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para la
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CONFERENCE

Thirty-fourth Session

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IMPLEMENTATION OF 2006 REGIONAL CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS

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TWENTY-FOURTH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA

Bamako, Mali, 30 January – 3 February 2006

The following is a brief summary of action taken by the Organization on the recommendations made by the 24th session of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa:

In collaboration with other UN agencies and development partners, extend to the whole continent the support provided in relation to the Avian Influenza crisis.

Most African countries have received FAO support in relation to Avian Influenza (HPAI) since 2006, notably in training for emergency preparedness, diagnostic kits and training, and personal protective equipment. In each member country, FAO is part of the UN country team which, *inter alia*, advises on country emergency preparedness. FAO has established a Crisis Management Centre and an Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (TADs) based in Rome. Four Regional Animal Health Centres have been established, one each, for North Africa, East Africa, Central Africa, Southern Africa, and West Africa to enhance fire brigade type of early response to HPAI and other TADs outbreaks.

An assessment should be carried out of what needs to be done to promote trade within Africa.

FAO prepared paper on “Enhancing intra-African Trade for Food Security” in mid-2006 and organized a Meeting of African Ministers for Agriculture in November 2006, in Libreville, Gabon, which discussed factors that should promote intra-African trade.

FAO, in collaboration with the AU, is currently conducting an analysis of constraints to intra-African trade in basic food products.

FAO to play an active role in:

- ***Capacity building to strengthen skills on international trade standards in order to enhance access to markets.***

FAO is implementing in several countries in West and Central Africa a project on increasing incomes and food security of small farmers through export of organic and fair trade tropical products, with strong capacity building components.

FAO, with Japan’s financial support, is preparing two training workshops for November 2007 (Nairobi) and December 2007 (Dakar), benefiting government officials and private stakeholders, on enhancing their capacity to meet standard and quality requirements of export products.

- ***Analysing in which commodities member countries have competitive and comparative advantages.***

The FAO background paper for the November 2006 ministerial meeting in Libreville provided an analysis of major commodity problems, approaches to identifying strategic commodities, and a tentative list of such products, based on the comparative advantage of subregions and countries.

- ***Studies to develop common agricultural policies in the RECs.***

FAO has been providing support to RECs such as ECOWAS, SADC and ECCAS in harmonizing policies, especially through CAADP/NEPAD implementation activities; FAO is collaborating with the AU in evaluating the process of harmonizing the trade policy in basic food product for the RECs; similar work is being carried out in collaboration with CEN SAD.

In consultation with specialized institutions, contribute to the organization of training in financing.

Following the December 2006 Abuja Summit on Food Security's recommendations that member countries, assisted by the AUC and NEPAD, identify critical training needs in the areas of food security, the African Union Commission (AUC), NEPAD and FAO have held consultations with the AfDB to develop modalities for the implementation of the Sirte Decision on establishing an African Agricultural Development Fund, and to improve access to soft loans, small loans and grants through Africa-based development banks and financial institutions.

FAO and its Member States to develop an Action Plan with clear indications of detailed activities, timeframes and allocation of responsibilities for the aggressive promotion of the use of improved seeds by farmers.

FAO has undertaken/initiated actions aimed at:

- Facilitating the access of farmers to improved seed suited to their agro-ecological conditions through: subregional activities related to the development of an African Seed and Biotechnology Programme (ASBP) which has been approved for implementation by all member countries.
- Harmonizing rules and regulations to strengthen the seed system in West Africa, including international institutions and relevant stakeholders. The purpose is to agree on a common variety release acceptable to all countries, a common subregional variety catalogue and a quality standard for regional seed production.
- Assisting several African countries to develop national seed programmes, including seed policy formulation, and conducting seed testing workshops for countries of West, East and Southern Africa.

In collaboration with relevant partners, pursue efforts to prepare fire control manuals and provide training and equipment to village level fire brigades.

Efforts in this area include:

- Production of Fire Management Working Paper 17 – Fire Management Voluntary Guidelines: Principles and Strategic Actions, 2006;
- Projects for capacity building in fire management in Africa: Delivering training and equipment in community based fire management in Botswana (2006); Capacity building in awareness raising, prevention and suppression of wildfires (Cape Verde, Zimbabwe).

