



منظمة الأغذية  
والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

联合国  
粮食及  
农业组织

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  
Agricultura  
y la  
Alimentación

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### Agenda Item 7

## REPORT ON FAO ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION 2006-07 WITH A FOCUS ON THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE WORLD FOOD SUMMIT TARGETS AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS, AND FUTURE PRIORITIES

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The population of countries covered by the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (REU) is nearly 900 million people. The Region comprises some of the world's richest countries but also Low-Income Food-Deficit Countries (LIFDCs) and nearly 28 million undernourished people (in 2001-03). FAO activities concentrate on the countries in Southeastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) where the agricultural sector is of major importance to the economy.

2. FAO works with countries in the region and other United Nations system organizations to achieve the World Food Summit (WFS) targets and Millennium Development Goals by 2015. One of the main focuses of FAO is to assist countries in achieving the WFS Plan of Action target of halving the number of people suffering from hunger, and on the Millennium Development Goals 1 and 7, respectively to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger and to ensure environmental sustainability. The Organization is also involved in promoting gender equality (MDG 3) and developing a global partnership for development (MDG 8).

3. The present document provides a brief report on major activities undertaken by FAO in the European and Central Asian Region during the biennium 2006-2007. For each major programme, only the more significant areas in which FAO activities were carried out are highlighted.

## **II. CHAPTER 2: SUSTAINABLE FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS**

### **A. MAJOR PROGRAMMES 2.A AND C: CROP PRODUCTION SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT AND DISEASES AND PESTS OF PLANTS**

4. FAO work on crop and pest management emphasized conservation agriculture for sustainable intensification, including the production of a technical manual for Uzbekistan in four languages, including Russian. Assistance to policy-makers to develop access to segmented markets was also given attention: a manual on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for olives was developed with the Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa (AARINENA), which includes Turkey, and, in addition, capacity-building support on organic agriculture was provided to Kyrgyzstan and Turkey. A workshop on the handling of obsolete pesticides in Central Asia was held in Ankara in November 2007.

5. FAO, as part of its technical assistance in the Region, launched a project to improve seed production of cereal, leguminous, oil and forage crops in Uzbekistan. In Armenia, FAO activities were aimed at improving crop production and reducing losses due to pests and diseases, including rodent control. The Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programme continued its assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia in integrated pest management for the control of the Western Corn Rootworm.

6. Three locust species are major pests in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Their distribution areas overlap the borders and swarms produced during upsurges can invade neighbouring countries causing damage to crops and pasturelands. In 2006 and 2007, FAO received requests from Caucasus and Central Asian countries for assistance concerning a regional locust approach, highlighting the transboundary nature of locust pests and impact at regional level. FAO thus initiated regional cooperation and is now seeking funding for this work. A presentation on locust management in the two regions is scheduled during the 26<sup>th</sup> FAO Regional Conference for Europe (ERC). In May 2007, Tajikistan, which was facing a serious locust situation accentuated by movements of locust populations from Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, requested

immediate assistance; an emergency project was implemented under FAO technical supervision, utilizing the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) grant from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

7. FAO continues to assess the national plant breeding and associated biotechnology capacity in countries in the Region. This work has been carried out in Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Moldova, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and TFYR of Macedonia. The information gathered is being incorporated into the programme of work of the Global Partnership Initiative for Plant Breeding Capacity Building (GIPB), which aims at strengthening national capacity to use plant genetic resources.

## **B. MAJOR PROGRAMMES 2.B AND C: LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT AND DISEASES AND PESTS OF ANIMALS**

8. FAO has provided emergency assistance for the early detection, prevention and control of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in the Eastern European and Caucasus regions (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Hungary, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, TFYR of Macedonia, Turkey and Ukraine). Most of the technical assistance is being provided through the SFERA and TCP/RER/3004E. The objective is to provide support to infected countries in efforts to control and eradicate the disease and to furnish assistance to unaffected countries in efforts to be prepared to face an incursion of the disease. FAO has launched emergency assistance for the prevention, control and elimination of African Swine Fever (ASF) in domestic pig holdings in Armenia (TCP/ARM/3102) and Georgia (TCP/GEO/3103). The objective is to assist countries infected with ASF in collecting adequate field samples, performing laboratory diagnosis, and conducting epidemiological analysis and surveillance in the affected and at-risk districts. Relief and technical assistance response to the drought in Moldova is another example of the emergency assistance provided in 2007-2008. It aimed at preserving the existing livestock by distributing fodder and feedstuff to small-scale farmers to complement their own limited resources in order to sustain the cows and future young calves during the critical winter period.

