

REPORT

**Antalya,
Turkey
25 – 29 November
2019**

**NEAR EAST
FORESTRY
AND RANGE
COMMISSION**

**Twenty-fourth
Session**



**Food
and
Agriculture
Organization
of
the
United
Nations**

FO:NEFRC/2019/REP

REPORT

of the

TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION

of the

NEAR EAST FORESTRY AND RANGE COMMISSION

**Antalya, Turkey
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**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
Regional Office for the Near East
Cairo, 2019**

PREVIOUS SESSIONS OF THE COMMISSION

First session	Tehran, Iran	24-29 September 1955
Second session	Cairo, Egypt	27 October –1 November 1958
Third session	Adana, Turkey	30 April – 5 May 1962
Fourth session	Beirut, Lebanon	15-22 June 1964
Fifth session	Amman, Jordan	25-30 September 1967
Sixth session	Tehran, Iran	25-30 April 1970
Seventh session	Baghdad, Iraq	30 November – December 1974
Eighth session	Khartoum, Sudan	23-28 February 1978
Ninth session	Nicosia, Cyprus	6-10 June 1983
Tenth session	Tunis, Tunisia	29 June – 3 July 1987
Eleventh session	Ankara, Turkey	15-19 October 1990
Twelfth session	Cairo, Egypt	21-24 October 1996
Thirteenth session	Damascus, Syria	6-9 December 1998
Fourteenth session	Tehran, Iran	1-4 July 2000
Fifteenth session	Khartoum, Sudan	28-31 January 2002
Sixteenth session	Beirut, Lebanon	24-27 May 2004
Seventeenth session	Larnaka, Cyprus	5-9 June 2006
Eighteenth session	Khartoum, Sudan	18-21 February 2008
Nineteenth session	Hammamet, Tunisia	5-9 April 2010
Twentieth session	Antalya, Turkey	29 January – 2 February 2012
Twenty first session	Amman, Jordan	26-30 January 2014
Twenty second session	Tlemcen, Algeria	13-17 December 2015
Twenty third session	Beirut, Lebanon	11-14 December 2017

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR THE ATTENTION OF MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE COMMISSION

The Commission:

welcomed the matrix reporting format and *encouraged* its use in future reporting exercises. It *recommended* Members to consider establishing national task teams/committees to follow the implementation of the recommendations and the reporting.

invited countries to implement sustainable land management practices that combine biodiversity conservation and land uses to the benefit of local people.

took note of the forest-related outcomes of COP24 of the UNFCCC and *invited* countries to consider how to strengthen forest-related contribution to their respective Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

took note of the forest-related outcomes of the CBD COP 14 and *called on* countries to provide input to the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

took note of the conclusions of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) and strive to implement the commitments pertaining to forests listed in the Ministerial Declaration¹.

invited countries to promote nature-based solutions to climate change and encourage participation in the United Nations Climate Action Summit.

took note of the outcome of the 1st World Forum on Urban Forests and *invited* countries to promote the Tree Cities of the World initiative.

took note of the UN reform process and *encouraged* developing countries to ensure that forestry issues are given the priority they deserve in the development of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework documents for their country.

invited International Popular Commission (IPC) Member Countries to engage in the IPC's continued reform and *called on* countries not members of the IPC to consider joining the IPC under its new scope.

recommended that countries strengthen engagement of their forestry and rangelands institutions in the preparation of NDCs and enhance the capacities to access funding related to climate change adaptation and mitigation and to achieving Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN).

highlighted the need for longer-term restoration programmes.

suggested that Country Programming Frameworks could be an entry point to enhance FAO support to forest and rangelands ecosystem restoration.

invited members to strengthen coordination efforts and collaboration between countries on transboundary invasive species and *requested* FAO support in containing emerging pests and diseases.

stressed that forest fire management, particularly prevention, is increasing in importance and *highlighted* the need for more accurate and detailed information on fires to assess the effectiveness of prevention measures and strategies.

¹ https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/HLS/2018/1&Lang=E

invited countries to further strengthen efforts in experience sharing building on successful efforts including disaster risk reduction.

invited countries to support the XV World Forestry Congress and to encourage the widest possible attendance and participation from all sectors within the region.

invited countries to propose themes and topics that could form the basis of technical sessions at the Congress, and *encouraged* members, as appropriate, to support the Congress financially, aiming especially participation from developing countries.

suggested to capitalize on the expertise of *SILVAMED* in the context of inter-regional collaboration including in the areas of forest health and fire management.

highlighted some knowledge gaps in the further promotion of non-wood forest products (NWFPs) and *raised* their concerns about potential degradation of forest resources that may be caused by the economic promotion of NWFPs resulting in over exploitation

highlighted the need for improving the inventory methods of NWFPs that could provide food for the local communities and/or wildlife and for strengthening the technical capacities in this regard.

recognized the importance of strengthening information and experience sharing on the promotion of NWFPs and the need for developing their local and external markets.

highlighted the need for developing national rangeland, wildlife and forest strategies.

emphasized the importance on agreeing on and adopting criteria and indicators for sustainable rangeland management.

SUMMARY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ATTENTION OF FAO

The Commission:

recommended to streamline and coordinate the reporting template and include check boxes or selection options, which would facilitate the work of national correspondents in charge of the report and could lead to a further increase in response rates. The Commission also *recommended* the Secretariat to continue working towards effective communication.

commended FAO for its activities in the region, noting in particular the support to fund raising and supporting access to major international funding sources. It was noted that funds directed to forestry are decreasing and there is a need to take a broader approach and coordinate efforts with those of related areas, and prepare more comprehensive applications for funds and *requested* FAO's continued support in this regard.

noted the difficulties in accessing international funding by countries with internal conflicts and *recommended* that the international community pay special attention to such cases.

requested FAO to support countries in undertaking an assessment study on the status of forest and range biodiversity in the region and in identifying gaps for future country actions as well as in establishing gene banks for the conservation of their national genetic resources.

supported the recommendation on seeking proactive measures to strengthen the linkages between its work and the UN Strategic Plan for Forest (UNSPF) as well as appropriate ways to strengthen collaboration with UN Forum on Forestry (UNFF) as recommended by the Committee on Forestry (COFO).

requested FAO to continue supporting the implementation of the UNSPF and to establish clear links between its activities and the UNSPF and report on implementation accordingly. It also *requested* FAO to continue its leadership role in the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF).

recommend COFO to consider the opportunities provided by the UN Decade on Family Farming and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration for upscaling forest and landscape restoration activities.

requested FAO to continue contributing to the Global Climate Action Agenda and to promote forest related initiatives, projects and programmes as well as support countries in the development of their forest and other land use related proposals for the Green Climate Fund.

requested FAO to explore ways and means to help further enhance the forest sector's contribution to post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

requested FAO to further promote urban forestry activities.

requested FAO to take an active part of the UN Decade on Family Farming and scale up its support to forest and farm producer organizations through the Forest and Farm Facility.

