

List of International Commodity Bodies (ICBs) falling under the scope of the Working Party on Commodities of the Council of the European Union

1. *International Coffee Organisation (ICO)*

Est. 1963, London. Members: 45 producers and 32 consumers, including the EC + 27 MS. The first Agreement was concluded in 1962, starting in July 1963; the current of 2001 is the sixth negotiated agreement, while the seventh (negotiated in 2007) awaits only some ratifications of producing countries to enter into force. In the international trade, coffee represents the second world product after oil, in terms of value. Its market suffered in the past a long and serious crisis of the international prices which was overcome slowly. Its organisation-ICO - is rather efficient. The principal activity aims to establish a platform of discussion on the problems of the sector in order to contribute to raising the standards of living of the people involved. The EC has been very active, in particular under the aspect inherent quality. The principal objectives are the improvement of the trade considered as sustainable development instrument, the expansion of the sector and the transparency of the market. Projects also play an important role.

2. *International Cocoa Organisation (ICCO)*

Est. 1973, London. Members: 12 producers and 3 consumers, including the EC. The current of Agreement of 2001 is the sixth and the seventh is under negotiation. Less important than coffee in terms of trade, the cocoa transactions reach in value approximately 5 billion USD. Cocoa production involves particularly Africa, notably Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Ghana, Nigeria and Gabon. The ICCO was established in 1973 and the objectives of the current Agreement also aim at the strengthening the economy of the product, the promotion of a sustainable economy, transparency, achieving a certain balance between supply and demand. The EC acts in exclusive competence.

3. *International Jute Study Group (IJSG)*

Est. 2001, Dhaka (Bangladesh). Members: Bangladesh, India, Switzerland and the EC. Originally established in the 1980s as International Jute Organisation, after the liquidation of the latter, the new IJSG was negotiated in the early 2000 and represents today the smallest Organisation. However, despite this aspect, this international commodity body is quite strategic, having regard to the number of people involved in the jute channel. Its seat is located in a LDC (Bangladesh) and the economy of jute affects, in this country alone, more than 15 million people. Objectives aim at the expansion of the sector, the improvement of the living conditions, in particular women and children, the improvement of the quality and the research. The question about the future of the IJSG arises to date, at the time of the first deadline of the agreement fixed in April 2010. The EC is a member in exclusive competence.

4. *International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO)*

Est. 1986, Yokohama. Members: 33 producers and 27 consumers, including the EC + 16 MS. This Organisation was established on the basis of the first International Tropical Timber Agreement of 1983, which was re-negotiated in 1994. The third ITTA was concluded in 2006 but it has not yet entered into force in absence of sufficient accessions on the side of the producing countries. The main scope is sustainable forest management and all the commercial activity inherent to tropical timber. In this context, sustainability is a major element and it may be considered as the core action.

In addition to the usual objectives related to trade and international cooperation, the action of the ITTO is focused on sustainable development and the reduction of poverty. It is important to underline, in this respect, its interaction with other important international initiatives on forests and environment, including FLEGT and certification issues. The Organisation deploys a major part of its resources in the implementation of projects financed by voluntary contributions of members.

5. *International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC)*

Est. 1939, Washington. Members: 43 countries including 10 EU MS (the EC is not a member) The Committee is the outcome of an international cotton meeting held in Washington, in September 1939 between ten producing countries: Brazil, British cotton exporting colonies, Egypt, French cotton exporting colonies, India, Mexico, Peru, Sudan, the USSR, and the United States, to discuss problems of over-production, rising stocks and falling prices. The principal objective was to take concerted international action to avoid chaotic developments in the world cotton economy. Monitoring the world cotton situation and achieve an international cooperation were among the key mandate. In 1946 the Secretariat were established and in 1948, it was agreed to replace the original Executive Committee with a standing Committee in which all countries would have a voice. The EC plays a role within ICAC in spite of not being a member, and EC accession to ICAC has therefore been required both by the Council and by other ICAC members. However, the accession procedure has not formally been initiated due to a long-lasting internal debate within the Commission' services.

6. *International Network on Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR)*

Est. 1997, Beijing. Members: 34 countries, all of them producers of bamboo and/or rattan except Canada. No EU MS nor the EC is a member. While INBAR is an intergovernmental organisation since 1997, its existence as a network started in 1993. Today there are 34 members, the majority of which are developing countries as different as China, Myanmar or Venezuela. It is estimated that 1,5 billion people depend directly or indirectly from bamboo and its utilisation for trade purposes, plays a key role for poor inhabitants of rural areas in tropics and subtropics. The value of the market is today estimated at 7,5 billion USD, with EU as major importer followed by USA. Bamboo and Rattan can easily contribute to sustainable development. Among the main strategic objectives of INBAR we can highlight good source of revenues and preservation of environment and biodiversity. The possible EC accession to INBAR has been on the table for a number of years, EU member States are generally in favour and China is pushing the EC to join, but the accession procedure has not yet started pending a general assessment of the EC interest to become a member and to some legal obstacles that need to be solved beforehand.

7. *Intergovernmental Groups of FAO*

Est. 1945, Rome. Members: 192 countries (Russian Federation and Singapore are not members). FAO IGG do not have separate membership structures. The FAO Committee on Commodity Problems is the parent body to the FAO-IGG and meets every two years. FAO IGGs do not have separate councils. In general FAO undertakes commodity market reviews, including forecasting FAO commodity projects often are more technical and less policy or institutionally oriented. Contrary to the independent ICB's, the FAO-IGG also has the capacity to implement projects. Both the EC and EU MS are members of some of these FAO IGGs. In particular, the EC is member of the Group on jute, kenaf and related fibres; Group on hard Fibres; Group on Tea; Group on Spices

and Group on leathers and skins. FAO IGGs meet very seldom and performance is not particularly dynamic.

