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粮食及  
农业组织

Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

Organisation des Nations  
Unies pour l'alimentation  
et l'agriculture

Продовольственная и  
сельскохозяйственная организация  
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las  
Naciones Unidas para la  
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة  
الأغذية والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة



# FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR THE NEAR EAST

## Thirty-third Session

Rome, Italy, 9-13 May 2016

## Provisional Annotated Agenda

### SENIOR OFFICERS MEETING

9-11 May 2016

#### I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

1. Appointment of the Rapporteur
2. Adoption of Agenda and Timetable  
(Refer to page 5 for items 3-7)

#### II. REGIONAL AND GLOBAL POLICY AND REGULATORY ISSUES

##### 8. Livestock Contribution to Food Security in the Near East and North Africa Region

The livestock sector plays an important role in the food security and economic growth in the Near East and North Africa (NENA) region. Demand for livestock products has increased sharply over the last two decades, compelled by higher incomes, rapid urbanization and changing consumption patterns, making the region a net importer of animals and animal products. On the other hand, the livestock production systems in the region have been undergoing structural changes, as a result of the economic and societal transformations and the degradation of the natural resources base (rangeland, forest, water). Outbreaks of Transboundary Animal Diseases (TADs) with risks of spillover to humans have also been frequent in the region, posing serious challenges to the development of the sector and putting a heavy pressure on the veterinary services. This overall situation is aggravated by conflicts and other crises in the region.

The paper takes stock of the situation of the livestock sector in the NENA region, its contribution to economic growth, food security and nutrition; analyses the major trends, challenges and opportunities that are shaping the transformation of the sector; and puts forward a strategic framework including a set of coherent policies, institutional measures and interventions to unlock the growth potential of the sector and ensure its sustainable development.

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## **9. Fisheries and Aquaculture: Application of FAO's Blue Growth Initiative**

The Blue Growth Initiative (BGI) supports sustainable and coordinated fisheries and aquaculture production systems for economic, environmental and social development through an improved understanding and application of ecosystem services. In the region, most wild marine and freshwater fish stocks are fully or over exploited and better management, diversification of fishing methods, reduction of bycatch, losses and wasting, are needed to reverse declines in stocks and yields. Freshwater and brackish water aquaculture offers, in some areas, the main opportunities for increasing fish production. On the other hand, marine aquaculture offers potential opportunities but is still in its infancy within the region. The BGI, under a cross-sectoral framework, seeks sustainable development through knowledge sharing, the application of new technologies, and an enabling support system. The equitable, suitable and efficient use of ecosystem services is essential to the development of the region's food supply and as support to rural livelihoods. The paper presents a framework for unlocking blue growth potential and provides examples of opportunities for sustainable economic, environmental and social development among BGI participating countries through collaborative support by FAO.

## **10. Small-scale Farmers and Women Empowerment in the Near East and North Africa Region**

The majority of agricultural activities in the NENA region involves small-holders (small-scale farmers, pastoralists, forest keepers, fishers and aquaculture farmers) that produce the bulk of fresh food supply. Small-scale agricultural activities, including post-production activities (handling, processing and marketing), are the major source of income in rural areas for smallholders themselves and provide a boost for the local economy through the creation of farm and off-farm employment.

The paper presents the findings of a study and regional consultations aiming at improving the understanding of smallholders' typologies, their linkages to markets, their barriers for better prioritizing interventions and better targeting public and private investments. It proposes a vision for the sustainable improvement of productivity, value addition and viability of the sector in order to empower those engaged in small-scale activities in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, including strengthening professional organizations and supporting youth and women's employment. The vision addresses also gender inequalities by focusing on areas which can empower women economically and socially. The study focuses on Egypt, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan, and Tunisia.

## **11. Update on the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)**

The CFS Chair will provide an overview of the main outcomes of the 41st and 42nd Plenary Sessions reporting on activities undertaken in 2014-15. The session would be an opportunity to discuss how to improve the achievement of results in the context of Strategic Objective (SO)1 results framework, by better disseminating CFS products at regional and national levels, improving collaboration with FAO decentralized offices and increasing CFS impact on the ground, as well as discussing with CFS stakeholders how to achieve these objectives within the SO1 results framework.

### **III. PROGRAMME AND BUDGET MATTERS**

## **12. Results and Priorities for FAO in the Near East and North Africa Region**

The Regional Conference will consider the results of FAO's work in the region, including how FAO activities have addressed previously agreed regional priorities during 2014-15, and will provide guidance on areas of regional priority for 2016-17 and 2018-21. The discussion will be informed by results of FAO's work at Outcome level (extract from the Programme Implementation Report 2014-15), a report on the implementation of the three Regional Initiatives, the Medium Term Plan 2014-17 (Reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17 approved by the FAO Conference in June 2015, and a Regional Strategic Review encompassing the major trends, challenges and development objectives for food and agriculture, also taking into account the

priorities and recommendations of the Regional Technical Commissions; a synthesis of Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs); and the plans and priorities of partners such as the Regional Economic Organizations, CSOs and the private sector.

### **13. Decentralized Offices Network**

Ongoing efforts to improve and strengthen the work of FAO's country offices network in the region will be reviewed and recommendations formulated to enhance the Organization's effectiveness and efficiency at country level.

