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Продовольственная и
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Organización
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para la
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THIRTIETH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Gyeongju, Republic of Korea, 27 September – 1 October 2010

Agenda item 8

REPORT ON FAO ACTIVITIES IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC REGION IN THE BIENNIUM 2008-09 AND ACTIONS TAKEN ON THE MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 29TH REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

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I. Introduction

1. The FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) has followed up closely on necessary actions regarding recommendations of the 29th Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific which was held in March 2009 in Bangkok, Thailand.

2. Many interrelated activities were initiated and completed in support of agriculture, food security and rural development in Asia and the Pacific region. During 2008-2009, 70 technical meetings and expert consultations were organized (3 222 participants), 69 training courses and study tours were implemented (1 974 trainees), 63 regional office publications were produced, and 96 work-months of FAO regional office staff were devoted to field missions for normative activities and 332 work-months to technical backstopping missions of field projects.

3. Full coverage of all the activities undertaken during the biennium cannot be condensed into a document of this length and therefore the report focuses only on some of the main activities undertaken. Part II documents actions taken in response to the recommendations of the Twenty-ninth FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific held in Bangkok, Thailand from 26-31 March 2009. Part III highlights the status of FAO's field programme with focus on the rapid developments since 2005. Part IV summarizes other key activities implemented in the region, which were not covered under Part II, with particular emphasis on emerging issues and associate interventions.

II. Actions on recommendations of the 29th APRC

4. The following is a brief summary of the actions taken so far by the Organization on the recommendations made by the 29th FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific:

Submit a fully formulated Regional Priority Framework for its review and consideration at the next Regional Conference and report on the restructuring and strengthening of the regional office to address these priorities

5. Immediately following the 29th APRC, RAP initiated a series of consultations with member countries and concerned stakeholders to further review and develop the draft RAP Regional Priority Framework (RPF), which is aimed at translating the Organization's Strategic Framework into regional actions based on a results-based approach. The draft was reviewed at the 8th Meeting of the FAO South West Pacific Ministers of Agriculture (Niue, May 2009), the ASEAN-FAO Regional Conference on Food Security (Thailand, May 2009) and the SAARC-FAO Meeting on the Regional Priority Framework (Bhutan, July 2009). RAP is also undertaking an iterative process to fine tune the draft RPF after receipt of substantive inputs from member countries and regional economic organizations, as well as technical inputs from headquarters and FAO Representatives. A further consultation with development partners, donors and international organizations was conducted on late 2009 before finalizing the RPF for presentation at the 30th APRC for consideration and endorsement.

6. RAP has prepared scenarios for restructuring the Regional Office as requested by Asia and the Pacific member countries. The proposal was submitted to the Director-General for consideration in September 2009 with the aim of strengthening RAP's capacity to respond to the needs of member countries in a more timely and effective manner through promoting decentralization and a multi-disciplinary approach as well as other measures.

Enhance linkages between the Regional Technical Commissions (RTCs) and the Asia and the Pacific Regional Conference (APRC)

7. This particular recommendation will be brought to the attention of the five regional technical commissions (plant protection, agricultural statistics, fisheries, forestry and animal

production and health) at their next sessions to involve the commission members in exploring ways and means for enhancing linkages between the RTCs and the APRC. Details will be reported under agenda item 8 of the 30th APRC.

Assist member countries in formulating and implementing practical climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies

8. FAO has been working on formulating national and regional strategies and frameworks on climate change adaptation and mitigation; developing, identifying and disseminating practical technologies; conducting capacity building in member countries; and participating in national, regional and international fora to provide advice to partners on effective policies and approaches to agricultural climate change adaptation and mitigation. A number of projects are under implementation in Bangladesh, China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal and the Philippines covering aspects of water, cropping, IPM, bioenergy, livestock, fisheries and forestry. New initiatives involving studies, technical assistance and projects are under preparation in Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand and the Greater Mekong Subregion.

9. A symposium on climate change and food security in South Asia was convened in Dhaka, Bangladesh in August 2008. The symposium identified key knowledge gaps and opportunities, made recommendations, and adopted a regional framework on climate change adaptation and mitigation in agriculture for South Asia. A Declaration was issued.

10. A study on the impact of climate change on agriculture and food security in the Pacific region has been completed by FAO. The study demonstrates the urgency to mainstream food security within climate change adaptation policy, strategy and programmes, with special focus on vulnerable groups.

Continue supporting member countries in implementing sustainable forest management, including measures related to climate change mitigation and adaptation

11. In response to a specific recommendation from the twenty-second session of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission, FAO has been facilitating a "stocktaking" of Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) activities and initiatives in the region. FLEG aims to improve governance in the forest sector and contribute to capacity building, poverty reduction and sustainable management of forest resources through workshops, technical support and publications.

12. FAO actively promotes forest rehabilitation and restoration in the region. Especially effective is the support for assisted natural regeneration (ANR) which restores and enhances forest productivity, biological diversity and ecological processes, and livelihoods, in consonance with the ecological principles of secondary forest succession. A TCP project, workshops, publications, awareness raising and training are provided in support thereof.

13. Over 750 participants from 57 countries gathered at the widely publicized Asia-Pacific Forestry Week. Thirty events, including four plenary sessions, were organized by FAO and partner organizations – providing an opportunity for diverse stakeholders and forest managers to share perspectives and seek solutions to the most challenging issues facing forests and forestry in the Asia-Pacific region today.

