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Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

Organisation des Nations  
Unies pour l'alimentation  
et l'agriculture

Продовольственная и  
сельскохозяйственная организация  
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las  
Naciones Unidas para la  
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة  
الأغذية والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

# FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

**Thirty-sixth Session**

**19-21 October 2020<sup>1</sup>**

**Provisional Annotated Agenda**

## I. Introductory Items

### 1) Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons, and Appointment of the Rapporteur

### 2) Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

### 3) Statements:

- Statement by the Director General
- Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the Council
- Statement by the Chairperson of the 35th Session of the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean
- Statement by the Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)
- Statement by the spokesperson for the Civil Society Consultation
- Statement by the spokesperson for the Private Sector Consultation
- Statement by the spokesperson for the Parliamentary Fronts against Hunger
- Statement by the spokesperson for the Scientific and Academic Committee

### 4) Review and Adoption of the Regional Conference Report

The draft report of the Regional Conference will be reviewed, discussed and subsequently adopted.

The discussion will encompass:

- I. Regional and Global Policy and Regulatory Matters
- II. Programme and Budget Matters
- III. Other Matters

The report will be introduced by the Rapporteur.

<sup>1</sup> Rescheduled from 27-29 April 2020, Managua, Nicaragua.

## *Regional and Global Policy and Regulatory Matters*

### **5) Transforming food systems for healthy diets for all**

The region of Latin America and the Caribbean is facing a complex nutritional situation. Hunger rates have recently increased after years of decrease, and they will be particularly impacted by the effects of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Furthermore, the region has seen a significant increase in overweight and obesity. This is largely explained by the adoption of inadequate food consumption patterns and a change in lifestyle, with a higher percentage of the population living in urban areas, with sedentary habits and less time dedicated to practising healthy diets.

Today, food systems need to be transformed in order to enable future generations to feed themselves in a healthy and sustainable way. This constitutes an opportunity to introduce new forms of sustainable production and technological and policy innovations. This transformation implies balancing the interests of all the actors involved in food systems, and with greater public participation as populations see their right to adequate food threatened.

The UN Food Systems Summit in 2021 is an opportunity to address these challenges and the Latin America and the Caribbean region should be prepared to participate actively.

### **6) Hand-in-Hand towards prosperous and inclusive rural societies**

Rural-urban territories have enormous potential based on their population, GDP, employment generation, food production, market supply and access to natural resources. Despite this, half of the rural inhabitants of the region live in poverty and 20.4 percent in extreme poverty. Considering that 78 percent of the 169 targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) depend exclusively or mainly on actions undertaken in rural areas, promoting prosperous and inclusive rural territories is essential.

To remain economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sustainable, rural-urban territories must be transformed. This presents a double challenge: to continue with the region's progress in reducing poverty and hunger and to implement broader rural development agendas, which lead to an inclusive growth dynamic. The Hand-in-Hand Initiative seeks to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs, especially SDGs 1 and 2, by supporting countries to implement efficient and effective actions in the fight against hunger and extreme rural poverty through cooperation between different actors. The strategy *100 Territories free from Hunger and Poverty* is one modality of action focused on the poorest and most vulnerable areas in each country in the region.

Empowering rural communities and increasing levels of productivity, competitiveness and innovation can give new impetus to rural development, strengthening investments and capitalizing on the opportunities offered by the drivers of change in rural areas. The Hand-in-Hand Initiative aims to promote the improvement of the data and information on the evolution of agriculture and food security in rural areas. This is important to enact sound policies in support of productivity, innovation and competitiveness.

### **7) Sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture**

In a context of climate change and accelerated deterioration of natural resources, today the Latin America and the Caribbean region faces the challenge of transforming its agriculture and food systems towards more sustainable and resilient production. Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are particularly vulnerable to climate change and deserve the special support of FAO. Agriculture must be able to facilitate the increase in production based on technological and institutional innovation that promotes the efficient use of natural resources and the conservation of biodiversity while helping to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

In this transition, agriculture should become an engine of economic growth, institutional modernization and social inclusion as well as constitute the foundation for healthy diets. Policies that facilitate intersectoral coordination with different sectors of society are required to generate an enabling environment that leverages existing knowledge and promotes innovation.

### **8) Improving FAO's capacities to serve member countries in Latin America and the Caribbean**

The operational model of FAO in Latin America and the Caribbean, which has been developed in the countries of the region over more than 40 years, needs to be renewed. The main proposal is to accelerate this change so that FAO becomes a more efficient Organization in the region, focused on promoting innovation in policies and programmes that generate results and impacts at scales that are consistent with the SDGs and their targets.

### **9) Innovation and Digital Agriculture**

The global food system continues to face considerable challenges in being able to provide enough food of adequate quality to feed an ever-growing population. The world is also changing at a fast pace with the emergence of an array of technologies. Digital technologies and other forms of innovation offer unique opportunities for improving food systems and rural societies, and in helping to achieve the SDGs. This document highlights key strategic areas of FAO's work aimed to promote innovation in the region, to improve: (a) food, nutrition and health; (b) climate resilience; (c) agroecosystems and landscape management; (d) productivity of farm and non-farm employment; (e) inclusive financial services and agricultural insurance. The proposed International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture<sup>2</sup> is a centrepiece of FAO's strategy on innovation.

### **10) Coronavirus (COVID-19) update and adjustments to FAO's regional priorities to address impact on food security and nutrition, and food systems**

This document presents the main actions taken so far by FAO in the region to assist Members in diminishing the impact of the pandemic on the functioning of the food system and on the food security and nutrition of the population.

It also proposes areas of emphasis in FAO's regional programme to support the Members in their efforts to recover from the social and economic impacts of the pandemic, while continuing to pursue the agenda outlined in the regional priority documents.

## **II. Achievements and New Priorities in the Region**

### *Programme and Budget Matters*

### **11) Results and Priorities for FAO in the Latin America and the Caribbean Region**

The Regional Conference will consider how FAO activities have addressed previously agreed regional priorities during 2018-2019 and will provide guidance on the priorities for 2020-2021 and beyond, in the context of FAO's Strategic Objectives and the 2030 Agenda. The discussion will be informed by the results of FAO's work in the region, the Medium Term Plan 2018-2021 (reviewed) and the Programme of Work and Budget 2020-2021 approved by the FAO Conference in June 2019; priorities and recommendations of the Regional Commissions; and the plans and priorities of partners such as the Regional Economic Organizations, civil society organizations and the private sector.

Global priorities of FAO, which include the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, innovation, engagement with the private sector and civil society, SIDS and the UN Food Systems Summit, are all regional priorities in 2020-21.

## **III. Other Matters**

### **12) Date and venue of the 37th Session of the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean**

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<sup>2</sup> FAO, 2020. Realizing the potential of digitalization to improve the agrifood system: proposing a new International Digital Council for Food and Agriculture. Concept note.

***Special event: The Committee on World Food Security (CFS): Driving Transformation Toward Sustainable Food Systems and Healthy Diets***

Highlighting the CFS's collaborative approach towards global policy convergence, this agenda item will underline the ongoing process by the CFS and its partners to develop voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition – guidelines that will be ready for adoption at CFS 47 in February 2021. Participants will come away understanding the CFS, its core products and the need for cross-sectoral, whole-of-government approaches to transform the global food system towards one where diets are healthy for both people and the planet.