requested FAO to inform COFO on plans for the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration

informed about activities related to follow up on the NDCs and specific activities in support of the developments of the post-2020 biodiversity agenda and *noted* the need for continued learning from

good experience and sharing lessons learned, and *recommended* FAO to continue facilitating this process.

requested FAO to continue its support in efforts to access international funds and particularly to assist in building capacity to develop related programme and projects.

stressed that forest fire management, particularly prevention, is increasing in importance and *highlighted* the need for more accurate and detailed information on fires to assess the effectiveness of prevention measures and strategies.

requested FAO's support to strengthen countries' capacities on fire prevention and post-fire interventions, including by extending existing fire guidelines to cover also this latter area.

requested FAO to continue supporting the Near East Network on Wildlands Forest Fire (NENFIRE) and Near East Network on Forest Health and Invasive Species (NENFHIS) in implementing their activities and to strengthen regional and inter-regional collaboration on forest fire, health and invasive species.

acknowledged the importance of the Working Group on Drylands Forests and Agropastoral Systems, in particular for the region, and *noted* the continued need for keeping FAO members abreast of the developments so that countries, not associated with the Working Group yet, could join in the future and nominate their experts.

supported the MedForYouth project and *requested* FAO to explore ways and means to support its development and implementation.

requested the assistance of FAO, the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD) and other related organizations in developing national rangelands strategies taking into account, as appropriate, the guidance provided in the framework strategies developed by AOAD.

highlighted the urgency to take action regarding climate change consequences on food security in the region, and *called* on FAO to assist countries in the selection of drought-tolerant species in agriculture and forestry, to develop measurable indicators and the needed capacities for institutions in charge of monitoring those indicators.

highlighted the importance of integrated watershed management approaches to address water scarcity issues in the region and *requested* FAO's support in the development of integrated watershed management projects.

noted the differences in capacities between countries regarding the adopted techniques of afforestation/reforestation and landscape restoration, and *requested* FAO to facilitate sharing of information and experiences between the countries in this regard.

noted the expertise that Turkey has developed in fire management and monitoring as well as in forest restoration and combating desertification and establishment of adequate training facilities and *called on* FAO to facilitate bilateral collaboration in this regard including through South-South cooperation.

INTRODUCTION AND OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The Twenty-fourth Session of the Near East Forestry and Range Commission (NEFRC) was held in Antalya, Turkey, from 25 to 29 November 2019, at the kind invitation of the Government of Turkey. The meetings attracted 67 participants for the opening session. The Commission session was attended by 45 country representatives from 13 Members and one observer country and 5 observers from regional intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations. *Annex A* provides a full list of NEFRC participants. The session was conducted in Arabic and English.

2. A technical session on Climate Smart Agriculture and its relation to Climate Smart Forestry was held in conjunction with the 24th Session of the NEFRC. The concept note is given in *Annex B*.

3. Two in-session seminars were also held during the week: the first seminar on “Forests, rangelands and food security and nutrition in the Near East and North Africa region” and the second seminar on “Best practices on afforestation/reforestation and ecosystem restoration”. The programme is in *Annex C*.

4. In his opening remarks, Mr Chadi Mohanna, outgoing Chairperson of the Commission, welcomed participants and thanked them for the trust they had given to him for chairing the 23rd session of NEFRC. He also thanked the Government of Turkey for hosting the 24th session.

5. Mr Ewald Rametsteiner, Deputy Director, Forestry Policy and Resources Division, Forestry Department, FAO, expressed, on behalf of the Director-General of the Organization his gratitude to the Government of Turkey for hosting the session. He underlined the important role of the Regional Forestry Commissions (RFCs) in bringing forestry issues into the international agenda and country priorities. He also highlighted the importance of climate change in the global sustainable development agenda and encouraged countries to increase broad awareness of the role of the forest sector in climate change mitigation and adaptation. Mr Rametsteiner also noted that in 2020 there will be a strong focus on biodiversity. Recalling FAO’s work on biodiversity and drylands, he informed the Commission about the creation of the COFO Working Group on Dryland Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems, which could play an important role in this regard.

6. Mr Mehmet Çelik, Deputy Director-General, General Directorate for Forestry of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Turkey, expressed in his welcoming speech his Government’s pleasure to host the session, reminding that three commission sessions had been held in Turkey and confirming his country’s involvement and readiness to support and collaborate with Near East countries. He also shared information on the International Forestry Training Center, which hosted training in forest fires for participants from the Near East and from Africa. Mr Mehmet Çelik declared, at the end of his speech and on behalf of the host country, the Twenty-fourth Session of the Commission open.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Item 1)

7. Under the guidance of Mr Chadi Mohanna the provisional agenda (FO:NEFRC/2019/1/Rev.1) was adopted (see *Annex D*). The documents considered by the Commission are listed in *Annex E*.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS (Item 2)

8. In accordance with the provisions of Rules II-1 and II-5 of its Rules of Procedure, the Commission elected the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairpersons and the Rapporteur. The composition of the Executive Committee is as follows:

Chairperson:	Yusuf Serengil (Turkey)
1 st Vice-Chairperson:	Chadi Mohanna (Lebanon)

2nd Vice-Chairperson: Youssef Gharsa (Libya)
3rd Vice Chairperson: Wahid Tefiani (Algeria)
Rapporteur: Osman Omar (Sudan)

9. Mr Abdelhamied Adam Hamid, Senior Forestry Officer, FAO Regional Office for the Near East, Cairo, served as Secretary of the Commission.

FAO AND COUNTRY ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION AND FOLLOW-UP ON REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 23RD SESSION OF THE COMMISSION (Item 4)

10. The Secretariat presented an overview of countries' and FAO's forestry and rangelands activities in the Region in response to the recommendations of the 23rd session of the NEFRC. The Secretariat noted the growth in numbers of national reports and encouraged members to continue this also in the future. A summary of the country reports is presented in *Annex F*.

11. Some members, including Libya, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia noted more country reports could have been prepared than what have reached the Secretariat and presented oral reports on relevant national follow-up actions. Several other delegations provided amendments to their reports and expressed readiness to share further details on national activities. Turkey informed about an ongoing major campaign of planting (over 4.5 billion seedling) since 2002 and about the establishment of a dedicated National Forestation Day, celebrated on 11 November every year. Algeria also informed about its national programme for planting 43 million seedling from 2019 to 2021.

12. The Commission welcomed the matrix reporting format and encouraged its use in future reporting exercises. It recommended Members to consider establishing national task teams/committees to follow the implementation of the recommendations and the reporting. The Commission also recommended the Secretariat to continue working towards effective communication.

13. The Commission further recommended to streamline and coordinate the reporting template and include check boxes or selection options, which would facilitate the work of national correspondents in charge of the report and could lead to a further increase in response rates.

14. The Commission commended FAO for its activities in the region, noting in particular the support in resource mobilization and access to major international funding sources. It was noted that funds directed to forestry are decreasing and there is a need to take a broader integrated approach and coordinate efforts with those actors in related fields to prepare more comprehensive applications for funds. The Commission requested FAO's continued support in this regard.

