

conference

C 91/30
October 1991

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FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ROME

Twenty-sixth Session

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Rome, 9 - 28 November 1991

FAO ACTIVITIES RELATED TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
AND ENVIRONMENT

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Introduction

1. In November 1989, the 25th Session of the FAO Conference adopted Resolution 3/89 on FAO Activities related to Sustainable Development, which called for the Organization to intensify its interdisciplinary work related to sustainable development and environment, to strengthen cooperation with other UN organizations and to fully collaborate in the preparations for the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED).
2. In November 1990, progress was reported to the 98th Session of the FAO Council (CL 98/6) on the improvement of coordination and fostering mechanisms, namely the appointment of a Special Adviser to the Director-General for Environment and Sustainable Development with the rank of Assistant Director-General; the establishment of a Steering Committee for Environment and Sustainable Development at ADG level; revised terms of reference for the Interdepartmental Working Group on Environment and Sustainable Development, linking it to the Steering Committee; and continued development of technical areas of work through *ad hoc* working groups and task forces.
3. In June 1991, the 99th Session of the FAO Council reviewed two documents related to sustainable development and environment. The first was the Report of the FAO/Netherlands Conference on Agriculture and the Environment (CL 99/23), which included the den Bosch Declaration and the Agenda for Action on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development. The second document was an outline of an International Cooperative Programme Framework for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (CL 99/3 Sup.1 Rev.1), in which the Director-General proposed a framework to strengthen further and gradually streamline field programme activities related to sustainable development and environment in the Agriculture, and the Social and Economic Policy Departments.
4. The Council welcomed the report of the FAO/Netherlands Conference on Agriculture and the Environment and recommended that it should be used as a basis for the further elaboration of strategies and action proposals in the field of sustainable agriculture and rural development (SARD). In particular, it was viewed as a major input for the UNCED preparatory process concerning the agricultural sector. The Council requested that a fuller report be presented to the Twenty-sixth Session of the FAO Conference and gave guidance to the Secretariat to this effect. ^{1/}
5. The Council fully endorsed the den Bosch Conference recommendation that FAO develop, in cooperation with others, an overall International Cooperative Programme Framework (ICPF) to assist in meeting the needs for SARD at national and international levels. It gave broad support to the preliminary outline of this programme framework and requested that it be further developed, including its operational, financial and organizational implications, for submission to the Twenty-sixth Session of the FAO Conference. ^{2/}

^{1/} CL 99/REP, paras. 75 and 76

^{2/} CL 99/REP, paras. 77 and 78

6. This document (C 91/30) provides a broad overview of matters related to sustainable development and environment. There is also considerable coverage of this topic in other Conference documentation. Particular attention is drawn to the Review of Field Programmes 1990-91 (C 91/4) containing a special chapter dealing with the integration of environmental components in FAO's field activities; the Review of the Regular Programme 1990-91 (C 91/8); the Medium-term Plan 1992-1997 (C 91/23) which contains a section on sustainable development and environment; the 1992-93 Programme of Work and Budget (C 91/3) which includes detailed information on proposed activities in these fields for the next biennium; and the Director-General's Report on the Implementation of the Review of Certain Aspects of FAO's Goals and Operations (C 91/21).

7. The present document covers three main aspects: (i) it gives a brief recapitulation of the action taken to strengthen FAO's multi-sectoral activities related to sustainable development and environment, in response to Conference Resolution 3/89; (ii) it elaborates on the strategies for sustainable development and environment, taking into account the views of the FAO Council at its 99th Session and the UNCED Preparatory Committee at its 3rd Session, on the Declaration and Agenda for Action of the den Bosch Conference; and (iii) it submits more detailed proposals on the ICPF/SARD with particular reference to its operational, financial and organizational implications.

PART ONE - PROGRESS ACHIEVED TO DATE

Implications of Conference Resolution 3/89

8. The scope of Conference Resolution 3/89, which called for a strengthening of FAO activities in the fields of environment and sustainable development, is very broad. Agriculture, forestry and fisheries are the sectors of activity which make the largest use of the renewable resources of the planet, are most dependent upon environmental conditions and, conversely, have caused and can cause further environmental changes. Moreover, sustainable development is not merely concerned with the environmental dimensions of development:

"Sustainable development is the management and conservation of the natural resource base, and the orientation of technological and institutional change in such a manner as to ensure the attainment and continued satisfaction of human needs for present and future generations. Such sustainable development (in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors) conserves land, water, plant and animal genetic resources, is environmentally non-degrading, technically appropriate, economically viable and socially acceptable." (Definition adopted by the FAO Council in November 1988).

It can be said, therefore, that sustainable development and environment issues cut across most of the activities of the Organization.

9. Strengthening FAO activities in the field of environment and sustainable development did not therefore merely imply the introduction of some additional "environmental activities" throughout FAO's programmes and

projects, or their regrouping under a separate organizational and programmatic structure: the full implications of the sustainable development concepts on the whole range of FAO strategies, priorities and programmes had to be considered. The task called for by FAO Conference Resolution 3/89 was thus considerable and is far from being completed. The process of change, which started with the Stockholm Conference in 1972 and was broadened as a result of the recommendations of the Brundtland Commission, proceeds further with the preparation of UNCED which, in turn, will influence the course of future development and the role of the UN system, including that of FAO. The main achievements to date are summarized below.

Coordination mechanisms

10. The measures taken by the Director-General were reported in detail in document CL 98/6 presented to the 98th Session of the Council. Under the chairmanship of the Special Adviser to the Director-General/Assistant Director-General for Environment and Sustainable Development, the Steering Committee has met several times to examine the IDWG's proposals and recommendations and provide guidance to the cross-sectoral activities promoted and coordinated by the IDWG and its sub-groups, in particular the proposals by the IDWG for the 92/93 Programme of Work and Budget, the preparations for and follow-up to the den Bosch Conference, and related action for the streamlining of FAO Special Action Programmes; and the FAO contributions to UNCED.

