



FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Thirty-sixth Session

Dhaka, Bangladesh, 8-11 March 2022

Provisional Annotated Agenda

Senior Officers Meeting

8-9 March 2022

I. Introductory Items

1. Election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons, and appointment of the Rapporteur
2. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

(Please see Ministerial Session items from 3 to 14 on pages 7 and 8)

II. Regional and Global Policy and Regulatory Matters

15. State of food and agriculture in Asia and the Pacific region, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has been intensively working on the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme to reach a larger share of rural populations and to relaunch economic activities. The Programme is now focusing on building back better and stronger towards transforming agrifood systems across all our *Four Betters*, with an emphasis on science and innovation, climate change, legal frameworks and scaling up. This paper examines the situation in Asia and the Pacific during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021. It reviews the health, economic, livelihood, and food security impacts both regionally and at the country level for specific groups, such as the poor and the most vulnerable segments of the population. Given the broad socio-economic reach of the pandemic, the Report examines the macro-economic impacts and the effects on employment and income, migration and trade, economic growth and government fiscal space, food security and nutrition, poverty, and hunger. The Report also reviews the various governments' responses to the COVID-19 pandemic covering the health crisis, macro economy, unemployment, food supply disruptions, food demand shocks arising from the pandemic lockdowns, reduced mobility, restrictions on international travel, and internal and cross border migration. These responses include governments' investments in health services; expansion of social protection measures to new groups and beneficiaries; trade measures to ensure continued trade in critical food

and health products, and financial support measures to minimize job losses and reduce food supply chain disruptions. It also covers new policies and investment priorities, including digital technologies, to rebuild agrifood systems that are resilient, inclusive and green.

16. Actions to promote climate resilient agrifood systems in Asia and the Pacific region

As the Director-General stated in the opening of the 168th Session of the Council, FAO's new thematic Strategy on Climate Change needs game-changing, innovative and wise solutions based on science and partnerships to transform agrifood systems to be more resilient and sustainable. Since the impacts of past and ongoing climate change are likely more significant than previously thought and since there are time lags between the development and adoption of new technologies and practices needed to strengthen resilience, the window available for action to invest in resilience and ensure that the agrifood system is adapted to future potential climate risks is narrow. Acting now to anticipate and adapt, but also to address the drivers of future risks from climate change such as agroecosystem degradation and excess greenhouse gas emissions, will have durable and lasting benefits. This paper will provide an overview of climate resilient agrifood systems and the specific challenges in moving towards resilience as well as guiding approaches and examples to facilitate urgently needed action. The paper also aims to respond to requests from Members to highlight practical examples of actions being rolled out by national counterparts, FAO and other partners to promote or support the transition toward climate resilient agrifood systems and requirements for scaling-up. Delegates are invited to share experiences with national approaches and specific policies, programmes and measures to transition toward climate resilient agrifood systems. Delegates are also asked to highlight key institutional and technical challenges for the attention of FAO and other partners to accelerate needed action and investment to foster climate resilient agrifood systems in the region.

17. Scaling up inclusive digitalization in agricultural value chains

"Going Digital" is a smart solution for agriculture and rural development. FAO is committed to a digital agricultural transformation and the use of innovation to end hunger and improve quality of life in Asia and the Pacific. In this region, digital transformation is occurring at all stages of the value chain: from food production to consumption. The ongoing food e-commerce revolution is happening at the same time that mobile-based business models are emerging to provide advisory, marketing and financial services at scale to smallholder farmers. A parallel revolution in Industry 4.0 technologies is taking agro-industries to new levels of efficiency. Digitalization offers great potential for improving the efficiency and sustainability of value chains, and achieving Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2 and 13 (No Poverty, Zero Hunger and Climate action). However, there are several risks associated with digitalization, from potential job losses to environmental degradation and data governance concerns. Different value chains, and actors within them, digitalize at varying speed and would require tailored digitalization strategies to leave no one behind. Policymakers in the region need to facilitate the scaling up of digital innovations in an inclusive and sustainable manner to future-proof agricultural value chains, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Members are invited to provide guidance on how FAO can best support them in fostering the inclusive digitalization of agricultural and food value chains.