15. The Commission also noted the difficulties in accessing international funding by countries with internal conflicts and recommended that the international community pay special attention to such cases.

16. Two additional topics were raised in the course of the discussion, one on possible areas of future regional collaboration and the second was a suggestion for establishing an International year on rangelands and pastoralism.

FAO'S WORK ON BIODIVERSITY (Item 5)

17. Countries welcomed the document on FAO's work on biodiversity, noting the growing concern about biodiversity losses and the wider attention given now to biodiversity at global, regional and national levels.

18. The Commission took note of the forest-relevant outcomes from the 17th session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the FAO Strategy on Biodiversity

Mainstreaming across Agricultural Sectors as well as the work on the second report of The State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources.

19. Several delegations informed about national efforts to conserve biodiversity, including genetic resources, seed bearing mother trees, species varieties, and specific areas that host significant biodiversity. It was noted that protecting areas that host significant biodiversity should not prevent local populations from using these areas, but it should be ensured that this use is sustainable. Several Members highlighted the lack of capacity in conducting genetic studies.

20. Members highlighted the risks for biodiversity that may arise from agriculture policies orientated towards market demands and population needs, which may favor highly productive crops to the detriment of biodiversity. Conflicting options between social and economic demands and biodiversity conservation were also highlighted in relation to the fight against forest pests. Mutual learning and sharing experience could support a better mainstreaming of biodiversity in the economy, across sectors.

21. The Commission invited countries to implement sustainable land management practices that consider biodiversity conservation and the benefit of local people.

22. The Commission requested FAO to support countries in undertaking an assessment study on the current status of forest and range biodiversity in the region and in identifying gaps for future country actions, as well as in establishing gene banks for the conservation of their national genetic resources.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UN STRATEGIC PLAN FOR FOREST 2030 AND COLLABORATION WITH THE UN FORUM ON FORESTS (Item 6)

23. The Commission was informed about the main activities of FAO, as a UN system organization and as member and chair of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), in supporting progress towards the Global Forest Goals and associated targets, including the joint initiatives of the CPF led or co-led by FAO. The Commission was further informed about the collaboration with the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) and the related decisions of the Committee on Forestry (COFO), as well as on FAO's contribution to the work of the High-Level Political Forum as it relates to forests.

24. The Commission supported the recommendation on seeking proactive measures to strengthen the linkages between its work and the UN Strategic Plan for Forest (UNSPF) as well as appropriate ways to strengthen collaboration with UNFF, as recommended by COFO.

25. The Commission requested FAO to continue supporting the implementation of the UNSPF and to establish clear links between its activities and the UNSPF, and report on implementation accordingly. It also requested FAO to continue its leadership role in the CPF.

OUTCOME OF GLOBAL POLICY PROCESSES OF RELEVANCE TO THE COMMITTEE (Item 7)

26. The Commission took note of the rich set of forest-related developments in the global processes presented by the Secretariat, and supported the recommendations contained in document FO:NEFRC/2019/05.

27. Several delegations informed about national activities related to increasing forest and tree cover and other vegetated areas, including some very ambitious plans. Many of these included multi-stakeholder approaches where active participation from stakeholders, including the civil society, was foreseen. It was noted by some members that degradation still continues with a considerable pace and addressing it requires cross-sectoral approaches and collaboration with agriculture in particular in livestock.

28. Commission also informed about activities related to follow up on Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and specific activities in support of the developments of the post-2020 biodiversity agenda. The Commission noted the need for continued learning from good experience and sharing lessons learned, and recommended FAO to continue facilitating this process

FORESTS AND RANGELANDS IN COUNTRIES' NDCs AND LDN TARGETS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT (Item 8)

29. The Secretariat presented an overview of the position of forest and rangeland in NENA countries NDCs and Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets, noting the potential these processes hold for the development of the forest and rangeland sector and sustainable management of forest and range resources.

30. The Commission recommended that countries strengthen engagement of their forestry and rangelands institutions in the preparation of NDCs and enhance the capacities to access funding related to climate change adaptation and mitigation and to achieving LDN.

31. Countries requested FAO to continue its support to access international funds and particularly to assist in building capacity to develop related programme and projects.

32. Countries also highlighted the need for long-term restoration programmes.

33. Countries suggested that Country Programming Frameworks could be an entry point to enhance FAO support to forest and rangelands ecosystem restoration.

FOREST PROTECTION IN THE NENA REGION: INTEGRATED FIRE MANAGEMENT; FOREST HEALTH AND INVASIVE SPECIES (Item 9)

34. Countries welcomed the report on FAO's and countries' work on wildfire and on forest pests and diseases including in the regional networks on Forest and Wildland Fires (NENFIRE), and on Forest Health and Invasive Species (NENFHIS), noting their growing importance in the context of climate change

35. The Commission stressed that forest fire management, particularly prevention, is increasing in importance and highlighted the need for more accurate and detailed information on fires to assess the effectiveness of prevention measures and strategies.

36. The Commission requested FAO's support to strengthen countries' capacities on fire prevention and to post-fire interventions, including by extending existing fire guidelines to cover also this latter area.

37. The Commission invited members to strengthen coordination efforts and collaboration between countries on transboundary invasive species and requested FAO support in containing emerging pests and diseases.

38. The Commission invited countries to further strengthen efforts in experience sharing, building on successful efforts including disaster risk reduction.

39. The Commission requested FAO to continue supporting NENFIRE and NENFHIS in implementing their activities and to strengthen regional and inter-regional collaboration on forest fire, health and invasive species.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE 25th SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY AND THE XV WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS (Item 10)

40. Countries took note of the FAO governance mechanism and the role of the Regional Forestry Commissions that report to COFO as well as to the regional conferences. While the RFCs have a crucial role in setting the COFO agenda, their contribution to the regional conferences are also very important because cross-sectoral questions may not be properly addressed when the connection is not made between the commissions and the conference. The 24th session of COFO requested more attention to forestry questions in regional conferences. Regional Forestry Commissions could recommend activities to be undertaken at various levels and to set clear priorities linked to FAO Strategic Objectives and programme of work.

41. The Commission identified topics for consideration in the COFO agenda, in the Regional Conference for the Near East and in the Programme of Work of the Organization and requested the Secretariat to translate these into the templates contained in *Annexes G, H and I*.

42. The XV World Forestry Congress will take place in 2021 in Korea where around 4,000 forestry experts and professionals are expected to attend from around the world. The Commission invited countries to support the Congress and to encourage the widest possible attendance and participation from all sectors within the region.

43. Based on priority issues in the Region, the Commission invited countries to propose themes and topics that could form the basis of technical sessions at the Congress, and encouraged members, as appropriate, to support the Congress financially, aiming especially participation from developing countries.