11. The Environment and Sustainable Development Programmes Coordinating Centre (AGRE) (formerly Environment and Energy Programmes Coordinating Centre), now under the direct supervision of the Special Adviser, provides support services to the Steering Committee and the IDWG and its sub-groups, ensuring day-to-day liaison among these mechanisms, liaison and collaboration with other UN agencies and NGOs, and coordination of FAO inputs to UNCED.

Regular Programme activities

12. Document CL 98/6, presented to the FAO Council in November 1990, described the multisectoral and departmental activities related to environment and sustainable development. The Review of the Regular Programme 1990/91 (C 91/8) gives further information on the work done under the major programmes and sub-programmes in these fields.

13. Activities of a cross-sectoral, interdepartmental nature are dealt with essentially by the following sub-groups, under the aegis of the IDWG on Environment and Sustainable Development: Biological Diversity, Climate Change, Desertification Control, Rural Energy, Integration of Environment and Sustainable Development in Policy and Planning, and Coastal Area Management. These sub-groups focus on ways and means of addressing cross-cutting issues in a coordinated, interdepartmental manner. Emerging issues related to environment and sustainability are identified by the sub-groups in order to alert the IDWG and to consider FAO's role. Their tasks are to produce position papers, guidelines for FAO's work, proposals for the next biennium, and contributions to inter-agency activities, to UNCED and to other international conferences.

14. Beside these sub-groups which report to the IDWG on Environment and Sustainable Development, other interdepartmental working groups have

established sub-groups and task forces to deal with related subjects: a Task Force on Environmental Aspects of FAO Field Programmes and Projects, established by the FAO Field Programme Committee; a Task Force on Environmental Education and Training, established by the IDWG on Education and Training; and a Sub-group on Agroforestry, established by the IDWG on Land Use Planning. A Steering Committee and Central Task Force for Sectoral and Structural Adjustment Policy were established in 1990 *inter alia* to review and analyse policies related to SARD.

15. In addition, FAO's 1990 Regional Conferences (for Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean) all addressed aspects of sustainable development and environment relevant to their respective fields of interest. In the Near East region, this topic was addressed primarily through the Near East Regional Commission on Agriculture which carried a related agenda item in its penultimate session. The Regional Conference for Africa examined the proposal for an International Scheme for the Conservation and Rehabilitation of African Lands. The Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean considered a document on the management of fragile ecosystems. More details are given in C 91/Inf/10 ("Implementation of the 1990 Regional Conference Recommendations").

The Field Programmes

16. As requested by the 98th Session of the FAO Council, a review of FAO's Special Action Programmes (SAPs) took place during the last biennium with particular attention to the aspects related to sustainable development and environment. This led to the launching of a process of streamlining SAPs within major field programme frameworks, in line with the recommendations of the den Bosch Conference and the preparation of the UNCED Agenda 21. This process, which started with the field programmes of the Agriculture, and the Economic and Social Policy Departments, is further described in Part Three below. The follow-up to the den Bosch Conference, notably through development of the ICPF/SARD and the streamlining of SAPs, is expected to lead to considerable reinforcement of the components related to sustainable development and environment of the field programmes of these departments. The process is now being extended to the field activities of the Forestry and Fisheries Departments.

17. In the meantime, the project cycle by which field projects are identified, formulated, implemented, monitored and evaluated in relation to sustainable development and environment, was reviewed by the Field Programme Committee's *ad hoc* Task Force on Strengthening Aspects related to Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection. Guidelines and procedures for environmental impact assessment were tested and reviewed, and training activities implemented (see details in C 91/4).

FAO collaboration in sustainable development and environment

Inter-agency collaboration

18. Collaboration between FAO and other UN and international organizations on matters related to sustainable development and environment has been very active during the biennium. Of particular note are the regular and extraordinary meetings of the UNEP Governing Council, and those of the Designated Officials on Environmental Matters, the Ecosystems Conservation Group, the Consultative Group on Desertification

Control and the Committee of International Development Institutions on the Environment. Several inter-agency meetings have been held on the technical and legal elements of a Convention on Conservation of Biological Diversity and on a Strategy and Plan of Action for Biological Diversity. FAO commented extensively on this strategy, as well as on the IUCN/WWF/UNEP second conservation strategy "Caring for the Earth".

19. FAO issued a position paper and contributed several technical studies to preparations for the Second World Climate Conference (Geneva, 29 October to 7 November 1990), which it co-sponsored with WMO, UNEP, Unesco and ICSU. FAO continues to pursue studies on the role of agriculture and forestry in greenhouse gas emissions and on the possible impact of climate change on food security, agriculture, forestry and fisheries, as contributions to the follow-up of the World Climate Conference, to the work of the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change, and to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for an International Convention on Climate Change.

Activities with NGOs

20. Of particular importance for the achievement of sustainable development objectives is the active participation of people and of local organizations, in which NGOs play a key role. The den Bosch Conference provided a good opportunity for FAO collaboration with NGOs. Twenty NGOs participated actively in this Conference, ranging from agrochemical manufacturers' associations to environmental movements, including farmers' and consumers' organizations.

21. Recognizing the crucial role of small farmers and their organizations in programmes for environmental protection, FAO has introduced participatory approaches in many of its field programmes. The Human Resources, Institutions and Agrarian Reform Division is engaged in promoting "people's participation" projects in 15 countries and in initiating dialogue between governments, NGOs and donors involved in participatory development programmes which protect the environment. FAO has prepared a Plan of Action on People's Participation aimed at promoting sustainable rural development. This will be considered for adoption by the 26th Session of the FAO Conference.

22. FAO's Freedom from Hunger Campaign/Action for Development (FFHC/AD) projects support grassroots agricultural development initiatives through the enhancement of farmers' knowledge and traditional practices in various fields related to rural development. African farmers' organizations and NGOs are encouraged to articulate their interests at policy level. An example is the workshop being organized by FAO for West Africa, based on case studies to be presented by farmers' organizations from Senegal and Burkina Faso.

