27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture
Written Correspondence Procedure – inputs from Members (English versions)
Item 2.12 Terms of Reference of the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture

Member name	Comments
Dominican Republic (Tue 22/09/2020 18:52)	• The Dominican Republic welcomes the terms of reference of the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture. • Digitalization represents significant opportunities to transform agriculture and food systems, enabling farmers in rural areas to find digital solutions to improve food production processes and marketing channels, and to facilitate the acquisition of new knowledge. Digitalization can also help to reduce the digital gap between producers in addition to attracting and retaining young people in the agrifood sector while creating employment and new opportunities in rural areas. • We appreciate that the mission and objectives are inclusive and multilateral, providing synergy and preventing duplication with established work programmes in other international bodies that have comparative advantages in the digital world. • We welcome the mechanism proposed to incorporate an Inter-governmental Representative's Group based on a geographical balance, so that each Member Nation can promote priorities based on their own regional circumstances. • We would like to receive more information on the advisory Committee, in particular the selection process of the organizations that would form part of it and the expected duration of participation. • We note that the Platform will be funded by extrabudgetary contributions and we await presentation of the funding plan.
Australia (Wed 23/09/2020 17:07)	Australia notes that the paper on the Terms of Reference of the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture (the Platform) is presented as an information note and does not provide suggested actions by the Committee; however, as flagged in Council, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Governance arrangements of the Platform as outlined the Terms of Reference. In reviewing the paper we consider the Advisory Committee of the Platform to be the key element in bringing together global best practice. We would urge FAO to further consider how the Platform can maximise output while minimising input and as such would appreciate more detailed information on the expected commitment and level of engagement required for the Inter-Governmental Group. We would be interested to see the development of a solid monitoring and evaluation framework of the Platform, with periodic reporting to the FAO Council to ensure effective functioning and accountability.
Peru (Thu 24/09/2020 10:03)	1. IT tools developed for livestock in Peru a) Support System for Decisions of the Department of Livestock of the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation of Peru SODEGA is an integrated and responsive web system that is managed by the Department of Livestock of the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation of Peru, which is designed to make decisions on relevant issues based on information of all the activities relating to the National Development Plan for Livestock 2017-2027. Depending on the hierarchy, SODEGA is used to register, approve, report and analyse stakeholder data in accordance with the progress of activities. The reported information will be available to public users via the Peruvian Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation's geoportal. Public users are understood to be natural and legal persons who access the cited portal. b) Tools created as part of New Zealand's project in support of the Peruvian Dairy Sector There is currently a virtual training tool that is used via the Ministry of Agriculture's CENDOC virtual library, which is used for capacity building aimed at technicians and specialists from the Ministry of Agriculture, their bids and projects. This tool will incorporate technical chats on the quality of raw milk and milk products, in particular cheese, as well as standardized procedures for making fresh cheese. 2. Approach to the development of IT tools for livestock

