

174th Session of the Council

Written Correspondence Procedure – inputs from Members - English version

Item 13 – Update on FAO’s collaboration with other UN system entities

Member Name	Comments
United States of America (Tuesday, 14 November 2023 – 14.49)	<p>The United States thanks FAO for the update on its engagement with UN Partners and appreciates the details on FAO’s collaboration with the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), and also across the entire UN system.</p> <p>As Secretary Blinken said during the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Summit in September: “The United States remains unwavering in our commitment to achieve the SDGs by 2030.” Reducing hunger and strengthening global food security are critical to achieving all 17 Sustainable Development Goals.</p> <p>Only through working together and seeking and establishing effective and value-added partnerships – and evaluating these partnerships – will we advance this collective ambition.</p> <p>For this reason, we welcome the RBA’s global tripartite Memorandum of Understanding signed in South Sudan on 1 August 2023 and appreciate the increased collaboration between FAO, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the World Food Programme (WFP).</p> <p>We note that FAO collaborates with over 40 entities across the UN system and is implementing a two-year UN partnership roadmap. We would welcome receiving additional information and details related to the roadmap.</p> <p>As further reporting on FAO collaboration in the UN system is provided, we would welcome updates on the challenges as well as the successes and achievements. It is critically important to understand the obstacles that FAO confronts to improving and strengthening coordination.</p> <p>We encourage FAO to continue to establish, expand, and deepen its collaboration and partnerships across the UN system – within its mandate. Given continuing complex food insecurity challenges globally, with the need to reach as many individuals as possible within available funding, joint UN collaboration and coordination needs to be efficient and effective to build sustainable, resilient and inclusive food systems that support the achievement of the SDGs by 2030.</p>
Japan (Wednesday, 15 November 2023 – 15.00)	<p>Japan expresses its gratitude to FAO for regular progress updates on FAO’s collaboration with other UN system entities. We submit the following comments;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We welcome the new global tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) (Paragraph 8). This marks a positive step towards collaboration, and we look forward to updates and advancements resulting from this agreement.• Furthermore, we welcome the prospect of collaboration with organizations such as the World Food Programme (WFP) at country level (Figure 2, Paragraph 25). While supporting the partnership, we would like to seek clarification on the specific nature and implementations of this collaboration. We also would like to get a better

	<p>understanding of concrete examples or details illustrating how this partnership will manifest.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In terms of collaboration between FAO, the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and other environmental fora related to climate change and biodiversity (Paragraph 48-50), achieving practical and flexible outcomes is crucial. It is essential to reflect the diverse conditions of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries among countries, aiming to enhance food security and address environmental challenges simultaneously. With the growing number of agro-environmental issues, Japan urges FAO to actively provide its technical inputs to environmental discussions, leveraging its expertise. This effort should make use of FAO's existing voluntary guidelines and the ongoing development of the Plastic Voluntary Codes (VCoC). Particularly, these guidelines can form the basis for discussions on the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), the negotiations for the plastic treaty (INC) and Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Japan hopes to strengthen collaboration with FAO on these issues.
<p>Colombia (Wednesday, 15 November 2023 – 16.05)</p>	<p>Colombia welcomes the report on FAO's collaboration with other entities of the United Nations system. It recognizes that the work of implementing the 2030 Agenda implies multiple interdependencies between the Sustainable Development Goals, and stresses that food systems transformation poses challenges that go beyond the agriculture sector, involving environmental, economic, social, gender and health challenges, among others.</p> <p>Therefore, we believe that coordinated work between FAO and other UN entities is not only positive but necessary if we want to move towards achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda. Joint and coordinated work between the UN Rome--based Agencies (FAO, IFAD and WFP) is more necessary and strategic than ever, given the many crises facing the planet, and the need for coordinated, effective and sustainable responses to these crises.</p> <p>We stress the importance of FAO remaining a key stakeholder in all discussions and actions aimed at food systems transformation and sustainable development, as well as in UN Country Teams (UNCTs). Partnerships and alliances play a decisive role in these common goals and lie at the heart of the <i>four betters</i> outlined by the Organization (<i>better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life, leaving no one behind</i>).</p> <p>We applaud FAO's collaborative work in science and technology with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and in the environmental sphere with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Digital transformation of the countryside and its adaptation to the harmful effects of climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation are fundamental and crucial to achieving FAO's strategic aspirations and the SDGs.</p> <p>In conclusion, Colombia expresses its appreciation for the report and encourages FAO and the other entities of the United Nations system to continue working effectively in a coordinated and collaborative manner to achieve all the Sustainable Development Goals.</p>
<p>Norway on behalf of the Nordic countries</p>	<p>Norway is delivering this statement on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and Norway).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank you for the insightful and detailed update on FAO's collaboration with other UN system entities. • To maximise the impact of actions and programmes, to avoid overlaps and to increase the efficiency and

