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*Further integration of sustainable agricultural approaches, including agroecology,
in the future planning activities of FAO*

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PC 126

***Further integration of sustainable agricultural approaches, including agroecology,
in the future planning activities of FAO***

THE CONFERENCE,

Recognizing that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to achieve sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner represents a formidable global challenge;

Recognizing that the number and prevalence of undernourished persons in the world is increasingⁱ and if efforts are not enhanced, the SDG target of hunger eradication will not be achieved by 2030;

Expressing serious concern that unsustainable agricultural practices continue to negatively affect natural resources (such as loss of biodiversity, greenhouse gas emissions, and land degradation), and show inefficiencies along the food chainⁱⁱ;

Recognizing the co-existence of a broad range of sustainable agricultural approaches, that can contribute to meeting the challenges facing farmers and food systems, and the urgent need to achieve the environmentally, socially and economically sustainable transformation of our food systems, in line with Agenda 2030 relevant goals and targets;

Recalling that at its 40th session, the FAO Conferenceⁱⁱⁱ endorsed the key role that agriculture plays in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, welcomed the alignment of FAO's Strategic Objectives with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and called on FAO to continue to strengthen its normative and science and evidence-based work with particular attention to agroecology, biotechnology, sustainable production, climate change, biodiversity, mechanization, statistics, food safety, nutrition, youth and gender.

Stressing that sustainable agriculture, as defined by the five principles of the Common Vision on Sustainable Food and Agriculture, endorsed by COAG at its 25th session^{iv}, can foster inclusive growth, enhance income, promote the eradication of extreme poverty, and improve livelihoods and resilience, in particular of smallholders and family farmers.

Noting that several of FAO's Regional Conferences held in 2018^v highlighted the need for transformative change to support transition to sustainable agriculture and food systems, and the potential of a number of sustainable agricultural approaches in this regard;

Recognizing that the Second FAO International Symposium on Scaling up Agroecology to achieve the SDGs highlighted agroecology as an approach, among others, to contribute to feeding sustainably a growing population and support countries in achieving SDGs.

Noting further the potential of agricultural innovation in supporting transformative change of the different agricultural systems, and the outcome of the FAO International Symposium on Agricultural Innovation for Family Farmers on the need to strengthen the capacity of family farmers to innovate, including through adaptation, sustainable use of knowledge systems, indigenous resources, scientific solutions, co-creation and learning^{vi};

Recalling that the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) in its twenty-sixth Session held in October 2018^{vii} welcomed the Scaling up Agroecology Initiative, and supported the 10 Elements of Agroecology developed by FAO as a guide to one of the ways to promote sustainable agriculture and food systems.

Requests FAO to:

- a) Thoroughly integrate policies and approaches towards more sustainable and innovative agricultural and food systems in its planning and work, to fully implement the five principles of sustainable food and agriculture in support of the Sustainable Development Goals;

- b) Continue exploring different sustainable agricultural approaches with the view to maximizing synergies and complementarities;
- c) Demonstrate leadership in promoting inclusive transition towards more sustainable agriculture and food systems, and to proactively engage in efforts to address economic, environmental and social trade-offs;
- d) Give special attention to the specific needs of women, youth and family farmers including within the Framework of the UN Decade of Family Farming;
- e) Assist countries and regions to enhance their commitment and engage more effectively in transitioning towards sustainable agriculture and food systems by:
 - i) Strengthening normative, science and evidence-based work on all sustainable agricultural approaches, by developing appropriate indicators and supporting countries' capacities to measure their compliance, tools and protocols to evaluate the contribution of these practices to sustainable agriculture and food systems;
 - ii) Catalyzing scientific evidence and co-creation of knowledge and innovation, and facilitating their dissemination, in particular with women and youth while also strengthening communication, awareness raising and sharing of experience and good practices;
 - iii) Encouraging innovation in agriculture, inter alia, through the utilization of relevant and context adapted technology - including ICT and biotechnology -, as it can offer a solution for a wide range of issues;
 - iv) Facilitating policy dialogue and providing technical support to countries, upon their request, including capacity development of smallholders and family farmers through, inter alia, south-south, north-south and triangular cooperation, private sector partnerships, and networking among member countries;
- f) Strengthen its collaboration with other United Nations agencies and programmes, in particular IFAD and WFP, in order to scale-up sustainable agricultural approaches, through policies, responsible investments, participatory research and knowledge generation and sharing for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;
- g) Report regularly on progress on the integration of sustainable agricultural practices including agroecology among others, into the planning and work of the Organization.

Invites all Member States to:

- a) Support FAO and share their own expertise on a broad range of sustainable agriculture practices, including agroecology among others, and foster innovations that enhance food security and nutrition through policies, responsible investments, participatory research and knowledge generation and sharing for the achievement of the SDGs.
- b) Promote and enhance multi-stakeholder partnerships, including with other international and regional organizations, farmers private sector and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, academia, individuals and other relevant stakeholders, in support of sustainable agricultural practices.