	As a first step in the development of IT tools for livestock use, it is necessary to analyse current national and sectoral policies on ICT usage by the Government of Peru, especially the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation. This analysis is required in order to reach livestock producers and guarantee that their service requirements are satisfied. It is also necessary to identify all public digital platforms on livestock and carry out diagnostics of the current situation of technology infrastructures. There also needs to be further analysis on the type of information generated from each platform, and how it contributes to performance indicators that support the proposed objectives on agricultural policies. Improvements also need to be carried out on the architecture of IT systems, which will help identify the applications (systems) to be implemented or improved, to support the main processes and services of the livestock sector in an integrated manner. Short and long-term initiatives must be established to develop digital innovations in the agricultural sector. Once a template for the e-goverance of the livestock sector (Gobierno Electrónico para el sector ganadero) has been designed, it is essential to set up a pilot scheme using ICT to develop a platform for rural extension services, focused on the supply of simplified information via cyber-extension supported by user-friendly texts or audiovisual illustrations in local languages that highlight the technology of animal husbandry to develop producer capacities. Capacity building via the design of ICT for rural development is considered to be fundamental, with particular focus on officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and the regions. ICT technologies need to include digital technologies, services and architecture, as well as internal and external interoperability and digital security, thereby helping to improve farming and livestock services. .
Peru (Thu 24/09/2020 10:03)	AIDE-MEMOIRE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLATFORM FOR DIGITAL FOOD AND AGRICULTURE The International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture ☐ Will provide a voluntary and multi-stakeholder mechanism to enhance awareness, promote coordination, bridge the gap between multilateral fora for the digital economy and those for food and agriculture and provide policy recommendations to governments. ☐ Will be a flexible, light and consensual coordination mechanism supported by FAO while complying with its regulations, rules and procedures. ☐ Specifies an operating mechanism that will be composed of: 1. the Inter-governmental Representatives Group, composed of Members; 2. the Advisory Committee formed by technical experts from International Organizations and other stakeholders; 3. the Online Multi-stakeholder Forum to ensure that everyone can participate in the discussions; and 4. a Coordination Unit. The International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture shall be funded by extra-budgetary contributions ☐ The objectives of the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture are as follows: a. promote discussion among stakeholders on impacts of digital technologies on food and agriculture and facilitate the exchange of knowledge on policy frameworks and best practices that promote digitalization; b. undertake analysis and provide scientific evidence on the benefits and potential risks of digital technologies on food and agriculture in accordance with national conditions and needs to support multi-stakeholder dialogue and consensus; c. create and strengthen linkages between international and multilateral fora mandated for the digital economy and those for food and agriculture to improve coordination and synergies without duplicating or prejudging efforts and work, and enhance awareness on impacts of digital technologies that are specific to agriculture; and

	d. support policymakers to formulate policies by developing recommendations, best practices and voluntary guidelines that can address the technical, economic, social, and ethical challenges food and agriculture is facing in the context of digital technologies. ☐ The International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture shall be funded by extrabudgetary contributions Comments ☐ An assessment should be made on whether this Platform is duplicating any other areas looking into policy recommendations, voluntary guidelines etc. ☐ In addition, and in order to justify the creation of this Platform, the proposal should be accompanied by definitions on terms such as "digitalization" "digital economy", "digitalization of the food and agriculture sectors". ☐ There should be a feasibility assessment on the "Multi-stakeholder Forum", given that the functions of the Advisory Committee are to "support inclusive dialogue through the organization of online discussions with all stakeholders". ☐ More information is needed on the financial implications and the extra-budgetary contributions
Argentina (Wed 23/09/2020 23:05)	General comments: 1. Argentina appreciates that FAO maintains issues relating to innovation and digital tools at the centre of its programme of work, and accordingly supports the initiative to create the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture. 2. Conscious of the role played by digitalization in agriculture and food systems, Argentina considers it important to have a mechanism to, among other things, debate the effects of digitalization and exchange information in order to enable Members to develop new technologies and thus to encourage agricultural production, fight malnutrition and promote food security. 3. For this reason, adopting innovative perspectives and approaches is regarded as important for strengthening food production and distribution systems, particularly in the light of the crisis caused by COVID-19 and to avoid adverse consequences of the pandemic on food security and nutrition. These tools, including digital tools, will help us find solutions and alternatives to help us resolve this situation, supporting sustainable and inclusive development and growth, and offering great opportunities for the food and agricultural sector. 4. It is similarly important to balance the training divide that exists between small-scale producers and large companies so that the majority of producers are on equal terms when it comes to benefiting from these digitalized tools, focusing on enabling access for producers to the new technologies, developing training programmes for their use and improving connectivity. In this respect, Argentina would appreciate more details about the mechanism or mechanisms provided to carry forward this action. Specific comments on document COAG/2020/22: 5. Point IV –Objectives–, section 7.b: states that the Platform "will provide scientific evidence on the benefits and potential risks of digital technologies on food and agriculture". 6. In this point, it would be very useful to know what will be the basis for producing scientific evidence and proof concerning the relation between technology and its potential benefits or harms. In other words, will the inputs for evaluating impacts be provided by States on a voluntary basis? Are there plans to produce an FAO publication to address this subject? And if the answer to the second question is affirmative, how can States act to evaluate the conclusions reached by the publication? 7. Argentina would appreciate greater clarity on how this scientific evidence will be generated and what its scope will be. 8. Point IV –Objectives–, section 7.d: states that the Platform will develop "recommendations, best practices and voluntary guidelines". 9. First, we consider it appropriate to replace the term "best practices" with "good practices", because the second term suggests that working methods can be useful depending on the context, capacities and priorities of each country, whereas the reference to "best practices" prejudges the use of alternative methodologies to achieve the same results.

