



European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)

37/5 Meeting of the Executive Committee

17/05/2019

15.00 – 17.00 hours

Budapest, Hungary

Meeting Minutes

Present

Acting Chairperson: Ms Galina Jevgrafova (Estonia)

Members present: Ms Aulikki Hulmi (Finland)
 Ms Zora Weberova (Slovakia)
 Mr Kálmán Zoltán (Hungary)
 Mr Marios Georgiades (Cyprus)
 Mr Ali Recep Nazli (Turkey) (online)
 Ms Graziella Romito (Italy) (online)

Members absent: Ms Khatia Tsilosani (Georgia)
 Mr Paul Kiernan (Ireland)

REU Secretariat: Ms Ariella Glinni, Secretary of ECA (REU)
 Mr Raimund Jehle, Regional Programme Leader (REU)
 Mr Piotr Wlodarczyk, Agricultural Officer (REU)
 Mr Goran Stavrik, Programme Officer, ERC Secretariat (REU)
 Ms Melina Seyfollah Zadeh, Strategic Programme Support and Monitoring Specialist (REU)
 Ms Zsofia Horvath, Meeting and Programme Assistant (REU)

Agenda:

1. Preparation of the 41st ECA in 2019, including strategic thinking on improving modalities, impact and strategic engagement (37/5-2, 37/5-3, 37/5-4)
2. Review of proposed topics in preparation for the 32nd ERC Session in 2020
3. Reflection on the discussions at the Informal Consultation
4. Workplan and Meeting Schedule of the ECA Executive Committee (37/5-5)
5. Any other business

The meeting was opened by Ms Galina Jevgrafova - the Second Vice-Chairperson of the Executive Committee (ExCom), following the resignation of Mr Spyridon Ellinas as the ECA Acting-Chairperson. Ms Jevgrafova would be the Acting-Chairperson of the ECA up to the regular elections at the 41st ECA in October 2019. The Members of the Ex Com expressed their agreement with this interim arrangement.

The Acting-Chairperson welcomed the ExCom Members to the fifth meeting after the 40th Session of the ECA, thanked for the outstanding work carried out by Mr Ellinas as the Acting-Chairperson and congratulated the new Member nominated by Cyprus, Mr Marios Georgiades.

The Members agreed with the draft agenda for the meeting as distributed by the Secretariat.

Agenda item 1: Preparation of the 41st ECA in 2019, including strategic thinking on improving modalities, impact and strategic engagement (37/5-2, 37/5-3, 37/5-4)

The Secretariat presented the overall status of preparations and related arrangements for the 41st ECA, including the provisional Annotated Agenda, the foreseen schedule of sessions and on the Modalities for reporting on progress made in relation to the recommendations made at the previous ECA. In addition, the Secretariat provided an update on the logistical preparations and foreseen steps ahead.

The Members confirmed their agreement with the draft ECA Annotated Agenda and appreciated preparation of the high quality documents. Members proposed:

- To include antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in the ECA agenda, as raised at the Informal Consultation, as AMR is not only an animal health-related issue but also connected to plant health. It could be addressed under Agenda item 4;
- To including aspects related to the farming systems and ecosystems in the agenda as well as consider other related issues such as digital innovation for pest control.
- To adopt an integrated approach for the background document preparation, by the Secretariat preparing a Concept Note on the technical agenda items to be shared with the Members for review. This will further support the Secretariat in drafting the background documents, in a consultative process aiming at including all relevant aspects;
- To invite relevant stakeholders, including technical experts, representatives of the European Commission, high-level participants as well as farmers, who are directly involved in the subject discussed.

The Secretariat provided additional details about the partner organization and potential speakers envisaged to be invited and welcomed further proposals. It also reported on the side-events being considered and the proposal for a ECA side event made by CSO representatives during the IC.

Further, the Secretariat informed about the need for identifying two rapporteurs for the ECA Session.

Action:

Secretariat to prepare a short Concept Note on the technical agenda items to share with the Ex Com.

