

26th Session of the Committee on Forestry - Written Correspondence Procedure

Item 8.2 Progress report on the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors and its 2021-23 Action Plan

Secretariat response to written questions from Members

The Secretariat expresses its appreciation for the comments from Members on Item 8.2 Progress report on the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors and its 2021-23 Action Plan.

The Secretariat thanks the European Union and its 27 Member States for their continued support to the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors and its 2021-23 Action Plan, particularly in the context of the upcoming Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Secretariat acknowledges the importance of actions in the strategy to address deforestation and forest biodiversity loss.

The Secretariat welcomes New Zealand's appreciation for FAO's work on mainstreaming biodiversity across forestry sectors, especially in the context of the Action Plan and Strategy. The Secretariat took note of the request to continue promoting biodiversity mainstreaming in the context of the Global Biodiversity Framework process and monitoring. The Secretariat also acknowledges the need for Members to tailor sustainable forestry practices to their domestic context, environment and economy.

The Secretariat appreciates Australia's support to FAO's work on the implementation of the Strategy and its detailed comments regarding forest production and biodiversity. FAO, in partnership with the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), has conducted a review of biodiversity mainstreaming in forestry, as requested by the Committee on Forestry at its 25th Session, to share good practices on solutions that balance conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity. The report, to be launched at the 8th World Forest Week, discusses many of the points brought up by Australia including land sparing vs. sharing approaches.

The Secretariat took note of Australia's request for a balanced Action Plan for 2024-27 that considers various approaches to mainstreaming biodiversity.

The suggestions of Australia on the text of the COFO26 report have been noted by the Secretariat.

The Secretariat appreciates the comments of Argentina about the Strategy and progress in the implementation of the Action Plan. The Secretariat acknowledges Argentina's recommendation of a balanced approach to sustainable agriculture and the transformation of agrifood systems that takes into account the needs, capacities and priorities of Members.

Regarding the question on paragraph 24 about highlighting the value of TAPE (Tool for Agroecology Performance Evaluation) over other FAO tools, the Secretariat has included it as a completed output of the 2021-23 Action Plan, and due to its potential use, as appropriate, as one of the existing multidimensional assessment tools.

The Secretariat takes note of Argentina's observations on the draft 2024-27 Action Plan. With regards to the question on the scope of the actions that are planned to be carried out in the field of pesticides, FAO's activities would include awareness raising, identification of Highly Hazardous Pesticides, capacity building in regulatory control as well as piloting and mainstreaming of alternatives. With regards to the

references to the Rotterdam Convention, FAO takes note of the points raised by Argentina and will remove the targets that make reference to actions to be taken by the Parties, while maintaining those related to the work of the Secretariat.

With respect to Argentina's comment about the interdivisional initiative on deforestation, the Secretariat informs that FAO has continued to support the UN system-wide effort in response to "Turning the Tide on Deforestation". Cross-divisional work in this regard has been enhanced, focusing on issues and opportunities for collaboration, rather than on a specific cross-divisional initiative. Examples of such work include the preparation of the joint Agenda on "Agriculture and forestry linkages" (item 2.8 for COAG28) and (item 6 for COFO26), joint technical papers, and the work on GEF-7 Impact Program the Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration (FOLUR).

The Secretariat also took note of the observation by the Russian Federation that while reviewing the draft 2024-27 Action Plan it should be taken into account that the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework is not yet approved.

The Secretariat appreciates the support by the United States of America to mainstreaming biodiversity in the agriculture sectors and its positive feedback on the progress made in implementing the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors and its 2021-23 Action Plan and on the draft 2024-27 Action Plan.

The Secretariat took note of the reservations of the United States of America regarding the proposed deliverable *to support countries to eliminate public policies that are harmful to biodiversity* and the suggestion for developing and applying incentives for the conservation of natural resources including biodiversity. The Secretariat will take these into account when finalizing the 2024-27 Action Plan.

The Secretariat confirms that biodiversity is being mainstreamed by FAO under the One Health approach in its work within the Quadripartite and in its own programmes, including the One Health Programme Priority Area.