9. Developmental technical assistance provided to the livestock sector included: (i) capacity-building to support in-situ conservation and use of animal genetic resources (Albania); (ii) formulating a national livestock breeding policy and strategy document for the sustainable use and development of livestock (Armenia); (iii) integrated epidemiological-based control of echinococcosis to improve animal production and reduce human transmission (Lithuania); (iv) support for abattoir development (Armenia), and (v) assistance to brucellosis control (Armenia). In addition, FAO's support to the control of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, and assistance to livestock farmers in the Sandzak region (Serbia and Montenegro) continued.

10. FAO has contributed normative work in support of the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources, adopted during the first International Technical Conference on Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in 2007. This Plan comprised twenty-three Strategic Priorities for combating the erosion of animal genetic resources and ensuring animal genetic resources sustainability. FAO/World Organization for Animal Health (OIE)/World Health Organization (WHO) meetings were held regularly in order to review progress achieved on the "Global Framework for the Progressive Control of FMD and Other Transboundary Animal Diseases" (GF-TADs). Major partners included the European Commission (EC), the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (EUFMD), OIE and WHO. FAO cooperates with the European Association for Animal Production (EAAP) and the International Committee for Animal Recording (ICAR). Activities also covered cooperation on animal genetic resources management, development of animal identification and recording systems, capacity-building of advisory services and disease contingency planning and preparedness.

### C. MAJOR PROGRAMME 2.D: NUTRITION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

11. FAO has undertaken initiatives aimed at implementing the recommendations of the Pan-European Conference on Food Safety and Quality held in 2002. FAO sought the collaboration of other international agencies, particularly WHO. Activities included national and regional projects, seminars and training as well as direct technical assistance. Examples include:

- The FAO/WHO Subregional Workshop on Codex Alimentarius held in Warsaw, Poland, in September 2007, attended by delegates from Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Kosovo (UNMIK), Latvia, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, TFYR of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.
- A seminar on ‘Strengthening Knowledge of Codex Procedures and Risk Analysis’ prior to the FAO/WHO Codex Regional Coordinating Committee for Europe (CCEURO) in January 2007, to disseminate information on Codex procedures and the importance of risk analysis as a basis for national food control programmes. The seminar was attended by Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Lithuania, Poland, Serbia and Uzbekistan.
- A seminar on risk analysis and the organization of food control systems, held in Croatia in October 2006. FAO supported the workshop through funding and technical support. Over 250 delegates attended, representing all stakeholder groups. Discussions focused on issues including roles and responsibilities and different means of enhancing coordination.
- A subregional training course on food control and Codex held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, in July 2006 for delegates from Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.
- Direct technical advice provided to the Government of Romania on strengthening of the national Codex programme during a seminar organized in May 2007.
- FAO support through a regional initiative on the coordination of World Trade Organization (WTO) Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) Procedures for the Southeastern European countries during meetings in Bucharest in May 2007 and in Budapest in February 2008. The workshops were organized by the Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP), of the United States Department of Commerce, with representatives from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo (UNMIK), Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and TFYR of Macedonia. The workshop aimed at strengthening capacity in the region on planning and implementation of food control infrastructures, improved food safety in food businesses through the application of Good Hygienic Practices/Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (GHP/HACCP), and addressing the need for greater interaction between animal health and food safety specialists at a national level. The meetings also addressed plant and animal health issues within the framework of SPS measures linked with the WTO Agreements.

12. In addition, FAO provided technical assistance through regional and national projects, mainly through the FAO Technical Cooperation Programme as follows:

- The final workshop for the regional project “Strengthening food safety in Southeast European transition countries – A regional approach to food legislation and control” (TCP/RER/3002) took place in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in September 2007. The main project outputs included draft food safety strategies and action plans, and an assessment of legal status and recommendations in each of the countries.
- Food safety and capacity-building in Armenia and Georgia (TCP/RER/3003) is ongoing and includes review of the food control management systems, preparation of draft food control strategies, review of standard setting activities and an assessment of the laboratory network.
- The project “Strengthening the Ukrainian Laboratory for the Quality and Safety of food and agricultural projects” (TCP/UKR/3003) was completed in 2007. The project provided

on-site technical advice in planning and organizing the new Ukrainian Laboratory for Quality and Safety of Food and Agricultural Products and assistance in preparation for accreditation of this laboratory according to International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Standard 17025.

- FAO TCP project (TCP/AZE/3101) "Food safety capacity-building in Azerbaijan" has as objectives to strengthen national capacity for strategic planning and coordination of food control activities, to ensure adequacy of food law and harmonized food standards, and ensure compliance through development of inspection programmes, the laboratory network, and quality assurance programmes in agroprocessing sectors.
- Technical assistance on food safety related to food products containing GMOs (genetically modified organisms) will be provided to Croatia as part of "Capacity- building of regulatory agencies for the handling and monitoring of genetically modified crops, products and processed food" (TCP/CRO/3102 (D)).
- Technical assistance on food safety related to food products containing GMOs will be provided to Armenia, Georgia and Moldova, within the project "Capacity-building in agricultural biotechnologies and biosafety" (TCP/RER/3102).

