



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

**FAO STRATEGY  
ON MAINSTREAMING  
BIODIVERSITY ACROSS  
AGRICULTURAL  
SECTORS**



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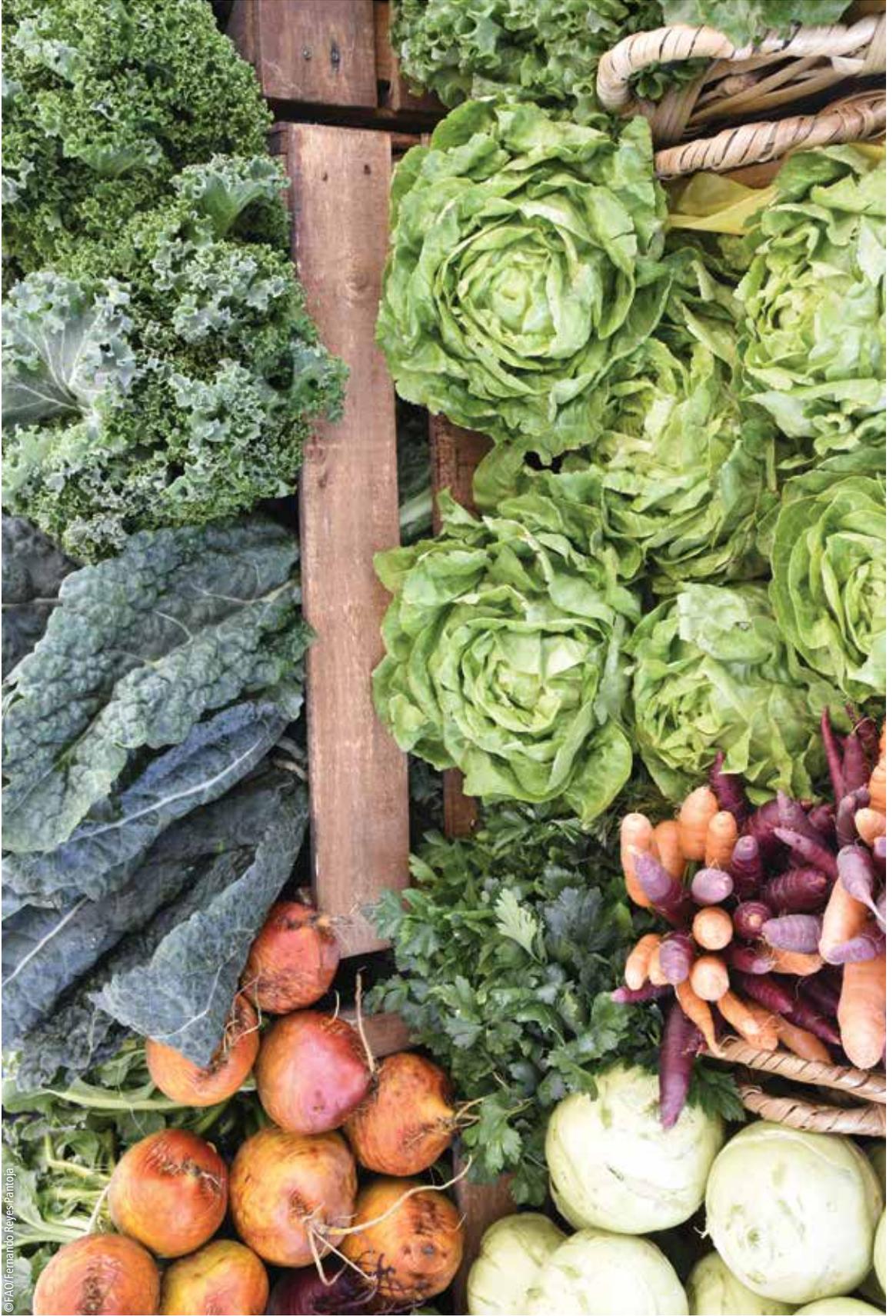
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10. The expected result of the application of the Strategy would be to reduce the negative impacts of agricultural practices on biodiversity, to promote sustainable agricultural practices and to conserve, enhance, preserve and restore biodiversity as a whole.

