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Food and Agriculture
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Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الغذية والزراعة
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COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY

TWENTY-THIRD SESSION

Rome, 18 - 22 July 2016

PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A WORKING GROUP ON DRYLAND FORESTS AND AGROSILVOPASTORAL SYSTEMS

1. At its 22nd Session, the Committee on Forestry (the Committee) considered the relevance and benefits of establishing a working group on dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems and requested FAO to: "(...) organize an ad hoc preparatory meeting to consider the draft terms of reference, modalities and other relevant arrangements for a working group on dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems; [and] present a recommendation to the Committee for the establishment of the working group on dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems, for consideration and possible adoption at its next session".¹

2. Pursuant to this mandate, FAO organized an ad-hoc preparatory meeting during the expert workshop "Drylands & Forest and Landscape Restoration Monitoring Week" (26-29 April 2016) in Rome, at FAO headquarters to consider the draft Terms of Reference and other relevant working arrangements for the working group on dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems (the Working Group).

3. Participants to the expert workshop highlighted the importance of dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems and the urgency of tackling the challenges behind their loss and degradation. They concluded that if well managed, dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems contribute to the food security, livelihoods and resilience of millions of people and to sustainable landscapes. Extensive areas of drylands are already degraded. Drylands are at high risk of further degradation and associated environmental and socio-economic impacts, including desertification, conflict, water and food insecurity, migration, and unemployment, among others. Addressing sustainable management and restoration of dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems requires a comprehensive understanding of their complexity, status and roles and context-specific approaches tailored to the unique conditions of drylands. Action and investments in monitoring, sustainable management and restoration of dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems and their adaptation to climate change need to be increased.

¹ Report of the 22nd Session of COFO (23-27 June 2014), COFO/2014/REP, paragraph 103.

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4. In accordance with Rule XXXI, paragraph 10, of the General Rules of the Organization (GRO), "[t]he Committee may, when necessary, establish subcommittees, subsidiary working parties or study groups, subject to the necessary funds being available in the relevant chapter of the approved budget of the Organization". Rule VII, paragraph 3, of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee provides that "[t]he Committees shall determine the terms of reference of its subsidiary bodies, who shall report to the Committee". Paragraph 2 of Rule VII further provides that "[b]efore taking any decision involving expenditure in connection with the establishment of subsidiary bodies, the Committee shall have before it a report from the Director-General on the administrative and financial implications thereof".

5. The draft Terms of Reference, as contained in Annex I to this document, describe the proposed tasks and other working arrangements for the Working Group. The report from the Director-General on the administrative and financial implications, as specified in paragraph 2 of Rule VII of the Committee's Rules of Procedure, is contained in Annex II.

6. The Committee may wish to:

- review and consider for adoption the proposal on the establishment of the Working Group on "*Drylands Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems*";
- if the Committee decides to adopt the proposal, encourage the Members of the Committee to become members of the Working Group.
- request FAO to organize the first session of the Working Group.

Annex I**Proposed Terms of Reference of the Working Group on
Dryland Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems****LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

1. The Working Group on Dryland Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems is a subsidiary body of the Committee on Forestry, established on the basis of Rule XXXI, paragraph 10, of the General Rules of the Organization.²
2. The Working Group will operate in accordance with the General Rules of the Organization and the Rules of Procedure of the Committee on Forestry ("the Committee"), as applicable.

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE WORKING GROUP

3. The Working Group on Dryland Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems shall:
 - a) review and report to the Committee on Forestry on the status, trends, issues and developments in dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems, and make recommendations to the Committee on these matters;
 - b) as guided by the Committee, contribute to developing a comprehensive understanding of dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems and the people who depend on them;
 - c) as guided by the Committee, promote scaling –up of the adoption of good practices for the protection, sustainable management and restoration of drylands forests and agrosilvopastoral systems, enhancing also environmental and socio-economic resilience and sustainable livelihoods;
 - d) report to the Committee on any other of its activities, in accordance with Rule VII (3) of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee.

ACTIVITIES OF THE WORKING GROUP

4. To achieve its mandate as described above, the Working Group will undertake the following activities:
 - assess and follow, in cooperation with relevant partners, the status of dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems, and facilitate the use of this information for well-informed decision-making and policy development to address the challenges faced in these systems;
 - assess current capacities and gaps, and advise on capacity development needs for the sustainable management, restoration, assessment and monitoring of dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems;
 - identify tools and approaches appropriate for dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems and support their dissemination and adoption;
 - share knowledge and lessons learnt on sustainable management, restoration and monitoring of dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems, and promote their uptake into policy, investments and implementation;
 - identify opportunities for collaboration and scaling-up of sustainable management and restoration practices within the Committee, as well as with other FAO Technical Committees and with relevant other partners;

² <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mp046e.pdf#page=117>

- provide advice in support of implementation in dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and decisions adopted within the framework of other international instruments, processes and initiatives, in particular the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;
- undertake such other tasks as may be delegated to it by the Committee.