8. [International Grains Council \(IGC\)](#)

Est. 1995, London. Members: 9 exporters (including the EC) and 17 importers. It replaced the former International Wheat Convention (est. 1942). The Grains Trade Convention (GTC)¹ applies to trade in wheat, maize, barley, sorghum and other grains, as well as their products. It seeks to further international cooperation in grains trade; to promote expansion, openness and fairness in the grains sector; to contribute to grain market stability and to enhance world food security. The Convention established the International Grains Council as an intergovernmental forum for cooperation in grains trade matters. The International Grains Council (IGC) includes all parties to the Grains Trade Convention. It holds two regular sessions each year, usually in June and December. Its functions are to oversee the implementation of the GTC; to discuss current and prospective world grain market developments; and to monitor changes in national grain policies and their market implications. The Council may develop and sponsor grains-related projects in member countries for financing by the UN Common Fund for Commodities.

9. [International Sugar Organization \(ISO\)](#)

Est. 1937, London. Members: 57 members, including the EC. The International Sugar Organization (ISO) is dedicated to improving conditions on the world sugar market through debate, analysis, studies and statistics. The member states of the ISO represent approximately 82% of world sugar production, 65% of world sugar consumption and 90% of world exports. The International Sugar Council holds two regular sessions each year. The ISO is in charge of the implementation of the current [International Sugar Agreement](#), 1992. A Council Decision for a two-year extension of the International Sugar Agreement up to 31 December 2011 was recently adopted.

10. [International Olive Council \(IOC\)](#)

Est. 1959, Madrid. Members: 17 olive producer members including the EC, as well as Israel, Iran, Irak, Lybia, Syria and Lebanon. The new International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives, 2005, entered into force on 1 January 2006 and will be in force until 31 December 2014 unless the International Olive Council decides otherwise. It succeeds a series of Agreements on Olive Oil, the first of which was signed in 1956, amended in 1958 and entered into force in 1959. The IOOC held its first session in October 1959. The last International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives, 1986, as amended and extended in 1993 and last prolonged in 2004, to which the Community was a Member, terminated on 31 Dec. 2005. The IOC will celebrate its 50 years of existence at its November 2009 Session under the Swedish Presidency. The International Olive Council, based in Madrid, is the organisation established for the purpose of applying the provisions of the Agreement.

¹ The International Grains Agreement, 1995 comprises two Conventions, one on grains trade and the other on food aid, with the Food Aid Convention being tied to the existence of the Grains Trade Convention. Both conventions are administered by the International Grains Council (IGC) Secretariat, set up under the Grains Trade Convention. The current Grains Trade Convention (GTC, 1995) and Food Aid Convention (FAC, 1999) are the latest in a long series of multilateral cooperation instruments, in operation since 1949 for grains trade and since 1967 for food aid matters. The European Community is member of the IGC in the category of exporters.

The European Community accounts for some 80 percent of the participation shares to this Agreement.

11. International Rubber Study Group (IRSG)

Est. 1944, London (now Singapore). Members: 16 members including the EC and 5 EU MS (BE, FR, DE, IT, ES). The International Rubber Study Group was established in 1944 as the only intergovernmental organization that brought the world's rubber producing and consuming stakeholders together. It was recognised as an intergovernmental international body. The first headquarters were formally established in United Kingdom until 2008 when the location was transferred to Singapore further to the formal withdrawal of the UK. The IRSG has collected the heritage of the former INRO (International Natural Rubber Organisation) liquidated in late '90s which was an organisation devoted to market stabilisation through buffer stock interventions. Today the IRSG provides a forum for discussion of matters affecting the supply and demand of both synthetic and natural rubber.

12. Non-Ferrous Metals Study Groups (NFMSGs)

The three international non-ferrous metals study groups share a common structure following to the merging of their respective secretariats :

- the International Copper Study Group (ICSG - est. 1992): 22 members including the EC and 12 EU MS,
- the International Nickel Study Group (INSG - est. 1990): 16 members including the EC + 9 EU MS,
- the International Lead and Zinc Study Group (ILZSG - est. 1959): 30 members including the EC + 12 EU MS.

The NFMSGs are intergovernmental organisations that regularly bring together [member countries](#) of each group in an international forum to exchange information on their respective metals. They provide a unique and globally recognised source of industry statistics and organise twice yearly meetings between producing and consuming countries, industry and government representatives. The common secretariat for the three NFMSGs is based in Lisbon.

13. Common Fund for Commodities (CFC)

Est. 1989, Amsterdam. Membership: 107 countries, including the EC and 15 EU MS (all EU-15 except France plus Bulgaria). The Common Fund for Commodities is an intergovernmental financial institution established by the United Nations (UNCTAD). The Secretariat is based in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Currently, the Fund is a partnership of [107 Member States](#) and institutional members including, the European Community (EC), African Union (AU), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the East African Community. The latest institutional members are: Andean Community, Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). Although the European Community has ratified in its name the Agreement creating the CFC, the EU participation is mixed as the Member States are also active members due to their initial financial contribution to the Fund.
