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COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Twenty-seventh Session

28 September - 2 October 2020

Implementation of the recommendations of the 26th Session of the Committee

Executive Summary

The Committee on Agriculture (COAG) is the main technical Governing Body of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) providing overall policy and regulatory guidance on issues relating to agriculture, livestock, food safety, nutrition, rural development and natural resource management. COAG plays a key role in guiding FAO and provides strategic advice on the challenges FAO has faced in assisting its Members to achieve the 2030 Agenda. The 26th Session of COAG reviewed several matters requiring the attention of the FAO Conference and Council and its Members.

This report provides an update on the implementation of the recommendations of the 26th Session of COAG.

Suggested action by the Committee

The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to provide any guidance it may find necessary for future reporting.

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I. Introduction

1. The Committee on Agriculture (COAG) has always played an important role in guiding the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The 26th Session of COAG reviewed and made a set of recommendations shown below on programmatic, policy and regulatory matters within its competence. Topics discussed included: (i) Sustainable pathways to engage food and agriculture for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; (ii) Sustainable food system; (iii) Agro-ecology: from advocacy to action; (iv) FAO's Work in the Food and Agriculture Sector under the Strategic Framework; (v) Revitalizing rural areas for youth; (vi) Report on the Global Soil Partnership (GSP); (vii) The Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems; (viii) FAO's activities on livestock, including the proposal for a sub-committee on livestock; (ix) Fall Armyworm in Africa: status, potential impacts and global response; (x) Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (WASAG); (xi) Biodiversity Mainstreaming Platform; (xii) Report on Implementation of the Recommendations of the 25th Session of the Committee, including the outcome of the informal open-ended working group on food safety scientific advice programme; (xiii) Multi-year Programme of Work of the Committee; (xiv) Observance of the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste, International Year of Fruits and Vegetables; and the International Year of Millets.

2. This report provides a summary and some indications of the main achievements of FAO as a result of the implementation of COAG 26 recommendations. While the COVID-19 related measures introduced as of March 2020 had implications on activities conducted, all efforts were made by the COAG Bureau, the Secretariat, FAO technical divisions and management team to address the recommendations regardless of limiting factors.

II. Status of implementation of recommendations of the Twenty-sixth Session of COAG

3. **Recommendation 1:** Sustainable food and agriculture (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 7)

The Committee requested FAO to

a) continue its support to countries in mainstreaming sustainable food and agriculture in the 2030 Agenda in an integrated way, e.g. through the related FAO guidelines to “Transforming food and agriculture to achieve the SDGs”

4. FAO has been supporting Members in identifying concrete, viable paths for moving forward at national and regional levels to mainstream food, agriculture and natural resource management into strategic agendas to achieve the common vision shared by the 2030 Agenda. This has been done using FAO guidelines to “Transforming food and agriculture to achieve the SDGs”, through workshops on building capacity around enforcing national investment plans, strengthening monitoring, creating partnerships, and innovating in implementation.

5. Regional workshops were held in the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) and the Regional Office for Near East and North Africa (RNE) regions, and technical assistance missions and trainings conducted at country level, including Bangladesh, Mexico, Kenya, Oman and Vietnam. Several countries requested FAO to provide support for training on SDG indicator 2.4.1 (the proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture), which, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, will take place virtually during the course of 2020.

d) develop a set of indicators and related statistics and tools relevant to sustainable food and agriculture and encourage their use by countries to measure and report on progress on SDGs implementation

6. FAO led the international multi-stakeholder process to formulate the methodology for SDG indicator 2.4.1, which is the proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable

agriculture. The methodology was officially endorsed by the international community when it was categorized as Tier II indicator by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) in November 2018. The final changes to the methodology, particularly the refinement of the Biodiversity sub-indicator, were endorsed in November 2019. Pilot tests have taken place in Bangladesh, Ecuador, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Mexico and Rwanda. Documentation - including a methodological note, survey questionnaire, enumerators manual, calculation procedure and an e-learning course - have been finalized to support countries in their data collection efforts. Protocols have been developed to collect data from the countries, including the SDG 2.4.1 data collection questionnaire, which was tested in 45 countries between December 2019 and April 2020. A collated version will be dispatched to countries for data collection in the third quarter of 2020.

7. The indicator is being rolled out in countries and has been integrated into the survey instruments of the AGRISurvey programme and the 50 x 2030 Initiative Data-Smart Agriculture¹, which will lead the way for improved data collection through farm surveys. In 2020-21, leveraging the Flexible Multi-Partner Mechanism (FMM) funds, a work stream is planned to explore the possibility of building an option of using alternative data sources to report on this indicator.

8. For the first time, FAO will be releasing a new global knowledge product entitled Progress Towards Sustainable Agriculture (PROSA). Currently, there is no international, regular source that reports on the state of sustainable agriculture across its multiple dimensions. With SDG 2.4.1 as the guiding framework, this publication fills this gap by analysing the main drivers of sustainable agriculture and reporting on past trends at country, regional and global levels. The new publication is planned for the second semester of 2020.

9. FAO started the project on “Sustainable Productivity in agriculture (in the context of Climate Smart Agriculture and Agro-ecology)” through the FMM, to provide evidence-based guidance and tools to promote a transition to more productive and sustainable agriculture at national and local levels. It includes a comprehensive set of tools to support policy and local decision making for sustainable agricultural and landscape interventions, methodologies and smart applications to understand current sustainability, identify transition options and support monitoring and verification. The SDGs, in particular SDG indicator 2.4.1, serves as the starting point for the methodology development, which will support the closer alignment of agricultural sectors to achieving the SDGs. The FMM sustainability assessment tools will combine farm-level information with broader-scale data, building on past and ongoing work on national agro-ecological zoning (NAEZ), soil and water mapping and modelling, GIS data, and in alignment with the *Hand-in-Hand initiative*, and is foreseen to be tested in two pilot countries (North Macedonia and Lao PDR).

