

165th Session of the Council

Item 10 - Report of the 129th Session of the Programme Committee (9-13 November 2020)

The 129th Session of the Programme Committee was held from 9 to 13 November 2020 and its Report is submitted to the Council in document CL 165/10.

The Programme Committee had twenty items on its agenda, including eight items for information. The session was conducted virtually on an exceptional basis due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It had excellent substantive discussion in a positive and constructive way.

The Programme Committee discussed the Outline of the Strategic Framework (2021-31) and Outline of the Medium Term Plan 2022-25 at length. Members of the Committee appreciated the inclusive consultation process to date, and the reflection of inputs from Members, welcomed the focus on a food systems approach and the strategic narrative of “Leaving No One Behind through sustainable, inclusive and resilient food systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life” to support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and FAO’s three Global Goals, and looked forward to further formal and informal consultations with Members for its elaboration.

On the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, the Programme Committee recognized its substantial progress, welcomed the flexible and innovative matchmaking approach to building multidimensional partnerships that strengthen mobilization of means of implementation, and noted with appreciation the transparent approach to monitoring performance for the multi-partner Hand-in-Hand Initiative.

The Programme Committee requested the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture to develop a framework on the basis of the recommended practices related to the digital food and agriculture for Members’ consideration through FAO Governing Bodies processes, following the review of the Terms of Reference by the Council.

The Programme Committee reviewed and discussed four evaluation items: the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), SDG 2, Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations and the Indicative rolling work plan of evaluations 2021-2023.

Under Any Other Matters, Members requested to discuss multilingualism, and they expressed concern about the delay in publication of documents in all Committee languages and agreed that for future sessions, the Committee will adhere to the rule that documents which are not published in all Committee languages by the established deadline will not be considered at the meeting.

The Programme Committee was also informed of extensive and detailed information on topics such as the UN Food Systems Summit 2021 and FAO’s work in food systems, FAO’s response to the Desert Locust upsurge and Fall Armyworm, FAO’s Gender Action Plan and the draft Nutrition Strategy.

Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen, Chairperson of the Programme Committee