	10. At the same time, it is requested that the reference to "ethical challenges" be removed as their scope and impact are unknown, being a reference that leads to confusion and does not provide any specific added value to the objective of the section. 11. With regard to the future development of recommendations, good practices and voluntary guidelines, Argentina considers that although these products could have inputs from the Platform, they should be developed within the scope of the Governing Bodies of the Organization –Technical Committees and Programme Committee - and through a transparent, inclusive formal consultation process, involving the Members. 12. These documents should similarly be produced according to strict parameters of scientific evidence, taking into account the component parts of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and seeking to balance the content and scope of any documents to avoid the generation of conceptual approaches which may result in obstacles to the international food trade. 13. Point V –Operating mechanisms–, section 8.b.iii: states that the Advisory Committee "will undertake technical analysis and provide scientific evidence on the effects of digital technologies". Argentina repeats the comments made in sections 5 to 7 of this presentation. 14. Point V –Operating mechanisms–, section 8.b.v: the comments relating to the difference between "best practices" and "good practices" set out in section 9 of this presentation are repeated. 15. Point V –Operating mechanisms–, section 9: the inclusion is strongly requested of the Interamerican Development Bank (IDB), ECLAC and IAEA to provide greater geographic, representative and technical balance to the Advisory Committee. It is also considered vital to expressly include the National State Agencies involved in the development of agricultural and livestock technology, as these are key stakeholders in the research and development process, which can bring experience and knowledge to the work of the Advisory Committee.
Canada (Thu 24/09/2020 14:43)	• Canada supports the creation of the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture and its Terms of Reference. • While the agriculture and agri-food sector has demonstrated its resilience during the pandemic, the adoption of digital technologies will continue to play an important role in helping it to address global challenges such as food security, adaptation to climate change, as well as providing economic and social opportunities for those who live and work in rural communities. • Canada supports the creation of the proposed international forum to encourage dialogue on challenges, risks and opportunities to the digitalization of agriculture and agri-food, exchange best practices, as well as provide evidence-based policy recommendations on supporting digital technology adoption in the sector.
Switzerland (Thu 24/09/2020 17:33)	Switzerland takes note of document COAG/2020/22 and thanks the Secretariat for its preparation. Switzerland attaches particular importance to digitization in the field of food and agriculture and is therefore ready to engage in the work of the proposed International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture (Platform). In our view, this Platform should ensure that digitization enhances the sustainability and performance of all actors, improves transparency along the value chain, improves efficiency and reduces administrative costs, while further improving animal welfare, the protection of natural re-sources and the sustainable use of resources. We have noted the absence of a link back to the COAG and other governing bodies of FAO. In our view, it could provide useful that policy recommendations and policy advice be endorsed by a governing body of FAO and not merely by the Platform governance. At the very minimum, the Platform should report to COAG at each session on progress made. In addition, we believe that FAO's different roles need to be clarified. According to the draft ToR, FAO will be host of the Inter-governmental Representatives Group • member of the Advisory Committee

- chair of the Advisory Committee
- convener of the Advisory Committee
- identifier and inviter of members of the Multi-stakeholder Forum
- the Coordination Unit

For good governance reasons and for the benefit of other participants, it will be important for other participants to understand how FAO will ensure separation of these very distinct roles in terms of workforce, competences etc.

Below, please find specific comments on individual paragraphs:

Par. 8a) We believe that two participants per region is not enough to reflect the diversity of approaches within each region. We therefore suggest a total of up to five participants pro region. This number seems more adequate to strike a balance between representation and size of the body.