WORKING GROUP ON DRYLANDS FORESTS AND AGROSILVOPASTORAL SYSTEMS (Item 11)

44. The Secretariat presented the outcomes of the first meeting of the COFO Working Group, held on 16-17 July 2019 in FAO headquarters, informing about key results, including the development of the workplan, the guidance on improving further the Dryland Restoration Initiative Platform, and the agreement to provide technical advice on the implementation of the GEF-7 Sustainable Forest Management Impact Program on Dryland Sustainable Landscapes.

45. Delegates acknowledged the importance of the Working Group, in particular for the region, and noted the continued need for keeping FAO Members abreast of the developments so that countries, not associated with the Working Group yet, could join in the future and nominate their experts.

SILVA MEDITERRANEA AND THE SIXTH MEDITERRANEAN FOREST WEEK (Item 12)

46. Mr Chadi Mohanna, Chairperson of *SILVAMED* presented the results of the last session, including the activities of the five working groups and the initiative to empower young entrepreneurs around the Mediterranean – MedForYouth. He also reported on the outcomes of the Sixth Mediterranean Forest Week, highlighting in particular the endorsement of the amended Brummana Declaration.

47. The Commission welcomed the report and noted the value of *SILVAMED* as one of the oldest statutory bodies comprising three regions. Some members recalled recent discussions at other fora, such as taskforces established by IUFRO at its 25th World Congress in 2019, being directly relevant for the Committee.

48. Members suggested to capitalize on the expertise of *SILVAMED* in the context of inter-regional collaboration, including in the areas of forest health and fire management.

49. Members also supported the MedForYouth project and requested FAO to explore ways and means to support its development and implementation.

IN-SESSION SEMINAR: FOREST, RANGELAND AND FOOD SECURITY

50. Countries' cases on the contribution of forests and rangeland to food security were presented. The presentations emphasised that forests and rangelands directly contribute to food security through various non-wood forest products and provision of firewood. These products support local communities' livelihoods in different ways, either directly by entering into their diets (e.g. cork oak acorns used to make couscous in Algeria, mushroom and honey), or as auxiliary ingredients that improve food (e.g. pine nut in Lebanon and Pakistan). Other products enter value chains and some are traded in international markets (e.g. oak acorn exported for use as food for animals, pine nut, Argan and Moringa oil).

51. Countries noted that the exploitation of non-wood forest products (NWFP) directly contributes to food security, job creation in rural areas and income generation for local communities. It is also important for the empowerment of women who play a key role in the harvesting and treatment of specific NWFPs (e.g. oak acorn in Algeria, Argan seeds in Morocco).

52. Countries also noted the importance of forest grazing and its contribution to livestock feed balance in some countries (e.g. Morocco and Sudan).

53. Countries highlighted the important role of forests in the provision of water, especially when irrigation of agricultural crops downstream depends on the flow of precipitation water from upstream highlands.

54. Countries also highlighted some knowledge gaps in the further promotion of NWFPs (e.g. nutrition properties of traditional products). They raised their concerns about potential degradation of forest resources that may be caused by the economic promotion of NWFPs resulting in over exploitation.

55. Rangelands tenure and governance issues were also highlighted as critical areas that need to be addressed to ensure sustainable management of the resources. Countries emphasized the importance of building on the traditional rangeland tenure systems.

56. A framework strategy for rangeland management in the Arab countries developed by the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD) to guide countries efforts in rangelands management was presented. The strategy has seven guiding objectives including stopping land degradation, building human capacities, sustainable management and participatory approaches, integrated value chains and enhancing awareness through various communication methods.

57. Delegates highlighted the need for improving the inventory methods of NWFPs that could provide food for the local communities and/or wildlife and for strengthening the technical capacities in this regard.

58. Delegates recognized the importance of strengthening information and experience sharing on the promotion of NWFPs and the need for developing their local and external markets.

59. Delegates requested the assistance of FAO, AOAD and other related organizations in developing their national rangelands strategies taking into account, as appropriate, the guidance provided in the framework strategies developed by AOAD.

60. Delegates highlighted the need for developing national rangeland, wildlife and forest strategy.

61. Countries emphasized the importance on agreeing on and adopting criteria and indicators for sustainable rangeland management.

TECHNICAL SESSION: CLIMATE SMART AGRICULTURE WITH FOCUS ON CLIMATE SMART FORESTRY

62. Countries took note of Climate Smart Agriculture and its relevance for the forest sector, including the implications of the Paris Agreement where, for the first time, agriculture and food security were considered for adaptation to climate change.

63. Countries were informed about the new generation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) prepared every five years, in which agriculture, forestry and fisheries need to have a larger share so that they are eligible for resource mobilization through international climate funding mechanisms.

64. The challenges of the region have also been discussed including climate change, demography, water scarcity, ecosystem resilience and vulnerability to climate change. According to the presentation 50 percent of cropland fell on the highest vulnerability category and 65 percent of forest and rangelands considered as vulnerable to climate change in the region.

65. Countries highlighted the urgency to take action regarding climate change consequences on food security in the region, and called on FAO to assist countries in the selection of drought-tolerant species in agriculture and forestry, to develop measurable indicators and the needed capacities for institutions in charge of monitoring those indicators.

66. The issue of coordination between ministries of agriculture and environment and the need for working together has been raised.

67. Data collection and monitoring systems for the estimation of greenhouse gas emissions in the agriculture, forestry and land use sector remain a challenge. International strategies for climate change do not take into consideration the characteristics of arid lands.

68. Countries also took note of Climate Smart Forestry and its principles. They also called to further adapt their forest policies to climate change where management plans and reforestation plans should better address climate change mitigation and adaptation, such as the use of local species in reforestation and better early warning systems linked to climate change risks.

IN-SESSION SEMINAR ON BEST PRACTICES IN AFFORESTATION/REFORESTATION AND ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION

69. Four country cases were presented, including one on best afforestation and reforestation practices from Turkey, a case of silvopastoral restoration from Tunisia and two cases on rangelands restoration from Jordan; one based on the revival of Al Hima traditional rangelands management system and empowering the local communities; and the second on adopting nature-based solutions.

70. The cases highlighted the importance of multidisciplinary approach and engagement of the local communities in all phases from planning to implementation, management and monitoring. The need for understanding socio-cultural, land tenure and rights to access was underlined, rather than focusing only on biophysical and technical aspects.

71. The value added of rangelands restoration in climate change adaptation, biodiversity conservation, soil protection, halting land degradation, and combating desertification and in promotion of ecotourism was also highlighted. It was concluded that more success could be achieved if adequate time is invested in awareness raising, good planning and in soliciting the commitment of all actors.

72. Delegates highlighted the importance of integrated watershed management approaches to address water scarcity issues in the region and requested FAO's support in the development of integrated watershed management projects.

73. The delegates noted the differences in capacities between countries regarding the adopted techniques of afforestation/reforestation and landscape restoration, and requested FAO to facilitate sharing of information and experiences between the countries in this regard.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Item 13)

74. The Commission noted the expertise that Turkey has developed in fire management and monitoring as well as in forest restoration and combating desertification and establishment of adequate training facilities and called FAO to facilitate bilateral collaboration in this regard, including through South-South cooperation.

