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Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الغذية والزراعة
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CONFERENCE

Fortieth Session

Rome, 3-8 July 2017

**Report of the 29th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa
(Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 4-8 April 2016)**

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Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

ARC/16/REP

REPORT

Abidjan
Côte D'Ivoire
4-8 April
2016

Twenty-Ninth FAO Regional Conference for Africa

FAO Member Nations in the Africa Region

Algeria	Eritrea	Namibia
Angola	Ethiopia	Niger
Benin	Gabon	Nigeria
Botswana	Gambia	Rwanda
Burkina Faso	Ghana	Sao Tome and Principe
Burundi	Guinea	Senegal
Cabo Verde	Guinea-Bissau	Seychelles
Cameroon	Kenya	Sierra Leone
Central African Republic	Lesotho	Somalia
Chad	Liberia	South Africa
Comoros	Libya	South Sudan
Congo	Madagascar	Sudan
Côte d'Ivoire	Malawi	Swaziland
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Mali	Togo
Djibouti	Mauritania	Tunisia
Egypt	Mauritius	Uganda
Equatorial Guinea	Morocco	United Republic of Tanzania
	Mozambique	Zambia
		Zimbabwe

Date and place of FAO Regional Conferences for Africa

First	Lagos, Nigeria, 3 – 12 November 1960
Second	Tunis, Tunisia, 1 – 10 November 1962
Third	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 3 – 15 September 1964
Fourth	Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 9 – 19 November 1966
Fifth	Kampala, Uganda, 18 – 29 November 1968
Sixth	Algiers, Algeria, 17 September – 3 October 1970
Seventh	Libreville, Gabon, 14 – 30 September 1972
Eighth	Rose Hill, Mauritius, 1 – 17 August 1974
Ninth	Freetown, Sierra Leone, 2 – 12 November 1976
Tenth	Arusha, Tanzania, 18 – 28 September 1978
Eleventh	Lomé, Togo, 16 – 27 June 1980
Twelfth	Algiers, Algeria, 22 September – 2 October 1982
Thirteenth	Harare, Zimbabwe, 16 – 25 July 1984
Fourteenth	Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, 2 – 11 September 1986
Fifteenth	Moka, Mauritius, 26 April – 4 May 1988
Sixteenth	Marrakech, Morocco, 11 – 15 June 1990
Seventeenth	Accra, Ghana, 20 – 24 July 1992
Eighteenth	Gaborone, Botswana, 24 – 28 October 1994
Nineteenth	Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 16 – 20 April 1996
Twentieth	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 16 – 20 February 1998
Twenty-first	Yaoundé, Cameroon, 21 – 25 February 2000
Twenty-second	Cairo, Egypt, 4-8 February 2002
Twenty-third	Johannesburg, South Africa, 1- 5 March 2004
Twenty-fourth	Bamako, Mali, 30 January – 3 February 2006
Twenty-fifth	Nairobi, Kenya, 16 – 20 June 2008
Twenty-sixth	Luanda, Angola, 6 – 7 May 2010
Twenty-seventh	Brazzaville, Congo, 23 – 27 April 2012
Twenty-eighth	Tunis, Tunisia, 24 – 28 March 2014
Twenty-ninth	Abidjan, Côte D'Ivoire, 4– 8 April 2016

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MATTERS REQUIRING THE ATTENTION OF THE CONFERENCE

II. Regional and Global Policy and Regulatory Matters

A. Public Private Partnership for Inclusive Agricultural Growth: paragraphs 14 a) – j) and 15 i) – vi)

B. Trends and Issues in Food and Agriculture for Regional and National Action in the context of the SDGs: paragraphs 17 a) – j) and 18

I. Introductory Items

Organization of the Conference

1. The Twenty-Ninth FAO Regional Conference for Africa was held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire from 4 to 8 April 2016. The Regional Conference was organized in two parts: a Senior Officers' Meeting from 4 to 6 April and a Ministerial-level Meeting from 7 to 8 April.
2. The Regional Conference was attended by 426 Delegates from 49 Member countries of which 46 ministers and deputy ministers, 16 Ambassadors, 5 Observer Nations, 8 UN Organizations, 39 Civil Society Organization and Non-Governmental Organization, and 5 Inter-Governmental Organizations.

