*As of 31 October 2017, that is, two months prior to the expiry of agreement, of the 1,252 arpents to be allocated for agricultural projects and the remaining 748 arpents for housing and other social projects, only an extent of 895 and 372 arpents of land for the respective projects, representing 63 per cent of total extent of land, have so far been acquired. Procedures have been initiated for the acquisition of another 133 arpents and proposals were under consideration for the remaining 109 arpents. Survey reports concerning*

*491 arpents were being finalized.*

*As of 31 October 2017, there was no evidence that the acquisition of the 2,000 arpents of land as agreed between Government and MSPA would be completed by the due date of 31 December 2017.*

### **Remedial Actions**

As at date, 1140 A of land have been acquired for agricultural purpose. Another 126 A are still under process either at the Ministry of Housing or at the sugar factories

## **10. Food Technology Laboratory**

### **Recommendations**

#### *Absence of Legal Framework*

*Three regulations were finalised by the NBC and submitted to the Attorney General's Office (AGO) for vetting. Given that too many shortcomings have been observed in GMO Act 2004, the said Act has to be repealed and replaced by a new GMO Act. The Regulations will be reviewed after the new GMO Act has been finalised. The new Act was under review at the Ministry in October 2018. The GMO Unit required the finalisation of the Genetically Modified Organisms Act and its legal framework to complete its setting-up.*

#### *NAO Recommendation:*

*A Committee should be set up to finalise the regulations, guidelines and legal framework for the GMO Unit to perform all its mandated activities*

### **Remedial Actions**

The objects of the NBC as per the GMO Act 2004 Section 5 shall be to advise the Minister on all aspects concerning the importation, exportation, transit, development, research, production, use, application, marketing, sale and release of genetically modified organisms.

As per Section 24, "The Minister may make such regulations as he thinks for the purpose of this Act".

The NBC has already finalised a new draft GMO bill, prepared by the Attorney General's Office (AGO) in April 2019 that was submitted to the Ministry on 29 April 2019 and same has been forwarded for vetting and finalisation