18. Identifying One Health priorities in Asia and the Pacific region

To date, One Health has focused largely on zoonotic diseases, Antimicrobial Resistance and food safety. As a result, One Health capacity development programmes have focused on supporting in-service veterinarians and medical doctors with no training programmes in place to support the natural resource management, wildlife and environment sectors. Yet, as an outcome of COVID-19, there is an increased awareness that the natural resource management, wildlife and environment sectors are essential to the future success of One Health, and that every form of environmental degradation has direct or indirect negative consequences on human and animal health. In order to prevent and mitigate health threats, the environmental, public health and veterinary sectors need to understand the interlinkages, speak with one voice and implement One Health with a harmonized approach focused on protecting biodiversity, ecosystems and natural resources (the "environment") from anthropogenic

drivers of degradation, as well as improve upstream interventions to prevent the spill-over and emergence of infectious zoonotic pathogens. The future of One Health aims to 1) engage the natural resource management and environment sector and enhance their capacity to support an inter-operable One Health approach with other sectors; 2) ensure that One Health Policy and implementation modalities at country level are inclusive of all partner's mandates and the priorities of all One Health stakeholders; and 3) increase the understanding of environmental issues in the One Health community, including how human health is dependent on the health of the environment. This paper provides an overview on One Health, technical areas where One Health is being applied, and opportunities for future One Health programming to address current gaps. We seek guidance from Members on capacity development and training needs and priority areas that FAO should address as part of the One Health FAO Programme Priority Areas.

19. Conserving, restoring and sustainably using biodiversity for food security and nutrition in the Pacific Islands

The Pacific Islands are primary centres of biodiversity. The subregion, where land makes up less than two percent of the total area, includes some of the richest and most diverse terrestrial and marine ecosystems on the planet. Closely interlinked, biodiversity and ecosystem services support the agricultural sector in multiple ways, benefiting producers' livelihoods and well-being. However, the increasing pace of transition from traditional to more intensive agricultural production systems is threatening this rich biodiversity heritage in the Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs), including the indigenous and local knowledge on which its survival depends. The majority of the PICTs have taken important steps to reverse these negative trends and embed the conservation and sustainable utilization of biodiversity into national strategies, but the capacity and coordination mechanisms to implement these measures are widely lacking. There is a clear need for a more systemic and coordinated approach among key sectors and stakeholders for the sustainable management of biodiversity for food and agriculture in the Pacific region. FAO has been working together with Members and regional partners in the Pacific region to build capacity and collaboration to strengthen the sustainable management of biodiversity for food and agriculture from policies to field. This paper presents an overview of the efforts made and existing opportunities to promote a regenerative, ecosystem-based agriculture.

III. Programme and Budget Matters

20. Regional results, priorities, the Four Betters and the Sustainable Development Goals

The Regional Conference will discuss how FAO activities have addressed previously agreed regional priorities during 2020-2021 and contributed to the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The item will highlight key achievements in the four Regional Initiatives agreed for the biennium and delivered in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. It will also examine how new ways of working, modalities and programmes introduced in 2020-21 have impacted Asia and the Pacific region, moving towards more inclusive, efficient and effective agrifood systems transformation. The item will underscore the important roles of strengthened partnerships with the private sector, country-led innovations and technologies, statistics, and gender-responsive programmes in realising inclusive, measurable and transformative change. It will also discuss new FAO initiatives such as the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, 1 000 Digital Villages, One Country One Priority Product, as well as achievements in the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Solution Forum and Platform and the Aquaculture Platform. Looking ahead, this item will draw key lessons learned from FAO's implementation of programmes in the region and emphasize the implications for supporting transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life, leaving no one behind. Science and innovation (including technology) will play major roles, and are seen as two accelerators that intensify the Organization's work in each of the *Four Betters* (better production, better nutrition, a better environment, a better life) and all of the 20 Programme Priority Areas (PPAs). This Agenda item will discuss FAO's regional approach towards achieving the Organization's vision, the Global Goals of Members and the 2030 Agenda. Reflecting on challenges

