

42nd Session of the Conference

Secretariat Responses to sub-items of Item 11.1, Report of the 27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture

11.1.1 - Eradication of Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) by 2030 (Draft Resolution)

The Secretariat fully appreciates the support expressed by the Members for the report of the 27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG 27). The PPR GEP (Global Eradication Programme) Secretariat also takes note of the aspects highlighted by Members, through the COAG 27 Bureau. The Secretariat acknowledges the support of Regional Groups as well as individual countries to the PPR GEP Resolution that contributes to achieving several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The FAO/OIE (World Organisation for Animal Health) PPR GEP Secretariat stands ready to support the important initiative of Indonesia and Thailand to develop the regional action plan for PPR eradication in Southeast Asia.

FAO, through the Joint FAO/IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) Animal Health and Production Laboratory, through its joint center with IAEA, is working on technology transfer and support for laboratory networks to support the eradication of PPR, based on best practices established during the rinderpest eradication programme. The Secretariat reiterates the view expressed by the European Union and, jointly with the African Union Pan African Veterinary Vaccine Center (AU-PANVAC), will work to improve the quality of vaccines to be used for PPR eradication and the control of other priority diseases through the FAO-OIE Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs). The established network, in addition to the request by Cuba, will not only support the understanding of PPR distribution but also help to maintain the disease-free status.

The need for strong partnerships as highlighted by Canada, as well as other members is noted and accordingly the PPR Secretariat is strengthening its strategic partnership with OIE under GF-TADs, and with several other global and regional institutions and partners, and civil society organisations, in the context of the One Health approach to develop procedures to prevent the spread of PPR and other diseases.

In line with Argentina's comment, emphasis will be given to the mobilization of resources in a holistic manner, contributing to the achievement of the SDGs, and assisting with the justification and cost-effective use of funding mechanisms and resource availability.

11.1.2 - Proposal for the establishment of a Sub-Committee on Livestock

The Secretariat appreciates the wide support for the establishment of the Sub-Committee on Livestock (Sub-Committee) as an intergovernmental forum with the mandate to build consensus on issues and priorities related to the livestock sector, in a coherent way, with a view to optimizing the contribution of the livestock sector to the SDGs. Such a forum allows Governments and key stakeholders to exchange information and views on all matters relevant to sustainable livestock production and health and advise the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) on technical and policy matters related to the livestock sector.

The Secretariat highlights the potential of the sector to significantly contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, and in particular to food security and nutrition, poverty reduction and inclusive economic growth, especially for developing countries. It also recognizes the challenges faced by the sector related to zoonotic diseases, overuse of antimicrobials, as well as its effects on climate change and the environment.

Optimizing the contribution of the livestock sector to sustainable development requires careful planning, implementation and monitoring to enhance synergies and manage trade-offs. The mandate of the Sub-Committee is to address such trade-offs and advise COAG, at its request, on all matters related to livestock production and health. The Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPoW) of the Sub-Committee

that will be developed for its first Session is key to ensure that the work of the Sub-Committee is well targeted, cost-effective and non-duplicative of the work of COAG. Therefore, when drafting the MYPoW, particular attention will be given to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication with other *fora* such as the Codex Alimentarius and the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources.

The MYPoW will allow Members to decide on, monitor and evaluate the work of the Sub-Committee based on measurable deliverables. As indicated in the Terms of Reference for the Sub-Committee, COAG assigns specific tasks to the Sub-Committee which reports back to COAG on its activities. The draft provisional agenda for the first Session of the Sub-Committee, currently under development, fully reflects COAG's requests. Topics such as Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), One Health and mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, are among the proposed standing items of the agenda. As per its Rules of Procedure, endorsed by the 165th Session of the FAO Council, all Members and Observers of COAG are Members and Observers of the Sub-Committee.