MEMBERSHIP

5. Membership in the Working Group is open to all Members of the Committee on Forestry whose territories are situated wholly or partly in drylands or that are interested in contributing to the objectives of the Working Group.

6. Each Member of the Committee shall designate its representative from appropriate sectors and disciplines.

OFFICERS

7. The Working Group shall elect a Chairperson and two Vice-Chairpersons from among the representatives designated in accordance with paragraph 6 above at the end of each session, who shall remain in office until the election of the new Chairperson and new Vice-Chairpersons at the next session. When electing its officers, the Working Group shall give due consideration to the desirability of ensuring equitable rotation of the offices among the regions and to gender balance.

SESSIONS

8. The Working Group shall normally hold one session every two years, unless otherwise requested by a majority of the Members of the Working Group.

Annex II

Note on possible administrative and financial implications of the proposal for the establishment of the Working Group on Dryland Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems

At its 22nd Session, the Committee on Forestry considered the relevance and benefits of establishing a Working Group on dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems and requested FAO to: (i) organize an ad hoc preparatory meeting to consider the draft terms of reference, modalities and other relevant arrangements for a working group on dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems; (ii) and to present a recommendation to the Committee for the establishment of the working group on dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems, for consideration and possible adoption at its next session.

As a follow-up to the above request, FAO organized an ad-hoc preparatory meeting during the expert workshop “*Drylands & Forest and Landscape Restoration Monitoring Week*” (26-29 April 2016) held at FAO headquarters to consider the draft terms of reference and other relevant arrangements for the working group.

The Terms of Reference of the Working Group, as contained in Annex 1 to document COFO/2016/7.3, describe the proposed tasks and working arrangements for the Working Group. These tasks and working arrangements have been considered in the assessment of the administrative and financial implications of the establishment of the Working Group.

Membership

In accordance with Rule XXXI, paragraph 10, of the GRO, *the Committee may include in the membership of the Working Group "Member Nations that are not Members of the Committee and Associate Members". The Council may also admit to membership "States which, while not Member Nations or Associate Members of the Organization, are members of the United Nations, any of its specialized agencies or the International Atomic Energy Agency"*.

Paragraph 5 of the Terms of Reference specifies that “membership in the Working Group is open to all Members of the Committee on Forestry whose territories are situated wholly or partly in drylands or that are interested in contributing to the objectives of the Working Group”.

The Working Group could therefore have a similar membership to the one of the Committee . FAO anticipates great interest of dryland countries to become members of the Working Group. Moreover, other members, whose territory is not in drylands but who wish to be involved in or support regional or international dryland forestry programmes, may decide to join the Working Group. Experts participating to the Expert workshop held in Rome, in April 2016 were of the opinion that membership could reach or exceed 60 members soon after the Working Group’s establishment and that membership would increase over time. However, increasing in membership is not expected to have cost implications as working modalities are quite insensitive to changes in size.

Needed support for the Working Group

The Working Group is expected to meet on a biennial basis (one 3-day meeting in two years). Opportunities should be sought to organize these meetings back-to-back with other events, to the extent possible, to save costs of both participation and organization. Meeting services provided through FAO should cover in-session interpretation and translation of documents. A documentation of up to 50 pages is foreseen for each meeting. Careful consideration should be given to working languages, considering the importance of achieving balance in language services. It needs to be assessed whether working in three languages (English, French and Spanish) would be acceptable for the Working Group.

FAO will provide secretarial services to the Working Group. This is foreseen not to exceed 15 percent staff time of a P4 position. In addition, 5 percent staff time of a general service support at G3 level is foreseen.

The biennial cost estimate in the table below has been prepared on this basis.

Other costs implications

The cost of attending the sessions (i.e. travel and daily subsistence) will be the sole responsibility of the Working Group members; FAO will not provide financial support for this purpose.

Non-quantifiable benefits generated by the Working Group

While the establishment of the Working Group will generate additional resource needs, it will also provide support and input to several key areas of work of the Organization, which, in the absence of such a working group, would need to be generated through other means. Through its activities, the Working Group could provide expertise and information in its areas of competence and save staff time, travel and costs of technical meetings, which would be needed to obtain the same input or generate the same impact.

Options for covering costs of Working Group

While FAO may be able to absorb the forecasted staff costs, predictable and solid functioning of the Working Group would require allocation of additional resources from the FAO Regular Budget, or, in the absence of these, funding from extra-budgetary resources.

Should the Working Group decide on intersessional activities, the required resources would need to be generated by the Working Group members or by other extra-budgetary contributions. The Working Group will consider this every time it discusses future activities that would require financial resources.

Estimated Biennial Budget for the COFO Working Group on Dryland Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems

Item	Unit	USD
Working Group Secretary (15% of P4 position)	Biennium	58,709
Sub-Total Prof. Salaries		58,709
General Service (5% of G3) for admin support	Biennium	7,733
Sub-Total General Services		7,733
Interpretation (3 languages)	Lump sum for three languages	20,000
Translation of documents (estimated 50 pages) in 2 other languages	USD 250 p. page (per language)	25,000
Sub-Total General Operating Expenses - Internal Common Services		45,000
GRAND TOTAL		111,442