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منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة للأمم
المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food and
Agriculture
Organization
of the
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Organisation des
Nations Unies
pour
l'alimentation
et l'agriculture

Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная
организация
Объединённых
Наций

Organización
de las
Naciones Unidas
para la
Alimentación y la
Agricultura

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Twenty-third Session

Rome, 21-25 May 2012

DRAFT REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee on Agriculture (COAG) held its 23rd Session from 21 to 25 May 2012 at FAO Headquarters. Of the 132 member countries of the Committee, 112 were present at the Session. Six Member Nations of the Organization, the Holy See, two UN Organizations, one intergovernmental organization and 16 Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) participated as observers. The List of participants and the List of documents are available at www.fao.org/bodies/coag/coag23/en/.
2. Mr Graziano da Silva, Director-General, addressed the Committee.
3. The Committee was informed that the European Union was participating in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of Article II of the FAO Constitution¹.
4. The Committee was assisted by a Drafting Committee composed of Cuba; Denmark; Ecuador; France; Japan; Lesotho; Netherlands (Chair); New Zealand; Oman; Philippines; Russian Federation; Sudan; Uganda; United States of America.
5. The Committee adopted the amended Agenda and Timetable for the Session. The Agenda is reproduced in Appendix A. Members agreed to discuss the documents COAG/2012/INF/13 and COAG/2012/INF13/Add.1 and to hear statements on trade barriers and market access and on COAG/2012/INF/15 under Item 12 – Any Other Matters.

GLOBAL TRENDS AND FUTURE CHALLENGES FOR THE WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION

6. The Committee welcomed the Strategic Thinking Process launched by the Director-General in order to determine the future strategic direction of the Organization, and to inform revision of the current FAO Strategic Framework, as well as preparation of the Medium Term Plan 2014-17.

¹ COAG/2012/INF/4

7. The Committee supported the relevance of the global trends and seven main challenges² identified as the first output of the Process, and noted that:

- a) all seven main challenges generally fell under COAG's mandate, in particular challenges 2, 3, 4 and 6;
- b) the challenges extrapolated from the trends applied to Members, partners and entities engaged in agricultural development globally, and did not necessarily represent areas of focus for the work of FAO alone;
- c) the current formulation of global trends and main challenges was subject to further evolution during the course of the Strategic Thinking Process, including through consultation with the governing bodies;
- d) in order to develop the future strategic objectives of the Organization, there was need for analysis with respect to each challenge of FAO's basic attributes, core functions and comparative advantages;
- e) there was need for a clear line of sight between FAO's strategic objectives and work on the ground, in order to translate FAO's normative and standard setting work into country-level impact;
- f) it would be critical to identify and develop meaningful partnerships with other UN agencies, civil society organizations and the private sector, in order to achieve the future strategic objectives;
- g) while the Programme of Work for the 2012-13 biennium was being undertaken under the existing Strategic Framework, there exists the need to determine how the identified challenges would be translated into cross-cutting strategic objectives in the second semester of 2012.

² COAG 2012/2 and COAG 2012/2 Web Annex

8. The Committee highlighted the following priority technical areas under its mandate, to be incorporated into the main challenges in formulating the new Strategic Objectives and related action plans and programmes for the future work of the Organization:

- a) increased, sustainable agricultural production and productivity in an environmentally sustainable manner through efficient management of water, land and energy resources, conservation and use of genetic resources, and adaptation to climate change;
- b) attention to increased production of staple food crops such as rice and wheat, and attention to non-traditional crops;
- c) transboundary plant pests and animal diseases and food safety and the related standard setting and capacity development work through the IPPC and Codex Alimentarius;
- d) achievement of gender equality in agriculture production and rural development;
- e) efforts to combat post-harvest food losses and waste in the food chain;
- f) increasing the resilience of rural livelihoods to threats and crises;
- g) compilation and dissemination of reliable agricultural statistics;
- h) facilitating sharing of evidence-based agricultural knowledge, capacity building, and technology transfer, including for technical innovations such as biotechnology;
- i) more inclusive and efficient food systems;
- j) addressing market access and issues of trade distortion on food commodities;
- k) safeguarding and supporting the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems activities.