75. The Commission noted the established collaboration between regional and international organizations working in the area of forest and rangeland in the region and called for the organizations to strengthen this collaboration and lead joint efforts and initiatives in support of the countries of the Region.

76. The Commission also noted the importance of wildlife in the Region and requested FAO to bring issues of wildlife conservation in the forefront of its attention, including through discussions in the NEFRC.

DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION (Item 14)

77. The Commission welcomed the information from the Mauritanian delegate that his country is considering to host the 25th Session of the Near East Forestry and Range Commission, informing that that this would be confirmed later through a formal offer, after completing internal government approvals.

78. The date of the next session will be confirmed in consultation with the host country with consideration of the two-year interval between the sessions.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE 24th SESSION (Item 15)

79. The Commission adopted the report as amended.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

80. Mr Ewald Rametsteiner, thanked the host country for the excellent host arrangements, as well as the Chairman for setting the favourable conditions to convene the sessions. He expressed his appreciation to the country delegates and organizations representatives, who held valuable discussions around the themes of the session and produced challenging set of recommendations. He drew countries attention to a number of important events coming ahead, including the UNFCCC COP25, The International Day of Forests, the COFO25 and XV World Forestry Congress. He also pointed that FAO took note of Turkey's message as relates to its International Forestry Training Center.

81. Mr Vedat Dikici, Regional Director, Turkish General Directorate for Forestry thanked participants for their involvement and valuable contributions, hoping that topics discussed and recommendations made would be converted into actions. He recalled Turkey's availability for bilateral, regional and international cooperation, emphasizing the role of their International Forestry Training Center in providing training for the countries of the region and beyond, requesting FAO and other international organizations to recognize this role through facilitating the hosting and/or organization of regional and interregional capacity building events in the Center.

82. Mr Yusif Serengil, elected Chairperson NEFRC24, thanked the participants for their active participation and the trust they put on him for chairing the Commission. He highlighted the challenges posed by climate change in the region, especially in water scarcity and called for giving more focus on adaptation measures.

The Chairman closed the session at 11.50 hours.

ANNEX A

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Concept note
Impact of climate change on agriculture in the Near East and North Africa

Global Onset:

Climate change impacts are being felt, with serious adverse consequences on the livelihood of people around the world. It has been reported recently that, the last four years were the four hottest on record. With more frequent droughts in some parts of the world and more floods in the others in addition to sea levels raise, the life-threatening impact of climate change on food security and human health became alarming and disturbing the national economies of many countries in the world. There is a need for tacking actions for climate change mitigation and adaptation to effectively address its impact on the different sectors. However, there is a growing recognition that appropriate solutions are available now that can be up-scaled to achieve resilient economies. Global efforts has been organized to address the threats accompanied with climate change, through the continues endeavor of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the decisions and recommendations of its 24 Conferences of Parties (COPs) until now. The COP 25 will be organized this year in Married, Spain.

The Paris Agreement that was signed at the COP-21 (December 2015) have been considered as a landmark in the history of climate change. For the first time all nations agreed to undertake, ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects, with enhanced support to assist developing countries. The Paris Agreement fundamental goal is to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius. To reach these ambitious goals, appropriate financial support, a new technology framework and an enhanced capacity-building framework are under discussion to be implemented. The Paris Agreement requires all countries to identify their efforts for mitigation and adaptation through nationally determined contributions (NDCs). There will also be a global stock-take every 5 years to assess the collective progress towards achieving the purpose of the Agreement and review the necessary actions.

Regional Context:

The Near East and North Africa region is facing major challenges affecting the ability of its people to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in an integrated and inclusive manner. Water scarcity, population growth, urbanization, conflicts and changing migration patterns increased pressures on human settlements and ecosystems, with negative impact on welfare of all populations including vulnerable groups.

Climate change and climate variability are imposing additional pressures with higher frequency and intensity of floods, droughts and extreme weather events aggravating the situation of already vulnerable communities, and resulted insignificant economic losses, environmental degradation and displacement in several parts of the region.

Global and regional predication reports indicated that, due to climate change, temperature is increasing and is expected to continue increasing until the end of century in the Near East and North Africa region. At the same time, precipitation trends are largely decreasing with expected changes of the frequency and length of the rainy season. Results from the “Regional Initiative for the Assessment of Climate Change Impacts on Water Resources and Socio-Economic Vulnerability in the Arab Region” (RICCAR 2017) show that areas with highest vulnerability to the impact of climate change are the Nile Valley (especially the northern parts; this is in addition to the impact of seawater-level rise on the Delta which is expected to impact negatively about 30% of the Delta land surface within this century), the Euphrates-Tigris basin, the south-west of the Arab Peninsula, and the western parts of North Africa on the Atlas Mountains.

Results of assessment (RICCAR 2017) also indicate that most affected crops are wheat and sorghum, while the latter is mostly grown in the highest vulnerable areas and expected to experience yield declines under all climate change scenarios. As for wheat, its yield is projected to decline under all scenarios, with the largest yield decline expected in areas with high wheat concentrations. For maize, the crop is the least vulnerable cereal and its yield's reduction is expected to be modest. Olive is found to be the most vulnerable to climate change, with substantial yield reduction under all scenarios of climate change.

The livestock sector in the region contributes to food security, poverty alleviation, employment and economic development and shares 30-50% of the agricultural output in the region. It is projected that potential impacts of climate change on livestock is related to decreasing water and feed resource base due to recurrent droughts, degradation of rangelands and desertification. Most vulnerable areas are located along the Nile Valley, the Horn of Africa, and south-west of Arabian Peninsula, followed by areas of Fertile Crescent and North Africa, though to a lesser extent. Excluding camels, which have the lowest density, cattle is the most affected by climate change, followed by goats and sheep respectively.

Marine fisheries, and to some extent aquaculture, in the region contribute to food security, poverty alleviation, employment and economic development and shares about 25 % of the agricultural output in the region. However, freshwater aquaculture of many countries within the region is likely to be affected by the climate change and may be affected by flooding or by drought or high temperatures. Because many fishery resources are heavily overexploited, a change in climate is very likely to cause the final collapse of some stocks if the fishery management does not secure a reduction of the exploitation accordingly.

Already forests in the region have been facing serious threats including population growth, urbanization, agricultural encroachment, deforestation, and inadequate social and economic institutions. Although forest ecosystems are considered outstanding for their biodiversity, it has been identified as the most vulnerable to the combined effect of climate and socio-economic changes. Anticipated impacts of climate change impose an additional stress on the forest sector in the region and its ecosystem services. The RICCAR (2017) indicted that over half of the area of the region (55%) showing high vulnerability to climate change, low adaptive capacity in areas such as the Eastern Sahel, the Jubal Bura valley forest, and the Jubba River riverine forests. These forests are under serious threat imposed by overgrazing, over cultivation, and deforestation.

