



European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)

37/2 Meeting of the Executive Committee

04/05/2018

10.00 – 12.00 hours

Meeting minutes

Present

Chairperson: Mr Damien Kelly (Ireland)

Members present: Mr Spyridon Ellinas (Cyprus) (First Vice-Chair)
 Ms Galina Jevgrafova (Estonia) (Second Vice-Chair)
 Ms Aulikki Hulmi (Finland)
 Ms Ágnes Dús (Hungary)
 Ms Zora Weberova (Slovakia)

Members absent: Ms Graziella Romito (Italy), represented at the meeting by Mr Giulio Gardini
 Mr Ali Recep Nazli (Turkey)
 Ms Khatia Tsilosani (Georgia)

REU Secretariat: Ms Ariella Glinni, Secretary of ECA (REU)
 Ms Yuriko Shoji, Deputy Regional Representative (REU), Secretary of the 31st Session of the ERC
 Mr Goran Stavrik, Alternate Secretary of the 31st ERC (REU)
 Mr Piotr Włodarczyk, Agricultural Officer
 Mr Artur Shamilov, Plant Production and Protection Consultant
 Ms Erzsébet Illés, Planning and Programme Officer

Agenda:

- 1. Introduction of the new secretary of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA) (37/2-1)**
- 2. Information about the preparation of the 31st Session of the Regional Conference for Europe (ERC) in Voronezh, Russian Federation, 16–18 May 2018**
- 3. Identification of topics and preparation for the 41st ECA in 2019, including strategic thinking on improving modalities, impacts and strategic engagement (37/2-2)**
- 4. Review of and recommendations on REU Work Programme 2018–19 – Regional Initiative 3 on Sustainable natural resource management under a changing climate (37/2-3)**
- 5. Work plan and meeting schedule of the ECA Executive Committee (37/2-4)**
- 6. Any other business**

The Meeting was opened by Mr Damien Kelly, chair of the ECA Executive Committee. The chair welcomed the members of the Executive Committee to the second meeting after the 40th Session of the ECA, thanked Mr Reuben Sessa for his excellent support as secretary of the ECA, and welcomed Ms Ariella Glinni as newly appointed secretary of the ECA.

The members agreed with the draft agenda for the meeting as it was distributed by the Secretariat, with one additional item to discuss under “any other business” on “*How the ERG should be informed about the ECA Executive Committee meetings’ outcomes.*”

Agenda item 1: Introduction of the new secretary of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA) (37/2-1)

Ms Yuriko Shoji, Deputy Regional Representative, briefly introduced and welcomed Ms Ariella Glinni as newly appointed secretary of the European Commission on Agriculture.

ECA Executive Committee members welcomed Ms Glinni’s appointment, and Ms Glinni confirmed that she was looking forward to collaborating with the members.

Action: No action needed.

Agenda item 2: Information about the preparation of the 31st Session of the Regional Conference for Europe (ERC) in Voronezh, Russian Federation, 16–18 May 2018

Ms Yuriko Shoji, Secretary of the 31st Session of the ERC, and Mr Goran Stavrik, Alternate Secretary of the 31st Session of the ERC, introduced the agenda and timetable of the 31st Session of the Regional Conference for Europe (ERC) in Voronezh, Russian Federation, 16–18 May 2018.

To answer the questions of Executive Committee members, they provided additional information on some logistical aspects related to the conference, such as the planned side events, the Heads of Delegation meeting, bilateral meetings with the Director-General of FAO, and the rules and regulations for Vice-Chairs and Rapporteurs of the conference.

Overall, the members expressed their appreciation towards the ERC Secretariat for their hard work to organize the 31st Session of the ERC.

Action:

The ERC Secretariat was invited to brief the Europe Regional Group (ERG) on the preparations of the ERC at the ERG’s next session, on 10 May.