Inaugural Ceremonies

3. The Senior Officers' Meeting was opened with addresses by H.E. Mathias Aka N'Gouan, Mayor of Cocody; H.E. Kobenan Kouassi Adjoumani, Minister for Animal Resources and Fisheries of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire; and Mr. Bukar Tijani, Assistant Director General and Regional Representative for the FAO Regional Office for Africa. The Mayor welcomed participants and expresses his delight to host the Regional Conference in the Cocody Municipality. His Excellency the Minister welcomed the participants and officially opened the meeting. He stressed the need for proposals on appropriate strategies and financing mechanisms to enhance value-chain development that would catalyse agricultural transformation that is relevant for the specificities of the African market. Mr. Bukar Tijani on behalf of the FAO Director-General, welcomed participants and thanked the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire for the support in organizing and hosting the meeting. He acknowledged the support of the Chairperson of the 28th Africa Regional Conference, the Independent Chair of the Council and the Chairperson of the Africa Group of Permanent Representatives at FAO. Mr. Tijani highlighted the importance of the Conference theme, "Transforming African Agri-food systems for inclusive growth and a shared prosperity", particularly in the context of the 2014 African Union Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation. H.E. Mamadou Sangafowa Coulibaly, Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and Madam Maria Helena Semedo, Deputy Director-General and Coordinator of Natural Resources of FAO were also in attendance.
4. The Inaugural Ceremony of the Ministerial Meeting was held on 7 April and was opened by His Excellency, Monsieur Daniel Kablan Duncan, Prime Minister and Minister of Economy, Finance and Budget of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. H.E. Mathias Aka N'Gouan, Mayor of Cocody and H.E. Mamadou Sangafowa Coulibaly, Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire also presented opening remarks. The Director-General of FAO, Mr José Graziano da Silva, provided a welcome address.

Election of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur

5. Delegates endorsed, H.E. Mamadou Sangafowa Coulibaly, Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire to chair this Session. H.E. Kobenan Kouassi Adjoumani, on behalf of the Chairperson, thanked Delegates for the election of Côte d'Ivoire to chair the Twenty-ninth Session of the Africa Regional Conference and FAO for the excellent preparations in organising the meeting, and requested Mr. Siaka Minayaha Coulibaly, Director of Cabinet, Ministry for Agriculture and Rural Development to Chair the Session of the Senior Officers' Meeting.

6. The Conference elected the following countries as Vice Chairs of the Conference: 1st Vice-Chair: Sudan and 2nd Vice-Chair: Cameroun. The Conference appointed as Co-rapporteurs: Tunisia and Zimbabwe.

Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

7. The Conference adopted the Agenda which is given in Appendix A (ARC/16/1). Documents submitted to the Conference are listed in Appendix B.

Statement by the Director-General

8. Mr José Graziano da Silva, Director-General of FAO, welcomed the participating Ministers and Dignitaries to the Twenty-ninth Session of the Africa Regional Conference. The Director-General highlighted the impressive progress made by African countries in reducing hunger in the continent and encouraged Member States to expand the pace of the momentum towards achieving the Malabo Declaration's target of zero hunger by 2025. He further noted that issues of conflict, diseases and the negative effects of climate change are acting to slow down Africa's growth. In addition, he informed the Regional Conference that as the benefits of Africa's growth are uneven within countries and across regions in the continent, scaling up resilience, and in particular social protection should be a cornerstone of interventions to improve the lives of all, especially the marginalized groups. Finally, the Director-General underscored the message that; where there is conflict, there is hunger; and where there is hunger, sustainable peace is impossible and pledged to the Regional Conference that FAO stands ready to work hand-in-hand with African countries in the fight against poverty, hunger and malnutrition.

Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council

9. As Mr Wilfred J. Ngirwa, Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council, had been unable to attend the Regional Conference, his statement was made available to delegates.

Statement by the Chairperson of the 28th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa

10. H.E. Saad Seddik, Minister of Agriculture, Water Resource and Fisheries, The Republic of Tunisia delivered the Statement of the Chairperson of the 28th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa. In doing so, he reminded the Conference about the recommendations of the Twenty-Eight Session, and briefed the Delegates on activities undertaken by the Regional Office as a follow up to the implementation of these recommendations, including proposals to strengthen south-south cooperation and mechanisms to monitoring of implementation of recommendations.

Statement by the Chairperson of the CFS on the Outcomes of the 42nd Session of the Committee on World Food Security

11. The Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), H.E. Amira Daoud Hassan Gornass reported on the progress made by CFS over the past two years and its relevance to the Africa Region. She also briefed the Conference on some of the on-going key CFS activities, and urged all stakeholders to engage actively in ongoing CFS multi-stakeholder consultative processes, and to implement CFS policy recommendations and guidelines.

Statement by the Representative of the African Union

12. H.E. Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, Commissioner, Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union, presented a statement on behalf of the African Union Commission. She noted FAO's historic contribution to African agricultural development and the CAADP process. She underscored the excellent support FAO provided in the renewed partnership to end hunger in Africa, which ultimately helped to frame the Malabo aspiration of achieving zero hunger in Africa by 2025. She further noted that although the African target to achieve the zero hunger commitment is 5 years

shorter than the global target of 2030 under the SDGs, the two processes are strongly aligned to each other.