Strengthen initiatives to establish networks and working groups on fire in Sub-Saharan Africa and to help countries make optimal use of remote sensing data for bush fire prevention and control at different levels.

FAO support includes:

- Animating the Regional Fire Management Networks –AFRINET;
- Distribution of the Voluntary Guidelines on Fire Management to all Forestry Departments in the region;
- Establishment of the Fire Management Actions Alliance.

FAO to help disseminate successful national initiatives to other member countries in the region.

Publication of FAO Fire Management Working Paper no. 9; Report on Fires in the Sub-Saharan Africa Region.

Pursue with relevant partners, work on studying and documenting the impacts of fire on carbon emissions and climate changes (improve understanding and knowledge).

Paper being prepared for debate during the upcoming African Forestry and Wildlife Commission (16th AFWC, Khartoum, February 2008).

Support efforts by Member States and Regional Economic Groupings to develop intra and inter-regional trade in food products, particularly from food surplus to deficit zones.

FAO supports the AU's efforts for implementing the Abuja December 2006 Summit recommendations, including the preparation of an Action Plan highlighting trade promotion activities and intra-trade along the line of value-chains for each of the strategic commodities identified.

FAO, UNDP and UNCTAD are currently preparing a project to support the database and information technology for COMESA member countries to identify shortage and surplus of basic food in the subregion.

Assist in strengthening the capacity of the African Union Commission in order to improve coordination of food security initiatives.

FAO is providing direct staffing support to the NEPAD Secretariat for coordinating the CAADP action plan implementation.

The recently created FAO Subregional Office for East Africa in Addis Ababa, with a multidisciplinary technical team, provides direct technical support to the AU Commission in food security initiatives.

Civil society organizations should be allowed to introduce discussion items into the agenda of the Regional Conference for Africa.

This request is subject to the decision of Governing Bodies, including the Regional Conference.

FAO to contribute towards reinforcing the capacity of farmer organizations to defend their land rights (information, training and experience-exchange programmes).

The relevant workshop was held in Africa and FAO provided its technical assistance to this end.

Adopt the right to food sovereignty as a right to be defended in the framework of the guidelines on the right to food and as a principle to be observed in food security programmes.

On 2007 World Food Day, as a side event, a workshop to discuss this matter is planned by the civil society groups in close coordination with FAO.

Put in place an effective programme for developing a multiparty partnership against hunger, for supporting subregional and country alliances and for strengthening farmer organization and civil society capacity to defend citizens' rights to food.

In close coordination with the International Alliance Against Hunger, consider this as a subject for further discussion.

Put in place a more effective mechanism for partnership with civil society, notably through reinforcement of the operating capacity of the FAO/NGO/CSO unit at headquarters (with sufficient human resources and appropriate means of operation), with gradual decentralization to the subregional offices and operational focal points in country offices.

Currently the FAO/NGO/CSO unit exists at headquarters but has limited staff and resources. Likewise, the capacity of the decentralized offices in this area is limited; further discussion is needed.

TWENTY-EIGHTH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR THE NEAR EAST

Sana'a, Yemen, 12 - 16 March 2006

The following is a brief summary of actions taken by the Organization on the recommendations made by the 28th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for the Near East:

Palestine: FAO to move from emergency to more long-term rehabilitation and development projects.

FAO is implementing several projects in Palestine. Although they are primarily of an emergency and rehabilitation nature, work is also being carried out in information and mapping-system development and capacity/institution building.

Emergency assistance to drought affected parts of Somalia.

FAO Emergency projects are presently providing seeds, seedlings, tools, small pumps, carts and capacity building for farmers and destitute pastoralists in the most critical areas of Somalia. Activities in the livestock, agriculture and riverine fishery sectors are closely integrated and were funded in response to the 2007 UN Consolidated Appeal.

Collaborate with OIE in implementing regional activities of the Global Framework for Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs).

Under the FAO/OIE GF-TADs, three Regional Animal Health Centres were established in Lebanon, Tunisia and Turkey.

