

European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)

35/4 Meeting of the Executive Committee

2 July 2015

Espace Gabon

14.00 – 17.00 hours

Agenda item 4

Update on the Implementation of the Medium Term Plan 2014-17

Summary and Decision Box

The paper presents the summary of results of the implementation of the first year (2014) of the Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15 for the European and Central Asia Region. It highlights the results based on the strategic framework. Reference is also made to the implementation of the Regional Initiatives in the Region and specific lessons learnt.

It is expected that the members of the Executive Committee will review the results and provide their recommendations regarding the format of the report and the results achieved in the first year of the biennium.

I. Introduction

1. FAO's five Strategic Objectives (see Table 1) represent those areas of work on which FAO is focusing its efforts in support of Members. Priorities for FAO's activities in each region were considered by the respective Regional Conferences in 2014 based on:

- a) The reviewed Strategic Framework and Medium Term Plan 2014-17, which contain the Strategic Objective results frameworks for organizing the response to priorities in the region.
- b) Regional priorities, which focus on region-specific needs as endorsed by the Regional Conferences.
- c) Country Programming Frameworks (CPF), which informed the identification of regional priorities and constitute an important and dynamic pillar of the Organization's delivery mechanisms.

2. Each Regional Conferences endorsed a set of regional initiatives, taking into account the CPFs of the countries in the region and the regional priorities.

3. The purpose of this paper is to inform the Executive Committee of the European Commission on Agriculture regarding the implementation of the work programme in the Region within their responsibilities of reviewing also inter-session work.

4. The document provides information regarding the results of the implementation of the regional priorities related to FAO's Strategic Objectives as at end 2014. The report is based on

FAO's Mid-term Review Synthesis Report (MTR) 2014,¹ which was considered by the Programme and Finance Committees in March 2015. It was also presented to the Informal Consultation meeting on 18/19 May 2015.

II. Results

5. The 29th Regional Conference for Europe (ERC) in April 2014 identified priority areas for FAO's work in Europe and Central Asia under FAO's Medium Term Plan 2014-17 and Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15.

6. FAO has responded to the challenges identified by the 2014 Regional Conference² by focusing its work on the following five priority areas:

- a) strengthening food security and nutrition and fisheries in a sustainable manner (contributing to SO1);
- b) policy advice to governments in support of sustainable intensification for smallholders (contributing to SO2, SO3, SO4);
- c) natural resource management, including climate change mitigation and adaptation (contributing to SO2, SO3, SO5);
- d) control of animal disease, plant pests and food safety hazards (contributing to SO2, SO4, SO5);
- e) policy and institutional support for entry of Member States into regional and global trade, standard-setting and organizations of regional economic cooperation (contributing to SO4).

7. FAO's support to these priorities centres around two Regional Initiatives endorsed by the Regional Conference, as well as some additional focus areas of work. Key achievements delivered by FAO in 2014 through each of the Regional Initiatives are highlighted in Annex 1. Results contributing to each SO are provided below.

Table 1: Contribution of Regional Priorities to FAO's Strategic Objectives

FAO Strategic Objectives	Priorities for FAO's work in Europe and Central Asia
SO 1 - Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition	RP 1 - Strengthening food security and nutrition
SO 2 - Increase and improve provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner	RP 2 - Policy advice to governments in support of sustainable intensification for small holders RP 3 - Natural resource management, including climate change mitigation and adaptation RP 4 - Control of animal disease, plant pests and food safety hazards
SO 3 - Reduce rural poverty	RP 2 - Policy advice to governments in support of sustainable intensification for small holders RP 3 - Natural resource management, including climate change mitigation and adaptation
SO4 - Enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems at local, national and international levels	RP 2 - Policy advice to governments in support of sustainable intensification for small farms RP 4 - Control of animal disease, plant pests and food safety

¹ PC 117/5 – FC 157/7 at www.fao.org/mtr2014

² ERC/14/7 Rev 1 para. 14-19

	hazards RP 5 - Policy and institutional support for entry of Member States into regional and global trade, standard-setting and organizations of regional economic cooperation
SO5 - Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises	RP 3 - Natural resource management, including climate change mitigation and adaptation RP 4 - Control of animal disease, plant pests and food safety hazards

Strategic Objective 1 - Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition

8. Achievements fall under the outcomes related to the policies and investment plans, programs, legal frameworks and the allocation of resources necessary for eradicating hunger (1.1), as well as to the evidence building and production of high-quality comprehensive food security and nutrition analysis that is based on data and information available in the networks of existing sector and stakeholder information systems (1.3).