#### **D. MAJOR PROGRAMMES 2.E, F, G: FORESTRY**

13. Forestry Department activities addressed issues related to forest management for sustainable development in the Region. FAO activities focus on the impacts of political and economic transition on the forest sector in Eastern Europe. FAO works in close collaboration with relevant partners in the Region, namely the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the Ministerial Conference on Protection of Forest in Europe (MCPFE), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Confederation of European Forest Owners (CEPF) and the World Conservation Union (IUCN). FAO contributed, as in the past, to the implementation of the Joint Work Programme of the FAO European Forestry Commission and the UNECE Timber Committee, which currently passes through its regular strategic review process. Ten workshops were organized by the SEU and SEC Subregional Offices in which most of the countries in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and Central Asia participated and which addressed: policy options for wood energy, capacity-building for policy reforms in the forest sector of Eastern Europe, nature-oriented silviculture approaches in the light of the potential impact of climate change, instruments for the harmonization of forest management policies in the Carpathian region, the potential and options for assistance to private forestry and capacity-building on forest management in the Caucasus region, etc. The existing cooperative networks between the countries in the Region within the context of the ECE/FAO integrated programme made a considerable contribution.

14. The Forestry Outlook Study for West and Central Asia (FOWECA) was released in 2006. It addresses the degradation of forests and the provision of environmental services as the primary objective, as well as the declining importance of industrial wood production. The strengthening of national forest programmes, institutional improvements, capacity-building in strategic planning and improvements in the information base are seen as options for sustainable forest management.

15. The Thirty-Third FAO European Forestry Commission addressed the challenges in sustainable forest management in Eastern Europe. Following the restitution of forests from the State to their previous owners in many countries of Central Europe holdings are frequently too small for efficient management. The session emphasized capacity-building on the basis of experiences in other European countries. It also pointed to the need for increased efforts to combat forest fires and for support to forest law enforcement. Fire Management projects, with a strong focus on community based fire management were undertaken in Bulgaria, Croatia and under preparation in Belarus. The 4<sup>th</sup> International Wildland Fire Conference was held in Seville, Spain in May 2007 at which the international partnership "The Fire Management Actions Alliance" was launched with 40 founding members, with the Secretariat at FAO, Rome.

## **E. MAJOR PROGRAMMES 2.H, I, J: FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE**

16. The Fisheries and Aquaculture Department and SEU have supported the establishment of the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Central and Eastern Europe (NACEE), in line with recommendations by the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture. The fourth Session of NACEE Directors was held in Galati, Romania, in September 2007, where cooperation between member institutes was highlighted and opportunities for project development within the Seventh Framework Programme were discussed. FAO published Regional Reviews of Aquaculture Development Trends in both Western Europe and in Central and Eastern Europe in 2006-2007.

17. The Fisheries and Aquaculture Department was involved in a number of projects in the Region, including in Bosnia and Herzegovina (TCP/BIH/3101, "Strengthening capacity on aquaculture health management" and GCP/BIH/003/NOR, "Support to Income Generation through the Establishment of a Fish Hatchery"), the Transcaucasus countries (TCP/INT/3101, "Capacity-building for the recovery and management of the sturgeon fisheries of the Caspian Sea"), Latvia (TCP/LAT/3001 (A) "Improving aquatic animal health and quality and safety of aquatic products"), and Hungary (TCP/HUN/3001, "Upgrading of fishing technology in Lake Balaton").

18. In addition, the Department contributed directly as part of its mandate to provide global public goods in codes of practice, sustainable fisheries management and fisheries information. Some of the more important activities included:

- A Symposium on Hydropower, Flood Control and Water Abstraction and the Implications for Fish and Fisheries at the 24th Session of the European Inland Fisheries Advisory Commission (EIFAC) in Mondsee, Austria, June 2006.
- The "EIFAC Code of Practice for Recreational Fisheries," drafted at a workshop in Bilthoven, Netherlands, in November 2007.
- Recommendations were adopted at the 30th Session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) (Istanbul, Turkey, January 2006): three binding recommendations on fisheries management measures, on fishing efforts and on the protection of sensitive habitats; two recommendations on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing, on establishment of a black list of vessels and on data confidentiality procedure. The GFCM also endorsed three recommendations from the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), including one on the establishment of a programme for transshipment by large-scale long liners.
- Three Resolutions, two related to the GFCM statistical framework (on fishing effort and operational units data collection sets and on Geographical Sub-Areas [GSAs]), and one on the use of the 40 mm size square mesh in the codend of trawls, were adopted at the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) (Rome, Italy, January 2007). The Commission also adopted binding recommendations on fisheries management for the conservation of marine mammals, as well as three recommendations emanating from the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) on bluefin tuna and on transshipment at sea.