Ensure that GF-TAD activities in the Region give adequate support to capacity building and upgrading of laboratories and equipment.

The strategic initiative of OIE/FAO Regional Animal Health Centre for the Middle East includes networks for epidemiological and laboratory expertise and infrastructure.

Enhance the capacity of animal health laboratories in the Region.

FAO provided support to Saudi Arabia on livestock quarantine; a programme for the restoration of veterinary services in Iraq under the umbrella of the UNDG; verification of freedom from Rinderpest under the GREP umbrella, as well as surveillance and control of other emerging diseases.

Support to countries who need rehabilitation of their agricultural sectors and veterinary services following wars and natural disasters, including training in animal health and monitoring of veterinary drugs and vaccines.

FAO worked with the Palestine Authority to implement and maintain effective HPAI prevention and control strategies.

The FAO emergency programme for Somalia includes livestock disease surveillance, vaccination and treatment.

Assist to control and ultimately eradicate Avian Influenza (HPAI) and to prepare non-infected countries for rapid detection and response to the disease.

Two subregional TCP projects have been undertaken in North Africa and the Middle East to assist Member Countries in developing preparedness HPAI plans. Direct country support was also provided to Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen and Palestine.

In Egypt, FAO provided extensive technical support and established a country unit of the Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD) to assist the country's efforts to control HPAI.

Regional coordination meeting on HPAI.

Subregional coordination meetings were held during the implementation of the TCP projects on HPAI preparedness plans.

Assistance in formulating and developing national long-term action plans for drought mitigation.

TCP projects in Iran and Jordan were completed in 2007 and produced national strategies and action plans on drought mitigation. In Syria, an ongoing TCP project includes the formulation of a drought management strategy.

Developing indicators for drought early warning.

The drought management strategies formulated for Iran and Jordan included development of objectively verifiable indicators for drought early warning and monitoring and operational triggering mechanisms for drought management.

Collaboration with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in relation to climatic studies, drought forecasting and capacity-building activities.

FAO collaborates with WMO and UNEP to promote national action plans for efficient water use for sustainable agriculture. In the Nile Basin countries, FAO collaborated with WMO in improving forecasting of floods and droughts.

Provide support for conducting stock-assessment surveys and preparing fishing and aquaculture databases.

FAO has prepared guidelines for assisting countries in reporting resource exploitation and formulating stock-status indicators. A capture-fisheries database and a Regional Aquaculture Information System (RAIS) were implemented in the RECOFI region.

Provide support for institutional capacity building in fisheries protection and the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

The FAO's programme for the Mediterranean and the Red Sea places emphasis on institutional capacity building, operates in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and encourages the use of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries.

Assist countries to benefit from the Fish Marketing Information Services and establish national networks.

A special item on Fish Marketing Information Services was included in the Agenda of the 4th Session of RECOFI (May 2007) and INFOSAMAK was invited to provide information material and guidelines on communications and information networks in the region.

Assistance to help overcome pollution and disease problems associated with aquaculture, through the adoption of good management practices.

A RECOFI project will promote regional aquaculture strategy and animal health and will include activities on management practices and Environmental Impact Assessment.

Technical and legal advice on illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing.

An agenda item on IUU was presented at the 4th Session of RECOFI and FAO was requested to consider organizing a workshop for RECOFI members.

Encourage the provision of assistance to Iraq in rebuilding and rehabilitating its fisheries institutions and infrastructure.

At its 4th Session, RECOFI expressed its support to all efforts taken to rebuild and rehabilitate the fisheries institutions in Iraq and welcomed further information from Iraq on immediate needs.

Assist Somalia to protect its fisheries resources from the extensive illegal fishing.

FAO is collecting information on illegal finishing in Somali waters, with the view of suggesting measures to be taken collectively by countries and international bodies.

Facilitate the sharing of information on successful experiences in aquaculture, with emphasis on Egypt's experience.

FAO has established aquaculture information systems in the Near East to facilitate exchange of information and expertise. Regarding Egypt, where aquaculture is almost exclusively based on brackish and fresh waters, FAO has been participating in technical consultations to ascertain the applicability of some methods in other parts of the region.

