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Developments in Fora of Importance for the Mandate of FAO

Executive Summary

In keeping with established practice, the Council is informed of developments in other *fora* of importance for FAO's mandate. Presentations will be made on the following topics at the 149th Session of Council:

- 1) Collaboration among the Rome-based Agencies: Joint Project on Food Losses
- 2) Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)
- 3) UN Secretary-General's Climate Summit (New York, 23 September 2014)
- 4) Common Oceans (ABNJ Programme)
- 5) Global Oceans Action Summit for Food Security and Blue Growth
- 6) Review of the International Arrangement on Forests
- 7) XIV World Forestry Congress
- 8) International Year of Family Farming 2014

Suggested action by the Council

The above topics are presented to the 149th Session of the Council for information only.



I. Collaboration among the Rome-based Agencies: Joint Project on Food Losses

1. In December 2013, the RBAs signed their first agreement for joint project implementation through a project funded by the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation to address food losses in developing countries. The three RBAs will work together on the three-year project which will focus on reducing losses of grains and pulses such as maize, rice, beans and cow peas, staple foods that play a significant role in global food security and have a major impact on the livelihoods of millions of smallholder farmers. At a global level, the joint initiative will share knowledge on the most effective ways to reduce post-harvest losses and help countries introduce policies and regulations to cut down on wastage at national and regional level. By mobilizing the individual strengths of the three agencies, the joint project will have significant impact and influence in stimulating Member Countries to take action to reduce food losses and is expected to be a model for future collaboration and up-scaling of RBA collaboration.

II. Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

2. Resolution 14/2011 adopted by the Conference at its 37th Session in June 2011 welcomed the decision of Governments to establish an Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and mandated the Director-General to offer to establish, co-host or otherwise support IPBES, together with other relevant international organizations, provided that costs were met through extra-budgetary resources. The IPBES Plenary, at its first session in January 2013, requested the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to provide the Secretariat for IPBES and invited UNEP, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), FAO and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to establish an institutional link with the Platform through a collaborative partnership arrangement for the work of IPBES and its Secretariat. In response to this request, the four UN organizations prepared, in close collaboration with the IPBES Secretariat, a draft Collaborative Partnership Arrangement (CPA).

3. The second session of the IPBES Plenary, held in Antalya, Turkey, from 9 to 15 December 2013, welcomed the collaboration of the four UN organizations with IPBES, reviewed and approved the CPA, and subsequently invited the four UN organizations to also approve it. Within the framework of the CPA, FAO will continue contributing with its expertise and knowledge to the implementation of the IPBES Work Programme 2014-2018, which foresees the launch of several thematic and methodological assessments relevant to the mandate of FAO, including a fast-track assessment on pollination and pollinators associated with food production.

III. UN Secretary-General's Climate Summit (New York, 23 September 2014)

4. The UN Secretary General's Climate Summit will be held in New York on 23 September 2014. The Summit will serve as a public platform for leaders at the highest level to: catalyze ambitious action on the ground to reduce emissions and strengthen climate resilience; and, to mobilize political will for an ambitious global agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) by 2015. "Action Areas", or multi-partner initiatives, are expected to be launched at the Summit. The Abu Dhabi Ascent (Abu Dhabi, 4-5 May 2014), a high-level meeting hosted by the United Arab Emirates, generated momentum for the Climate Summit and provided a forum for discussion on the foreseen "Action Areas".

5. FAO has in particular been engaged in the action areas related to climate-smart agriculture and deforestation. Following the 3rd Global Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change (Johannesburg, South Africa, 3-5 December 2013), a number of countries and organizations have taken the initiative to establish a global Alliance on Climate-Smart Agriculture. The objective of the Alliance is to catalyze and help create partnerships that will help governments, farmers, scientists, businesses and civil society to adjust agricultural practices, food systems and policies so that they

support an increase in agricultural productivity and incomes, while adapting to a changing climate. It is anticipated that the Alliance will be formally launched during the Summit.

6. FAO is also involved, together with other partners, in the action area on Land Use and Forests. This initiative, that falls within the area of FAO's core mandate, is led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and aims to reduce deforestation and increase forest restoration through effective land use policies, improved forest governance and increased economic incentives. FAO's role in this regard will be to provide support for the implementation of the action area, as well as data collection and analysis to assess progress and impact.

IV. Common Oceans (ABNJ Programme)

7. The Global Sustainable Fisheries Management and Biodiversity Conservation in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction Programme (ABNJ Programme), often referred to as Common Oceans, aims to promote efficient and sustainable management of fisheries resources and biodiversity conservation in ABNJ to achieve the global targets agreed upon in international fora. The Global Environment Fund (GEF) funded programme will be led by FAO, in close collaboration with two other GEF agencies, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank, as well as with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and several other partners.

