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Organización de las
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الغذية والزراعة
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COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS

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Proposal to establish the Commission on Statistics

I. Introduction

1. This matter is referred to the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (“CCLM” or “the Committee”) under Rule XXXIV, paragraph 7(e), of the General Rules of the Organization (“GROs”) whereby the Committee shall consider specific items referred to it which may arise out of the establishment of commissions under Article VI of the Constitution, including their membership, terms of reference, reporting procedures and rules of procedure. The document addresses a proposal to establish a global Commission on Statistics under Article VI, paragraph 1, of the FAO Constitution.

2. As provided in paragraph 9 of Rule XXXIV of the GROs, “*In considering items referred to it under paragraphs 7 and 8, the Committee may make recommendations and give advisory opinion, as appropriate*”. The purpose of this document is to seek the Committee’s guidance on the proposed establishment of the new global body.

3. The programmatic and budgetary implications of the proposal will be considered by the Programme and Finance Committees at their sessions in November 2014.

II. Background

4. The establishment of a Commission on Statistics was contemplated in the Medium Term Plan 2014-17 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2014-2015 endorsed by the Conference in 2013.¹ In addition, the importance of strengthening the Organization’s delivery of its statistical work is emphasized in this and other documents reflecting the Organization’s long-term strategy, as described in Section III below.

¹ Document C 2013/3, page 106, as a key performance indicator of Objective 6, “Establishment of International Advisory Group and Committee on Statistics”. The International Advisory Group was immediately established and held its first meeting in September 2013.

*This document can be accessed using the Quick Response Code on this page;
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QR Code

5. The proposal to establish a global Commission on Statistics was presented to the Regional Conferences in 2014, which took note of the information provided and, in the case of the Regional Conference for Africa, endorsed the proposal to establish a Global Commission.² In addition, some of the existing regional bodies mandated to address statistical matters have recommended the establishment of a global FAO body on statistics. Additional information on the views expressed by the regional bodies is provided in *Annex III*.

III. Rationale

A. The FAO Constitution

6. Statistics work is central to FAO's overall mandate as reflected in paragraph 1 of Article 1 of FAO's Constitution which stipulates that "*the Organization shall collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate information relating to nutrition, food and agriculture*". Although the Constitution establishes statistics work as a fundamental element of the Organization's mandate, there is no global intergovernmental body in FAO specifically mandated to address this subject-matter.

B. The FAO Reviewed Strategic Framework

7. FAO's Reviewed Strategic Framework recognizes that one of the Organization's Core Functions is to "*assemble, analyze, monitor and improve access to data and information, in areas related to FAO's mandate*". A further Core Function to which statistical work contributes is to "*advise and support capacity development at country and regional level to prepare, implement, monitor and evaluate evidence-based policies, investments and programmes*".³ The Reviewed Strategic Framework refers, in the context of the Objective on Technical Quality, Knowledge and Services, to work aimed at achieving "*quality and integrity of the data produced and analyzed by the Organization*".⁴

8. Furthermore, the Adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15 records, at paragraph 93, that

"The heightened emphasis on evidence-based decision-making in governments and organizations at all levels puts a greater focus on the role of statistics, and the part it must play in measuring and monitoring progress towards national and international development goals and targets. FAO is at the forefront of these tasks, performing an essential role in helping to reduce hunger and poverty by informing decision-making through the provision of reliable and timely data. This vital role is recognized in the FAO Constitution, which states that the Organization 'shall collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate information relating to nutrition, food and agriculture'."

9. A global FAO Commission on Statistics may contribute to achieving the objectives set out in the Reviewed Strategic Framework and related planning documents by providing an intergovernmental forum with a membership comprising representatives of the Members who have responsibilities in their countries on statistical issues.

² The 28th Regional Conference for Africa, in document ARC/14/REP, paragraph 36, "endorsed the recommendation of the 23rd Session of the African Commission for Agricultural Statistics to *establish a Global Commission on Agricultural Statistics*"

³ See sub-paragraphs 68(b) and (d) of the Reviewed Strategic Framework, document C 2013/7, approved by the Conference at its 38th Session.

⁴ Document C2013/7, Paragraph 114 b).

C. Formulation and implementation of FAO policy and programmes in the area of statistics

10. At the present time, there is no global FAO platform for country involvement and participation in strategic discussions on agricultural statistics. With limited country engagement in discussions at the global level, FAO's capacity to facilitate the adoption and implementation of statistical norms and standards may be limited. Moreover, global priorities and policies for statistical capacity development are not established in consultation with the Members.

