

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE**  
**38/7 MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

2 June 2021

(Online meeting)

**MEETING MINUTES****1. Opening of the meeting**

The Chairperson of ECA (Mr Paul KIERNAN) opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the Executive Committee to the seventh meeting after the 41st Session of the ECA. Furthermore, the Chairperson thanked the members for their flexibility and availability, and the ERC/ECA Secretariats and REU staff for their support.

The participants' list is presented in Annex 1.

**Adoption of the agenda**

The meeting agenda was adopted with no additional items added under AOB.

The adopted meeting agenda is presented in Annex 2.

**2. Identification of topics in preparation of the 33rd ERC (2022)**

Mr GANGI, DRR and ERC Secretary informed the ExCom on the current status of organization of the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for Europe (ERC), currently scheduled for 2-6 May 2022, in Poland - following the generous offer made by the Government of Poland on hosting the 33rd ERC, and consultations with Members of the region through the Europe Regional Group (ERG).

Mr GANGI summarized the sections and items of the ERC agenda, including three proposed main topics for Member's consideration:

- a) Greening agriculture and food production for a transformative food system in Europe and Central Asia;
- b) Leaving no one behind in Europe and Central Asia;
- c) Sustainable food value chains for nutrition, a practical approach for transforming food systems for healthy diets in REU.

Mr GANGI further clarified, that based on usual practice, the ERC agenda could include one or two main topics, to allow enough time and focus for a thorough discussion at the Conference. The decision on the main topic(s) is expected to be taken after consulting Members at the Informal Consultation for Europe and Central Asia (Informal Consultation, IC) scheduled to take place between 12 and 15 July 2021 and inputs from the ERG. Furthermore, during the consultations, and as customary, REU would be expecting to hear from the Host Government on its preferred topic out of the proposed items.

The ExCom thanked the ERC Secretariat for the informative background document and welcomed the idea of a wider consultation process through the IC and an ERG meeting. The members of the ExCom supported mainly the proposals marked as "A." and "C." in the annex to document ECA\_ExCom/38/7-2, with the below comments:

- Proposal "B." may be integrated into proposal "A." and "C.";

- Strong link between the developed background documents and the outcomes of the UN Food System Summit would be required and beneficial for the ERC;
- Proposal "C." is the most complex and broad topic. More detailed annotation could present better the specific direction of the topic, particularly in relation to the role of the food environment and consumer behavior, which could be useful in future consultations with Members;
- Proposal "C." could also be built upon and linked to the outcomes of the 42nd Session of the ECA;
- The specific language used for proposal "A." should be carefully considered. '*Greening agriculture*' is not yet introduced in UN terminology, where '*sustainable agriculture*', or in the case of the UN Food Systems Summit the '*nature-based agriculture*' is used instead.

Responding to questions from the ExCom, Mr GANGI confirmed, that the outcomes of the United Nations Food System Summit will be covered at the 33rd Session of the ERC through an information document.

**Action:**

N/A

### 3. Preparation to the 42nd Session of ECA (2021)

Mr WLODARCZYK presented an update on the current state of preparations to the Session of ECA and summarized the main points requiring decision or approval from the ExCom.

Following confirmation from the Government of Hungary on its continued commitment to host the 42nd Session of the ECA, the ExCom discussed the possible date and modality options for the Session and decided to prioritize these options as ranked here below:

1. A regular (physical) two-day session in Budapest, Hungary, on 20 and 21 October 2021;
2. A hybrid (physical and online) three-day session in Budapest, Hungary, from 20 to 22 October 2021;
3. An online three-day session from 20 to 22 October 2021.

The ExCom expressed its preference for a physical or hybrid meeting and agreed that the decision whether the Session should be a regular/physical, hybrid or online meeting should be taken following a broader consultation at the Informal Consultation and when more information is available on the pandemic situation and travel restrictions within the region.

The ExCom noted the explanation on the role of rapporteurs at ECA sessions.

The ExCom discussed the draft annotated agenda for the 42nd Session of ECA and agreed that the arising questions will be shared with the ECA Secretariat in writing, to allow proper transmission to relevant FAO REU officers involved in the development of the background documents.

Furthermore, the ExCom agreed, that a reminder message to all Members in the region will be necessary in June in relation to the deadline (30 June) for submitting nominations for the positions of the Chair of ECA, Vice-Chairs of ECA and other members of the ExCom.

**Action:**

The ECA Secretariat to consult with Members of the region about the modality of the Session at the Informal Consultation.

The ECA Secretariat to ensure that arising questions from the ExCom in relation to the agenda of the 42nd Session are forwarded to relevant REU technical officers for consideration when drafting the background documents for the ECA Session.

The ECA Secretariat to send a reminder message to all Members in the region about the close deadline for submitting nominations for the positions of the Chair of ECA, Vice-Chairs of ECA and other members of the ExCom.

#### **4. Update on the review of progress made by REU on plant health-related recommendations of the 41st Session of ECA (in written procedure)**

At the 38/6 meeting, due to time constraints, the ExCom agreed to provide comments on the implementation of plant health-related recommendations of the 41st ECA Session through a written procedure. The ExCom noted the outcomes of the written procedure.

