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# COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

## Item 4 of the Provisional Agenda

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

#### Ninth Session

Rome, 6 – 8 July 2016

### THE OPERATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FUNDING STRATEGY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Commission), at its Twelfth Regular Session, adopted the *Funding Strategy for the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources*<sup>1</sup> (Funding Strategy) and requested FAO to implement it.<sup>2</sup>

2. The Funding Strategy covers all known and potential sources of financial resources that support the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources (Global Plan of Action). The Funding Strategy established, as one of its financial resources, an FAO Trust Account for voluntary contributions to support national and regional projects for implementation of the Global Plan of Action.

3. At its Thirteenth Regular Session, the Commission requested FAO to launch the first call for proposals for the use of funds received through the FAO Trust Account, and provided detailed guidance on the process.<sup>3</sup> It also requested FAO to use experience gained in the first round of projects to prepare draft monitoring procedures,<sup>4</sup> as envisaged in the Funding Strategy,<sup>5</sup> which the Commission adopted at its Fourteenth Regular Session.<sup>6</sup> At its Fourteenth Regular Session, the Commission was also informed about the 13 projects selected by its Bureau to receive support under the FAO Trust Account and that financial negotiations with the project coordinators were underway.<sup>7</sup>

4. At the Fifteenth Regular Session of the Commission, the Secretariat presented an update on the status of the FAO Trust Account projects.<sup>8</sup> The implementation of all projects was on-going, but the status of the projects varied. The selection and operation of projects under the Funding Strategy was reported to be complex and time consuming. The Commission reviewed the administrative costs and agreed to consider, at its Sixteenth Regular Session, an increase of the maximum budget per national project for future calls for proposals.<sup>9</sup>

5. The present document reports on FAO's activities in the implementation of the FAO Trust Account since the Commission's Fifteenth Regular Session. It reports on the status of implementation of the first project cycle under the FAO Trust Account, including on successes and challenges encountered, and proposes options to enhance the effectiveness of the use of its resources and the administrative efficiency of the FAO Trust account. Additionally, it considers monitoring and evaluation procedures. Finally, it provides information on the status of other financial sources under the Funding Strategy. More detailed information on resources dedicated to the implementation of the Global Plan of Action, as well as partnerships and alliances pursued by FAO with other international mechanisms and organizations to facilitate the implementation of the Global Plan of Action, is provided in the document, *Detailed FAO progress report on the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources*.<sup>10</sup>

## II. STATUS OF THE FAO TRUST ACCOUNT

### Financial status

6. The first call for proposals was supported by voluntary contributions totalling US\$1 050 402 from Switzerland (US\$406 000), Norway (US\$100 000) and Germany (€480 000). To date US\$1 036 155 has been disbursed.

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<sup>1</sup> CGRFA-12/09/Report, Appendix C.

<sup>2</sup> CGRFA-12/09/Report, paragraph 43.

<sup>3</sup> CGRFA-13/11/Report 12, paragraph 85-88.

<sup>4</sup> CGRFA-13/11/Report 12, paragraph 88.

<sup>5</sup> Annex I Section C, II Project Cycle, paragraph 8c.

<sup>6</sup> CGRFA-14/13/Report, paragraph 65.

<sup>7</sup> CGRFA-14/13/14, paragraph 13.

<sup>8</sup> CGRFA-15/15/11, paragraphs 43-51.

<sup>9</sup> CGRFA-15/15/Report, paragraph 42.

<sup>10</sup> CGRFA/WG-AnGR-7/12/Inf.2.

### **Status of projects**

7. Under the first call for proposals under the Funding Strategy, the Bureau of the Commission approved 13 project proposals involving 30 countries. Subsequently, 17 Letters of Agreement (LoAs) were signed for the implementation of the 13 projects. Additional details about the projects, including countries involved, objectives, numbers of species and breeds addressed and project status can be found in document *Detailed FAO progress report on the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources*.<sup>11</sup>

8. As of May 2016, seven projects have been closed and the remaining six projects are in the final stages of implementation. The active projects and the overall FAO Trust Account project cycle are scheduled to be closed by the end of 2016.

9. The administration and monitoring of each project under the Funding Strategy has been complex and time consuming. For example, the development of the LoAs required between 2 and 18 months of negotiation, depending on the project. This delayed the implementation of several projects. Revisions of work plans were necessary in many cases and implementation and reporting needed to be deferred.

