



European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)

**36/3 Meeting of the Executive Committee
21 November 2016, 14.00-17.00
Room Espace Gabon, HQ Rome
Minutes**

Present

Acting Chairperson: Ms Marieta Okenkova (Slovakia)

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

Members absent: Mr Miroslaw Drygas (Poland)

REU Secretariat: Mr Vladimir Rahkmanin, ADG, Regional Representative (REU) – 1st item
Mr Raimund Jehle, Secretary of the ECA (REU)
Ms Cristina Amaral, Deputy Regional Representative (REU)
Mr Goran Stavrik, Secretary of the 30th ERC (REU)
Ms Erzsebet Illes, Programme and Monitoring Associate (REU)

Agenda:

1. Change of the Secretary of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)
2. Revision of the Rules of Procedure of the European Commission on Agriculture
3. Draft agenda and format of the Informal Consultation in May 2017
4. Assessment of the European Commission on Agriculture
5. Review of the Programme of Work for the Region - Presentation on the cross-SP work regarding Disaster Risk Reduction, in collaboration between SP2 and SP5
6. Workplan and Meeting Schedule of the ECA Executive Committee
7. AOB

The Meeting was opened by the Acting Chair, Ms Marieta Okenkova, Permanent Representative of Slovakia to FAO. The Chair welcomed the Members of the Executive Committee (Ex Com) to the third meeting after the 39th Session of the ECA. The members agreed with the draft agenda for the meeting as it was distributed by the Secretariat.

Agenda item 1: Change of the Secretary of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)

Mr Vladimir Rakhmanin, ADG/RR for Europe and Central Asia informed the Ex Com members that a new Secretary for the ECA would be appointed. Due to the change in the structure of the Office for Europe and Central Asia (REU), two senior managers, the Deputy Regional Representative (DRR) and the Regional Strategic Programmes Coordinator (RSPC), support the Regional Representative. Ms Cristina Amaral, DRR will be in charge of supervising all governing bodies in the region, including the ECA and the ERC. While Mr Raimund Jehle, as RSPC would coordinate the implementation of the Strategic Programmes in the region. Mr Rakhmanin informed that the appointment of the new Secretary would be completed in the coming weeks. He also ensured that the transition would be smooth. ECA Ex Com thanked Raimund for his work as Secretary of the ECA in the past years and for the good collaboration.

Action:

Secretariat to inform the Ex Com about the new Secretary.

Agenda item 2: Revision of the Rules of Procedure of the European Commission on Agriculture

The Secretariat informed that following the recommendations of the Members made at the Ex Com meeting on 15 June, the Legal Service in HQ (LEGA) was consulted to suggest adjustments related to the Rules of Procedure regarding accommodating

- change of Ex Com members between the sessions (Point 1, Rule III) and
- rules applying for Acting Chair in case the Chair has resigned (Point 2, Rule III).

LEGA confirmed that the replacement of an Ex Com member, who would not be able to serve his/her mandate could be replaced by a person from the same country subject to the approval by the Ex Com. This would include the Vice Chair acting as Chair until the next regular ECA session if the original chair would not be able to serve anymore his/her function. This was common practice in other governing bodies of the organization and would not require adjustments of the Rules of Procedure. Based on this, according to LEGA, there is no need for amendment of the document.

During the discussion the members advised to obtain further clarification from LEGA regarding the advice to follow the practice without changing the Rules of Procedure (ROP) as the members felt that the current ROP allowed for different interpretations and did not provide clear guidance, especially in the cases referred below:

- what rules would apply if the acting Vice-Chair's mandate expires before the next ECA Session or both the Chair and the Vice-Chair have to leave;
- if the Ex Com nominated a substitute member of a country already nominated for the Ex Com, there is one member less in the Committee;
- if the ROP would allow a temporary replacement of the Chair for different Ex Com meetings with the approval of the Ex Com members, it might cause difficulties for the continuity of work;
- the nomination of another person was inconsistent with the Rule of Procedure on Ex Com membership. Quote: "The Executive Committee shall be composed of the

Chairman, the Vice-Chairman of the Commission as *ex officio* members and (five) **six** other members elected by the Commission from among the representatives”.

Ex Com members propose clear changes to the Rules of Procedure. There is an understanding among the Ex Com members that the ECA could be the first Committee to work on the Rules of Procedure and other Committees might be able to use this as an example.