Climate Smart Agriculture:

Climate-smart agriculture, is an approach that contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goals under climate change. It integrates the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) by jointly addressing food security and climate challenges. It is composed of three main pillars:

1. Sustainably increasing agricultural productivity and incomes;
2. Adapting and building resilience to climate change;
3. Reducing and/or removing greenhouse gases emissions, where possible.

Achieving the transformations required for Climate Smart requires an integrated approach that is responsive to specific local conditions. The methodology FAO has developed with its partner countries for implementing the climate-smart-agriculture includes:

- Expand the evidence base: For identification and evaluation of potential climate-smart options.
- Support enabling policy frameworks: Such as national agricultural development plans, provisional and local extensions to national plans.
- Strengthening national and local institutions.
- Enhancing financing options: Innovative financing mechanisms.
- Implementing practices in the field.

Considering the expected adverse impact of climate change on the different agriculture sectors in the Near East and North Africa, it has been suggested that climate smart agriculture principles and practices provide sustainable solution to address these challenges and achieve sustainable development.

Objective of the Session:

The overarching objective of the session is to present challenges imposed by climate change and the global efforts to address them. Also discuss the impact of climate change on the Near East and North Africa and present possible adaptation and mitigation measures as well as deliberate on the chance provided by climate smart agriculture to address them. Climate smart forestry will be discussed as an option for dealing with the effect of climate change on forestry sector.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

Monday, 25 November 2019

Morning

- 08:30 - 09:30 Registration
- 09:30 - 10:00 Opening of the 24th Session of NEFRC
- 10:00 – 10:10 Item 2: Adoption of the Agenda
(Document FO:NEFRC/2019/1/Rev.1)
- 10:10 - 10:30 Item 3: Election of Officers
- 10:30 - 11:00 Coffee break
- 11:00 - 12:00 Item 4: FAO and Country Activities in the Region and Follow-up on Requests
and Recommendations of the 23rd Session of the NEFRC
(Document FO:NEFRC/2019/2/Rev.1)
- 12:00 - 12:30 Item 7: Global processes
(Document FO: NEFRC/2019/5)
- 12:30 - 14:00 Lunch

Afternoon

- 14:00 - 15:00 Item 6: Implementation of the UN Strategic Plan and Collaboration with the UN
Forum on Forests
(Document FO:NEFRC/2019/4)
- 15:00 - 15:30 Item 5: FAO's work on biodiversity
(Document FO:NEFRC/2019/3)
- 15:30 - 16:00 Coffee break
- 16:00 - 17:00 Item 8: Forests and rangelands in countries NDCs and LDN targets and
implications for future sector development
(Document FO:NEFRC/2019/6)
- 19:00 FAO ADG Reception

Tuesday, 26 November 2019

Morning

- 09:00 - 10:30 In-session seminar: Forest, Rangeland and Food Security
Algeria case
Turkey case
Morocco case
Pakistan Case
Rangelands Strategy for Arab region - AOAD

10:30 - 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 – 12:30	In-session seminar: Forest, Rangeland and Food Security - continue
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch
Afternoon	
14:00 – 14:30	Item 11: Working Group on Drylands Forests & Agrosilvopastoral Systems (Document FO:NEFRC/2019/10)
14:30 – 15:00	Item 12: <i>Silva Mediterranea</i> & the 6 th Mediterranean Forest Week (Document: FO:NEFRC/2019/11)
15:00 - 15:30	Coffee break
15:30 - 16:30	Item 9: Forest protection in the NENA region: Integrated fire management. Forest health & Invasive Species (Document FO: NEFRC/2019/8)

Wednesday, 27 November 2019

Morning

09:00 - 10:30	Technical session: Climate Smart Agriculture
10:30 - 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 - 11:30	Climate Smart Agriculture (continued)
11:30 – 12:30	Item 10: Preparations for the 25 th Session of the Committee and the XV World Forestry Congress (Document FO:NEFRC/2019/9)
12:30 - 14:00	Lunch
14:00 - 15:30	In-session Seminar on best practices in Afforestation/reforestation and ecosystem restoration Best afforestation/reforestation practices: Turkey case Silvopastoral restoration initiative –ICARDA Community based management toward healthy rangeland ecosystem: Al Hima experience - IUCN Nature based solutions for rangelands restoration: case of Jordan - US Forest Service/WADI NGO
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee break
16:00 - 16:30	In-session Seminar on best practices (continued)
19:00	Host country Social Dinner

Thursday, 28 November 2019

09:00 - 17:00 Field trip

Friday, 29 November 2019

Morning

10:00 - 10:30 Item 13: Any other Business

10:30 - 10:40 Item 14: Date and place of the next session

10:40 - 11:30 Item 15: Adoption of the report and closure of the session

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening of the Session
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Election of Officers
4. FAO and Country Activities in the Region and Follow-up on Requests and Recommendations of the 23rd Session of the NEFRC
5. FAO's Work on Biodiversity
6. Implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2030 and Collaboration with the UN Forum on Forests
7. Outcome of Global Policy Processes of relevance to NEFRC
8. Forests and Rangelands in Countries' NDCs and LDN Targets and Implications for Future Sector Development
9. Forest Protection in the NENA Region: Integrated Fire Management; Forest Health and Invasive Species
10. Preparations for the 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry and the XV World Forestry Congress
11. Working Group on Drylands Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems
12. *Silva Mediterranea* and the 6th Mediterranean Forest Week
13. Any Other Business
14. Date and Place of the next Session
15. Adoption of the Report and Closure of the Session

ANNEX E**LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

FO:NEFRC/2019/1/Rev1	Provisional Agenda
FO:NEFRC/2019/2	FAO and Country activities in the Region and follow-up on requests and recommendations of the 23 rd Session of the NEFRC
FO:NEFRC/2019/3	FAO's work on biodiversity
FO:NEFRC/2019/4	Implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests and collaboration with the UN Forum on Forests
FO:NEFRC/2019/5	Outcome of global policy processes of relevance for the Regional Forestry Commissions
FO:NEFRC/2019/6	Forests and rangelands in land degradation neutrality targets and the nationally determined contributions to mitigate/adapt to climate change in the Near East and North Africa Region
FO:NEFRC/2019/8	Forest protection (Fires, Pests and Diseases) in the Near East and North Africa Region
FO:NEFRC/2019/9	Preparations for the 25 th session of the Committee on Forestry and the XV World Forestry Congress
FO:NEFRC/2019/10	Working Group on Drylands Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems
FO:NEFRC/2019/11	<i>Silva Mediterranea</i> progress report
FO:NEFRC/2019/Inf.1	Information Note
FO:NEFRC/2019/Inf.2	Provisional Timetable
FO:NEFRC/2019/Inf.3	List of Documents

