

Brief on the meetings held amongst BRICS countries on Agriculture Cooperation

1. BRICS Expert Consultation for Cooperation in Agriculture

Meeting of BRICS Experts for cooperation in Agriculture & allied sectors was held on 26-27th July 2021 under the chairship of Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare. The mandate for holding BRICS Expert Consultation for cooperation in Agriculture and allied sectors originates from the Action Plan 2017-2020. The Expert Consultations were held to discuss the extent of implementation of the Action Plan 2017-2020 and develop the way forward for the plan period 2021-2024.

The Action Plan 2021-2024 was developed to achieve the following objectives:

- Accelerate and sustain agricultural development for enhanced food security and nutrition, especially in view of the challenges posed by COVID- 19 pandemic across all countries; step up efforts to enhance water use efficiencies in agriculture; support efforts in fighting poverty and hunger at the global level, exchange policies experience in ensuring food security, enhance food supply capacities of BRICS, and contribute to a food secure world;
- Advance mechanisms for recovery from the pandemic including by enhancing trade of safe and quality agro-products and investment of BRICS agribusiness.
- Promote agro biodiversity for food resources and nutrition security;
- Promote new solutions for sustainable agriculture through exchange of successful BRICS sustainability framework models with special reference to small holder and family farmers, including models to support women, youth and the elderly farmers;
- It is envisaged that the Action Plan will usher into exchange of knowledge & experience in agricultural research and development activities and sharing of best practices. It would also strengthen the economy by way of ensuring food security amongst the BRICS-Countries.

2. Meeting of BRICS Working Group on Agriculture

- The Meeting of BRICS Working Group on Agriculture, under the chairmanship of Shri Sanjay Agarwal, Secretary (A&FW), was held on 12-13 August 2021. The meeting had the following outcomes:

- Discussion and endorsement of the Action Plan 2021-2024 for Agricultural Cooperation of BRICS Countries, for adoption by the Ministers of Agriculture, took place in the meeting.

The Action Plan 2021-2024 has the following thematic areas :

- Strengthening agri value chains for food security and welfare of farmers.
- Conservation and promotion of agrobiodiversity for nutrition and sustainability.
- Enabling climate change adaptation by enhancing resilience of food and agricultural production systems through sustainable use of natural resources.
- Promoting digital agricultural solutions through technology innovation for achieving SDGs.
- Cooperation in the field of SPS measures and One Health Approach.
- Trade development.

(iii) Discussion & finalization of the Draft Joint Declaration of the 11th Meeting of the BRICS Ministers of Agriculture, took place in the meeting. The meeting concluded with fruitful discussion and future collaboration/ cooperation in the area of Agriculture which is vital for achieving the goal of food security for all through sustainable use of our natural resources.

(iv) The BRICS Members decided to operationalize BRICS-Agricultural Research Platform (BARP), to promote sustainable agricultural development and poverty alleviation through strategic cooperation in agriculture to provide food security in the BRICS member countries. BARP envisages to intensify the cooperation in the areas of agricultural research, technology, policy, innovations and capacity building including technologies for smallholder farmers and to sustainably increase yields and farmers income in the BRICS member countries.

3. 11th Meeting of BRICS Agriculture Ministers

(i) The 11th Meeting of BRICS Agriculture Ministers was held virtually on 27th August 2021 under the chairmanship of Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, Hon'ble Agriculture & Farmers Welfare Minister, Govt. of India. The Ministers of Agriculture from Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa deliberated virtually on the theme "BRICS Partnership for Strengthening Agro Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition Security".

(ii) The Ministers expressed their intention to make functional the BRICS Agriculture Research Platform developed by India and encourage research cooperation to improve the use and application of agricultural technologies for

meeting the needs of producers and processors. BRICS Agriculture Research Platform (BARP) will promote cooperation in the areas of agricultural research, extension, technology transfer, training and capacity building.

(iii) After the meeting a Joint Declaration of the eleventh meeting of BRICS Agriculture Ministers covering a wide range of focus areas for future cooperation amongst BRICS countries and the Action Plan for 2021-24 for agricultural cooperation of BRICS countries were adopted. These documents were discussed in depth in the Meetings of BRICS Agricultural Experts and BRICS Working Group on Agriculture at senior officers level.

(iv) The Action Plan of 2021-24 for Agricultural Cooperation of BRICS Countries was adopted in the Ministers meeting. The Action Plan 2021-2024 provides for enhanced cooperation in the field of agriculture amongst BRICS nations and focuses on the themes of food security, welfare of farmers, conservation of agro biodiversity, resilience of food and agricultural production systems, promotion of digital agricultural solutions etc. which are integral to the sustainable development of agriculture.

(v) Hon'ble Agriculture Minister highlighted the efforts made by India in preserving the agrobiodiversity by establishing and maintaining the National Gene banks for plants, animals, fish, insects and agriculturally important microorganisms at different respective Bureaus.
