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# COUNCIL

## Hundred and Fiftieth Session

Rome, 1-5 December 2014

### INFORMATION NOTE

## Overview of the Structure of the FAO Governing Bodies and their Reporting Lines

1. The Joint Meeting of the 116<sup>th</sup> Session of the Programme Committee and 156<sup>th</sup> Session of the Finance Committee (5 November 2014) requested the Secretariat to provide a brief outline of the overall Governing Body architecture of FAO<sup>1</sup>.
2. This document offers an overview of the structure of the FAO Governing Bodies and their reporting lines. The sequence of meetings over the biennium under the reformed programming, budgeting and results-based monitoring systems given in *Annex A* shows the planning, implementation monitoring and evaluation stages in the governance process.

### I. Definition of Governing Bodies<sup>2</sup>

3. The Governing Bodies of FAO are the bodies which directly, or indirectly through their parent bodies, contribute within their respective mandates, to
  - (a) the definition of the overall policies and regulatory frameworks of the Organization;
  - (b) the establishment of the Strategic Framework, the Medium-Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget and
  - (c) exercise, or contribute to the oversight of the administration of the Organization.
4. The Governing Bodies comprise the Conference, the Council, the Programme Committee, the Finance Committee, the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters, the Technical Committees referred to in Article V, paragraph 6 (b) of the Constitution and the Regional Conferences (i.e. for Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Near East).

<sup>1</sup> Document CL 150/6, paragraph 6.

<sup>2</sup> Basic Texts, Volume II, Section B.



## **II. The Conference and Council in the Governance Structure of FAO**

5. The Conference, which normally meets in regular session in June of the second year of the biennium, is the supreme Governing Body of the Organization in which each Member is represented. The Conference focuses on global governance, policy issues and international frameworks, as well as approving the budget of the Organization and electing the Director-General, the Independent Chairperson of the Council and Council Members. The Conference also makes decisions on applications for membership in the Organization.

6. The 49-member Council is the executive arm of the Conference for oversight of programme and budgetary matters, and normally convenes five times between sessions of the Conference. The Council is presided by the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC), who is elected for a two year term of office by the Conference. Past practice has been for the ICC to stand for two terms of office.

### ***Subsidiary Organs***

7. In the exercise of this pivotal role in the overall governance architecture of the Organization, the Council is able to draw on the advice of three subsidiary organs of restricted regionally-balanced membership:

- the Programme Committee (PC), comprising 12 Members and a Chairperson;
- the Finance Committee (FC) comprising 12 Members and a Chairperson; and
- the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM) comprising 7 Members and a Chairperson.

8. Each biennium, the "one day" post-Conference session of Council appoints the Chairpersons and Members of these subsidiary organs. The PC, FC and CCLM provide essential input, paving the way for Council and – where relevant – Conference decisions. Each committee sets its own agenda and approves its MYPOW, which is also presented to the Council.

### ***Links to Technical Committees***

9. The Council is also assisted in its work by open Technical Committees reporting to the Council on programme and budget matters within their respective mandates (as well as to the Conference on global governance, policy and regulatory matters):

- the Committee on Agriculture (COAG),
- the Committee on Fisheries (COFI),
- the Committee on Forestry (COFO), and
- the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP).

10. The Council also considers the reports of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) with respect to programme and budget matters (Rule XXXIII.16 GRO refers).

### ***Links to Regional Conferences***

11. The Regional Conferences of the Organization and the Informal Regional Conference for North America report to the Council, through the PC and FC, on programme and budget matters within their respective mandates (and to the Conference on global governance, policy and regulatory matters):

- Africa (ARC)
- Asia and Pacific (APRC)
- Europe (ERC)
- Latin America and Caribbean (LARC)
- Near East (NERC)

### III. Governing and Statutory Bodies Web site

12. The Governing and Statutory Bodies Web site offers a structured compilation of data on all the Governing Bodies (See section I. *Definition of Governing Bodies* above) and the Statutory Bodies established by the Organization.

13. The generic expression "statutory bodies" is used to designate all bodies of the Organization other than those currently defined as "governing bodies". Statutory bodies include a large number of committees, commissions and treaties established under Article VI or Article XIV of the Constitution, dealing for the most part with technical and scientific matters.

14. Article VI bodies are normally fully integrated within FAO and are established by a decision of the Conference, the Council, or the Director-General under the authority of the Conference or Council. They are normally entrusted with the development of recommendations and advice for the Governing Bodies and the individual Member States.

15. Article XIV bodies, on the other hand, have some level of autonomy from FAO and are established through the negotiation of a new international agreement which, following adoption by the Conference or the Council, enters into force only when a prescribed number of Members have deposited instruments of ratification with the Depositary. Subject to the provisions of the agreement, an Article XIV body may create legally binding obligations for those Members that adhere to it.

### III. Reporting lines of Governing Bodies



[source: Home page of the Governing and Statutory Bodies Web site  
<http://www.fao.org/unfao/govbodies/gsbhome> ]

## Annex A

**Schedule for Governing Body Input and Oversight Under  
The Reformed Programming, Budgeting and Results Based Monitoring Systems**

Process		YEAR 1				YEAR 2			
		First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
PLANNING	Review Implementation Performance Strategic Framework (Alternate biennia)	RC	PC/FC CL	TC	PC/FC CL	EB	PC/FC CL	CONF	PC/FC CL
	MTP-PWB (Next biennium)	Input on Priorities				Review/Approval			
	Implementation Review and Adjustment (Current Biennium)	Input on Priorities				Review/Approval			
IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING	Results (Previous Biennium)								
	Impact								
Legend: RC: Regional Conference		TC: Technical Committees of Council MTP Medium-Term Plan		PC: Programme Committee PWB Programme of Work and Budget		FC: Finance Committee EB: Extra-Budgetary		CL: Council	CONF: Conference