

REPORT

**Bucharest, Romania
2-4 April 2014**

**Twenty-ninth FAO
Regional Conference for Europe**



FAO Member Nations in the European Regional Conference

Albania	Hungary	Russian Federation
Andorra	Iceland	San Marino
Armenia	Ireland	Serbia
Austria	Israel	Slovakia
Azerbaijan	Italy	Slovenia
Belarus	Kazakhstan	Spain
Belgium	Kyrgyzstan	Sweden
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Latvia	Switzerland
Bulgaria	Lithuania	The former Yugoslav
Croatia	Luxembourg	Republic of Macedonia
Cyprus	Malta	Tajikistan
Czech Republic	Republic of Moldova	Turkey
Denmark	Monaco	Turkmenistan
Estonia	Montenegro	Ukraine
Finland	Netherlands	United Kingdom
France	Norway	Uzbekistan
Georgia	Poland	European Union
Germany	Portugal	(Member Organization)
Greece	Romania	Faroe Islands
		(Associate Member)

Date and place of FAO Regional Conferences for Europe

First	-	Rome, Italy, 10-15 October 1949
Second	-	Rome, Italy, 10-15 October 1960
Third	-	Rome, Italy, 8-13 October 1962
Fourth	-	Salzburg, Austria, 26-31 October 1964
Fifth	-	Seville, Spain, 5-11 October 1966
Sixth	-	St. Julian's, Malta, 28-31 October 1968
Seventh	-	Budapest, Hungary, 21-25 September 1970
Eighth	-	Munich, Germany, Fed. Rep. of, 18-23 September 1972
Ninth	-	Lausanne, Switzerland, 7-12 October 1974
Tenth	-	Bucharest, Romania, 20-25 September 1976
Eleventh	-	Lisbon, Portugal, 2-7 October 1978
Twelfth	-	Athens, Greece, 22-27 September 1980
Thirteenth	-	Sofia, Bulgaria, 4-8 October 1982
Fourteenth	-	Reykjavik, Iceland, 17-21 September 1984
Fifteenth	-	Istanbul, Turkey, 28 April-2 May 1986
Sixteenth	-	Krakow, Poland, 23-26 August 1988
Seventeenth	-	Venice, Italy, 3-7 April 1990
Eighteenth	-	Prague, Czechoslovakia, 24-28 August 1992
Nineteenth	-	Killarney, Ireland, 6-10 June 1994
Twentieth	-	Tel Aviv, Israel, 29 April-3 May 1996
Twenty-first	-	Tallinn, Estonia, 25-29 May 1998
Twenty-second	-	Porto, Portugal, 24-28 July 2000
Twenty-third	-	Nicosia, Cyprus, 29-31 May 2002
Twenty-fourth	-	Montpellier, France, 5-7 May 2004
Twenty-fifth	-	Riga, Latvia, 8-9 June 2006
Twenty-sixth	-	Innsbruck, Austria, 26-27 June 2008
Twenty-seventh	-	Yerevan, Armenia, 13-14 May 2010
Twenty-eighth	-	Baku, Azerbaijan, 19-20 April 2012
Twenty-ninth	-	Bucharest, Romania, 2-4 April 2014



**REPORT OF THE TWENTY-NINTH FAO
REGIONAL
CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE**

Bucharest, Romania 2-4 April 2014

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

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SUMMARY OF MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

MATTERS REQUIRING THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL

The Twenty-ninth FAO Regional Conference for Europe:

Programme and Budget Matters

Decentralization and Decentralized Offices Network

- recognized the positive effects of the FAO reform put in place during the last biennium (para. 31a)
- commended the improved performance and impact of FAO's work at country level; the reduced fragmentation and increased integration across all aspects of FAO's work; between decentralized offices and headquarters, between normative and field work and between emergency, rehabilitation and development activities; and the promotion of partnerships with all stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector (para. 31b);
- welcomed the implementation of FAO's mobility policy and enhanced turnover of FAORs based on merit, and looked forward to more efforts to improve the global gender target for FAORs (para. 31c);
- endorsed the measures pursued to reinforce capabilities within the Regional Office, Sub-regional office and Decentralized Offices Network through a Skill mix review (para. 31.d);
- supported actions taken to strengthen the capacity of country offices, and the focus on 12 priority countries (para. 31.e)
- welcomed the strategic use of the TCP projects in line with the Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs) and the integration of the CPFs (para. 31.g);
- endorsed the proposed establishment of an FAO country presence in Albania, and the establishment of a FAO Representation in Uzbekistan, while looking forward to receiving additional details on funding for these two new offices, and supported implementation of pending decentralization measures aimed at strengthening the Decentralized Offices Network (para. 31.h);
- requested further clarification regarding the long term plans for new offices and the structure of existing offices in the region including cost implications (para. 31.i)

Priorities for FAO Activities in the Region

- commended the major actions carried out by FAO to address the regional priorities during the 2012-13 biennium, including actions taken in response to the recommendations of the previous Session (para. 33.a);
- endorsed the relevance of the existing regional priorities for FAO's work in the region for 2014-15 also; noting the close alignment of regional priorities with FAO's new Strategic Objectives (para. 33.c);
- supported the two Regional Initiatives: (i) Empowering smallholders and family farms for improved rural livelihoods and poverty reduction; and (ii) Agri-food trade and regional integration. FAO work on trade-related issues in the region requires a cautious and balanced approach (para.33.d);
- supported the other major areas of work in the region: (i) control of animal disease, plant pests and food safety hazards and emergencies; (ii) natural resource management including fisheries and forestry, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and (iii) conservation and sustainable use of plant and animal genetic resources (para. 33.e);
- emphasized FAO's important role as a neutral and inclusive forum for policy discussions and technical advice based on sound knowledge (para. 33.f);
- recognized the positive effect of the FAO reforms put in place during the last biennium and underlined the need for continuity in the strategic direction and leadership of the Organization in order to realize the full impact of the reviewed Strategic Framework (para.33.g);
- stressed that all extra-budgetary funds should be used in line with the new Strategic Framework and Regional Priorities (para. 33.h)
- called on FAO to concentrate on the identified focus countries and ensure the efficient use of resources by working together with other organizations, civil society and building public private partnerships (para. 33.j);
- requested that FAO addresses food security more prominently, including food security assessments, in line with the VGGT (para. 33.k).
- stressed the importance of capacity development of all actors along the value chain, including vulnerable groups, women and rural youth, and making documents and material available in the Russian language (para 33 l)

MATTERS REQUIRING THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL (cont..)**Other Matters*****Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW)***

- endorsed the MYPOW in its current form and requested to include Central Asia in the name of the Regional Conference for Europe (para. 34);
- urged REU, in collaboration with the Executive Committee of the ECA and in consultation with the members of the ERG, to make further improvements in the next MYPOW for the period 2016-19 (para. 36)

FAO Governance in the Region and Rules of Procedure for the Regional Conferences

- endorsed the Rules and Procedures of the Regional Conference for Europe (para.37);
- endorsed the proposal of the Secretariat to hold the ECA and the ERC sessions separately in alternate years with the ECA being held at least six months in advance of the ERC in order to enhance the ECA preparatory activities and technical support in preparation of the ERC (para. 38a).
- agreed to hold the next session of the ECA in 2015 at the seat of the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia and to review the situation after this session without prejudging any future location (para. 38b)

Proposal to Establish a Global FAO Commission on Statistics

- was informed about the proposal to establish a Global FAO Commission on Statistics and noted that there was strong support for the establishment of such a global body on statistics from other regional bodies working in the area of statistics (para. 50).