23. Two initiatives in Asia, especially relevant to sustainable agriculture are: a) the establishment of a national network of genetic resource conservation centres and community seed banks throughout India to protect and propagate farming systems and crop varieties that are ecologically sustainable but threatened with extinction; and b) a workshop organized by FFHC/AD in Bangalore in October 1990 on "the South Asian Environmental Perspective", to provide a regional platform for environmental policy and action to help local movements, and provide an

alternative perspective on the global environmental agenda to reflect the concerns of marginalized groups.

24. FAO supports the Latin America Consortium on Agro-ecology and Development (CLADES), which is a regional network comprising eleven NGOs in nine countries.

25. Closer collaboration is also being established with the Information Centre for Low-External-Input and Sustainable Agriculture (ILEIA) and the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), as a follow-up to the den Bosch Conference. Cooperation continues with the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) on matters related to sustainable agriculture.

FAO contributions to preparations for UNCED

26. The preparatory process for UNCED involved a considerable amount of time and resources, and FAO has been engaged particularly in the topics dealing with atmosphere, land degradation, forests, combating desertification, oceans and coastal area management, living marine resources, freshwater, biological diversity and biotechnology, toxic chemicals and poverty. FAO has actively contributed to the UNCED inter-agency working parties on these topics, which assist the UNCED Secretariat in the preparation of documents for the sessions of the Preparatory Committee, particularly in preparing the draft documents on land resource management and sustainable agriculture, forests, living marine resources and coastal management.

27. FAO has participated in one organizational and three substantive sessions of the UNCED Preparatory Committee and contributed to the Committee's discussions on such topics as land degradation, forests, oceans and their living resources. At the August 1991 session of the Committee, FAO's proposals for an International Cooperative Programme Framework for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development were presented, as recommended by the FAO Council at its 99th Session. The UNCED Preparatory Committee decided to retain the ICPF/SARD proposals, with minor changes, for elaboration and inclusion in Agenda 21 (action plan) to be submitted to UNCED. Further details are given in document CL 100/7.

PART TWO - STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

28. A major activity during the 1990/91 biennium was the development of strategies which could serve as a basis both for strengthening FAO's programmes in the field of sustainable development and environmental protection, and for FAO's contributions to UNCED. The FAO/Netherlands Conference on Agriculture and the Environment was especially geared to this objective. Its preparatory process involved the formulation of elements of strategies by sub-sector (crops, livestock, etc.) and by region. The Conference elaborated a synthesis in the den Bosch Declaration and Agenda for Action. Both the FAO Council in June and the UNCED Preparatory Committee in August 1991 had the opportunity to examine the den Bosch Conference report and made a number of observations and

recommendations for further elaboration and follow-up action. The results of this process are summarized below.

The challenges

29. The strategies for sustainable agriculture and rural development (SARD) should address three main challenges:

- (i) By the year 2025, an additional 3 billion people will have to be fed from a resource base which is shrinking due to diverse forms of degradation. Already, there are more than 600 million people undernourished and some 50 million are now threatened by food shortages and famine in developing countries. Further intensification of agriculture is therefore imperative to meet present and future demands and to avoid further encroachment on marginal lands and fragile ecosystems which should be protected. However, intensification as practised at present, particularly in developed countries, carries with it problems of pollution and contamination, waste disposal, and loss of biodiversity which can affect not only the natural resources and the environment, but also human health. Moreover, the enforcement of environmental protection regulations and standards tends to reduce the farmer's income and create new trade barriers, particularly as regards food contamination.
- (ii) In most countries, agriculture does not offer sufficient opportunities for gainful employment. Disparities in the living conditions of rural dwellers and between them and urban people tend to grow. In developing countries, it is often poverty which forces rural people either to eke out their livelihood at the expense of the natural resources which are their sole means of survival, or to leave the countryside in search of employment in the cities or abroad. In many developed countries, farmers' incomes tend to be increasingly vulnerable to the vagaries of weather and markets; farm populations decrease leaving large tracts of land insufficiently inhabited and unattended, with growing risks of environmental degradation. Meanwhile, as urban populations grow in both developed and developing countries, more intensive forms of agriculture and related processing industries develop to meet the needs of city markets, resulting in growing problems of adjustment of supply and demand, and of disposal of wastes.
- (iii) The third challenge in the search for sustainable forms of agriculture and rural development is related to the global dimensions of a number of environmental threats such as the depletion of natural resources, climate change, air and water pollution, deforestation, desertification and loss of biological diversity. While local environmental problems caused by agriculture, or affecting agriculture, have long been documented, these global environmental threats and the role of agriculture as the culprit or victim of these threats are far from being fully assessed. The gravity of these risks calls for a precautionary approach which places additional constraints on the agriculture sector and on rural

areas and, more generally, may call for changes in consumption patterns, particularly those of affluent societies.

Creating the appropriate policy framework

30. Different pathways can be chosen for the attainment of SARD, depending on the resource endowments of a country, the existing environmental constraints, the demographic situation and trends, the needs, traditions and preferences of the people, the available technologies and human skills. However, in most cases, the choice will be dictated by the overall wealth of a country, the financial resources available to support the transition towards SARD and the trade-offs which can be politically, socially and economically acceptable within the agriculture sector and between this and other sectors of the economy. The first prerequisite is to create a policy framework at national and international levels which is favourable to SARD.

31. If, to be sustainable, agriculture must meet the challenges of food security in quantitative and qualitative terms, providing more employment and better incomes, contributing to the eradication of poverty, while at the same time conserving the natural resources and protecting the environment, then the status and role given to farmers in our societies must be commensurate with their responsibilities *vis-à-vis* other segments of the population. The terms of trade between the agriculture sector on the one hand, and industry and the tertiary sectors on the other, should better reflect the services rendered by agriculture to the general public. Similarly, the terms of trade between the agricultural producers and those who process, market and consume agricultural products, the urban dwellers in particular, should be influenced so as to take better account of the cost to farmers and other rural people of natural resource conservation and environmental protection in rural areas. Finally, North-South and East-West adjustments in commodity prices should be effected in such a way as to enable farmers to make a sustainable living from agriculture without being forced to cause further environmental degradation and depletion of the resource base.