10. An analytical and conceptual framework has been developed, which assesses the synergies and trade-offs of the 20 Actions to guide policy makers² within the context of the SDGs and takes into account intertemporal (present and future) and spatial (farm, landscape and country) dimensions, to provide support to countries in the areas of policy development and implementation. The process included a literature review, which highlighted cutting-edge methodologies on understanding trade-offs and synergies within agriculture.

11. FAO, together with its partners, developed the Tool for Agro-ecology Performance Evaluation (TAPE), consisting of an analytical framework to assess the multidimensional performances of Agro-ecology, and a database. TAPE is based on the Ten Elements of Agroecology and 10 core criteria of performance addressing the different dimensions of sustainability³. It was launched in July and published in October 2019. Two regional training workshops were conducted in Bangkok (September 2019) and Mexico (November 2019) and others are planned in Africa and Central Asia. A number of projects, conducted by FAO or by partners, are currently testing the tool in different regions and

¹ http://www.data4sdgs.org/sites/default/files/services_files/50x2030_Data-Smart%20Ag_Brochure.pdf

² <http://www.fao.org/3/I9900EN/i9900en.pdf>

³ <http://www.fao.org/agroecology/tools/en/>

results will be analysed in the database. Over 20 organizations from academia and civil society across different regions have contributed to the development of TAPE and piloting is being carried out with 10 organizations, consolidating the FAO Agroecology community of practice.

12. The Domestic Animal Diversity Information System (DAD-IS)⁴ was developed and maintained by FAO. Its role as a clearing house mechanism and early warning system for animal genetic resources for food and agriculture has been recognized by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) since the mid-1990s. The current version of DAD-IS includes tools to monitor the progress towards achieving SDG target 2.5.

13. **Recommendation 2** Sustainable food systems (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 12)

The Committee requested FAO, subject to resource availability, to take the lead in collaboration with relevant actors to develop voluntary codes of conduct on food loss and food waste to be submitted to the next session of COAG (COAG 27)

14. FAO has developed a Voluntary Code of Conduct (CoC) on Food Loss and Waste (FLW) Reduction, framed by a food-systems approach and aligned with the interconnected SDGs, which addresses both food loss and food waste within the same document.

15. Major steps followed in the development of the CoC include: a global e-consultation hosted on the Food Security and Nutrition Network to obtain feedback on the outline of the CoC and the technical content of the different sections (19 July to 16 August 2019); multi-stakeholder technical consultation workshops for the identification of priority FLW issues that should be incorporated into the CoC (organised as side events at the following meetings: 2nd All African Post Harvest Congress and Exhibition, in September 2019; 1st Regional Summit on FLW in Latin America and the Caribbean on 10 October 2019); Regional Consultation on FLW in the Near East and North Africa organized by the FAO Office in Cairo, Egypt (16-17 December 2019); a global e-consultation (May 2020) for obtaining feedback on the draft document and an on-line workshop; an Open-ended Working Group (OEWG), composed of representatives from each of the FAO Regional Groups and non-State actors, meeting through an on-line workshop (30 June and 1 July 2020) to review and agree on the final text submitted to the 27th Session COAG.

16. It is envisaged that the CoC submitted to the 27th Session will provide an overarching generic framework to develop specific voluntary codes of conduct on food loss on the one hand and food waste on the other, as well as technical guidelines to permit practical application in particular situations. It is a living, dynamic document that will be refined and brought up to date as required, taking into account technical, economic and social progress.

17. **Recommendation 3** Agroecology: from advocacy to action (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 13)

The Committee requested FAO to develop an action plan (for the Scaling up Agroecology Initiative) with partners, taking into account country needs and capacities.

18. The Work Plan of the Agroecology Initiative was approved in January 2019, by the UN-Partners Advisory Mechanism and includes key activities and milestones for the 2019-2020 timeline within the three main lines of action⁵. At national scale, three priority countries were identified for the first phase: México, Senegal and India. The implementation progress has been monitored by UN-Partners Advisory Mechanism regularly.

19. **Recommendation 4** Agro-ecology: from advocacy to action (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 14)

⁴ <http://www.fao.org/dad-is/en/>

⁵ COAG/2020/INF/6 Updates on the Scaling Up Agroecology Initiative.

The Committee [...] requested FAO to further revise the Ten Elements of Agroecology, as presented by FAO, to reflect the discussions of this session (to be presented to the Council together with the COAG report). (para 14)

20. At the request of Council at its 160th session, the Ten Elements of Agroecology were revised to reflect the discussions of the 26th COAG Session and submitted to the Conference at its 41st Session, which requested that an inclusive consultation process under the leadership of the Chairpersons of the Programme Committee (PC) and the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) be put in place and submitted for review by the Programme Committee at its next session, and thereafter for consideration and approval by the Council at its December 2019 session (C 41/REP, para 49(c)). The document, including all comments from Members, received in-depth review by nominated representatives from each FAO regional group in three full-day sessions in October. A revised version of the Ten Elements of Agroecology⁶ was approved by the 163rd Session of the Council (CL 163/Rep). Following the endorsement of the Ten Elements of Agroecology, a new publication is under preparation for submission to a peer-reviewed journal as a contribution to the COAG request to FAO for strengthening normative, science and evidence-based work on agroecology.

21. **Recommendation 5** Agro-ecology: from advocacy to action (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 16)

The Committee requested FAO to continue exploring synergies and complementarities between Agro-ecology and other approaches of sustainable food and agriculture

22. FAO is supporting with technical contributions the ongoing policy convergence process within the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) to produce policy recommendations on “Agroecological and other innovative approaches for sustainable agriculture and food systems that enhance food security and nutrition”⁷ following the HLPE report on this topic presented at the CFS 46th Session in October 2019.