Further to the inputs received through the written consultation, Members suggested to include examples and specific level of success reached in the region, when such document is prepared in the future.

##### **Action:**

Relevant REU technical officers to include information on the approximate percentage of plant health-related project activities, which had to be suspended or cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **5. Roles and responsibilities of the ExCom in relation to ECA and ERC**

At the 38/6 meeting, due to time constraints, the ExCom agreed to postpone the discussion on this item to the current 38/7 meeting.

The ExCom discussed issues presented for their consideration in document ExCom/38/6-5, and agreed on the following.

The ExCom supported the idea to collect proposals of main technical themes for future ECA Sessions through an open call operated by the ECA Secretariat, in order to obtain more information on topics of interest to the Members of the region. The ExCom noted that when the call is opened, it should be accompanied by relevant guidance on the framework for the selection of topics, as well as by the list of topics covered at previous ECA and ERC sessions. Specific dates for the call were not discussed in detail at this stage, and will be discussed in due time before the first call is opened. The ExCom noted, however, that an early start of the call (preferably earlier than 1 October) could be recommended to allow sufficient time for the preparation of the Session.

The ExCom agreed that the main mechanism for the consultation on the content of upcoming ECA Sessions should be the Informal Consultation and meetings of the ERG.

The ExCom agreed that in situations where agreement between the ECA Chairperson and ADG-RR is required, the appropriate form for seeking this agreement will be a dedicated note sent to the ADG-RR by the ECA Secretariat on behalf the ECA Chairperson.

The ExCom agreed that whenever there is a request from a Member of the region to add an item to the agenda of an ECA Session, submitted 90 days prior to the Session, there will usually be two options to consider the proposal by the ExCom - either at a meeting (if there is a meeting planned) or in a written procedure (if there is no meeting planned). The ExCom stressed that in each case a quorum will be required for taking a decision.

The ExCom agreed that their questions No. 33 and 34 relating to Regional Commissions other than ECA and to Regional Groups other than ERG have lost their relevance, and do not need to be considered further.

The ExCom members expressed their appreciation and support for the “ECA Executive Committee Information Document”, developed by the ECA Secretariat following a request and guidance from the ExCom.

**Action:**

The ECA Secretariat to revise the dates for calls for main technical themes of future ECA Sessions, for future consideration by the ExCom.

The ECA Secretariat to update the “ECA Executive Committee Information Document”, based on the decisions of the ExCom.

**6. Any other business**

N/A

**7. Closing of the meeting**

The Chairperson thanked the ExCom members for their participation and contribution, as well as the ECA Secretariat for good preparation of background documents, their support throughout the meeting and wished everyone a healthy and relaxing holiday season, and closed the meeting.

## Annex 1

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE****38/7 MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

2 June 2021

10.00-12.00 hrs (Rome time)

Online meeting

**PARTICIPANTS LIST**

	<b>Role</b>	<b>Country/Organization</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Present/Absent</b>
1.	ECA Chairperson	Ireland	Mr Paul KIERNAN	Present
2.	ECA 1st Vice-Chairperson	Slovak Republic	Ms Zora WEBEROVA	Present
3.	ECA 2nd Vice-Chairperson	Cyprus	Mr Marios GEORGIADES	Present
4.	ExCom Member	Albania	Ms Lorena PULLUMBI	Absent
5.	ExCom Member	Czechia	Mr Jiří JÍLEK	Present
6.	ExCom Member	Georgia	Ms Ekaterine ZDIADADZE	Present
7.	ExCom Member	Hungary	Ms Lilla EGRI	Present
8.	ExCom Member	Italy	Ms Graziella ROMITO	Absent
9.	ExCom Member	Serbia	Ms Daria JANJIĆ	Absent
10.	Deputy Regional Representative, Secretary of the ERC	FAO REU	Mr Nabil GANGI	Present
11.	Acting Secretary of ECA	FAO REU	Mr Piotr WŁODARCZYK	Present
12.	ERC-ECA Secretariat	FAO REU	Ms Zsófia HORVÁTH	Present

## Annex 2

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE****38/7 MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

2 June 2021

10.00-12.00 hrs (Rome time)

Online meeting

**AGENDA**

No.	Agenda Item Title	Document No./Link	Presenter
	Opening of the meeting	-	KIERNAN
1.	Adoption of the agenda	ECA_ExCom/38/7-1	PARTICIPANTS
2.	Identification of topics in preparation of the 33rd ERC (2022)	ECA_ExCom/38/7-2	GANGI
3.	Preparation to the 42nd Session of ECA (2021)	ECA_ExCom/38/7-3	WŁODARCZYK
4.	Update on the review of progress made by REU on plant health-related recommendations of the 41st Session of ECA (in written procedure)	ECA-ExCom/38/7-4	WŁODARCZYK
5.	Roles and responsibilities of the ExCom in relation to ECA and ERC	ECA_ExCom/38/6-5 ECA_ExCom/38/7-5	WŁODARCZYK
6.	Any other business	-	PARTICIPANTS
	Close of the meeting	-	KIERNAN