Summary report of the recommendations of the European Forestry Commission (EFC)

- appreciated the work undertaken by FAO on forestry in the region, which encompasses contributions to the FAO global programme and the FAO regional programme in particular through important technical cooperation projects and government cooperative programmes (para. 52);
- welcomed the close cooperation between FAO/EFC and UNECE/COFFI, and also the good collaboration with other regional related entities, such as Forest Europe, the European Forest Institute and UNEP. The issue of putting boreal forests on the agenda of future sessions of the Committee on Forestry (COFO) was brought to the attention of the Conference (para. 53);
- appreciated and supported FAO's leadership in forestry and its chairmanship of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (para. 54).

The Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2)

- considered the Joint FAO/WHO Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), to be held 19-21 November 2014 in Rome, to be a unique, high-level opportunity to review the progress made towards improving nutrition since the first ICN in 1992, reflect on persisting nutrition problems and new challenges, and identify policy options for improving nutrition worldwide (para. 56a).
- requested that ICN2 ensure that the outcome will contribute to a higher degree of nutrition policy coherence and prioritization at global, regional, national and sub-national levels, to attain the nutrition targets agreed in the World Health Assembly of 2012 and support the UN Secretary-General's call to world leaders to take up the "Zero Hunger Challenge" and the Scaling-Up-Nutrition (SUN) Initiative (para. 56b);
- recommended further engagement of all UN agencies in the preparation, performance and implementation of ICN2, especially those based in Rome, and the appropriate involvement of all relevant stakeholders, including civil society and private sector organizations (para. 56c);
- welcomed the work done by the ICN2 Joint Secretariat and the creation of the Joint Working Group (JWG) (para. 56d).

MATTERS REQUIRING THE ATTENTION OF THE CONFERENCE

The Twenty-ninth FAO Regional Conference for Europe:

State of food and agriculture in the Region, including future prospects and emerging issues

- emphasized the primary responsibility of countries to tackle national food security and nutrition (para. 19).
- encouraged member countries to give appropriate importance to food security and nutrition as well as to agriculture (para. 19).
- recommended a multi-partner approach by all stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, working in a coordinated manner, as well as mainstreaming gender (para. 19).
- considered the development of agriculture through strengthening of family farms to be of importance and supported the paper's statement that governments developing and implementing a comprehensive approach to the revival and development of their agricultural and rural sectors can help enhance food security and livelihoods (para. 21).

Ministerial Round Table - Food Losses and Waste in Europe and Central Asia

- recognized the serious impact of food losses and waste on hunger and malnutrition (para. 23a);
- agreed that reducing food losses and waste is closely linked to the Right to Adequate Food for all people in the world (para. 23b);
- stressed that the reduction of food losses and waste should be embedded in the broader concept of promoting sustainable food systems, which encompasses sustainable food production on the one hand, and sustainable diets and consumption on the other, in multi-sectoral approaches and initiatives (para. 23d);
- agreed that food losses and waste have huge social, environmental and economic impacts and costs (para. 23e);
- requested that FAO take the lead in sharing knowledge, information and best practices to reduce food losses and waste (para. 23m);
- endorsed that FAO should continue to address gaps in availability of data and statistics on food losses and waste, including at the small scale farm level in the countries of the Region and assist member countries in developing capacities for value chain analysis with particular attention on food losses and waste (para. 23n);
- endorsed that FAO, in cooperation with donors, continues to support member countries in their effort to include small farmers in value chains in an effort to reduce food losses (para. 23o).

International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) in Europe and Central Asia

- took note of the need for an enabling environment, supportive legal frameworks, access to natural resources, to financial support, improvements in rural infrastructure, training and education as well as equal opportunities for men and women (para. 26)
- noted that family farming and commercial farming traditionally exist in the region, with both production systems having their share in contributing to food security and rural development (para. 27).
- considered family farming crucial for the sustainability of agriculture and preservation of natural resources and cultural heritage (para. 27).
- reiterated the importance of family farming from economic, socio-cultural and environmental perspectives, calling for family farming to be positioned at the centre of agricultural and rural development policies. CSOs are willing to contribute to this process with their knowledge and ability to organize farmers and the rural population (para 29).

Summary report of the recommendations of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC) and COFI and Importance of Fisheries for the Europe and Central Asia Region

- confirmed the importance of fisheries for the Region and supported membership in the recently established CACFish (para. 55).

I. Introductory Items

Organization of the Conference

1. The Twenty-ninth FAO Regional Conference for Europe was held in Bucharest, Romania at the invitation of the Government of Romania. The Conference was preceded by the 38th European Commission on Agriculture.
2. Representatives from 46 member countries participated in the Conference. Observers from six United Nations member states, nine civil society organizations and four intergovernmental organizations were in attendance as well as three representatives from the private sector.

Opening Ceremonies

3. His Excellency Jose Graziano da Silva, Director-General of FAO, welcomed the participants and expressed his gratitude to the Government of Romania for hosting this high-level event for the second time, first in 1976 and now in 2014. His Excellency thanked the Prime Minister of Romania for his presence and for Romania's commitment to the shared goals of the Organization.
4. His Excellency Victor Ponta, Prime Minister of Romania, welcomed the participants on behalf of his Government and expressed his satisfaction that Romania was hosting this governing body of FAO, which provides a forum for discussing the role of agriculture as a food and energy provider and a source of healthy food.
5. His Excellency Mr Daniel Constantin, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of Romania, addressed the participants and referred to the importance of agriculture for the current Government, with both agriculture and energy having been declared as priorities for the country and the current national programmes in support of family farming.
6. He stressed the importance of the fight against food waste.

Election of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur

7. His Excellency Mr Daniel Constantin, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Romania was elected as Chairperson of the Conference.
8. Her Excellency Christina Grieder for Switzerland and His Excellency Vedat Mirmahmutogullari for Turkey were elected as Vice-Chairpersons of the Conference.
9. Ms Hedwig Wögerbauer, Director, Ministry of Agriculture, Austria and Mr Damien Kelly, First Secretary, Deputy Permanent Representative of Ireland to FAO, WFP and IFAD were appointed Rapporteurs of the Session.



Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

10. The Chairperson introduced the agenda, informing the participants that a briefing on establishing a global FAO Commission on Statistics would be provided under AOB.
11. The Conference adopted the agenda and timetable. The Agenda is provided in *Appendix A*. Documents submitted to the Conference are listed in *Appendix B*.