32. A review of the macro-economic conditions, which must be met to enable the transition towards SARD, extends way beyond the agriculture sector and the scope of this document. The UNCED preparatory process is at present grappling with the formulation of the new economic and environmental order required. The main requirements are merely sketched out below and may include the following inter-related elements.

33. At national level, an appropriate overall policy framework favourable to SARD, that promotes sustainable economic growth while safeguarding the natural resource base, may include the following thrusts:

- (a) Creating an overall economic environment conducive to growth with equity. Experience shows that this goal is more likely to be achieved if public intervention is limited to setting norms and standards, overseeing and, if necessary, regulating markets, implementing land and tenancy reforms and compensating for social inequities.

- (b) Creating an overall policy environment enabling people's participation in which individuals can express their choices and associate with others. This should extend to enabling households to move in order to enhance income-earning opportunities. Rural/rural or rural/urban migration can contribute to SARD in appropriate situations.
 - (c) Establishing an appropriate policy for human settlements, exploiting the benefits of both urbanization (larger, denser markets, the easier provision of basic services) and ruralization (better food and fuel security) without incurring the disadvantages of large cities (costly infrastructure, dislocation of communities).
 - (d) Establishing a population policy that aims at both a sustainable rate of population growth and an optimal size of population at which growth should stabilize, given current knowledge of the stock of natural resources and the technologies to exploit them.
 - (e) Inducing changes in lifestyles, dietary habits and other consumption patterns, particularly among the richer segments of the population, especially in the more affluent societies of developed countries, to reduce wastage and promote less greed in pursuing profits and more frugality in the consumption of those non-essential goods which are causing undue pressure on the resource base and the environment
34. At international level, action may include the following:
- (a) Ensuring that the economic environment is conducive to SARD. Two aspects merit particular attention:
 - The burden of international debt that seriously impeded growth in the 1980s for the highly indebted countries; some action has been taken towards re-structuring or forgiving debt depending on the debtor country, but more needs to be done.
 - Protectionism in international trade; conflicts may arise between the aim of liberalization and the need for environmental protection. It could be tempting for countries to use environmental sustainability as a pretext for protectionist methods. While it is legitimate to require adherence to some minimum standards aimed at curbing environmental predatory practices involving commodities with "public good" elements (such as trade in endangered animal species), it is important to establish clear guidelines on fair trading practices, by which disputes of this nature can be resolved or even compensation paid to developing countries adversely affected by their adherence to environmental protection standards.
 - (b) Assisting developing countries to have access to improved technologies that permit more economic and environmentally-acceptable use of natural resources, means of economizing on energy and/or using renewable resources, yield-enhancing biotechnologies, etc.

- (c) Ensuring that actions regarding the development of shared natural resources, such as rivers or their basins, are sustainable on a regional as well as a national basis. This will involve research, negotiation and an integrated approach to development. Regional action can also extend to the control of transboundary pollution.
- (d) Concluding international agreements, including codes of conduct aimed at setting common standards and rules which promote sustainable practices.
- (e) Developing international financial and technical cooperation so as to ensure that it enhances sustainability objectives, while limiting the financial burden, especially for poor countries and the poor in these countries.

Agricultural sector policy review, planning and programming

35. Concurrent with the establishment of an appropriate macro-economic framework, the adoption of SARD policy objectives will generally call for major revisions in agricultural policies, and rural development plans and programmes. The impact of current agricultural policies on the environment in general and on the sustainability of development in the sector should be evaluated in a longer-term perspective, taking into account *inter alia* population trends, available natural resources, their rate of degradation and depletion, and present and future demand for improved livelihoods. In particular, the role of such measures as subsidies, output pricing policies, credit and tenancy laws, should be assessed for their impact on the sector and its sustainability as well as on the environment.

36. To this end, the collection and compilation of agricultural statistics will have to be broadened so as to enable the development of environmental accounting and monitoring systems in the field of agriculture as an aid to policy choice and decision-making. Guidelines and methodologies for policy analysis, agricultural planning and project appraisal should be reviewed accordingly and the planning units of ministries of agriculture, or their equivalent, strengthened in terms of staff and equipment.

37. In the face of the multiple requirements for achieving SARD and their often conflicting implications, the choice of appropriate sector policy development plans and programmes will largely depend on a country's needs and conditions. However, three major objectives should guide the choice of options:

- (i) **Improving efficiency.** Intensification of agriculture and accelerated rural development should be achieved, not by using ever-increasing amounts of resources and inputs, but rather by using them more efficiently. Such intensification is imperative, particularly in developing countries, to meet the demands of growing populations without encroaching further on marginal lands and fragile ecosystems. Improved efficiency should reduce waste and loss, rely on improved skills and know-how of the producers, use biological inputs and processes on the farm rather than increased amounts of external inputs, and maximize income rather than yield. Nevertheless, this objective must be carefully implemented,

recognizing that in many situations external inputs remain necessary.

- (ii) **Increasing resilience and minimizing risks.** Strategies for SARD should reduce the vulnerability of the agriculture sector and the producer to adverse external factors (environmental and socio-economic) and, in particular, provide a steady income to the producer and regular supplies to the consumer. Risk and degradation hazards in the use of resources and inputs, in the choice of technologies, and in post-harvest and marketing processes should be minimized. In many cases, this will imply avoiding over-dependence on external supplies and market conditions, and using crops and animals which are more tolerant to environmental stress as well as more resistant to diseases and pests.
- (iii) **Promoting diversity.** This objective is a corollary of the preceding ones. Diversification will generally increase the resilience of production systems and minimize risks. It will also provide opportunities for the more efficient use of the diversity of environments, local resources and cultures. A diversification strategy does not, however, mean that all production units should be diversified, each one associating different crops, animals and trees in complex farming systems. While these diversified systems are desirable, diversity can also be promoted by developing different specialized production units, including extensive systems, and maintaining areas for other uses such as forestry, aquaculture and fisheries, watershed protection, recreation and nature conservation, adapted to the diversity of natural resources in the rural landscape. Combining on-farm with off-farm activities, including the development of local processing industries, cottage industries and tourism, is another way of diversifying production while relieving pressure on the farm resources.