11. A global Commission on Statistics could serve as a forum for formal engagement of Members in the formulation, review and monitoring of FAO's overall statistical programme of work. This, in turn, could enhance coherence in the implementation of this programme of work. Moreover, a stronger ownership and commitment of countries in the application of agreed statistical norms and standards across regions will further strengthen FAO's facilitation role towards this effort, improve the overall quality of data and statistics as a Global Public Good, and increase the opportunities for support from strategic development partners.

12. For the implementation of the reviewed Strategic Framework, work on statistics plays a dual role, in creating the internal and external enabling environments which facilitate the delivery of statistical products that are global public goods, and in contributing to outputs and activities of the individual Strategic Objectives (SOs).

13. The overall coordination of the FAO statistical system is carried out through the Chief Statistician supported by an inter-departmental working group (IDWG) on statistics. The Chief Statistician has led a thorough review of FAO's statistical programme of work bringing clarity to its planning, monitoring and coordination, as follows:

- a) statistical work that creates the internal and external enabling environments for the delivery of statistical products that are global public goods is now planned and budgeted under Outcome 6.02 of Objective 6. This work includes the development of statistical norms and standards, national capacity development in statistics, and data compilation, validation, analysis and dissemination of data through FAOSTAT. It also includes internal measures to coordinate, harmonize and ensure the quality of FAO statistics, as well as support to the corporate monitoring and evaluation framework;
- b) work that directly contributes to achieving results under the SOs is being planned and budgeted under specific Strategic Objectives. FAO statistics play a significant role in several statistical outputs and activities that are associated with the delivery of specific SO Outcomes and Outputs. New data needs, existing gaps and areas for data development are also being identified as part of the work planning process.

D. The place of a FAO Commission on Statistics in the Global Statistical System

14. The United Nations Statistical Commission ("the Statistical Commission") is a functional commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council ("ECOSOC"). The Statistical Commission consists of 24 Member States elected by ECOSOC on the basis of equitable geographical representation, normally represented by their Chief Statisticians. The Statistical Commission assists ECOSOC in, *inter alia*, "promoting the development of national statistics and the improvement of their comparability", "the coordination of the statistical work of specialized agencies" and "promoting the improvement of statistics and statistical methods generally".⁵

15. The Statistical Commission may "submit to [ECOSOC], in the form of draft resolutions, recommendations to States Members of the United Nations, the Secretary-General or the specialized

⁵ Economic and Social Council resolution 1566 (L) of 3 May 1971, reaffirming its resolution 8 (I) of 16 February 1946, as amended by resolution 8 (II) of 21 June 1946. Annex to the "Report of the Bureau of the Statistical Commission on the review of working methods", document E/CN.3/2005/2, 21 December 2004.

agencies”. The Statistical Commission, thus, provides the intergovernmental coordinating machinery for interaction between the specialized agencies and the UN on matters related to statistics.⁶ FAO participates in the meetings of the Statistical Commission as an observer.

16. Provision is also made for coordination in the Agreement between the United Nations and FAO (1946) (hereinafter “the FAO-UN Agreement”). In Article XII, FAO recognizes “*the United Nations as the central agency for the collection, analysis, publication, standardization and improvement of statistics serving the general purposes of international organizations*” and the United Nations, in turn, “*recognizes the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations as the appropriate agency for the collection, analysis, publication, standardization and improvement of statistics within its special sphere*” (the full text of this Article is set out in **Annex II**).

17. In Article IV of the FAO-UN Agreement, FAO “*affirms its intention of co-operating in whatever further measures may be necessary to make the co-ordination of the activities of specialized agencies and those of the United Nations fully effective*”. Moreover, recognizing the authority of ECOSOC “*to make recommendations to the specialized agencies for the co-ordination of the policies and activities of such specialized agencies*”,⁷ FAO “*agrees to arrange for the submission, as soon as possible, to the appropriate organ of the Organization, of all formal recommendations which the United Nations may make to it*”. FAO “*agrees to enter into consultation with the United Nations upon request with respect to such recommendations, and in due course to report to the United Nations on the action taken by the Organization or by its members to give effect to such recommendations, or on the other results of their consideration*” (the full text of this Article is set out in **Annex II**).

18. At present, the FAO Chief Statistician is the primary FAO entity that can contribute technical expertise and support coordination between FAO and ECOSOC, or the Statistical Commission, on matters related to global statistics in accordance with the FAO-UN Agreement and the resolutions of ECOSOC.

19. It is observed that “coordination” with the UN can include the receipt and consideration of recommendations “*for the co-ordination of ... policies and activities*”, that is, on matters that are within the exclusive authority of the Members to determine. If an intergovernmental exchange is required, this has to be effected through one of the Governing Bodies which would, in turn, need to identify an appropriate forum to provide specialist advice in order to comply with the above-mentioned provisions. This specialist advice would typically come from senior statisticians within the specialized line ministries at the national level who do not regularly participate in the sessions of the FAO Governing Bodies.