Statement by the Director-General

12. His Excellency Jose Graziano da Silva, Director-General of FAO, delivered his statement to the Conference, pointing to the progress made in the global fight against hunger, and especially in the European, Caucasus and Central Asian region where the vast majority of countries have already achieved rates of undernourishment below 5 percent. He added that, today, the biggest nutritional challenge for the region is related to obesity and over-nutrition. FAO's responsibility is to help to address the full range of malnutrition issues, as well as support sustainable rural development.
13. He stressed that the work of FAO and member countries has to adapt to today's challenges and needs, in particular to climate change, which is one of the biggest threats to achieving food security and to the world's poorest people, who are particularly vulnerable. These factors confirm the relevance of FAO's new Strategic Objectives. In this context the Director-General stressed the critical role that FAO Governing Bodies, Regional Conferences and Technical Committees have played in shaping FAO's priorities and making it a fitter organization by institutional strengthening and decentralization, allowing it to overcome the challenges of the 21st Century.
14. Despite the differences among the countries in Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, there are challenges that are common to all; namely, addressing malnutrition from hunger to obesity; reducing food loss and waste; controlling animal, plant and food borne pests and diseases; strengthening sustainable family farming and small-scale production; and building resilience in the face of climate change.

Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council

15. His Excellency Wilfred Ngirwa, Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council, addressed the Conference, stressing the new role of the Regional Conferences as Governing Bodies reporting to the FAO Council and Conference. The Independent Chairperson highlighted the mandate entrusted to him, including the ongoing Independent Review of Governance Reform and informed that the ICN 2 preparation is in progress.

Statement by the Chairperson of the 28th Regional Conference for Europe

16. Her Excellency Ambassador Gerda Verburg, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the Food and Agriculture Organization, delivered the statement of the Chairperson of the Twenty-eighth Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe. In doing so, she reminded the Conference of the recommendations of the Twenty-eighth Session, and briefed the Delegates on activities undertaken by the Regional Office as a follow up to the implementation of these recommendations.

II. Regional and Global Policy and Regulatory Issues

A. State of food and agriculture in the Region, including future prospects and emerging issues

17. The Conference was informed about specific challenges and achievements in the countries of the region. Insufficient calorie intake is no longer the major problem, with almost all countries having reached the 2001 Millennium Development Goal (MDG) hunger target or World Food Summit (WFS) target. The more pressing challenges now relate to food access, stability, and utilization which will likely remain the case in the future. Poverty is seen as the key constraint on the improvement of household food security, primarily in the Caucasus and Central Asia (CCA) sub-region.
18. The Conference thanked FAO for this excellent review of the state of food and agriculture in the region, putting emphasis on two of FAO's Strategic Objectives; namely, food and nutrition security, and poverty alleviation.
19. The Conference emphasized the primary responsibility of countries to tackle national food security and nutrition. It is for beneficiary countries to choose their priorities; however, they should be encouraged to give appropriate importance to food security and nutrition as well as to agriculture. A multi-partner approach by all stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, working in a coordinated manner, as well as mainstreaming gender into all hunger reduction and nutrition efforts, is recommended.
20. The Conference highlighted the relevance of the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Forestry and Fisheries as well as the on-going process on Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investments for Europe and Central Asia.
21. The Conference considered the development of agriculture through strengthening of family farms to be of importance and supported the paper's statement that governments developing and implementing a comprehensive approach to the revival and development of their agricultural and rural sectors can help enhance food security and livelihoods.

B. Ministerial Round Table - Food Losses and Waste in Europe and Central Asia

22. The Conference appreciated the document which presented issues and policy options for the reduction of food losses and waste in Europe and Central Asia and the inclusion of this pertinent item on the agenda recalling the request by the 28th Regional Conference.
23. The Conference:
 - a) recognized the serious impact of food losses and waste on hunger and malnutrition;
 - b) agreed that reducing food losses and waste is closely linked to the Right to Adequate Food for all people in the world.



- c) agreed that the promotion of sustainable and nutrition-sensitive development of local food chains and systems is needed to reduce losses and lead to less hunger and malnutrition;
- d) stressed that the reduction of food losses and waste should be embedded in the broader concept of promoting sustainable food systems, which encompasses sustainable food production on the one hand, and sustainable diets and consumption on the other, in multi-sectoral approaches and initiatives.
- e) agreed that food losses and waste have huge social, environmental and economic impacts and costs;
- f) highlighted that reducing food losses and waste would also reduce pressure on scarce natural resources in particular land, water and biodiversity;
- g) recognized that a reduction in food losses and waste would reduce climate change;
- h) recalled the high priority given to reduction of food losses and waste along the supply chains by many countries in the Region through the introduction of policies and initiatives to reduce food losses and waste, both in the short and long term;
- i) suggested launching consumer awareness raising campaigns, and education and training initiatives;
- j) noted that food losses and waste depend on specific conditions and may be caused by many different factors with all actors in the entire food chain carrying responsibility for reducing food losses and waste;
- k) stressed the importance of distinguishing between food losses and waste, which affect food security in different ways, and require different approaches and targeted reduction measures;
- l) encouraged cooperation among all stakeholders, including the public and private sectors, civil society and smallholders, in order to identify the best possible actions and technologies to reduce food waste and share best practices;
- m) requested that FAO take the lead in sharing knowledge, information and best practices to reduce food losses and waste;
- n) endorsed that FAO should continue to address gaps in availability of data and statistics on food losses and waste, including at the small scale farm level in the countries of the Region and assist member countries in developing capacities for value chain analysis with particular attention on food losses and waste;
- o) endorsed that FAO, in cooperation with donors, continues to support member countries in their effort to include small farmers in value chains in an effort to reduce food losses.

C. Outcome of the Committee on World Food security (2012-13) and update on its major workstreams

24. The CFS Chair, Ms Gerda Verburg, reported on the progress made by CFS over the past two years including the planned follow-up on Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGT). She also briefed the Conference on some of the on-going key CFS activities, including CSF's engagement with the post-2015 agenda. She urged all stakeholders to implement CFS policy recommendations and guidelines.

25. The Conference commended the work of the High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) and welcomed the regional consultations and discussions with stakeholders and looked forward in particular to the further negotiations on Responsible Agricultural Investment (RAI).

D. International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) in Europe and Central Asia

26. The Conference welcomed the background document and thanked FAO for putting this important issue on the agenda of the ministerial round table. Sustainability of Family Farming requires an enabling environment and supportive legal frameworks, such as providing access to natural resources, in particular land and water, to financial support, but also improvements in rural infrastructure, training and education as well as equal opportunities for men and women were considered of crucial importance for sustainability and development of family farming.
27. Challenges for family farmers are not only bargaining power but also access to knowledge to participate effectively in markets. Family farming and commercial farming traditionally exist in the region, with both production systems having their share in contributing to food security and rural development. Family farming was considered crucial for the sustainability of agriculture and preservation of natural resources and cultural heritage.
28. The Conference was informed about a vast number of national, regional and global events in support of the IYFF aiming to improve the position of family farming at national and international levels.
29. The Spokespersons of the Civil Society Organizations (CSO) reiterated the importance of family farming from economic, socio-cultural and environmental perspectives, calling for family farming to be positioned at the centre of agricultural and rural development policies. CSOs are willing to contribute to this process with their knowledge and ability to organize farmers and the rural population.

