

## **European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)**

### **37/6 Meeting of the Executive Committee 2 July 2019**

#### **Agenda item 1 – Background note**

### **Draft Outline of the 41<sup>st</sup> ECA technical agenda items Forty-first Session of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA) Budapest, Hungary, 1–2 October 2019**

As per the mandate of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA), its 41<sup>st</sup> Session, which is to be held in Budapest, Hungary on 1-2 October 2012 will aim to assist the region's Member Governments in cooperating on agricultural problems and to encourage and facilitate cooperation between international governmental and non-governmental organizations concerned with agriculture, and to make recommendations on all matters within its geographical and technical competence.

Following the recommendations from the assessment of ECA, further to the review of potential topics for the 41<sup>st</sup> Session of ECA, the Executive Committee has identified plant health as the Session's main theme.

Apart from the main theme, the Session's agenda will include usual ordinal items, as well as standing items.

Currently the following points are on the agenda of the Session (please note that the numbers of the items in the final ECA agenda may differ from the ones given below):

1. Opening of the Session
2. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable
3. Appointment of the Rapporteur
4. Panel discussion: Plant health in Europe and Central Asia - relevance, trends and developments
5. Plant pests and diseases in the context of climate change and climate variability, food security and biodiversity risks
6. Impact of global trade and human mobility on the health of agricultural crops and forests in Europe and Central Asia
7. Update on the International Year of Plant Health in 2020
8. Panel discussion: Key findings and priorities on plant health for the ECA Region in 2020-21
9. Advancing gender equality in the region, with special focus on FAO support in income diversification
10. Progress made by the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia on the main recommendations of the Fortieth ECA
11. Field visit
12. Election of Members of the Executive Committee
13. Any Other Business
14. Date and place of the 42nd Session
15. Review and endorsement of the report of the Commission
16. Closing of the Session



Additionally, two to three side-sessions are foreseen. The potential organizers of the side-sessions are (1) the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), (2) the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO) and (3) the European Coordination Via Campesina (CSO).

The technical part of the 41<sup>st</sup> ECA Session includes agenda items referred to above as items 4-8 and 11, the side-sessions as well as the field visit.

The discussions under agenda items 4-8 will be supported by background papers developed and distributed to the countries prior to the Session. The papers will be directly relating to agenda items 4-6. The papers will be drafted by Mr Michael John Jeger – a retired professor from the Imperial College, London, UK, and will be reviewed by REU in cooperation with the IPPC Secretariat, AGD and EST. It is expected that the papers will form the basis for the multidirectional discussion on plant health issues relevant for the countries of the region.

Under **agenda point 4** the general introduction to further discussion on plant health issues in the region will be made through the discussion of a panel. It is assumed that the composition of the panel will include the IPPC Secretariat, the Director General of EPPO, and representatives from research institutions and civil society organisations. The ECA Secretariat would appreciate the ExCom's views and proposals for the membership of the panel.

The following points may be considered for discussions under the agenda point 4:

- Key plant health issues and trends at regional and country level
- Food security and nutrition: the impact of plant pests
- Relevance of plant health for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDGs 1, 2, 8, 12, 13, 15 and 17
- Challenges and opportunities for the implementation of plant health development programmes
- The need for ecosystem-based approaches for sustainable management of pests

**Agenda point 5** is dedicated mainly to spread of plant pests through natural means, not directly linked to human activities. It should cover issues relating to impacts of climate change, transboundary pests, as well as links between plant health and food security or risks for biodiversity. The need for cooperation between countries and within countries in information exchange as well as in research will be stressed as the factors that may help reduce economic damage caused by pests.

The agenda point will be briefly introduced by a REU speaker. After the introduction, the floor will be open for the Member States' discussion.

The following points may be considered for discussions under the agenda point 5:

- Regional situation of emerging plant pests
- Economic and environmental impacts of plant pests
- The most threatening emerging plant pests in the region and cooperation on plant health activities
- Efforts by countries and roles for international institutions in addressing plant health threats in the region
- Possible regional actions from the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (REU) to assist Member Countries in cooperating on plant health issues

**Agenda point 6** is dedicated to risk of spread of plant pests through human activities, primarily movement of goods and people. International trade of plants and plant products is perceived as the main source of pest risks. Some pathways for spread of pests that may currently be underestimated will also be discussed, such as internet trade, tourism or food aid. The need for cooperation between countries and their relevant institutions, e.g. in the framework of the International Plant Protection Convention,



will be stressed for harmonized action aiming at minimizing movement of pests between countries and continents.

The agenda point will be briefly introduced by a REU speaker. After the introduction, the floor will be open for the Member States' discussion.

The following points may be considered for discussions under the agenda point 6:

- Gaps in the management of pest risks in the international trade of plants
- The importance of capacity development at national levels
- Cooperation opportunities to address common challenges

**Agenda point 7** is an information item on the coming International Year of Plant Health (IYPH) proclaimed by the General Assembly of the UN to be held in 2020. Mr Ralf LOPIAN (FI) has kindly agreed to develop and present the information at the ECA Session. Mr LOPIAN is going to represent Finland, who was the proponent country of the idea to hold the International Year of Plant Health, and is personally the Chairperson of the IYPH Steering Committee that was pursuing the IYPH initiative through the proclamation process. As this is an information point, no discussion has been foreseen.

The discussions under points 4-6 will be summarised under **agenda point 8** by another panel discussion. The members of the panel could this time mainly be the representatives of the countries, who would try to identify and summarise the main plant health-related issues raised in the earlier discussion. Again, the ECA Secretariat would appreciate the ExCom's suggestions for the membership of the panel.

Inputs from the floor will be most welcome throughout the Session, irrespective of the format adopted for particular agenda points.

The **field visit** will take place in the morning of the second day of the Session. It is organised in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture of Hungary. Currently the proposal is to visit the National Reference Laboratory for Plant Health in Budapest. The visit will conclude the technical part of the Session.

Apart from the technical content related to plant health in the ECA Region, the Session will include some **standing agenda points**, which are not covered by this outline.

The Session will conclude with the **adoption of the report**.