Par. 8a) iv) We would like to ask the Secretariat for clarification whether it is the Inter-governmental Representative's Group that will endorse policy recommendations or propose policy recommendations for adoption by FAO governing bodies (see also comment further above).

Par. 8b) ii) We would like to get some clarification on the "list of participants" for the various components that the Advisory Committee is charged to establish. Please clarify that the "various components" does not refer to the Intergovernmental Representatives' Group as it should remain within the authority of FAO Members and regions to nominate their representatives. On what basis and selection criteria would such lists be established? It is not clear to us why we need a list of participants upon invitation, as opposed to allowing the open participation of those stakeholders who are interested, eager and able to contribute.

We would also like to seek clarification regarding the notion of "develop … agendas"; in our under-standing, the Inter-governmental Representatives' Group would develop its own agenda.

Par.9) This paragraph lists the composition of the Advisory Committee, namely specific international organizations, farmers, the private sector, civil society and knowledge society. It is not clear to us what is meant by referring to multi-stakeholders group, given that farmers' organizations, the private sector, the civil society and the knowledge society are not necessarily multi-stakeholder groups.

In addition, in our view, the balance of the composition of the Advisory Committee between international organizations and other actors should be improved. In our view, the work of the Advisory Committee would benefit from a broader representation with practical expertise. We suggest to include two participants from farmers' organizations, the private sector, civil society and the knowledge community.

Par. 11) Please clarify the numbering (11a) and 11b) seem to be missing).

Par. 11) It is not clear what the term multistakeholder groups entails in this context. Does it imply that the experts can be from different sectors of society (farmers' organizations, the private sector, the civil society and the knowledge society)?

Par. 11c) We fail to understand the added value that would come with the need to be identified and invited by the Coordination Unit in order to participate in the Multi-stakeholder Forum. An open system is preferable in order to ensure inclusiveness. In addition, we suggest to allow for occasional face-to-face meetings besides the online meeting in order for the Forum to work more efficiently.

Par. 11d) Reference is made to the following sentence: "It will be placed in the office of the FAO Chief Economist and will be entirely managed by FAO under its mandate and institutional framework, and within its programme of work and budget." This sentence seems to be in contradiction with the executive summary and par. 13 which state that the platform will be funded by extra-budgetary contributions while, in our understanding, the budget of the office of the Chief Economist is sourced through

	the regular budget. We thus ask for some clarification and rephrasing in order to ensure that the Platform, including the Coordination Unit, is funded by extra-budgetary contributions.
New Zealand (Thu 24/09/2020 18:16)	Thank you for this paper outlining Terms of Reference of the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture. While it is strange that process wise, the Terms of Reference are being considered by COAG and the other technical committees only after approval of the platform by the Programme Committee and Council, overall we are reasonably comfortable with the level of consultation that has taken place to date. New Zealand is supportive of the role that digitalization can make to food systems productivity and to all dimensions of sustainable development. We note that digitalization issues are being addressed in several other international fora and many are not unique to agriculture such as data ownership, the digital divide, market power, privacy and security. New Zealand's main objectives for the platform are to ensure that the platform adds as much value as possible to existing digitization work going on internationally (such as in the OECD and WTO) rather than duplicating this work. Throughout the consultation process we were very concerned that the approach was consistent with the work of those wider bodies, and it appears that their feedback has been incorporated throughout the process. We are also happy to see in the Terms of Reference that these bodies will have an ongoing role in the Advisory Committee. However, in recognition of the broad scope that "Digital Food and Agriculture" covers, we are interested to better understand the choice of international organizations on the Advisory Committee. In particular, given this is an International Platform for Digital Food, should the advisory committee include the other standards bodies in addition to OIE (e.g. to cover issues such as e-certification)? New Zealand was very concerned that the voluntary nature of the platform is made very clear, and we are pleased to see this is reflected in the paper. We note the further detail on the governance arrangements, and we are pleased that the paper makes it explicitly clear that the platform will be fully funded through extra-budgetary resources. Noting the likely costs associated with the proposal for a Coordination Unit composed of a full-time Director (D-1 level), a Professional Staff member (P-4 level) and General Service support (G-3 level), we would appreciate further FAO comment on the long-term sustainability of such an arrangement, and any plans for resource mobilization given the flat nominal growth FAO budget.
Thailand (Thu 24/09/2020 23:20)	Thailand welcomes the initiative on the International Platform. We recognize that the digitalization can play important roles in improving food security and livelihoods of the farmers and rural communities, as it could provide access to information and boost cooperation across the value chain. Thailand supports adoption of proposed Terms of Reference for International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture. We suggest to amend the ToR Section VI. 'Financial implication' to specify that extra-budgetary resources shall be received in accordance with FAO Oversight Framework for extra-budgetary funds and that all financial resources received shall be reviewed by the Finance Committee and the Council. Thailand recommends that discussion on digital technologies be focused on understanding farmers' needs and be aimed at identifying practical and viable solutions to farmers' needs that are appropriate, relevant, secure, available, accessible, affordable and applicable, particularly to smallholders and family farmers. Thailand recalls the need for careful, context-specific, evaluation of risks and benefits of digital technologies for smallholders and family farmers.
Brazil (Fri 25/09 00.01)	Brazil appreciates the opportunity to present the following inputs to agenda item 2.12: - The mission of the International Platform, as currently drafted in section III of the text, gets confused with and replicates the objectives defined in section IV. Accordingly, sub-items "a" and "b" should be deleted. Furthermore, the mission should