(Adopted on....)

i <http://www.fao.org/3/I9553EN/i9553en.pdf>, (SOFI 2018, p.xii)

ii <http://www.fao.org/3/a-16583e.pdf>, (The future of food and agriculture – Trends and challenges, p. 49)

iii <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mu208e.pdf>, p.6

iv <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mr949e.pdf> (p.7)

v A)The Thirty-fourth Session of the FAO Regional Conference of Asia and the Pacific (APRC) “noted the importance of promoting sustainable agricultural production through agro-ecological methods increasing biodiversity, and supporting Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) as well as biotechnologies” in order to implement the climate change elements of the 2030 Agenda (Para. 19 v; APRC/18/REP). The APRC also highlighted agroecology as one of the relevant strategies - among others- to bring about sustainable intensification of agriculture in order to feed the growing population (Para. 16 iv; APRC/18/REP).

- B) The Thirty-fifth Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean (LARC) recommended FAO to “support knowledge exchange for agricultural innovation, including agroecology, biotechnologies and other technologies, to enhance sustainable rural development.” (Para 18 vi; LARC/18/REP). The LARC also recommended FAO to “Support the development of strategies and policies for the conservation and recovery of degraded forests and soils, by encouraging countries to invest in national initiatives on agro-forestry, agroecological and organic production systems as well as biotechnologies that protect and preserve biodiversity, especially for family farmers, and support experience exchange initiatives at global and regional levels” (Para. 20 vii; LARC/18/REP).
- C) The Thirty-first Session of the FAO Conference for Europe and Central Asia (ERC):
- “highlighted the potential of agroecological approaches, in particular for smallholders and family farmers, to accelerate the transition to sustainable agriculture and food systems and called on governments to promote such agroecological and other sustainable agricultural approaches as befits their national contexts” (Para. 18 c; ERC/18/REP);
 - “emphasized the need for research and quality data on agroecological and other sustainable agricultural approaches” (Para. 18 d; ERC/18/REP);
 - “requested that FAO ii) incorporate agroecological approaches and diversification into the three Regional Initiatives; and iii) further develop its work on agroecology, for example in the context of the United Nations Decade of Family Farming (2019–2028) and the Scaling up Agroecology Initiative, discussing this in FAO’s technical and governing bodies” (Para. 18 k; ERC/18/REP);
 - “reiterated the importance of combining digital technological innovations with other innovations, including agroecology as well as enhanced capacities of all actors, in order to promote a development change in food and agriculture systems” (Para. 20 b; ERC/18/REP).
- D) The Thirty-fourth Session of the FAO Regional Conference for the Near East (NERC):
- “recognized the contribution of agroecology to support adaptation to climate change in semi-arid areas for sustainable agricultural development, food security and nutrition” (Para. 17 a; NERC/18/REP). In this regard, the NERC “called upon governments to identify and provide incentives to agricultural producers particularly small-scale farmers to foster transitions to more sustainable agriculture and food systems, based on agro-ecological practices” (Para. 17 b; NERC/18/REP);
 - “invited stakeholders to establish national and regional platforms for exchange of knowledge and experiences on agroecology” (Para. 17 c; NERC/18/REP)
 - “encouraged Members to promote the adoption and scaling up of agroecology, which requires mobilization of resources and cooperation between countries that share common agroecological concerns” (Para. 17 d; NERC/18/REP).
 - requested FAO to “integrate agroecology into the existing Regional Initiatives and strengthen its work on agroecology in the context of the United Nations (UN) Decade of Family Farming (2019–2028), the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016–2025) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” (Para. 18 a; NERC/18/REP);
 - “support countries to build on the successes achieved under the South-South and Triangular Cooperation experience for enhancing cooperation and experience sharing in the area of agroecology” (Para. 18 b; NERC/18/REP);
 - “support countries to better work together with the other active partner organizations and international and regional research organizations for promoting and upscaling agroecology” (Para. 18 c; NERC/18/REP)
 - “build countries capacities in the areas of relevance to agroecology for climate adaptation for food security and nutrition, including support to rehabilitation of degraded lands, monitoring and assessment of land degradation and taking a proactive role in rangelands management and the conservation of biodiversity” (Para. 18 d; NERC/18/REP).
- E) The Fifth Session of the FAO Informal Regional Conference for North America (INARC) identified the support to agroecological approaches as a complementary tool with other agricultural innovations and urged FAO to work more closely with Member States on agroecology going forward.

vi <http://www.fao.org/3/BU658en/bu658en.pdf>

vii http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/bodies/Conference_2019/MY349_21/MY349_C_2019_21_en.pdf