23. **Recommendation 6** Agroecology: from advocacy to action (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 17)

The Committee requested the Secretariat to prepare, in collaboration with the Bureau, a draft resolution on the further integration of sustainable agricultural approaches, including Agroecology, in the future planning activities of the Organization to be discussed in the next Council. (para 17)

24. The resolution 7/2019 *Further integration of sustainable agricultural approaches, including Agroecology, in the future planning activities of FAO* was adopted by the Conference in its 41st Session (C 2019/REP, para 49.a).

25. **Recommendation 7** Revitalizing rural areas for youth (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 22)

The Committee requested FAO in collaboration with the other Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) to develop a rural youth action plan, based on existing instruments, to be submitted to the next session of the COAG (COAG 27).

26. FAO developed a Rural Youth Action Plan (RYAP), for which consultations were undertaken with other UN agencies, including IFAD, ILO, and other members of the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (UN IANYD), to finalize the specific areas of collaboration.

27. Drafts of the Action Plan were shared with the COAG Bureau for guidance and inputs, including at its 4th meeting on 23 April and 7th meeting in September 2019.

28. In addition, FAO has consulted and requested contributions from a number of youth related stakeholders at global as well as regional levels, these include: the Youth UN staff network, the Youth Alliance for Zero Hunger, Young Professionals for Agriculture Development (YPARD), the WFP

⁶ <http://www.fao.org/3/ca7173en/ca7173en.pdf>

⁷ <http://www.fao.org/3/ca5602en/ca5602en.pdf>

Youth Network and the Convention on Biological Diversity Youth Networks. The action plan was developed in consultation with FAO divisional and regional children and youth focal points.

29. The overall scope of the RYAP is twofold: it will strengthen FAO's capacity to integrate youth in its programmes and initiatives, across all technical units and decentralized offices, and contribute to facilitating rural youth's access to education and decent jobs, contributing to revitalizing rural areas, through the development, strengthening and upscaling of specific tools and services for rural youth.

30. The RYAP is developed under 5 pillars: Pillar 1: Support youth participation in rural development, within the context of integrated Landscape and Territorial Approaches; Pillar 2: Foster youth employment in an inclusive green economy; Pillar 3: Strengthen rural youth capacities for the use of innovative approaches and technologies in food and agriculture; Pillar 4: Promote rural services for youth and agripreneurs, and Pillar 5: Building FAO institutional capacity to address rural youth areas of work. The action plan is considered a "living" document to ensure it has the flexibility to accommodate new developments such as the emerging challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

31. Considering its transverse nature, the RYAP has been structured with a series of activities and integrative processes within existing programmes and thus, would not require significant additional resources. Activities would be anchored within the Regular Programme and, where possible, strengthened with extra-budgetary resources. Should additional funding be secured, the RYAP will be expanded, in collaboration with partners, to include additional cross-cutting normative and operational activities. However, the effective implementation of the Rural Youth Action Plan requires FAO to strengthen its organizational and budgetary arrangements.

32. **Recommendation 8** Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 24)

The Committee requested FAO and the SAG to continue developing and refining criteria and indicators for the designation of sites and the monitoring and evaluation of their Dynamic Conservation Plans and ensure geographical expansion in a balanced manner, technical assistance, and the active participation of the private sector and local governments.

33. Further refinement of GIAHS criteria and development of basic indicators for monitoring have been discussed with the GIAHS Scientific Advisory Group (SAG). These following tasks are ongoing, i.e.: i) clarification of the meaning of "Global Importance"; and ii) to add a requirement for harmonization with the natural environment in the GIAHS criteria 2, and to specify the concept of "Seascape" in the criteria 5⁸. Guidelines have been developed for making proposals for assisting countries to develop high quality GIAHS proposals and are uploaded in the GIAHS homepage.

34. Designation of GIAHS sites have been promoted through the three SAG sessions held after the 26th COAG, and nine new sites have been added (Brazil, Iran (2), Italy, Morocco, Spain (2), Tunisia (2)), bringing the total GIAHS sites to 62 in 22 countries. As of June 2020, there is one proposed site in the final stage, seven proposed sites in the evaluation process and seven new proposals at the initial stage. For greater geographic expansion of the sites, several technical workshops and training projects at national, regional and global levels were organized in China, Costa Rica, Georgia, Japan and Spain in collaboration with host governments and FAO regional and country offices. The GIAHS Coordinator made a presentation to the G20 Agricultural Ministers (Niigata, Japan, 12 May 2020). The GIAHS Secretariat provided technical guidance to individual country requests. To enhance the global visibility of the GIAHS programme, the Secretariat participated in the

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http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/giahs_assets/GIAHS_test/04_Become_a_GIAHS/02_Features_and_criteria/Criteria_and_Action_Plan_for_home_page_for_Home_Page_Jan_1_2017.pdf

events and meetings organized by partner organizations and institutes such as ICOMOS, Slow Food and [East Asia Research Association for Agricultural Heritage Systems, ERAHS](#).

35. Consultations have been held with other relevant FAO technical units: Former Rural Poverty Reduction Programme Management Team (SP3), Value chain and Geographic Indications, Biodiversity, Agroecology, Secretariat of the UN Decade of Family Farming (UNDIFF) to seek collaboration in the fields of biodiversity, sustainable agriculture, poverty reduction, promotion of family farming and marketing. In this context, a study for digitalization of GIAHS programme was also conducted. In the field of sustainable agrotourism, discussion has been underway with UNWTO (World Tourism Organization) to exchange a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for initiating joint activities.