Ensure a speedy approval funding for the regional project on Red Sea Fisheries.

This project has received funding of US\$600 000 from the OPEC Fund, in addition to the US\$1 million already allocated by IFAD and the US\$500 000 approved by the IsDB.

Countries with an important fisheries sector to have adequate technical support from FAO headquarters and Regional and Subregional offices.

FAO undertook several technical assistance activities at national and regional levels, including RNE-sponsored country missions and the organization of regional workshops on fisheries statistics (Cairo, November 2006) and food safety (Abbassa, Egypt, April 2007).

Standing item on "Global and Regional Emergency Issues" to be introduced.

Such standing item is included in the Agenda of the upcoming Regional Conference.

Secretariat to prepare note on procedures for the participation of Observers in the Conference.

Advice will be sought from OCD, KCC and LEG on the preparation of this note.

Support in multilateral trade negotiations and regional trade agreements.

Technical assistance on WTO-related issues was provided to Egypt, Jordan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Yemen, focusing on strengthening national institutional capacities for effective participation in trade negotiations and in meeting commitments trade agreements.

Subregional capacity-building workshops were organized for North African countries to support negotiations with the EU in the context of the EU-Mediterranean Agreements.

Assess, upon completion of ongoing WTO negotiations, the potential impact of the Doha Round commitments on Near East countries.

WTO negotiations on agriculture are still ongoing, so no impact study was undertaken.

TWENTY-NINTH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Caracas, Venezuela, 24 - 28 April 2006

The following is a brief summary of action taken by the Organization on the recommendations made by the 29th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean:

Fully implement the Latin America and the Caribbean Without Hunger Initiative.

An FAO/AECI project was launched to support the initiative, with identification of priority countries and assistance programme actions in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia and Venezuela and for the Network of Food Security and Nutrition Research and Training. Meetings were held on the human right to food, the measurement of food security in the home and multi-dimensional aspects of poverty, and papers were drafted on social cohesion and the swap of the external debt for action against hunger. Horizontal cooperation has been promoted to facilitate projects in Haiti, Nicaragua, Bolivia, Colombia and Venezuela. Semi-attendance courses have been made available on food security, family farming and fighting poverty.

Technically support the process of integration of agricultural trade, in particular the negotiation of sanitary aspects and training for border control against transboundary pests and diseases.

FAO has participated in the bodies governing the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. A study is underway on the impact of private-sector standards in Latin America and a process of dialogue will be facilitated between public and private entities. Technical assistance is being provided to adapt institutions and infrastructure relating to food safety, animal health and plant protection to new standards and increased international trade.

Promote and support activities of exchange and cooperation between countries of the Region for the implementation of protection measures against the risk of Avian Influenza.

Under the FAO/OIE initiative for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases, four technical assistance projects have been implemented for the early detection and prevention of Avian Influenza in the LAC countries.

Support cooperation between the laboratory networks of the countries of the Region.

Staff from veterinary diagnostic laboratories have been trained in basic methodologies of diagnosis of Avian Influenza and in advanced molecular diagnostic techniques.

Promote and technically support the exchange of experiences between countries and the possibilities of partnerships in bioenergy as a priority focus of cooperation.

Countries have been assisted in conducting seminars, and programmes and projects have been formulated in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Paraguay and Peru. A compendium of regional experts, institutions, programmes and studies is being compiled. Identified policy issues include: incentives and penalties associated with the rational use of natural resources; technological policies; regulatory framework; contractual relations; and consumption structure.

Provide technical support for training in the trade and handling of fishery products, and information for the consumption of these products to ensure their quality and safety.

The project "Improving domestic fish and fishery product markets in Latin America and the Caribbean" has been approved, with a component on training in the trade of fishery products in 11 countries of the Region.

Promote the conduct of studies on linkages between fisheries and nutrition, monitoring of fishery resources, better-quality information on fisheries, and strategies to improve the living conditions of artisanal fishers.