38. The attainment of the above-mentioned objectives requires a number of parallel actions at government, rural community, and production unit levels. The main elements which may compose the national strategies are summarized below.

People's participation and development of human resources

39. The WCARRD Plan of Action and subsequent work by FAO and others have stressed the importance of enabling local communities to take more responsibility in decision-making and implementing rural development programmes. This implies more decentralization by devolving more power down to local level, by providing incentives for local community initiatives and people's participation, rather than by relying on top-down approaches. To this end, clear rights have to be allocated with regard to resource use at local level, including those related to the role of women in agriculture. Education, training and support services have to be provided to enable people to assume responsibility for managing their resources sustainably and protecting their environment. The role of voluntary organizations and communication programmes in this regard should be enhanced.

Integrated production system management and diversification of rural incomes

40. Meeting the objectives of improved efficiency, increased resilience, minimized risks and promotion of diversity, as indicated above, implies in many instances modifications to existing production systems. The types of production, the patterns of land and water use and other economic activities in rural areas should be better adapted to the diversity of local resources in each agro-ecological zone, while seeking to develop their comparative advantages. The integration of diverse types of production on the farm and among farms provides opportunities for waste recycling and reduces the need for external inputs. Where intensification by diversification and integrated management of farming systems are not possible, other possibilities should be developed such as part-time, off-farm employment ("pluriactivity"), wildlife utilization, aquaculture and fisheries, multiple use of forest resources, light manufacturing, cottage industries, recreation and tourism. This requires parallel efforts in research and development of appropriate technologies and system management methods, including the use of traditional knowledge and practices, in the development and utilization of local crops and livestock, in information exchange, extension and training, with related improvements in people's participation and infrastructure development.

Improving efficiency and reducing risk in the use of natural resources and key inputs for SARD

41. To be successful, integrated action at government, rural community and production unit levels, as indicated above, should be supported by specific interventions for each of the key resources of agriculture (land, water, biological resources) and each of the key production inputs (fertilizers, pesticides, energy) in order to ensure their safe and efficient use. The six major areas for such interventions are outlined below. Each requires a combination of activities ranging from policy and standard setting down to people's participation in grassroots programmes, and includes related elements of research, extension and training, development of support services to the farmers, special credit facilities or other incentives, monitoring systems and information exchange and, where applicable, development of legislation, guidelines, regulatory controls and standards. Strategies and programmes in these six specific areas have been formulated already by FAO. However, they require more emphasis and closer coordination in the context of SARD strategies. These are:

- (i) land use planning and soil conservation, including the development of land zoning and land use monitoring systems as well as major programmes to promote soil conservation practices and land rehabilitation (e.g. FAO's International Scheme for the Conservation and Rehabilitation of African Lands);
- (ii) improved water management in both rainfed and irrigated agriculture, as outlined in the International Action Programme on Water for Sustainable Agricultural Development;
- (iii) conservation and use of genetic resources (plant and animal) for which existing programmes promoted by FAO and others

(e.g. CGIAR) should be more focused on the SARD objectives of food security, diversification and risk alleviation;

- (iv) **integrated plant nutrition systems** seeking to optimize the use of diverse plant nutrient sources (biological, organic and mineral) to increase and sustain soil productivity, while protecting water resources and avoiding plant nutrient depletion, as recommended by the FAO Committee on Fertilizers in April 1990;
- (v) **integrated pest management** with a two-pronged approach, promoting the use of biological techniques, genetic resistance and appropriate farming practices, and minimizing the use of pesticides on the one hand, while developing national and local capacities for effective implementation of the FAO Code of Conduct on Pesticides, on the other hand;
- (vi) **integrated rural energy development and utilization**, to assist in the energy transition in rural areas from fuelwood and fossil fuels to more diversified and affordable sources of energy for the household, agriculture and agro-industry.

Focusing on critical areas

42. The transition towards SARD will call for major public and private investments and lasting efforts. Priorities for action should therefore be established at country level, within the various regions. The most critical areas are those where conflicts between demands for environmental protection and sustainable development are most acute; where irreversible damage occurs, or may occur rapidly; and where significant segments of the population are affected, or may be affected. Identification of these critical areas should be part of the SARD strategy elements concerned with "agricultural sector policy, review, planning and programming", with inputs from other elements such as "land use planning" and "people's participation" described above.

43. The main elements of the SARD strategies outlined above will generally apply in all these critical areas, with different degrees of emphasis. The main critical areas concerned are:

- mountain and hilly areas;
- coastal zones and small islands;
- drylands and other areas of uncertain rainfall;
- irrigated lands;
- humid and perhumid lowlands.

44. These critical areas, which may overlap, generally call for special programmes of integrated action for SARD. In a number of cases, programmes have already been launched in the framework of broader regional or international action (e.g. to combat desertification). Such programmes may have to be reassessed within the longer term and broader perspectives of SARD, and the strategies and programmes for each of these critical areas need further elaboration. This process was already started by FAO and others, for example the Strategies for SARD in Areas with Different Resource Endowments, presented to the den Bosch Conference, and the Strategy for promoting Sustainable Development for the Drylands. This approach is being pursued in the preparatory process of UNCED for the

elaboration of Agenda 21 and FAO is actively associated with it. This should result in the presentation of specific action proposals to UNCED for critical areas.

PART THREE - AN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE PROGRAMME FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (ICPF/SARD)

Rationale and scope

45. As reported to the 98th Session of the Council (CL 98/6), the process of streamlining FAO's field activities, in particular the Special Action Programmes, as requested by the 25th Session of the FAO Conference, concentrated mainly on those of the Agriculture and the Economic and Social Departments since, with the Tropical Forests Action Programme and the Programmes of Action of the World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development, the Forestry and Fisheries Departments respectively had already established major programme frameworks for their field activities. However, in developing a common framework for the field programmes in relation to the strategies presented in Part Two, it was necessary to address the problem of linkages with the forestry and fishery sectors, and to extend further the process of streamlining field programmes. This task is far from being achieved and it is proposed to proceed during the 1992/93 biennium in conjunction with the UNCED process.