14. The Asia-Pacific Forestry Sector Outlook Study II is a wide-ranging outlook study which aims to provide an overview of the status and trends in the forestry sector, and highlight issues that will shape the future of forestry in the region. Country outlook reports have been prepared by 28 countries and 20 thematic study reports have been completed.

15. FAO supports the national forest programmes in thirteen countries in the region through the National Forest Programme Facility (NFPF) to strengthen capacity in participatory and community forestry, update national forest policies and build capacity.
16. FAO, in collaboration with UNDP and UNEP, launched the “United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD)” in July 2009. The programme provides financial and technical support for countries’ REDD+ readiness and currently supports activities in nine pilot countries, which include Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Viet Nam in the Asia-Pacific region. FAO’s Forests and Climate Change Programme developed two sets of guidelines on forest and climate change and supports member countries in integrating climate change issues in forest management and forest policies. Through a TCP project, support is being provided to countries for linking communities to forestry-related voluntary carbon markets. The project focuses on five countries in Southeast Asia: Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, the Philippines and Thailand.
17. About 200 persons from 29 countries attended the 23rd Session of the International Poplar Commission, hosted by the State Forest Administration, Chinese Forestry Society, Beijing Forestry University and the Chinese Academy of Forestry, Beijing, 26-30 October 2008, with the theme “Poplars, Willows and People’s Wellbeing”.
18. A joint FAO-The Nature Conservancy-State Forest Administration hosted regional workshop on “Community-Based Fire Management in North East Asia” was hosted in Xishuangbanna, China in March 2009.
19. A regional workshop was hosted by FAO, supported by APAFRI on “Fire Management Needs and Actions in South East Asian Region” in November 2008 in Pekanbaru, Indonesia. Each country developed a logical framework for future actions to improve fire management based on the Fire Management Voluntary Guidelines, needs assessment and information exchange between the countries and organizations.
20. A regional workshop was hosted by FAO, supported by APAFRI on “Towards Sustainable Management of Planted Forests” in January 2008 in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Twenty nine multi-stakeholder participants from China, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Thailand and Viet Nam prepared logical frameworks and programmes of action for implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Responsible Management of Planted Forests in their country contexts.
21. A total of US\$6 million was approved for Fiji, Niue, Samoa and Vanuatu under the Global Environment Facility – Pacific Alliance for Sustainability (GEF-PAS) Forestry Conservation and Protected Area Management project, which contains national and regional components for promoting conservation of biodiversity. FAO is providing technical advice and information to Pacific Island member countries and working on developing the full project proposal.
22. Support was provided to Samoa and Tonga in updating data and information on tree and forest resources. A draft national forest policy was developed for Tonga to improve sustainable management of forest and tree resources.
23. Under a Trust Fund project with Japan, a Letter of Agreement was signed with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) to strengthen regional collaboration among Pacific Island countries in forest-related monitoring, assessment and reporting. Specific objectives include establishment of a Pacific region network and formulation of a long-term umbrella plan in support of managing forest and tree resources on a sustainable basis.

Assist in promoting practical crop insurance schemes and social safety nets, in particular targeting small farmers

24. FAO initiated a regional study covering ten Asian countries on the impact of the food and financial crisis and the macroeconomic policy responses on agriculture and food security with a view to evaluating policy options, addressing both urgent challenges and longer-term structural issues and investment choices, with particular emphasis on the provision of social safety nets for affected small farm households and poor consumers.

25. A study proposal for funding under the regional TCP facility on crop and agriculture insurance programmes in the region has been formulated for inception in 2010.

Continue its assessment of the opportunities and risks associated with bioenergy development and provide sound and balanced information, policy advice and technical support to member countries

26. As part of an ADB-FAO-IFAD partnership, a TCP project on development of sound bioenergy policies for rural development and poverty alleviation is underway in the Greater Mekong Subregion to better understand the status of the sector and identify best practices.

27. FAO commissioned a rapid appraisal on opportunities and constraints for bioenergy development in 14 Pacific Island countries. The study evaluated cassava and coconut-based biofuels, the two main crops for biofuel production in the region, as well as other alternative bioenergy sources to identify the potential impact of biofuel production on food security. A feasibility study on potential agricultural crops for biofuel production was conducted in collaboration with the Samoa Electric Power Corporation (EPC).

28. The FAO Bioenergy and Food Security (BEFS) project, which aims to strengthen the capacity of developing countries to mitigate the impact of bioenergy on food security, has selected Thailand as one of three BEFS countries in the world, and initiated studies and analyses on the interplay between land availability, bioenergy production potential, rural development and food security, and assessment of different bioenergy pathways.

Support the development of regulatory frameworks and management policies for fisheries, provide technical assistance to meet the emerging traceability requirements of international markets, and support sustainable aquaculture development

29. Six workshops were convened to improve the capacity of member countries in addressing key issues in fisheries and aquaculture including recommendations on adoption of an ecosystem approach to fisheries management (a paradigm shift in policy from one that is production oriented to one that is benefits oriented), on best practices and policies to support coastal community livelihoods, on assessment of fisheries stocks and on combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

30. Member countries and regional fisheries organizations were assisted in promotion of regional initiatives for more effective fisheries management through Asia-Pacific Fisheries Commission (APFIC) sessions and related publications. Policy and action plans to address major issues in the region were examined, such as implementing the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and exploring opportunities for certification.

