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COUNCIL

Hundred and Forty-fourth Session

Rome, 11-15 June 2012

Report of the Informal Regional Conference for North America (Ottawa, Canada, 3-5 April 2012)

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Appendix A - List of Participants

Appendix B - Provisional Agenda

Appendix C - North American FAO Priorities for 2014-2015

I. Introductory Items

Organization of the Conference

1. The second FAO North American informal regional conference was held in Ottawa, Canada on April 3-5, 2012.
2. Representatives from Canada and the United States of America participated in the Conference. Observers from two United Nations member states were in attendance. In addition, representatives from four civil society, four private sector organizations, and one research center were also in attendance for the Committee on World Food Security engagement session on April 5, 2012. A complete list of Conference participants is provided in *Appendix A*.

Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

3. The Conference adopted the agenda and timetable, a copy is provided in *Appendix B*.

Statements by Canada and the United States of America

4. Mr. Blair Coomber, Director General of Multilateral Relations and Policy Engagement Directorate at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada provided a statement on behalf of Canada, and endorsed the FAO's role in providing analysis and capacity building to help developing countries fight food insecurity. In particular, the key role the FAO has played in preparing analysis for the G20 and technical analysis for various initiatives, including Rio+20.
5. On behalf of the United States of America, Ms. Heinen, Administrator of the Foreign Agricultural Service at the U.S. Department of Agriculture reaffirmed that her country has been a strong supporter of the very important mission of the FAO. Together with Canada, she noted, we supported for Independent External Evaluation, faced and continue to face the challenges of the Immediate Plan of Action implementation, while striving to instill budgetary discipline on the Organization. In addition Ms. Heinen stated that the United States of America considers the North American priorities for all the work of FAO - be it programmatic, technical or governance - to be equally important. The North American region, she continued, which together provides one-quarter of the assessed budget of FAO, deserves to have its priorities and concerns taken on board and addressed in the same manner as any other of the FAO regional conferences.

II. Global Policy and Regulatory Issues

North America's perspective on food and agriculture

6. Mr. Daryl Nearing, Deputy Director of Policy and Multilateral Relations Division at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada provided an overview of North America's perspectives on food and agriculture, and priorities for the FAO.
7. The Conference emphasized the importance of the FAO's normative work, innovation (including biotechnology), partnership between Member countries and international organizations, and engagement with women to ensure they have access to the appropriate information.

III. Program and Budgetary Issues

FAO's Program of Work and Budget 2012-2013

8. The Conference reviewed the FAO's inclusion of North America's priorities into the Program of Work and Budget 2012-2013, and reaffirmed its support for the FAO's role in addressing food insecurity problems.

Update on FAO Technical Committees

9. The Conference appreciated the update on the various FAO technical committees, including the Committee on Agriculture, Committee on Commodity Problems, Committee on Fisheries, Committee on Forestry, and the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

10. The Conference noted the importance of communicating the outcomes of its regional conference at the various FAO technical committee meetings.

Medium Term Plan 2014-2017 and Programme of Work and Budget 2014-2015

11. Mr. Boyd Haight, Director of Strategic Planning, Resources Management at the FAO summarized the global trends and future challenges for the work of the Organization.

12. The Conference appreciated the work of the FAO, and highlighted the importance of the following:

- The need to focus on the FAO's comparative advantage (its technical expertise and knowledge)
- Ensuring the FAO plays a leading role when linked to its mandate
- The importance of partnering with other agencies, in particular with challenges 3, 4 and 6

13. The Conference considered areas of priority for the FAO's work and identified key implementation items under the current strategic objectives structure. A copy is provided in *Appendix C*.

14. The Conference also emphasized the need to use available resources efficiently and effectively.

IV. FAO Reform

FAO's Decentralization Network

15. The Conference indicated that it is North America's expectation that a fully transparent and costed plan be tabled at the Programme and Finance Committees for consideration and approval.