## GOALS

11. Cognizant of the aim of this Strategy and mindful of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), FAO pursues four overarching goals.

### **Goal 1: Promote sustainable use and management of biodiversity with special focus on landscape and ecosystem approaches in agricultural sectors**

12. Agricultural production systems should try to limit the negative impacts on biodiversity. Food and agricultural production, in particular, depends on a wide range of ecosystem services derived from the biodiversity present in landscapes/seascapes and ecosystems surrounding production systems.

### **Goal 2: Conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity and ensure the continued provision of ecosystem services**

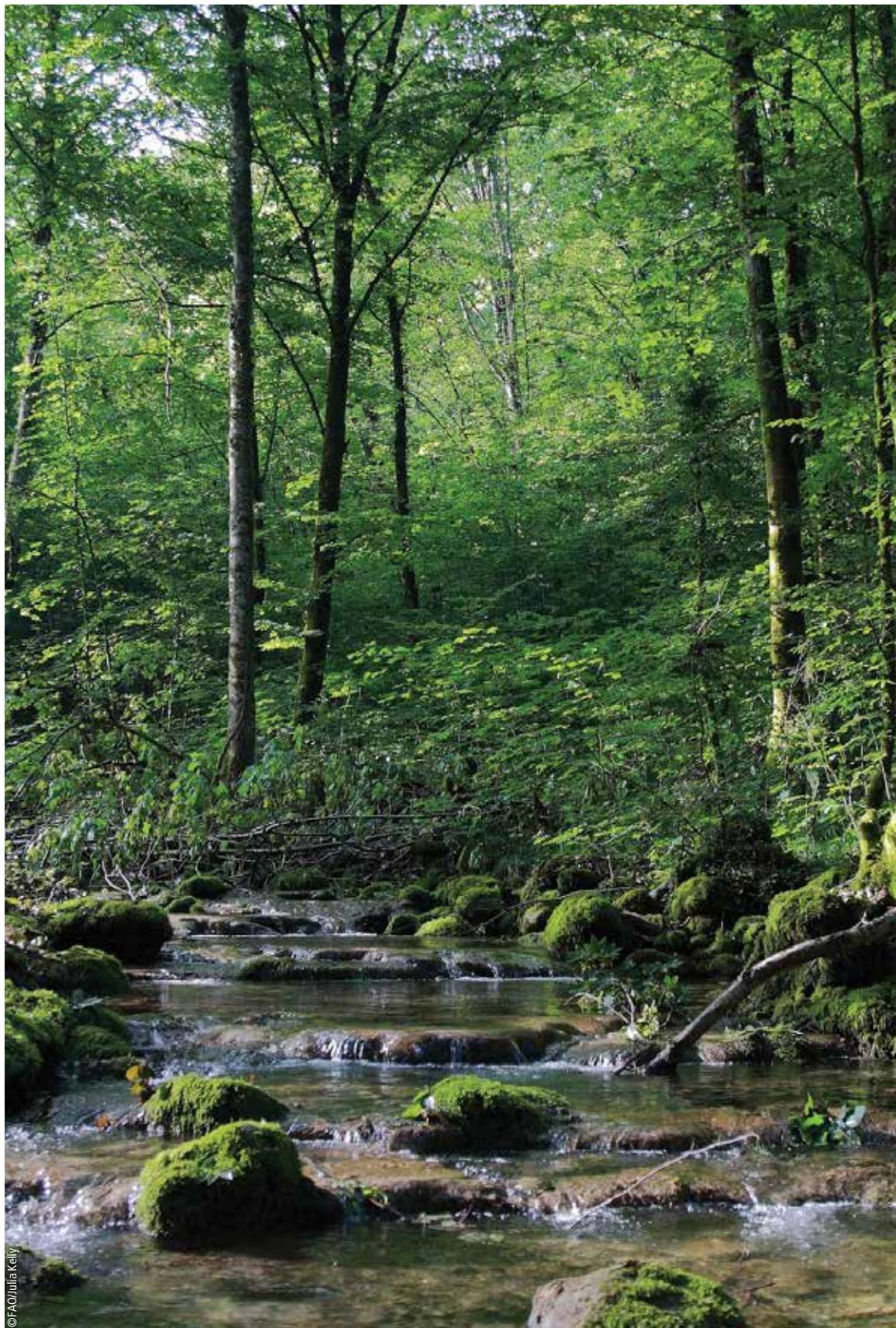
13. Biodiversity conservation is a critical means to ensure future productive use and the resilience of production systems. Biodiversity needs to be restored where ecosystems have lost their functionality and ability to provide services due to unsustainable practices. The continued provision of ecosystem services will require the agricultural sectors to curb activities affecting biodiversity.