31. Through a TCP project, four Asian countries are implementing farm trials to reduce their dependence on trash fish/low value fish as feed for aquaculture of marine finfish. The preliminary data is promising and the project is expected to contribute significantly to the protection of marine fish resources and improve the livelihoods of practitioners.

32. A five-year Trust Fund project funded by Spain which addresses regional and national level priorities for improving coastal fisheries livelihoods in Southeast Asia became operational in September 2009.

33. The GEF Trust Fund project for the sustainable management of the Bay of Bengal large marine ecosystem became operational in April 2009. The aim of the five-year project is to support the development of a strategic action programme whose implementation will lead to the enhanced food security of coastal communities in the eight countries of the Bay of Bengal.

34. FAO supported the update of Fishery Country Profiles for 14 Pacific Island States during the period 2009-10. These profiles will be published on the FAO website and as a print publication.

35. Technical assistance was provided to the Cook Islands and Micronesia to recommend measures on aquaculture development to further improve their effectiveness, development impact and sustainability. A study was completed and national workshop conducted on risk assessment in aquaculture development in the Marshall Islands.

36. FAO assisted in formulating national plans of action to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing for the Marshall Islands and Nauru based on the methodology provided in the International Plan of Action for IUU fishing. A study was undertaken on the potential environmental impacts of milkfish farming in Nauru and appropriate paths for its re-establishment. FAO assisted in formulating fisheries legislation for Palau relating to governance and participation by stakeholders in fisheries management.

Pursue the establishment of regional support units under the Global Framework for the Control and Prevention of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TAD) that would consist of epidemiology and laboratory reference centers to assist countries, especially in times of disease emergencies

37. The Emergency Centre for the Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases Unit (ECTAD) has continued its role in controlling and preventing transboundary animal diseases, including H5N1 Avian Influenza, in the region. Three subregional meetings for SAARC, SPC and ASEAN on GF-TADs were convened jointly with OIE where setting up of regional support units was discussed. This culminated in a regional steering committee meeting in Tokyo in July 2009 to review recommendations of the three subregional groups and discuss coordination mechanisms to strengthen surveillance and preparedness plans.

Assist member countries in developing comprehensive policy and strategic frameworks for coping with water scarcity

38. A comprehensive set of technical and policy assistance instruments are being developed through a regional Trust Fund project to promote sustainable water resource use for agriculture.

39. Strategies and programmes to cope with water scarcity, and capacities to improve water productivity and efficiency within the region will be strengthened through technical support, capacity building, advocacy and mobilization of extrabudgetary funding.

Scale up its regional irrigation modernization programme

40. A TCP project is being formulated to assist five Asian countries in adoption and implementation of irrigation modernization concepts and technologies.

41. Approximately 100 experts from India, Malaysia and Nepal will be trained in irrigation modernization methodologies and management.

42. Countries in the region where water is a critical factor limiting crop production will be assisted in improving crop water productivity through capacity building.

Support the establishment of regional networks of experts on water management and approaches for coping with water scarcity

43. Ongoing and planned projects are underway to identify, mobilize and strengthen support to policy-makers, managers and practitioners in member countries to improve water use and management in agriculture.

Continue promoting agro-industries and value chains that deliver benefits to smallholder farmers and small agro-enterprises by assisting member countries to improve services to agro-industries, promoting practices that add value for small farmers, and helping small farmers respond to changing markets and consumer requirements

44. A joint FAO-EC conference on food quality linked to geographical origin in Asia was held in Bangkok to promote agrifood marketing chains that deliver benefits to smallholder farmers.

45. Case studies were carried out in 11 Asian countries to better understand how smallholder farmers can link and respond to changing markets and consumer requirements. The case studies will be published in 2010.

46. National workshops were held in Bhutan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar on regulations, standards and certification for agricultural exports. A regional trainer's manual for producers and exporters in Asia was produced.

47. FAO, in cooperation with the IFAD, the Shaanxi Provincial People's Government and UNIDO, organized and implemented the Regional Agro-industries Forum for Asia and the Pacific held in November 2009 in Yangling, China in which 110 individuals from 25 Asia-Pacific countries participated. The aim of the forum was to promote dialogue among private sector, government and civil society representatives on the development of competitive agro-industries that incorporate smallholders as significant stakeholders.

48. Two training of trainer programmes for six Asian countries were implemented and one training manual was published on training of trainers in horticultural chain management for improved handling to assure safety, maintain quality and reduce losses.

49. A training of trainers programme for four Asian countries on good practice in coconut water processing was implemented for small farmers and processors to provide them with the background required to adopt and apply simple technologies leading to income generation.

50. FAO, under the auspices of the *All ACP Agricultural Commodities Programme (2007-2011)*, is supporting stakeholders in the Pacific region to develop and/or implement sustainable commodity strategies. Under this programme of work: a Fruits and Vegetables Sector Development Strategy (2009-2014) for Samoa was developed in collaboration with the International Trade Centre; a regional expert meeting in Fiji was held to address institutional constraints for farmer groups to engage with markets; training in agribusiness management and value addition strengthened the capacity of farmer groups in Samoa, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu to engage in sector strategy development; and a round table in Samoa took place to assess the financial needs and constraints for chain stakeholders in the fruits and vegetables sector.

51. FAO and WHO held a joint training course on risk based food inspection and certification in Wellington, New Zealand in November/December 2009, attended by 11 Pacific Island countries.