46. The main results which are presented here concern the broad sectors of SARD. The issues raised by the streamlining of FAO field activities within the forestry and fishery sectors are merely identified as regards their linkages with SARD.

47. The implementation of SARD strategies outlined in Part Two should involve many "actors": the individual farmer and other rural dwellers, the rural communities, the private sector, the governments and government institutions, particularly the ministries responsible for the agriculture and rural sectors, and related intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Success in achieving SARD will largely depend on whether the interests, perspectives and rights of all these actors can be recognized and harmonized in a set of mutually-acceptable broad objectives of the action to be taken. This does not necessarily call for a search for integration and coordination of all the activities involved for its own sake. In fact, in most cases, this may well prove impossible to achieve without a proliferation of prescriptive measures and related bureaucracy. Rather what is needed is a flexible reference framework for cooperation and coordination and a process of mobilization of efforts by which all the actors can see their respective roles and the complementarity of their action.

48. As indicated in Part Two, most of the integration and coordination of the action required for SARD should be effected at the levels of government, rural community and production unit. The role of the international community should be to facilitate and support national and local activities.

49. The ICPF/SARD should therefore be seen not merely as a new action plan or international programme, but also as a process of networking and streamlining a number of existing field programmes, projects and other

activities by FAO and others towards the goals and objectives of SARD. In this process, new approaches, new mechanisms and new activities will be gradually introduced with a view to ensuring better integration and more durable impact of the multiple actions required for sustainable agriculture and rural development.

50. Some of the ICPF/SARD programme components and projects within the framework of SARD will need to include relevant elements of aquaculture, agroforestry and coastal fisheries, in the same way as projects which are principally conceived as forest development projects may need to include elements related to agriculture and rural development. Rather than attempting to draw definite and rigid boundaries, the approach should be to recognize the importance of the interfaces and to facilitate linkages. This should lead to developing through concerted action, at project rather than at programme level, *ad hoc* arrangements, depending on the priorities and requests formulated by individual countries, their institutional set-up and the opportunities for durable impact.

The main components of the ICPF/SARD

51. The types of activity to be promoted by the ICPF/SARD may include advisory services and technical cooperation (including TCDC), technical assistance projects, pre-investment studies, investment projects and sector loans, and supporting activities including data and information exchange facilities, global, national and regional assessments (sectoral or sub-sectoral). The ICPF would not however encompass each and every facet of agriculture and rural development and necessarily include for each facet all these activities. It would rather concentrate on those priority areas for action which have been identified in Part Two as playing a key role in achieving SARD. These are the following:

- (i) programmes, projects and related services of an integrated nature which contribute to the incorporation of sustainability and environment considerations in the mainstream of development efforts; three main groups of activity are envisaged at three levels of integration as follows:
 - (a) the government level, as regards the policies, policy instruments and plans of development in the agriculture and rural sectors; this would encompass, *inter alia*, the FAO programmes and projects on sector and sub-sector policy assistance, comprehensive food security programming under the Food Security Assistance Scheme, the WCARRD follow-up activities at the policy level, and related supporting information and monitoring systems, such as WAICENT, GIEWS, the nutrition surveys, the FAO/WHO/UNEP Food Contamination Monitoring Programme and GIS;
 - (b) the rural community level, as regards grassroots programmes aimed at the development of local organizations and capacities for people's participation in SARD; this would include, *inter alia*, the FAO programmes and projects on education, training and extension and the proposed Action Plan for People's Participation, the Plan of Action on Women in

Agricultural Development, and the Development Support Communication Programme;

- (c) the production unit level, as regards the integration of the necessary activities, inputs and management practices to achieve SARD, in particular those related to plant and animal production and, where appropriate, the diversification of activities to improve rural incomes and quality of life in rural areas; this would include, *inter alia*, the FAO field programmes and projects on farming systems and their diverse components, as well as those related to processing and agro-allied industries in rural areas, and the attendant credit and marketing systems;
- (ii) programmes, projects and related services of a specialized supporting nature related to key natural resources aimed at developing the technical capacities of government agencies, local communities and individual farmers to use and manage these resources sustainably; this would entail three groups of activity for each of the three key resources as follows:
 - (a) land use planning and soil conservation, e.g. the FAO International Scheme for the Conservation and Rehabilitation of African Lands;
 - (b) water resource management, e.g. the International Action Programme on Water and Sustainable Agricultural Development;
 - (c) biological resources, in particular the FAO programmes on the conservation and use of plant and animal genetic resources, in cooperation with UNEP, IBPGR, other institutions of the CGIAR system and several NGOs;
- (iii) programmes, projects and related services of a specialized supporting nature for the safe and efficient use of the key inputs for agriculture, aimed at developing the capacities of government institutions, the private sector, local communities and individual farmers; three groups of activity would focus respectively on:
 - (a) plant nutrients, including FAO programmes and projects on integrated plant nutrition systems;
 - (b) pest management, including FAO programmes and projects on integrated pest control and related projects for the control of pesticide use;
 - (c) rural energy, including FAO programmes and projects for the formulation of national strategies and technology transfer for integrated rural energy development.

52. Although the ICPF/SARD would integrate many fields of activity, it is not proposed to encompass all the international programmes and projects which contribute to agriculture and rural development. For example, special campaigns to eradicate a pest or a disease would not find their

place in the ICPF although they might be linked with it. Projects for the strengthening of data collection and monitoring (e.g. statistics, agro-climatology and agro-meteorology, and food contamination monitoring and control) may be launched to support several components of the ICPF/SARD without necessarily being part of it. Similarly a number of field projects which are designed to meet special needs, country circumstances or regional requirements would not fit directly within a specific programme component of the framework, but remain free-standing within the overall framework. In fact, a country (or an international institution) may decide to participate in the ICPF only for some of its components which correspond to its priority needs and/or comparative advantage.