36. For the next stage of the GIAHS programme, the plan identifies main pillars of activities, which extends the operation to technical assistance for effective implementation of the action plan for dynamic conservation, to scale up the impacts of GIAHS and to invite countries to strengthen the existing sites through an integrated support to the farmers.

37. **Recommendation 9** Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 25)

The Committee requested FAO, subject to the availability of extra-budgetary resources, to strengthen its work on GIAHS, including its Secretariat.

38. The extra-budgetary funds from China and Japan, which had supported GIAHS programme for a long time, ceased in December 2018 and September 2019, respectively. Japan decided to start allocating a new 3-year funding project from 2020 as its third phase and the project document is under preparation. In addition, Italy provided its financial contribution to the GIAHS programme in 2020, and Spain expressed its plan for funding as well as their financial contribution to GIAHS programme in 2020. Nonetheless, the number of the GIAHS Secretariat staff is kept to the minimum to match the current financial capacity. In this regard, China has proposed to send an APO to the Secretariat.

39. **Recommendation 10** FAO's activities on livestock, including the proposal for a sub-committee on livestock (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 29)

The Committee discussed the background document "FAO's activities on livestock, including the proposal for the establishment of the Sub-Committee on livestock", and requested the Secretariat to prepare a report on the administrative and financial implications of its establishment and to develop terms of reference that include rationale, function, structure and implementation modalities to be considered by its Bureau for submission to the next session of COAG.

40. The Animal Production and Health Division (NSA) prepared the document "Proposal for the establishment of a COAG Sub-Committee on Livestock" in collaboration with the COAG Secretariat under the guidance of the COAG Bureau. The document reviews COAG's current working arrangements for issues related to livestock, highlights the need for such a Sub-Committee in the light of the criteria adopted by the Conference through its Resolutions 13/97 and 11/2015, and describes the administrative and financial implications of its establishment. It also provides, in its appendices, draft Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Sub-Committee on Livestock.

41. The proposal for the Sub-Committee on Livestock specifies that the operational costs of the Sub-Committee would be covered by extra-budgetary contributions. To this end, a concept note for the establishment of a Multi-lateral Trust Fund in support of the operationalization and the multi-year programme of work of the COAG Sub-Committee on Livestock was prepared and shared with the FAO's Resource Mobilization and Private Sector Partnerships Division (PSR). The concept note is foreseen to be shared with Members and Regional Groups expressing interest and support to the proposed Sub-Committee on Livestock and its activities.

42. **Recommendation 11** Fall Armyworm in Africa: status, potential impacts and global response (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 35)

The Committee requested FAO to prepare a report on the spread and assessment of the risks that Fall Armyworm (FAW) poses to the livelihoods of those affected)

43. Since the FAW was detected in Africa in 2016, the Plant Production and Protection Division (NSP) has developed 65 projects with a total budget of around USD 32 million (including one inter-regional TCP that focuses on South-South Cooperation) and is mobilizing more resources for the 3-year Global Action for FAW Control, launched by FAO's Director-General in December 2019. The objective of the Global Action is to establish global coordination among key partners, reduce losses and prevent further spread of FAW.

44. Technical oversight for the implementation of the Global Action is provided by NSP and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Secretariat. In addition, a FAW Steering Committee and a FAW Technical Committee were established. The Steering Committee, chaired by the FAO Director-General, provides guidance on the implementation of the Global Action. The Technical Committee, chaired by USAID, oversees the work of the seven Technical Working Groups (TWGs). All these partners draw from Centres within the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), universities, as well as international, regional and national research centres.

45. FAO, in close collaboration with PennState University, developed the mobile App FAMEWS for farmers, community focal persons and extension agents to send vital information about FAW presence and infestation, helping to generate detailed, real time and reliable information that can be used to manage FAW. The data is transferred to the FAMEWS global platform⁹, with a real-time situation overview with maps and analytics of FAW infestations¹⁰ at global, country and sub-country levels.

46. In addition to the data collected on a regular basis with FAMEWS, the FAW Secretariat is currently coordinating a data collection initiative in Africa, the Near East and Asia. The data will be harmonized and analysed and a first report of the assessment of the risks that Fall Armyworm (FAW) poses to the livelihoods of those affected is expected for October 2020.

47. Two Global Action Steering Committee meetings and two Global Action Technical Committee meetings have been held virtually in 2020¹¹.

48. The International Conference on FAW Sustainable Management was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and is tentatively scheduled for the end of 2020.

49. The FAW website has been improved with new information and reports coming from the global coordination mechanism. Several new Guidance Notes to better assist Member Nations are available on the FAW website.¹²

50. **Recommendation 12** Implementing the FAO Climate Change Strategy: driving a global transformation to sustainable agriculture (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 37)

The Committee requested FAO to continue assisting Members to promote coherence in domestic adaptation and mitigation policies and strategies in the agriculture, food and land use sectors, according to their needs, priorities and respective capabilities.

51. The Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement provide the framework for collaboration between FAO and Members on climate change. FAO has been working with Members responding to their needs with regards to NDCs with a particular focus on the agricultural sectors in the following areas: enabling countries' capacities to define and implement

⁹ <http://www.fao.org/fall-armyworm/monitoring-tools/famews-global-platform/en/>

¹⁰ <http://www.fao.org/fall-armyworm/monitoring-tools/faw-map/en/>

¹¹ Reports available at <http://www.fao.org/fall-armyworm/global-action/technical-oversight/en/>

¹² <http://www.fao.org/fall-armyworm/en/>

NDCs in agricultural sectors; supporting implementation of the current NDCs; revising and enhancing NDCs in terms of technical quality and ambition; supporting countries in addressing their adaptation priorities including on National Adaptation Plans; and reporting NDC progress to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) under the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF).