## **F. MAJOR PROGRAMME 2.K: SUSTAINABLE NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

19. Under the Central Asian Countries Initiative for Land Management (CACILM), FAO has been identified as a partner for the development of the sustainable land management information system (SLMIS) under the Multi-country Partnership Framework Support Project funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF). Based on methodologies and tools developed under the Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands (LADA) project, FAO will provide technical support and capacity-building to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan,

Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan for integrating the assessment of land degradation at subregional, national and local level into the monitoring of sustainable land management.

20. Under Major Programme 2.K technical assistance projects were completed during the biennium on land management issues. The Bosnia and Herzegovina GCP/BIH/002/ITA project, "Inventory of the Post-War Situation of Land Resources," provided the country with modern tools, methodologies and guidelines for land resource management and participatory land use planning. The project assisted national institutions to develop a comprehensive set of data and digitized information characterizing the natural resource base of the country, and has strengthened the capabilities of local authorities for the evaluation and management of resources and to identify investment opportunities in rural areas. The Uzbekistan TCP/UZB/3001 project, "Enhanced productivity of cotton-wheat systems through the adoption of conservation agriculture practices", established conservation agriculture demonstration areas for cotton-wheat cropping systems and attempted to mainstream conservation agriculture approaches into agricultural extension. The Kosovo TCP/KOS/3101 project, "Establishment of a land resources information system for sustainable land use", initiated the establishment of a system of production and dissemination of land resources information for farmers, decision-makers and land users for the creation of a land resources information system.

21. Governments of seven countries covered by the new SEC Subregional Office benefited from a training workshop on irrigation water management held in Ankara in September 2007. This workshop was an example of the increased cooperation with the Government of Turkey, supported by the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) and other Turkish line agencies. The main themes of the workshop were irrigation water management and reforms of the irrigation sector.

22. Land consolidation/land management issues and their relevance for sustainable rural development in the Region are of importance and direct concern to FAO, the World Bank, the EC and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). Several workshops were organized: (i) Prague Regional Workshop on Land Consolidation and Land Development (under the Czech Republic Trust Fund GCP/INT/790/CEH), May 2006; (ii) Prague Regional Workshop on the European Union (EU) Rural Development Programme 2007-13 and its application to land consolidation (under the Czech Republic Trust Fund GCP/INT/790/CEH), June 2007. The final conference of the INTEREG project "Future Approaches to Land Development (FARLAND)" in November 2007 in Budapest was supported by FAO. The following studies were prepared in 2006/2007: (i) Land Tenure Policy Paper "Opportunities to mainstream land consolidation in rural development programmes of the European Union", and (ii) contribution to the joint FAO/World Bank (WB) publication "The Future of the Agriculture and Rural Sector in the Western Balkans".

23. Direct technical assistance was provided to: (i) Armenia, to support the preparation and implementation of land consolidation and improved land management schemes (TCP/ARM/3004); (ii) Hungary, to support the development of a strategy for territorial organization and sustainable land management in areas with high natural disaster risk (TCP/HUN/3002); (iii) Montenegro and Serbia, to support the preparation of a national land consolidation strategy and a land consolidation pilot project (TCP/YUG/3001); (iv) Lithuania, to support the preparation of an operational land consolidation system (TCP/LIT/3101); and (v) TFYR of Macedonia, TCP facility component on "Support for the Preparation of a Proposal on State Land Management in Rural Areas of TFYR of Macedonia" (TCP/MCD/3101). Under the FAO/World Bank Cooperative Programme, technical inputs and support have been provided to land administration and policy projects in: Azerbaijan (Real Estate Registration Project); Kosovo (Outstanding Property-Related Issues Briefing Paper for Kosovo Future Status Negotiations; Business Environment Technical Assistance Project); Kyrgyzstan (Kyrgyz Land and Real Estate Registration Project); TFYR of Macedonia (Real Estate Cadastre and Registration Project); Moldova (Rural Investment and Services Project 2); Russian Federation (Cadastre Development Project); Serbia (Real Estate Cadastre and Registration Project);

Montenegro (Real Estate Cadastre and Registration Project); Tajikistan (Land Registration and Cadastre System for Sustainable Agriculture Project; Farm Privatization Support Project I), and Turkey (Support to the General Cadastre and Registry Directorate).

### **G. MAJOR PROGRAMME 2.L: TECHNOLOGY, RESEARCH AND EXTENSION**

24. Two projects on improvement of information and communication and knowledge systems for sustainable agriculture were implemented in Lithuania and Ukraine, including the formulation of information and communication strategies for agriculture. Additionally, Lithuanian extension advisors were trained in organic agriculture. Technical support was also provided to capacity-building in new extension strategies and methodologies for the National Agricultural Advisory Service of Bulgaria. Assistance was provided to Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Montenegro and TFYR of Macedonia for the formulation of a regional project on capacity development of national advisory services.

