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Продовольственная и  
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Organización  
de las  
Naciones Unidas  
para la  
Alimentación y la  
Agricultura

# COUNCIL

## Hundred and Forty-sixth Session

Rome, 22-26 April 2013

### International Years Part B: International Year of Pulses

#### Executive Summary

The Governments of Pakistan and Turkey have made a proposal to declare an International Year of Pulses (IYP). The main objective of this initiative would be to raise awareness of the contribution of pulses to food security. Pulses are important food crops and offer significant nutritional and health advantages due to their high protein and essential amino acid content as well as being a source of complex carbohydrates and several vitamins and minerals.

In a draft Conference resolution submitted by Pakistan and Turkey, attention is also drawn to the relatively lower carbon footprint of pulses compared to other crops, connections throughout the food chain to better utilize pulse-based proteins, increase global production, better utilize crop rotation and address the challenges of trade in pulses.

The budgetary implications for FAO are set out in section III of this document.

#### Suggested action by the Council

The Council may wish to:

- Review the proposal by the Governments of Pakistan and Turkey to declare an International Year of Pulses and provide guidance on the proposal as deemed appropriate;
- Take into consideration the FAO Policy on Proclamation and Implementation of International Years (see C 2013/LIM/15) and,
- Make a recommendation to the 38<sup>th</sup> Session of Conference for decision

*Queries on the content of this document may be addressed to:*

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## **I. Background**

1. The Governments of Pakistan and Turkey have proposed the declaration of an International Year of Pulses (IYP) and proposed to the 145<sup>th</sup> FAO Council that an item on the International Year be included in the agenda of the 146<sup>th</sup> FAO Council for further discussion (see letter and draft Conference Resolution of 30 October 2012 addressed to Director-General in Annex).

## **II. Objective**

2. The objective of designating the IYP would be to draw attention to the benefits of pulses, and emphasize that:

- Pulse crops are a critical source of plant-based proteins;
- Pulses are used by humanitarian agencies as an invaluable part of the general food basket;
- The nitrogen-fixing properties of pulses means they have a smaller carbon footprint than many other crops, making them an environmentally sustainable food choice;
- Health organizations around the world recommend eating pulses as part of a healthy diet to address obesity and prevent and manage non-communicable diseases like diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

## **III. Administrative and financial implications**

3. The declaration of the IYP would have budgetary implications for FAO as, in collaboration with partners, it could be requested to take the lead in its development and implementation. Extra-budgetary funding, estimated to range between 2.5 to 3 million USD, would be required over three years starting in late 2014 to develop and implement activities in connection to the IYP. Out of this, 1.5 to 2 million USD are estimated as being necessary for an administrative Secretariat.

4. The Secretariat would be expected to support the development of the initiative through resource mobilization with donors and private sector stakeholders. It would also have the responsibility of coordinating international action and building an alliance of international and national organizations, including international awareness raising initiatives.

5. These estimates do not reflect possible in-kind contribution of FAO.

6. Further matters for consideration include:

- The compliance of the proposal with the FAO Policy on Proclamation and Implementation of International Years (C 2013/LIM/15);
- The availability of extra budgetary funds, from FAO Members, as well as partners in the public and private sectors.

## Annex

Rome, 30 October 2012

Your Excellency,

On behalf of the Government of Pakistan and Government of Turkey, we write to request your support, in accordance with Rule XXV of the FAO Constitution, for inserting an item on designation of 2016 by the United Nations as "International Year of Pulses", in the provisional agenda of the 145<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO Council.

Based on our preliminary contacts, "International Year of Pulses" has wide support in the FAO membership. A draft motion prepared to initiate the process during the 145<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO Council is attached to this letter.

As is known, International Year designation provides an opportunity to raise awareness and to underscore the role of beans, chickpeas, lentils and other pulses in feeding the world. Even more importantly, it can become a galvanizing moment to draw together key actors to further the contributions pulses make to health, nutrition, and sustainability.

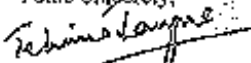
In addition to Governments like ours, also the pulse sector, from growers, to traders, to food processors, want to have a very proactive approach to draw attention to the benefits of pulses. Such benefits include sustainable food production aimed at achieving food security, for instance:

- Pulse crops such as lentils, beans, peas, and chickpeas are a critical source of plant-based proteins for people around the globe.
- The World Food Programme and other food aid initiatives use pulses as an invaluable part of the general food basket.
- The nitrogen-fixing properties of pulses mean pulses have a smaller carbon footprint than many other crops, making them one of the most environmentally sustainable food choices.
- Health organizations around the world recommend eating pulses as part of a healthy diet to address obesity, plus prevent and manage non-communicable diseases like diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

"International Year of Pulses" would create a unique opportunity to encourage better utilization of pulse-based proteins, further global production of pulses, improve crop rotations, and address the challenges of trade of pulses.

We hope we may count upon your support.

Yours Sincerely,

  
Tehmina JANJUA  
Ambassador  
Islamic Republic of Pakistan

  
Hakkı AKIL  
Ambassador  
Republic of Turkey

## Annex

Draft Resolution submitted by the Governments of Pakistan and Turkey

**Draft Resolution .../2013**

*International Year of Pulses*

**THE CONFERENCE,**

**Noting** that pulse crops such as lentils, beans, peas and chickpeas are a critical source of plant-based proteins for people around the globe;

**Recalling** that the World Food Programme and other food aid initiatives use pulses as a critical part of the general food basket;

**Desiring** to focus attention on the role that pulses play as part of sustainable food production aimed towards food security;

**Recognizing** the nitrogen-fixing properties of pulses mean that pulses have a smaller carbon footprint than many other crops, making them one of the environmentally sustainable food choices;

**Recognizing** health organizations around the world recommend eating pulses as part of a healthy diet to address obesity, as well as preventing and managing chronic diseases such as diabetes, coronary conditions and cancer;

**Believing** that such a celebration would create a unique opportunity to encourage connections throughout the food chain that will better utilize pulse-based proteins, further global production of pulses, better utilize crop rotations, and address the challenges of trade of pulses;

**Affirming** the need to heighten public awareness of the nutritional benefits of pulses, and further sustainable agriculture;

**Requests** the Director-General to transmit this Resolution to the Secretary-General of the United Nations with a view to having the General Assembly of the United Nations consider at its next session declaring the Year ... as the International Year of Pulses.

(Adopted on)