### **Management of the FAO Trust Account**

10. The project cycle agreed by the Commission consisted of the following steps:

- Opening calls for proposals (prepared by the Secretariat under the guidance of the Working Group, based on decisions of the Commission);
- Submission of concept notes (by Commission Members or legal or natural persons, in consultation with Commission Members);
- Screening and response to concept notes (by the six Members of the Bureau of the Commission, on the basis of preparatory work done by the Secretariat and the recommendations of the Bureau of the Working Group);
- Submission of project proposals based on approved concept notes (by Commission Members or legal or natural persons, in consultation with Commission Members, through National Focal Points);
- Appraisal of project proposals (by the Bureau of the Commission, on the basis of recommendations submitted by the Bureau of the Working Group and an appraisal report submitted by a panel of experts designated by the Bureau of the Working Group);
- Approval of projects for funding within the project cycle (by the Bureau of the Commission and, in addition, one representative per each region);
- Disbursement of funds and implementation, and reporting and monitoring (by the Secretariat). An independent evaluation of the project cycle will take place under the aegis of the Commission in and funds have already been budgeted for this evaluation.

11. In line with the reporting and monitoring requirements for individual projects funded under the Trust Account,<sup>12</sup> result-based management has been achieved through use of standard FAO reporting and monitoring procedures. Recipients reported in accordance with an agreed schedule against progress milestones identified in the project documents. Standard FAO monitoring procedures for LoAs applied.

12. FAO's contribution to the implementation of the Funding Strategy included substantial inputs by technical officers for the development and monitoring of projects, as well as overall coordination by an associate professional officer funded by Switzerland.

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<sup>11</sup> CGRFA/WG-AnGR-9/16/Inf.2.

<sup>12</sup> Section B.8 of Annex 1 to the Funding Strategy.

### **Outputs and impacts**

13. The Funding Strategy defines the initial technical priorities for projects under the FAO Trust Account as follows: Information exchange, technology transfer and capacity-building (reflecting the Global Plan of Action priority activities 12, 13 and 14); Sustainable use of animal genetic resources (reflecting the Global Plan of Action priority activities 4, 5, and 6); and Managing animal genetic resources (reflecting the Global Plan of Action priority activities 1, 8 and 9).

14. Every region, with the exception of North America, benefitted from one or more projects approved under the first project cycle of the Trust Account. Seven LoAs were implemented by governmental institutions or ministries, five by national research organisations or universities and five by NGOs. The projects facilitated activities improving the management of animal genetic resources for more than 50 different national breed populations belonging to seven species.

15. Awareness raising was a key component of all projects and most of the projects included capacity-building activities. Livestock keepers were the main beneficiaries of the projects. More than 2 150 people attended awareness-raising, capacity-building and dissemination events with participants ranging from government personnel and livestock keepers to researchers and technical experts. These stakeholders benefitted through increased networking with other livestock keepers and technical experts. Livestock keepers represented both genders and a range of age groups. Other stakeholders who benefitted included members of producer and marketing associations, university students and staff of implementing agencies. At least 20 policies of various types were prepared in the course of the first project cycle, including breeding strategies, conservation plans and biocultural community protocols. Breed data sheets for the Domestic Animal Diversity Information System (DAD-IS) were compiled for those project that included a component on breed characterization.

### **Challenges encountered**

16. The development and negotiation of LoAs, particularly matters regarding procurement and subcontracting, as well as the review of project reports and related correspondence required careful attention to properly manage and implement the FAO Trust Account. For example, several regional projects required individual LoAs with every project partner. Some projects were not fully aligned with existing livestock policies or the National Strategy and Action Plan for management of animal genetic resources (NSAP) of the relevant countries.

## **III. OPTIONS TO IMPROVE THE OPERATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FAO TRUST ACCOUNT**

17. Future projects under the FAO Trust Account should either be fully in line with the national priorities laid down in a NSAP or should support the development of NSAPs in countries that lack such a policy. All projects funded under the FAO Trust Account should either reflect the needs and priorities identified in an existing NSAP or aim at establishing such a policy. Trust Account projects have to be part of a “bigger picture”, i.e. the implementation of the Global Plan of Action.