Agenda item 2: Review of proposed topics in preparation for the 32nd ERC Session in 2020

Mr Stavrik summarized the document prepared on the ERC Agenda with the shortlisted topics and the steps of the process already undertaken to identify the main topics for the 32nd Regional Conference for Europe (ERC). Mr Stavrik also presented the key points emerging from the discussion at the Informal Consultation in relation to that Agenda item and highlighted the offer made by delegation representing the Government of Uzbekistan to host the 32nd ERC to be held on 5-7 May 2020.

Responding to questions asked by the Members, the ERC Secretariat informed the ExCom on the next steps foreseen to select the main topics for the ERC in 2020 as follows:

- Based on comments received from the Members at the Informal Consultation (presented and received in written format) and inputs from the ExCom, the Secretariat will prepare the first draft of the Provisional Annotated Agenda for the 32nd ERC;
- In line with the timeline of the Regional Conference Manual, it is expected that the draft Provisional Annotated Agenda would be agreed at the Europe Regional Group (ERG) meeting in July 2019 to collect further comments and inputs from the Members;
- The Secretariat will revise the 32nd ERC Provisional Annotated Agenda to align with the views expressed by ERG members;
- Upon internal clearances, the Regional Office will send the Provisional Annotated Agenda to the FAO Headquarters for OSD, DDGs' and ODG clearances, expected in September 2019.

Members confirmed their support to all shortlisted topics and proposed the following:

- further discussions on this important issue should not be restricted to the ERG meeting in July 2019 only, but should also be included in the agenda of the ERG meeting in June and, if needed, also beyond July;
- the next round of consultations should be prepared in June 2019, with expanded annotations on each of the three topics, including advantages and disadvantages of having that particular topic and the potential of the topic to attract the attendance of Ministers and other high-level delegates;
- Ms Hulmi informed the Members and the Secretariat that the Programme Committee in its recent report invited the FAO's Office of Evaluation to submit regional synthesis of lessons learned from, and trends identified in the country programme evaluations to the Regional Conference.

Action:

ERC Secretariat to revise the Agenda based on the inputs received (by mid-June).

ERG Chair to include the ERC Agenda in the Agenda of the June ERG meeting and to invite the ERC Secretariat to present the item.

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Agenda item 3: Reflection on the discussions at the Informal Consultation

Following the participation of the ExCom members at the Informal Consultation prior to the ExCom meeting the members reflected on the discussed technical topics and logistical organization of the Informal Consultation (IC) for Europe and Central Asia. Overall, the members welcomed the IC and appreciated the opportunity for the dialogue among the member countries of the Region. In order to further improve the members suggested:

- To ensure that IC agenda items are organized in a way that the participants given sufficient time to actively engage in the discussion as some of the sessions were too short.
- To give more time for the small group discussions as it was considered as one of the key part of the session;
- To review the agenda item regarding the technical commissions and organize it more concise;

The members confirmed that the allocated time slot and the modality starting in the afternoon on the first day and finishing by lunchtime on the second day for the IC, is adequate and there was no need seen to extend it for two full days. It was suggested to provide more opportunities to the participants for interaction.

Action:

No action needed

Agenda item 4: Workplan and Meeting Schedule of the ECA Executive Committee (37/5-5)

The Secretariat presented the Ex Com time schedule and session plan for the current biennium up to the 41st Session of the ECA with no changes from the last version presented at the second Ex Com meeting.

The Secretariat informed that the next meeting of the Ex Com was foreseen to be held on 2 July, with an agenda focusing on the 41st ECA preparation.

Action:

No action needed

Agenda item 5: Any other business

Secretariat informed the Ex Com Members that Ms Glinni is resigning from her position as the Secretary of ECA due to her new appointment as the Secretary of COAG.

The Secretariat introduced Mr Piotr Włodarczyk's who was appointed to act as the interim Secretary for the ECA.

Ex Com Members congratulated Ms Glinni for her new position and welcomed Mr Włodarczyk's appointment. Mr Włodarczyk confirmed that he was looking forward to collaborating with the ExCom Members.

Action:

No action needed

Closing of the Session:

The Acting-Chairperson thanked the Ex Com members for their participation and contribution, as well as the Secretariat for the good preparation of background documents and their support throughout the meeting and at the Informal Consultation.