OPTIONS FOR STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE IN SUPPORT OF SUSTAINABLE LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT

9. The Committee:
- a) recognized the importance of the multi-stakeholder consultation and suggested action in support of sustainable livestock sector development to catalyze an accelerated and targeted improvement of livestock sector performance;
 - b) encouraged member countries to collaborate with and support the Global Agenda of Action and to recognize the process as a concrete contribution to Greening the Economy with Agriculture and related intergovernmental processes (e.g. Rio+20);
 - c) supported the relevance of the stakeholders' agreed thematic priorities³, highlighting that regional and other thematic priorities should be identified;
 - d) recommended that FAO continue its central engagement in this multi-stakeholder initiative and act as its secretariat if so requested;
 - e) requested the secretariat to report on progress of the Global Agenda of Action and on any requirements for related inter-governmental action at the Committee's next session; and deferred its decision on whether to establish a subsidiary body of COAG on livestock sector issues to a later date.
10. The Committee recognized the need to establish a novel and functional governance system for the Global Agenda of Action and requested further information regarding its development and its relation to COAG.
11. The Committee noted the suggestion that the secretariat organize a donor meeting to explore the potential to mobilize additional extra-budgetary resources.

³ COAG/2012/4 Rev.1, para. 13 (p. 5-6)

SUSTAINABLE CROP PRODUCTION INTENSIFICATION

12. The Committee considered the progress report on the implementation of the Strategy on Sustainable Crop Production Intensification through an ecosystem approach and an enabling environment (Strategy) supported at its 22nd Session.
13. The Committee:
- a) noted the progress made in the implementation of the Strategy and the importance of a holistic approach that integrates economic, social and environmental sustainability to production including the need for complementary actions along the food chains and sustainable diets.
 - b) recommended that FAO member countries examine the Save and Grow approach to sustainable production and consider incorporating those aspects that would make their agriculture more sustainable in the light of, and without prejudice to, their national agricultural development strategies. It emphasized that, depending on national priorities and needs, particular attention should be paid to integrating actions on sustainable production with nutrition, food losses and wastes, efficient use of water, conservation and use of genetic resources and soil health.
 - c) noted the topics for integrated work proposed for 2012-2015. Encouraged countries to focus on integrated approaches to sustainable production including, and in the light of national priorities and needs, rice-based systems, crop-livestock systems and activities related to building resilience to climate change. It stressed that lessons learned and best practices, particularly with respect to smallholder farmers and women, should be developed and shared across all FAO regions.
 - d) emphasized the need for a broad range of partnerships involving the public and private sectors including civil society, farmers' organizations, Rome-based Agencies, and Centers of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR).

- e) reaffirmed support for the Strategy with the revised title of Sustainable Production Intensification.

PERSPECTIVES OF LAND AND WATER RESOURCES IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

14. The Committee concurred that FAO should strive to ensure that sufficient, reliable and impartial information and knowledge on sustainable management of natural resources for food and agriculture is available to member countries to support policy decisions and interventions on food and agriculture at national, regional and global levels in the context of climate change. The Organization should seek to ensure that knowledge provided is supported by a wide scientific consensus.

15. The Committee recommended that FAO, in cooperation with member countries, relevant national, regional and international institutions, research and technology institutions, as well as the private sector and farmers' organizations give high priority to:

- a) development of tools and methodologies and, on request, provision of technical assistance and advice on the planning and management of national natural resources for food and agriculture under different climatic and management conditions, with special consideration of family farms and women farmers;
- b) analysis of regional and global perspectives on the status and sustainable use of natural resources for food and agriculture, under different climatic and management scenarios.

16. The Committee noted the proposed establishment of a small Coordinating Unit on Regional and Global Perspectives on Natural Resources for Food and Agriculture. Such a unit should not duplicate the work of existing institutions. As and when such a unit is proposed to be established, its Terms of Reference should be clearly stated, including the objectives, activities, scope, location and financial requirements and it should be submitted to relevant FAO Governing Bodies for its possible adoption.