20. A global Commission on Statistics could strengthen coordination of FAO’s statistical work with the rest of the Global Statistical System, including the UN as contemplated in the FAO-UN Agreement and ECOSOC resolutions, and enhance FAO’s role in that System.

IV. Legal basis

21. Based upon the anticipated functions and purpose of the proposed new body, the establishment of a Commission under Article VI, paragraph 1, of the Constitution is recommended. Article VI, paragraph 1 provides, in relevant part, that “*The Conference or Council may establish commissions, the membership of which shall be open to all Member Nations and Associate*

⁶ In 2014, the Statistical Commission adopted decision 45/112 on the “coordination of statistical activities in the United Nations system” which, *inter alia*, “[s]tressed the importance of effective coordination among the agencies of the United Nations system and the national statistical offices in order to promote the use of official statistics by the agencies and to avoid duplication and discrepancies in statistical sources”. Report on the forty-fifth session (4-7 March 2014), document E/2014/24-E/CN.3/2014/35, Economic and Social Council Official Records 2014, Supplement No. 4.

⁷ This provision reflects the role of ECOSOC as stated in Chapter X of the Charter of the United Nations.

Members... to advise on the formulation and implementation of policy and to coordinate the implementation of policy”.

A. Analysis of the proposal in light of paragraph 8 of Resolution 13/97

22. In developing this proposal, close attention has been paid to the Conference’s decision “*that in future, Statutory Bodies should be established only where strictly necessary and where the work to be undertaken cannot be carried out by ad hoc groups, and that the Terms of Reference of all new Bodies created should provide for a periodic review of their usefulness*”.⁸ Thus, the factors to be considered in accordance with paragraph 8 of Resolution 13/97 have been considered, as set out below.

23. **Centrality to the FAO mandate and the Organization's current priorities as expressed by FAO Members and reflected in planning documents:** As described at paragraphs 6 to 9 above, statistical work and its governance are an integral part of FAO’s mandate, the Reviewed Strategic Framework, the Medium Term Plan 2014-17 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15.

24. **Clarity of the definition of the task, which should normally be of limited duration:** The proposed tasks of a Commission on Statistics would be (i) within FAO, to advise on policy and priorities, and coordinate implementation of FAO’s statistical programme of work (as described in paragraphs 6 to 8 and (ii) within the Global Statistical System, to enhance coordination and strengthen the role of FAO (as described in paragraphs 10 to 20). The tasks are more specifically outlined in Article III of the draft Terms of Reference set out in *Annex I*.

25. Bearing in mind that a constitutionally mandated function of FAO is to “*collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate information relating to nutrition, food and agriculture*”, an intergovernmental forum on statistics may be needed on a continuous basis. Consultations at a technical level, whether *ad hoc* or by a standing committee, may not be appropriate if the Commission is charged, as anticipated, with advising on priorities and policies and coordinating FAO’s overall statistical programme of work. Furthermore, in light of the anticipated provision of advice on policy matters that may arise from discussion of statistical issues, a formal reporting line to the FAO Council and Conference may be appropriate. Nevertheless, Article XI of the draft Terms of Reference (contained in *Annex I*) provides for periodic review of the usefulness of the Commission, to assess its work and functioning, as well as the continued need for it.

26. **Positive impact of the Body’s work at the level of FAO Members:** The proposed Commission would address the current absence of an intergovernmental forum for country engagement, knowledge sharing and exchanging experiences on “best practice” in the statistical field. It offers a mechanism for Members to discuss and agree on priorities for FAO’s global statistical work programme. At a deeper level of impact, it is anticipated that the Commission would facilitate evidence-based decision-making at the country level, as emphasized in the Reviewed Strategic Framework (see paragraph 8 above).

27. **FAO’s comparative advantage, thereby avoiding overlap and creating synergy with the work of other Bodies:** FAO’s comparative advantage is reflected in the inclusion of statistics within FAO’s core mandate, as provided in Article 1 of the FAO Constitution. Its comparative advantage in the field of agricultural statistics has also been explicitly recognized by the UN (see paragraph 16).