	include a reference to the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, to frame the activities of the Platform in the context of the promotion of sustainable development in its three dimensions. Paragraph 6 could, thus, be redrafted in the following terms: "The International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture aims at providing an inclusive multi-stakeholder forum for identifying, discussing AND DEVELOPING RECOMMENDATIONS ON the potential benefits and risks of digitalization of the food and agricultural sectors, WITH A VIEW TO CONTRIBUTING TO THE FULFILLMENT OF THE 2030 AGENDA". - The terms of reference, in paragraph 7(d), define among the objectives of the Platform the formulation of "policies by developing recommendations, best practices and voluntary guidelines". Recommendations and guidelines aimed at supporting policymaking should be submitted for approval of the relevant FAO decision-making bodies. This practice can be found in the products of the Global Soil Partnership – a mechanism in which participation is voluntary and whose technical recommendations on policy are often submitted for analysis and approval by COAG, Council and Conference. We, therefore, suggest the inclusion of the following sentence at the end of 7(d): "TO BE SUBMITTED FOR THE APPROVAL OF FAO'S GOVERNING BODIES, AS APPROPRIATE." - Also in paragraph 7(d), we suggest to replace "support policymakers to formulate policies" with "SUPPORT DECISION MAKING". - In paragraph 7(a), the word "promote" should be replaced with "ADDRESS", to better reflect the idea that the digitization can bring benefits and risks, in the following manner: "promote discussion among stakeholders on impacts of digital technologies on food and agriculture and facilitate the exchange of knowledge on policy frameworks and best practices that ADDRESS digitalization". - In paragraph 7(c), we suggest to change the text from "that are specific to agriculture" to "that are specific to FOOD AND agriculture", to adapt to the scope of the Platform. Brazil also respectfully submits the following requests for clarification: - In paragraph 8(b), we would like to understand the rationale for including exclusively one institution of regional character. - In paragraph 8(c), we would like to understand how the discussions taking place in the Multistakeholder Forum will be connected to the work being developed in the remaining mechanisms, to guarantee a bottom-up approach. This should be made clear in the terms of reference. - As for financing and operationalization, it is not clear if the Platform would be entirely funded with extra-budgetary contributions or if the activities of the Coordination Unit described in paragraph 12 would be borne by FAO's regular budget.
EU (Thu 24/09/2020 19:00)	First of all, we welcome the decision of the FAO Council, taken at its 164th session in July, for FAO to host the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture as a flexible, light and consensual coordination mechanism and inclusive multi-stakeholder forum. 3. We also thank FAO for preparing the Terms of Reference for this Platform, which address many aspects important to the EU and its Member States, such as the principles of inclusiveness, transparency and regional distribution. These are essential for finding widely acknowledged solutions to the key issues the Platform has to deal with, such as security and data privacy and data sovereignty. To protect sensitive personal data, we consider it essential to include appropriate safeguard mechanisms in the Terms of Reference in order to ensure safe interaction and participation of all stakeholders to the Platform. 4. However, reading the objectives of the Platform, we find that the Platform is lacking a clear mandate to reduce digital divides among stakeholders. Given the importance of overcoming digital divides, a separate point should be dedicated to it. In so doing, we would recognise this aspect as an issue in its own right, and that it has a cross-cutting dimension that should be taken into consideration when providing custom-made solutions for individual Members and their specific problems. 5. Furthermore, while recognising that flexibility has to remain for the International Platform to set and adjust its agenda