and opportunities in the region, the item will introduce four Regional Priorities for 2022-23 and beyond in the context of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, including the *Four Betters* and the PPAs. The Regional Priorities will focus on those PPAs most relevant in Asia and the Pacific with a view to “localizing” the Strategic Framework, contributing to SDG targets, and guiding future technical work of FAO in the region. The discussion will be informed by the results of FAO’s work in the Region; the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, the Medium Term Plan 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2022-23; priorities and recommendations of the Regional Technical Commissions; and the plans and priorities of partners such as the Regional Economic Organizations, civil society organizations (CSOs) and the private sector. The item will elaborate on regional approaches to embed corporate priority initiatives and strategies, including the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme, Hand-in-Hand Initiative, One Country One Priority Product and 1 000 Digital Villages. The item will describe how accelerators and cross-cutting themes will be integrated in priority programmes and activities in the region. This item will seek endorsement from Members of the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) Regional Priorities for the next biennium.

21. Update on the development of the new FAO Strategy on Climate Change

Progress in the development of FAO’s new Strategy on Climate Change as key guiding elements for FAO’s Programme of Work in the region will be presented for feedback by Members.

22. Update on the development of the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy

Update on the development of the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy and presentation of its outline and roadmap, followed by discussion on its implications for countries in the Asia and Pacific region.

IV. Other Matters

23. Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) 2022-2025 for the FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific

24. Date and place of the 37th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific

25. Any other matters

V. Concluding Items

26. Review and adoption of the Report of the Senior Officers Meeting

The Rapporteur will introduce the Report of the Senior Officers Meeting prepared by the Drafting Committee for consideration and adoption. The meeting will adopt the Report, with appropriate amendments, by consensus.

Information Series¹

a) Animal Production and Health Commission for Asia and the Pacific (APHCA)

¹ If they so wish, delegates may comment on the information items under "Any Other Matters"

The FAO Animal Production and Health Commission for Asia and the Pacific (APHCA) was initiated by Asian nations at the 5th FAO Regional Conference on Animal Production and Health in 1971. APHCA's mission is to enhance levels of nutrition and standards of living of livestock keepers, livestock producers and livestock value-chain actors through equitable, sustainable and safe livestock sector development. Furthermore, APHCA supports sustainable improvement in rural livestock agriculture and resource use through information sharing and capacity development for Members. Some of the most important areas currently addressed by APHCA relate to the development of climate smart livestock, dairy production, animal feeding, transboundary animal and zoonotic diseases, One Health and antimicrobial resistance. APHCA has been instrumental in the establishment of Dairy Asia.

b) Report of the Thirty-sixth Session of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC)

The 36th Session of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC) was convened in virtual session Bangkok, Thailand from 5 to 7 May 2021, hosted by the Department of Fisheries, Government of Thailand. The report summarizes the outcomes of the 36th Session and the activities under the work programme, many of which were rolled out in virtual format during 2020 and 2021. The report also highlights the challenges facing the future of the Commissions and its recommendation for the creation of an ad hoc working group to review the legal and financial implications of the future of APFIC. The Commission concurred that there is a clear case for increasing access to knowledge and skills in sustainable aquaculture production practices and agreed on the importance of the FAO Aquaculture Platform, welcoming this initiative. The Commission emphasized the importance of fishery management grounded on science for sustainable marine and inland fisheries. It acknowledged the challenges related to lack of adequate capacity for conducting stock assessment and analyses and welcomed the development of an FAO initiative for capacity development to improve stock assessment for marine and inland applications.

c) Report of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission (APFC)