The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture was published with a summary of the findings of multiple studies on the state of fishery resources, the quality of fishery information, the contribution of fisheries and aquaculture to nutrition, and the improvement of living conditions of artisanal fishers.

Support country exchanges of experiences in reforestation, in particular, productive reforestation using fruit trees.

Under the framework of the Forestry Commission, specific projects and the support mechanism for national forest programmes have promoted the exchange of experiences in reforestation and technical guidelines have been drawn up for forest plantations. There has also been joint action in preparing studies and proposals on financing mechanisms.

Review and amend the document "Institutional challenges for national, subregional and regional technological innovation" to better reflect the complexity of the subject and to refine analysis of the system of technological innovation in the specific conditions of the Region.

The document is being reviewed with examination of: relations between productivity and food security; relations between international trade and technological innovations; a better public-and-private sector balance in the process of innovation; the generation and adoption of technologies; rural extension; and relations between biotechnology and environmental sustainability.

Continue to look more deeply and broadly into territorial policies for the economic and social development of rural areas and conduct studies in other countries similar to those carried out in Brazil, Chile and Mexico.

Lessons have been drawn from the practical application of the territorial development approach in parts of Brazil, Chile and Mexico, which has provided greater insight and scope for replication in policies and programmes in the other countries.

Study in greater depth the trends and challenges of agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean, including aspects relating to health, equity and environmental sustainability.

A letter of agreement has been signed with the Autonomous National University of Mexico to build analytical capacity. Collaboration agreements have been concluded with institutions in countries to determine the underlying causes of the present situation and the sectoral outlooks and to closely examine issues such as equity, social inclusion, environmental sustainability and health.

Implement the recommendations included in the Final Declaration of the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, contributing to its Plan of Action.

A consultation of experts from Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela was held to discuss the challenges of agrarian reform in the 21st century. Support is being given to the Network of Institutions Responsible for Land Ownership, Land Reform and Land Access Policies. With support from the National Institute of Land Settlement and Agrarian Reform, the following documents are being prepared: "Concentration and foreign ownership of land in

countries of the Specialized Network of Family Agriculture (REAF)" and "Regulatory frameworks of agrarian reform and land access policies in the countries of MERCOSUR".

TWENTY-EIGHTH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Jakarta, Indonesia, 15 - 19 May 2006

The following is a brief summary of the actions taken by the Organization on the recommendations made by the 28th FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific:

Continue providing advice and capacity building for multilateral and bilateral agricultural trade negotiations.

FAO organized two regional meetings on agricultural trade and development and on agricultural trade policy in the context of multilateral and regional trade agreements. The Pacific Island countries held a meeting on WTO and regional trade agreements and provisions.

Support member countries in developing practical and cost-competitive bioenergy sectors.

A brainstorming meeting on bioenergy was convened in Bangkok jointly with ADB and IFAD to review issues and map out a strategy for regional cooperation on bioenergy issues relating to policy, legislation, production, processing and marketing. Seventy participants attended.

A desk study on forests and bioenergy was conducted to improve understanding of the issues, opportunities, constraints and implications of bioenergy development in Asia-Pacific.

Continue its support for the formulation and implementation of codes and guidelines for responsible forest practices.

A regional workshop to strengthen implementation of national codes of practice for forest harvesting was conducted.

Continue assisting member countries in formulating pro-poor policies and strategies to enhance the competitiveness of the agricultural sectors.

FAO and IFAD launched a regional programme in eight countries in Asia to promote pro-poor policy formulation, dialogue and implementation at the country level through an inception workshop convened in Bangkok.

Formulation of a National Medium-term Priority Framework (NMTPF) was completed in Cambodia and initiated in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Pakistan, Thailand and Viet Nam to prioritize FAO's assistance in meeting the development priorities of the countries.

Continue facilitating South-South Cooperation and other technology exchange initiatives beneficial to the rural poor.

Under South-South Cooperation, 8 regional experts and 56 Chinese and Filipino field technicians were out-posted to all 14 Pacific Island member countries to provide technical support and training to rural farmers under the Regional Programme for Food Security (RPFS).