28. The functions of a FAO Commission on Statistics are unlikely to overlap with those of the UN Statistical Commission. The UN Statistical Commission does not duplicate the work of the specialized agencies; rather, its function is, *inter alia*, to coordinate work by the specialized agencies and to promote the improvement of statistics and statistical methods generally. Indeed, an important function of the FAO Commission on Statistics would be to interact with the UN Statistical Commission and, in

⁸ Paragraph 7 of Resolution 13/97 adopted by the Conference at its 29th Session (1997).

particular, provide guidance to the Governing Bodies on how requests and recommendations received from the UN could be addressed within the context of FAO's policies and programme of work.⁹

29. It is also considered there would be no overlap with existing FAO bodies, given that the only bodies comprised of Members and addressing statistics within FAO are regional in mandate.¹⁰ Indeed, a global body could promote synergies between such regional bodies, enhance the dialogue between regions on statistical matters, and improve consistency and coherence at a global level. It is further considered that there is no duplication with the work of any of the Governing Bodies or existing Statutory Bodies because the mandate would require a thorough understanding of statistical issues, i.e. at the level of senior statisticians in line-ministries at the national level, who do not regularly participate in sessions of the Governing Bodies.

30. **Proportion of the FAO Membership to which the work of the proposed body is of importance with due regard to the economic capacity of less-advantaged Members, including least developed countries and small-island developing states:** As indicated at paragraph 25 above, the Commission is expected to bring direct benefits to all Members. It may bring particular benefits to less-advantaged Members by supporting them in the development of institutional capacities and, in particular, in the development of capacities for evidence-based decision making (as described at paragraphs 7 to 9).

31. **Willingness of their Members to contribute financially and through non-monetary inputs to the work of the Body, especially where the Body will serve a more limited number of countries, with due regard to the economic capacity of their less advantaged members and the availability of other financial support:** Given that the scope and mandate of the Commission would be of interest and benefit to all Members, it is proposed that it would be funded by the Regular Programme of the Organization. It is expected that there is a sufficiently high level of overall interest to ensure an adequate level of non-monetary inputs where appropriate (e.g. Members already provide their national agricultural statistical data to FAO) and that there will be opportunities for voluntary contributions for specific projects that may arise, or to support the participation for those delegations that may need it to attend the meetings of the Commission.

32. Finally, it is considered that the objectives of the Commission could not be met through work by the Secretariat alone because it would be tasked to address matters that call for the direct engagement of Members at a policy level and in priority-setting for FAO's overall statistical programme.

B. Costs of implementation of the proposal

33. It is anticipated that the work of the Commission on Statistics would be funded primarily from the FAO Regular Programme. No additional resources for staff costs are required to support the Commission. The creation of the role of Chief Statistician in 2012, together with the overall level of resources already budgeted within the Programme of Work and Budget 2014-2015 (Outcome 6.02), are sufficient to meet the anticipated staff support requirements of the Commission in the future.

34. Regarding the non-staff resource requirements, these have been assessed on the understanding that at least one plenary meeting of the Commission on Statistics will be held during a biennium. On this basis, the incremental non-staff resources for servicing the Commission have been estimated at approximately USD 300,000 per biennium. These costs would cover preparations for the session (such as translation of documents and external assistance in the preparation of specialist documents) and in-

⁹ Indeed, as it operates under an ECOSOC mandate, the Statistical Commission could not serve as a forum for FAO discussions on statistical matters.

¹⁰ It is noted that only two FAO regions have formal Commissions on agricultural statistics (i.e. Africa and Asia/Pacific), and therefore there is currently no opportunity for uniform and equitable participation across all regions. In any event, attempting to address global statistical issues through regional mechanisms alone would not be effective or efficient. Please see *Annex III* for further information on the existing regional statistical bodies.

session requirements (interpretation in six FAO languages, messenger services, security, etc). This estimate is based upon the costs of meetings of existing FAO bodies of a similar nature.

35. Any other activities of the Commission on Statistics (e.g. additional sessions in a biennium, subsidiary bodies, specific projects) would require additional resources from assessed or voluntary contributions.

C. Process for establishment

36. According to Article VI of the Constitution, the creation of a new Commission is a decision that can be taken either by Council or Conference.¹¹ As the new body is intended to have a global mandate, it would be appropriate for this action to be taken by the Conference or at the request of the Conference. This would be consistent with the practice of the Organization according to which the establishment of statutory bodies with global mandates is effected by or pursuant to Conference resolutions,¹² while regional bodies are established by Council decisions or resolutions.

V. Suggested action by the Committee

37. The Committee is invited to review this document, including the draft Conference Resolution is presented in *Annex I*, which includes draft Terms of Reference, providing such guidance as deemed necessary.

38. Considering the interest that the existing regional bodies and the Regional Conferences may have in this matter, it is proposed that a request be made to the Director-General in the draft Resolution to make recommendations to the Conference at its 40th Session on the formal relationship that could be established between the regional statistics bodies and the global statistics body, taking into account comments received from the Regional Conferences and the regional statistics bodies.

39. If the Committee considers that it is in a position to endorse the proposal, the Committee is requested to forward it for consideration by the Council, in time for consideration and possible approval by the FAO Conference at its 39th Session to be convened in June 2015. The proposal will be presented to the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee in November 2014.