### **Goal 3: Promote sustainable agriculture and food systems that integrate the conservation, recognition and promotion of biodiversity throughout value chains**

14. A food and agricultural system-wide perspective allows the identification of leverage points (including policies, incentives and market systems) throughout the value chains for promoting markets that support biodiversity.

### **Goal 4: Safeguard the livelihoods of small-scale producers and indigenous peoples and local communities as custodians of biodiversity, and emphasize the role of all relevant stakeholders as custodians of biodiversity**

15. The livelihoods of poor people depend particularly on products and services provided by biodiversity. Indigenous peoples and local communities as well as small-scale producers, especially women and youth, are important custodians of biodiversity. The contribution of biodiversity to their food security, nutrition and health, resilient livelihoods and poverty alleviation is supported by an enabling framework, including resources tenure security and the application and development of indigenous and local knowledge.



## I. OPERATING PRINCIPLES

FAO implements the Strategy based on the principles of effective governance, partnerships, a knowledge-based approach, inclusiveness, and gender equality and women's empowerment.

### Effective governance

Members, through the FAO's Governing and Statutory Bodies, play a vital role in providing impetus and guidance to the implementation of the Strategy and reflecting biodiversity mainstreaming, as appropriate, in the policies, programmes and activities of FAO.

In implementing the Strategy, FAO takes into full account national policies, regulations and priorities and the national and international obligations of Members including those relevant to trade issues, having due regard to voluntary commitments under applicable regional and international instruments.

The implementation of the Strategy is a shared responsibility of departments and work streams in FAO. FAO strengthens collaboration between existing bodies and initiatives while respecting existing mandates, and facilitates information exchange and collaboration between FAO units while avoiding duplication.

### Partnerships

In the implementation of the Strategy, FAO Governing Bodies, Statutory Bodies, such as the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and Secretariat work in partnership with Members, relevant international organizations and instruments, such as the CBD, and the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and relevant national, regional and international research institutes, such as Bioversity International, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and the private sector.

### Knowledge-based approach

In the implementation of the Strategy, FAO relies on scientific evidence and takes into account local and indigenous knowledge.

### Inclusiveness

In the implementation and monitoring of the Strategy, FAO pays attention to the differentiated views, roles and responsibilities of relevant stakeholders and partners.

Stakeholders include governments, producers, consumers, public research and extension institutions, intergovernmental organizations, including relevant financial mechanisms, non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

### Gender equality and women's empowerment

In most societies, women and men producers have differentiated knowledge and roles with respect to biodiversity. FAO strives to ensure the effective participation of women in its efforts to mainstream biodiversity across the agricultural sectors.

## II. OUTCOMES

Achieving the Strategy's aim and goals requires action that will focus on the following Outcomes which reflect FAO's core functions:

### **Outcome 1: Support provided to Members, at their request, to enhance their capacity to mainstream biodiversity**

FAO assistance is provided to enhance capacities of Members to develop and implement evidence-based policies, programmes and activities for biodiversity mainstreaming across the agricultural sectors and to monitor and evaluate their impact.