52. The second meeting of the Pacific Food Safety and Quality Legislation Expert Group was convened in November 2008 to share resources and information related to Codex and build capacity in development of common food standards and consistent enforcement approaches across the Pacific.
53. In collaboration with WHO, SPC, UNICEF and IICA, a subregional workshop on “Nutrition, diet and lifestyle – scaling up action in the Pacific” was organized.
54. Support was given to the Research and Development Institute of Samoa (RDIS) to build capacity in post-harvest research to improve the shelf-life/packaging and product quality of breadfruit and papaya in Samoa.
55. FAO provided technical assistance in reviewing the food inspection system in Fiji and identifying areas that may require strengthening/amendments.
56. A case study on integrated food security policy for the Solomon Islands was developed that covers food safety, nutrition and agriculture.

III. Status of FAO’s field programme

General Overview

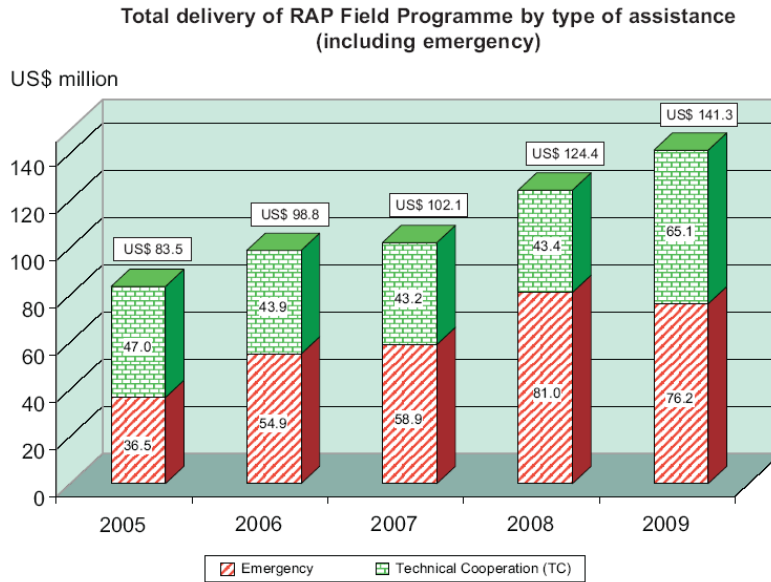
57. The number of recipient countries of the field programme in the region is 20¹ countries in Asia and 14² countries in the Pacific region. In 2009, total regional delivery including both long-term development and emergency projects was US\$141.3 million, an increase of 14 percent from that of US\$124.4 in 2008. As of the end of 2009, there were 236 operational long-term development projects³ and 248 emergency projects under operation (484 projects).

¹ Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, India, Indonesia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam.

² Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

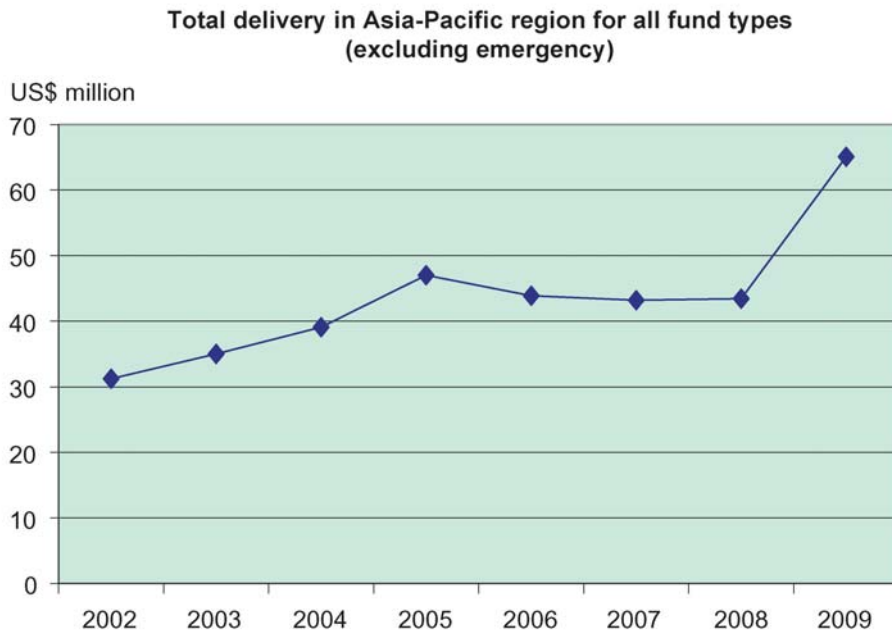
³ Long-term development projects include Trust Fund projects, Unilateral Trust Fund (UTF) projects, Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) projects and other non-emergency projects.

