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Продовольственная и
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Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الأغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

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FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Thirty-sixth Session

Dhaka, Bangladesh, 8-11 March 2022

Information Note

Conference arrangements

1. The 36th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (APRC) will be held in hybrid modality (in-person and virtual modality) from 8 to 11 March 2022. There will be both physical presence in the host country of Bangladesh and participation through the Zoom videoconferencing platform. The Zoom meeting will be broadcast on a large screen inside the meeting room so that participants attending the Session physically will be able to see the participants attending the meeting virtually, and vice versa.
2. Special procedures for online modality outlined in this Information Note will be confirmed by the Regional Conference during Item 2 *Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable*, and said confirmation will be recorded in the Report of the 36th Session of the APRC.
3. The inaugural ceremony of the Ministerial Session will take place on Thursday, 10 March 2022 immediately prior to the opening of the Session. Heads of Delegations are kindly requested to be present (physically or virtually) at this time.
4. All session times indicated are those of Bangladesh (GMT +6). All meetings of the Regional Conference will be conducted in-person and simultaneously through the Zoom videoconferencing platform. The link to register for the Zoom meeting will be distributed in a separate message. A dry-run of the virtual modality will be held closer to the Regional Conference. We strongly encourage delegations to attend this dry-run in order to ensure that any issues or challenges are addressed and resolved prior to the actual virtual session of the Regional Conference. More details will follow in due course.
5. During the Regional Conference, an “Order of the Day” will be issued daily on the Conference webpage giving detailed information of the Regional Conference business, timetable of meetings, items to be discussed and other general information for that day.
6. The Provisional Annotated Agenda (APRC/22/1), Provisional Timetable (APRC/22/INF/2) and Provisional List of Documents (APRC/22/INF/3) are available on the APRC website at: <https://www.fao.org/events/detail/aprc36/>

Documents can be consulted at www.fao.org

Working languages

7. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided, and documentation issued in Chinese, English, French and Russian.

Press liaison and information

8. For the duration of the Regional Conference, the Conference Information Officer will ensure contact with the press and be responsible for matters concerning information for the public.

Documentation

9. The Regional Conference webpage is available at: <https://www.fao.org/events/detail/aprc36/>

10. Working documents will be made available to all participating governments and organizations, before the Regional Conference commences, at the following address: <http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/aprc36/documents/en>

Draft recommendations and amendments

11. Delegates who wish to submit draft recommendations, or other documents requiring decision by the Regional Conference, are requested to provide an electronic version of their text in English to the Regional Conference Secretary at: APRC@fao.org

Advance communication of speeches and statements

12. Delegations are encouraged to limit their written statements to a maximum of 800 words. In order to ensure accuracy in interpretation, delegates are kindly requested to submit digital copies of their statements, in English, to the Secretariat of the Regional Conference at APRC@fao.org by Monday, 28 February 2022. FAO will post these statements on the Regional Conference webpage at: <https://www.fao.org/events/detail/aprc36/>

13. Interventions at the Regional Conference by Heads of Delegations during Item 11 *Prioritization of country and regional needs* will be scheduled in alphabetical order of country name. Interventions may be either live or pre-recorded regardless of whether delegates are attending in person or in virtual modality. In any case, the duration should not exceed four minutes. In order to minimize the risk of connectivity problems, pre-recorded interventions for Item 11 are encouraged. If the intervention is pre-recorded, it will be played during the Conference at the appropriate time during the Ministerial Session and will later be posted on the webpage: <https://www.fao.org/events/detail/aprc36/>

14. Participants who choose pre-recorded statements are kindly asked to submit the written text of the statement along with the video, to assist in the interpretation of the recorded statements.

15. If pre-recorded, the final video statement in MP4 format must reach the APRC Secretariat no later than 1 March 2022. Videos should be sent to APRC-Dialogue@fao.org with a link to any commercial large file transfer service.

16. The technical specifications for pre-recording interventions for Item 11 are as follows:

- a. the recording/filming should be produced in full HD 1080 x 1920;
- b. the file, in MP4 format, should be compressed into a lighter version for playback via Zoom;
- c. a 3-4 minute video should be compressed to 80 MB in size at a compression rate of 3.5 mbps (megabyte per seconds). Files exceeding this size may create technical problems

- to play and view; the compression should be done prior to sending to the APRC Secretariat;
- d. videos in .MOV format should be avoided; and
 - e. the hard deadline of 1 March 2022 is required to give the Secretariat time to test the recordings on Zoom.