9. Specific results achieved in this context were:

- In Albania the development of the National Nutrition Policy;
- The Global Food Security and Nutrition Network's work in Europe and Central Asia³;
- In Kyrgyzstan the Food Security and Nutrition Technical Working Group has been established, agricultural statistics have been improved through digitization and hand held computers; National Statistics Committee staff were trained on price collection mechanisms;
- In Tajikistan the quality of food security and nutrition related data and information has improved, including gender sensitive data; capacity was strengthened to collect, analyze, disseminate and mainstream agricultural statistics relevant to food security (food demand and supply data, prices, nutrition indicator). In addition, FAO actively contributed to the Technical Working Group on Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) by reviewing policy and other documents on food security and nutrition related issues.

10. In 2015 work will primarily focus on Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. A regional project is expected to accelerate that aims to support ministries of agriculture in Central Asian countries in formulating a Regional Programme on Food Security.

Strategic Objective 2 – Increase and improve provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner

11. Results contribute to the outcomes related to the adoption of producers' practices that increase agricultural production in a sustainable manner (2.1), strengthen member countries' governance such as policies, laws and management frameworks (2.2), support the adoption of international instruments (2.3) and evidence based decisions in the planning and management of the agriculture sector (2.4). The major contribution in the Region is linked to the outcomes related to producers' practices and governance mechanisms.

12. Specific results achieved in this context were:

³ <http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/eca/en/previous-consultations>

- In Kazakhstan the climate change adaptation of aquaculture and culture-based fisheries was strengthened, supporting the development of the National Forestry Programme;
- In Uzbekistan water saving technologies were enhanced through different activities and training materials developed on locust management;
- In Kyrgyzstan the capacities of different groups such as fisheries associations, civil society, policy makers and local administration were developed;
- In Tajikistan the capacities of production cooperatives and dehkan farm associations were strengthened and the National Forestry Programme was developed;
- In Azerbaijan a biotechnology laboratory was established within the Research Institute of Vegetable-growing, a draft potato seed certification regulation was developed, the capacities of the Cattle and Milk Producers Association were strengthened and the National Strategy and Action Plan for the Management of Animal Genetic Resources was developed;
- In Turkey the capacities of the Ministry of Agriculture were strengthened on sustainable land management, and climate friendly agriculture. Capacities were also strengthened through the development of indicators that allow land consolidation monitoring.
- In Ukraine the relevant scientific research institute's staff were trained on African Swine Fever related issues including diagnostics and monitoring. In addition, the development of the national forestry policy was supported by establishing a Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue and Inter-agency task force on forests and forestry;
- In Albania the capacities of various organizations were strengthened on sustainable production technologies of different vegetables, olives and small ruminants as well as the fishery statistical data collection and national information systems were developed;
- In Macedonia a soil information system was developed which provides the official national soil map according to European and global standards. The map includes reliable data and information on the spatial distribution of soil types and soil properties of the country.

13. In 2015 work will continue in some of the above fields. In addition:

- In Uzbekistan support is being provided for the adaption of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture;
- In Moldova and Kazakhstan innovative irrigation practices will be enhanced to increase efficiency;
- In Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan support will be provided to develop legislation on organic agriculture;
- In Kyrgyzstan support is being provided to support national pasture management;

- In Albania support will be provided to establish an inventory of local crop varieties.

Strategic Objective 3 – Reduce rural poverty

14. Results contribute to the outcome related to equitable access to production resources, services, organizations and market for the rural poor and helping them to manage their resources more sustainably (3.1).

15. The Regional Initiative on Empowering Smallholders and Family Farms for Improved Rural Livelihoods and Poverty Reduction is the major delivery mechanism of this Strategic Objective. More details about results in 2014 are available in IC/2015/2-2.