III. Programme and Budget Matters

A. Decentralization and Decentralized Offices Network

30. The Conference welcomed the document on Decentralization and Decentralized Offices Network in Europe and Central Asia, reporting on actions taken in 2012-13 and those planned for 2014-15.
31. The Conference:
- a) Recognizing the positive effect of the FAO reforms put in place during the last biennium, appreciated the progress made in strengthening Decentralized Offices in the region, and the support and guidance received from members in the successful implementation of decentralization, in response to the twenty-eighth Regional Conference and the 144th session of the Council in June 2012



- b) commended the improved performance and impact of FAO's work at country level; the reduced fragmentation and increased integration across all aspects of FAO's work; between decentralized offices and headquarters, between normative and field work and between emergency, rehabilitation and development activities; and the promotion of partnerships with all stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector;
- c) welcomed the implementation of FAO's mobility policy and the enhanced turnover of FAO Representatives (FAORs), based on merit, and looked forward to more efforts to improve the global gender targets for FAORs;
- d) endorsed the measures pursued to reinforce capabilities within the Regional Office, Sub-regional office and Decentralized Offices Network through a Skill mix review;
- e) supported actions taken to strengthen the capacity of Country Offices, and the focus on 12 priority countries;
- f) welcomed progress made in new posts of FAORs created for Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, and the creation of Assistant FAOR positions in Moldova and Uzbekistan;
- g) welcomed the strategic use of Technical Cooperation Programme projects (TCPs) in line with Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs) and the integration of the CPFs, which are aligned to the reviewed Strategic Framework, into the broader corporate planning processes, noting that CPFs have been completed or are waiting for endorsement in 14 countries, and recommended the completion of CPFs in remaining two countries;
- h) endorsed the proposed establishment of an FAO country presence in Albania, and the establishment of a FAO Representation in Uzbekistan, while looking forward to receiving additional details on funding for these two new offices, and supported implementation of pending decentralization measures aimed at strengthening the Decentralized Offices Network;
- i) requested further clarification regarding the long-term plans for new offices and the structure of existing offices in the Region, including the cost implications.

B. Priorities for FAO Activities in the Region

- 32. The Twenty-ninth Session of the European Regional Conference (ERC) considered the report on Priorities for FAO Activities in the Europe and Central Asia Region, covering achievements in 2012-13 and the proposals for 2014-15 and beyond.
- 33. The Conference:
 - a) commended the major actions carried out by FAO to address the regional priorities during the 2012-13 biennium, including actions taken in response to the recommendations of the previous Session;
 - b) took note of the lessons learned from this experience, particularly the pilot regional initiative on agrarian structures in 2013;
 - c) endorsed the relevance of the existing regional priorities for FAO's work in the region for 2014-15 also; noting the close alignment of regional priorities with FAO's new Strategic Objectives;
 - d) supported the two Regional Initiatives: (i) Empowering smallholders and family farms for improved rural livelihoods and poverty reduction; and (ii) Agri-food trade and regional integration, as a means to further focus FAO's work for country-level impact and for

resource mobilization within the Programme of Work and Budget 2014-2015 and the Medium-Term Plan 2014-2017. FAO work on trade-related issues in the region requires a cautious and balanced approach.

e) supported the other major areas of work in the region: (i) control of animal disease, plant pests and food safety hazards and emergencies; (ii) natural resource management including fisheries and forestry, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and (iii) conservation and sustainable use of plant and animal genetic resources;

f) emphasized FAO's important role as a neutral and inclusive forum for policy discussions and technical advice based on sound knowledge;

g) recognized the positive effect of the FAO reforms put in place during the last biennium and underlined the need for continuity in the strategic direction and leadership of the Organization in order to realize the full impact of the reviewed Strategic Framework;

h) appreciated the substantial increase in extra-budgetary funds utilized for implementation during 2012-13 and emphasized the need to mobilize additional resources in the region to implement the Regional Initiatives and the Country Programming Frameworks, including their finalization. The Conference stressed that all extra-budgetary funds should be used in line with the new Strategic Framework and Regional Priorities;

i) looked forward to being kept informed of resource allocations and achievements in the region during the course of the biennium;

j) called on FAO to concentrate on the identified focus countries and ensure the efficient use of resources by working together with other organizations, civil society and building public private partnerships;

k) requested that FAO address food security more prominently, including food security assessments, in line with the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to adequate Food in the context of National Food Security and recalled the importance of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the context of national food security;

l) stressed the importance of capacity development of all actors along the value chain, including vulnerable groups, women and rural youth, and making documents and material available in the Russian language.

IV. Other Matters

A. Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW)

34. The Conference endorsed the MYPOW in its current form, but called for a greater emphasis on the obligation of the Executive Committee to link the members of the ERG to the ECA and to submit proposals concerning the general orientation of the Commission's activities and its programme of work. Although the ECA and the ERC are two different legal bodies of the Organization it would benefit both of them if in the future the ECA took into consideration the ERC MYPOW



35. The Conference also noted that the MYPOW needs better, measurable indicators and targets in order to be a genuine results-based tool, and as such an efficient means of improving the functioning of the ERC and include Central Asia in the name of the Regional Conference for Europe.
36. The Conference urged REU, in collaboration with the Executive Committee of the ECA and in consultation with the members of ERG, to make further improvements in the next MYPOW for the period 2016-19.

B. FAO Governance in the Region and Rules of Procedure for the Regional Conferences

37. As requested by the 146th Session of the FAO Council as follow-up to the Evaluation of the FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for Europe and Central Asia, the Conference reviewed proposals for the organization of sessions of the Regional Conference for Europe (ERC) and the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA) and endorsed the Rules and Procedures.
38. The Conference:
 - a) endorsed the proposal of the Secretariat to hold the ECA and the ERC sessions separately in alternate years with the ECA being held at least six months in advance of the ERC in order to enhance the ECA preparatory activities and technical support in preparation for the ERC;
 - b) agreed to hold the next session of the ECA in 2015 at the seat of the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (REU) and to review the situation after this session without prejudging any future locations, in order to determine whether the objectives to revitalize the ECA have been achieved;
 - c) requested that, at the ECA in 2015, the Secretariat provide a report with financial data comparing the costs of holding the ECA in Budapest, Rome and Ankara.