Chart 1



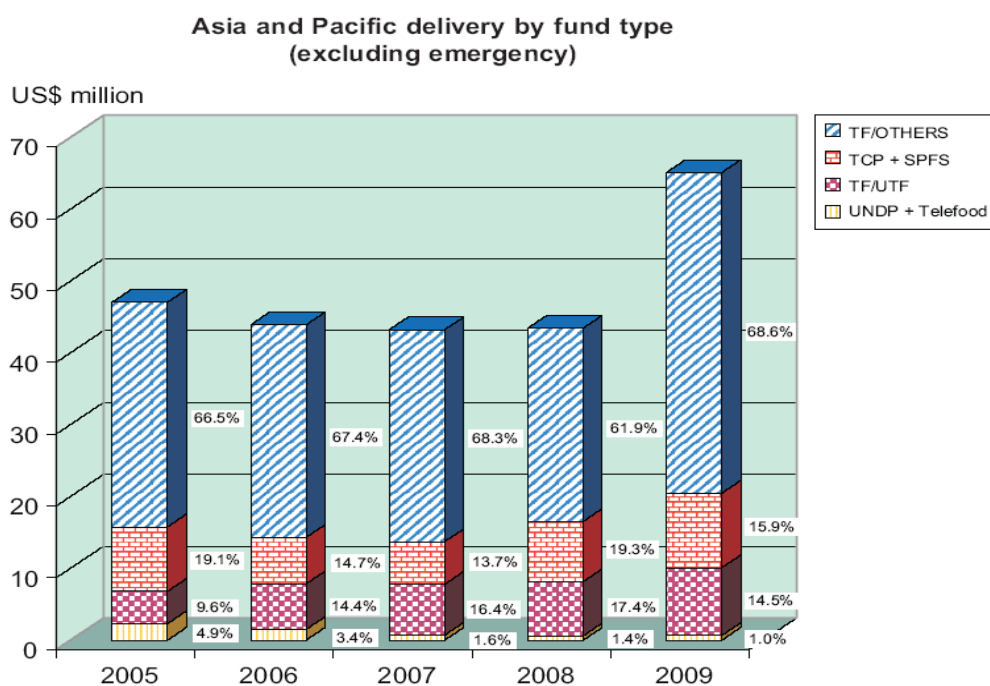
58. There was a significant increase in the delivery of long-term development projects which increased by 51 percent from US\$43.4 in 2008 to US\$65.1 in 2009. In fact, the delivery of long-term development projects has more than doubled since 2002. Emergency delivery has also steadily increased and has surpassed development delivery since 2006. This trend is expected to continue. Chart 1 below highlights total delivery for both development and emergency projects by year since 2005. Total project delivery of long-term development projects for the region in 2009 was US\$65.1 million. This reflects an increase of 109 percent and 51 percent as compared with that of 2002 (US\$ 31.2 million) and 2008 (US\$ 43.2 million), respectively, as per below Graph 1.

Graph 1



59. Chart 2 below shows total delivery of long-term projects in the region (excluding emergency projects) from 2005 to 2009 and the fund type for each year. Government Cooperative Programme trust funds and other trust fund projects accounted for approximately 85 percent of total delivery in 2009. This distribution is nearly consistent with previous years. Regional project delivery in 2009 was US \$8.6 million, slightly less than 2008 delivery of US\$9.2 million.

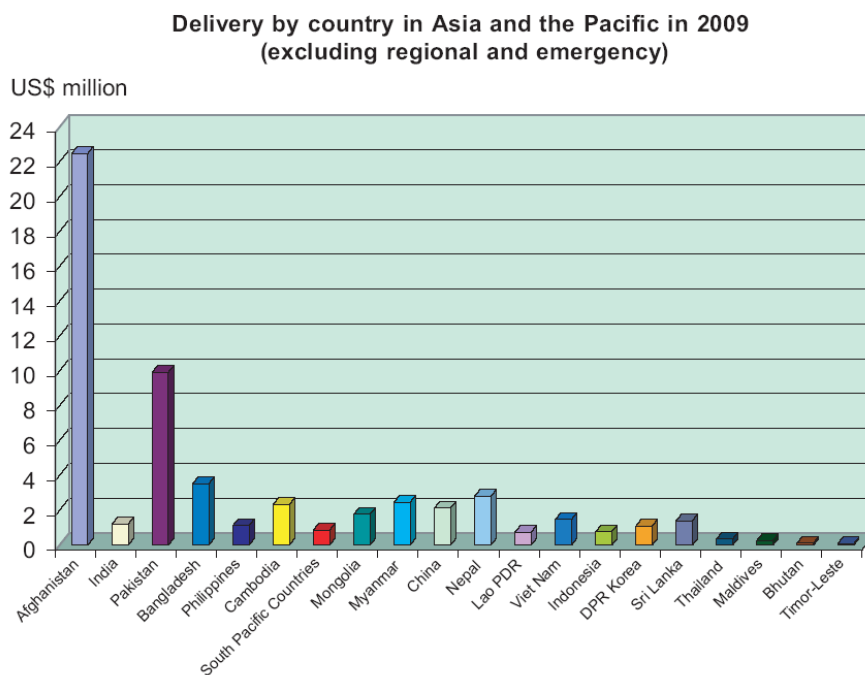
Chart 2



60. Delivery by country, excluding emergency projects and regional projects, is outlined in Chart 3 below.⁴ Afghanistan delivered nearly double in 2009 from that of 2008. Other countries which achieved higher delivery over the previous year (2008) are Bangladesh, China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Mongolia, Nepal and Pakistan. Pakistan had a delivery of US\$10 million in 2009, a three-fold increase from 2008. Prospects for technical cooperation projects are showing very encouraging trends, reflecting donor support for the implementation of activities related to enhancing food security in the region. On the other hand, there is increased concentration of delivery in specific countries, i.e. Afghanistan and Pakistan, for which existing political instability and security problems pose a risk of sustainability in FAO's field programme in the region.

⁴ Annual field project delivery for Afghanistan in 2009 was the highest with 22.8 million followed by Pakistan with 8.8 million, regional projects 8.7 million, Bangladesh 3.6 million, Nepal 2.9 million, Myanmar 2.5 million, Cambodia 2.4 million, China 2.2 million, Mongolia 1.9 million, Viet Nam 1.5 million, Sri Lanka 1.3 million, India 1.3 million, Philippines 1.2 million, DPR Korea 1.0 million, etc. The annual project delivery of Afghanistan and Pakistan alone accounted for nearly 50 percent of the total annual delivery in this region.

