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Food and Agriculture
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Продовольственная и
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FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Thirty-eighth Session

Georgetown, Guyana, 11–13 March and 18–21 March 2024

Summary of the recommendations of the Regional Commissions

Executive Summary

FAO Regional Commissions are Statutory Bodies of the Organization. This document sets out recommendations for the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean and Programme of Work issued by the following bodies: the Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission (LACFC), the Commission on Livestock Development for Latin America and the Caribbean (CLDLAC), the Commission for Small-scale and Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture of Latin America and the Caribbean (COPPEAALC), the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC) and the FAO-OEA/CIE-IICA Working Group on Agricultural and Livestock Statistics for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Queries on the content of this document may be addressed to:

Regional Conference Secretariat
RLC-Conferencia@fao.org

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Regional Commissions fall under the umbrella of FAO Statutory Bodies and examine key issues and technical aspects in forestry (the Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission [LACFC]); livestock (the Commission on Livestock Development for Latin America and the Caribbean [CLDLAC]); fisheries (the Commission for Small-Scale and Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture of Latin America and the Caribbean, [COPPEAALC]), and the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission [WECAFC]); and statistics (the FAO-OEA/CIE-IICA Working Group on Agricultural and Livestock Statistics for Latin America).
2. The Regional Commissions issue technical recommendations and lists of regional priorities which are submitted to the Regional Conference.

II. Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission (LACFC) Report

3. The Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission held its 33rd Session from 26 to 30 June 2023, virtually, at the invitation of the Government of Ecuador. The Session was attended by delegates of 21 member countries and observers of 12 organizations, including three United Nations

Documents can be consulted at www.fao.org.

agencies or fora, and nine international, intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental organizations. The technical documents and full report can be viewed on the Commission's official website.¹

4. The mandate of LACFC is to advise FAO on the Forestry Programme to be developed in the region and serves as a forum for countries to analyse important regional forestry issues and to exchange knowledge and experiences. This includes the formulation of policies for the sustainable management of forests and wildlife, monitoring of forest resources, exchange of information, fight against deforestation and assessment of national and regional experiences. The main LACFC's recommendations are reported to the Regional Conference, the Committee on Forestry (COFO) and the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF).

5. During the meeting, members discussed bioeconomy (non-wood forest products, wood production chains), forest sector financing, restoration of ecosystems, forest health and integrated fire management. Members welcomed and endorsed the process of developing a new FAO Forestry Framework Document 2024–2031, highlighting the importance of it containing a sound strategic approach to addressing challenges and promoting sustainable development in forestry globally.

Recommendations for the attention of the FAO Regional Conference

6. The Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission recommended the Regional Conference to reinforce more intersectoral coordination to:

- (a) make production and conservation compatible in agricultural and forestry practices;
- (b) promote agriculture and forestry value chains that avoid deforestation, including the analysis of legal vacuums;
- (c) manage socioenvironmental conflicts, such as landownership-related conflicts; and
- (d) manage and prevent wildland fires in a more efficient manner, applying integrated fire management.

7. The Commission further recommended the Regional Conference to promote the importance of trees and forests in food production, biodiversity and quality of life by:

- (a) promoting agroforestry and silvopastoral systems, for example through incentives; and
- (b) incorporating the tree component in urban and peri-urban areas (urban agroforestry).

Recommendations for the FAO Programme of Work

8. Among the list of specific recommendations of the Commission to the FAO Programme of Work, the following can be highlighted:

- (a) to encourage the participation of local communities and Indigenous Peoples, including men, women and different generations, in initiatives and investments related to wood and non-wood forest product chains, as well as in restoration efforts;
- (b) to facilitate a channel for coordinating with other agencies and organizations, such as the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO), the Technical Forestry Group of the Central American Commission for Environment and Development of the Central American Integration System (CCAD SICA), and the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) to access climate and environmental financing;
- (c) to promote sustainable wood and non-wood value chains, including innovation in production and harvesting systems, development of small and medium enterprises, fostering legality and traceability;
- (d) to conduct an assessment on the potential of the circular bioeconomy for the forestry sector, including micro, small- and medium-sized enterprises, and community forestry producers;