52. In 2018 and 2019, FAO continued to provide technical leadership in enhancing national capacity to address both climate change and agriculture. The annual United Nations Climate Change Conference and discussions under the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture raised awareness and enhanced countries' capacities to integrate agricultural sectors in their NDCs and national climate change policies. A total of 98 Members received support in the implementation and further development of the agricultural components of their NDCs by the end of the biennium.

53. FAO's continuous work with the NDC-Partnership increased coordination of FAO action with other agencies to support Members reach their NDC targets in a more holistic way. FAO took a more active role being in-country facilitator in Mozambique and Gabon.). A rising number of Members and organizations also joined the Technical Working Group (TWG) on Agriculture, Food Security and Land Use, which launched a number of output products (case studies, e-discussions, etc.).

54. **Recommendation 12** Implementing the FAO Climate Change Strategy: driving a global transformation to sustainable agriculture (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 38)

The Committee requested FAO to continue promoting the conservation and use of underutilized crop species.

55. FAO, especially through funding provided by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), supported nine Members to conserve and use sustainably their endemic and underutilized crops and varieties. Under the auspices of the Zero Hunger Challenge, the incentives and disincentives for agricultural diversification and dietary diversity were identified in four Asian Member Nations, as a prelude to strengthening relevant national policies. In Africa, four countries have included diverse nutrient-dense crops as components of emergency responses to restart crop production after natural disasters and crises.

56. The Voluntary Guidelines for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Farmers' Varieties/Landrace¹³ was published in 2019. FAO's Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) endorsed it as a tool to aid countries to conserve and use underutilized crops and varieties sustainably. Following a technical consultation held at FAO headquarters in December 2019, a plan was drawn up for the publication, subject to the availability of extra-budgetary funding, of a book on the Indigenous Fruits and Vegetables of sub-Saharan Africa. Furthermore, a publication on the production of fruits and vegetables which highlights their available global diversity, including the underutilized ones, is planned for December 2020 in the Save and Grow series as a contribution to the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables scheduled for 2021.

57. **Recommendation 13** Implementing the FAO Climate Change Strategy: driving a global transformation to sustainable agriculture (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 39)

The Committee requested FAO to assist Members to promote transformative and integrated approaches towards sustainable agriculture in its economic, environmental and social dimensions, such as climate smart agriculture, which would help farmers to increase sustainably agricultural productivity and incomes, adapt to a changing climate and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions.

58. FAO continued to advocate for transformational change towards more sustainable and climate resilient food and agricultural systems. FAO's work at the field level on Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) was pursued to support governments to cope with climate change in the context of agriculture.

¹³ <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca5601en>

FAO organized various workshops, including one on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) for CSA, and produced CSA-related knowledge products such as the publication “Climate-smart agriculture and the Sustainable Development Goals” in 2019.

59. As a response to FAO’s Governing Bodies’ call for increased evidence-based work on Agroecology, the study “The potential of Agroecology to build sustainable livelihoods and resilient food systems”, funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation was completed in December 2019, with the aim to elaborate on existing links between Agroecology and climate change.

60. The Director-General participated in the 2019 Climate Action Summit and COP25, which promoted FAO’s support to countries to transform agriculture and food systems to become more climate resilient and sustainable and to reinforce its leadership in the urgency of addressing food security, hunger and poverty issues in the context of climate change.

61. **Recommendation 14** Implementing the FAO Climate Change Strategy: driving a global transformation to sustainable agriculture (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 40)

The Committee requested FAO to engage actively in national, regional and international discussions on how to implement the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture on the ground.

62. Since the inception of the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture (KJWA), a landmark decision adopted by countries at COP23, FAO has been playing a key role in supporting countries as well as the UNFCCC Secretariat through facilitating informal negotiators workshops and sharing its technical expertise. Through its active engagement in the UNFCCC process and support to countries, FAO has been recognized as a key actor and “knowledge- expertise- holder” in supporting the implementation of the Koronivia roadmap.

63. **Recommendation 15** Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 43)

The Committee requested FAO to provide technical and policy assistance to countries, including through South-South Cooperation and innovative approaches, to enhance their involvement in WASAG activities.

64. Technical assistance included a TCP project on “Reducing climate vulnerabilities of the agriculture sector” to Burundi, Djibouti and Rwanda and a project on “Climate smart agriculture in the face of saline groundwater intrusion and a persistent drought”, developed with the Government of Cabo Verde and a scoping mission in December 2019.

65. WASAG is developing a Quinoa Programme in collaboration with the International Centre for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) and Agricultural Research for Development (CIRAD) with the contribution of four FAO Regional Offices and technical divisions to target 18 countries. With the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS) and in collaboration with prospective partners on quinoa, a joint project proposal for submission to South-South and Triangular Cooperation will be initiated. WASAG visibility has been supported by partners and featured in several international events. Other key WASAG working group activities include the World Bank, IFAD with FAO’s financing framework for bridging financing gaps for NDC Agriculture projects and, work on water productivity and nutrition, for publication in 2020¹⁴.

66. **Recommendation 16** Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 44)

The Committee requested FAO to report to COAG periodically on the progress of the partnership.

67. Since the establishment of the six WASAG Working Groups, reviewed at the First International WASAG Forum (Praia City, March 2019), the partnership has produced technical and

¹⁴ COAG/2020/INF/16 Updates on the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (WASAG).

policy guidance on water productivity improvements under water scarcity and a number of virtual information webinars due to COVID-19. Three webinars have been conducted, including a World Water Day message on Water and Climate Change focusing on agriculture, with an additional seven planned for 2020.