16. The Conference agreed that any changes proposed to the current Programme of Work and Budget (2012-2013), would have to go through the approval process including in FAO rules and regulations.

FAO Governance

17. The Conference discussed the role and membership of the Council, and also the role of the Independent Chairperson of Council.

18. The Conference acknowledged that the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture has begun discussing the possibility of becoming an official FAO technical committee, but also noted the importance of highlighting the financial implications.

Formalization of the North American regional conference

19. The Conference considered options related to the question of whether formalization of the North American regional conference would be needed, and deferred its decision on this matter until a later date. The Conference appreciated the FAO's confirmation that views from North America's second informal conference will be incorporated appropriately.

V. Any Other Issues

The Role of the Washington Liaison Office

20. The Conference appreciated the work of the FAO liaison office, and highlighted the need for better engagement between North America and the Washington office.

VI. Committee on World Food Security Engagement Session

21. The Conference reviewed recent developments and deliberations of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

22. The Conference welcomed the successful conclusion of the consultations on the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests.
23. The Conference discussed the Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition (GSF), and also the Mapping Food Security and Nutrition Actions at Country Level.
24. The Conference noted the comments provided by delegates to the first draft of the GSF, and urged stakeholders to provide additional input through available mechanisms.
25. The Conference also encouraged stakeholders to provide views on the Mapping Food Security and Nutrition Actions.

VII. Concluding Remarks

Date and Place of the Third FAO informal Regional Conference for North America

26. The Conference noted with satisfaction the offer of the Delegation of United States of America to host the third FAO informal regional conference for North America, to be held in 2014.

Adoption of the Report

27. The Conference adopted the Report.

Appendix A**FAO North American Informal Regional Conference
List of Participants**Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Blair Coomber
Director General
Multilateral Relations and Policy
Engagement Directorate

Brad Fraleigh
Director
Multilateral Science Relations

Shelley Monlezun
Director
Policy and Multilateral Relations Division

Rachel Archer
Senior Trade Policy Analyst
Strategic Trade Policy Division

Daryl Nearing
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Policy and Multilateral Relations Division

Lidija Lebar
Chief
BRM and GF2 Analysis

Lisa Guindon
Senior Multilateral Affairs Officer
Policy and Multilateral Relations Division

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Suzanne Heinen
Acting Administrator
Foreign Agricultural Service

Robin Tilsworth
Minister Counselor
U.S. Embassy – Ottawa

Andrew Burst
Director
Multilateral Affairs Division

Jerilyn Levi
Deputy Director
International Programs, Forest Service

George Douvelis
Senior Advisor
Multilateral Affairs Division

Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada

Valerie Bisson
Deputy Director
United Nations Division

Jennifer MacKay
Senior Policy Advisor
Development Policy and Institutions

Bronwyn May
Policy Advisor
United Nations Division

Eric Robinson
Deputy Director
Trade Policy and Negotiations Division

U.S. Department of State

John Tuminaro
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Office of Human Security, IO

Mary Blanca Rios
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Office of Human Security, IO

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Shahrzad Sedigh
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Thematic and Sectoral Policy Directorate

Anar Mamdani
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Thematic and Sectoral Policy Directorate

Embassy of Canada – Rome

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Canada to the Food and Agricultural
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Marco Valicenti
Alternate Permanent Representative of Canada
to the Food and Agricultural Agencies of the
UN

Debra Price
Deputy Permanent Representative of
Canada to the Food and Agricultural
Agencies of the UN

U.S. Mission to the UN Agencies – Rome

Karen Johnson
Deputy Chief of Mission

Gregory Groth
Alternate Permanent Representative

Michael Michener
Alternate Permanent Representative

Natural Resources Canada

Peter Besseau
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Canadian Forest Service

Jessica Thomson
Senior Policy Advisor
International Affairs Division
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Department of Fisheries and Oceans

Angela Bexten
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Global Marine and Northern Affairs Bureau
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Krystal Novak
Policy Analyst
Global Marine and Northern Affairs Bureau
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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Daniel Gustafson
Director
Support to Decentralization