FAO, jointly with IFAD and CFC, formulated a South-South Cooperation programme among selected countries in the Greater Mekong subregion to enhance the agricultural competitiveness of rural households through the promotion of value chains for selected agricultural products.

Continue building the capacity of member countries to deal effectively with rapid changes in agriculture.

An Asia-Pacific Forestry Sector Outlook Study 2020 is underway to assess the changes in the forest sector, analyse different scenarios and identify priorities and strategies to address emerging opportunities and challenges.

A data exchange system involving 16 countries in the region was developed to strengthen national capacities to analyse, use and disseminate food and agricultural statistics in support of national agricultural development policy and planning.

Case studies on the constraints facing Asian livestock sectors are being undertaken, focusing on smallholder dairy development for 18 Asia-Pacific countries.

Give particular attention to the special needs of Small Island Developing States, land-locked countries and post-conflict areas.

Under the RPFs, FAO, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, organized regional and national training workshops on multilateral trade negotiations in agriculture and commodity chain studies.

FAO, in collaboration with the SAARC Secretariat, prepared a RPFs for SAARC members, including the land-locked countries Bhutan and Nepal and the small island country Maldives.

Assistance was provided to the Maldives, Nepal and Papua New Guinea in development of a 15-year master plan for agricultural development, food security policy and strategies, and a 5-year agricultural development plan, respectively.

Assist member countries in:

a) Developing and enhancing diversification, value-added processing, food product innovation, agro-industries and marketing.

FAO organized an international symposium on fresh produce supply chain management, and a regional workshop on independent certification to assist small agro-enterprises in implementing third party certification.

Under the RPFs, local processors in Samoa were assisted to improve their capacity in product development and value adding activities, a core processing team of trainers was set up to support value adding activities in Palau and training was given to farmers in Vanuatu to enhance their capacity to add value to cassava production.

b) Enhancing capacities to meet international food quality and sanitary and phytosanitary standards.

A workshop on certification schemes for capture fisheries and aquaculture was convened to examine opportunities and potential costs and benefits in the Asia-Pacific context, and to develop regional recommendations.

Two meetings were convened, one in Asia on Pest Risk Analysis for South American leaf blight of rubber and another in the Pacific on developing food standards.

Four regional workshops were organized to review and develop regional and international standards for phytosanitary measures and to promote capacity building in plant health.

Take a lead role when disasters impact heavily on the agricultural sector.

FAO continued its leadership role in assisting tsunami-affected countries in the region through national and regional rehabilitation projects in fisheries, agriculture and forestry. FAO established a special task force and a coordination and technical support unit within RAP for tsunami rehabilitation. About 60 projects worth over US\$65 million have been implemented.

The Regional Unit of the Emergency Centre for Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD) was established within RAP to enhance FAO's capacity in combating H5N1 Avian Influenza outbreaks in the region.

Enhance support for integrated watershed management, integrated coastal area management, codes of conduct for sustainable forest and fisheries management and good agricultural practices.

An FAO resource book – *The new generation of watershed management programmes and projects* – was published, presented and distributed at an international workshop in the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

FAO organized a regional workshop on managing fishing capacity and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in Asia, and co-organized an international conference to review the state of tropical coastal deltas with particular focus on agriculture–fishery–aquaculture–environment conflicts and coastal hazards.

Actively engage in all activities of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction as outlined in the Hyogo Framework.

A regional cooperative mechanism on disaster management has become operational in six Asian countries to better monitor and assess droughts and their impacts on short-term food security.

Provide support to member countries in building capacity for safe and appropriate handling and use of pesticides.

Plant protection profiles from 14 member countries have been compiled and published to help formulate better strategies and policies for pest and pesticide management.

Technical assistance was provided to the Cook Islands, Fiji and Samoa in the safe use of pesticides.

Enhance coordination with international organizations to harmonize the classification of hazardous chemicals and promote consistent and efficient approaches for pesticide management.

Eight countries from Southeast Asia participated in a workshop to develop a regional action plan for the sound management of hazardous wastes.

Technical assistance was provided to the Cook Islands, Fiji, Thailand and Pakistan in preparing national action/work plans for implementation of the Rotterdam Convention.