	according to current needs and unexpected events, with a view of ensuring a more sustainable impact of the work of the Platform, we would like the Advisory Committee to provide – in addition to the provisional biennial plans of action – proposals for long term objectives for the Platform. 6. Additionally, to further ensure that the International Platform follows a medium and long-term strategic approach in its work, it is important that there is a regular reporting of the activities and outcomes of the Platform to the FAO Technical Committees and FAO Council. 7. Moreover, we ask FAO to include in the Terms of Reference a clarification on the role the newly established Office of Innovation and the Chief Scientist will play in relation to the International Platform, as they are only mentioned once in the reference document. Further explanation on their role and work is important, as in our opinion, both institutions play a pivotal role when it comes to digitalisation in food and agriculture and hence have to have a clear mandate when it comes to the International Platform. 8. In addition, we reiterate the need for FAO to provide a solid and sustainable funding concept for the Platform with cost estimation and based on voluntary extra budgetary contributions, at the 165th session of the FAO Council in December. 9. Finally, we request that the TOR be also considered by the next sessions of the Finance and the Programme Committees.
Egypt (Thu 24/09/2020 11:19)	Egypt considers the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture to be an innovative solution for addressing challenges to food security and nutrition by boosting connectivity and reducing inefficiencies and information costs. It stands out as a light, agile, and voluntary mechanism for cooperation that operates according to FAO regulations, rules and procedures. The Platform's importance derives from its mission and objectives since it will coordinate and bridge the gap between international and multilateral fora for the digital economy; provide policy recommendations to governments aimed at supporting decision-making at higher levels; and undertake economic analysis and provide scientific evidence on the potential risks of digital technologies to food, in accordance with national needs and to achieve multi-stakeholder consensus. With regard to the Platform's operating mechanisms, these will ensure inclusive multi-stakeholder representation and access to best agricultural practices to advance agricultural production and achieve sustainable development (economic, environmental and social). These mechanisms will be formed of: • the Inter-governmental Representatives Group (Members); • the Advisory Committee formed by technical experts from International Organizations and other stakeholders; • the Online Multi-stakeholder Forum to ensure that everyone can participate in the discussions; and, • the Coordination Unit, which will provide day-to-day operational, administrative and technical support to the International Platform. It will be entirely managed by FAO within its programme of work and budget.
USA (Fri 25/09/2020 09:33)	• The United States supports increased innovation, including digitalization in agriculture to increase sustainable production. • Thus, the United States supports the platform's proposed role in knowledge sharing of best practices and raising awareness. • We note the recommendations from the Joint meeting of the Program and Finance Committees explicitly noted that the new platform should not have a policy setting function in its mandate; the recommendations of the Council made no mention of a policy function. • It is imperative the new platform avoid duplicating established work programs and activities of other international bodies with comparative advantage in policy areas involving information communication technologies, use of digital technologies and data, and digital economy, as well as multi-stakeholder forums providing recommendations and guidelines or supporting governments as they create new policy frameworks. • The United States requests that any terms of reference for this digital focus more on knowledge sharing, to fully remain within

