



Members' Update

FAO renewal



Members welcome progress in implementing IPA

FAO Council Members welcomed the significant progress made in implementing the Immediate Plan of Action for renewal, when they met at Rome headquarters recently.

They also heard of the challenges that lay ahead over the next two years as the process enters a new phase.

David Benfield, vice-chair of the reform support group, said: "Council was very pleased with the progress made and commended the Secretariat and the Council Committee for their highly successful work despite a shortfall in funding.

"Council also recognized the improved atmosphere of trust and collaboration between Members and Secretariat."

Benfield said more than half of the IPA actions would be completed by the end of 2009. However, that would not equate to being more than 50 percent of the way through FAO reform, since some large and very complex actions lay ahead.

Achievements to date included development of a new results framework, issuing of the new medium term plan 2010-13 and a programme of work and budget for 2010-11, restructuring of headquarters, and articulation by the culture change team of an internal vision for FAO's future, based on extensive staff consultations.

In addition, a comprehensive Root and Branch Review had been conducted of administrative support functions.

This marked real progress, Benfield said, but much work still lay ahead for Members and staff.

“The nature of the FAO reform will change in 2010-11 with the implementation of a number of major projects. This is in contrast to the policy and planning focus of our work in 2009.

“The Council recognized this changing nature and noted that Member responsibilities will change from hands-on to oversight and monitoring,” said Benfield.

“They also indicated that special attention would be given to the risk elements in IPA implementation.

“It’s fair to say that everyone is very pleased with progress to date, but mindful of the major work that lies ahead, that will require the full commitment of members, management and staff to deliver successfully.”

Conference Committee completes its work

FAO Members paid a warm tribute to the chair of the Conference Committee for Independent External Evaluation follow-up, after the group finished its work assisting the renewal process.

The Committee was set up as one of the recommendations of the IEE and was open to all Members. It has now unanimously adopted its Final Report on the IPA, for submission to the 36th Session of Conference in November 2009.

Members participating in the FAO Council praised Professor Mohammad Saeid Noori-Naeini’s “incomparable leadership role, deeply appreciating his invaluable contributions to the [renewal] process.”

They also commended the chairs, co-chairs and vice-chairs of the Committee’s working groups, as well as FAO management and staff for their hard work.

FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf added his own appreciation for the Committee’s work.

He said: “To get this far, the Conference Committee has shown exemplary leadership, and provided encouragement and motivation, in guiding Members and the Secretariat through the implementation of the IPA for FAO Renewal.”

Comments? Suggestions? Write to Members-Update@fao.org.