¹¹ Paragraph 2 of the *Principles* states, “[i]n accordance with the provisions of Article VI of the Constitution, the Conference and the Council may establish general or regional commissions as well as committees and working parties, and may convene general, technical, regional or other meetings. For the necessary juridical act to be accomplished, all that is required is a decision of the Conference or Council”.

¹² See, e.g., the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, which was established in 1983 as the Commission on Plant Genetic Resources by the Council at its 85th Session (Resolution 1/85) as requested by the Conference in its Resolution 9/83. The Commission’s mandate was broadened and it was renamed the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture by the Conference in 1995 in its Resolution 3/95.

Annex I
Draft Resolution
Establishment of a Commission on Statistics

THE CONFERENCE:

Having noted ... [*insert recommendations of the Council*] on the establishment of a Commission on Statistics,

Recalling that the FAO Constitution provides that “*the Organization shall collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate information relating to nutrition, food and agriculture*”, and

Having considered the relevant provisions of the Basic Texts of the Organization and, in particular, Article VI, paragraph 1, of the Constitution and the Principles and Procedures which should govern Conventions and Agreements concluded under Articles XIV and XV of the Constitution, and Commissions and Committees established under Article VI of the Constitution, set out in the Basic Texts of the Organization,

- 2) **Decides** to establish a Commission on Statistics in accordance with Article VI, paragraph 1, of the Constitution;
- 3) **Requests** the Director-General to make recommendations to the Conference at its 40th Session on the formal relationship that may be established between the regional statistical bodies and the Commission, having requested, and taken into account, comments received from the Regional Conferences and the regional statistics bodies;
- 4) **Adopts** the Terms of Reference of the Commission, which shall be as follows:

Article I: Membership

1. The Commission shall be open to all Member Nations and Associate Members of the Organization. It shall be composed of those Member Nations or Associate Members which notify the Director-General of their desire to be considered as Members.
2. Each Member of the Commission shall communicate to the Director-General the name of its representative who should, as far as possible, participate in the sessions of the Commission in a continuing capacity and have responsibilities related to the coordination between the Commission and the country concerned on statistical issues related to all domains of FAO’s work.

Article II: Objectives

3. The objectives of the Commission are to strengthen global governance of FAO’s work in the field of statistics and to promote coordination on statistical matters, in support of the Organization’s discharge of its function of collecting, analysing, interpreting and disseminating information relating to nutrition, food and agriculture.

Article III: Mandate

The Commission shall provide advice and promote coordination in the context of FAO’s global priorities, policies and work programmes related to statistics. For this purpose, Commission shall:

- a) provide advice to the Governing Bodies on statistical matters to assist the Organization in formulating its priorities, policies and work programmes on statistics at the global level, having regard to issues of common interest to Members of the Organization, the

priorities identified at the regional and national levels, and emerging needs for data and statistics;

- b) coordinate and promote coherence in the implementation of FAO's global policies and work programmes on statistics, and its statistical activities across regions by, *inter alia*, serving as a forum for the exchange of information and experiences between Members on statistical matters;
- c) promote coherence and enhance the quality and integrity of the data produced, analysed and disseminated by the Organization, through the consideration, promotion and endorsement of international norms, methodologies and standards in food and agricultural statistics, and the review of quality assurance mechanisms with a view to making recommendations for improvement;
- d) provide strategic advice on mechanisms to promote the development of national agriculture statistics systems and the capacity of countries to prepare, implement, monitor and evaluate evidence-based policies, investments and programmes;
- e) strengthen collaboration and coordination with the United Nations, including the United Nations Statistical Commission, and other intergovernmental statistical bodies on matters of mutual interest, and reinforce the role of agricultural statistics as an integral part of the Global Statistical System;
- f) consider matters brought to the Organization's attention by the United Nations and other entities of the Global Statistical System, provide advice to the Governing Bodies on such matters and, as requested by the Governing Bodies, formulate and communicate the Organization's responses on such matters;
- g) Promote the role of statistics as a Global Public Good and the adoption of Open Data dissemination policies.

Article IV: Bureau

1. The Commission shall have a Bureau, the composition of which shall be based upon equitable representation and with due regard to the principle of rotation. The methods for selecting members of the Bureau shall be laid down in the rules of procedure to be adopted by the Commission pursuant to Article X.
2. The primary functions of the Bureau shall be to facilitate the effective and efficient functioning of the Commission and, in particular, the planning of the work of the Commission, the preparation and organization of Commission sessions, including by facilitating consultation with Members in relation to agendas, formats and other matters, and the promotion of dialogue. The Bureau shall submit to the Commission proposals concerning the general orientation of the Commission's activities and its programme of work and, as requested by the Commission, it shall investigate particular problems and help to ensure implementation of the programme of work approved by the Commission.