18. Effectiveness of projects could be improved by providing sufficient budgetary support in the project budgets for backstopping, monitoring and technical assistance. In addition, encouraging the preparation of multi-stakeholder project proposals may improve effectiveness. Most of the projects undertaken with a wide diversity of partners, in particular non-governmental partners, had a better track record than did other projects with respect to delivery of outputs on time and in line with the agreed work plan. None of these projects resulted in non-delivery with regard to main outputs.

19. Increasing the maximum budget per project could improve the operation and effectiveness of the FAO Trust Account. By supporting fewer bigger projects, rather than many small projects, administrative costs per project could be reduced. It is recommended, for any future call for proposals under the Funding Strategy, to increase the maximum budget per national project to US\$200 000 and to US\$500 000 for regional projects. Criteria for selection of projects for funding would have to be more stringent, which could help to increase across the board the quality of projects funded. Fewer projects would also mean that they could be more easily monitored and revised, as necessary and appropriate. The requirements of LoAs with respect to procurement and subcontracting would need to

be clearly reflected in the next call for proposals to avoid time-consuming negotiation of project proposals.

#### **IV. STATUS OF OTHER RESOURCES UNDER THE FUNDING STRATEGY**

##### **FAO Regular Programme**

20. Work on animal genetic resources, including the implementation of the Global Plan of Action, contributes to six Outcomes of the FAO's *Medium Term Plan 2014-17* relating to *Increase and improve provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner; Reduce rural poverty; and Enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems.*<sup>13</sup> During 2014-15, the value of FAO's Regular Programme resources for work on animal genetic resources amounted to approximately US\$3.1 million.

21. During the reporting period, the value of FAO Technical Cooperation Projects contributing to this work amounted to approximately US\$1.0 million, and from the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme through the FAO/IAEA Joint Division of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture approximately to US\$1.5 million.

##### **Voluntary contributions to FAO**

22. FAO received funds to support the implementation of the Global Plan of Action at global level from France, Germany, and Switzerland (total of approximately US\$1.1 million) and for regional and country projects from Germany, Iraq, Mongolia, Nepal, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey (total of approximately US\$5.9 million). For some of these countries, the support was with funds the countries had received from donors, specifically the European Union, UNDP and World Bank. The funds under these programme cooperation agreements helped FAO provide catalytic funds for special activities at all levels. FAO is also associated with several European Commission-funded projects that provide stipends for developing-country participants and support the generation and dissemination of knowledge.

##### **Resources not under FAO control**

23. The Funding Strategy lists four different types of relevant resources, including resources that are not under FAO control. FAO has a facilitating role in enhancing countries' access to information on funding. It carries out this role by continuing to provide information on funding sources and grants through the Domestic Animal Diversity discussion network (DAD-net) and through the Funding Strategy web site. Although information about resources not under FAO control are scant, ample evidence suggests increasing recognition by donors of the importance of management of animal genetic resources. For example, the European Union continues to provide support to the African Union Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) project on "Strengthening the Capacity of African Countries to Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of African Animal Genetic Resources" and increasingly involves developing countries in animal genetic resources projects under its Horizon 2020 research-support programme. Donor support for management of animal genetic resources is often integrated into large comprehensive programmes, such as projects that support pastoralism or enhancement of entire livestock value chains, or through complementary activities, such as projects on animal identification and traceability.

#### **V. GUIDANCE SOUGHT**

24. The Working Group may wish to recommend that the Commission

- Consider, for any future call for proposals under the Funding Strategy, to increase the maximum budget per national project to US\$200 000 and to US\$500 000 for regional projects;

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<sup>13</sup> CL 153/3 Web Annex 5

- Consider giving priority to projects under the FAO Trust Account aimed at the development of NSAPs for those countries lacking these policies or to favour projects that undertake actions prioritised by existing NSAPs or other established policy frameworks for the management of animal genetic resources, as well as projects that will be implemented in collaboration with national or international NGOs;
- Consider amending the Funding Strategy, as necessary and appropriate, with a view to reflect the recommendations of the Working Group;
- Incorporate its recommendations on the review and possible update of the Global Plan of Action into its recommendations on the Funding Strategy, if required; and
- Invite donors to contribute to the implementation of the Global Plan of Action, including to a second call for proposals under the FAO Trust Account.