16. In 2015 work will be carried out:

- In Armenia support will be provided to develop the Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy for 2015-2025 and to update related Action Plan;
- In Macedonia support will be provided for the preparation of the Land Consolidation Strategy;
- In Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina training material and coaching will be provided to the beneficiaries of Drina-Tara and Drina-Sava cross border regions through area based development approach;
- In Kazakhstan support will be provided to improve the national extension program.

Strategic Objective 4 – Enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems

17. Results contribute to the outcomes related to international agreements and standards that promote efficient and inclusive trade and markets (4.1) and agribusiness and agrifood chain made more inclusive and efficient (4.2) as well as inclusive policies and financial instruments and investments (4.3).

18. The Regional Initiatives on Agri-food Trade and Regional Integration and on Empowering Smallholders addresses SO4. Therefore results are reported in the background document on the RIs IC/2015/2-2.

19. Results in 2014 beyond those included in the regional initiatives:

- Regional workshops were organized to support various aspects of plant health;
- In Georgia support was provided to the Laboratory of the Ministry of Agriculture on the requirements of international accreditation; characteristics of validated method in laboratory and the measures to insure the quality of test and calibration results. Staff of the laboratory was trained on the international requirements in the area of laboratory testing of fish products. In addition National Food Agency inspectors were trained on fish inspection issues including inspection of the processing establishments to meet the sanitary and phytosanitary obligations for fish and fishery products;
- In the Russian Federation, FAO jointly with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) supported the development of the Roadmap for Value-Added Investments in the Forestry Industry that provides recommendations for sustainable forest industry development;

- In Serbia FAO provided technical advice to develop origin-based labels in the horticultural sector financing institution jointly with EBRD.

20. In 2015 work within SO4 will include:

- In Kyrgyzstan support will be provided to develop the animal identification and traceability system in the country;
- In Tajikistan and Kazakhstan country studies will be prepared to assess and to propose recommendations as regards the situation of food losses and waste;
- In Azerbaijan capacities will be strengthened on monitoring, analyzing and reporting market developments in order to improve a national marketing system;
- In the Republic of Moldova the market information collection and analysis capacities will be strengthened

Strategic Objective 5 – Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crisis

21. Results contribute to outcomes such as providing regular information and early warning against potential threats (5.2), reducing risks and vulnerability at household level (5.3) as well as preparation for and management of effective responses to disasters and crisis.

22. Specific results achieved in this context are:

- FAO's Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS), which provides up to date information on the food security situation of monitored countries globally including countries in the region;
- Locust programme for countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus including activities related to data monitoring and collection, cross border surveys and capacity building of relevant technical persons.
- In the Republic of Moldova awareness raising campaigns on integrated management of hazardous chemicals, provision of guidance materials and relevant recommendations on lifecycle management of hazardous chemicals.
- In Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia effective response was provided to the floods occurred in spring 2014 while subsequently post-emergency measures were provided.

23. In 2015 work will cover:

- In Ukraine a spatial database will be established for surveillance and control of African Swine Fever (ASF) outbreaks and capacity will be built on early recognition and response to ASF;
- In Central Asian and Caucasus locust management related work is continuing;
- In Serbia post-flood emergency work is being carried out.

Resource Mobilization

24. The total amount of extra-budgetary resources mobilized in 2014 was USD 24.12 million. This represents the mobilization of 60 percent of the mobilization target (USD 40 million) for 2014-15 biennium.

25. Resources mobilized for development cooperation in 2014 amounted USD 12.9 million. The main resource partners were the Global Environmental Fund (GEF) and the European Union with a share of 64 percent.

26. Resources mobilized for emergency cooperation in 2014 amounted USD 11.5 million. The main emergency operations were responding to the floods in Serbia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The main resource partner for emergency funding was the European Union with more than 90 percent of the resources. Funds were also provided through the Special Fund for Emergency Operations (SFERA) and the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) by the UN as well as Austria and the Czech Republic.

Technical Cooperation Programme

27. During 2014, 13 fully-fledged TCP Projects and 11 TCP Facilities for a total of USD 5.8 million were approved against the 2014-15 appropriation, representing a total of 55.4 percent of the net appropriation of USD 10.5 million available for project approvals in the current biennium.