Article V: Sessions

The Commission shall normally hold only such sessions in each biennium as are listed in the Programme of Work and Budget of the Organization for the relevant period. Sessions shall normally be held at the Headquarters of the Organization. The sessions of the Commission shall be convened by the Director-General, in consultation with the Bureau.

Article VI: Subsidiary bodies and *ad hoc* meetings

1. Subject to the availability of the necessary funds in the relevant chapter of the approved necessary for the accomplishment of its functions or recommend to the Director-General the convening of *ad hoc* meetings in order to study specific questions that, because of their specialized nature, could not fruitfully be discussed during the normal sessions of the Commission. The determination of the availability of funds shall be made by the Director-General.
2. Membership in subsidiary bodies and participation in *ad hoc* meetings shall be determined by the Commission and may be open to representatives of members of the Commission, Member Nations or Associate Members of the Organization that are not a members of the Commission, international organizations, international non-governmental organizations having special competence relevant to the work of the Commission, or experts serving in their individual capacity.
3. The terms of reference of the subsidiary bodies established under paragraph 1 above and the questions to be discussed by *ad hoc* meetings shall be determined by the Commission.
4. The Terms of Reference of the Commission and its rules of procedure shall apply to its subsidiary bodies, as appropriate.

Article VII: Observers

1. Any Member Nation or Associate Member of the Organization that is not a Member of the Commission but has an interest in the work of the Commission may, upon its request, be represented in an observer capacity at the meetings of the Commission or its subsidiary bodies and at its *ad hoc* meetings, as appropriate.
2. Non-Members of the Organization that are members of the United Nations, any of its Specialized Agencies or the International Atomic Energy Agency may, upon their request and with the approval of the Commission, be represented in an observer capacity at the meetings of the Commission or its subsidiary bodies and at its *ad hoc* meetings, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the principles adopted by the Conference of the Organization.
3. The Commission shall provide for participation in its meetings, as observers, and in accordance with its rules of procedure, of intergovernmental organizations, and international non-governmental organizations having special competence relevant to the work of the Commission. Participation of international organizations in the work of the Commission and the relations between the Commission and such organizations shall be governed by the relevant provisions of the Constitution and the General Rules of the Organization, as well as by the general rules of the Organization on relations with international organizations. All such relations shall be dealt with by the Director-General.

Article VIII: Reporting and Recommendations

1. At the conclusion of each session, the Commission shall submit a report to the Director-General on its activities taking into account the need for the Director-General to be in a position to take such reports into consideration when preparing the draft Programme of Work and Budget of the Organization or other submissions to the Governing Bodies. The report shall also contain any recommendations of the Commission to the Governing Bodies on matters that it has been mandated to address.
2. The Director-General shall circulate the reports to Members of the Commission and observers that were represented at the session and, upon request, to other Member Nations and Associate Members of the Organization. The reports shall also be circulated to the United Nations Statistical Commission and other intergovernmental bodies of the Global Statistical System, including those that were not represented at the session.

3. The Director-General shall bring to the attention of the Conference, through the Council, any recommendations adopted by the Commission which have policy or regulatory implications, including the Commission's advice on matters brought to the Organization's attention by the United Nations and other entities of the Global Statistical System. The Director-General shall bring to the attention of the Council any recommendations which may affect the programme or finances of the Organization.

4. The Director-General may request Members of the Commission to supply the Commission with information on actions taken on the basis of recommendations made by the Commission.

Article IX: Financial and administrative matters

1. The expenses of the Commission shall be determined and paid by the Organization within the limits of the relevant appropriations in the approved budget of the Organization.

2. The Secretary of the Commission shall be appointed by the Director-General and shall be administratively responsible to the Director-General. The expenses of the Secretariat of the Commission shall be determined and paid by the Organization within the limits of the relevant appropriations in the approved budget of the Organization.

3. Expenses incurred by representatives of Members of the Commission, their alternates or advisers, when attending sessions of the Commission, the Bureau, its subsidiary bodies or *ad hoc* meetings, as well as expenses incurred by observers at sessions, shall be borne by the respective governments or organizations. Expenses incurred by experts invited by the Director-General to attend sessions or meetings in their individual capacity shall be borne by the Organization.

4. Any financial matter relating to the Commission, its subsidiary bodies or *ad hoc* meetings shall be governed by the Financial Regulations of the Organization.

Article X: Rules of Procedure

1. The Commission may adopt and amend its own rules of procedure, which shall be in conformity with the Constitution and the General Rules of the Organization and with the Principles and Procedures which should govern Conventions and Agreements concluded under Articles XIV and XV of the Constitution, and Commissions and Committees established under Article VI of the Constitution adopted by the Conference.