Explore the potential for widespread application of innovative technologies for animal identification used to effectively track animals and products.

A regional workshop was convened to assist countries in developing standards and guidelines for animal identification and traceability schemes.

TWENTY-FIFTH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE

Riga, Latvia, 8 - 9 June 2006

The following is a brief summary of action taken by the Organization on the recommendations made by the 25th FAO Regional Conference for Europe:

FAO activities were of paramount importance in assisting Member Nations in the Region in meeting the challenges of achieving the WFS target and the MDGs.

FAO continued to provide assistance to countries in the region under the TCP Programme, the TCP Facility and Trust Funds aimed at increasing agricultural productivity and assisting farmers to access new markets. Most of the assistance dealt with issues of institutional reform and in the development of rural areas. Some examples of significant projects currently under implementation in the region are: Azerbaijan (GCP/AZE/001/SWI - Capacity Building in Rural Development for Internal Displaced Persons and Refugees in New Settlement Areas of Aghdam District); Serbia (GCP/FRY/001/NET – Phase II – Development Assistance to livestock farmers in the mountainous areas of the Sandzak region); Montenegro and Kosovo (GCP/RER/019/LUX – Development Assistance to Farmers in Remote Areas of Kosovo and Montenegro); Kyrgyzstan (TCP/KYR/3002 – Institutional capacity building in small-scale enterprise development in mountain regions).

FAO should help build common perceptions among governments through awareness raising and provide space for collective information gathering, analysis, discussion and negotiations.

A number of stakeholder consultation meetings and workshops were organized by FAO in the region on different subjects aimed at enhancing dialogue among various stakeholders, to exchange experiences and to encourage regional cooperation. Example of such activities were:

- Regional Workshop on Enabling Environments for Agribusiness and Agro-industry Development in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Budapest, 30 November – 2 December 2006) with participants from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Georgia, Hungary, Serbia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The workshop's objective was to discuss and identify priority areas for FAO's work in support of development policies, institutions and support services that constitute an enabling environment for agribusiness and agro-industrial development in the region;
- Workshop on FAO Assistance to Forest Land Use in Caucasus Countries (Tbilisi, 18-21 September 2006) to exchange views on priority issues with regard to development of forest resources and production of forest products. In addition, the workshop provided an opportunity to inform the participants on needed policy reforms and policy options;
- Workshop on Rural Development in EU-Accession Countries – Lessons learnt from New Members States of the EU – Challenges and Opportunities for SEE countries and Turkey (Prague, 17-20 April 2007). The main objectives of the workshop were to facilitate information exchange regarding rural development policies between policy makers and experts from accession countries and new EU member states, as well as to discuss options for a rural development policy with the EU-Accession process by taking into consideration experiences from new EU-member states and the challenges faced in South-East European (SEE) countries and Turkey;
- Technical Consultation for Central Asian Countries (Ankara, 11-13 July 2007). The main objective was to discuss priority issues for technical assistance at national and regional levels and to provide information on the technical capacity of the newly established Subregional Office for Central Asia;

- Regional Workshop on the Utilization and Management of Biotechnology in Crop Production – Focus on Genetically Modified (GM) Maize (Prague, 16-20 October 2006) the objectives of which were to (a) inform on various aspects of managing GM crops – global and European experience, (b) inform on recent experiences of managing GM crops, in co-existence with conventional and organic crops in the European region (legal framework, technical and market aspects), (c) identify issues of common importance to South Eastern European (SEE) countries and countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) related to the development and management of GM crops, and (d) develop an informal network of decision makers and experts on GM management/co-existence in SEE and CIS;
- Workshop on Building Partnerships for Technology Generation, Assessment and Sharing among Western Balkan Countries (Skopje, 25-30 June 2007). The workshop dealt with the key challenges for agricultural research and extension services to improve competitiveness and market-orientation of farmers. It also explored how regional partnerships in research and extension can assist technology generation, assessment and transfer;
- Regional scoping workshop on the use of irrigation systems for fish production in Central Asia (Tashkent, 17-20 July 2007). The workshop increased awareness among the stakeholders of the current situation of the irrigation systems for inland capture fisheries and aquaculture and the need for regional cooperation.