The 28th Session of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission (APFC28) was held from 17 to 21 June 2019 in Incheon, Republic of Korea. The Commission was convened as the core event of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Week 2019, which attracted more than 2000 participants and included 100 events organized by FAO and partner organizations. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 29th Session of the APFC could not take place in 2021 as planned and is expected to be held in early 2022. This information note summarizes the action taken on the recommendations of the 28th Session of the APFC and the progress related to organizing the 29th Session including the outlook on strengthening the collaboration between the Regional Forestry Commission and the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO).

d) Report of the Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission (APPPC) and update on Fall Armyworm and Desert Locusts in Asia and the Pacific

The report summarizes the APPPC's work during the period from 2020-2021. It highlights key activities implemented by the Commission, including the development of regional plant protection systems, provision of assistance to Members and other countries in Asia in setting regional and international standards for phytosanitary measures, development of effective plant protection regimes, information exchange among Members, as well as the advancement of integrated pest management (IPM) and pesticide management. The report also gives an update on the current situation and management of the Fall Armyworm in the region as well as the Commission's regional support to FAO's Global Action for Fall Armyworm Control. It also covers APPPC's ongoing development of a new strategic plan for 2022-2026. Noteworthy are the challenges faced by Members and their family farmers and the opportunities available for achieving more effective pest and pesticide management, taking into account the post COVID-19 world and the digital transformation.

e) Biodiversity mainstreaming across agricultural sectors in Asia and the Pacific region

The FAO Council, at its 163rd Session in 2019, adopted the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors. At its 166th Session in 2021, the Council further adopted the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategy, including a timetable, to operationalize the Strategy. In Asia and the Pacific, a Regional Consultative Meeting on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors took place in July 2019, organized by FAO and CBD Secretariat, and co-hosted by the Kingdom of Thailand. This document recalls the role of biodiversity mainstreaming across agricultural sectors for sustainable agrifood systems transformation, summarizes the status of biodiversity mainstreaming in the region, and reports on progress to date including emerging future priorities such as strengthening the multidimensionality of family farming to promote social innovations contributing to territorial development and food systems that safeguard biodiversity, the environment and culture.

f) Addressing rising water scarcity in agriculture: introducing a new FAO Water Scarcity Programme and associated Regional Cooperative Platform

At the 2020 Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (APRC35) FAO presented a technical paper titled: *Setting regional priorities to manage water for agriculture under conditions of water scarcity*. The technical paper, and the proposal for a new Water Scarcity Programme proposed within it, were widely endorsed by the 35th Session of the APRC. This information document serves to follow up from APRC35 by providing an overview of a five-year Water Scarcity Program (WSP) for the Asia and Pacific region. The WSP has now been developed in detail and is designed to support FAO Members in taking practical steps to address and manage water scarcity in a changing climate. This WSP is based on extensive scoping activities carried out by FAO over the period 2019--2021. It is a consultative document designed to allow the Regional Conference to provide inputs and comments for improvement.

Ministerial Session

10-11 March 2022

- 3. Statement by the Director-General**
- 4. Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council**
- 5. Statement by the Chairperson of the 35th Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific**
- 6. Statement on the Third Joint FAO and Pacific Community (SPC) Ministers for Agriculture and Forestry Meeting**
- 7. Statement by the Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)**
- 8. Statement by the Spokesperson of the Civil Society Consultation**
- 9. Statement by the Spokesperson of the Private Sector Consultation**
- 10. Special event on innovation, science and digitalization: Transforming agrifood systems in Asia and the Pacific region**