¹ <https://www.fao.org/3/cc7316en/cc7316en.pdf>

- (e) to continue promoting and collaborating with regional efforts to integrated fire management, through exchange of knowledge and experiences and supporting the global fire management hub;
- (f) to support countries in the form of tools, methodologies and capacity-building initiatives to expand forest restoration efforts, share best practices and monitor their progress, and provide access to corresponding funding mechanisms;
- (g) to safeguard biodiversity by promoting use of forest-based foods, developing methodologies to assess the risk of introducing exotic species that could become invasive and support regional network of southern cone countries on invasive species and
- (h) to support South-South collaboration through the existing regional networks.

III. Commission for Small-scale and Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture of Latin America and the Caribbean (COPPESAALC) Report

9. The XVIII Session of the Commission for Small-scale and Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture of Latin America and the Caribbean took place in San José, Costa Rica, from 29 to 31 March 2023. It was attended by 25 delegates from 15 countries. The full report is available on the Commission's website.²

10. The Commission aims to promote the responsible use of fishery resources, advise governments on fishery management measures and support the sustainable development of aquaculture. To this end, the Commission reflects collectively on the issues that concern the sustainability and contribution of fisheries and aquaculture to food and nutrition security, the alleviation of rural poverty and the responsible and harmonious management of natural resources, in line with the needs of the member countries of the Commission, FAO regional priorities and the goals of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Recommendations for the attention of the FAO Regional Conference

11. The Commission recommended the FAO Regional Conference to:
- (a) support efforts of member countries to promote aquaculture extension programmes and services, with a focus on self-management and empowerment of small-scale producers;
 - (b) promote and encourage the inclusion of small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture in national social protection and decent employment systems;
 - (c) continue supporting and assisting member countries to raise awareness and notification of other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) in marine fisheries regarding:
 - i. preparation of manuals and guidelines for the process of identification, evaluation and notification of OECMs for inland fisheries and aquaculture;
 - ii. support in the dissemination and training for the identification, evaluation and notification of OECMs in COPPESAALC countries; and
 - iii. assistance in the process of identification, evaluation and registration of OMEC in marine fisheries;
 - (d) continue assisting countries in their efforts to adapt to climate change;
 - (e) continue assisting member countries in their efforts to strengthen inland fisheries management given their contribution to food security and nutrition; and
 - (f) strive to make small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture sectors more visible in national development agendas to stimulate their prioritization, development of specific policies and the allocation of the necessary resources for their sustainable development.

² Informe de la decimoctava reunión ordinaria de la Comisión de Pesca en Pequeña Escala, Artesanal y Acuicultura de América Latina y el Caribe (COPPESAALC): <https://www.fao.org/3/cc7652es/cc7652es.pdf>

Recommendations for the FAO Programme of Work

12. With regard to the FAO Programme of Work, the Commission recommended to:
- (a) assist countries in consolidating their capacities and systems for recording and collecting data for the sustainable management of inland fisheries resources;
 - (b) establish mechanisms for the differentiation of artisanal and small-scale and industrial fisheries statistics, in order to have a realistic evaluation of the contribution from each sector;
 - (c) assist and train countries in the preparation and completion of questionnaires regarding the compliance with the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, to reflect the actions that are carried out for the responsible use of fishing resources;
 - (d) continue assisting countries in the development of climate change vulnerability analysis in fisheries and aquaculture;
 - (e) continue assisting countries in promoting aquaculture extension programmes and services;
 - (f) assist member countries in strengthening small-scale aquaculture, through greater access to innovation and sustainable technologies that improve their economic competitiveness and resilience to climate change;
 - (g) continue assisting the implementation of instruments to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, in addition to the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA); and
 - (h) assist countries in understanding and implementing the agreement on the protection of biodiversity in marine areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) approved by the United Nations, as well as the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies approved by the World Trade Organization (WTO).