Boyd Haight
Director
Strategic Planning, Resources Management

Florence Rolle
Officer in Charge
FAO Liaison Office for North America

FAO Member State Observers

H.E. Zohrab V. Malek
Ambassador of Armenia to the FAO

Maria Eugenia Urcelay
Third Secretary in charge of agricultural affairs
Embassy of Chile – Ottawa

Civil Society, Private Sector and Research Centres

Gordon Bacon
CICILS

Robynne Annderson
World Farmers Organization

Clyde Graham
Canadian Fertilizer Institute

Errol Halkai
Canadian Federation of Agriculture

Greg Northey
Canadian Federation of Agriculture

Kevin Tiessen
International Research Development Centre

Christina Schiavoni
WhyHunger and US Food Sovereignty
Alliance

Faris Ahmed
USC Canada and Food Secure Canada

Dave Andrews
Food and Water Watch and US Food
Sovereignty
Alliance

Kalissa Regier
National Farmers Union Canada and La Via
Campesina



Permanent Representation of Canada to the UN
Food and Agriculture Agencies
Représentation permanente du Canada auprès des
Agences pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture de l'ONU

FAO North American Informal Regional Conference

Ottawa, Canada

April 3-5, 2012

- Provisional Agenda -



United States Mission To The United Nations
Agencies For Food & Agriculture
Rome, Italy

Appendix B

Tuesday, April 3rd

09:00 Welcoming Remarks
Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable
Statements by Canada / USA senior officials

Session 1 – Global Policy and Regulatory Issues

09:30 Presentation: N.A. perspectives on food and agriculture (global overview)
- “Setting the stage” and N.A. regional priorities
09:45 Roundtable/Open discussion
- Experiences and perspectives on short/medium/long-term policy options
- Effective N.A. engagement with the FAO
11:30 Conclusions, Next Steps and Recommendations from Session 1
12:00 Lunch (hosted)

Session 2 – Program and Budgetary Issues

14:00 FAO's Programme of Work and Budget 2012-2013
- Confirmation of current N.A. priorities update
15:00 Update on FAO Technical Committees
- Committee on Agriculture
- Committee on Commodity Problems
- Committee on Fisheries
- Committee on Forestry
- Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
16:00 Medium Term Plan 2014-2017 and Programme of Work and Budget 2014-2015
- Discussion on N.A.'s FAO strategic priorities for the next biennium
17:30 Adjournment
19:00 Dinner (self-hosted)

Wednesday, April 4th**Session 2 – Program and Budgetary Issues...cont'd**

- 09:00 Medium Term Plan 2014-2017 and Programme of Work and Budget 2014-2015
- Discussion on N.A.'s views of the renewed strategic framework
- 10:30 Conclusions, Next Steps and Recommendations for Session 2

Session 3 – FAO Reform

- 11:00 FAO's Decentralization Network
- 12:00 Lunch (hosted)
- 14:00 FAO Governance
- 15:00 Formalization of the N.A. regional conference, and discussion of 2014 conference
- 16:00 Conclusions, Next Steps and Recommendations from Session 3

Session 4 – Any Other Issues

- 16:30 Presentation: The role of the Washington Liaison Office, and upcoming work plan
- N.A.'s Multi-Year Program of Work (MYPOW)
- 17:00 Closing Remarks
- 17:30 Adjournment

Thursday, April 5th

- 09:00 Presentation: Overview of the Committee on World Food Security and Reform Implementation (CFS Secretariat)
- 09:30 Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition and the Mapping Food Security and Nutrition Actions at Country Level (CFS Secretariat)
- 10:00 Roundtable/Open discussion
- 12:00 Closing Remarks

Appendix C**North American FAO Priorities for 2014-2015****A. Sustainable intensification of crop production**

Emphasis should be placed on building effective frameworks for technology transfers and managing plant genetic resources, including seed systems. We support improving science and risk-based evaluation and regulation of new agricultural technologies – including biotechnology and climate-smart agriculture practices.