NEFRC 23 RECOMMENDATIONS AND COUNTRIES' ACHIEVEMENTS

Recommendations made by the Near East Forestry and Range Commission, 23 rd session	Activities linked to the recommendations	Other activities ²
1. The Commission invited countries to consider the recommendations of the High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and to take appropriate actions	National forest strategies and programmes take into account valorization of forestry products, involving forestry communities and encouraging Income Generating Activities (Algeria, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco,..) Sudan has elaborated a policy document for food security and nutrition	
2. The Commission requested countries to participate actively in the Global Forest Resource Assessment (FRA) 2020 reporting process, including in the review and validation of the remote sensing products	Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Somalia, Sudan and Tunisia prepared their reports	
3. The Commission called on countries to contribute actively to the global processes, including to promote and monitor progress on the forest-related indicators and to report on progress during the High-Level Political Forum review of SDG 15 in 2018	Near East countries are contributing to global processes especially the Convention of Biological Diversity and the United Nation Convention to Combat Desertification (Morocco) Algeria is implementing, through a participatory approach, a national strategy taking into account SDG15. Lebanon first report was presented before the HLPF 2018 and showed the progress achieved by Lebanon as to each goal of the UN 2030 SDGs	Sudan is establishing a technical unit that aims to control and observe impact of desertification and changes in forests and rangelands in the framework of REDD+
4. The Commission invited countries to consider the recommendations of the Forest Action Day to foster enabling environments for cooperation among multiple stakeholders; facilitate implementation of open access tools for monitoring forests and land use, such as Collect Earth; and recognize the NDCs as an opportunity to mainstream REDD+ into national planning processes	Collect Earth was adopted as open access tool for monitoring forests in Algeria, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman and Tunisia	Kyrgyzstan is developing criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management taking into account SDG indicators Sudan launched an awareness campaign (Tree planting campaign, ...) and organized a training workshop on GIS
5. The Commission requested countries to continue their efforts in implementing sustainable forest management and restoration as the forest sector's contribution to the mainstreaming of biodiversity	Work in progress: updating legislative texts and implementing forest strategies taking into account sustainable forest management and conservation of protected areas and biodiversity (Egypt, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon (SALMA project) Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, Yemen) Lebanon: MoA is working on updating Forest Law and developing Legal framework for Rangeland Management	

² Any other activities led by the country of relevance to the subject recommendation

6. The Commission invited countries to enhance the work on dryland forests and agrosilvopastoral systems and to nominate experts to participate in the COFO Working Group on Dryland Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems	Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia Syria, Tunisia and Turkey nominated their experts Egypt and Sudan proposed a group of experts	
7. The Commission encouraged countries to invest more in addressing land tenure, building capacities of communities and supporting community action towards sustainable and participatory management of rangelands	Countries are supporting participatory management of rangelands and building capacities of local communities (Algeria, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Morocco, Somalia) Algeria: New areas for grazing especially in steppe Lebanon: under the Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism Kyrgyzstan: Reform of the forest sector: implementation of new participatory approaches based on transfer of authority and aiming at ensuring joint forest management , implementing integrated natural resources management as well as diversification of sources of income Morocco: National programme on land tenure implemented years ago	Oman organized an investment Forum on agriculture and launched a number of agricultural projects
8. The Commission recommended countries to implement assessment programmes to determine the extent of rangelands in Near East and North Africa countries, their contribution to GDP and value their goods and services including in food security and nutrition, carbon sequestration, annual feed balance, job and income creation, poverty reduction, recreation and ecotourism.	Countries are implementing assessing programmes to determine the extent of rangelands (Algeria (component of the Green Dam project), Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Sudan) Lebanon: Sustainable Land Management in the Qaraoun catchment project is coordinating with MoA in order to come out with guidelines on Rangeland Management outside and inside forests.	
9. The Commission requested members to review and update their guidelines, policies and strategies on sustainable management of forests and rangelands taking into consideration the SDGs.	Recommendation adopted by Algeria, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman and Sudan. Egypt implemented capacity building activities taking into consideration the SDGs Lebanon: is updating Forest Law and developing Legal framework for Rangeland Management Morocco: Coordination unit to facilitate the implementation and monitoring of SDGs	
10. The Commission requested members to increase the understanding of forest goods and services through communication strategies and tools, including using tree planting campaigns and major national and international events.	Communication strategy developed and awareness campaign implemented in Algeria, Egypt, Somali a and Tunisia Capacity building activities conducted in Oman, Somalia and Sudan	
11. The Commission requested countries to encourage decision makers to prioritize investments in forestry and rangelands	Near East countries are prioritizing investments in forestry and rangelands and implementing programmes in collaboration	Oman: organized international conference on Frankincense and medicinal plants at Sultan at

programmes and to use the academia and universities for the assessment of the socio-economic values of these resources.	with universities and research centers (Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Oman, Sudan, Tunisia). Morocco: Partnership agreements between Ministry of agriculture and Universities and research institutes Projects are being established with financial support of World Bank (Tunisia) and other International Organizations and partners (Sudan)	Qaboos University and Dhofar University is working with an international medicinal company to produce medical creams from the tree
12. The Commission encouraged countries to develop activities related to the youth and women entrepreneurship in bio economy as a means to address the challenges faced by forests in the context of global changes and to promote creating job opportunities.	Algeria, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Oman, Somalia and Sudan are promoting youth employment in forestry sector. (ex; "Green jobs" project in Morocco 2018-2022)	
13. The Commission highlighted interlinks between forest health questions and environmental degradation, demographic pressure, land tenure issues, urban development, forest fires, and land use and invited members to strengthen coordination efforts and collaboration between countries on the issue of transboundary invasive species.	Algeria and Tunisia have signed a convention aiming at improving monitoring and protection of border areas (forest fire, transboundary animal diseases, ...)	
14. The Commission encouraged countries to strengthen their participation in the Near East Network on Forest Health and Invasive Species (NENFHIS) and contribute to the activities of this network to strengthen regional collaboration on forest health and control of invasive species in the Region.	9 Near East focal points: Algeria, Iran, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen	
15. The Commission stressed the need to focus more on the economic contribution of Urban and Periurban Forestry (UPF) and to promote private sector investment, including in recreation and ecotourism.	Countries are implanting national programmes in collaboration with NGOs and private sector (Algeria, Kyrgyzstan, Sudan and Tunisia) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tunisia: Action plan in collaboration with Professional Organizations to support urban forestry and ecotourism • Sudan: Public Private Partnership: Urban forestry areas, Urban investment for landscape, Golf .. 	
16. The Commission called on members to raise the awareness of policy makers and urban planners for promoting the role of UPF as essential element of sustainable cities and in the implementation of SDG11.		
17. The Commission invited countries to promote integrated urban planning as a strategic tool for maintaining an optimal balance between the green and the built environment and to boost investments in the development and sustainable management of UPF.		