IV. FAO-OEA/CIE-IICA Working Group on Agricultural and Livestock Statistics for Latin America and the Caribbean Report

13. The 31st Session of the FAO-OEA/CIE-IICA Working Group on Agricultural and Livestock Statistics for Latin America and the Caribbean was held in hybrid format at the invitation of the Government of Chile from 28 to 30 March 2023. The number of participants including delegates and observers was about 40, from 29 countries in the region.

14. The purpose of this Commission is to review the state of food and agricultural statistics in the region, to advise member nations on the development and standardization of agricultural statistical services, and to convene study groups or other Subsidiary Bodies of national experts required for this purpose. To this end, the group discusses the main challenges of national agricultural statistical systems, reviews best practices at regional level, and proposes concrete actions to improve the quality and availability of agricultural statistics.

Recommendations for the attention of the FAO Regional Conference

15. The Commission made the following strategic recommendations,³ which either fundamentally change some aspects of the body or engage it with other regional initiatives:

- (a) to change the name from FAO--OEA/CIE--IICA Working Group on Agricultural and Livestock Statistics for Latin America and the Caribbean to Latin American and the Caribbean Commission for Agricultural Statistics (LACCAS), which better reflects its mandate as a strategic body, is coherent with its current functioning and participants' organizations, and aligns with the naming of bodies with the same mandate in other regions;

³ Conclusions and Recommendations: <https://www.fao.org/3/cc5877en/cc5877en.pdf>

- (b) to create a working group on agricultural statistics in the framework of the Statistical Conference of the Americas (CEA) aimed at producing a diagnostic paper on the status of use of multiple frame sampling designs for agricultural surveys; and
- (c) to establish appropriate mechanisms that would permit activities of this body to systematically report to the CEA in order to exploit synergies, receive the endorsement of its recommendations and raise the profile of agricultural statistics within the framework of the CEA.

Recommendations for the FAO Programme of Work

16. The following are items recommended by the Commission to be included in FAO's Programme of Work:

- (a) to begin the process of changing the name to LACCAS;
- (b) to coordinate with countries to develop and present a proposal for a working group on agricultural statistics to the CEA;
- (c) to propose to the CEA the systematic presentation of the Commission's recommendations, to receive their feedback and endorsement;
- (d) to generate a series of webinars to exchange information on key issues in agricultural statistics, including the implementation of the Agricultural Integrated Survey Programme (AGRISurvey) methodology; and
- (e) to provide technical support and training to countries to improve administrative registers for agricultural statistics, measurement of food losses and compiling food balance sheets.

V. Commission on Livestock Development for Latin America and the Caribbean (CLDLAC) Report

17. The Commission on Livestock Development for Latin America and the Caribbean is the technical advisory forum on animal production and health for the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean. It brings together representatives from governments and the private sector to exchange experiences in livestock development policies and programmes, and to formulate cooperation strategies to strengthen them.

18. The 16th Session of CLDLAC was held virtually, at the invitation of the Government of Ecuador, from 11 to 13 July 2023. The number of participants, including delegates and observers, was 62 from 21 countries in the region. The full report can be viewed on the Commission's official website.⁴

Recommendations for the attention of the FAO Regional Conference

19. The Commission recommended the Regional Conference to:
- (a) adopt and include CLDLAC's recommendations related to technical cooperation for the livestock sector in its biannual programme of work; and
 - (b) support countries in enhancing dialogue, exchange of experiences and resources mobilization from different sources to promote more resilient, sustainable, inclusive and competitive, livestock production.

Recommendations for the FAO Programme of Work

20. With regard to the FAO Programme of Work, the Commission recommended to:

- (a) support countries in generating evidence on the contribution of regenerative livestock farming or other sustainable livestock farming strategies (indicators on productivity,

