

EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE

39/3 MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

30 June 2022

(Online meeting)

MEETING MINUTES

1. Opening of the meeting

The Chairperson of ECA (Mr Marios GEORGIADIS) opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the Executive Committee (the ExCom) to the third meeting after the 42nd Session of the ECA.

2. Adoption of the agenda¹

The Secretariat of ECA proposed that under the AOB an update on the call for the main technical theme for the 43rd Session of ECA (September 2023) be presented. The proposal was supported by the ExCom. The meeting agenda was adopted with this additional item.

The adopted meeting agenda is presented in Annex 2.

3. Review of the outcomes of the 33rd Session of ERC (Łódź, Poland, 10-13 May 2022)²

Mr Nabil GANGI briefly updated the participants on the conduct and outcomes of the 33rd Session of ERC, which was held in Łódź, Poland on 10-13 May 2022, in hybrid modality. He noted the record high participation of Members in the Session - 52 out of 54 Member countries, as well as high level of representation - 15 ministers and 13 deputy ministers or state secretaries. Mr Gangi recalled the main technical items discussed at the Session, which related to the transformation of agri-food systems, healthy diets, and implications of the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine on world food security and agriculture, including global food prices. He mentioned that the ERC had also reviewed and endorsed the report from the 42nd Session of the ECA.³

The Chairperson of ECA praised the high standard of preparation of the Session and expressed his thanks to REU and to Poland as the host country. This was further supported by Mr Jiri JILEK.

Mr Gangi emphasized that Sessions of ERC should form a continuum, where the entire activities of the region follow from one Session and building upon the outcomes up to the following ERC Session.

Action:

No actions to be taken were identified for this agenda item.

¹ Document number ECA_ExCom_39/2-1

(https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/reu/europe/documents/Events_2022/excom39_2/39_2_1.pdf)

² The report from the 33rd Session of the ERC is available at <https://www.fao.org/3/nj289en/nj289en.pdf>

³ The report from the 42nd Session of the ECA is available at <https://www.fao.org/3/ni198en/ni198en.pdf>

4. Impact of the war in Ukraine on food security and related matters – technical information on REU's work relating to agricultural matters and food security in the Region and beyond

This item was presented by Mr Raimund JEHLE. As Mr Jehle was unable to be present at the meeting, the item was delivered in form of a pre-recorded video presentation.

In his presentation, Mr Jehle highlighted the circumstances affecting food security in the region and beyond. He stressed the increasing prices of energy and other inputs relevant for agriculture and food production, leading to the FAO Food Price Index reaching historic unprecedented levels.

Mr Jehle presented a brief update on the current situation in Ukraine, saying that the situation in the country is critical, especially in terms of decrease of sown area in grain production, but also reduction in livestock population and damage to Ukrainian forests. He mentioned storage of grain as one of the key issues. He also updated the ExCom on activities undertaken by FAO, including surveys and analyses, as well as the FAO Rapid Response Plan for Ukraine, with focus on maintaining food production systems, addressing breakdowns in key supply chains, monitoring the agricultural sector and food security needs and mitigating the storage deficit. Next, he presented the key activities that FAO is planning to implement in Ukraine and in other countries in the area affected by the war, which result from a review and revision of FAO plans for the region for the years 2022-2023.

The Chairperson of ECA requested that updates on the situation in Ukraine and other countries of the region affected by the war in relation to agriculture and food security be a regular item on the agendas of ExCom meetings.

Mr Serkos CHAROUTOUNIAN expressed his view that this crisis has exposed weaknesses in food security and food storage systems in the region, which should be thoroughly analysed and long-term solutions should be sought for the future.

Mr Jiri JILEK thanked for the presentation and supported that such updates should be a regular item on the agendas of ExCom meetings. He requested that the presentation be shared with the ExCom, as well as available information on REU's Regional Initiatives. He agreed with the view presented by Mr CHAROUTOUNIAN and added that reconstruction activities in Ukraine will have to last for at least several years, so long-term approaches will need to be developed and relevant plans periodically updated. He stressed that FAO should be able to solve the problem of grain storage in Ukraine and its exports from Ukraine, providing that Russia does not attack grain storage facilities in the country or block Ukraine's exports through its ports in the Black Sea.

Ms Lidija POPANDONOVA thanked for the presentation and for the written material on the subject. She requested that the video presentation be shared with the ExCom. She also requested more data on impacts of war in countries other than Ukraine, as well as information on the relation between the Regional Cooperation Programme, which was mentioned by Mr Jehle, and the national CPF frameworks.

Mr Kirill ANTYUKHIN requested that more information on consumption is presented, and mentioned that Russia was not trying to impede Ukraine's food exports nor did they attack grain storage facilities.

Action:

The Secretariat to add an item on impact of the war in Ukraine on food security and related matters to the agendas of upcoming ExCom meetings.