C. Report from the outcome of the debate of the 38th Session of the European Commission on Agriculture

39. The Rapporteurs provided a summary report of the Thirty-eighth Session of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA) was held in Bucharest, Romania, 1-2 April 2014
40. Building Inclusive and Fair Value Chains in Europe and Central Asia: Cooperatives and Their Alternatives
41. The Commission considered mechanisms to build inclusive and fair value chains in the Region that include smallholder farming and raise the income of small farms.
42. The Commission:
 - a) encouraged FAO to provide legislative policy advice on cooperatives and to develop the capacities of farmers, processors, politicians and other relevant stakeholders in relation to cooperatives and their benefits, with the ultimate goal of building sustainable value chains in Europe and Central Asia;
 - b) noted the difficulties related to developing cooperatives and Members' experience in overcoming these difficulties;

c) encouraged FAO to collaborate with the private sector, successful cooperative movements, and countries with long standing experience in the development of different types of cooperatives.

Agri-Food Systems for Better Nutrition in Europe and Central Asia

43. The Commission examined how agriculture and food systems in Europe and Central Asia affect nutrition outcomes, as well as how agri-food policies can be shaped to ensure better nutrition in the region.

44. The Commission:

a) noted that the discussion paper provides a good overview of the challenges faced by member countries in the area of nutrition;

b) supported the policies presented to improve the nutritional impact of food systems in the region and highlighted the need for multisectoral and interdisciplinary approaches;

c) noted that the predominant nutrition related issues in the region are obesity and malnutrition, although undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies are still a problem in some countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus, and in relation to undernutrition highlighted that particular attention should be given to prenatal balanced diets and postnatal feeding practices;

d) recommended that consumer policies and appropriate nutrition labeling, which enable consumers to make informed decisions, should be developed as outlined in the ECA document, which should facilitate citizens staying healthy and well-nourished

e) considered the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the context of National Food Security as a suitable framework for the assessment of nutrition issues in the region;

f) disagreed with the statement that industries which produce fast food and soft drinks “may provide cheap nutrients that contribute to the alleviation of under-nutrition”.

Towards Risk-Based Drought Management in Europe and Central Asia

45. The Commission considered the current and future challenges related to increasing the resilience of livelihoods to droughts in Europe and Central Asia.

46. The Commission:

a) stressed the need to develop and implement policies, strategies and action plans on drought risk management at national and river basin levels;

b) noted that agriculture, as a major user of water resources, is the sector that is most vulnerable to drought;



- c) highlighted the need for targeted investments and strategically planned and implemented measures for reducing drought risks, combating land degradation and coping with water scarcity (e.g. modernization of irrigation systems), which would contribute to food security and support environmental benefits.
- d) agreed with the conclusions and the way-forward presented in the paper, supported better integration of drought risk management and climate change aspects and multi-sectoral collaboration for effective drought management policies, and welcomed closer co-operation in the Region on drought related issues;
- e) encouraged FAO and other organizations to collaborate effectively in supporting national and regional capacity development programmes and to participate actively in regional platforms dealing with drought monitoring and early warning systems (e.g. European Drought Observatory);
- f) welcomed the support offered by research partners to increase the use of the scientific progress in drought monitoring and impact assessment, particularly in agriculture and related sectors.

A Focus on Gender Statistics in the Agricultural and Rural Sector: Progress and challenges and the Review of the Work of the Working Party on Women and the Family in Rural Development and its Future

47. The Commission took note of the results of the country gender assessment conducted in the Region (i.e. Albania, Armenia, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova) and:
- a) recognized that the lack of rural/agricultural sex-disaggregated data (SDD) is an obstacle for effective work in the Region, which leads to sub-optimal planning, implementation and evaluation. In light of this, member states should be encouraged to develop capacities in SDD to better collect, disseminate and analyse relevant agri-rural data;
 - b) strongly supported the mainstreaming of gender in all activities;
 - c) strongly noted the existing gender gap in access to land, resources, extension services;
 - d) recognized the need to have targeted training for women involved in the agricultural sector;
48. As requested at its 37th Session and as follow-up to the Evaluation of FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for Europe and Central Asia, the Commission considered an alternative mechanism to the Working Party on Women and the Family in Rural Development (WPW) and:
- a) supported the alternative approach proposed by the Secretariat for mainstreaming gender activities in the Region in an efficient and cost-effective manner within FAO's new Strategic Framework, in which gender features as a cross-cutting theme across all Objectives;
 - b) endorsed the abolition of the Working Party on Women and the Family in Rural Development;
 - c) supported the new regional gender-focal point network and its composition and encouraged its strengthening and enlargement, including involving other ministries and institutions in addition to the Ministries of Agriculture.

D. Date, Place and main Theme(s) of the 30th FAO Regional Conference for Europe

49. The Conference approved the invitation by Turkey to host the next (30th) Regional Conference for Europe in Turkey in 2016.

E. Any other business

Proposal to Establish a Global FAO Commission on Statistics

50. The Conference was informed about the proposal to establish a Global FAO Commission on Statistics and noted that there was strong support for the establishment of such a global body on statistics from other regional bodies working in the area of statistics.

Summary report of the recommendations of the European Forestry Commission (EFC)

51. The Chair of the EFC introduced the item.
52. The Conference appreciated the work undertaken by FAO on forestry in the region, which encompasses contributions to the FAO global programme and the FAO regional programme in particular through important technical cooperation projects and government cooperative programmes.
53. The Conference welcomed the close cooperation between FAO/EFC and UNECE/COFFI, and also the good collaboration with other regional related entities, such as Forest Europe, the European Forest Institute and UNEP. The issue of putting boreal forests on the agenda of future sessions of the Committee on Forestry (COFO) was brought to the attention of the Conference.
54. The Conference appreciated and supported FAO's leadership in forestry and its chairmanship of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.

Summary report of the recommendations of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC) and COFI and Importance of Fisheries for the Europe and Central Asia Region

55. The Conference confirmed the importance of fisheries for the Region and supported membership in the recently established CACFish.

The Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2)

56. The Conference:



- a) considered the Joint FAO/WHO Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), to be held 19-21 November 2014 in Rome, to be a unique, high-level opportunity to review the progress made towards improving nutrition since the first ICN in 1992, reflect on persisting nutrition problems and new challenges, and identify policy options for improving nutrition worldwide.
- b) requested that ICN2 ensure that the outcome will contribute to a higher degree of nutrition policy coherence and prioritization at global, regional, national and sub-national levels, to attain the nutrition targets agreed in the World Health Assembly of 2012 and support the UN Secretary-General's call to world leaders to take up the "Zero Hunger Challenge" and the Scaling-Up-Nutrition (SUN) Initiative.
- c) recommended further engagement of all UN agencies in the preparation, performance and implementation of ICN2, especially those based in Rome, and the appropriate involvement of all relevant stakeholders, including civil society and private sector organizations.
- d) welcomed the work done by the ICN2 Joint Secretariat and the creation of the Joint Working Group (JWG).

Committee on Agriculture

57. The Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) enumerated the achievements realized since the 23rd COAG session in 2012, including the approval of the new International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management and the launch of the Global Soil Partnership, and invited the Ministers from Europe and Central Asia to attend the 24th COAG, to be held in Rome from 29 September to 3 October 2014.

