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Organización
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Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

Item 6.2 of the Provisional Agenda

COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Thirteenth Regular Session

Rome, 18 – 22 July 2011

PREPARATION OF THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

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PREPARATION OF THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Commission), in adopting its Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW), requested FAO to present the first ever report on *The State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture (Report)* to the Commission's Sixteenth Regular Session (2016/17). The draft revised MYPOW proposes that the Commission, at its Fourteenth Regular Session (2013), consider key issues and the preparation of the *Report*.¹
2. The purpose of this concept note is to facilitate discussion on the key issues and content of the *Report*, as well as the preparatory process in order to guide the Secretary in preparing documentation for consideration of this issue at the Commission's next session. The note will be further elaborated based on advice received by the Commission during the current session, and advice received through consultations, prior to the next session of the Commission.

II. PURPOSE AND POSITIONING OF THE REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

3. The *Report* will be a key input to assist the Commission in determining its future work. The *Report*, as currently scheduled, would be considered by the Commission approximately 10 years after the Commission established its MYPOW, and eight years after it adopted the Strategic Plan 2010-2017 for the implementation of the MYPOW (Strategic Plan 2010-2017). It would also be approximately 20 years since the FAO Conference, in 1995, broadened the Commission's mandate to cover all components of biodiversity of relevance to food and agriculture. Thus, the *Report* will provide a timely basis to assist the Commission to update its MYPOW, adopt a Strategic Plan for the 2017-2027 period, and determine its focus in coming years.
4. As the Strategic Plan 2010-2017 states, the *Report* is an essential long-term goal of the Commission's MYPOW. It should also be seen as a United Nations assessment and serve as a major milestone of the United Nations Decade of Biodiversity. Preparation and release of the *Report* is a unique opportunity to bring together the agriculture and environment communities, attract attention and contributions from global centres of knowledge and research to contribute to the *Report* and enhance overall awareness of the essential roles of biodiversity for food and agriculture, and the need to invest in maintaining and further using, developing and conserving this critical resource.
5. Consideration could be given to a comprehensive communication and visibility strategy, for the release of *Report*, to take advantage of the opportunity to enhance awareness of the roles and values of biodiversity for food and agriculture. As a major UN assessment for the Decade of Biodiversity, the release of the *Report* would likely attract global media attention.
6. The *Report* will build on and complement global assessments of genetic resources undertaken under the guidance of the Commission (i.e. *the State of the World's plant, animal, forest and aquatic genetic resources*). It will also address other components of biodiversity for food and agriculture and take into account global biodiversity assessments, such as the Global Biodiversity Outlook and the Global Forest Resources Assessment.
7. The *Report* will provide the first global synthetic assessment of the status and trends of genetic resources and their contributions to food and agriculture, and would also provide an overview of institutional and technical capacities to manage biodiversity for food and agriculture,

¹ See document, Review of the Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW), CGRFA-13/11/20, Appendix 2.

based on information from sector assessments and other sources, examining in particular, the state of and capacity to manage biodiversity for food and agriculture, including the application of the ecosystem approach.

8. While benefiting from the sectoral assessments, the *Report* will go beyond being a compilation of existing reports and will have a focus on the implementation of the ecosystem approach in agriculture systems, highlighting the essential roles of ecosystem services in relation to food and agriculture. A substantive focus on ecosystem services will serve to enhance understanding of their importance in relation to achieving sustainable agriculture as well as food and nutritional security.

9. The *Report* will address cross-cutting issues, including climate change, indicating how these are being addressed in relation to the management for biodiversity for food and agriculture for food security.

III. INITIAL SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FIRST REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE WORLD`S BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

10. The possible main elements of the *Report* might include:²

Section 1. Introduction:

- An overview describing biodiversity for food and agriculture
- An overview of the main roles and values of biodiversity for food and agriculture
- Understanding of the inter-dependencies among countries in relation to biodiversity for food and agriculture: food and nutritional security
- Benefits of different types of diversity in agricultural landscapes

Section 2. Status and trends of biodiversity for food and agriculture and ecosystem services they provide

State of resources

- The state of biodiversity for food and agriculture: summary of sector analyses, plant, animal, forest and aquatic genetic resources, invertebrates and micro-organisms
- The state of other associated components of biodiversity for food and agriculture - pollinators, soil biodiversity, etc.
- Gaps and needs

State of ecosystem services

- The main ecosystem services provided by biodiversity for food and agriculture - pollination, nutrient cycling, disease and pest regulation, etc.
- The state of the application of the ecosystem approach
- Gaps and needs

Section 3. Major stressors on biodiversity for food and agriculture: on overview of the main influences affecting biodiversity for food and agriculture

- Climate change
- Changing market and consumer demands and their affects on biodiversity for food and agriculture
- Land use conversion and production system changes
- Natural disasters: Disease, etc.
- Invasive alien species

² Note, these sections are intended to assist in obtaining guidance on the main content of the first *Report*. It is not a draft outline of the first Report. A detailed draft outline will be prepared for the Commission to consider at its Fourteenth Regular Session.