2. The General Rules of the Organization shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to all matters not specifically addressed by the rules of procedure adopted by the Commission.

Article XI: Periodic Review

Five years after its establishment, the Commission shall undertake a review of its usefulness, taking into account its specific mandate, and shall transmit a report thereon, including recommendations, if any, to the Director-General for submission to the Conference through the Council. This review shall assess the work and functioning of the Commission, as well as the continued need for it. Thereafter, at intervals of three years, further reviews shall be undertaken by the Commission with the same objective and submitted to the Director-General for submission to the Conference through the Council.

Article XII: Amendments to the Terms of Reference

The Commission may propose amendments to these Terms of Reference which shall be in conformity with the Constitution and the General Rules of the Organization and with the Principles and Procedures which should govern Conventions and Agreements concluded under Articles XIV and XV of the Constitution, and Commissions and Committees established under Article VI of the Constitution adopted by the Conference. Any proposal for amendments must be transmitted to the Director-General in time for inclusion in the agenda of the Council or Conference as appropriate.

Annex II
Agreement Between the United Nations and FAO (1946)

(Excerpt)

Article IV: Recommendations of the United Nations

1. “The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, having regard to the obligation of the United Nations to promote the objectives set forth in Article 55 of the Charter and the function and power of [ECOSOC], under Article 62 of the Charter, to make or initiate studies and report with respect to international, economic, social, cultural, educational, health and related matters and to make recommendations concerning these matters to the specialized agencies concerned, and having regard also to the responsibility of the United Nations, under Articles 58 and 63 of the Charter, to make recommendations for the co-ordination of the policies and activities of such specialized agencies, agrees to arrange for the submission, as soon as possible, to the appropriate organ of the Organization, of all formal recommendations which the United Nations may make to it.
2. The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations agrees to enter into consultation with the United Nations upon request with respect to such recommendations, and in due course to report to the United Nations on the action taken by the Organization or by its members to give effect to such recommendations, or on the other results of their consideration.
3. The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations affirms its intention of co-operating in whatever further measures may be necessary to make the co-ordination of the activities of specialized agencies and those of the United Nations fully effective. In particular, it agrees to participate in and to co-operate with any body or bodies which [ECOSOC] may establish for the purpose of facilitating such co-ordination and to furnish such information as may be required for the carrying out of this purpose.”

Article XII: Statistical Services

1. “The United Nations and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations agree to strive for maximum co-operation, the elimination of all undesirable duplication between them, and the most efficient use of their technical personnel in their respective collection, analysis, publication and dissemination of statistical information. They agree to combine their efforts to secure the greatest possible usefulness and utilization of statistical information and to minimize the burdens placed upon national governments and other organizations from which such information may be collected.
2. The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations recognizes the United Nations as the central agency for the collection, analysis, publication, standardization and improvement of statistics serving the general purposes of international organizations.
3. The United Nations recognizes the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations as the appropriate agency for the collection, analysis, publication, standardization and improvement of statistics within its special sphere, without prejudice to the right of the United Nations to concern itself with such statistics so far as they may be essential for its own purposes or for the improvement of statistics throughout the world.
4. The United Nations shall in consultation with the specialized agencies develop administrative instruments and procedures through which effective statistical co-operation may be secured between the United Nations and the agencies brought into relationship with it.

5. It is recognized as desirable that the collection of statistical information should not be duplicated by the United Nations or any of the specialized agencies whenever it is practicable for any of them to utilize information or materials which another may have available.

6. In order to build up a central collection of statistical information for general use, it is agreed that data supplied to the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations for incorporation in its basic statistical series or special report should, so far as practicable, be made available to the United Nations”.

Annex III

Regional Considerations and existing regional bodies on agricultural statistics

A. The Regional Conferences

1. The proposal to establish a global Commission on Statistics was presented to the Regional Conferences that met in 2014. The views of the Conferences on the proposal were as follows:
 - a) The Regional Conference for Africa “*endorsed the recommendation of the 23rd Session of the African Commission for Agriculture Statistics to establish a Global Commission on Agricultural Statistics*”.¹³ The recommendation of the African Commission for Agriculture Statistics is set out below.
 - b) The Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific “*took note of the outcome of the twenty-fifth session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics (APCAS), convened in Vientiane, Lao PDR, in February 2014, including the Commission’s endorsement of FAO’s work on agricultural statistics, support for the establishment of a Global Commission on Agricultural Statistics, and the request from member countries for further information on its establishment*”.¹⁴
 - c) The Regional Conference for Europe “*was informed about the proposal to establish a Global FAO Commission on Statistics and noted that there was strong support for the establishment of such a global body on statistics from other regional bodies working in the area of statistics*”.¹⁵
 - d) The Regional Conference for the Near East “*took note of the presentation made by the Secretariat on the proposal of the establishment of a global commission on Statistics to address the information gaps in food security, nutrition and Agriculture and coordinate global efforts in this area.*”¹⁶
2. The Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean did not address this matter in its final report.