Offer by the delegation of Kazakhstan to host the Subregional Office for Central Asia in Astana (supported by the delegations of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) and also took note of Turkey's readiness to host this Subregional Office in Turkey (supported by the delegation of Azerbaijan).

The Subregional Office for Central Asia was established in November 2006 in Ankara, Turkey.

Importance of livestock activities and the emergency assistance for the early detection and prevention of HPAI.

Numerous activities were carried out in the region particularly focusing on the Balkan region and Caucasian countries – under the special fund for emergency and rehabilitation activities for Avian Influenza - in assisting CVOs to collate and analyse all information on HPAI and advise on national and regional strategies according to the recommendations and guidelines published by FAO/OIE and to develop and strengthen the networking mechanisms in the Balkan and Caucasian regions aiming at a collaborative network at scientific level.

Meetings and assessment missions under the EUFMD Commission responded to the outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease (new type of O Panasia strain) in Kazakhstan and other Central Asian CIS countries and of African swine fever in Georgia.

A new project was launched in Armenia funded by the Italian Government - GCP/ARM/001/ITA – the objective of which is to enhance family livelihoods by reducing brucellosis disease in animals and in humans.

Importance of the training provided related to issues of food safety, risk assessment and Codex Alimentarius.

Technical assistance was provided through the implementation of relevant projects in this area, i.e. (i) TCP/RER/3002 “Strengthening food safety in South East European Transition Countries – A regional approach to food legislation and Control; (ii) TCP/RER/3003 “Food Safety Capacity building (Armenia and Georgia)”; (iii) TCP/UKR/3003 “Strengthening the Ukrainian Laboratory for Quality and Safety of Food and Agricultural Products”.

Land tenure, land consolidation and land management were issues of importance for sustainable agriculture and rural development.

Technical assistance was provided through the implementation of the following projects: TCP/HUN/3002 “Support to the development of a strategy for territorial organization and sustainable land management in areas with high natural disaster risk”; TCP/LIT/3002 “Support for the preparation of an operational land consolidation system”; TCP/YUG/3001 “Support to the preparation of a national land consolidation strategy and a land consolidation pilot project in Serbia”.

Two regional workshops aimed at assisting countries to develop responses to their problems of land fragmentation and adverse rural conditions were held in Prague in 2006 and in 2007, respectively. These workshops were organized in response to requests for information on the EU Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2007-13 and, in particular, its requirements and funding options for land consolidation. The RDP is relevant to all European countries whether they are members of the EU, acceding countries, candidate or potential candidate countries, or European neighbours.

The following diagnostic/thematic studies have been finalized or are being finalized: Land Reform and Farm Restructuring in Moldova, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan; The Economic Effects of Land Reform in Tajikistan; Land Reform and Agricultural Performance in CIS.

Important work of FAO in supporting Member Nations’ development efforts through policy assistance and field operations.

Technical assistance was provided through the implementation of projects, such as: “Support to the formulation of a medium-term agricultural and rural policy framework” in Ukraine; “Support for the preparation of a Rural Development Strategy” in Armenia; “Development of a sustainable charcoal industry” in Croatia; “Promotion of Rural Development” in the FYR of Macedonia; “National Medium Term Framework” in Tajikistan; “Capacity Building in Rural Development (Food Supply Chain Approach) for Internal Displaced Persons and Refugees in New Settlement Areas of Aghdam District” in Azerbaijan.

A number of field programme development and assessment missions have been undertaken to Tajikistan, Moldova, Ukraine, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Kosovo, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and the FYR of Macedonia.

A number of Diagnostic/Thematic studies have been completed: The Challenge of Conforming to Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures for WTO Accession and EU Exports: The Case of Ukraine; Rethinking Agricultural Reform in Ukraine; Rural Transition in Azerbaijan; Opportunities and Constraints to Investment in the Agribusiness Sector in Azerbaijan based on the Experience of the Fruit and Vegetable Sector; Dairy Sector Review in Turkey; and Country Studies on the agricultural sector of the five Central Asian CIS countries.