Table 2: TCP Approvals in the first year of biennium (Source: FPMIS)

Biennium	Regional Appropriation (USD)	Approvals in first year of biennium (USD)	Approvals in first year of biennium (%)	# of full TCPs	Budget of full TCP (USD)	# of TCPFs	Budget of TCPF (USD)
2010-11	8 702 530	4 099 301	47.1%	8	3 207 000	9	892 301
2012-13	9 047 335	4 510 009	49.8%	10	3 536 000	9	974 009
2014-15	10 467 399	5 803 269	55.4%	13	4 712 000	11	1 091 269

28. TCP funds are available for expenditure over two biennia (delivery starts in the funding biennium and continues into the following one). Out of the USD 5.8 million approved against the 2014-15 appropriation, USD 0.75 million were delivered in 2014. The TCP projects approved against the 2012-13 biennium delivered in 2014 USD 3.5 million, bringing the total delivery of 2012-13 appropriation to USD 5.9 million (65.6 percent of appropriation).

Annex 1: Regional Initiatives in Europe and Central Asia – 2014

EXTRACTED FROM PC 117/5 MTR 2014 PARAS 153 AND 197-211

153. The Regional Initiatives serve as a mechanism to ensure effective delivery and impact, providing a cohesive framework for FAO's actions at country level in each of the regions, through common themes across country priorities. The Regional Initiatives are aimed at harnessing capacities, skills and resources from across the Organization and provide an important entry point for enhancing partnerships, including resource partners.

Challenges and priorities

197. FAO has responded to the challenges identified by the 2014 Regional Conference⁴ by focusing its work on the following five priority areas:

- a) strengthening food security and nutrition and fisheries in a sustainable manner (contributing to SO1);
- b) policy advice to governments in support of sustainable intensification for smallholders (contributing to SO2, SO3, SO4);
- c) natural resource management, including climate change mitigation and adaptation (contributing to SO2, SO3, SO5);
- d) control of animal disease, plant pests and food safety hazards (contributing to SO2, SO4, SO5);
- e) policy and institutional support for entry of Member States into regional and global trade, standard-setting and organizations of regional economic cooperation (contributing to SO4).

198. FAO's support to these priorities centres around two Regional Initiatives endorsed by the Regional Conference, as well as some additional focus areas of work. Key achievements delivered by FAO in 2014 through each of the Regional Initiatives are highlighted below.

Empowering smallholders and family farms in Europe and Central Asia

199. After the land reforms of the 1990s, transition countries of Europe and Central Asia became an area of smallholder farms, a large number of which are not economically viable and - in most countries - rural people remain the most vulnerable section of the population. Getting family farming right is key to enhanced food security and sustainable growth in rural areas, and to making inroads against rural poverty. The overall goal of the initiative is to empower smallholders in order to strengthen their livelihoods, thereby reducing rural poverty, with particular emphasis on inclusiveness.

200. The focus of the initiative's work is both at the institutional and community level, working with partners, to achieve three results over the biennium: increased participation of farmers and rural communities in national development; enhanced sustainable and inclusive growth of rural economies; and improved sustainable management of natural resources.

201. Initial results of the initiative include the promotion of innovative practices and considerable capacity development of governments and local institutions, complemented by improved policies and raised awareness.

⁴ ERC/14/7 Rev 1 para. 14-19

202. Highlights are the development of innovative practices for sustainable agriculture production in integrated pest management, conservation of plant genetic resources and application of farmer field schools in Armenia, Moldova and Tajikistan. Key deliverables include training manuals on small-scale rainbow trout farming and on carp polyculture provided for the region.

203. Capacities for governments and local institutions have been strengthened in areas such as animal disease prevention and control in Armenia, and sustainable crop production in Kyrgyzstan. Armenia and Georgia improved their capacities to design and implement policies and regulatory frameworks for plant and animal health and food safety and quality, specifically the Pesticide Residue Monitoring Laboratory in Armenia and the National Food Agency in Georgia. At the regional level, over 100 government officials, land administration experts and representatives of NGOs from 27 countries were provided with policy advice and capacity building support on promoting equitable access to natural resources at the 6th International LANDNET conference.

204. Agrarian reforms have been supported at policy level in Albania, Georgia, FYR of Macedonia and Montenegro, through the development of their national strategies for agriculture and rural development. More streamlined policies in the Western Balkan countries were documented through the publication *Agricultural Policy and European Integration in Southeastern Europe*. In Moldova, a Land Code policy promoting equitable access and the sustainable management of productive natural resources was drafted. Inclusiveness and efficiency in agrifood chains were enhanced through two regional workshops. Awareness was raised through a key deliverable on gender mainstreaming – the publication *Rural Women in Eastern Europe and Central Asia* – and Country Gender Assessments for Georgia and Albania, including a toolkit on statistics and gender in rural areas.

205. FAO has established important partnerships for achieving rural poverty reduction in the region, through collaboration with stakeholders, research institutes and governments, to achieve results. For example, FAO cooperates with the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group. This inter-governmental organization provides possibilities to leverage partnership with its member countries, providing opportunities for further development of the field programme in these countries. Collaboration continues with the European Commission and other resource partners, such as Austria, Turkey and Switzerland. Partnership on land tenure issues was fostered through LANDNET, which is an informal network dealing with land tenure. Partnership on gender was ensured by participation in the Gender Thematic Group of the United Nations Country Team, coordinated by UN WOMEN. Round tables were organized in Turkey and Kyrgyzstan to establish dialogue with civil society stakeholders. Partnerships were facilitated by UN WOMEN, WFP and FAO through the UNJP on Rural Women Economic Empowerment, which is being implemented in Kyrgyzstan.

Agrifood trade and regional integration in Europe and Central Asia

206. Agricultural systems in Europe and Central Asia are still deeply affected by the process of political and economic transition which coincided with globalization and deepening regional and global trade integration. The purpose of this initiative is to increase regional and national capacities to deal effectively with the challenges posed by greater trade integration. It does this by developing better evidence on trade implications, improving the capacity of the countries to use this evidence, facilitating neutral fora and dialogues on trade agreements, and supporting design and implementation of appropriate policies at country level. A dynamic Web site was put in place where work under this initiative is presented and regularly updated in English and Russian languages.

207. In relation to trade agreements, FAO focused on the WTO Agreement on Agriculture in the CIS region by providing analysis of agricultural policies of CIS in light of WTO accession. Two five-week e-learning courses were delivered and successfully completed by 167 officials from the region, and a workshop on agriculture market access issues was convened in Moldova, a focus country of the initiative. FAO prepared a study on economic and trade (dis-)integration across the CIS region, and a study on agricultural policy issues arising in CIS countries as the work to meet their WTO accession commitments was published. The focus of this work is the adherence of countries in the region to international food safety standards and WTO commitments while they pursue regional trade agreements.

208. Concerning the nexus of food security and trade, FAO has focused particularly on wheat trade, given its prominent role in ensuring food security in the region and some CIS countries being key global suppliers of wheat. A study on wheat production, trade and volatility in the region was completed in collaboration with the European Commission and will be published in 2015. FAO is finalizing a major report on wheat production and trade in Belarus, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan providing projections to 2024. The results of the papers greatly contribute to the assessment of the food security situation in the region.

209. Concerning food safety systems, FAO is providing technical assistance to the National Food Safety Agency in improving the food safety regulatory and institutional framework in the Republic of Moldova. The technical assistance is enriching capacity for practical application of risk analysis and more effective participation in the standard setting Codex work. A legal gap analysis to identify areas requiring further alignment with international standards was also performed. In Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, also focus countries for this regional initiative, technical assistance supported national authorities and private sector with trainings on good hygiene practices and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) based food safety management systems. Elaboration of national guides on good hygiene practices and HACCP plans for a set of major products support the spread of international systems and practices in these countries.

210. The CIS region is characterized by different integration processes that increasingly influenced international trade flows of agrifood products during 2014. FAO monitors these integration processes and their impacts on agrifood trade and promotes the role of international standards and rules as global governance mechanisms of international trade.

211. A CIS Agricultural and Trade Policy Expert Network was launched, bringing together experts in governments, private sector and academia who work on agricultural trade to promote exchange of knowledge and experiences with trade policy issues and to support broader capacity development, thus contributing to the sustainability of FAO actions in this area.