F. Concluding Items

Adoption of the Report

58. The Regional Conference unanimously adopted the report as presented by the Rapporteurs.

Closure of the Regional Conference

59. The Director-General thanked the Government of Romania for being an excellent host of the Conference, and the participants for their contributions. He appreciated that the Conference had confirmed the transformational changes initiated since he took office and highlighted that the regional priorities had been confirmed.
60. His Excellency Mr Daniel Constantin, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of Romania, in closing the Conference, he called for renewed efforts and collaboration in addressing regional priorities.
61. Participants expressed their heartfelt appreciation to the people and Government of Romania for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements in hosting the Regional Conference, and to FAO for the efficient preparation and organization.

Appendix A

AGENDA

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

1. **Election of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Appointment of Rapporteur:**
for decision
2. **Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable:** *for decision* (ERC/14/1 Rev 4, ERC/14/INF/2 Rev 3 and ERC/14/INF/10)
3. **Statement by the Director-General** (ERC/14/INF/4)
4. **Statement by the Independent Chairman of the FAO Council** (ERC/14/INF/5)
5. **Statement by the Chairperson of the 28th Regional Conference for Europe** (ERC/14/INF/6)

The statement of the Chairperson of the 28th ERC will provide a brief overview on the outcome of the deliberations of the 38th Session of the FAO Conference (Rome, 15 - 22 June 2013) and the 144th FAO Council (11 - 15 June 2012) on matters related to the European Region.

II. REGIONAL AND GLOBAL POLICY AND REGULATORY ISSUES

6. **State of food and agriculture in the Region, including future prospects and emerging issues:** *for discussion and decision* (ERC/14/2)

Various indicators and trends of food insecurity and malnutrition in the Region will be analysed and discussed, along with the role of investment, subsidies, public goods and gender in addressing emerging issues. Government actions in these areas, including those emanating from various global initiatives, as well as the FAO Conference, will also be examined with a view to learning lessons and deriving best practices for the Region.

7. **Ministerial Round Table - Food Losses and Waste in Europe and Central Asia:**
for discussion and decision (ERC/14/3)

The item was requested by the Regional Conference for Europe 2012. The documentation will improve understanding of underlying causes of food losses and waste (FLW) along selected food supply chains in developing countries of Europe and Central Asia and raise awareness on the need for introduction of appropriate policy interventions to mitigate the impact of FLW on food security and incomes of smallholders in the region. The analysis will build up on previous and ongoing FAO work on FLW. Regional dimension of the study will be based on country case studies and analysis of critical loss points along the priority food supply chains. Based on the information and findings obtained by analysis, a synthesis, which consists of policy options and recommendations for reduction of FLW in Europe and Central Asia will be prepared, presented and validated at the regional expert consultation on food losses and waste. The outcome of all these activities will be integrated and summarised in the paper prepared for ERC 2014. Member countries are requested to discuss the policy recommendations and to endorse the recommendations for further action at the country and the regional level.



8. Outcomes of the Committee on World Food Security (in 2012-2013) and update on its major workstreams: for information (ERC/14/4)

The CFS Chair will address the Ministerial session and provide an overview of the main outcomes of the 38th, 39th and 40th Plenary Sessions, reporting on activities undertaken in 2012-2013. The Chair will emphasise the need to strengthen linkages between CFS and the regions, and highlight the main findings of the multi-stakeholder dialogue held on 30 March 2014 in Bucharest..

9. International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) in Europe and Central Asia: *for discussion* (ERC/14/5)

The 66th Session of the General Assembly¹ of the United Nations, declared 2014 as the “International Year of Family Farming” (IYFF) and invited FAO to facilitate its implementation. The secretariat will provide a background paper regarding the activities and the process related to IYFF and awareness raising at the country level. The document will also highlight the main issues and linkages of Family Farming as a cross-sectoral issue and as one of the main drivers for agriculture development in the Region. It is expected that in the final paper there are recommendations from the consultation process in the Region reflected, which should form the basis for the global consultation process later in 2014. The member countries may, under this item, present their views in order to agree on a common position for the Region to facilitate FAO’s further work in this context, in relation to the implementation of the Strategic Framework.

III. PROGRAMME AND BUDGET MATTERS

10. Decentralization and Decentralized Offices Network: *for discussion and decision* (ERC/14/6)

Ongoing efforts to improve and strengthen the work of FAO’s country offices network in the Region will be reviewed and recommendations formulated to enhance the Organization’s effectiveness and efficiency at country level.

11. Priorities for FAO Activities in the Region: *for discussion and decision* (ERC/14/LIM/1, ERC/14/7 Rev 1 and ERC/14/7 (Web Annex))

The Regional Conference will consider how FAO activities have addressed previously agreed regional priorities during 2012-13 and will provide guidance on areas of regional priority for 2014-15 and 2016-17. The Conference will be informed of the findings and recommendations of the 38th Session of the ECA – based on the function of the ECA as a preparatory meeting – which will take into consideration FAO’s Reviewed Strategic Framework 2010-19, Medium Term Plan 2014-17 and Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15 approved by the FAO Conference in June 2013; priorities and recommendations of the Regional Technical Commissions; a synthesis of Country Programming Frameworks; and the plans and priorities of partners, such as Regional Economic Organizations, Civil Society Organizations and the Private Sector.

IV. OTHER MATTERS

12. Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW): *for discussion and decision* (ERC/14/8)

¹ C 2013/REP para 89 refers.

The ERC 2012 asked the Secretariat to review and fine tune the MYPOW in consultation with the member countries.

13. FAO Governance in the Region and Rules of Procedure for the Regional Conferences: *for discussion and decision* (ERC/14/9, ERC/14/10 and ERC/14/LIM/3)

The 146th Council welcomed the Evaluation of FAO's Regional and Sub-regional Offices for Europe and Central Asia and its management Response, and endorsed the recommendations of the Programme Committee in this regard. In particular, the Council called on the 2014 European Regional Conference to discuss Governance issues raised in the Evaluation.²

Based on the outcomes of the ERC 2012, the ERC recommended to prepare detailed Rules of Procedure (RoP) for the ERC, in order to have a clear basis and understanding regarding the function.

14. Report from the outcome of the debate of the 38th Session of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA): *for discussion and decision* (ERC/14/LIM/2)

The Rapporteur of the 38th Session of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA), which takes place on 1-2 April 2014, will provide a summary report from the deliberations of the Sessions.

15. Date, Place and Main Theme(s) of the 30th FAO Regional Conference for Europe: *for decision*

16. Any other business

Review and endorsement of the Report of the Conference

The draft Report, introduced by Rapporteur, will be reviewed, discussed and eventually endorsed.

Closure of the Conference

INFORMATION NOTES³

Summary Report of the recommendations of the European Forestry Commission (EFC) (ERC/14/INF/7)

The agenda item will report on the outcomes of the joint session of the UNECE Timber Commission and the European Forestry Commission, which takes place on 9-13 December 2013 in Rovaniemi, Finland.