25. The regional project on biosafety capacity-building for Armenia, Georgia and Moldova, was approved (TCP/RER/3102). Under the GCP/INT/790/CEH project "Training in selected areas", two regional workshops on biotechnology management and risk assessment for Eastern Europe and Central Asia were organized with the Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic in Prague, in October 2006 and September 2007. Support was provided to the workshop in Rome, Italy, in October 2007 on the role of biotechnologies for bioenergy production. The presentations are available on the FAO Biotechnology website. Two projects on information and communication and knowledge systems for sustainable agriculture were implemented in Lithuania and Ukraine.

26. A study on biotechnology and biosafety status and needs assessment in Ukraine was published in 2006. The programme provides biotechnology information in Russian to scientists, policy-makers and staff of biosafety regulatory bodies, through the regular publication of FAO-BiotechNews-Ru. From 2007, following the launch of the FAO Biotechnology website in the Russian language, biotechnology information can now be accessed in six languages. The FAO-BioDec database of biotechnology products and techniques in use or in the pipeline in developing countries has been updated for transition countries in the Region. The FAO Glossary on Biotechnology for Food and Agriculture has also been translated into Russian.

27. An expert consultation workshop for agricultural research and extension systems for Western Balkan countries was organized in June 2007; the workshop report proposed five initiatives for improved regional cooperation. A comprehensive Portal on Research and Extension has also been published; it provides a gateway to information on research, technology, extension and linkages for decision-makers, research institutes, extension services and regulatory bodies. The Portal was tested during a workshop held in October 2006 with research scientists from Eastern Europe. The publication entitled: "Modernizing National Agricultural Extension Systems: A Practical Guide for Policy-Makers in Developing Countries", was translated into Arabic, French and Russian.

### **H. MAJOR PROGRAMME 2.M: RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND AGRO-INDUSTRIES**

28. In response to the challenges of the globalization of food trade, increasing concentration and commercialization of farming and food production, the main thrusts of Programme 2.M in the FAO Eastern European and Central Asian Region were competitiveness of agro-industries, enhancing small farmer income, and employment and livelihoods. SEU contributed to the global comparative appraisal of policy and institutional support for agribusiness and agro-industry development, by organizing a workshop on enabling environments for agribusiness and agro-industry development in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, in November 2006 in Budapest. This workshop brought together international experts, government officials, private sector

entrepreneurs and other stakeholders from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Georgia, Hungary, Serbia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan to assess the policies, institutions and support services for an enabling environment for agribusiness and agro-industrial development and to identify lessons and best practices, policies, institutions and support services that have led to increased investments and improved competitive performance of agribusiness and agro-industry. The workshop findings and proceedings contributed to the discussions at the Global Agro-industries Forum held in New Delhi in April 2008. FAO continued its work on dissemination of information on opportunities for farm enterprise diversification, including publication of a Russian version of the proceedings of the workshop on Farm Commercialization and Income Diversification on the Road to EU Accession. These activities contributed to the new programme entity on rural infrastructure development, by providing a regional perspective to FAO work on comparative appraisal of public-private partnerships in rural infrastructure development.

29. FAO continued its technical assistance in the fields of agro-industries and marketing as well as support to the development and strengthening of information and advisory services and capacity-building for improved food supply chain management. This included agricultural production support in Albania, following the product chain approach; capacity-building for sustainable delivery of agribusiness advice to market-oriented farmers (Bulgaria); assistance for the establishment of a farm data and monitoring system (Azerbaijan); strengthening of the agricultural marketing unit of the Ministry of Agriculture (Georgia); and support to rural enterprises development in regional rural development and natural resources management technical assistance projects (Croatia and Hungary).

### **III. CHAPTER 3: KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE, POLICY AND ADVOCACY**

#### **A. MAJOR PROGRAMME 3.A: LEVERAGING RESOURCES AND INVESTMENT**

30. FAO, through its Investment Centre Division in collaboration with technical divisions and field offices, provides investment project formulation support to member countries. In the Region, the Centre plays a key role in helping governments to mobilize investment financing for agricultural and rural development, in partnership with the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID). During 2006-07, the European Union also provided funding to the Region for avian influenza control.

31. During 2006-07, 32 projects prepared for the Region with major Investment Centre input, were approved for financing by partner institutions. Total investments mobilized for these operations amounted to approximately \$890.49 million. Of these, 14 projects benefited Central Asian countries, with investments representing 39 percent of the total investment support mobilized for Europe and Central Asia.

32. Investment collaboration with the World Bank in Europe and Central Asia provided support to rural finance, land administration and management (registration and cadastre), micro and small agribusiness development, export competitiveness and marketing to meet European Union integration requirements, avian influenza preparedness, agricultural policy, water management improvement, agricultural services and management of natural resources. IFAD collaboration assisted in poverty alleviation and improved farmer access to markets.