A wide range of approaches, technologies and practices exist to tackle agrifood systems challenges. Science and innovation – including indigenous and local knowledge – underpin them all and are an essential part of assessing risks, identifying trade-offs and finding solutions to complex problems. The landscape of science and innovation is changing rapidly with amplification of biotechnologies, digital tools, nanotechnology, big data, and artificial intelligence. Public-private partnerships are on the rise. The importance of the participation of a range of actors in agricultural innovation systems is increasingly recognized to co-create knowledge and strengthen capacities. The FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 recognizes that innovation across agrifood systems is key to achieve the SDGs and the Organization's first Science and Innovation Strategy is being formulated. The special event on 'Innovation, Science and Digitalization: Accelerators for Transformative Change in Asia and the Pacific region' will delve into the topics that the Strategy will have to tackle. It will discuss, among others, on strengthening the lab-to-land link and technology transfer; reinforcing the science-policy interface to ensure the development of evidence-based strategies; governance and regulatory issues; inter- and trans-disciplinary research; and contentious scientific issues, including prevailing power asymmetries and socioeconomic inequalities that affect science and innovation. FAO is uniquely placed to support its Members in strengthening national policy frameworks for enhanced science and innovation and identifying research priorities and communicating them to the major research institutions.

11. Prioritization of country and regional needs

Asia and the Pacific region faces various challenges in the food and agricultural sectors, such as food insecurity, malnutrition, climate change, emergence of infectious diseases and endemic disease burdens, natural resource degradation and depletion and natural disasters. This session allows the heads of country delegations to deliver their statements. Delegates are invited to outline their views on the priorities for addressing national and regional needs in three to four minutes each.

VI. Roundtable discussions

12. Ministerial Roundtable on greener and better agrifood systems after COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic caused widespread disruption to the economy and health and agrifood systems. The socio-economic impacts were wide ranging, spanning income losses and unemployment, higher health care costs, increased poverty, reverse migration, disruptions to domestic and international trade, and an increased incidence of food insecurity and malnutrition, especially for the poor and family farmers. Governments implemented substantial short-term and long-term responses to minimize the impacts of the pandemic on food security and agrifood system functioning. These responses included stimulus packages, expanded social protection, direct support to alleviate agrifood system disruptions, and investments in digitalization and digital technologies. Other proactive government interventions included a range of options from direct input, credit, and other incentives for the farming sector to investing in alternative market channels, encouraging local or short value chains including urban food production, and more. Digitalization and investment in digital infrastructure and alternative market platforms are being mainstreamed into agrifood systems and rural and village development in order to build more resilient agrifood systems. The private sector responded with the fast growth of online marketing and distribution and e-commerce. Rebuilding resilient and inclusive agrifood systems post COVID-19 that serve the needs of family farmers also requires a green growth paradigm in line with needed climate action. Many governments are pursuing green agrifood strategies from clean energy to climate-smart agriculture. This Ministerial Roundtable invites Members to share their experiences, initiatives, strategies and priorities related to rebuilding inclusive, resilient, and green agrifood systems post COVID-19.

13. Ministerial Roundtable on climate actions for resilience and sustainability

Climate change is one of the most important ongoing and future challenges to improving food security and nutrition in Asia and the Pacific. The region is the most exposed and vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change, as it includes six of the ten countries most affected in the past two decades. The agrifood system is also an important driver of climate change. To tackle these interconnected challenges, many countries in the region are encouraging a transformation toward sustainable and resilient agrifood systems. The majority of countries have included the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU) sector as part of their Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement, both in general mitigation contributions and as part of their adaptation component. Updated NDCs in the past two years also reflect countries' increased climate ambitions, including more ambitious action targeting agrifood systems. Building resilient agrifood systems has also been highlighted at the 35th Session of APRC and through the Global Food System Summit dialogues. At the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26), countries from the region have furthered their support for urgent action and investment to protect nature and shift to more sustainable ways of farming through initiatives such as the Policy Action Agenda for the Transition to Sustainable Agriculture, the Global Action Agenda for Innovation in Agriculture and the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use. This Ministerial Roundtable will aim to encourage Members to share actions to achieve climate resilient agrifood systems. Members will also be encouraged to share perspectives on regional priorities, opportunities for partnership and cooperation, including South-South Triangular Cooperation, and to provide guidance on policy and technical support needed from FAO in the coming biennium, including the new FAO Strategy on Climate Change.

VII. Concluding Items

14. Adoption of the Report of the Regional Conference

Closure of the Regional Conference