68. WASAG is set to collaborate with the newly proposed FAO Dryland Agriculture Programme for supporting synergies on mutually reinforcing issues. WASAG is also exploring how to develop a response to COVID-19 in the context of water scarcity in agriculture.

69. **Recommendation 17** Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 45)

The Committee requested FAO to develop an umbrella programme, including a funding strategy.

70. WASAG developed the Umbrella Programme, as reflected in the FAO Business Development Portfolio¹⁵, and continues to implement the programme. In addition to the current Swiss Federal Office for Agriculture contribution to the Umbrella Programme, equivalent to USD 300 000, which has supported the WASAG activities to-date, proposals have been submitted to several partners.

71. WASAG has 68 partners and a committed Steering Committee, which meets four times a year. The support from Members has been key to achieving all the above results and their greater involvement and support will increase the impact of WASAG in contributing to food security and nutrition and sustainable agriculture under a changing climate.

72. **Recommendation 18** Biodiversity Mainstreaming Platform (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 47, 48)

The Committee requested FAO to develop a strategy on biodiversity mainstreaming across agricultural sectors, ensuring consistency with other FAO strategies including the one on climate change, for consideration by the Programme Committee and Council, to be presented at the FAO Conference in 2019, in view of the preparation of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework of the CBD.(para 47)

The Committee requested FAO to organize electronic consultations on the draft strategy on biodiversity mainstreaming and, subject to the availability of extra-budgetary resources, regional dialogues on mainstreaming biodiversity into the different agricultural sectors (para 48).

The Committee requested FAO to continue to act as the Biodiversity Mainstreaming Platform, and to: Para 49 d) develop an action plan indicating the resources needed.

73. Following the request from the Committee, a draft Strategy on Biodiversity Mainstreaming Across Agricultural Sectors was submitted to the FAO Conference in 2019 for approval. The Conference mandated the 163rd Session of the Council (December 2019) to further consider and adopt the draft Strategy, following an inclusive consultation process.

74. The revised draft Strategy was submitted for a second online consultation through the FAO Members Gateway platform in September 2019 (first round in May 2019), supplemented by an Informal Seminar with Permanent Representatives called by the Chairperson of the Programme Committee (PC) (19 September 2019). Feedback was received from over 30 FAO Members, as well as through Regional Dialogues, including from the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP)

75. An informal meeting of the PC was held on 30 September 2019 and feedback was presented to FAO Members. A second revised draft of the Strategy was distributed for consultation via the FAO Members Gateway and discussed at a second Informal Seminar with Permanent Representatives called by the Chairperson of the PC (23 October 2019); subsequently a third revised draft Strategy was presented to the 127th Session of the PC (4-8 November 2019) for consideration. The FAO Council, at

¹⁵ See also at https://home.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/rm-ssc/images/BDTF/2paggers/climate_change/DanaInfo=intranet.fao.org+Water_Scarcity_Management.pdf

its 163rd Session in December 2019, adopted the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors (Strategy).¹⁶ According to the Strategy, FAO has to develop an action plan, including a timetable, to operationalize the Strategy, for consideration by the FAO Technical Committees and approval by the Council. The draft Action Plan for the Implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural sectors was reviewed by the Secretariats of Technical Committees and a first draft was submitted to the informal meeting of the PC on 3 February 2020.

76. Finally, the Programme Committee, at its 128th Session in June 2020, reviewed the first draft of the Action Plan¹⁷ and provided detailed comments.¹⁸ The Council, at its 164th Session in July 2020, appreciated the progress made in the implementation of the Strategy, highlighted the need for the draft Action Plan to be reviewed by the relevant Technical Committees on Fisheries (COFI), Forestry (COFO) and Agriculture (COAG), as mandated by the Council at its 163rd Session, and recommended that the implementation period of the Action Plan would be extended to three years.¹⁹

77. **Recommendation 19** Update on the Global Soil Partnership, including the International Code of Conduct for the Use and Management of Fertilizers (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 54)

The Committee mandated its Bureau to undertake an inclusive consultation process to prepare a revised text to be submitted to the FAO Council at its next session.

78. The International Code of Conduct for the Sustainable Use and Management of Fertilizers was endorsed by the Conference at its 41st Session (June 2019). A Concept Note for the implementation of the Fertilizers Code was prepared by the Secretariat to guide execution of various activities at global, regional and national levels.

79. The implementation plan will be distributed to potential donors to support its execution. This plan of action was discussed during a webinar, organized by the Global Soil Partnership (GSP), and attended by over 500 participants from 94 countries. The implementation plan was endorsed by the 8th GSP Plenary Assembly (3-5 June 2020), including the establishment of the International Network on Fertilizers Analysis (INFA), to be launched in September 2020 under the umbrella of the Global Soil Laboratory Network (GLOSOLAN), to focus on the harmonization of laboratory methods for fertilizers quality assessment and for developing capacities of soil laboratories in this regard. The GSP Plenary urged the Secretariat to fully move into the execution of the plan together with Members and partners. Ongoing activities to improve the procedure for technical clearance and procurement of fertilizers are in place to support development and emergency projects at country level. Furthermore, a project on sustainable soil management for nutrition sensitive agriculture is under implementation in three countries addressing the issue of micronutrients.

80. Regarding other GSP activities, focus was given to the improvement of soil data and information through the following products: global assessment of soil pollution, global assessment of soil biodiversity, global assessment of the status of black soils, preparation of global soil salinity and global soil organic carbon sequestration potential maps, all to be launched in 2020. The “RECSOIL: recarbonization of global soils” was launched and is under implementation as a solid option to scale sustainable soil management practices on the ground. Furthermore, as per request of FAO Members, a stocktaking evaluation of the GSP was performed and reported to the 8th GSP Plenary Assembly²⁰.