33. Cooperation between FAO and the EBRD was further strengthened during the biennium. Meetings of the EastAgri network, aimed at coordinating the interventions of international financing institutions and bilateral development agencies investing in

agriculture/agribusiness in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries, were organized by FAO in 2006 and 2007. FAO and EBRD jointly supported the development of Georgia's wine appellations and helped Georgian wine producers to find new export markets. Investment options in the Russian Federation's fisheries sector and in Armenia's fruit processing sector were also explored through in-depth sector reviews, which materialized in concrete investments. EBRD and FAO also looked into ways of expanding rural and agricultural finance in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. In late 2007, EBRD's President and FAO's Director-General met and decided to intensify policy and investment support to the Region's agricultural sector, in view of its vast untapped production potential and the window of opportunities offered by higher agricultural prices. A high-level Conference on this topic was convened in March 2008.

34. In December 2007, the Investment Centre organized a workshop in the Russian Federation on "Sharing Experiences on Agricultural Investment Project Implementation in the CIS", to promote exchange of experiences and best practices among national and international staff working in Project Implementation Units, donor agencies and FAO, on factors for success and constraints in project implementation in the Region. Participants represented ten CIS countries and included high-level experts from the Region and staff from UNDP, the World Bank and IFAD. The findings and recommendations of the workshop will contribute to enhancing the focus and effectiveness of assistance provided to CIS countries by financing institutions and the Centre.

## **B. MAJOR PROGRAMME 3.B: FOOD AND AGRICULTURE POLICY**

35. This major programme primarily covers the work of the Policy Assistance Division's decentralized units. In Europe and Central Asia this includes policy assistance officers in the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia and the Subregional Office for Central and Eastern Europe. The following diagnostic/thematic studies were carried out in 2006-2007: (i) "Opportunities to mainstream land consolidation in rural development programmes of the European Union"; (ii) Chapter on "Addressing Rural Development" in the joint FAO/World Bank publication "The Future of Agriculture and the Rural Sector in the Western Balkans" (forthcoming, 2008); (iii) "Land Reform and Farm Restructuring in Transition Countries: The Experience of Bulgaria, Moldova, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan," World Bank Working Paper No. 104 (World Bank, 2007); (iv) Rethinking Agricultural Reform in Ukraine (Institute of Agricultural Development in Central and Eastern Europe (IAMO), 2007); (v) Rural Transition in Azerbaijan (Nova Scientific, forthcoming 2009); (vi) Overview of the Turkish Dairy Sector within the framework of EU Accession, and (vii) Strategy for Field Programme Development in the Western Balkans. Policy officers also finalized country policy profiles for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

36. The major programme also covers activities of the Agricultural Development Economics Division in the Region. The work of the Division focussed on issues related to poverty analysis, rural development and migration, largely based on data from Albania and Bulgaria. The following analytical papers were produced in 2006-07: (i) "International Migration from Albania: the Role of Family Networks and Previous Experience", *Eastern European Economics* (46)2, 2008; (ii) "Agency, Education and Networks: Gender and International Migration from Albania" ESA Working Paper 08-02, 2008; (iii) "The Vanishing Farm? The Impact of International Migration on Albanian Family Farming", FAO ESA Working Paper, 07-09, and World Bank *Policy Research Working Paper*, No. 4367, 2007; (iv) "Investing Back Home: Return Migration and Business Ownership in Albania", FAO ESA Working Paper, 07-08, and World Bank *Policy Research Working Paper*, No 4366, 2007; (v) "Being Poor, Feeling Poorer; Combining Objective and Subjective Measures of Welfare in Albania", *Journal of Development Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 5, 2006; (vi) "Internal Mobility and International Migration in Albania", *International Migration Review*, Vol. 40, No. 4, 2006; (vii) "Monitoring Poverty without Consumption Data: and Application Using the Albania Panel Survey", *Eastern European*

*Economcs*, Vol. 44, No. 1, 2006; and (viii) "Choosing to Migrate or Migrating to Choose: Migration and Labour Choice in Albania", FAO ESA Working Paper, 06-06, 2006.