Organization, management and funding

53. The arrangements for the organization, management and funding of the ICPF/SARD should develop gradually with the streamlining of the FAO field programmes concerned and their linkages with those of other institutions, first at the level of the main programme framework components and then at the level of the overall programme framework. This process should make full use of the existing machinery for field programme management in FAO and the UN system, e.g., the UNDP country programming. It should also evolve as part of the wider process of elaboration of UNCED's Agenda 21. The organizational arrangements for the ICPF/SARD should therefore remain relatively simple and flexible in the first stages of programme development.

54. It is proposed to proceed in two phases for the establishment of the ICPF/SARD:

- (i) a development phase during which the components of the ICPF should be further formulated, the related FAO field programmes streamlined, the networking arrangements established and the mechanisms for governance, technical guidance, coordination, funding, monitoring, and secretariat support elaborated;
- (ii) an operational phase which would start with the establishment of the machinery developed during the first phase and the implementation of concerted action through field programmes and projects by the ICPF partners.

Policy and technical guidance

55. During the development phase, the COAG, the FAO Council and Conference could be used to guide the development of the ICPF/SARD. In addition, *ad hoc* consultations could be convened to develop the content and organization of some ICPF components. Other components would require the attention and guidance of FAO commissions and expert panels, such as the Commission on Fertilizers and that on Plant Genetic Resources. For some other subjects, UN system-wide concerted action would be necessary as for the programmes on water through the Dublin Conference and its follow-up. The results of these consultations would then be brought to the attention of COAG, the Council and Conference for further guidance and decision.

Streamlining of FAO's Special Action Programmes (SAPs).

56. Within FAO's field programmes, the SAPs are groupings of field projects which contribute to specific objectives and are closely linked to recognized priorities, as set by FAO's governing bodies in certain areas (e.g. the Fertilizer Programme). Management and coordination mechanisms have been established for most existing SAPs. A SAP usually covers a "family" of projects financed from different sources (TCP, UNDP, Trust Funds), focusing on specific key bottlenecks in agricultural and rural development. While these projects are executed by FAO, their follow up involves further national activities and often also others which may be financed through projects supported by bilateral or multilateral donors, including investment projects. However, only a fraction of FAO-executed projects belongs to established SAPs.

57. The implementation of SARD strategies will call for a revision of the Special Action Programme approach. While the need for action focused on key bottlenecks remains valid, the fulfilment of sustainability requirements in agriculture and rural development requires more lasting efforts, closer linkages with the FAO Regular Programme and more coordination of these efforts. It is proposed to achieve these objectives by:

- (i) regrouping or associating some of the SAPs more closely;
- (ii) enlarging the scope of others which are too narrowly specialized and/or not sufficiently concerned with sustainable development and environmental protection;
- (iii) ensuring flexible coordination among these enlarged SAPs, enabling one to provide inputs in another, to adapt better to country needs;
- (iv) broadening the number of partners in the execution of SAP projects;
- (v) associating more closely the funding sources and beneficiaries in overall planning and monitoring, in particular by organizing meetings of the partners, including the managers of major country projects, to review progress and experience gained, and ensure the necessary feedback for further programme and project development;
- (vi) using the technical consultations, panels of experts and publications of the Regular Programme to provide the necessary guidance to the SAPs;
- (vii) finally, associating TCDC networks with the SAPs.

58. The coordination of the different components of the ICPF/SARD and of the various actors involved should first and foremost be achieved at the local and national levels. The selection and coordination of the inputs which the ICPF may provide should be determined by the individuals, the communities and the governments concerned. This would generally require roundtables at various levels, convened by the local and/or national authorities.

59. At the international level, the partner institutions should coordinate their action principally at the level of the individual component programmes of the ICPF (SAPs). This could take the form of TCDC networks, multi-donor projects and regular consultations to achieve complementarity among technical assistance, investment projects and sector loans. In the development phase, maximum use could be made of existing mechanisms such as the UNDP country programming and the FAO cooperative programmes with the World Bank, IFAD and other financing institutions.

60. Within FAO, coordination and guidance would be provided by the existing steering committees, interdepartmental working groups and task forces concerned.

Funding

61. As clearly indicated during the debates of the den Bosch Conference, achieving sustainability in agriculture and rural development entails additional costs. At the country level, the financial resources required should come from structural adjustments in public revenue generation and reallocation of expenditures; at the international level, from structural adjustments in trade and in the allocation of expenditures, grants and loans by donors (bilateral and multilateral, including NGOs).

62. Further, in the case of many developing countries, the accelerated transformation of agriculture will require net additionality in financial and technical assistance from the donor community on terms which will not exacerbate their debt and trade problems.

63. The reallocation of financial resources and mobilization of additional resources for many countries will be facilitated if the process is oriented by a shared view of the priorities, opportunities and constraints in SARD within a flexible system for accumulation, analysis and exchange of information among the various actors at the local (resource user), national, regional and international levels.

64. In the development phase of the ICPF/SARD, existing funding mechanisms should be used to the maximum extent possible on an *ad hoc* basis to meet the requirements of the programme components for technical advice, programme development and consultative meetings. This will be the case in particular for those programmes and projects which are already in operation and which will become an integral part of the ICPF/SARD component programmes.

65. The funding mechanism for the operational phase will depend not only on the findings and experience gained in the development phase, but also on the funding arrangements which may be established for the implementation of Agenda 21. An enlarged Global Environment Facility, a "Green Fund", debt-for-SARD swaps, or a special fund for SARD financed from grants, levies, taxes or fixed contributions are among the possibilities, besides the strengthening of existing funding mechanisms.

Linkages with the Forestry Programmes

66. Forestry is mentioned above as providing multiple inputs into the diverse components of ICPF/SARD. The orientation of forestry has always been towards sustainable management of resources. Initially, the focus

was on ensuring availability of forests and trees in perpetuity, but attention is being increasingly focused on the role of forestry in ensuring sustainable rural development, including sustainability of the land and water base for agriculture. At the same time, the development and management of the forestry sector and of areas where forestry is the predominant land use have called and still call for specific programmes and projects entrusted to specialized institutions or government services. The coordination of SARD programmes with programmes especially focused on forestry and forest areas is therefore essential. The main mechanisms for such linkages are the Interdepartmental Steering Committee for Sector and Structural Adjustment Policy Work, the TFAP Steering Committee, the various IDWGs and their sub-groups and task forces on Land Use Planning, Agroforestry, Biodiversity, Energy, etc. The modalities of linkages, coordination and integration will however depend on the institutional structures of individual countries and on their objectives and policies. What is important is to identify the activities concerned and, at the international level, to ensure both flexible and coordinated responses to specific country demands.