B. The Regional Agricultural Statistical Bodies

3. It is also relevant to consider the existing regional bodies concerned with statistics in the context of the proposed global Commission. The existing regional statistics bodies take a number of different legal forms and, while some are entirely within FAO, others are collaborations with other Organizations. Some FAO regions do not have a regional statistics body. As reflected in the draft Resolution for the establishment of the global Commission on Statistics, it may, in the future, be deemed appropriate to consider what, if any, formal relationship should be established between regional statistics bodies and the global body.

¹³ Paragraph 36, Report of the 28th Regional Conference for Africa, document ARC/14/REP.

¹⁴ Paragraph 40, Report of the 32nd Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific, document APRC/14/REP.

¹⁵ Paragraph 50, Report of the 29th Regional Conference for Europe, document ERC/14/REP Rev 1.

¹⁶ Paragraph 37, Report of the 32nd Regional Conference for the Near East, document NERC/14/REP.

African Commission on Agricultural Statistics (AFCAS)

4. AFCAS was established under Article VI, paragraph 1, of the Constitution in 1961, upon the recommendation of the Conference at its 11th Session for the immediate establishment of a permanent commission to promote the improvement of agricultural statistics in Africa.¹⁷ The Statutes were adopted by the Council at its 40th Session in 1963.¹⁸

5. The 23rd Session of AFCAS, convened from 4-7 December 2013, recommended that: “*FAO establish a Global Commission on Agricultural Statistics in order to: (a) ensure better coordination and standardization of the activities and recommendations emanating from Regional Commissions and bodies; (b) provide a global forum for Country Representatives to review and endorse methodological and other normative work; and (c) create a peer-review process for data published and methodologies used by FAO.*”

*Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics (APCAS)*¹⁹

6. APCAS was established in 1963 pursuant to Article VI, paragraph 1, of the Constitution, by the Conference in its Resolution 41/63, adopted at its 12th Session. APCAS’ Statutes were approved by the Conference in same Resolution.

7. The 25th Session of APCAS, convened from 18-21 February 2014: “*supported the establishment of the Global Commission and requested further information on its establishment.*”

FAO/OEA-CIE/IICA Working Group on Agricultural and Livestock Statistics for Latin America and the Caribbean

8. The FAO/OEA-CIE/IICA Working Group on Agricultural and Livestock Statistics for Latin America and the Caribbean was established under paragraph 2 of Article VI of the Constitution. It was originally established as Sub-Committee on Agricultural Statistics of the Committee on Improvement of National Statistics (COINS) by the Executive Committee of the Inter-American Statistical Institute (IASI) at its 24th Session (1964) and formally approved by COINS at its Eighth Session (1964). The name was changed to its current version by the *Conferencia de Estadísticos Gubernamentales de las Américas* (CEGA) at its First Session (1983), CEGA being the organization which replaced COINS in 1981. In 1995, IASI withdrew from the Working Group and was replaced by the Organization of American States (OEA) and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

9. At its 26th Session held in June 2013, the FAO-OEA/CIE-IICA Working Group recommended “*that FAO establishes a Committee on Agricultural Statistics at Global Level in order to (a) ensure better coordination and standardization of the activities and recommendations emanating from Regional Commissions and bodies; (b) provide a global forum for Country Representatives to review and endorse methodological and other normative work; and (c) create a peer-review process for data published and methodologies used by FAO.*”²⁰

FAO/ECE/CES Study Group on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Europe

10. The FAO/ECE/CES Study Group on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Europe was established as a Study Group on Problems of Methodology and Definitions in Agricultural Statistics in Eastern and Western Countries, following the recommendations of the ECE Committee on Agricultural Problems at its Eleventh Session (1959) and the suggestion of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) at its Seventh Session. The name was changed to its current name by the CES at its Twelfth Session (1964). This Group has not met in recent years.

¹⁷ Paragraph 306, Report of the 11th Session of the Conference.

¹⁸ Resolution No. 4/40.

¹⁹ The Commission’s name was changed from “Asia and Far East” to “Asia and Pacific” by the 82nd Session of the Council in 1982.

²⁰ Recommendations, 26th Session of the FAO-OEA/CIE-IICA Working Group on agricultural and livestock statistics for Latin America and the Caribbean, document ESS/ALSLAC/13/18.