37. The following policy advice, programming and field programme development missions, as well as capacity-building were carried out:

- National Medium-Term Programme Framework completed for Tajikistan;
- Organization of Land Consolidation Workshops in 2006 and 2007 funded under the Czech Republic Trust Fund GCP/INT/790/CEH, Prague;
- Organization of the workshop "Rural Development in EU Accession Countries – Lessons Learned from New Member States of the EU - Challenges and opportunities for South East Europe (SEE) countries and Turkey", in April 2007 funded under the Czech Republic Trust Fund GCP/INT/790/CEH, Prague;
- Organization of seminar sessions at the East-West Agricultural Forum 2006 and 2007, Berlin;
- Organization of an agribusiness investment conference in Azerbaijan in May 2006;
- Organization of a consultation meeting for Chief Technical Advisors (CTAs) and personnel of trust funds in the Western Balkans in order to support field programme development in Non-Resident Agency (NRA) countries, in Sarajevo in March 2007;
- Organization of a consultation meeting on field programme development and closer collaboration with EC DG Agri, in Brussels on 7 November 2006;
- Organization of the "FAO Policy Assistance and Resources Mobilization Division (TCA) Technical Seminar: Policy Issues in Europe and the Central Asia Region", Budapest, January 2007;
- Organization of the 20<sup>th</sup> Expert Meeting of the FAO/ECA Working Party on Women and the Family in Rural Development in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture of Slovakia and Nitra Agroinstitut that addressed rural development policies and programmes to generate jobs and incomes with focus on gender issues;
- Field programme development/assessment and formulation missions (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, TFYR of Macedonia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan);
- Stakeholder consultation meetings/workshops were organized in Kosovo within the framework of the Norway-funded project;
- Regional initiatives/policy forums: Meetings of the Standing Working Group for Rural Development in the Balkan region and of the Dinaric Arc Initiative were organized.

38. Direct technical assistance and backstopping was provided to (i) Kosovo, through the project "Support Unit for Rural Sector Rehabilitation in Kosovo" (GCP/KOS/002/NOR); (ii) Ukraine, for the formulation of a medium-term agricultural and rural policy framework (TCP/UKR/3004).

39. Work commenced in Albania on the National Medium-Term Priority Framework as FAO's input to the One UN activities.

### **C. MAJOR PROGRAMME 3.D: AGRICULTURE INFORMATION AND STATISTICS**

40. The main areas of support related to assistance in statistics where FAO has been active were in preparatory assistance for agricultural censuses, data processing and analysis of household surveys, enhancing systems of agricultural statistics and institutional strengthening, food security analysis, and training and capacity-building.

41. Former projects include the TCP project "Preparatory Assistance to the Agricultural Census" implemented in Georgia between 2003 and 2005, which addressed the weaknesses of the national information systems. The development objective was to support the preparations for the

agricultural (including livestock) census and to strengthen national capacities to collect, process, analyse and disseminate reliable and timely agricultural statistics for policy decision-making. A similar project “Support to Agricultural Census and Statistics” was implemented in Kyrgyzstan during 2003-2004.

42. In early 2006, within the EC/FAO Food Security Programme, FAO was requested to evaluate possible technical assistance for the First National Census of Agriculture in Armenia. Activities included review of food and agriculture statistics and census plans, evaluation of the data needs, advice on methodological, operational and procedural issues, identification of existing critical skill gaps, and methodological and technical recommendations.

43. During 2006, a TCP Facility funded a technical evaluation for the First General Census of Agriculture in Moldova. The actual implementation of the census was delayed while external donors were sought. It is anticipated that the census will be conducted with an approximately 20 percent cost share coverage by both the Moldovan Government and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), with the remaining 60 percent covered by other donors.

44. In view of the importance of gender disaggregated data in agricultural and rural development, FAO, within the World Census of Agriculture (WCA) Programme, has since 2005 been cooperating with the Government of the Czech Republic, in training and capacity-building seminars in gender statistics, attended by participants from Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asian countries.

45. Technical assistance for strengthening the national statistical capacity for food consumption and security analysis was provided to Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Tajikistan under the EC-FAO Food Security Information for Action Programme (GCP/INT/952/EC-FAO). Nationals from the statistical organizations and food security institutions were trained to derive food security indicators at national and subnational levels, including the MDG indicator 1.9 on hunger, from available food consumption data collected in household budget surveys. Technical assistance was also provided for the dissemination of food insecurity assessment reports to multisectoral national and international food security stakeholders.

46. Under the ECE-FAO Food Security Information for Action Programme (GCP/INT/952/EC-FAO), assistance was also provided to the Government of Georgia in establishing a system of quarterly agricultural surveys to meet the demand of reliable current agricultural statistics. In Tajikistan national staff were trained in the computation of Food Balance Sheets, and national-level data on food security were collected in collaboration with the World Bank and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) (through the 2007 Tajikistan Living Standard Survey (data to become available in 2008)). In Armenia the programme supported the launch of the Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) Workstation, a means for collecting and disseminating food security information data and early warning messages, and facilitating data handling and data sharing between users and producers of food security information.