Agenda item 3: Identification of topics and preparation for the 41st ECA in 2019, including strategic thinking on improving modalities, impacts and strategic engagement
(37/2-2)

Mr Piotr Włodarczyk presented the preliminary proposals for the topics of the 41st Session of the ECA in 2019, in light of the suggestion of the Executive Committee to select a topic related to plant health, taking into consideration that 2020 will be the International Year of Plant Health. The relevance of the plant health theme and related issues were summarized in the background document shared with the members in advance.

The Executive Committee members confirmed their agreement with the preliminary proposals in relation to the overarching topic of plant health and appreciated the background document. Members proposed:

- to further highlight the importance of the Forest Invasive Species Network for Europe and Central Asia and of giving greater prominence to plant health in the general policy debate on climate change and to the use of prevention tools in plant health issues;
- to consider during the ECA preparations the events and work of the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO), the Congress of Mediterranean Phytosanitary Union, and other events related to the International Year of Plant Health 2020; and
- to promote the International Year of Plant Health 2020 at the 31st Session of the ERC. In this regard, it was clarified that the topic of support to the International Year of Plant Health 2020 could be presented at the ERC under the “any other business” agenda item.

Ms Aulikki Hulmi informed that Finland would provide additional written comments to the background document.

Action:

Secretariat to prepare the first draft of the annotated agenda of the 41st Session of the ECA and to present it at the next Executive Committee meeting in September.

Agenda item 4: Review and recommendations on REU Work Programme 2018-19 – Regional Initiative 3 on Sustainable natural resource management under a changing climate. (37/2-3)

Mr Artur Shamilov introduced the Regional Initiative on Sustainable natural resource management under a changing climate (RI3).

Overall, the members expressed their support for and appreciation of the newly established RI3 and confirmed that they were looking forward to receiving any additional documents on the initiative.

To answer the questions of Executive Committee members, the Secretariat:

- gave further information on the relations between the regional priorities and regional initiatives, including on nutrition and food security as cross-cutting areas of work, as well as about the synergies among the regional initiatives;
- confirmed that the preparation of proposals for the funding facilities Global Environment Facility and Green Climate Fund was well-coordinated and guided by relevant FAO HQ divisions;
- informed Executive Committee members that further details will be presented under the ERC agenda item on “Results and Priorities for FAO in the Region” and the related background document (ERC/18/5) and at the side-event on “Implementing the FAO Strategic Framework through Regional Initiatives” at the 31st Session of the ERC.

Action:

No action needed.

Agenda item 5: Work plan and meeting schedule of the ECA Executive Committee
(37/2-4)

The Secretariat presented the draft time schedule and session plan for the current biennium up to the 41st Session of the ECA, with some proposed changes from the last version of the work plan.

In the revised document, the Secretariat proposed to reschedule the 41st Session of the ECA to September–October 2019 and consider holding the Informal Consultation in May 2019.

Overall, the members expressed their agreement with the proposed new work and time plan. Furthermore, the following were raised:

- Hungary reaffirmed its readiness to host the 41st Session of the ECA on the proposed new dates; and
- the members proposed to highlight in the work plan the implementation of the recommendations of the Assessment of the European Commission on Agriculture.

Action:

Secretariat to update the work and session plan based on the Executive Committee members' comments.

Agenda item 6: Any other business

The meeting discussed the point raised on how the ERG should be kept informed about the ECA Executive Committee meetings' outcomes. The members agreed that along with all documents being published on the web page of the ECA Executive Committee, the chair of the ECA Executive Committee would inform the ERG chair on the outcomes and topics of the ECA Executive Committee meetings and offer to brief ERG on any topics of mutual interest.

Ms Ágnes Dús informed the members of the ECA Executive Committee and ECA Secretariat that she was resigning from her position as member of the Committee and will be replaced by Mr Zoltán Kálmán, Permanent Representative of Hungary to FAO.

Action:

Chair of the ECA Executive Committee to inform ERG chair about the outcomes of the current ECA Executive Committee meeting and offer to brief ERG in particular on agenda items 3 and 4.

Closing of the Session:

The chair thanked the Executive Committee members for their participation and contribution, as well as the Secretariat for the good preparation of background documents and their support throughout the meeting.