

166th Session of the Council
Written Correspondence Procedure – inputs from Members - English version
Item 21 - Developments in Fora of Importance for the Mandate of FAO

Member Name	Comments
<p>Dominican Republic – Member (Wed 14/04/2021 16:00)</p>	<p>The Dominican Republic welcomes the document “Developments in Fora of Importance for the Mandate of FAO” (CL 166/INF/4).</p> <p>We recognize that the likelihood that people will face food insecurity and different forms of malnutrition increases when they cannot afford a healthy diet, and that institutionalizing indicators of the cost and affordability of healthy diets is a priority task for FAO.</p> <p>We value FAO’s efforts in this regard and urge it to continue to support governments by creating policies for these purposes, including the transformation of agrifood systems to ensure healthy diets are affordable for all.</p> <p>We are grateful for the information provided on the Organization’s participation in preparations for this year’s G20 meeting, and we wish every success for the Italian Republic’s G20 Presidency.</p> <p>With regard to Agro-Informatics as a new instrument for digital agrifood systems and public goods, we take note of FAO’s progress in combating poverty and hunger through the delivery of digital public goods for food and agriculture in the world.</p> <p>We consider that the projects that have been launched for these purposes, namely the Hand-in-Hand Geospatial Platform, the Digital Services Portfolio, and Integrated Agricultural Data Visualization and Analytics (Situation Rooms, Dashboards) are of great importance for our countries; and we look forward to further progress and regular reporting on these issues.</p> <p>Lastly, we are grateful for the update on the outcomes of the One Planet Summit for Biodiversity and the Great Green Wall Investment Forum.</p>
<p>Argentina – Member (Wed 14/04/2021 16:48)</p>	<p>Argentina welcomes the information provided by FAO under this agenda item, which highlights the Organization’s participation in other fora of importance. Argentina would like to make the following comments in this regard:</p> <p>1. Institutionalization of Cost and Affordability of Healthy Diet Indicators in FAO</p> <p>Argentina agrees in this regard that low incomes, particularly in rural areas, in the context of high food costs, are among the most serious impediments to accessing the healthy nutrition that is essential for ensuring a healthy and active lifestyle and preventing all forms of malnutrition.</p> <p>As is acknowledged in the documents provided, governments can and must address factors determining the cost of nutritious foods, through policies that apply to the entire food system, including the areas of food production, food environments, consumer demand and food supply chains.</p> <p>With regard to the last point, we cannot ignore the fact that international trade can facilitate and improve the availability of and access to healthy and nutritious products, thus allowing consumers a wider range of healthy eating options, while contributing to the sustainable and efficient use of resources for production based on comparative advantages.</p>

Similarly, Argentina emphasizes that the analysis performed to establish costs or identify the steps determining the price of food to end consumers as well as the need to make healthy diets more affordable should consider existing distortions in the international agricultural market. This must be done because tariffs and subsidies applied to agriculture have a major impact on the proper functioning of global agrifood chains.

Moreover, agricultural subsidies lead to the consolidation of inefficiencies and prevent developing countries, in particular, from unleashing their agricultural potential, improving the incomes of rural people and achieving poverty eradication and higher levels of food security and nutrition.

Argentina therefore considers that FAO, in addressing the issue of the affordability of healthy diets and the need to achieve sustainable livelihoods and incomes through a food systems approach, should consider international agrifood trade and the distortions affecting it, which have unfortunately long been prevalent.

2. FAO's engagement in the G20 process

Argentina values FAO's participation in the various spheres and activities of the G20 due to the technical capacity it has gained from its unique position in the global food and agricultural architecture and due to its leadership in this forum's global initiatives.

We would particularly like to draw attention to the Organization's participation in the G20 Extraordinary Virtual Leaders' Summit on COVID-19 and in the G20 Extraordinary Virtual Agriculture Ministers' Meeting. FAO – from an early stage of the pandemic – has contributed to the development and consolidation of a clear and strong message at a multilateral level in support of the effective functioning of global food supply chains and the importance of ensuring that markets remain a transparent, stable and reliable source of food.