18. The Commission invited countries to explore the possibility of developing national forest funds taking, as an inspiring model, the experience of other members in this regard.	National Forest Fund is under exploration and discussion in Lebanon and Algeria	
19. The Commission encouraged members to mobilize national resources for co-financing large-scale projects and ensure investments sustainability to meet GCF and GEF-7 funding requirements.	Egypt, Morocco, and Sudan submitted Concept notes to GCF and GEF7 A national project for the sustainable development of Argan tree in degraded areas in Morocco was submitted and approved by GCF	
20. The Commission encouraged countries engagement in the proposed GEF-7 Impact Program to address the commitment under the Agadir Commitment and complement the countries' baseline efforts on the sustainable management of forests and rangelands.	Concept notes on biodiversity are under preparation for GEF7 (Algeria, Sudan)	

ANNEX G

NEFRC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ATTENTION OF COFO

<i>Priority issues for COFO to consider</i>	<i>Expected outcome (information/discussion/decision)</i>	<i>Reference to other RFC recommendation</i>	<i>Possible follow up activities for COFO and FAO</i>
Special attention to countries with internal conflicts to support their access to international funding	Discussion		Recommendations for countries and funding organizations, as well as for FAO
UN Decade of Family Farming and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration for upscaling forest and landscape restoration activities	Discussion/decision	EFC	Guidance for FAO and countries
Regional and global collaboration in forest health, fire and invasive species	Discussion/decision	NAFC, EFC	Guidance for FAO and countries
Linkages between FAO work and the UN Strategic Plan for Forest (UNSPF)	Discussion/decision		Guidance for FAO and countries
Collaboration with UNFF and leadership role in the CPF	Discussion/decision		Guidance for FAO and countries
Development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework	Discussion		Guidance for FAO and countries

ANNEX H

**NEFRC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR
THE NEAR EAST FOR POSSIBLE DISCUSSION**

<i>Priority issues for the RC to consider</i>	<i>Expected outcome (information/discussion/decision)</i>	<i>Possible follow up activities for FAO)</i>
Regional and global collaboration in forest health, fire and invasive species	Discussion/decision by NERC	Support countries efforts in addressing trans-boundary forest pests & diseases, forest fire and invasive species and strengthening regional and inter-regional collaboration in forest health, forest fire and invasive species
Special attention to countries with internal conflicts to support their access to international funding	Discussion/decision by NERC	Support the efforts of countries with internal conflicts to access international funding for implementation of forest and rangelands rehabilitation/restoration and other related cross-sectoral programmes, including conservation of biodiversity and climate change adaptation
Forests and rangelands contribution to the UN Decade of Family Farming and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration	Discussion/decision by NERC	Support countries efforts in upscaling forest and landscape restoration and related cross-sectoral collaboration

ANNEX I

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FAO PROGRAMME PRIORITIES IN FORESTRY

<i>Area/ action for FAO programme of work</i>	<i>Priority (High, Medium, Low, De-emphasis)</i>	<i>Type (new, continued)</i>	<i>Level of action (sub-regional/ regional./global)</i>	<i>Strategic Objective</i>	<i>Global Forest Goal of UNSPF</i>
<i>commended</i> FAO for its activities in the region, noting in particular the support to fund raising and supporting access to major international funding sources. It was noted that funds directed to forestry are decreasing and there is a need to take a broader approach and coordinate efforts with those of related areas, and prepare more comprehensive applications for funds. The Commission <i>requested</i> FAO's continued support in this regard	High	Continue	National/Sub-regional /Regional	All SPs	Goal 4
<i>Requested</i> FAO to support countries in undertaking an assessment study on the status of forest and range biodiversity in the region and identifying gaps for future country actions as well as in establishing gene banks for the conservation of their national genetic resources.	Medium/low	new	National/ Sub-regional	SP2	Goal 3
<i>requested</i> FAO to continue supporting the implementation of the UNSPF and to establish clear links between its activities and the UNSPF and report on implementation accordingly. It also requested FAO to continue its leadership role in the CPF.	High	continued	Sub-regional / national	SP2 SP3 SP5	Goal 6
<i>requested</i> FAO to continue contributing to the Global Climate Action Agenda and to promote forest related initiatives, projects and programmes as well as support countries in the development of their forest and other land use related proposals for the Green Climate Fund.	High	continued	National/Sub-regional /Regional	SP2	Goal 4
<i>requested</i> FAO to further promote urban forestry activities.	Medium	continued	National/Regional/ Sub-regional	SP2	Goals 1 & 2
<i>informed</i> about activities related to follow up on Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and specific activities in support of the developments of the post-2020	High	new	Regional	SP1 SP2 SP4	Goals 1, 2 & 3

biodiversity agenda and <i>noted</i> the need for continued learning from good experience and sharing lessons learned, and <i>recommended</i> FAO to continue facilitating this process.					
<i>requested</i> FAO support in efforts to access international funds and particularly to assist in building capacity to develop related programme and projects.	High	continued	Regional	SP2	Goal 4
<i>stressed</i> that forest fire management, particularly prevention, is increasing in importance and <i>highlighted</i> the need for more accurate and detailed information on fires to assess the effectiveness of prevention measures and strategies.	High	New	Regional	SP5 SP2	Goal 1
<i>requested</i> FAO's support to strengthen countries' capacities on fire prevention and post- fire interventions, including by extending existing fire guidelines to cover also this latter area.	High	Continued / new (post fire intervention)	Regional	SP2 SP5	Goal 1
<i>requested</i> FAO to continue supporting NENFIRE and NENFHIS in implementing their activities and strengthen regional and inter-regional collaboration on forest fire, health and invasive species.	Medium	Continued	Regional	SP5	Goal 1
<i>acknowledged</i> the importance of the Working Group on Drylands Forests and Agrosilvopastoral Systems, in particular for the region, and <i>noted</i> the continued need for keeping FAO members abreast of the developments so that countries, not associated with the Working Group yet, could join in the future and nominate their experts.	Medium	New	Regional	SP2	Goals 1
<i>requested</i> the assistance of FAO, AOAD and other related organizations in developing national rangelands strategies taking into account, as appropriate, the guidance provided in the framework strategies developed by AOAD	Medium/low	New	National/ sub-regional/ Regional	SP2	Goal 5
<i>highlighted</i> the urgency to take action regarding climate change consequences on food security in the	High	New	National/ sub-regional/ Regional	SP1 SP2 SP5	Goal 1 & 2

region, and <i>called</i> on FAO to assist countries in the selection of drought-tolerant species in agriculture and forestry, to develop measurable indicators and the needed capacities for institutions in charge of monitoring those indicators.					
<i>highlighted</i> the importance of integrated watershed management approaches to address water scarcity issues in the region and <i>requested</i> FAO support in the development of integrated watershed management projects.	Medium	Updated/ New	Regional	SP2	Goals 3 & 1
<i>noted</i> the differences in capacities between countries regarding the adopted techniques of afforestation/reforestation and landscape restoration, and <i>requested</i> FAO to facilitate sharing of information and experiences between the countries in this regard.	High	New	Regional	SP2	Goal 1
<i>noted</i> the expertise that Turkey has developed in fire management and monitoring as well as in forest restoration and combating desertification and establishment of adequate training facilities and <i>called on</i> FAO to facilitate bilateral collaboration in this regard including through South-South cooperation		NEW	sub-regional/ Regional	SP2 SP5	Goal 1