<p>(Wednesday, 15 November 2023 – 16.20)</p>	<p>effectiveness of available financial and human resources, cooperation among the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) as well as all other relevant UN organizations in-country, on the ground is critical. We also encourage FAO to strengthen its cooperation with the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We welcome the focus on the reposition of the UN development system, country-driven partnerships, UN Resident Coordinators and Country Teams. • We also welcome the recently signed global tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), recognising that RBA collaboration is built on a broad spectrum of work that spans from responding to emergencies and shocks, to humanitarian and long-term development activities. The recently launched joint FAO and World Food Programme (WFP) strategy on anticipatory action is also important in this regard. • Formalised agreements should translate into action on the ground. Lessons can be learned from the Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress towards Rural Women’s Economic Empowerment. The programme is jointly implemented by FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), UN Women and WFP and adopts a holistic approach that builds on each agency’s comparative advantage and strengths. • The Nordic countries would welcome more details on how FAO collaborates and coordinates its work with multilateral development banks, such as the World Bank and African Development Bank. • There is a strong focus on the contribution of collaboration to the <i>four betters</i>. We would welcome a stronger emphasis on the Sustainable Development Goals as the overarching and universal call to action. • We would also like more detail on how collaboration with UN system entities contributes to all sectors that the FAO works with, including fisheries, aquaculture, and forestry. • The Nordic countries underscore the importance of not just measuring the quantity of collaborations, but also their quality. FAO should create baselines, clear metrics of success, and ensure that they measure impact and the contribution of collaborations in helping us achieve Agenda 2030. • The Nordic countries highlight that collaborations should capitalise on FAO’s unique comparative advantage as the utmost provider of technical and normative expertise that contributes to evidence-based guidance and good practice for food systems solutions. • The administrative burden, reporting and monitoring responsibility, and financing should also be shared across collaborations and build on each organizations’ comparative advantage. <p>Finally,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Nordic countries have been longstanding supporters of the UN Development System Reform. It is important to ensure that the reform of the UN Development System keeps moving forward and is fully implemented. • The Nordic countries highlight the prerequisite that the UN delivers as One UN at the country level. We would like to see more reporting on how FAO implements UN reform.
<p>European Union</p>	<p>I am honoured to write to you on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States regarding the aforementioned Agenda Item for the 174th Session of the FAO Council.</p>

(Wednesday, 15
November 2023 –
16.39)

The EU and its Member States thank FAO for the information provided in document CL 174/12 and welcome that the update covers FAO's collaboration across the UN system, including but not limited to the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), and appreciate FAO's stated ambition to strengthen and deepen its collaboration within the UN system. We particularly welcome the focus placed on the UN Development System (UNDS) repositioning and collaboration through the Resident Coordinator (RC)-system and the UN Country Teams.

Partnerships within the United Nations system, including with the RBAs is paramount if we want to transform food systems and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We very much welcome the new global tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which emphasizes the spectrum of the RBA collaboration, spanning from humanitarian to development activities. We encourage FAO in collaboration with RBA to focus on the five long-term priorities and the set of recommendations resulting from the 2021 evaluation.

We commend FAO for playing a key role in the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, as well as the Global Network Against Food Crises, and in the coordinated efforts and collaboration of the RBAs in response to the ongoing global food crisis.

In addition, we very much welcome FAO's continued engagement with the outgoing and incoming Conference of the Parties (COP)-presidencies, to make food systems visible, and have a positive contribution to tackle the climate crisis.

The document rightly puts a strong emphasis on the crucial role of FAO Regional and Country Offices with the UN country teams, coordinating mechanisms, thematic networks and UN joint programmes. In that respect, the EU welcomes the review of FAO's Decentralized Offices network as a first step for further, more in-depth discussions.

Unfortunately, the document does not put enough emphasis on the importance of continued, or even ,where possible strengthened RBA support to the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), including through financing and staffing, and of ensuring that the CFS, its High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) and its products, remain an integral part of the RBAs' follow-up activity to the Food Systems Summit, with the aim of consolidating the position of CFS as the leading international platform for policy coherence and convergence on food security and nutrition.

The EU appreciates the collaboration with the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, hosted at FAO, to actively advance the goals set by the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit to transform global food systems in alignment with the SDGs.

We appreciate the broad overview of FAO's current UN partnerships and the informative examples of thematic engagements (nutrition, health, food safety, gender equality and women's empowerment, transparent markets and trade, integrated policy support, climate change, biodiversity and the environment, emergencies and resilience, science technology and innovation). Here we underline the importance of the work of the Quadripartite on the One Health approach.

We welcome FAO's planned actions to continue to enhance UN collaborations at all levels, notably the further strengthening and institutionalizing of key UN system partnerships and the leveraging of joint funding mechanisms and investments as a key driver of UN collaboration.

The EU and its Member States welcome further regular updates on the progress made by FAO in partnering with the wider UN system, including the RBAs.

<p>Australia (Thursday, 16 November 2023 – 13.58)</p>	<p>Australia appreciates this update on FAO’s collaboration with UN system entities including Rome-based Agencies and over 40 other UN agencies, funds, programmes and other entities. We support FAO working collaboratively in pursuit of the SDGs and sustainable development outcomes through long-term, systemic and transformative actions. We note the different paths and programmes that the FAO works on with various agencies, which areas they are focused on, and key themes they work across. We appreciate the inclusion of highlights and examples of work undertaken. Considering the ongoing food security crises occurring around the world we thank FAO for its leadership during these challenging times and appreciate it has a role as a valued partner for many other UN entities given FAO’s highly relevant mandate and areas of expertise.</p> <p>In line with the commitment by FAO Management to continued, open and transparent communication with Members, for which we express thanks, we look forward to further updates from FAO on partnership initiatives going forward, including the provision of finalised documents such as MoUs, active circulation to Members of the MoU between the Rome-based Agencies, and workplans mentioned at paragraph 25. In particular, in future updates to FAO Governing Bodies we would like to see some assessment of the impact and value-add of a range of both new and traditional partnerships.</p>
<p>Chile (Wednesday, 22 November 2023 – 15.50)</p>	<p>Chile agrees with the contents of this update, particularly on the need for a multifaceted approach to the transformation of agrifood systems. As the report rightly points out, this should include agriculture, trade, health, environment, gender, education and infrastructure, among others.</p> <p>Chile is able to call on two fundamental instruments (which have been renewed for the 2023–2026 period) in order to address the issue in a multi-sectoral manner and with due coordination between agencies. We refer to the UN System Cooperation Framework with the Government of Chile 2023–2026 and the FAO Country Programming Framework with the Government of Chile 2023–2026.</p>