### **Outcome 2: Biodiversity mainstreamed across FAO's policies, programmes and activities**

A biodiversity perspective is integrated into FAO policies, programmes and activities, and biodiversity is regularly considered by relevant Governing and Statutory Bodies.

### **Outcome 3: Role of biodiversity and its ecosystem services for food security and nutrition globally recognized**

The important role of biodiversity and its ecosystem services for food security and nutrition, and the agricultural sectors, is fully reflected in relevant international agreements and processes, particularly those related to the CBD.

### **Outcome 4: Coordination and delivery of FAO's work on biodiversity strengthened**

Coordination and delivery of FAO's work relevant to biodiversity are strengthened, including through enhanced technical capacity of and better coordination between FAO departments, regional and country offices.

### III. ACTIVITIES

Activities to achieve the Outcomes may include:

- 1 Support provided to Members, at their request, to enhance their capacity to mainstream biodiversity** (Outcome 1)
  - 1.1 Raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem services to enhance resource-use efficiency and resilience, including through assisting FAO Members in convening national dialogues on biodiversity mainstreaming across agricultural sectors with the participation of related sectors, such as environment, health, and finance, and support Members to develop relevant policies and mechanisms.
  - 1.2 Provide information on agricultural production practices that conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and favour the provision of ecosystem services, for example agroforestry, organic farming, agroecology, sustainable intensification and integrated pest management.
  - 1.3 Assist Members in building their capacity to conduct participatory assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services, including impact assessments, with relevant stakeholders and partners, contributing to country-driven assessments such as those carried out by the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the CBD, or to those of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.
  - 1.4 Continue to facilitate, through relevant FAO programmes and bodies, Members' reviews of the impact of relevant national priorities and policies on biodiversity.
  - 1.5 Continue to assist FAO Members in fostering their capacity to collect, analyse and provide data regarding the status of their biodiversity, including as required under relevant international instruments.
  - 1.6 Assist Members in the coherent mainstreaming of biodiversity into relevant policies, strategies and practices, including through the development of enabling frameworks.
  - 1.7 Assist Members in integrating a biodiversity perspective, including related gender strategies, in relevant planning instruments, including FAO Country Programming Frameworks and regional initiatives, national plans for agricultural sectors, and national plans for food security and nutrition.
  - 1.8 Support Members in mobilizing resources for biodiversity mainstreaming and investments in sustainable agriculture approaches that better contribute to biodiversity.

- 1.9 Support Members in implementing measures at landscape and seascape level to both promote sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity, taking into account both research findings and indigenous and local knowledge. Such measures may include the reduction of the use of external inputs, avoidance of unsustainable water abstraction, avoidance of fishing beyond biologically sustainable levels, halting the loss of soil biodiversity and combatting deforestation and land degradation.
- 1.10 Provide advice on options to internalize the positive and negative economic, environmental and social impacts (externalities) of different agriculture and food systems.
- 1.11 Assist Members in seizing the opportunities for creating synergies and in overcoming trade-offs they may face in pursuing multiple SDGs.
- 1.12 Assist Members in sharing and disseminating best practices and experiences learned in mainstreaming biodiversity across productive systems and related policies, plans and programmes.
- 1.13 Assist Members in designing and implementing policies and instruments for the sharing of benefits arising from the use of biodiversity for food and agriculture as a means to promote conservation and sustainable use of those resources.

## **2 Mainstreaming biodiversity across FAO's programmes, policies and activities** (Outcome 2)

- 2.1 Include biodiversity mainstreaming as a regular item on the agenda of relevant FAO Governing and Statutory Bodies and other regional bodies to ensure regular review of their work in the light of the Strategy.
- 2.2 Strengthen dialogue and collaboration on biodiversity across all agricultural sectors with other relevant sectors, including the environment, health, economic, educational and finance sectors.
- 2.3 Continue to align relevant FAO programmes, policies and activities and their implementation with the SDGs, including the SDGs related to biodiversity.
- 2.4 Strengthen the evidence base on the quantitative and qualitative interactions between biodiversity, the agricultural sectors and related value chains, gender, climate change, and food security and nutrition, building on scientific, indigenous and local knowledge.
- 2.5 Identify and address data gaps and develop, where applicable, gender disaggregated data of relevance to biodiversity mainstreaming.

