

NEWS BULLETIN

6 APRIL 2012



GLOBAL

WORLD FOOD PRICES in March remained virtually unchanged from their February levels, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization reported, adding that dairy prices are at their lowest level since August 2010. The latest UNFAO Food Price Index, a measure of basic food prices at the global level that is published every month, averaged 216 points in March, compared to 215 in February. Regarding the various commodity groups, only oils prices showed strength, compensating for falling dairy quotations, while the indices of cereals, sugar and meat prices were largely unchanged from last month's level, according to the Index. Among cereals, maize prices registered some gain, supported by low inventories and a strong soybean market, but wheat changed little as supplies remained ample.

CLIMATE CHANGE - The tide seems to be finally turning for the oceans. After years of neglect, there is a growing focus on the health of the oceans, which helps sustain life on earth, particularly in light of the impact of rising levels of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and higher temperatures.

AFRICA

HORN OF AFRICA - Food insecurity in the eastern Horn of Africa is expected to worsen as a result of less rain than previously forecast falling in the key March-to-May season.

KENYA - Over the past few weeks refugees fleeing violence in parts of Sudan and South Sudan have been arriving in Kakuma refugee camp in northwestern Kenya in large numbers, and aid agencies fear the camp's capacity could soon be exceeded.

ASIA & PACIFIC

PAPUA NEW GUINEA - In Papua New Guinea, which has no national power grid but large river systems and abundant sunshine, renewable energy has tremendous potential to transform remote rural lives with clean and sustainable electricity.

VIETNAM - A dangerous strain of the typically non-lethal hand-foot-and-mouth disease (HFMD) has affected more than 21,000 persons - mostly children younger than five - killing 16 thus far in Vietnam, according to the Ministry of Health.

LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

BRAZIL - The government of Brazil, which will host the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in June, defended itself from ecologists who lambasted its performance on the environmental front.

GUATEMALA - The lack of adequate management of electronic waste in Guatemala is posing a serious threat to the environment and health, as demand for electronic devices has soared to the point that there are more cell phones than people.

WFWO's Communications Team