The Secretariat to present more information on the relation between the Regional Cooperation Programme being developed and the existing national CPF frameworks, how FAO's regional work plans have been changed with regard to agriculture and food security, and what are FAO's plans to address the situation caused by the war in Ukraine in the long term.

The Secretariat to share with the ExCom the video presentation for agenda item 3 and information on REU's Regional Initiatives.⁴

5. AOB: Update on the call for the main technical theme for the 43rd Session of the ECA.

The Secretary of ECA informed the ExCom that the call was opened on 15 May, with the deadline for submissions of 15 July 2022. By the time of the meeting, the Secretariat had received one proposal (*„The role of millets in the development of sustainable food systems“*), which was submitted by Hungary.

The Secretary also informed that REU had prepared a short list of technical areas, under which the work of the Regional Office is ongoing and which may be considered as support for the identification of the technical theme for the 43rd Session of the ECA. The list was presented to the ExCom for consideration. The list is presented in Annex 3.

The Secretary informed that the call for the main ECA theme would remain opened until 15 July, and the Secretariat would present the full list of submitted proposals at the September meeting of the ExCom, with discussions planned at September and November meetings, hoping to identify the theme by the end of 2022.

The Chairperson of ECA suggested that sending a reminder to the Members of the region could be considered.

This was supported by Jiri JILEK. In relation to the proposal submitted by Hungary, he requested that information be provided on the actual impact of millets for the whole region in terms of production, processing, consumption, export, etc.

Action:

No actions to be taken were identified for this agenda item.

6. Closing of the meeting

The Chairperson thanked everyone for their participation and closed the meeting.

⁴ Information on REU's Regional Initiatives is available through <https://www.fao.org/europe/regional-initiatives/en/>

Annex 1

EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE**39/3 MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

30 June 2022

14.00-15.00 hrs (Rome time)

Online meeting

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

	Role	Country/Organization	Name	Present/Absent
1.	ECA Chairperson	Cyprus	Mr Marios GEORGIADIS	Present
2.	ECA Vice-Chairperson	North Macedonia	Ms Lidija POPANDONOVA	Present
3.	ECA Vice-Chairperson	Russian Federation	Mr Kirill ANTYUKHIN	Present
4.	ExCom Member	Czechia	Mr Jiří JÍLEK	Present
5.	ExCom Member	Greece	Mr Serkos A. CHAROUTOUNIAN	Present
6.	ExCom Member	Hungary	Ms Lilla EGRI	Absent
7.	ExCom Member	Serbia	Ms Vedrana ILIĆ	Absent
8.	ExCom Member	Slovakia	Mr Andreas FABIAN	Absent
9.	ExCom Member	Uzbekistan	Mr Nuriddin KUSHNAZAROV	Absent
10.	Deputy Regional Representative, FAO Europe and Central Asia	FAO REU	Mr Nabil GANGI	Present
11.	Acting Secretary of ECA	FAO REU	Mr Piotr WŁODARCZYK	Present
12.	National Professional Officer	FAO REU	Ms Erzsebet ILLES	Present
13.	ERC-ECA Secretariat	FAO REU	Ms Eniko KOTI	Present

Annex 2

EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE**39/3 MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

30 June 2022

14.00-15.00 hrs

Online meeting (Zoom)

AGENDA

No.	Agenda Item Title	Document No./Link	Presenter
	Opening of the meeting	-	CHAIRPERSON
1.	Adoption of the agenda	ECA_ExCom/39/3-1	EXCOM
2.	Review of the outcomes of the 33rd Session of ERC (Łódź, Poland, 10-13 May 2022)	-	DEPUTY REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE
3.	Impact of the war in Ukraine on food security and related matters – technical information on REU's work relating to agricultural matters and food security in the Region and beyond	ECA_ExCom/39/3-2	REGIONAL PROGRAMME LEADER
4.	Any other business: Update on the call for the main technical theme for the 43rd Session of the ECA	-	ECA SECRETARY
	Close of the meeting	-	CHAIRPERSON

Annex 3

**Highlights of ongoing technical work addressing recent region-specific challenges
Proposals for the ECA ExCom agenda****Regional Initiative 1**

1. Crisis response to strengthen local food production by improving farm structures and addressing land abandonment through land consolidation, land banking and development of agricultural land markets
2. Accelerating the digital transformation of rural areas through the FAO 1000 Digital Village Initiative

Regional Initiative 2

3. Crisis response and recovery in Europe and Central Asia (COVID, the war in Ukraine and the looming recession)
 - Near-real-time data and analytical issues
 - Nutrition and food safety in times of crises
 - The policy dimension: Policies for building resilience; Enhancing food market transparency and encouraging regional policy coordination (AMIS)

Regional Initiative 3

4. Managing agri inputs sustainably for enhancing agriculture productivity in ECA region
5. [Regional Technical Platform on Green Agriculture](#): a knowledge sharing tool on climate resilient agriculture practices