Given FAO's work during Saudi Arabia's presidency in 2020, Argentina is pleased that the G20 will continue to rely on FAO's technical input to inform its discussions, which will surely ensure the success of the Italian Presidency in 2021.

3. Agro-Informatics, a new IT instrument for digital agrifood systems and public goods

The agro-industry sector needs more and better technological solutions to its intrinsic problems and those arising from economic shifts and climate change. Such solutions will, in turn, be useful for all countries, depending on their context, priorities and capacities. Many of the solutions to these problems emerge from contact between researchers, businessmen, entrepreneurs and students, whose ideas and developments complement one another.

Argentina boasts an array of public institutions, academic centres, companies and human resources that have devoted themselves to this subject for more than 10 years. We therefore welcome FAO's involvement in this IT instrument dedicated to the agro-industry business, and express our readiness to explore ways of expanding and building networks for the development and transfer of knowledge in this field.

4. Outcome of the One Planet Summit on Biodiversity and the Great Green Wall Investment Forum (11 January 2021)

Argentina takes note of the "One Planet Summit on Biodiversity", which was attended by 11 Heads of State and Government, and to which FAO made a considerable contribution.

<p>Australia – Member (Wed 14/04/2021 17:09)</p>	<p>Australia notes the information presented in CL 166/INF/4, <i>Developments in Fora on Importance for the Mandate of FAO</i>, and offers the following comments:</p> <p><i>FAO’s engagement in the G20 process</i></p> <p>Australia values the ongoing collaboration between the FAO and the G20, especially on issues related to food security, and welcomes efforts to improve collaboration among international organisations and the international community, especially during Italy’s 2021 G20 Presidency.</p> <p>Australia notes that any further measures to be developed in 2021 should address genuine policy gaps and add value to the overall picture on this important issue.</p> <p><i>Agro-informatics, a new IT instrument for digital agri-food system and public goods</i></p> <p>Australia notes the FAO’s investment in new IT instruments for digital agri-food systems while also acknowledging the important role of innovation, digitalisation and technological tools (in addition to good agricultural policies and governance), in achieving productive, sustainable and resilient agriculture and food sectors.</p>
<p>Guinea on behalf of the Africa Regional Group (Fri 16/04/2021 11:51)</p>	<p>The Republic of Guinea is submitting comments on this item on behalf of the Africa Regional Group. The Africa Regional Group notes that the document addressed in this statement is submitted to the Council for information purposes. In this regard, the Africa Regional Group congratulates the Secretariat for the document, which is centred on the following topics:</p> <p>Institutionalization of Cost and Affordability of Healthy Diet Indicators in FAO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On this topic, the Africa Regional Group notes with satisfaction the pertinence of the studies carried out by the relevant United Nations agencies and other partners involved in the preparation of the 2020 edition of <i>The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World</i>. • As stated in the document, the Africa Regional Group is worried by the alarming statistics on the number of people who cannot afford a diet that meets their essential nutritional needs. The Regional Group believes that transforming agri-food systems to ensure healthy diets are affordable for all is one of the key factors for achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2. • The Africa Regional Group urges FAO and all stakeholders to take steps to improve methods for calculating the indicator on people’s economic access to healthy and nutritious food. In this context, the Africa Regional Group believes that the national and regional dimensions of diets should be taken into account. <p>FAO’s engagement in the G20 process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Africa Regional Group congratulates FAO for its engagement in the various G20 summits. We applaud the effective contribution made by the Organization on topics within its mandate and on which it has a comparative advantage. <p>Agro-informatics, a new IT instrument for digital agri-food systems and public goods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Africa Regional Group notes the importance of Agro-Informatics in promoting digital agriculture and innovation. • To this end, we request FAO to place special emphasis on the capacity-building component, which would enable smallholder and family farmers to benefit from this technological achievement.

	<p>Outcome of the One Planet Summit and the Great Green Wall Investment Forum:</p>
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- The Africa Regional Group notes that the various topics discussed during this summit are central to FAO's activities. We applaud the contributions made by the Director-General and endorse his proposal to create a High-Level Expert Panel on the "One Health" approach. The Africa Regional Group calls on FAO to lend its support to the mobilization of Great Green Wall funding pledges.