IMPROVING STATISTICS FOR FOOD SECURITY, SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

17. The Committee reviewed and endorsed the Action Plan for improving statistics at sub-national, national, regional and global levels for food security, sustainable agriculture and rural development and its governance.

18. The Committee observed that besides improving agricultural statistics at national levels, the Global Strategy will also benefit the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS).

19. The Committee commended FAO and all Partners involved for the progress made so far in the implementation of this initiative.

20. The Committee called on member countries to consider implementing the Action Plan and reinforce their commitment to strengthening their national agricultural statistics system through allocation of adequate resources.

21. The Committee called on resource partners to mobilize adequate resources to fill gaps in the implementation of the Action Plan.

UPDATE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT ON THE DISTRIBUTION AND USE OF PESTICIDES

22. The Committee welcomed the draft updated International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides and the proposal to present the finalized Code for adoption by the Governing Bodies of FAO, WHO and UNEP.

23. The Committee recognized that an update of the Code requires approval of the Conference, to which referral should be made by COAG. The Committee therefore reviewed the modifications to the Code that have been negotiated by the FAO and WHO Expert Panels on Pesticide Management

including UNEP experts and with input from other intergovernmental organizations, the private sector and NGOs in its meetings of 2010 and 2011, and intersessionally.

24. The Committee:

- a) commended the work done on the update to date;
- b) provided a number of substantive comments, queries and suggestions for modifications to the document; and
- c) decided that countries should have the opportunity to participate in amending the draft as part of an inclusive consultation process among countries and all stakeholders.

25. The Committee delegated the COAG Bureau to determine the modalities for an inclusive consultation process to prepare an amended text to be submitted to the FAO Council in November 2012 for adoption by the 38th session of the FAO Conference in 2013 and in time for the presentations to the subsequent meetings of the Governing Bodies of WHO and UNEP.

MULTI-YEAR PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

26. The Committee reviewed, amended and approved the draft Multi-Year Programme of Work 2012-2015. The amended version is attached in Annex...

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE COMMITTEE

27. The Committee reviewed Document COAG/2012/9 and did not accept the proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure. The Committee agreed on the following:

- a) to enlarge the COAG Bureau from three to seven Members, with one representative from each Regional Group.
- b) to suspend Rule I of the Rules of Procedure, through a nominal vote requiring a two-thirds majority of the votes cast, to enable election of a Chairperson and the expanded Bureau; to

defer consideration of the proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure to the 24th Session of COAG; and to mandate the expanded Bureau to negotiate a consensus document before the next session.

- c) in the event of the Chairperson being unable to preside at a meeting, to have the Bureau select from among its members an acting Chairperson.

DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT SESSION

28. The Committee decided to hold its 24th Session in Rome in 2014 at a date to be determined by the Director-General in consultation with the Chairperson of the Committee.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

29. The Committee endorsed the initiative of the establishment of the Global Soil Partnership, and welcomed the update provided by the Secretariat.

30. The Committee suggested the establishment of an Open-Ended Working Group to review the Terms of Reference of the Global Soil Partnership before its submission to the FAO Governing Bodies.

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSONS

31. The Committee had before it two nominations for the Office of Chair of the Committee on Agriculture, namely Mr François Pythoud (Switzerland) and Ambassador Mario Arvelo Caamaño (Dominican Republic).

32. The Committee, after a secret ballot, elected Ambassador Mario Arvelo Caamaño to the Office of Chair of the Committee. The following were subsequently elected as members of the Bureau:

- Monique Ouli Ndongo, Cameroon, (Africa)
- Sultana Afroz, Bangladesh (Asia)
- François Pythoud, Switzerland (Europe)
- Mohamed Eltayeb Elfaki Elnor, Sudan (Near East)
- Michael Michener, USA (North America)
- Matthew Worrell, Australia (South West Pacific)