Chart 3



61. The major funding for non-emergency technical cooperation projects implemented by RAP in 2009 was the Government Cooperative Programme (GCP) which accounted for 70 percent of 2009 delivery. Unilateral Trust Funds (UTF) projects funded by member countries using their own revenue budget or foreign investment loans accounted for 15 percent of delivery, and the Technical Cooperation Programme and Special Programme for Food Security funding as well as others accounted for the remaining 15 percent.

62. The major donors funding FAO Government Cooperative Programmes during 2009 in the Asia-Pacific region were the European Commission followed by Japan, Italy and Germany, USA, Spain, Netherlands, Sweden, UK, IFAD, New Zealand, AsDb, etc. Spain has emerged as a new and strong donor to the field programme, particularly under the UNDP/Spain Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund and for FAO Trust Fund regional projects. The total approved budget for Spanish-funded projects is US\$23.64 million. Other new donors are Canada (Sri Lanka) and Luxembourg (Afghanistan). Finland resumed its multilateral collaboration with FAO by funding a forestry project in Nepal worth US\$3.3 million.

63. In 2009, there were a total of 17 approved United Nations Joint Programmes valued at US\$8.99 million, covering the areas of livelihoods, food security, rural development, etc. With the expanded window on delivering as One to cover Bhutan, Kiribati and Papua New Guinea, in addition to the current pilots of Pakistan and Viet Nam, a total of US\$13.25 million is earmarked for the region in 2009/2010. The projects funded under the UN Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS), which is contributed by Japan, have increased rapidly and have been implemented in Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, etc. under the UN Joint Programme approach. On the other hand, more efforts would be required to tap the Global Environment facility (GEF) resources which would require support from member countries.

64. Approved TCP funding in the 2008-2009 biennium was US\$15.78 million involving 69 new approvals in the region. Total TCP delivery in 2009 was US\$10.3 million. Twenty-three TCP projects under the Initiative on Soaring Food Prices (IFSP) were approved during the 2008/2009 biennium for a total budget of US\$5.03 million.

65. The field programme delivery for 2010 and future years looks bright. The current estimate for delivery for the Asia-Pacific region in 2010 is in excess of US\$70 million (non-emergency technical cooperation projects only). Delivery for the Regional Operations Branch alone is estimated to be in the order of US\$12 million for the same year.

66. There will continue to be greater scope to develop unilateral trust funds, particularly in countries achieving middle-level incomes and others. Greater collaboration with emerging multilateral donors such as the Common Fund for Commodities, IFAD, UNOCHA and the Asian Development Bank is expected to grow. The expanded window for delivering as One may provide greater opportunities for field programme development. UN Joint Programmes supporting Millennium Development Goals (food security, nutrition and employment; gender equality; child health; and environmental sustainability) are expected to increase. UN-REDD, GEF and UN Trust Fund for Human Security-funded programmes would also provide opportunities for FAO.

Investment promotion

67. FAO's Investment Centre continued its strong support to the region by helping governments to undertake investment planning, develop investment strategies, formulate and implement investment projects and programmes, and evaluate their impact and results. Work carried out before and during 2008-2009 contributed to the approval of over US\$2 billion in total investments for the region's agriculture/rural sector. Of this amount, 70 percent (US\$1.4 billion) will be provided to 16 countries and two regional programmes in loans, grants and credits from the World Bank Group, IFAD, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the European Union (EU) and bilateral donors.

68. The investment operations approved will assist in environmental protection of fragile coastal habitats, irrigation improvement, land management and administration, agricultural and livestock sector growth, food security and food safety, sustainable livelihoods and avian influenza control. Bangladesh received extra support with four projects related to post-cyclone and post-flood livelihood restoration, and Afghanistan received additional emergency help for irrigation rehabilitation.

69. During 2008-2009, FAO's Investment Centre fielded 467 missions to the region and assisted in the preparation of 30 operations with financing partners. These activities focused on strengthening national capacity in project formulation and planning, promotion and dissemination of best practices, and linking countries to potential financing agencies. For example, support was given to the Government of Timor-Leste on its rural development policy and evaluation of an agricultural rehabilitation project financed by the World Bank. In 2009, a stocktaking exercise of agricultural and rural development projects in India and South Asia was launched to focus on water management, livelihoods, and project monitoring and evaluation. This sector analysis will provide important source material for future investment operations and capacity building work.

IV. Summary of other key activities implemented in the region

FAO's Initiative on Soaring Food Prices (ISFP)

Asia-Pacific

70. In the context of the FAO Initiative on Soaring Food Prices (ISFP), FAO provided direct emergency assistance to vulnerable farming populations through TCP projects in 10 Asian countries and 14 countries in the Pacific. These projects provided agricultural inputs to targeted small farmers, with a view to improving household food security through direct access to food. In 2009, within the context of the ISFP, FAO implemented EU Food Facility programmes funded by

the European Union in Pakistan (US\$34 M), Afghanistan (US\$18.5 M), Cambodia (US\$15.4 M) Sri Lanka (US\$7.2 M), Nepal (US\$11.3 M), Bangladesh (US\$9.1 M) and the Philippines (US\$6.1 M).

