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منظمة الأغذية  
والزراعة للأمم  
المتحدة

联合国  
粮食及  
农业组织

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

Продовольственная и  
сельскохозяйственная  
организация  
Объединенных  
Наций

Organización  
de las  
Naciones Unidas  
para la  
Alimentación y la  
Agricultura

# FAO Regional Conference for the Near East

## Thirty-second Session

Rome, Italy, 24-28 February 2014

### Summary of the Progress made in the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Thirty First Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East

- The following table provides an update on progress made in the implementation of the recommendations made by the 31<sup>st</sup> session of the Regional Conference for the Near East (NERC). Several of the recommendations are addressed in other NERC-32 documents. This table provides a summary of actions taken to address each recommendation and refers, as appropriate, to the relevant NERC-32 document.

I. PLANNING, PROGRAMME AND BUDGET MATTERS	
RECOMMENDATION	COMMENTS
1. Fine-tuning the regional priorities to be in line with the newly emerging global and regional challenges and country priorities with emphasis on sustainable natural resources management 2. Taking full consideration of the regional and sub-regional priorities in the Near East in reviewing the FAO Strategic Framework and preparing the Medium-Term Plan 2014–17 3. Including the regional priority areas, as identified by NERC-31, in the Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15	NERC/14/2

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4. Assisting member countries mobilize additional resources to support the work of the Organization in the region	A total of USD 43 Million and USD 57 Million has been mobilized in 2012 and 2013, respectively, to support countries affected by shocks and crises.
5. Allocating an increased share of financial resources to the region through the Program of Work and Budget 2014 -15	The RNE allocation in the PWB 2014-2015 is stable NERC/14/2 NERC/14/3
6. Facilitating increased collaboration at regional and sub-regional levels including through cooperation and partnerships with public and private sector, and Civil Society Organizations (CSO)	<p>Several consultations with wide participation from public and private sectors, and Civil Society Organizations (CSO) took place in 2012 and 2013. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Multistakeholder workshops on Food Security and Nutrition, including Food Losses, were held on 17-18 September 2012 and on 4-7 November 2013, in Khartoum and Tunis, Respectively.</li> <li>• Organized in partnership with 14 regional and International Organizations, the first ever Near East Land and Water Days, Amman December 2013, was held on 15-18 December 2013 in Amman, Jordan.</li> <li>• Regional Dialogue on Family Farming attended by country representatives and farmers organizations held on 20-21 November 2013, in Tunis.</li> <li>• Workshop on Gender equality attended by Country representative, Civil Society and Academia was held on 18-19 November 2013, in Tunis.</li> <li>• The first Highlevel consultation meeting with the League of Arab States held on 21 October 2013, at the FAO Regional Office in Cairo.</li> </ul>

7. Establishing a Regional Trust Fund to advance food security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DG Letters sent to all Ministers for the establishment of the Fund;</li> <li>• Limited progress so far</li> <li>• Government of Iraq confirmed in June 2013 a contribution of 2 million USD.</li> </ul>
8. Promoting effective Country Programming	NERC/14/3
9. Establishing a sub-regional office in Lebanon and merging the multidisciplinary Team for the Oriental Near East (SNO) into the Regional Office (RNE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The multidisciplinary Team for the Oriental Near East (SNO) merged into the Regional Office (RNE)</li> <li>• Financial resources are a major constraint for establishing a new Subregional Office</li> <li>• Preliminary discussion have taken place with the Government of Lebanon</li> </ul>
10. Devising suitable mechanisms to mobilize additional funding for the Sub-Regional Office for the GCC (SNG) to meet the need for non-staff resources	NERC/14/3

<b>II. POLICY AND REGULATORY MATTERS</b>	
<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
11. Assistance to Member countries in addressing the key challenges of reducing food waste and losses by conducting comprehensive studies on impact of food losses and waste on food security in the region and in establishing a plan to reduce food losses and waste in the region by 50 percent within ten years	NERC/14/7.
12. Assisting Member countries of the Region in enhancing their technical capacity to deal with and tackle the impacts of climate change on the forest and rangeland ecosystems, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The regional Office joined of the Regional Initiative for the Assessment of Climate Change Impacts on Water Resources and Socio-Economic Vulnerability in the Arab Region (RICCAR) that is the result of a collaborative effort between the United Nations and the League of Arab States (LAS) and its specialized organizations. In this context,</li> <li>• the FAO Regional Office, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Africa (ESCWA) and Arab Center for Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD) have pledged, at the Land and Water days, to collaborate in supporting countries in addressing Climate Change impacts. ESCWA and ACSAD will start using and promoting with countries the use of the FAO Modeling System for Agricultural Impacts of Climate Change (FAOMOSAICC).</li> <li>• Climate change is one of the priority areas for action under the Water Scarcity Regional Initiative. Climate change is also among the priority areas for the collaboration between FAO and ICARDA and</li> </ul>