81. **Recommendation 21** Implementation of the recommendations of the 25th Session of the Committee, including the outcome of the informal open-ended working group on food safety scientific advice programme (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 60)

¹⁶ CL 163/REP, paragraph 10 g)

¹⁷ PC 128/9

¹⁸ CL 164/6 Rev.1, paragraph 14

¹⁹ CL 164/REP, paragraph 18 l).

²⁰ COAG/2020/18 Report of the Global Soil Partnership (GSP).

Recognizing the importance of regular reporting on COAG recommendations, the Committee requested FAO's continued reporting, including on the 2030 Agenda, Innovation, Family Farming, Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR), Agroecology and GIAHS

82. In line with COAG recommendations, FAO is engaged in continued reporting and information sharing on key activities, including dedicated updates, publications and information notes for COAG 27 relating to the 2030 Agenda, Innovation, Family Farming, Agroecology and GIAHS.

83. The United Nations Decade of Family Farmers (UNDFF) serves as a framework for countries to develop public policies, knowledge and investment to support family farming, displaying their potential as key actors for the achievement of the SDGs.

84. National Action Plans (NAPs) for Family Farming, designed by governmental institutions in close coordination with Family Farming Organizations and multistakeholder platforms for policy dialogue, have been already adopted in six countries (Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, the Gambia, Indonesia, Nepal and Peru). In three other countries (Chad, Philippines, Sierra Leone) the processes are at the drafting phase, while at least 31 other countries are progressing in mobilizing actors for dialogue on priorities to be included in their NAPs.

85. The UNDFF is channelling strong political commitment by engaging with a wide range of stakeholders towards establishing strategic partnerships and improved synergies with ongoing initiatives, especially at national level. So far, those national processes engaged 1400 different actors (cooperatives, farmers, organizations, NGOS, public institutions, academia).

86. FAO is supporting countries in the implementation of the UNDFF in order to provide a roadmap to advance the implementation of the UNDFF giving value to the multidimensional contribution of family farming to meet the SDGs and to provide technical support at the regional and national levels.

87. At the global level, ongoing key global initiatives promoted by FAO include a Modular Training Program on Public Policy Cycle for Family Farming (FAO-IFAD) to strengthen capacities of policy makers, family farmers' organizations and other relevant stakeholders on the formulation, implementation and evaluation of differentiated and context-specific public policies for family farming.

88. Family Farmers' contributions are being recognized and given a central role in national strategies during the health emergency due to the spread of the COVID-19 and its current and expected effects on food systems. FAO is collecting as much information as possible on the multidimensional and multi-level impacts of the pandemic on family farming, as well as on the required, planned or implemented response measures put in place by countries, for a better understanding of the impacts at different levels and in different contexts, and a better, diverse and timely orientation to Members.

89. Considering the current health crisis, the Global Action Plan of the UNDFF remains a valid, though not exclusive, framework for action, with a focus on Pillar 4 aimed at strengthening family farmers' organizations and capacities to generate knowledge, represent farmers and provide inclusive services; Pillar 5 providing indicative actions to strengthen the economic, ecological and social resilience of family farmers facing the crisis; and Pillar 7, with its focus on local food systems and the promotion of innovative economic opportunities and market solutions, taking into account the need for measures to revamp rural economies adversely affected by the crisis. A threefold, GAP-based approach to support family farmers coping with the negative effects of the pandemic is being developed, along the following three main axes: ensuring that family farmers are not exposed to or agents of COVID-19 transmission; mitigating the impact of the health crisis on family farmers' food security and livelihoods; and strengthening local food systems and family farmers access to markets to revamp rural economies.

90. Concerning the **Peste des Petits Ruminants** (PPR), the Joint PPR Resource Mobilization and Marketing Strategy (RMMS) was developed. Over 60 percent of the targeted resources (USD996 millions) for the 5-year (2017-2021) PPR Global Eradication Programme (PPR GEP) has been mobilized, with a funding gap of about USD 340 million needed. The second phase (2022-2026) is to be formulated and more resources will be needed for its implementation.

91. In order to address shortfalls in vaccines for the programme, vaccine production critical capacity has been enormously increased in Ethiopia, Pakistan, and Senegal, to serve the national needs and serve neighbouring countries. Between 2015 and 2019, countries were assisted by FAO to vaccinate over 100 million animals. This is a major achievement but represents less than 8 percent of the 1.5 billion small ruminants needing vaccination. Vaccination was also carried out by other partners.

92. Sero-surveillance was also promoted and in 2020 more than 90 percent of laboratories in infected and at risk countries have the capacity to use at least the ELISA kit for PPR diagnosis. ELISA kits are produced at AU-PANVAC with FAO assistance.

93. The status of the PPR GEP implementation was presented at the 128th Session of the Programme Committee and a specific recommendation was made at the 164th Session of the FAO Council, recognizing the potential funding gap resulting from the COVID-19 crisis. FAO was encouraged to pursue more affordable solutions to mobilize resources, including through partnerships with the private sector and other stakeholders.

94. **Recommendation 22** Implementation of the recommendations of the 25th Session of the Committee, including the outcome of the informal open-ended working group on food safety scientific advice programme (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 61)

Recognizing the importance of the standard setting work of FAO, the Committee requested FAO to ensure sustainable funding for the Joint FAO/WHO food safety scientific advice programme to the CODEX Alimentarius and for IPPC, including from the regular budget.(para 61)

95. The 163rd Session of the FAO Council highlighted the importance of sustainable funding for FAO's work on scientific advice and standard setting, and recommended additional resources for WHO/FAO's food safety scientific advice programme. The Adjustments to the PWB 2020-21 (CL 163/3) include additional resources of USD 1 million for WHO/FAO's food safety scientific advice programme. In addition, the Director-General made USD 500 000 available for 2019.

