

Good morning/evening

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to present to you a summary of recommendations of the 25th Session of the Near East Forestry and Range Commission (NEFRC25), which was on 19 -21 October 2021 and hosted virtually by Egypt.

- Following the guidance provided by COFO at its 25<sup>th</sup> Session for RFCs to seek ways to help facilitate their policy dialogues and technical exchanges, to assist them in achieving their Members' goals and contributions to international processes and goals, the NEFRC has synchronized the calendar of its 25<sup>th</sup> Session with that of 36<sup>th</sup> Session of the Regional Conference for the Near east (NERC) where the inputs from NEFRC25 Session were discussed and adopted as integral part of the Report of the 36<sup>th</sup> Session of the NERC;
- The Chairman of the Regional Commission was invited and participated in both the Senior Officers Meeting and the Ministerial Segment of the Regional Conference, a matter that facilitated, for the first time, the interaction with Regional Conferences members;
- The restructuring of FAO regional programme into four regional priorities aiming at transforming the agrifood systems to respond to COVID-19 and achieving the SDGs has resulted in Strengthening cross-sectorial work of the NEFRC, especially on forestry/rangelands and agrifood systems.
- FAO Regional Priority number 3 on Greening Agriculture (RP3-GA) which focuses on the sustainability, efficiency and resilience of agrifood systems has special focus to strengthen actions on halting desertification, land degradation and deforestation while greening agrifood systems, is providing a framework for better integration of forestry, rangelands, agriculture, sustainable land and water management, biodiversity and ecosystem restoration.
- To support countries with the formulation of development projects that integrate forest and rangelands within the broader food system, conserve biodiversity, adapt to climate change and to support countries' efforts in accessing climate finance, FAORNE organized in July 2022 a regional consultation meeting on GEF-8 funding through. The meeting gathered the GEF Operational Focal Points, representatives from ministries of the agriculture and from FAO country offices to identify project ideas to be further developed into project proposals for submission to GEF-Sec.
- Among the ideas identified for further development into full project proposals is to include in the drylands impact programme a sub-programme on sustainable agrosilvopastoral systems. Other ideas related to forestry and rangelands is the restoration and sustainable management of mangrove ecosystems and support to mainstreaming biodiversity in forestry and sustainable management of forest biodiversity.
- Preparations are ongoing for the review of the NEFRC with the aim of further enhancing its relevance, efficiency and effectiveness with focus on the 2030 Agenda and the FAO Strategic Framework 2022- 31.

Thank you for your attention