## **IV. OTHER MATTERS**

### **14. Multi-year Programme of Work for the Regional Conference for the Near East**

This paper will present the progress made in implementing the Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) for the Regional Conference for the Near East during 2014-2015. Emphasis will be on the results achieved during this period.

### **15. Any Other Matters**

#### **Information Notes<sup>1</sup>**

- **Summary of the Progress made in the Implementation of the Recommendations of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East**

This information note provides a summary of the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East by reporting on activities and actions undertaken during 2014-2015.

- **Summary of the Recommendations of Regional Commissions and Major Meetings in the Near East on: i) Policy and Regulatory Matters and ii) Programme and Budget Matters**

This item reviews the conclusions and recommendations of the Regional Commissions and other relevant regional meetings in the Near East with regard to: i) policy and regulatory matters and ii) programme and budget matters. This includes regional fora such as the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI), the Near East Forestry and Range Commission (NEFRC) and the Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Central and Western Regions (CRC and CLCPRO). This also includes summaries of the outcomes of high-level meetings such as the Regional Multi-stakeholder Workshop on Food Security and Nutrition.

- **Status of the Near East Forests: Challenges and Development Potentials**

The paper presents a regional perspective on the current status of the Near East forests, based on the data generated under the framework of the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA 2015). It provides an account on the state, changes and trends in forest resources in the region by forest types, functions and ownership, and presents some data on the environmental and socioeconomic contribution of the forest sector with emphasis on biodiversity conservation, soil and water protection, carbon sequestration, food security, rural income, employment opportunities and contribution to the national GDP. The paper identifies the main drivers of forest cover decline in the region and assesses the extent to which countries have proper policies, legislative and institutional framework and effective law enforcement mechanisms. Although general trend indicates continuous decline in the forest cover in the region, the paper shows significant increase in the forest areas designated for biodiversity conservation, soil and water conservation as well as in the area of planted forests, which all represent promising development options for increasing the forest cover in the region.

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<sup>1</sup> If they wish, delegates may comment on information notes under "Any Other Matters".

- **Agriculture in the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development: the need to address cross-sectoral interactions in the Near East and North Africa Region**

The second of the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals is “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture”. This ambitious goal puts sustainable agriculture high on the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. To support countries in their transition towards more productive and sustainable agriculture, FAO developed an integrated vision and approach, called Sustainable Food and Agriculture (SFA).

In the Near East region, agriculture is facing many challenges: only 4.5 percent of the total surface area is cultivable. Extreme fluctuations in rainfall, exacerbated by climate change, put agricultural production at high risk. Competition for land and water is high, and natural resources degradation is a major issue. Increasing demand for food and fibre means agriculture has to achieve higher yields from limited cultivated land and with less water. Increases in yields will have to come from sustainable agricultural intensification.

This paper will present the five principles of the Common Vision on Sustainable Food and Agriculture. It will focus on the need to adopt more effective cross-sectoral approaches and the support that FAO is currently providing to countries in moving towards sustainable agriculture, through a combination of interventions at field and at policy levels.

- **Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) Follow-up**

The FAO/WHO Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), which was held in November 2014, adopted the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and a voluntary Framework for Action that encompassed 60 recommendations addressed to national governments for combating the triple burden of malnutrition. This paper will present the follow-up actions undertaken by FAO to assist member countries in implementing the Framework of Action.

- **Food Losses and Waste (FLW) Work at Regional and National Level**

The paper would map the evolution and milestones in developing a regional strategy on FLW, from the Regional Multi-Stakeholder workshops on Food Security and Nutrition in Khartoum (2012) and Tunis (2013) to the one in Amman in April 2015, and endorsement of the strategy at the 32nd Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East. As implementation of the strategy is underway, the paper would also present the growing number of national FLW strategies and field projects being developed/implemented, for example in Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia, and a regional network for exchange of knowledge and good practice in food loss and waste reduction.

- **South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Agricultural Development and Food Security in the NENA Region: Challenges and Opportunities**

The NENA region, in spite of its efforts to enhance agricultural production, productivity and sustainability, is facing several development challenges. In this context, South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTrC) offers an opportunity for mutual learning based on sharing successful development experiences among developing countries. Interest in South-South Cooperation (SSC) from member countries is growing. FAO, alongside other United Nations entities, strongly promotes SSC as an efficient and effective means to share development solutions for agriculture and food security. In this respect, all NENA countries can play a role, in spite of the prevailing difficulties in the region driven down by the decline of oil prices and political instability in some countries. The Agenda-Item on SSC of the NERC33 will be an opportunity to further raise SSC visibility and discuss the challenges facing the countries of the region and the potential support under the SSTrC, and in particular with regard to technology and knowledge sharing, innovative policies, best practices and funding among countries. In addition to an information note that will be made available to participants, the FAO SSC Gateway, an on-line platform including national institutions designated by governments as potential providers of SSC, could be illustrated during the Conference if agreeable by all concerned.

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**MINISTERIAL MEETING**

12-13 May 2016

- 3. Statement by the Director-General**
- 4. Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council**
- 5. Statement by the Chairperson of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East**
- 6. Statement by the Chairperson of the CFS**
- 7. Statement by the Spokesperson of the Civil Society Consultation**
- 16. Prioritization of Country and Regional Needs: Statements by Heads of Delegation**
- 17. Date and Place of the 34<sup>th</sup> Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East**
- 18. Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairpersons of the 34<sup>th</sup> Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East**

**Review and endorsement of the Report of the Conference**