Advance written correspondence on agenda items

17. Given the decision to hold the 36th Session of the Conference in hybrid modality with simultaneous in-person and virtual participation, and given constraints related to the wide span of time zones in Asia and the Pacific region, the programme of the Senior Officers Meeting (SOM) will be condensed. There will be time for interactive discussion, but in order to streamline the proceedings of the Regional Conference, a written correspondence procedure will be the main mode to address the following agenda items:

- a. Item 15. *State of food and agriculture in Asia and the Pacific region, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic*
APRC/22/2
- b. Item 16. *Actions to promote climate resilient agrifood systems in Asia and the Pacific region*
APRC/22/3
- c. Item 17. *Scaling up inclusive digitalization in agricultural value chains*
APRC/22/6
- d. Item 18. *Identifying One Health priorities in Asia and the Pacific region*
APRC22/4
- e. Item 19. *Conserving, restoring and sustainably using biodiversity for food security and nutrition in the Pacific Islands*
APRC/22/5
- f. Item 23. *Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPoW) 2022-2025 for the FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific*
APRC/22/9
- g. Item 25. *Any other matters*

18. Under the written correspondence procedure, Members are requested to submit any questions and comments by email to APRC-Dialogue@fao.org by 25 February 2022 if possible. These inputs will then be posted on the Regional Dialogue Area as they are received. Please indicate clearly in the email subject line and in its body to which Agenda item the comments or inputs relate.

19. The Regional Dialogue Area will be available to Members by password at: <https://www.fao.org/aprc36-dialogue/en>. Access will be limited to registered participants of Member delegations who will receive the username and password by separate email after registration.

20. Where applicable, the Secretariat will provide written responses to inputs received. A consolidated response to comments received by 18 February 2022 will be prepared by the APRC Secretariat and will be posted in the Regional Dialogue Area by 4 March 2022.

21. To facilitate the proceedings, an introduction to each of the Agenda Items 15 to 20 and 23 will be circulated to participants through the Regional Dialogue Area.

22. Items considered under the written correspondence procedure will form an integral part of the deliberations and Report of the 36th Session of the APRC.

General enquiries

23. All general correspondence concerning the Regional Conference should be addressed to:

Conference Secretary at the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Mr Sridhar Dharmapuri

Conference Secretary

36th FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific

39 Phra Atit Road

Bangkok 10200

Thailand

Tel: +66 2 6974000

Fax: +66 2 6974445

E-mail: APRC@fao.org

Please copy all correspondence to the Government Liaison Officer at the addresses below.

Liaison Officer (FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific)

Robert Simpson, FAO Representative in Bangladesh

FAO Representation

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Mobile: +880 01733 003344, +880 01733 003377

Email: FAO-BD@fao.org

Web: www.fao.org/bangladesh

Conference Venue

24. InterContinental Hotel

1 Minto Road

Dhaka, 1000, Bangladesh

Tel: +880 2 55663030

Email: dhaka@intercontinental-dhaka.com

Website: <https://www.ihg.com/intercontinental/hotels/it/it/dhaka/dachb/hoteldetail>

Online registration

25. Participants are kindly informed that there is a two-step registration process. The first step is the Regional Conference online registration, available at: <https://event-services.fao.org/36thAPRC>. The second step is the Zoom registration. Registered participants will receive a Zoom link and helpful guidance on using Zoom after registering for the Conference at the above link.

26. All delegates and observers are requested to register by 15 February 2022.

Registration upon arrival at the venue

27. All delegates and observers attending in-person at the venue are requested to register, soon after arrival, at the conference hall to receive identification tags. The registration desk will be open on Sunday, 7 March 2022 from 09.00 to 20.00 hours and daily during the conference from 07.00 to 18.00 hours. The Conference Secretariat will issue a Provisional List of Participants on the first day of the Conference. The Secretariat should be notified of any corrections or additions to this list. Only registered participants will be issued special badges, which will permit them to enter the conference meeting venues.

Formalities for entry into Bangladesh

28. Participants must have the appropriate visa obtained from their respective Bangladesh Embassy/High Commission. If there is no Bangladesh Embassy/High Commission in the country, the visa request needs to be communicated in the neighbouring country. Visa on Arrival is strictly prohibited in the Dhaka Airport.