Key Implementation Items:

- Ensure sufficient resources (human & financial) are re-directed towards achieving the stated performance indicators required to address the sustainability of FAO's plant protection programmes and the use of international standards. Efficient and resilient production systems using appropriate farming practices will be essential.
- Strengthen IPPC's capacity to generate international standards; establish and promote effective information exchange systems among members; address the technical capacity of all member countries, especially developing member countries; and provide a sufficient and sustainable administrative support structure to meet its members' needs and priorities.
- Further analyze and raise awareness about the contribution that innovative agricultural biotechnologies will continue having on food security and sustainability.
- Establish a leadership role in promoting the movement and exchange of food and agriculture genetic resources, including frameworks that facilitate access and benefit sharing (ABS) related to the use of these genetic resources.
- Effectively implement appropriate outcomes of Rio + 20 and integration of climate change adaptation considerations.

B. Increased sustainable livestock production

Contain and combat animal disease, pests, and the associated human health risks. Consequently, contingency planning, prevention and control should be FAO's priority focus and its comparative advantage within this strategic objective. Promote the use of livestock genetic resources to improve breeds and populations.

Key Implementation Items:

- Prioritize Avian Influenza (AI)/ H5N1 Control and Prevention; Laboratory and surveillance capacity building for detecting and reporting on priority animal and zoonotic diseases; expand animal disease surveillance into the commercial poultry and livestock industry.
- Strengthen the EMPRES and GLEWS platforms, along with ensuring an effective and sustainable Crisis Management Centre (CMC) that quickly responds to transboundary animal disease outbreaks.
- Effectively implement appropriate outcomes of Rio + 20 and integration of climate change adaptation considerations.

C. Sustainable management and use of fisheries and aquaculture resources

In order to maintain sustainability of fisheries resources and secure the role of fisheries and aquaculture as a long term solution to food security, we support more focused efforts to broaden and deepen the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related instruments, primarily through the prioritization and development of effective policy guidance, good governance and the promotion of best practices.

Key Implementation Items:

- Combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, including implementation of the FAO Port State Measures Agreement, development of a Global Record of Fishing Vessels, and development of guidance on traceability.
- Build capacity at the national and regional levels to support implementation of existing instruments, particularly the guidelines on bycatch management and reduction of discards.
- Develop and adopt a Plan of Action to guide the Subcommittee on Aquaculture in its work to meet the shortfall in human needs for fish protein from wild capture fisheries.
- Continue capacity building and normative work on improving post-harvest practices to improve yield, market access, and food safety and quality.

D. Improved quality and safety of foods at all stages of the food chain

Promote the use of science based measures and international standards to ensure predictable agri-food trade, particularly for innovative products derived from agricultural biotechnology. Increase the organization's investment in building capacity among member countries to enhance the development, use and compliance with internationally-agreed regulatory standards based on science. Continue working with the WHO on implementing the Codex Alimentarius Commission programming activities and on improving direction of the organization. Focus on reinforcing technical capacity development at the institutional level.

Key Implementation Items:

- Ensure that the Codex Secretariat has strong management, including filling key positions, to follow the founding principles of CODEX.
- Support joint FAO/WHO expert committees by restoring their funding at adequate levels.
- Continue assessing existing capacity among member countries in order to enhance, as appropriate, members' abilities to develop, use and comply with internationally-agreed regulatory standards based on science.
- Support the development and improvement of regulatory systems among member countries to enable greater synchronization of approvals of new genetically modified crops, and promote appropriate, risk-based policies for dealing with low-level presence.
- Enhance the functionality of the FAO database for genetically modified food safety assessments, and promote the use of the database and Codex LLP annex in dealing with LLP when it does occur.
- Prioritize food safety data collection, forecasting and early warning systems.