Summary report of the recommendations of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC) and COFI and Importance of Fisheries for the Europe and Central Asia Region (ERC/14/INF/9 and ERC/14/INF/9 Corr 1)

² CL 146/REP para 18 refers <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/028/mg569e.pdf>

³ If they wish, delegates may comment on information notes under "Any other business".



The report of the regional fisheries and aquaculture commissions will be presented to the ERC including other Regional Bodies, such as the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission.

The Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) (ERC/14/INF/11)

The ICN2 is a positive pro-active global policy response by FAO to tackle unacceptably high and persistent levels of malnutrition. The high level conference will be held in FAO headquarters Rome 19-21 November 2014. This document aims at increasing the understanding of ERC members on the objectives and intended outcomes of the conference.

Appendix B

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

ERC/14/1 Rev 4	Provisional Annotated Agenda
ERC/14/2	State of food and agriculture in the Region, including future prospects and emerging issues
ERC/14/3	Food Losses and Waste in Europe and Central Asia
ERC/14/4	Outcomes of the Committee on World Food Security (in 2012-2013) and update on its major workstreams
ERC/14/5	International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) in Europe and Central Asia
ERC/14/6	Decentralization and Decentralized Offices network
ERC/14/7 Rev 1	Priorities for FAO Activities in the Region
ERC/14/7 Web Annex English Only	Priorities for FAO Activities in the Region - Web Annex
ERC/14/8	Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) 2012 -2015 of the Regional Conference for Europe
ERC/14/9	Overview of FAO Governance in the Region – Proposals for the Organization of the Regional Conference for Europe and the European Commission on Agriculture
ERC/14/10	Rules of Procedure for the Regional Conference for Europe

INF SERIES

ERC/14/INF/1 Rev 1	Information Note
ERC/14/INF/2 Rev 3	Provisional Timetable
ERC/14/INF/3 Rev 2	Provisional List of Documents
ERC/14/INF/4	Statement by the Director-General
ERC/14/INF/5	Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council
ERC/14/INF/6	Statement by the Chairperson of the 28th Regional Conference for Europe
ERC/14/INF/7	Summary Report of the joint 71st Session of the Committee on Forests

- and the Forest Industry and 37th Session of the European Forestry Commission
- ERC/14/INF/9 Summary report of the recommendations from the Various Fisheries Commissions in the Region and Importance of Fisheries for the Europe and Central Asia Region
- ERC/14/INF/9 Corr. English Only Summary report of the recommendations from the Various Fisheries Commissions in the Region and Importance of Fisheries for the Europe and Central Asia Region
- ERC/14/INF/10 Statement of Competence and Voting Rights Submitted by the European Union and its Member States
- ERC/14/INF/11 Joint FAO/WHO Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2)

LIM SERIES

- ERC/14/LIM/1 Report from the outcome of the debate of the 38th Session of the European Commission on Agriculture on item 3 - Priorities for FAO Activities in the Region
- ERC/14/LIM/2 Report from the outcome of the debate of the 38th Session of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)
- ERC/14/LIM/3 Report from the outcome of the debate of the 38th Session of the European Commission on Agriculture on item 8 - Future Organization of the European Commission on Agriculture



Appendix C

Declaration of the Civil Society Organizations at the 29th FAO Regional Conference for Europe

We, European, South Caucasus and Central Asian independent social movements of small farmers, agricultural workers, NGOs, fishers and fish workers, pastoralists and herders, consumers, women and youth, gathered in Bucharest, on 29-30 March 2014, to prepare our contribution to the 29th FAO's Regional Conference for Europe and Central Asia.

We welcome the FAO *Strategy for Partnership with Civil Society Organizations* which was approved by Member States at the Council in 2013. We reaffirm our commitment to this Strategy; we will fulfil our responsibility in this regard and we are convinced that governments and FAO will do their part as well. We are looking forward to engaging with FAO at all levels; from headquarters, to the regional office and country offices. We will do our best to broaden civil society participation throughout the region, with particular attention to Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

In this context, we see the ongoing FAO decentralization process as an opportunity for civil society to contribute towards setting priorities at regional level, and actively participating in the implementation of the priorities we share. This process has to facilitate the implementation of the new FAO *Strategy for Partnership with the Civil Society Organizations* at country and regional level.

1. RIGHT TO FOOD 10 YEARS LATER

Ten years ago, FAO's Council adopted the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security. We call on FAO and its member states to reinforce efforts to effectively put these guidelines at the very centre of their actions in order to achieve sustainable and democratic food systems that able to guarantee the right to food for all. We urge FAO to use the Right to Food Guidelines as a baseline to assess the state of food and food security in our region. As we see in the report presented to this conference on the current state of food security and poverty in selected countries of the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) region, the food security framework focuses selectively on increasing food production and fails to holistically address structural causes of food insecurity, such as the income situation of family farmers, agricultural workers, pastoralists, fishers and consumers. Such a multidimensional assessment is absolutely indispensable for understanding why people do not have, at all times, social protection, physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. Agricultural and food workers and their families are among the malnourished and hungry in the region, because they cannot afford to buy adequate food with their wages. While the Right to Food Guidelines state that working conditions should be consistent with the obligations States assumed under the ICESCR, ILO Conventions and human rights treaties, workers' humans rights continue to be violated out in the fields. Of particular concern is the situation of an increasing number of migrant workers, who can get trapped in bounded and forced labour. More and more workers are employed through private employment agencies and middlemen, who sell the job offers to migrant workers for hundreds and sometimes thousands of Euros, get them indebted and force them to work 14 hours per day, 7 days per week to return the debts.

2. AGENDA POST 2015

We acknowledge the failure of the Millennium Development Goal aimed at reducing hunger and malnutrition by 50 percent and the subsequent failure of all related policies. The Post-2015 Targets and Indicators leading to "sustainable" development have to be decided on the basis of the following documents, which have already been agreed on by governments but which, unfortunately, are yet to be implemented:

- Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security

- International Treaty for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)
- Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in Europe
- Global Strategic Framework of Committee on Food Security
- Outcome of the Policy Roundtable: Investing in Smallholder Agriculture for Food Security and Nutrition the Roundtable at CFS 40 (Rome, Italy, 7-11 October 2013)
- The International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD)
- International Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries
- International Labour Organization - Decent work agenda

The Rights Approach is the way forward and this is why we are striving for the recognition of Food Sovereignty⁴ as an overarching framework of all food security policies dedicated to achieve the right to food.

3. INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PEASANT FAMILY FARMING

Peasant families respect their animals and their crops and do not think of farming as an industrial activity. They ensure innovation and develop agro-ecological systems to produce healthy, quality food while at the same time ensuring that natural resources are taken care of in a sustainable way. Peasant farmers are also able to foster trusting relationships with consumers, which means that localized food systems are possible.