II. Regional and Global Policy and Regulatory Matters

A. Public Private Partnership for Inclusive Agricultural Growth

13. The Regional Conference considered the document (ARC/16/2) on Public Private Partnership for Inclusive Agricultural Growth. The Conference noted the importance of innovative public private partnerships (PPPs) as a mechanism to improve productivity and drive growth in the agriculture and food sectors. It also highlighted the key role of PPPs towards achievement of the Malabo Declaration Goals 2025 and CAADP. Members presented successful examples of PPPs ongoing in their countries.

14. The Regional Conference:

- a) Noted the importance of economies of scale, technology transfer and other possible spillover effects that are often derived from PPPs;
- b) Recognized that despite its potential benefits, PPPs should not be considered as a panacea, and countries should develop partnerships based on their specific situation;
- c) Underscored the need for the creation of appropriate enabling environment to attract private sector investment that enhances food security, livelihoods and that enhances youth employment and overall economic growth;
- d) Noted the relevance of producers in the Public Private Producer Partnerships process;
- e) Acknowledged the importance of inclusive growth and integration of smallholder farmers at all levels of the partnership;
- f) Acknowledged that benefits and risks associated with PPPs should be shared equally among all stakeholders through a transparent governance strategy;
- g) Underlined the importance of having in place effective institutional, legal and regulatory frameworks and appropriate monitoring and evaluation systems;
- h) Noted the prevalence of uncertainty and risks in the agricultural sector and highlighted the importance of appropriate risk management strategies that includes the specific situation of smallholder farmers;
- i) Noted that PPPs should enhance value addition activities, improve product quality, enhance markets, ensure fair prices and decent income for weaker participants; and;
- j) Highlighted that agricultural institutions should provide appropriate research and strategies that respond to private sector issues and promotes PPP.

15. Recommended FAO to:

- i) Develop further in-depth analyses to highlight case studies that have produced positive, concrete and sustainable impact using PPP platforms;
- ii) Continue to foster collective action and capacity building of smallholders to increase the participation in modern value chains;

- iii) Support Member states to promote sound institutional and policy and regulatory frameworks, including the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure, fisheries, forestry in the context of national food security and transparent processes for selection of private partners and the projects that will be implemented in the framework of PPPs;
- iv) Enhance efforts to adopt and strengthen appropriate risk management measures, both hard and soft relating to agricultural activities (disaster, etc.) to ensure beneficial effects for smallholders, including agricultural insurance;
- v) Create an expert group on PPPs that will conduct in-depth analyses on the nature and types of PPPs that are relevant for specific circumstances and provide expert advice to African countries;
- vi) Ensure that particular attention is given to youth in the area of agri-food systems.

B. Trends and Issues in Food and Agriculture for Regional and National Action in the context of the SDGs

16. The Regional Conference considered the document on Trends and Issues in Food and Agriculture for Regional and National action in the context of the SDGs (ARC/16/3). It highlighted trends and issues that are likely to shape the work of FAO in the coming years and identified three major drivers for FAO global and regional action. These are: the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); the Paris Agreement adopted as an outcome of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21), and the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the Framework for Action adopted by the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2).

17. The Regional Conference:

- a) Called attention in particular to the critical issue of youth unemployment, urbanization and migration and the dividend that can accrue to Africa from its large and increasing youthful population;
- b) Shared experiences on measures taken in some countries to encourage youth interest in the agribusiness and rural development following on consideration of this matter by the 28th Session of the Regional Conference.¹ ;
- c) Identified several challenges for encouraging Africa's youth to effectively participate in agriculture, including (i) difficulties in access to factors of production, in particular land and finance; (ii) insufficient infrastructure to enhance agricultural and rural development; (iii) low profitability in the agricultural sector and (iv) unattractive working conditions;
- d) Acknowledged that the benefits associated with the youth dividend are not automatic, they will require an appropriate enabling environment based on each country's specific situation;
- e) Stressed the importance of a strong evolution of social protection for overall economic transformation;
- f) Underscored the importance of strengthening synergies between agriculture and non-agricultural sector policies and strategies to reinforce sector wide benefits and overall economic growth;

¹¹ ARC/14/REP paragraphs 18-19

- g) Highlighted the need for inclusive growth, including gender and women's empowerment, and the need for strong and equitable value chain development;
- h) Underlined the importance of developing strong M&E systems which would provide feedback on results and impact;
- i) Noted the continued challenges which will need to be addressed in the context of climate change and the environment, and emphasized the need for appropriate risk management strategies, including to combat drought, water scarcity and wild fires;
- j) Provided guidance and advice on the synergies related to challenges and future actions in the context of the Malabo Implementation Strategy, the Sustainable Development Goals and FAO's Strategic Objectives.