Action:

Secretariat to go back to LEGA for further consultation on how the other bodies work, as well as to invite the representative of LEGA to the next Ex Com meeting for discussion. Secretariat to ask LEGA to confirm whether the Secretariat should request that the Embassy of Austria designate a new member, considering that the Austrian representative of the Ex Com left last year.

Agenda item 3: Draft agenda and format of the Informal Consultation in May 2017 (36/3-1)

The Secretariat presented the draft agenda for the next Informal Consultation to be held in Budapest in May 2017 for the Ex Com Members’ views and suggestions.

Ex Com members agreed that the agenda reflects their recommendations related to the format of the IC, such as being very informal to encourage active participation and make the discussion more interactive, motivating and inclusive. Greater involvement of other regional commissions and committees would be welcome.

Recommendations:

- Provide background documents to the group sessions to narrow the discussion and provide orientation.
- In the group session on regional priorities, the focus should be on what FAO can do and should do within the defined priorities.

Action:

Acting Chair to share the agenda of the Informal Consultation with ERG for views and comments. Secretariat to define the date of the event.

Agenda item 4: Assessment of the European Commission on Agriculture (36/3-2)

Secretariat informed the Ex Com that Ms. Tullia Aiazzi, Evaluation Expert, has been recruited to prepare the TORs of the Assessment and to conduct the assessment. Ms Aiazzi presented the TORs, including the methodology and work plan. In response to the Ex Com Members’ questions, she highlighted that there was an internal baseline for the assessment considering that no previous assessment is available, except the recent evaluation of the Regional Office. Also when the list of the participants of ECA meeting is available since 1999, the comments at the meetings are not attributed in the minutes to specific countries. Thus it needs to be reconstructed based on the memory of the participants.

The report will be finalized in close interaction with the Ex Com members and presented by the Secretariat at the next session of the ECA.

Action:

The Evaluation Expert will revise the timeline, prepare the comments trail matrix, include the reference for Agenda 2010 and address the comments from ERG. Secretariat to share the final text of the TORs with the Ex Com members for email consultation after the meeting.

Agenda item 5: Review of the Programme of Work for the Region - Presentation on the cross-SP work regarding Disaster Risk Reduction, in collaboration between SP2 and SP5

Mr Reuben Sessa, Climate Change Officer and Alternate Regional SP5 Focal Point, presented the main results achieved and work planned related to cross-SP work regarding Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), in collaboration between SP2 and SP5.

During the discussion members raised questions and the secretariat provided response. The points below are summarizing both:

- FAO has a number of international partner organizations related to CSA, including CGIAR, WHO, GIZ and WB, as well as research entities and environmental groups. Collaboration and information sharing between different UN agencies is crucial in the area of climate change and DRR. Currently, joint work with WFP is limited, but based on the approval of the new WFP framework, new opportunities might arise. There is certainly the need for more integrated approaches where different communities work together.
- Risk Management Strategies are generally developed in the countries. However, they are fragmented, varying from country to country, and they often do not have sound integration of risk reduction practices and tangible climate change adaptation measures for agriculture.
- GACSA, as a global alliance, works as an umbrella to identify key gaps. The European Alliance would have the same scope as the other regional alliances, i.e. more related to implementation and CSA knowledge dissemination relevant to the region as well as direct intercountry support. Regional alliances in Africa, Asia and North America have already been established and one is under establishment in South America. Although the establishment of the European Alliance only under discussion it is envisaged that if created the membership would be flexible and countries would not necessarily have to be part of GACSA in order to become member in the European Alliance (and vice versa).

Action:

No action needed.

Agenda item 6: Workplan and Meeting Schedule of the ECA Executive Committee (36/3-4)

The Secretariat presented the updated workplan and time schedule for the meetings of the Executive Committee by the 40th ECA Session 2017 available as agreed at the 36/2 meeting of the Executive Committee.

Ex Com members suggested the adjustments below based on the outcomes of the previous agenda items:

- Draft agenda of the 40th Session of ECA and the Discussion on the Rules of Procedure should be put on the agenda of the next Ex Com meeting in February.
- Ex Com meeting scheduled in May, might be organized back to back or on the side of the Informal Consultation

Action:

Secretariat to adjust the Workplan based on the suggestions of the Ex Com.

Agenda item 7: AOB

No item mentioned under AOB.

Action:

No action needed.

Closing of the Session:

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