Pacific

71. Under the Initiative on Soaring Food Prices (ISFP) assistance was provided to 14 Pacific Island member countries to improve the food security and nutritional status of vulnerable households and small farmers affected by soaring food prices by provision of inputs of production and other necessary agroproduction inputs.

Support to agriculture and food security strategies and pro-poor policies

Asia

72. In cooperation with China's Ministry of Agriculture, FAO convened a policy forum to examine agricultural reforms and trade liberalization experiences of the past three decades in China and selected Asian countries and the lessons learned therefrom, particularly in the context of the global food and financial crisis. The key conclusion of the forum deliberations was that a favorable policy and institutional environment is crucial for sustained and rapid agricultural growth, and corresponding success in rural development and poverty reduction.

73. Through a Trust Fund project, FAO collaborated with IFAD to build the capacity of government agencies in eight Asian countries in undertaking pro-poor policy analysis, formulation and capacity development for rural poverty reduction and enhanced food security.

74. FAO assisted the formulation of National Medium-Term Priority Frameworks (NMTPFs) in close consultation with the concerned governments in India and Indonesia. Preparation of NMTPFs in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Myanmar, Nepal and the Philippines have been initiated. Support was provided for the implementation of NMTPFs in Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Pakistan and Thailand.

75. FAO assisted SAARC in preparing a food security strategy and programme for the South Asian countries. The regional strategy and programme were approved by the 15th SAARC Summit in Colombo in August 2008. The ASEAN-FAO regional conference on food security was held in May 2009 in Bangkok, Thailand, in support of implementation of the ASEAN Integrated Food Security Strategy (AIFS) Framework.

76. FAO assisted the governments of Sri Lanka and Mongolia in formulating National Programmes for Food Security (NPFS) as part of Government programming and budgeting processes and in view of mobilizing donor support. In Cambodia, FAO supported the preparation of a Food Security Support Programme, a key pillar in the Strategy for Agriculture and Water 2010-2013.

77. Following the signing of a strategic alliance with FAO on South-South Cooperation (SSC) in support of NPFS, the Government of China has approved a UTF agreement with FAO for a budget of US\$30 million, aimed at developing tripartite South-South Cooperation (SSC) agreements with other developing countries. A similar strategic alliance was also signed with Indonesia. In addition to China, other Asian countries such as Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Pakistan and Viet Nam have been among the active supporters of the SSC by fielding their experts and technicians to several other developing countries.

Pacific

78. The Food Security and Sustainable Livelihood Programme in the Pacific Island Countries (FSSLP) has been formulated as a follow-up to FAO's highly successful Regional Programme for Food Security in the Pacific (RPFS). The goal of the FSSLP is to contribute to the improvement of food security of poor and vulnerable populations, especially women and youth, with emphasis

on increasing food availability, promoting import substitution, development of market opportunities and institutional strengthening.

79. FAO organized the 11th and 12th Round Table Meetings for Pacific Island Countries on WTO and Regional Trade Agreements and Provisions in Wellington, New Zealand in 2008 and 2009. The aim of the meetings is to increase awareness and understanding of multilateral, regional and bilateral trade agreements and provisions relating to agriculture and fisheries, and to enhance the capacity of Pacific Island countries to plan and formulate informed and appropriate agriculture, fisheries and trade policies.

80. An information guide on agricultural policy was completed with the intention of assisting the Pacific Island member countries in accessing and using the available stock of domestic and international knowledge to strengthen the process of policy formulation.

81. Draft agricultural policy documents have been completed for the Cook Islands, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

82. A draft multi-country National Medium Term Priority Framework (NMTPF) for the 13 Pacific Island countries has been completed, which was endorsed at the eighth meeting of the FAO South West Pacific Ministers of Agriculture, held in Niue in May 2009. The NMTPF document was endorsed as a roadmap for FAO's intervention in the region for the period 2009-2012. The draft NMTPF for Papua New Guinea has been completed.

83. A food security vulnerability assessment was undertaken in the Marshall Islands and policies proposed for effective management in addressing soaring food prices.

Plant production and protection

Asia-Pacific

84. At its 84th session, the FAO Council approved a number of amendments to the Plant Protection Agreement for Asia and the Pacific Region to introduce mandatory contributions for the contracting governments. These amendments entered into force in September 2009 after acceptance by two-thirds of the contracting governments. Pursuant to the articles of the Agreement, the Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission (APPPC) adopted its rules of procedure and financial rules at its 26th session, which have been published and disseminated to member countries. It is expected that the rules will strengthen the APPPC in progress towards plant protection in the region.

85. Plant protection profiles from 20 countries in Asia-Pacific have been published to help formulate better strategies and policies for pest and pesticide management.

86. Two regional standards for phytosanitary measures (RSPMs) were adopted, including the RSPM on South American Leaf Blight for rubber after ten years of preparatory work and negotiations in the region.

87. Three training courses on plant quarantine were conducted to improve the capacity of member countries in pest risk analysis and inspection and certification.

Asia

88. Asian smallholder farmers have continued to benefit from participation in FAO Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Farmer Field School training including the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) in Nepal.

89. Activities have continued to improve seed security in the region through participation in the Executive Committee of the Asia Pacific Seed Association and implementation of related TCP/TF projects in Afghanistan, China, Myanmar and Nepal.

90. A Regional Biosafety Workshop was organized by FAO in collaboration with the Government of Thailand from 30 November to 4 December 2009 in Bangkok as a follow up to the project "Capacity Building in Biosafety of GM Crops in Asia", which was implemented by the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific from 2002 to 2005. Thirty-five participants from 13 countries attended.