8. The five-year Programme, started in 2014, is an innovative, unique and comprehensive initiative working with a wide range of partners. It is made up of four projects: Sustainable management of tuna fisheries and biodiversity; Sustainable use of deep-sea living resources and biodiversity; Oceans Partnership for sustainable fisheries and biodiversity conservation; and Strengthening global capacity to effectively manage ABNJ. The four projects bring together governments, regional management bodies, civil society, private sector, academia and industry working towards ensuring the sustainable use and conservation of ABNJ biodiversity and ecosystem services.

V. Global Oceans Action Summit for Food Security and Blue Growth

9. The Hague Summit, co-organized by the Government of the Netherlands, the World Bank and FAO, was held from 22 to 26 April 2014, and demonstrated measurable steps towards critical internationally agreed upon targets for fisheries, aquaculture, habitat protection and pollution reduction. The Summit highlighted the need to address the next frontiers of successful integrated approaches that include public-private partners, secure financing and catalyse good ocean governance, while reconciling tensions and balancing priorities between (i) growth and conservation, (ii) private sector interests and equitable benefits for communities and (iii) Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) and Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ). Moreover, the Summit took stock of previous important regional and thematic ocean conferences and provided a pathway towards prime positioning for the oceans on the international development agenda.

VI. Review of the International Arrangement on Forests

10. As stipulated by ECOSOC Resolution E/2006/49, the effectiveness of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) was to be reviewed in 2015 and on this basis a range of future options would be considered. The IAF includes the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), a voluntary alliance of 14 major international organizations and instruments with a strong global mandate in forestry chaired by FAO. As a major step within this review, the First Ad hoc Expert Group on IAF (AHEG) was held from 24 to 28 February 2014 in Nairobi, Kenya, with the participation of over 170 experts from UNFF Member Countries. FAO made a presentation at the AHEG on the accomplishments of CPF since its inception, its strength, weaknesses and potential for any future arrangement.

11. The work of the CPF and FAO's contribution, including its leadership role, were acknowledged by the AHEG and UNFF, who underlined the fundamental role of the CPF in

supporting the implementation of the Forum's decisions and contributing to informed discussions. It was noted, however, that expectations regarding the CPF could exceed the capabilities of the voluntary Partnership and further efforts were needed to enable it to meet this growing demand and to fully exploit the potentials offered by the Partnership, which was unique within the United Nations system. FAO will continue to play an active role both in the review of the IAF and in the CPF as its Chair, and to work with Members to strengthen the Partnership further to better meet the expectations of Member Countries, in line with the recommendations of the Strategic Evaluation of FAO's role and work in Forestry.

VII. XIV World Forestry Congress

12. The 140th Session of the Council (November-December 2010) endorsed the offer by the Government of South Africa to host the XIV World Forestry Congress, which will be held in Durban from 7 to 11 September 2015. The Congress, the first to be held in Africa, – is open to participants from all sectors, including governmental organizations, NGOs, private sector, scientific and professional bodies and private individuals. Women, youth and the private sector are the key target groups. Previous Congresses attracted between 3000 and 7000 participants. The main theme of the Congress is "Forests and People: Investing in a Sustainable Future" with an agenda focused on socio-economic priorities. These include the role of forests and forestry in national sustainable development, employment, equity, poverty eradication and fighting hunger and government promoted sustainable forest management, including environmental aspects such as climate change and water. The 2015 Congress will be an opportunity for the world's forestry community to share expertise and experience, and to project a new vision for the future. Furthermore, the XIV Congress will be particularly timely with the expected adoption of the new Sustainable Development Goals in 2015.

VIII. International Year of Family Farming 2014

13. The 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly declared 2014 the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF), and invited FAO to facilitate its implementation. The IYFF 2014 was officially launched on 22 November 2013 at UN Headquarters in New York, and five Special Ambassadors for the IYFF 2014 were nominated on that occasion. FAO has engaged in several events to raise global awareness of family farming throughout the IYFF, including the five Regional Dialogues (RD) which took place with the participation of various stakeholders such as family farmers, relevant organizations, government representatives, private sector, civil society organizations and researchers. The RDs aimed to identify the main challenges and opportunities for family farming in each region and the main tenets of an enabling policy environment for family farming as a central component for achieving food and nutrition security and effectively eradicating hunger and rural poverty. At the request of the International Steering Committee of the IYFF, family farming was inserted in the work programmes of the FAO Regional Conferences held during the first semester of 2014, which provided fora for constructive dialogue with the various stakeholders and further defined the scope of work and the priorities of the Organization in support of family farming at regional level.