

November 2007

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منظمة الأغذية  
والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

联合国  
粮食及  
农业组织

Food  
and  
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Organisation  
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l'alimentation  
et  
l'agriculture

Organización  
de las  
Naciones  
Unidas  
para la  
Agricultura  
y la  
Alimentación

## CONFERENCE

### Thirty-fourth Session

Rome, 17 - 24 November 2007

Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2008-09

(Extract from the Report of the Hundred and Thirty-third Council Session)

(November 2007)

### PROGRAMME OF WORK AND BUDGET (PWB) 2008-09<sup>1</sup> - ITEM 4

1. The Council considered the Programme of Work and Budget proposals for the 2008-09 biennium, together with the relevant advice in the Reports of the Programme and Finance Committees.
2. The Council observed that the contents of the document complied with the guidance it had provided at its previous session of June 2007. Hence, the proposed maintenance budget presented in the Summary had been further developed in the full PWB; the latter included more phased proposals for the funding of reserves and long-term liabilities to restore the financial health of the Organization.
3. The Council further noted that the full PWB met the expectation of no major reprioritisation, pending the outcome of the IEE. The maintenance budget, therefore, continued the substantive priorities agreed by the Membership and reflected the organizational changes recently approved by the Governing Bodies. Nevertheless, the Council welcomed the increased multidisciplinary focus placed on climate change and bioenergy, as well as work in support of knowledge management and capacity-building.
4. The Council also appreciated the preliminary efforts made to present Regular Programme and extra-budgetary resources in a more integrated manner. It looked forward to further progress

<sup>1</sup> C 2007/3; CL 133/PV/2; CL 133/PV/..

in this direction while respecting the multilateral character of the Organization, as this would facilitate a more coherent resource mobilisation strategy and enhance flexibility in meeting requirements of Members, as well as eventual IEE follow-up.

#### *Links with the IEE*

5. The Council recognised that the proposals in the PWB could not address follow-up to the IEE while, as anticipated, the two tracks of inter-governmental consideration of the PWB and of the IEE documentation would need to converge at the Conference in the following week.

#### *Views on the Budget Level*

6. As different views were expressed on the budget level for the next biennium, the Council was not in a position to reach a consensus ahead of the further discussions expected in Commission II of the Conference.

7. A majority of Members supported the proposals for a maintenance budget which in their view constituted a bare minimum, bearing in mind the challenges FAO was expected to address, including the implementation of MDG1, and the need to put an end to the cumulative budgetary stringency experienced in recent biennia. They felt that this would also be consistent with the call for reform with growth made by the IEE.

8. Many other Members stated that they could support in principle the maintenance budget. They reiterated the need for continued attention to efficiency savings which could assist in lowering absolute resource requirements under the Regular Budget.

9. Some Members stressed their expectation that increases in Assessments for the next biennium should remain within realistic levels.

10. One Member underlined that the level of the budget proposed in the PWB could not be supported, as it was not in line with the financial discipline his country expected in international organizations and bearing in mind the expectation of significant gains in efficiency from implementation of the IEE recommendations.

11. One Member proposed that the Conference in the following week could adopt a one-year budget (i.e. for the year 2008), pending the expected consideration by a Special Session of the Conference in the second half of 2008 of the Immediate Action Plan (IAP) recommended by the IEE. Hence, the latter session of the Conference would be able to address budgetary requirements for the second year of the biennium in full cognizance of the reform package embodied in the IAP. Many Members opposed this idea, as it would generate a damaging climate of uncertainty in the Organization and would be disruptive to the orderly delivery of essential services.

12. Other Members did not specifically express their respective Governments' views at this stage.

#### *Other matters*

13. The delegate of the State of the United Arab Emirates reported that since the Hundred and Thirty-second Session of the Council, consultations had taken place and all Members of the Gulf Cooperation Council and Yemen had supported the proposal to establish a FAO Sub-regional Office for the Gulf Cooperation Council States and Yemen in the State of the United Arab Emirates. He confirmed the commitment of his Government to cover the full costs of the new Office and requested the Council to approve the establishment of this Sub-regional Office in 2008. The Secretariat recalled that the establishment of this Sub-regional Office was foreseen since 2005 as part of the worldwide implementation of reform, and clarified that in light of the principle of full-cost reimbursement by the Host Country, the Sub-regional Office would be established within the current budgetary appropriation without any net transfer of resources from Headquarters or the field. A majority of Members expressed their support, with no country

expressing reservations. In view of the above, the Council approved the proposal to establish a new FAO Sub-regional Office for the Gulf Cooperation Council States and Yemen in the State of the United Arab Emirates and applauded the generosity of the State of the United Arab Emirates to cover the full implementation and running costs.