	FAO's mandate, and not duplicate authorities or mandates of other relevant international organizations. • With regards to the proposed provisions on policy guidance, the FAO should not duplicate policy guidance areas or ongoing work within the International Telecommunication Union, through its Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) and World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC), and the UN World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) or its forums, created by UN General Assembly. • The United States proposes an alternative vision for the Digital Platform based on knowledge sharing in Annex 1 Alternative Outline – Mandate and Functions FAO proposed "International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture". (The Annex follows after the end of these comments.) • We are concerned with the proposed governance structure described in the Executive Summary and Paragraph 8. • The United States will appreciate more information from FAO about the role of the Member States in overseeing the Platform. As currently described, the four separate components serve to diffuse action and responsibility across a range of bodies, with no clear locus of control or responsibility. • We recognize that Member States will be asked to propose "highly qualified public senior offices" for the "Inter-governmental Representative's Group" but we also note that those officers, in the context of this Platform, are to act in their personal and not their national capacities. • Given the importance of digital agriculture, we would like to see some sort of reporting mechanism where recommendations and proposals from the Platform are submitted to the FAO Member States for their consideration and approval. We believe this reporting structure is sufficiently important that we should delay approving this proposal until a satisfactory reporting structure is agreed. ANNEX -- Alternative Outline – Mandate and Functions FAO proposed "International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture" Mandate (1) Share knowledge of best practices and raise awareness of agricultural technology and digital products and related advisory services, to include availability, use and trade (local, regional, or international); (2) Share knowledge of best practices and raise awareness of educational tools and technical training products related to agricultural technology and digital products and related technology applications; and, (3) promote multi-stakeholder (public-private) dialogue related to 1 and 2; Main functions of a digital agriculture platform to: • promote dialogue on digital transformation, adoption of digital technology and market development for advisory services; • favor the transformation of agriculture towards more efficient and sustainable use practices; • foster exchange of knowledge and lessons learned of technologies through bilateral and multilateral dialogues*; • encourage knowledge sharing of best practices to encourage reliable and affordable electronic connectivity in rural areas and farm communities; • act as a cross-cutting initiative, working in synergy with other relevant organizations and activities, avoiding duplications with multi-lateral, international and/or country-specific/local organizations;
Philippines (Fri 25/09/2020 11:44)	Popularizing Use of Digital Technologies ● The International platform for Digital Food and Agriculture should be able to set strategic directions that shall innovate digital solutions in order to be more efficient, responsive in serving farmers and fisherfolk for global agri-food challenges. ● The platform should set policy directions in its digitalization activities that will shift focus on synergy and integration.

	Scaling up of agritech solutions by intensifying its operations will be the major role of ICT coupled with the infusion of innovations through continued learning and development (L&D) and knowledge transfer. Thus, will give emphasis on concrete ways to sustain all the digital investments through continued upgrade and enhancement of members' systems and infrastructure to maintain its security, reliability, accessibility, and integrity. ● Drive the exchange of ideas and experiences and consequently help everyone harness the opportunities presented by digitalization. ● Intensify the collaboration and implement actions at the global, regional and national levels that aim to enhance the role of ICTs in agriculture. This will also bring benefits to the digital world to the citizens of tomorrow. Identifying Opportunities and Potential Risks ● Data play a crucial role in the development of digital agriculture: the platform will need to help spreading the benefits of big data (e.g., increase of productivity, access to information) but also to manage their risks (e.g., data ownership, privacy, trust) ● Digitalization also opens up new opportunities for entrepreneurs through access to global, regional, national and local markets ● The platform should be able to identify additional roles such as: ○ identifying trends and problems ○ analyzing the impact of digitalization ○ suggesting and recommending solutions to the government ● Digitalization can create new job opportunities for untapped niche of the manpower. Participatory Governance ● Advocate for a participatory policy formulation on e-agriculture linked to agricultural and rural strategy goals. ● Collaboration should be promoted, and knowledge shared, via online communities of practice, including existing regional networks and global platforms. ● The platform will need to have an inclusive, lean and non-bureaucratic governance model. ● Transparency, especially on knowledge sharing is highly encourage; a collaboration between different sectors is needed. ● Open sharing of information also helps to increase transparency and trust between otherwise disparate stakeholder groups in the global agri-food system. ● Participatory consultation with the concerned stakeholders is important