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	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 Alimentación y la Agricultura
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## COUNCIL

### Hundred and Forty-seventh Session

Rome, 24 June 2013

### Developments in Fora of Importance for the Mandate of FAO

#### Executive Summary

In keeping with Action no. 2.31 of the Immediate Plan of Action for FAO Renewal, the Council is informed of developments in other *fora* of importance for FAO's mandate. Presentations will be made on the following topics at the 147<sup>th</sup> Session of Council:

- 1) Outcome of the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (Geneva, 28 April – 10 May 2013)
- 2) Voices of the Hungry (London, 8 June 2013)
- 3) Global Oceans Action Summit
- 4) UN System Participation in *Expo Milano 2015* (Milan, 1 May to 31 October 2015)
- 5) 10<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (Istanbul, 8-19 April 2013)
- 6) Fora on Agricultural Innovation

The above topics are presented to the 147<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council for information only.

#### I. Outcome of the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (Geneva, 28 April – 10 May 2013)

1. UNEP and FAO teamed up to promote synergies between the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in the first ever jointly held meetings of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, three legally autonomous multilateral environmental agreements, held in Geneva from 28 April to 10 May 2013. The joint meetings were attended by nearly 2000 participants from 170 countries and adopted 50 separate decisions aimed at strengthening protection against hazardous chemicals and waste. In addition, 80 Ministers participated in a high level segment on 9 and 10 May 2013 dedicated to the theme of strengthening synergies between the conventions at national, regional and global level and acclaimed the "Geneva Statement on the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste".

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2. In their extraordinary sessions (ExCOP-2), the Parties endorsed the establishment of the Secretariat and adopted a programme of work and budget for the individual and joint activities of three conventions for 2014-2015. The 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention (COP-6) agreed by consensus to add the pesticide azinphos-methyl and the industrial chemicals PentaBDE, OctaBDE and PFOS to Annex III of the Convention - the highest number to be added to the Convention's Prior Informed Consent procedure by any Conference of the Parties since the adoption of the Convention in 1998. No consensus could be reached with regard to chrysotile asbestos, while two countries opposed the listing of a severely hazardous paraquat formulation. These two chemicals will be considered at the next Conference of the Parties in 2015.

## **II. Voices of the Hungry**

3. The Government of the United Kingdom, the Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF), and the Government of Brazil co-hosted the high-level meeting "Nutrition for Growth: Beating Hunger through Business and Science", held in London on 8 June 2013, which brought together business leaders, scientists, governments and civil society to affirm the political and financial commitments needed to prevent under-nutrition and enabling people and nations to prosper. The event followed on from the United Kingdom-Brazil Hunger Summit held in London on 12 August 2012, which included a Roundtable to showcase new monitoring tools for improving accountability on national and international efforts to reduce under-nutrition.

4. The FAO Director-General was invited to both Hunger Events to present and discuss the Voices of the Hungry initiative. Through this initiative, starting in 2014, FAO will insert a questionnaire into the Gallup World Poll (GWP) - which is carried out in more than 150 countries annually - to collect information on people's experience with food insecurity. Based on responses to eight questions integrated into a single scale (the Food Insecurity Experience Scale), it is possible to classify cases across three levels of food insecurity severity (mild, moderate and severe) in a valid and comparable manner across cultures. The Voices of the Hungry initiative has a strong potential to create a new standard for measuring food insecurity with a tool that is cross-culturally comparable, that gathers information inexpensively and that provides results with a very short turnaround. This is a considerable advantage over other methods for measuring food security currently in use and greatly facilitates timely actions on the part of governments.

5. The Voices of the Hungry initiative will provide the basis for substantially strengthening FAO's global food security monitoring system in the immediate future. With this initiative FAO will be able to set benchmark levels of food insecurity in all countries of the world in 2015 and establish a standard for tracking progress of global initiatives such as the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the "Zero Hunger Challenge". As part of this initiative, a communication and capacity development strategy is being developed to work with individual countries in the application, analysis and political use of the tool for food security governance and accountability. FAO has been working closely with four countries of the Renewed Partnership to End Hunger in Africa (Angola, Ethiopia, Malawi and Niger) for the linguistic adaptation of the scale to be piloted through the GWP in 2013.

## **III. Global Oceans Action Summit**

6. The Global Oceans Action Summit for Food Security and Blue Growth will be held from 9 to 13 September 2013 in The Hague, the Netherlands. The Summit is co-organized by the Government of the Netherlands and the World Bank, in close collaboration with the Global Partnership for Oceans (GPO), and will allow global leaders, ocean practitioners, scientists, representatives of civil society and the private sector to share experience and demonstrate how combined action in partnerships for healthier and productive oceans is essential for global food security, livelihoods and economic growth. FAO is actively involved in the GPO and the preparations for the Global Oceans Action Summit and is participating in the Interim Working Group, including the development of the GPO Action Plans and GP Framework Document. FAO has been involved in discussions regarding governance arrangements, expected outcomes and identifying priorities for partner engagement in the lead up to the Summit.