Pacific

91. Assistance was given to Nauru in sustainable atoll banana production and technical advice was provided to farmers on vegetable growing in plastic pots.

92. An ecologically-based rodent management programme was launched in Tonga and Tuvalu.

93. Training was provided to the Pacific region on procedures and methodologies in quarantine to prevent the spread and introduction of plant and plant product pests and promote measures for their control.

94. Assistance was provided to Palau in control of orange spiny whitefly and an insect pest database for Tuvalu was compiled.

95. Tissue culture plantlets were introduced in Nauru for banana and in the Cook Islands for golden pineapple and orchids.

96. Assistance was provided to Kiribati in growing disease resistant bananas and in identifying suitable sites for the narrow-pit system for growing root crops.

Water and land management

Asia-Pacific

97. FAO has developed a version of its Mapping System and Services for Canal Operation Techniques (MASSCOTE) tool, MASSIF, to integrate fisheries and aquatic resources in the management and improvement of irrigation systems.

98. An e-conference on integrated land and water resources management in rural watersheds took place in November/December 2009 to assist member countries develop comprehensive policy and strategic frameworks for promoting integrated rural watershed manage. A website was created and a report will be published.

Asia

99. A workshop was convened in Bangkok in April 2009 for Southeast Asia countries as part of a project to develop tools and methods for land degradation assessment following the on-going GEF/UNEP funded project on land degradation assessment in drylands (LADA) and to build capacity to design, plan and implement interventions to support sustainable land use and land management practices. Training on tools and methods for land degradation assessment and sustainable land management was provided to Mongolia by the LADA project team in China.

Support to world census of agriculture and food security information

Asia-Pacific

100. At the twenty-second session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics (APCAS) held in Kuching, Malaysia from 9 to 13 June 2008, the session reported on a sourcebook, developed by FAO and the World Bank, for tracking results in agriculture and rural development in less-than-ideal conditions. A round table on rising food prices and the role of statisticians was convened in-session with the aim of assisting policy-makers formulate timely corrective measures when confronted with food market crises.

101. FAO continued its annual publication of *Selected indicators of food and agricultural development in the Asia-Pacific region*, with its twenty-fifth issue in 2009. The Selected Indicators is a comprehensive and detailed compilation of statistics on farming, livestock, fisheries, forestry and nutrition in Asia-Pacific countries.

102. The importance of country participation in the FAO World Programme for the Censuses of Agriculture (WCA) 2010 was advocated through workshops and meetings on this subject. An increasing number of member countries and development partners in the region realized the importance of conducting periodic censuses of agriculture and are requesting FAO's technical guidance in this area. Direct assistance to member countries was provided through projects.

103. The setting up of an electronic newsgroup for APCAS countries in late 2008 has improved the communication among statisticians responsible for development of agriculture statistics in the countries in the region. The newsgroup disseminates information and news on recent developments in agricultural statistics through regular bulletins.

104. FAO continued publication of its electronic monthly newsletter "Asia Pacific Food Situation Update" launched in mid-2008 as a rapid response to implementation of the initiative on soaring food prices. The newsletter monitors food market developments in the region, disseminates information about food prices and market news, and enables electronic dissemination of prices, news and other market information to stakeholders in times of food price volatility.

105. FAO, jointly with the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India and Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute, conducted from 23 to 29 May 2009 in New Delhi, India, a regional training workshop on food security statistics derived from National Household Income and Expenditure Surveys for the ten most populated countries in Asia.

106. A Gender and Agricultural Statistics Framework (GASF) was developed in Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam, under the initiative "Strengthening National Capacities for Socially- and Sex-Disaggregated Data in Agriculture and Rural Development" (SIDA-FAO Strategic Partnership on Rural Development 2008-09). The GASF guide and training materials were tested and finalized through consultations, training workshops and policy seminars.

Rural youth and rural education

Asia-Pacific

107. Several community learning centres were established in selected villages in Northeastern Thailand with the aim of promoting community-based learning initiatives with a focus on rural youth. Publication of two proceedings relating to rural education and agricultural extension, three case studies and two reports on rural youth employment plus country assessments in Cambodia and China were carried out in support of capacity building for food security and rural development in Asia-Pacific. Advocacy activities were conducted via the United Nations Inter-

Agency Working Group on Education for All (EFA) and the Steering Committee for the Decade for Education for Sustainable Development (DESD).

Livestock

Asia-Pacific

108. The Animal Production and Health Commission for Asia and the Pacific (APHCA) convened workshops and provided hands-on training in goat production in Asia, animal identification and traceability, animal productivity enhancement, and disease diagnosis and surveillance.

109. Two training courses were conducted and a training manual produced on geographic information system (GIS) applications for animal health management.

Asia

110. FAO collaborated with CFC on formulation of a strategy for smallholder dairy development for Asia, including investment and implementation plans to 2018. Workshops were convened and practical guidelines were published in support thereof.

111. A study on the carrier role of the Asian swamp buffalo in foot-and-mouth disease was conducted in Myanmar and the Lao People's Democratic Republic and results are being analysed.

112. Through a Trust Fund project, a study on cross-border movement patterns of large ruminants and pigs across the Greater Mekong Subregion countries was carried out. To strengthen the capacity of laboratory and field surveillance staff against transboundary animal diseases, training on surveillance and outbreak investigation was conducted. Diagnostic laboratories were equipped to support surveillance.