E. Sustainable management of forests and trees

Focus on the FAO's comparative advantage in forest resource monitoring and information; and developing and promoting sustainable forest management practices, strategies, and guidelines. Enhance cross-sectoral integration of forests with other issues, in particular food security and water.

Key Implementation Items:

- Increase focus on the Forest Department's forest resource monitoring and information, with emphasis on further incorporating remote sensing data; refining the designated functions (Country Report Table 3) and governance indicators of the Global Forest Resources Assessment; and further expanding the type of data collected to allow for an improved understanding of the full benefits that forests have to livelihoods and society.

- Continue Department of Forestry's leadership as Chair of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), which engages both member states and civil society through key international forest-related organizations and processes.
- Continue efforts to improve sustainable forest management practices, for example on wildfire management and forest climate change adaptation.

F. Sustainable management of land, water and genetic resources and improved responses to global environmental challenges affecting food and agriculture

Focus on the provision of global information, advocacy and risk management of environmental challenges affecting food and agriculture. Implementation of key policy instruments on biodiversity and the strengthening of partnerships with relevant international institutions focusing on the exchange of genetic resources.

Key Implementation Items:

- Strengthen the capacity of the Commission on Genetic Resources and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources to generate international standards; establish and promote effective information exchange systems among members; address the technical capacity of all member countries, especially developing member countries to conserve and use genetic resources sustainably; and provide a sufficient and sustainable technical and administrative support structure to meet members' needs and priorities.
- Assist governments to better incorporate science and technology advice into their decision-making processes in an effective and consistent manner, through the development of "best practices".
- Continue to focus on the Voluntary Guidelines on the Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests. It should also place a high priority on conducting research, promoting information and advocacy on best practice, and assisting governments to adopt policies and laws in the area of land tenure and governance.
- Effectively implement appropriate outcomes of Rio + 20 and integration of climate change adaptation considerations.

G. Enabling environment for markets to improve livelihoods and rural development

Focus on providing technical and policy assistance in the analysis of food and agriculture markets and related impacts on food security, regional and global agricultural trade policy analysis, and strategies and/or proposed policies to maximize smallholders' access to markets.

Key Implementation Items:

- Increase capacity building activities in targeted countries, particularly least-developed, to develop the trade-related skills and infrastructure that is needed to implement and benefit from WTO agreements and to expand their trade.
- Consider approaches to minimize waste and explore non-food applications of agricultural bio-products.

H. Improved food security and better nutrition

Focus on promoting sustainable improvements in food security and nutrition, especially among infants and pregnant/lactating women, nutritionally vulnerable households and population groups.

Key Implementation Items:

- Provide information, assessments and analysis to combat hunger and reduce malnutrition.
 - Collaborate with appropriate partners utilizing existing mechanisms (SUN and 1,000 Days) in assisting Members to identify food insecure populations and those vulnerable to nutrition-related problems.
 - Promote food safety/quality.
 - Prevent food-borne diseases; and, to focus on consumer protection and fair practices in food trade.
- I. Improved preparedness for, and effective response to, food and agricultural threats and emergencies
- Focus on the provision of knowledge, policy and technical advice/assessment, agriculture rehabilitation and extended recovery, rather than the stockpiling and delivery of supplies. Better articulate and define roles when responding to emergencies, particularly with respect to FAO's participation in future UN "clusters" dealing with emergencies. The FAO does have a role to play in prevention and mitigation, particularly as it relates to agricultural and crop threats.
- K. Gender equity in access to resources, good, services and decision making in the rural areas
- Further identify opportunities to fully incorporate gender in all FAO's programming activities, both at HQ and in its field operations without the necessity of a stand-alone strategic objective.
- L. Increased and more effective public and private investment in agriculture and rural development
- Should be mainstreamed and managed by an empowered Partnerships' office that has a clear mandate to strengthen ties between the Organization and a variety of relevant private sector partners. Enhance value-chain development in the food sectors to include small and medium-sized enterprises in addition to multinationals.