96. The Food Safety and Quality Unit has initiated additional work that will greatly facilitate and enhance the delivery of scientific advice to Codex, through additional expert meetings, the training of new experts to ensure an increased availability of experts for the scientific advice program and an enhanced focus on some extension activities that aims at a better country participation to help increase the amount of data available for scientific advice.

97. **Recommendation 23** Implementation of the recommendations of the 25th Session of the Committee, including the outcome of the informal open-ended working group on food safety scientific advice programme (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 62)

Given the importance of FAO's work and activities relating to Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), the Committee requested that reporting on the implementation of the AMR Action Plan become a standing COAG item (para 62)

98. AMR initiatives contribute to a range of outcomes under the Strategic Objectives of FAO, with the majority of outputs under SO4, as well as under SOs 5 and 2 in PWB 2018-2019 (C 2019/21

Rev.1, para 62). A progress report is in preparation and will be presented to the 27th Session of COAG²¹. It highlights the achievements in the below focus areas.

- Awareness: FAO has engaged in significant, sustained efforts to raise awareness of AMR through high level advocacy, key events, conference, digital and cross-media products, stakeholder engagement, and training.
 - Surveillance: The FAO Assessment Tool for Laboratories and AMR Surveillance System (FAO-ATLASS) has been applied in 28 countries (more than 100 labs); global network established through Reference Centres, technical advisory groups; a platform for AMR data related to food and agriculture is being developed and will be piloted; a series of harmonized guidelines for surveillance under a regional framework has been developed and Guideline Volume 1 has been published.
 - Governance: A Progressive Management Pathway for AMR (FAO-PMP-AMR) was developed and has been implemented in seven countries to help Members with developing and operationalizing their National Action Plans (NAPs). The Methodology to analyse AMR-relevant legislation in the food and agriculture sector has been developed and applied in 22 countries.
 - Good practices: Various guidelines, case study series have been published. Various, mixed-methods studies of stakeholders (e.g. Knowledge, Attitude, Practices survey) were carried out across 10 countries.
99. The report also includes tripartite activities and other multi-sectorial collaborations within the “One Health” framework.
- The Tripartite Work plan (2019-2020) has been developed, adopted and signed.
 - The AMR Multi-Partner Trust Fund (AMR MPTF) was launched in June 2019 to support the implementation of the activities at global, regional and national level under the “One Health” approach.
 - A Tripartite Joint Secretariat (TJS) was established in 2019, for which FAO has nominated a liaison officer to coordinate joint actions and the delivery of tripartite efforts on AMR.
 - Codex re-established an *ad hoc* Intergovernmental Task Force on AMR (TFAMR). The TFAMR is revising the existing Codex Code of Practice to minimize and contain foodborne antimicrobial resistance (CXC 61-2005), as well as developing new guidance for countries on integrated monitoring and surveillance of foodborne antimicrobial resistance.
 - The IPPC Contracting Parties (CPs) suggested that a Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) Recommendation on AMR be developed in relation to plant health.
100. **Recommendation 24** Proposal for an International Year of Fruits and Vegetables (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 67)

The Committee endorsed the proposal by the Latin America and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) to establish the observance by the United Nations system of an International Year of Fruits and Vegetables on an exceptional basis in 2021 and the draft Conference Resolution to be submitted for the consideration of the 160th Session of the Council for adoption by the 41st Session of the FAO Conference

101. Resolution 74/244 proclaiming an International Year of Fruits and Vegetables in 2021, was adopted by The United Nations General Assembly on 19 December 2019.

102. The resolution invites all Members, organizations of the United Nations system, other international and regional organizations and other relevant stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector and academia, to observe the International Year, as appropriate, through activities aimed at raising awareness of and directing policy attention to the nutritional and health benefits of fruit and

²¹ COAG/2020/8. Progress report on the Implementation of FAO Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) 2016-2020, and the proposal for the new FAO Action plan on AMR 2021-2025.

vegetable consumption, the contribution of fruit and vegetable consumption to the promotion of diversified, balanced and healthy diets and lifestyles, increase production in a sustainable manner to provide opportunities for family farmers and to improve affordability and accessibility, while reducing loss and waste of fruits and vegetables and sharing best practices in this regard.

103. **Recommendation 25** Proposal for an International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 68)

The Committee endorsed the proposal by the Government of Argentina to establish the observance by the United Nations system, of an International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste, to be celebrated on 29 September each year and the draft Conference Resolution to be submitted for the consideration of the 160th Session of the Council for adoption by the 41st Session of the FAO Conference.

104. Resolution 74/209 proclaiming an International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste, was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 19 December 2019, inviting FAO to facilitate the observance of the International Day, in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and other relevant organizations.

105. The first International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste (IDAFLW), to be celebrated on 29 September 2020, will make a clear call to action for both the public (national or local authorities) and the private (businesses and individuals) sectors to bolster efforts to reduce food loss and waste in an effort to ensure food security for all and particularly the most vulnerable, impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

106. **Recommendation 26** Proposal for an International Year of Millets (C 2019/21 Rev.1 para 69)

The Committee endorsed the proposal by the Government of India to establish the observance by the United Nations system of an International Year of Millets on an exceptional basis in 2023, and the draft Conference Resolution to be submitted for the consideration of the 160th Session of the Council for adoption by the 41st Session of the FAO Conference

107. The proposal for an International Year of Millets (IYM) was endorsed by the 41st FAO Conference (Resolution 10/2019). The Conference requested the Director-General to transmit this Resolution to the Secretary-General of the United Nations with a view to having the General Assembly of the United Nations consider, at its next session, declaring 2023 as the International Year of Millets. The International Year is still to be adopted by UNGA.