- 2.6 Facilitate collaboration among relevant bodies of FAO with a view to exchange experiences and best practices with biodiversity mainstreaming across agricultural sectors.
- 2.7 Report regularly to relevant FAO Governing and Statutory Bodies on biodiversity developments in other fora.

**3 Advocate the recognition of the role of biodiversity for food security and nutrition** (Outcome 3)

- 3.1 Raise awareness and provide technical expertise at global, regional and national levels, including in the development and implementation of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, about the role of biodiversity for food security and nutrition, the contribution of the agricultural sectors to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and sustainable livelihoods, and the risk of further loss of biodiversity.
- 3.2 Raise awareness of stakeholders along the value chain of the positive and negative environmental and social impacts (externalities) of the different agriculture and food systems.
- 3.3 Bring the Strategy to the attention of the Parties to the CBD as an important contribution to the development and implementation of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.
- 3.4 Strengthen collaboration and partnerships between FAO and international instruments and organizations and initiatives relevant to biodiversity, including the CBD.
- 3.5 Review, in the follow-up to the adoption of the Strategy and the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, memoranda of understanding or related work plans with relevant partners, with a view to identify areas of mutual interest and for possible future collaboration.
- 3.6 Foster the integration of biodiversity in the implementation of global processes and UN Decades<sup>6</sup> related to food security and nutrition.

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6 UN Decade of Action on Nutrition, UN Decade of Family Farming, UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Use, UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, and the International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development.

#### **4 Strengthen coordination and delivery of FAO's work on biodiversity**

(Outcome 4)

- 4.1 Strengthen FAO's institutional capacity across departments and offices to address biodiversity by facilitating knowledge management and cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary collaboration on biodiversity mainstreaming and developing an action plan for the implementation of the Strategy.
- 4.2 Review the project cycle processes, and environmental and social safeguards with a view to mainstreaming biodiversity, in consultation with Members and stakeholders.
- 4.3 Consider the establishment of biodiversity as a cross-cutting theme like climate change, gender, governance and nutrition.
- 4.4 Appoint biodiversity focal points in Regional Offices and technical divisions and facilitate their collaboration through a technical network and an interdepartmental working group.
- 4.5 Provide learning opportunities on biodiversity mainstreaming for staff based on identified needs.

## **IV. DEVELOPMENT OF AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY**

FAO will develop an action plan, including a timetable, to operationalize the Strategy, for consideration by the FAO Technical Committees and approval by the Council. The action plan will address mainstreaming biodiversity both between and within the agricultural sectors in a coherent and coordinated manner. FAO will engage all relevant departments to develop and implement the action plan, which will include cross-sectoral and sectoral components. In its endeavour to facilitate the mainstreaming of biodiversity across the agricultural sectors, FAO will continue to strengthen dialogue and collaboration with relevant sectors, including the environment, health, economic, educational and financial sectors.

The action plan will specify actions to be taken to implement the activities foreseen in the Strategy. It will take into account ongoing work by FAO and its partners with a view to increase synergies and avoid duplication of work. In the development and implementation of the action plan, FAO will further ensure complementarity with other strategies and policies, including the FAO Strategy on Climate Change, the Strategy and Vision for FAO's Work in Nutrition, the FAO Policy on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples and the FAO Policy on Gender Equality.

## **V. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The implementation of the Strategy will be monitored and reported to the relevant FAO Governing and Statutory Bodies. Progress will be reported regularly.

The Strategy will be updated periodically to reflect evaluation outcomes and in response to new global agreements, including those arising from the CBD and the Commission. A first update, including the implementation plan, will be presented to the Conference in 2021.





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