As indicated in its Terms of Reference, the Sub-Committee should collaborate with existing partnerships and establish communication channels with multiple stakeholders. In particular, it will ensure close coordination and collaboration with relevant existing multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSPs). In this regard, the Secretariat of the Sub-Committee participates in meetings of the Global Agenda on Sustainable Livestock (GASL) and the Livestock Environmental Assessment and Performance Partnership (LEAP), and involved GASL, LEAP, the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases (GRA) and other MSPs and relevant partners, such as the OIE, in a consultative process for the development of the agenda of the first Session of the Sub-Committee. It will liaise with relevant partners to explore collaborative activities.

The 165th Session of the Council recommended that the first Session of the Sub-Committee on Livestock be held, subject to the availability of extra-budgetary funds, during the first quarter of 2022. The Council agreed with COAG's recommendation to consider revisiting the funding arrangement at subsequent COAG sessions with a view to explore other funding options. FAO established a multi-donor project to enable interested resource partners to support the operationalization of the Sub-Committee and contacted a range of resource partners. The governments of France and Switzerland agreed to support the work of the Sub-Committee. However, fully securing the required financial resources to prepare for and organize the first Session remains a challenge. Revisiting the current funding arrangement, based on voluntary contributions only, is proposed to be discussed at the 28th Session of COAG, as requested by the Asia Regional Group.

11.1.3 - Proposal for an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (Draft Resolution)

The Secretariat appreciates the wide support to the proposal for an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists to be observed in 2026 as requested by Government of Mongolia, and the related draft Conference Resolution.

The Secretariat acknowledges the important role of rangelands and pastoralism not only in supporting the livelihoods and food security and nutrition of millions of people, but also for their multifunctional nature-based services and contribution to several Sustainable Development Goals, especially to reducing poverty (SDG 1), hunger and malnutrition (SDG 2), climate change mitigation (SDG 13), as well as for sustainable agriculture and biodiversity conservation (SDG 15). The Secretariat also recognizes the range of ecosystem services provided by rangelands and pastoralism, such as nutrient cycling, seed dissemination, carbon sequestration, biodiversity conservation and protection against erosion and forest fires.

The proposed International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists will help highlight the challenges faced in sustainable rangelands management, as well as the opportunities rangelands present for rural prosperity. The International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists will raise awareness on the central role of

pastoralists and Indigenous Peoples in sustainable rangelands and pastoralism and the need to scale up these nature-positive production methods.

The Secretariat recognizes the important role of FAO in supporting pastoralists and the sustainable management and restoration of dryland forests and rangelands, and notes the request to FAO to mainstream pastoralism and rangelands in its work to ensure their systematic consideration in its technical and policy programmes. The Secretariat recognizes also the importance of women's empowerment in the pastoralist context, as well as the role of FAO in facilitating the participation of indigenous pastoralists in the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

The Secretariat notes comments made by European Union, Spain and United States recalling the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) criteria for International Years as well as the FAO policy on proclamation of International Years, and requesting FAO to present a careful assessment against this framework in the text of any future proposals.

11.1.4 - Proposal for an International Day of Plant Health (Draft Resolution)

The Secretariat appreciates the wide support to the proposal for an International Day of Plant Health (IDPH) to be observed on 12 May every year as tabled by Zambia, and notes the endorsement of the related draft Resolution by Australia, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Cuba, India on behalf of the Asia Group, New Zealand, Peru, Spain and the United States of America.

The Secretariat also appreciates the support for this initiative by the Commission for Phytosanitary Measures (CPM), the CPM Bureau, the International Steering Committee of the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH) and the International Seed Federation, as expressed prior to the 27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture.

The proclamation of an International Day of Plant Health by the United Nations General Assembly would ensure continued awareness raising among the public, decision makers and relevant stakeholders of the importance of plant health for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and for better production, nutrition, environment, and life. An IDPH would also promote and facilitate measures to reduce phytosanitary risks, prevent the introduction and spread of pests, and manage plant health at global, regional and national level.

The IDPH would represent a lasting legacy for the IYPH 2020, whose success despite the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic has been praised by several Members and partners. Building on the momentum of the IYPH, the IDPH would contribute to create a platform for the ongoing annual recognition, advocacy and promotion of plant health.