#### **D. MAJOR PROGRAMME 3.H: KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

47. Focus has been placed on improving the quality of web-based communication, including technical support and advice to Thematic Knowledge Networks in the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and Central Asian countries. In cooperation with institutions, experts and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), two new active AgroWeb Network based thematic networks have been established on Capacity Development in Nutrition and Animal Welfare. Implementation of recommendations and principles of the e-agriculture initiative in Europe and Central Asia began with the preparation of a workshop for the European System of Cooperative Research Networks in Agriculture (ESCORENA) coordinators. Efforts to strengthen capacities in

agricultural information management and the effective use of information and communication technologies continued through activities related to the Information Management Resource Kit (IMARK) and Access to Global Online Research in Agriculture (AGORA). Capacity-building workshops for AGORA and IMARK took place in Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine.

48. The translation of IMARK modules into Russian was finalized in collaboration with the National Agricultural University, Kiev, Ukraine. Assistance was provided to the Central Scientific Agricultural Library, Moscow, Russian Federation, in the preparation of the Russian language version of the multilingual agricultural thesaurus, AGROVOC.

49. Expert consultations and training on FAO Depository libraries, AGROVOC and the international information system for agricultural sciences and technology (AGRIS) have been organized for librarians and information specialists from Armenia and Belarus at the SEUR Office in Budapest in March 2006.

50. Technical assistance was provided to Ukraine in “Strategy formulation and capacity-building in support of an agricultural information system” (TCP/UKR/3005). The project assisted the Ministry of Agricultural Policy in establishing an effective information system for agricultural development and food security policies through the necessary institutional arrangements and procedures, and in building capacities to improve access to, and the management of, information. A similar project was approved in April 2008 for Armenia (TCP/ARM/3103) while a TCP facility project with an information management related component has been approved for Georgia.

#### **IV. CHAPTER 4: DECENTRALIZATION, UNITED NATIONS COOPERATION AND PROGRAMME DELIVERY**

##### **A. MAJOR PROGRAMME 4.C: FOOD SECURITY, POVERTY REDUCTION AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION PROGRAMMES**

51. The period under review was characterized by further decentralization of operational responsibilities for projects to the FAO Representatives and to the Regional Offices. With the creation of a new Subregional Office for Central Asia (SEC), two new positions for field programme monitoring and support have been created at National Professional Officer level. Subsequently, operational responsibility for national and subregional projects was transferred to the Subregional Offices. This process was finalized at the end of 2007. In 2006 a total of 67 regional and national projects were operated by the Subregional Offices in the Region. In 2007 the total was 71 projects. Project delivery was US\$7.5 million in 2006 and decreased to US\$6.7 million in 2007. Assistance is provided to 25 countries with decreasing delivery to countries of south eastern Europe and increasing delivery to countries in the South Caucasus. Field Programme Delivery for 2008 is estimated at US\$4.5 million. Field programme development activities in 2008 will concentrate *inter alia* on countries of Central Asia as a follow-up to a field programme development conference for the members of the Sub-regional Office for Central Asia (SEC) in Ankara in July 2007 and in order to utilize the trust fund set up by Turkey for field programme development in Central Asia established with the inception of SEC. Further efforts will be made to utilize the Hungarian trust fund established with the transfer of the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia to Budapest. The TCP Facility has been used increasingly to prepare project proposals or to leverage with existing activities of both FAO and other donors. Greece joined the Region as a new donor and project activities in Armenia related to slaughterhouses and pesticide control are expected to begin soon. It is expected that full operational capacity will be achieved in both the Sub-regional Offices by mid-2008.

## V. CONCLUSION

52. Many countries of southeast Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) have high rural poverty rates. Agriculture is still an important sector of the economy employing a high percentage of the labour force. Growth of agriculture and diversification of rural incomes are important issues for the economy. Past regional conferences have recommended that FAO pay particular attention to strengthening the capacity of governments to deliver appropriate public goods services to enable agricultural growth. The focus of FAO technical assistance has included capacity-building in: (1) protection from plant and animal diseases; (2) adoption of legal and technical requirements for European Union accession or integration to enable access to markets; (3) better management of land, water, forests and other natural resources; (4) food safety and quality standards; (5) land reform legislation and policies; (6) good agricultural practices, and (7) providing an enabling environment for agricultural supply chain management. These are areas where FAO should have the requisite policy and technical knowledge to assist governments.

53. In order to advance a more programmatic approach to field programme development, the Independent External Evaluation (IEE) has recommended that national medium-term priority frameworks (NMTPFs) should be formulated as a set of evolving national priorities on which FAO agrees to work with countries. These frameworks are to be developed through dialogue with the government, the international community and non-state actors, and should match the Organization's strengths with country needs. According to the IEE, the NMTPFs should be driven by the FAO Representations on the ground. With few FAO Representations in the Region, outposted policy officers from regional and sub-regional offices are to take the lead.

54. Member countries are invited to express their views regarding the priority assistance FAO should provide in the coming years and as to the necessity to provide a more programmatic approach to assistance for countries in the region.