29. COVID-19 entry regulations will depend upon the situation in March 2022. At the time of writing, most passengers originating from APRC countries who are fully vaccinated are exempt from quarantine. Please regularly check the Government of Bangladesh website at <http://caab.gov.bd/covid19f.html> for the most current information before finalizing travel plans for entering Bangladesh, or write to the APRC Secretariat for further support.

COVID-19 Precautionary Measures

30. Due to the restrictions in place for the containment of the COVID-19 pandemic, only two representatives per Member will be invited to attend the meeting in-person in the Plenary Room. Other members of the delegation can sit in the Overflow Room in the same hotel, where the Conference proceedings will be broadcast live.

31. COVID-19 testing will be conducted at the hotel before the Senior Officers and Ministerial segments. Please follow generally accepted COVID-19 precautions such as:

- a. wear a surgical mask at all times except when you are taking the floor to speak or when you are consuming food or drink. At these times, maintain a two-metre physical distancing space;
- b. sit in the designated areas and respect the two-metre physical distancing space;
- c. refrain from touching your face, use proper hygiene methods for coughing or sneezing, and wash hands frequently;
- d. during the Conference, should you feel unwell, develop a fever or respiratory symptoms, stay in your room and contact the ARPC Secretariat;
- e. if you are aware that another participant is unwell, keep your physical distance and if appropriate, advise them to contact the ARPC Secretariat.

32. Further information on COVID-19 precautions, if any, will be communicated by email to registered participants.

Virtual Participation in the Regional Conference

33. Members and Observers attending the meeting virtually will be granted equal accessibility and capability inside the Zoom meeting platform, ensuring their ability to be seen, and to view who is in attendance in the virtual meeting, and to make interventions. These participants will be able to request the floor using the 'Raise Hand' function in the Zoom platform.
34. Interventions during all sessions, except for Agenda Item 11, will be on a first come, first served basis. To request to make an intervention, please use the 'Raise Hand' function in Zoom, and the Zoom software will indicate to the Secretariat the order in which hands were raised. Please note that on your own computer, you will be shown at the top of the list of participants. However, it is important to note that this does not mean that you were the first one to raise your hand. Furthermore, some delegations may be present in person and may raise their hand. Based on all of this information, the Chairperson will determine the order of speaking. We ask for your indulgence in this regard.
35. For optimal sound quality, both for speaking and listening, please wear a plugged in headset with a microphone, instead of using the built-in speaker in your computer.
36. Please mute your microphone when you are not speaking.
37. When you are speaking, if possible, please remove your mask and then replace it when you are finished speaking. Simultaneous interpretation will be available in Chinese, English, French and Russian. Access the channels in the interpretation button in the toolbar. During breaks of the meeting, even if you step away from your computer, please stay connected to the Zoom link or else the Conference Staff will have to let you back in through the virtual waiting room.

Foreign Exchange and Banking

38. Participants are permitted to bring an amount of maximum USD 5 000 in cash. A foreign exchange desk will also be available on the conference premises. The monetary unit is the Bangladeshi Taka and, at the time of writing, the current exchange rate offered by the Commercial Bank at the airport was BDT 85.588 to USD 1. The credit cards Visa, Mastercard and, to a lesser extent, American Express are accepted usually only in hotels, airport and shopping malls with a surcharge.

Medical services and first aid

39. Medical and first aid services will be available at the Conference premises. COVID-19 testing will be conducted at the hotel before the Senior Officers and Ministerial segments.

Hotel accommodation

40. Online bookings for hotel accommodation for participants should be received no later than 8 February 2022. Please use the online registration form available at <https://event-services.fao.org/36thAPRC> that provides a list of recommended accommodations.
41. **We strongly recommend that online registration be completed at participants' earliest convenience due to the limited number of rooms at the Intercontinental Hotel.**
42. At check-in, hotels may require guests to present a credit card or to make an advance cash payment. It should be noted that participants are required to settle their own hotel bills on departure, including meals, bar, tips, telephone, laundry, etc.

Webcasting

43. All Plenary sessions will be webcast live and uploaded to the Regional Conference website at <https://www.fao.org/events/detail/aprc36/> and <http://www.fao.org/webcast/home/en/>.

Weather and time

44. Bangladesh is located at 23 degrees north of the equator. During the month of March, the temperature in Dhaka is approximately between 26 and 32 degrees and some rain is typical as it is the beginning of the rainy season.

45. Bangladesh is six hours ahead of GMT (standard time).

Electricity

46. The voltage in Bangladesh is 220 volts AC (50 HZ). Please note that in Bangladesh the power plugs and sockets are of type A, C, D, G and K.