The Secretariat recognizes that plant health is essential to reduce poverty, provide sustainable food sources, protect the environment and biodiversity, mitigate the effects of climate change, and promote safe trade. The Secretariat concurs that the IDPH would further ensure concrete actions and global cooperation to resolve global issues while raising the profile and awareness of plant health activities worldwide.

Plant pests are a major agricultural, environmental, and ecological threat. Every year, a significant proportion of global harvest is lost to plant pests. The establishment of the IDPH would be an important step to address pest risk challenges that may have serious impact on food security and the environment.

FAO and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Secretariat are strong advocates of the importance of plant health globally, and its primary role in achieving a world free of hunger and malnutrition. The Secretariat acknowledges the key role of the IPPC and its CPM to protect cultivated and wild plants globally, and to prevent the introduction and spread of pests, by developing and supporting the implementation of International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs).

The IDPH would continue promoting the role of FAO and the IPPC to combat plant pests and diseases, while strengthening international collaboration on plant health issues; improve capacity for effective

phytosanitary systems at international, regional and national level; and promote harmonized phytosanitary measures through standard setting.

The IDPH would also promote FAO's role in the sustainable intensification of agriculture to feed a growing global population, and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as a means to contribute to the protection of the environment.

The Secretariat welcomes positive remarks about the recent scientific review of the Impact of Climate Change on Plant Pests coordinated by the IPPC Secretariat as a key IYPH legacy, and assures of FAO's support in continuing to analyse this important topic.

The Secretariat notes Spain's comment urging FAO and the IPPC to persevere with the initiatives launched under the auspices of the IYPH 2020, to reduce phytosanitary risks to an acceptable level by supporting policies and measures to promote plant health.

The Secretariat applauds the commitment of some Members and stakeholders in implementing the IYPH in their countries and constituencies and taking part in the IDPH implementation.

11.1.5 - Proposal for an International Year of Date Palm (Draft Resolution)

The Secretariat appreciates the wide support of the proposal for an International Year of Date Palm (IYDP) to be observed in 2027, endorsed at by Australia, Cuba, the European Union, Peru and the United States of America.

The Secretariat also appreciates the development of this proposal from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and for initiating a side event on "Promoting dates as extraordinary fruits for economic, environmental and social development" during the 41st Session of the Conference in 2019.

The proclamation of an IYDP by the United Nations General Assembly would ensure continued awareness raising among the public and private sector and other stakeholders on the contribution of dates for food security, nutrition and income generation under changing climates. The IYDP will make a positive contribution to better production, nutrition, environment and life and towards achieving a number of SDGs. Moreover, the IYDP would create policies to promote partnership opportunities among date producing and importing countries and the marketing of dates nationally, regionally and globally.

The Secretariat recognizes that traditional production and distribution systems dominate value chains for dates, and while very good examples exist of companies and countries that are modernizing sustainable systems and expanding exports, there is still scope for significant advances. However, constraints to production, improved genetic resources, pests and disease, post-harvest handling and processing and socially inclusive trade, limit the competitiveness of the date palm sector in local, regional and international markets.

The IYDP would support the development of a global framework to conserve date palm biodiversity and mobilize global efforts through cooperation, collaboration, facilitation, and partnership for sustainable intensification of date production and consumption. Further, the IYDP will encourage stakeholders, including national governments, to join efforts towards the establishment of an enabling environment for improving the productivity and quality of dates, including local value chain development. Awareness will be raised on the need for enhanced investment in research for development, capacity development, extension services and policies to promote sustainable and resilient date production systems through the application of green, innovative and digital technologies.

The Secretariat welcomes the remarks by the European Union and its 27 Member States with regard to the adjustment of the texts for future proposals on the proclamation of International Years with the UN ECOSOC, and ensures FAO's follow up.

The Secretariat also acknowledges the support of the United States of America to the FAO 2013 Policy on Proclamation and Implementation of International Years and encouraging Members to investigate other means of raising public awareness.

The Secretariat appreciates the consideration of the significant logistical and administrative challenges for FAO on the preparation and implementation of the International Years and the commitment of the Members to provide extra-budgetary resources for these activities.