- Policies: lack of or adverse policies
- Other stressors

Section 4. The state of national, regional and global efforts to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity for food and agriculture

National:

- Interventions or measures to conserve, sustainably use and enhance the various components of biodiversity for food and agriculture
- Policies and legislation: national framework including access and benefit-sharing arrangements
- Interventions or measures to maintain or enhance ecosystem services for food and agriculture: the application of the ecosystem approach in relation to biodiversity for food and agriculture
- Challenges in the management of biodiversity for food and agriculture (capacity development, research, technology development, etc.)
- National targets and indicators for biodiversity for food and agriculture
- Gaps and needs

Regional and Global:

- Interventions or measures to conserve, sustainably use and enhance the various components of biodiversity for food and agriculture
- Policies and legislation: international legal frameworks and major instruments including access and benefit-sharing
- Networks: research, data and information, etc.
- Partnerships
- Bilateral and multi-lateral support
- Funding mechanisms
- Gaps and needs

Section 5. A future agenda for biodiversity for food and agriculture

- Future contributions of the various components of biodiversity to food and nutritional security
- Future challenges in achieving food security, foreseen trends in use of genetic resources and other components of biodiversity for food and agriculture and their importance in agricultural production over the next 10 or more years
- New approaches for sustainability: integrated approaches, achieving sustainable intensification, sustainable agriculture, maintaining resilience and adaptation
- A future research agenda
- Future policies and legal arrangements
- Improved applications of technologies
- Strengthening institutions for biodiversity for food and agriculture at all levels
- Ensuring international instruments and agendas take adequate account of the contribution of biodiversity for food and agriculture
- Strengthening collaboration and synergies among various interests (agriculture and environment), agriculture institutions, private and public sectors, etc., at all levels

IV. THE PROCESS FOR PREPARING THE *REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE*: ANTICIPATED COSTS AND TIMING

11. **Sources of information:** Preparation of the *Report* will benefit from the sectoral assessments of plant, animal, forest and aquatic genetic resources for food and agriculture, prepared under the guidance of the Commission, as well as other available assessments. The *Report* will draw upon data and information from the sectoral assessments to provide a summary of the status and trends of these resources. Additional data and information on other components of biodiversity for food and agriculture and their ecosystem services will be gathered using a variety of means, including expert reports, thematic studies and questionnaires.³ In addition, expert inputs will be required on cross-cutting issues and common themes, needs and challenges.

12. **Preparatory process:** The preparation of the *Report* offers a unique opportunity to integrate the preparation of sectoral assessments foreseen in the MYPOW into a comprehensive process leading to the *Report*, as well as an opportunity to identify linkages, synergies and possible differences among the different sectors. The process for preparing the *Report* would involve:

- Preparation of a detailed outline of the *Report* by the Secretariat for consideration by the Commission at its Fourteenth Regular Session (CGRFA 14);
- At its Fourteenth Regular Session, the Commission would also invite participation of international organizations to contribute to the preparatory process, request donors to make available the necessary extra-budgetary resources for preparation of the *Report*;
- Preparation of the draft *Report* by FAO, based on available global assessments as well as inputs from *inter alia* experts, expert reports, studies, background papers and questionnaires;
- Regional consultations on the draft *Report*;
- Consultations with Intergovernmental Technical Working Groups;
- Presentation of the *Report* during the Commission's Sixteenth Regular Session.

13. Regional consultations would be the principle means for a detailed review of draft *Report*. International organizations and other stakeholders would be invited to review and comment on the draft *Report*.

14. **Costs and timing:** If the *Report* is to be prepared by FAO, reviewed through regional consultations, and made available to the Commission at its Sixteenth Regular Session, the preparatory process must begin soon after the Commission's Fourteenth Regular Session. Building on past experiences, preparation of global assessments on plant and animal genetic resources for food and agriculture have required significant extra-budgetary resources as well as significant investments from FAO's regular programme and budget. A cost estimate for the *Report* will be provided to the Commission's Fourteenth Regular Session.

³ Questionnaires might be used to obtain country-specific data and information, as required to fill gaps.