	<p>concrete actions will be developed in that context.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In the framework of the Water Scarcity Initiative, the regional office is preparing the establishment of a Climate Change Information and Knowledge Exchange Network for the Near East and North Africa Region.</li><li>• Other activities undertaken by Regional Office include the regional workshop on “Reducing Vulnerability of Fishing and Fish Farming Communities to Natural Disasters and Climate Change Impacts in the Near East and North Africa”, and a regional experts meeting to review the impact of climate related factors affecting fisheries and aquaculture in the Tigris and Euphrates River Basin (November 2012). As a result, a cooperative regional field programme has been elaborated; The programme: “Policy Perspectives for the Water Use of the Shatt al-Arab in Fisheries and Aquaculture for Sustainable Food Security” was established to address vulnerability to climate impacts and salinization.</li></ul>
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<p>13. Assisting Member countries address problems affecting natural resources from an integrated perspective through special studies and in-depth analyses elaborating appropriate national policies, strategies and programs to be implemented in mitigating the impact of Climate Change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several capacity development workshops targeting country technical officers were undertaken in 2012 and 2013 in the following areas: Assessments of the Status of Land Tenure; Land Use Planning and Management; the use of knowledge management tools of best practices (WOCAT) for sustainable land management (SLM) and Land degradation assessment in dry area (LADA); and knowledge-sharing on natural resources management and climate change adaptation.</li> <li>• Participants from countries that are members in the climate adaptation network for Near East, Middle East and Central Asia (NEMEDCA) participated in some of these workshops. Furthermore, countries benefitted from the National Drought Management Policies initiative developed by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), FAO and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).</li> <li>• The Regional Initiative on Water Scarcity will further strengthen the work of the organization on natural resources management and climate change.</li> </ul>
<p>14. Supporting the establishment of a regional coordination mechanism that could take the form of a regional CFS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial discussions on the issue took place in Jeddah with the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) as well as with the UN Regional Coordinating Mechanism Thematic Working Group on Food Security and Nutrition. Plans are underway to discuss it with other relevant partners in the region.</li> </ul>

<p>15. Organizing a regional food security and nutrition workshop to precede the 39th Session of the CFS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A regional multi-stakeholder consultation of food and nutrition security was organized in September 2012 and findings were shared with the subsequent CFS session in Rome.</li> </ul>
<p>16. Providing special attention and necessary technical support to the vulnerable communities living in areas affected by occupation, war and conflicts</p>	<p><u>Sudan,</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme development mission to identify key agricultural recovery and development needs in the context of the Darfur Development Strategy was fielded to Sudan in June 2013.</li> <li>• A project on Food Security Policy and Capacity was formulated and funding was secured from the EU.</li> </ul> <p><u>Syria Crisis</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In response to the crisis in Syria, several food security needs and crop and food supply assessments were conducted in 2012 and 2013 which provided the evidence base for the prioritization and formulation of the FAO response to the impact of the crisis.</li> <li>• Impacts of the Syria crisis on the regional macro-economic situation, food and nutrition security and agricultural livelihoods of refugees, returnees and host communities were assessed in February 2013.</li> <li>• Sub-regional Strategy and Action Plan for the Syria crisis were developed identifying the key quick impact, medium- and long-term interventions.</li> <li>• Implications of the Syria crisis on the food and nutrition security, agricultural livelihoods and agro-eco systems in Syria and</li> </ul>

	<p>neighbouring countries will be discussed during the side event to be organized during the NERC-32 conference.</p> <p><u>West Bank and Gaza</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• FAO continues its support to Palestine on several areas, including, improved household-level food production, food and nutrition security and income generation, as well as in strengthened institutional capacity on emergency preparedness and response. Funds were mobilized from different donors for many different projects during the 2012-2013 biennium.</li></ul> <p><u>Yemen,</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• FAO activities in the field of sectoral coordination and evidence-based, food and nutrition security related information management, including the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), have contributed to an improved response planning and programming.</li><li>• A project on Food Security Information System was formulated and funding was secured from the EU.</li><li>• An emergency technical cooperation project and emergency funding from the Common Emergency Relief Funding were also secured.</li></ul>
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<p>17. Assisting in developing a regional food security strategy complemented by an action plan</p>	<p>NERC/14/3.</p>
<p>18. Organizing a Near East side event during the 39th CFS in October 2012</p>	<p>The CFS Side Event titled “Regional Priorities for Food Security in the Context of Ongoing social and Political Transition in the Near East Region” was organized on October 17, 2012 in collaboration with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).</p>
<p>19. Supporting country-level mapping actions for food security in the region</p>	<p>Work to establish Food Security Information Systems in Sudan and Yemen has started in 2013. Plans are underway to assist Mauritania and countries affected by the Syria crisis to improve Food Security Information and Nutrition monitoring systems.</p>

<b>III. OTHER MATTERS</b>	
<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
20. Strengthening collaboration with ICARDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RNE-ICARDA coordination meeting on information sharing on programmes and Priorities took place on 22 November in the FAO Regional Office in Cairo.</li> <li>• An FAO/ICARDA regional meeting titled “International Conference on Policies for Water and Food Security in the Dry Areas” was organized in June 2013.</li> <li>• ICARDA has also been an active member in the steering committee of the “Land and Water Day” that took place in December 2013.</li> <li>• FAO is a member of the Steering Committee of the ICARDA-led CGIAR Research Program on Dryland Systems since 2013 and actively participates in its meetings.</li> <li>• A MoU to institutionalize the partnership between FAO and ICARDA is currently being drafted.</li> </ul>
21. Establishing a Regional Commission on Genetic Resources	Nine countries from the region, Iran (Islamic Republic), Oman, Lebanon, Sudan, Morocco, Syria, Libya, Jordan and Iraq, have supported the establishment of the commission.
22. Re-establishing the agricultural extension post in RNE	NERC/14/3
23. Implementing the Multi-year Program of Work (MYPOW) 2012-15 for NERC	NERC/14/8.