#### **IV. UN System Participation in *Expo Milano 2015***

7. *Expo Milano 2015* will take place over a period of six months from 1 May to 31 October 2015 and the Theme of the exhibition is “*Feeding the planet, Energy for life*”. The Secretary-General of the United Nations has accepted the invitation from the Government of Italy for the United Nations system to participate in the Exhibition. Taking into consideration the Theme of *Expo Milano 2015*, he has designated the three Rome-based agencies as lead agencies to coordinate the participation of the United Nations system, under the leadership of the Director-General of FAO. The Secretary-General has also appointed Mr Eduardo Rojas, Assistant Director-General, FAO Forestry Department to serve as Commissioner-General of the United Nations for *Expo Milano 2015*, tasked with coordinating the participation of relevant UN system organizations, working closely with other international partners such as Bioversity International.

8. The Theme of *Expo Milano 2015* is closely related to the mandates and activities of FAO, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), as well as those of many other organizations in the United Nations system. Key issues, including the history of food, food security, sustainable food production, biodiversity, water, healthy diets, food losses and waste, as well as the key roles of smallholders, women and indigenous people, will be addressed in the different thematic areas and clusters within the 1.1 million square meters site. The organizers have proposed an innovative approach where the United Nations system will have a horizontal presence in appropriate sectors of the Exhibition. This will allow FAO, WFP, IFAD and other United Nations agencies to highlight key messages on goals and challenges and to showcase their activities in developing countries in a visible and wide-ranging manner. The establishment of a technologically advanced digital platform by the organizers, through which millions of persons around the globe will have virtual access to the Exhibition, will offer the Rome-based agencies and other United Nations agencies a unique opportunity to strengthen global public awareness beyond reaching the projected 20 million visitors expected to come to Milan during the six-month duration of the Exhibition.

#### **V. 10<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (Istanbul, 8-19 April 2013)**

9. The 10<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests took place in Istanbul, Turkey, from 8 to 19 April 2013, to discuss key agenda items such as the role of forests in economic development and means of implementation for sustainable forest management. The Forum also considered its standing agenda items, including progress in implementing the non-legally binding agreement on forests, regional and sub-regional inputs, enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination, including further guidance to the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), and adopted a resolution in this regard. A second resolution was adopted on Emerging Issues, Means of Implementation and the UNFF Trust Fund.

10. Of particular relevance to the work of FAO are the invitations addressed to the CPF (chaired by FAO) and its members, notably to:

- continue and expand efforts to streamline and harmonize guidelines for national forest-related reporting;
- foster synergies among the forest-related activities and programmes of its member organizations and, in particular the Rio Conventions;
- enhance the role of forests and sustainable forest management in sustainable development;
- assist countries in assessing the non-market values of forest products, goods and services and in the recognition and valuation of the wide range of forest values;
- strengthen their efforts to collect and facilitate access to data on forest financial flows;
- promote the message of the importance of forests in the implementation of the outcomes of Rio+20 and the UN development agenda beyond 2015.

11. In particular, FAO was invited to:
  - strengthen collaboration for the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests;
  - develop further the work on collecting data about national public funding for sustainable forest management as part of the Forest Resource Assessments;
  - facilitate, in collaboration with the Forum secretariat, other CPF members, regional and subregional organizations, and major groups the celebration the International Day of Forests.
12. The Forum also agreed on the process of reviewing the international arrangement on forests in 2015 and considering options for the future and the CPF and its members were invited to provide input in this regard.

## **VI. Fora on Agricultural Innovation**

13. FAO promotes agricultural innovation through coalitions with the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR), the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) and other international partners, including the UN Roundtable on Communication for Development.
14. In February 2013, FAO signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the CGIAR Consortium Office to improve strategic collaboration for achieving better impact of international agricultural research for development and both organizations are currently developing priorities for this strategic collaboration. The Secretariats of GFAR, the CGIAR Independent Science and Partnership Council (ISPC) and the CGIAR Independent Evaluation Arrangement (IEA) are all hosted by FAO, and FAO contributes to the organization of the Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD), as well as to the governance of GFAR and GFRAS. Furthermore, FAO and GFRAS collaborate to provide advocacy and leadership on pluralistic, demand-led advisory services within the global development agenda and facilitate national, regional and thematic extension networks. FAO also contributes to the GFRAS Annual Meetings and working groups on extension evaluation, gender, capacity development and others.
15. FAO facilitates the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP), a G20 initiative which is dedicated to capacity development in agricultural innovation in the tropics, with 37 international, regional and national partner organizations as members dedicated to capacity development. Within the TAP, FAO has been working closely with the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) to assess the needs for capacity development in agricultural innovation systems of selected countries in Africa, Asia and Central America respectively. Recommendations from the needs assessments will be discussed and used for development of the TAP action plan during a partner meeting in September 2013.
16. Since its 17<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties in 2011, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has debated on agriculture and climate change as a critical policy issue, as well as the ongoing dialogue on the need for action, adaptation and mitigation. In this context, FAO supports countries in their efforts to integrate climate change concerns in food security policies and programmes and to increase resilience of vulnerable groups and food systems. FAO also provides technical advice and shares knowledge and experience, especially on aspects related to adaptation and food security as well as data on green house gas emissions from the agricultural sectors. The recommendations related to climate change and food security of the 39<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) have been submitted to the UNFCCC and FAO will continue to work with Members to follow up on these recommendations.
17. Another critical issue under UNFCCC is reducing emissions form deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD+). The subsidiary bodies of UNFCCC have recently debated on ways to improve coordination in the implementation as well as financing of the REDD+ activities. FAO, including through the UN-REDD Programme, has increased support to countries in particular with regard to the measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) of carbon emissions, national forest monitoring, governance, tenure and legal preparedness.