67. FAO's Forestry Department is involved in a wide range of field activities. These include individual free-standing projects to meet country requests; the "Forests, Trees and People" Programme (FTP) and the Tropical Forests Action Programme (TFAP). TFAP and FTP are both supported by multi-donor trust funds and also have significant Regular Programme allocations.

68. The FTP Programme is a SAP which blends elements of rural development into most activities of the forestry programmes, both regular and field.

69. The TFAP has five main priority areas: forestry in land use; forestry-based industrial development; forestry for energy; conservation; and institutions. It is a holistic programme which has elements that are serviced by all units of the Forestry Department and which requires inputs from other departments of the Organization. Furthermore, TFAP is an international undertaking, where FAO has been asked to coordinate international support by all the actors concerned, including tropical countries, international and bilateral aid agencies and concerned NGOs.

70. A streamlining process for FAO's forestry field programmes has been undertaken in parallel with those in the field of agriculture. Work is still in progress in conjunction with the ongoing discussions on the overall management of the TFAP. However, the main areas for closer coordination have been identified as follows: sector policy, planning and programming, notably with the TFAP; people's participation in community development, in particular with the FTP programme; integrated production systems and diversification of rural incomes, in liaison with the activities promoted by the 1991 World Food Day theme "Trees for Life"; land resource planning in relation to the programmes of forest resources assessment; soil conservation and watershed management; and the programmes on rural energy, including fuelwood.

Linkages with the Fisheries Programmes

71. Although national institutions dealing with policy and action programmes in the agriculture and fishery sectors are usually distinct, the concern for sustainable development and environmental protection now

calls increasingly for concerted action at policy and planning levels, and cooperation in specific programme areas such as the development and management of coastal zones and small islands.

72. The World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development, convened by FAO in 1984, adopted a Strategy for Fisheries Management and Development which provides principles and guidelines for consideration by governments and organizations when planning and implementing fisheries management and development programmes. It also approved five associated Programmes of Action designed to assist developing countries, mostly at regional and inter-regional levels, to increase their fish production and improve their individual and collective self-reliance in fisheries. These programmes provide, for the first time, a comprehensive and coherent framework for international development assistance in the field of fisheries by multinational and bilateral donors, based on the needs of developing countries and the policies of donors. These Programmes of Action are: the planning, management and development of fisheries; the development of small-scale fisheries; aquaculture development; international trade in fish and fishery products; and promotion of the role of fisheries in alleviating under-nutrition.

73. The Committee on Fisheries at its Nineteenth Session in April 1991 confirmed the validity of the Strategy for Fisheries Management and Development and found the principles and guidelines contained therein to be relevant in the design and formulation of fisheries management and development programmes. It also agreed that the five Programmes of Action should continue to provide a valid international framework and guidelines for development assistance for the fisheries sector. The Committee placed high priority on Programmes of Action for the Planning, Management and Development of Fisheries, and for Aquaculture Development. It also agreed that FAO should strengthen its role in management and development-oriented fisheries research in relation to the study on international fisheries research needs, in which FAO has participated together with the World Bank, UNDP, EEC and other donors. These views and recommendations were endorsed by the Ninety-ninth Session of the Council in June 1991.

74. In response to the directives of the Twenty-fifth Session of the FAO Conference, the process of streamlining and rationalization of all Special Action Programmes of the Organization is being extended to fisheries field activities. The five Programmes of Action launched by the World Fisheries Conference, along with fishery-related projects, are being examined in this streamlining process.

75. The main areas for closer linkages between the ICPF/SARD and the field programmes in fisheries have been identified and, like forestry, coordination is to be ensured by the interdepartmental mechanisms dealing with sector policy, land use, etc. The main areas for closer cooperation are food security, including food contamination control in relation to the growing role of fish in nutrition; integrated coastal area development, planning and management, because of the close interactions between land and water uses and fisheries; diversification of production systems and rural incomes, including aquaculture; inland fisheries in the context of integrated river basin management; and people's participation in community development, including artisanal fishery development.

Proposed action by the Conference

76. The Conference may wish:

- (i) to endorse the FAO Council recommendation that an International Cooperative Programme Framework for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (ICPF/SARD) be launched by FAO, in cooperation with the other institutions concerned;
- (ii) to provide guidance on the overall strategies, priorities and programme thrusts of the ICPF/SARD;
- (iii) to give advice on the ways and means by which the development phase of the ICPF/SARD should proceed and request that progress reports with recommendations for the operational phase be presented to the 102nd Session of the Council and the next session of the Conference;
- (iv) to request the FAO Secretariat to continue cooperating with the UNCED Secretariat as regards sustainable agriculture and invite UNCED to give the necessary political and financial support to the ICPF/SARD as part of Agenda 21.

APPENDIX

ABBREVIATIONS

AGRE	Environment and Sustainable Development Programmes Coordinating Centre
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
COAG	Committee on Agriculture
EEC	European Economic Community
FFHC/AD FTP	Freedom from Hunger Campaign/Action for Development "Forests, Trees and People"
GIEWS	Global Information and Early Warning System for Food and Agriculture
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
IBPGR	International Board for Plant Genetic Resources
ICPF/SARD	International Cooperative Programme Framework for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development
ICSU	International Council of Scientific Unions
IDWG	Inter-departmental Working Group
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IGOs	Inter-governmental Organizations
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
POA	Programmes of Action
SAPs	Special Action Programmes
SARD	Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development
TCDC	Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries
TCP	Technical Cooperation Programme
TFAP	Tropical Forests Action Programme
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
Unesco	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WAICENT	World Agricultural Information Centre
WCARRD	World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development
WHO	World Health Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization