



European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)

36/1 Meeting of the Executive Committee

1 February 2016

Queen Juliana

09.00 – 11.00

Minutes

Present

Acting Chairperson: Ms Marieta Okenkova (Slovakia) – Vice Chairperson

Members present: Mr Damien Kelly (Ireland)
 Mr Hilmi Ergin Dedeoglu (Turkey)
 Mr Oleg Kobiakov (Russian Federation)
 Mr Siim Tidemann (Estonia)
 Mr Spyridon Ellinas (Cyprus)

Members absent: Mr Mirosław Drygas (Poland)

REU Secretariat: Mr Raimund Jehle, Secretary of the 39th ECA (REU)
 Mr Goran Stavrik, Secretary of the 30th ERC (REU)

Agenda:

1. Briefing of the New Members of the Executive Committee on the tasks, Mandate and Modalities and the Function of the Executive Committee of the ECA (35/08/5 - Rules of Procedure)
2. Draft workplan and meeting schedule of the ECA Executive Committee until next ECA in 2017 (36/1-1)
3. Follow-up to the recommendations stemming from the 39th ECA Session in Budapest Hungary (ECA/39/15/REPORT – Final Report of the 39th ECA)
4. Eurasian Soil Commission
5. Finalization of the Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) for the 30th Session of the ERC (36/1-3)
6. Any other business

The Meeting was opened by the Vice-Chair Marieta Okenkova, Permanent Representative of Slovakia to FAO due to the fact that Natalie Feistritz resigned as Chair of the ECA at the end of 2015 as she has taken a position in FAO. Ms Okenkova, would be thus the acting chair of the ECA up to the regular elections at the 40th ECA in 2017. The members of the Ex Com expressed their agreement with this interim solution for the Chair.

The Chair welcomed the members of the Executive Committee to the first meeting after the 39th Session of the ECA and congratulated the new members, Spyridon Ellinas and Oleg Kobiakov.

The members also agreed with the draft agenda for the meeting as it was distributed by the Secretariat.

Agenda item 1: Briefing of the New Members of the Executive Committee on the tasks, Mandate and Modalities and the Function of the Executive Committee of the ECA (35/08/5 - Rules of Procedure)

The Secretary of the ECA briefed the new members of the Executive Committee of the ECA specifically regarding the tasks, mandate and modalities related to the Executive Committee. In this context it was mentioned that the rules of procedure should be slightly amendment to reflect the changes which occurred due to the separation of the ECA and the ERC.

The members were also briefed that after the abolishment of the Working Party on Women (WPW) the ECA does no longer have any subsidiary bodies.

Action:

Secretariat to prepare an updated version of the Rules of Procedures for review by the Ex Com and for presentation at the next 40th Session of the ECA.

Agenda item 2: Draft workplan and meeting schedule of the ECA Executive Committee until next ECA in 2017 (36/1-1)

The Secretariat presented the draft time schedule and Session plan for the current biennium up to the 40th Session of the ECA, which is planned to take place in autumn 2017. Overall the members expressed their agreement with the work and time plan. However, they have raised the following issues:

- Careful review of the time schedule for Oct 2016 (to be moved to Nov) and May 2017 (to be moved after the conference) should be taken into consideration due to the heavy schedule with other meetings
- Early planning should be ensured to avoid problems with finding suitable dates
- It was noted that informal consultations are important although concerns were raised by some members if there is a need for two Informal Consultations (ICs) within the biennium; it has been agreed that the number of ICs should be decided at the June meeting; if it is decided to have only one, then it could be done in May 2017
- The secretariat should provide further information regarding the scope and direction of the ICs for clarification.

It was agreed that the secretariat will prepare an adjusted time schedule and also indicate in more details what will the scope of the agenda for the different meetings.

Action:

Secretariat to update the work- and session plan as outlined in the report.

Agenda item 3: Follow-up to the recommendations stemming from the 39th ECA Session in Budapest Hungary (ECA/39/15/REPORT – Final Report of the 39th ECA)

The secretariat presented the recommendations as outlined in the report from the 39th Session of the ECA. The members raised the following issues:

- It was recommended that the Ex Com should include the different recommendations in more details in the future meetings but the secretariat should not only present the results but also the relevant plans for implementation.
- The secretariat should also try to present an impact assessment of the work done in the last 5-6 years for the region; such an impact assessment could be presented at the informal consultation meetings. It was explained by the Secretariat that for this purpose there was a need for an adequate baseline analysis in the region, which has been established and was not yet available for all countries.
- Clarification was requested regarding the location of the next ECA session; in this context the Secretariat confirmed that as indicated in the ECA report, the members only decided for the next session to be in Budapest; thus the next session would need to agree on location of the 41st Session of the ECA.
- A draft paper for the effectiveness of the ECA, due to the separation of the ECA from the ERC, should be presented to the Ex Com before it is presented to the ECA session in 2017.

Action:

The secretariat should initiate the commission of the paper for the effectiveness. Further thoughts should be given on how the impact analysis could be presented. Proposed indicators/criteria will be presented by Secretariat for the first review at November Ex Com meeting.

Agenda item 4: Eurasian Soil Commission

The secretariat informed that due to the complexity and the political sensitivity of establishing a commission, the paper was not yet ready for presentation to the Ex Com. Thus a verbal update for the members was presented. In this context the Secretariat highlighted the main issues:

- During the second plenary meeting of the Eurasian Soil Partnership in Izmir, there was a discussion to establish a sub-regional FAO Statutory Body: Soil Commission for Central Asia and Caucasus
- At the 39th Session of the ECA, REU was requested to prepare a paper on the Soil Commission and elaborate the implications of establishing it as article VI or XIV body
- Considering that the Organization was obliged to decrease the number of article VI and XIV bodies, there is a discrepancy with this proposal for a new body

The main issues raised during the discussion were:

- Members requested clarification as how such a commission would be linked to the other governing bodies

- The paper indicating the difference between an article VI and XIV as well as more details on the role and function of the commission should be prepared as soon as possible; ideally for the June 2016 session of the Ex Com; clarification should be provided in such a paper how it is linked to the Global Soil Partnership and the European Soil Partnership as well as the Eurasian Soil Partnership; further clarification should also be given regarding the advantage of a commission versus the current Soil Partnership and in such a way present the pros and cons for the Commission.
- Clarifications were also requested if similar efforts in other regions were made regarding the establishment of such Commissions. The secretariat should provide here further clarification.
- Noted that the members were talking and questioning the establishment of such a Commission and requested clarification to learn more who was in favor for the establishment of such a Commission.
- Further consultations regarding the Commission should be done at the next meeting of the Eurasian Soil Partnership in Bishkek (29 February – 2 March 2016).

It has been agreed that such a paper should be subject of discussion for the next Ex Com meeting in June 2016.

Action:

The Secretariat should finalize the draft paper in close consultations with HQ services including LEGN and make it available for the next Ex Com meeting in June 2016. This should include further clarification if similar efforts in other regions were made regarding the establishment of such Commissions.

Agenda item 5: Finalization of the Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) for the 30th Session of the ERC (36/1-3)

In line with the recommendations from the 29th ERC a new MYPOW for the Regional Conference covering the timeframe 2016-2019 has been prepared. The ERC requested to prepare the new MYPOW in collaboration with the Executive Committee of the ECA¹, so the Secretariat presented a draft MYPOW for discussion and review by the Ex Com members.

The main issues raised during the discussion were:

- The Members proposed to slightly revise paragraph 10 mentioning that the priorities would be reflected in the PWB relevant for the region. As the ERC has requested for the MYPOW to be also prepared in consultations with the ERG, it has been agreed that the Secretariat would send the revised document to the Ex Com for obtaining further comments and suggestions from the ERG.

Action:

Revise and submit a revised version of the document to the Ex Com and the ERG.

¹ Paragraph 36 of Report ERC 29 (www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/030/mk194e.pdf)

<u>Agenda item 6: Any Other Business</u>

<p>The Secretariat provided an update to the members related to some ERC related issues:</p>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ERC Agenda was approved with the adopted changes as proposed earlier by the ERG • Agenda item 12 on FAO Governance has been removed |
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<p>No other issues were raised under the AOB and thus the meeting was closed by the acting Chair.</p>

Action:

<p>The Secretariat to share the approved Agenda with the Ex Com and the ERG.</p>

Closing of the Session:

<p>The Chair thanked the Secretariat for the good preparation of background documents and their support throughout the meeting.</p>