⁴ <https://www.fao.org/3/cc7608en/cc7608en.pdf>

- biodiversity, carbon storage, etc.) that allows promoting its evidence-based implementation and that can be a relevant input for future strategies;
- (b) facilitate public-private dialogue at regional level to promote the development of strategies and joint projects to improve traceability and access to certifications by producers (large, medium and small);
 - (c) strengthen the communications strategy for result- and experience-based sustainable livestock farming, that demonstrate this sector's contribution to food security and nutrition, economic development and adaptation and mitigation to climate change;
 - (d) support the review of national regulatory frameworks on animal health as a starting point for updating legislation and policies for the different livestock chains;
 - (e) support official veterinary services to reinforce epidemiological and sanitary surveillance regulations on animal diseases prioritized at the national and regional level;
 - (f) improve the mechanisms and capacities for health emergency response, improving regional and interinstitutional coordination and collaboration;
 - (g) support training and continuous education activities for official veterinary services and cooperating entities staff to protect animal health in terms of biosafety, preparedness and emergency response, use of computer systems and new technologies for epidemiological surveillance and smart risk management, under the One Health approach led by the FAO-UNEP-WHO-WOAH5 quadripartite partnership;
 - (h) provide training and technical guidance on Dynamic Risk Assessment at national and regional level for the identification of vulnerabilities to prioritized diseases such as African swine fever and highly pathogenic avian influenza, among others;
 - (i) provide technical advice in the analysis and systematization of success factors of associative models or cooperatives in the production and marketing of products generated by small-scale livestock farming;
 - (j) provide support to train extension agents who can transfer knowledge and good practices and innovations to small-scale livestock producers;
 - (k) support the identification, systematization and implementation of successful experiences (knowledge, good practices, policies, technology, resources, etc.) that promote the development of sustainable small-scale livestock farming, making visible the role of rural women and youth, and that can be replicated in other countries or territories; and
 - (l) support resource mobilization from different sources to implement actions, strategies and programmes aimed to improve associativity, access to markets and credits, and to move forward to a more resilient, sustainable, inclusive and competitive small-scale livestock production.

VI. Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC) Report

21. The Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC) held its 19th Session in Bridgetown, Barbados, from 6 to 8 September 2023. The hybrid meeting was attended by 110 delegates from 21 member countries, one Member Organization (the European Union), and 11 partner organizations, signalling the highest number of delegates to ever attend in the history of this Commission's plenary meetings. The technical documents and full report can be viewed on the Commission's official website.

22. The new strategic plan⁶ adopted the objective of the Commission as its mission for the period 2022–2027. The mission of WECAFC is to promote the effective conservation, management and development and sustainable use of the living marine resources of the area of competence of the

⁵ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), World Health Organization (WHO) and World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH).

⁶ WECAFC 2022-2027 Strategic Plan: <https://www.fao.org/3/cc2978en/cc2978en.pdf>

Commission, in accordance with the FAO *Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*, and address common problems of fisheries management and development faced by members of the Commission.⁷

23. It is recognized that the strategic plan should address commonly shared sectoral priorities, as expressed by WECAFC members in the online survey during the strategic planning process, as well as those of the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy, the FAO Country Programming Frameworks (CPF), the recommendations from the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, and other important policies.

Recommendations for the attention of the FAO Regional Conference

24. The Commission recommended the Regional Conference to:
- (a) highlight the importance of fisheries statistics data and systems in combatting IUU fishing;
 - (b) support the regional small-scale fisheries and aquaculture coordination committee, which played a decisive role throughout the celebration of the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAF 2022) in the WECAFC region, as the globe prepares to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the *Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication* (SSF Guidelines) in 2024; and
 - (c) emphasize the importance of bringing the discussion on resource availability for fisheries and aquaculture to the next COFI and Regional Conference's sessions, especially as the WECAFC prepares for the practical phase of its strategic reorientation.

Recommendations for the FAO Programme of Work

25. With regard to the FAO Programme of Work, the Commission recommended to
- (a) support members in adapting to their national context and implementing the Commission-endorsed instruments and relevant conservation and management measures of other international fora, especially in the framework of multilateral governance of shared fishery resources;
 - (b) support members in the analysis and monitoring of sargassum implications for fisheries and coastal communities in the region, as it is an emerging problem with connection to climate change and ocean circulation; and
 - (c) consider the implications of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) on the fishery sector in WECAFC countries.

⁷ Revised Statutes of the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC):
<https://www.fao.org/fishery/docs/DOCUMENT/wecafc/statutes.pdf>