However, the celebration of the IYFF directly contrasts with policies imposed on a global scale, which do not recognize the fundamental role played by the social model of peasant production in terms of food, employment and respect for nature. These policies often lead to the displacement of peasant family farmers from their original living areas, and are an instrument of financial speculation and capital accumulation which fosters economic wars and competition. Land grabbing due to mining, fracking and large industrial agricultural investments in monocultures are rapidly dispossessing peasants and other small scale food producers from their land and water resources. Water access, either for drinking or irrigation has to be guaranteed (respecting the natural cycle of water for all the families who live in the area). Water is a universal right of all human beings and cannot be the private property of anyone. Small-scale fishers face the same difficulties since sea-grabbing is also a form of privatization of marine resources. We strongly condemn these unsustainable ways of exploiting natural resources.

Social movements and other CSOs in our region are already building food systems based on food sovereignty. In this context, the organizations participating in the CSO Consultation call upon all national governments with the support of FAO to:

1. Ensure the strict observance of equal rights for women with regards to access to land, financing, and all the resources required for peasant farming.
2. Implement the Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests adopted by the UN Committee on World Food Security in 2012. Priority should be given to stop land grabbing, revert land concentration and ensure access to land for young farmers and farming families so that the renewal of peasant farming systems and the vitality of rural areas is guaranteed. In the same context, sea grabbing should be stopped and the right of small scale fishers should be ensured, enabling them to harvest their traditional fishing areas.

⁴ www.nyeleni.org



3. Increase the protection of the human rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas. We call on European and Central Asian States to constructively engage and support the work of the United Nations Human Rights Council to draft a UN Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas.
4. By nature, so-called "free" trade agreements only benefit transnational companies, to the detriment of small-scale farmers. They are set up in an opaque and non-democratic manner, and have a negative effect on food standards, not to mention on the countries of the Global South. In light of this, the EU should cease negotiations on all new free trade agreements, in particular the transatlantic free trade agreement between the EU and the USA (TTIP), suspend the application of agreements already signed, and renegotiate other agreements to ensure that they benefit populations. The impact of the proposed Russian Customs Union agreement should be assessed and a mitigation plan to protect local food production should be developed. Agriculture should be excluded from the WTO. FAO should develop new rules for the trade of food and agricultural products which prioritizes local and national food needs and are in line with the obligations of states under the right to food.
5. Regarding the Common Agricultural Policy, the final arbitrations on the CAP and national and regional adaptations must strive to help smallholders. In particular, this can be achieved through the maximum coupling of payments to production, removing minimum levels in terms of surface area or investment for access to subsidies (in particular for installation aid), while implementing upper limits to redistribute assistance towards peasant farming. Cross-compliance must be adapted to avoid illogical and discriminatory measures for peasant crop and livestock farming.
6. Regarding the EU enlargement policy and accession of countries that are not yet EU members, it has to be recognized how the Stabilization and Association Agreements (SAA) are contributing to land grabbing and to the loss of small farmers' rights to land access. Through the SAA, foreign companies should be not allowed to take over agricultural land in a corrupted way, under threat of criminal charges for speculation. In this way the SAA could contribute to covering up and legitimizing privatization theft carried out in countries that are in the EU accession process. Implementing more flexible methods for re-negotiation terms of SAA could allow EU candidate members to defend their small farmers' right to access land and prevent land grabbing.
7. Guarantee the inalienable rights of farmers to produce, reproduce, exchange and sell their seeds, safeguarding cultivated biodiversity and the autonomy of farmers as recognized in the International Treaty on Plant and Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. GM crops in all forms must be prohibited in all areas.
8. To promote local production in short or direct food supply chains that are accessible to all, including the most vulnerable. Local purchases from smallholders through public procurement should also be promoted.
9. Small volume local and artisanal food processing and points of sale should be the subject of developing specific hygiene regulations by European and Central Asian states.
10. States have to prioritise installation of youth, guaranteeing education, access to land and financial support in the context of revitalised rural programs that can increase the attractiveness of rural areas to young people.

4. FOOD LOSSES AND WASTE

It is impossible to address the issue of Food Losses and Waste without first addressing the root causes of this unsustainable, industrialised food production that dominates European and Central Asian food systems, which are controlled by corporate interests and based on concentrated power, monocultures,

patenting seeds and livestock breeds, imposing pesticides, and excluding small scale farmers and fishers from building new relations and exchanges of services and products with communities. We recommend that at all levels, FAO reconsider and promote the logic of the need to change the food production system to take into account the fact that genuinely sustainable food systems are based on peasant family farming that, by their very nature, reduce food waste and loss. They need, above all, to connect small-scale producers to local markets, and re-localise food production and consumption based on agro-ecological models. We recommend that FAO commit independent studies to support the assessment of the negative impact of agro-industrial models.

Local Authorities must be encouraged to include more small-scale food producers in tenders for providing healthy local food for school, hospital and other collective catering meals. And support means whereby healthy, local produce is made accessible for the socially excluded such as through Community Supported agriculture.

We emphasize that this involves increasing consumer awareness that this involves fair prices being paid to local producers, as well as fair wages and social protection for the agricultural workforce (both on farms, in processing units and together with the cooperative movement).

Local Food Policy Councils and Food Hubs are a means of including Local Government and could provide the necessary connection between FAO Regional and Country offices with a sustainable system that by its very nature will reduce food waste and loss.

5. PRIORITIES FOR FAO ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION

1. Conduct assessments on the food security situation in the region using the Right to Food Guidelines. Support governments in reviewing their food security policies on the basis of these Guidelines.
2. Support governments in effectively enforcing workers' right as defined in core ILO conventions, on the agricultural fields as well as ensure adequate labour inspection. Priority should be given to ensuring that workers are directly employed and not treated as commodities by middleman and temporary employment agencies. Promote decent work for all workers, and stop the precarization of employment through subcontracting.
3. Support member states in quickly implementing the International Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small Scale Fisheries. We call European and Central Asian states to adopt these Guidelines in the upcoming session of the Committee on Fisheries.
4. Support Member States in implementing the CFS recommendations at the policy roundtable event on Investing in Smallholder Agriculture for Food Security and Nutrition.
5. Support European and Central Asian governments in guaranteeing the inalienable rights of farmers to produce, reproduce, exchange and sell their seeds, safeguarding cultivated biodiversity and the autonomy of farmers as recognized in the International Treaty on Plant and Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.
6. Promote local production in short food supply chains accessible to all, including the most vulnerable in Europe and Central Asia. Support policies for local purchases from smallholders through public procurement.



7. Support all States to develop specific hygiene regulations regarding small volume, local and artisanal food processing and points of sale.
8. Support governments in motivating youth and guaranteeing education, access to land and financial support in the context of revitalised rural programs that can increase the attractiveness of the rural areas to young people.
9. Support governments in implementing the Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests, adopted by the UN Committee on World Food Security in 2012. Priority should be given to stop land and sea grabbing, revert land concentration and ensure access to land for young farmers and farming families so that the renewal of peasant farming systems and the vitality of rural areas is guaranteed.
10. Support governments in ensuring the strict observance of equal rights for women with regards to access to land, financing, and all the resources required for peasant work.