18. Recommended FAO

- i) to continue to provide its knowledge and expertise to help Member States effectively address these trends and issues in food and agriculture, in particular in the areas of:
 - (a) value chain development; (b) youth employment; (c) information and communication technology (ICT) and agriculture; (d) social protection; (e) trade-related policies and agreements; (f) data, information systems and statistics to improve policies and strategies as well as M&E systems; and; (g) resilience building for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

C. Outcomes of the committee on World Food Security (CFS) and follow up actions at regional and country levels.

19. The Regional Conference reviewed recent developments and deliberations of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and considered appropriate follow-up actions in the Africa Region. H.E. Amira Daoud Hassan Gornass, Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), reported on the accomplishments of the CFS over the past two years and the relevance of this work to the FAO Regional Conference. She noted in particular the endorsement of the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems and the Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises. She also informed that CFS endorsed its Multi-Year Programme of Work for the biennium 2016-2017 and the guidance note for the selection of future CFS activities.

20. The Regional Conference:

- a) Took note of the CFS outcomes including its effort in strengthening linkages between global commitments and regional/national efforts to ensure food security and nutrition for all;
- b) Encouraged the implementation of CFS policy products and invited the active participation of all stakeholders in the activities to be carried out by the Committee in 2016-2017.

III. Programme and Budget Matters

A. Results and Priorities for FAO in the Africa Region

21. The Regional Conference considered the report on results and priorities for FAO activities in Africa, covering achievements in 2014-15 proposals for 2016-17 and beyond (ARC/16/5).

22. The Regional Conference:

- a) Welcomed the actions undertaken and results achieved during 2014-15 to address regional priorities, particularly through the three Regional Initiatives endorsed by the 28th Session of the Regional Conference, which had helped to focus FAO's work while allowing flexibility to respond to country priorities and emerging needs;
- b) Supported continuation of the Regional Initiatives for the 2016-17 biennium to help focus FAO actions on priorities of the region on: Africa's commitment to end hunger by 2025, sustainable production intensification and value chain development in Africa, and building resilience in Africa's drylands;
- c) Underlined the need for continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization and appreciated the alignment between the FAO Strategic Objectives and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- d) Noted the emerging trends in the region and looked forward to further analytical work by FAO to understand their impacts on food and agriculture in the region;
- e) Highlighted the need for inclusive growth based on (i) comparative advantage and social sustainability, including gender and women's empowerment; (ii) strong market development, and (iii) inclusive and equitable value chain development;
- f) Stressed the importance of resilience building to address risks associated with climate change and other factors, including (i) for sustainable management of both inland and marine ecosystems to benefit all stakeholders; (ii) appropriate land and water control systems, and (iii) strong capacity to control of plant and animal pest and diseases.
- g) Reiterated a basic premise for FAO to ensure that member countries have ownership over programmes and projects in their countries;
- h) Stressed the importance of member countries supporting FAO in resource mobilisation with development partners, as well as to actively support contributions to funding mechanisms such as the Africa Solidarity Trust Fund and Unilateral Trust Funds by all African countries for innovation and scaling up.
- i) Recommended FAO to:
 - i) Continue to improve on the results and impact of its programmes, including through more focused Country Programming Frameworks contributing to achievement of FAO's Strategic Objectives and the SDGs;
 - ii) Strengthen partnerships with Member Countries in collaboration with sub-regional, regional and international institutions, providing policy advice and capacity development and building on FAO's normative and standard-setting work;

iii) Enhance its support to countries in the important areas such market access and agri-food systems, sustainable natural resource management and governance, and resilience building for effective management of risks.

iv) Assist countries to develop strong and inclusive agro-processing sectors using appropriate technologies and mechanisation, in particular to attract youth to the food and agricultural sector.

v) Mobilize financial resources from the Green Climate Fund, in partnership with Regional Development Banks, and using existing FAO facilities and programmes as channels for technical support and capacity development.

B. Decentralized Offices Network

23. The Regional Conference considered the document on the Decentralized Offices Network (ARC/16/6), reporting on actions taken in 2014-15 and those planned for 2016-17. The Conference was informed of the need for FAO to review its decentralized offices network to improve the Organization's operational effectiveness in light of the evolving national and regional policy environment.

24. The Regional Conference:

a) Welcomed the decentralization paper and recognized the need to update the coverage of FAO offices, in order to adapt to current developments requirements and achieve greater flexibility, efficiency and impact in the implementation of strategic objectives;

b) Examined the options recommended by the Secretariat for Africa and noted the complex challenge in terms of coverage, location, roles and responsibilities and the need for flexibility in the size and scope of FAO's presence;

c) Supported principles for reviewing coverage of FAO offices that will (i) ensure a more flexible and strengthened network closer to and serving all Member Countries and regions, (ii) effectively contributing to a common result of eradicating hunger without weakening the existing FAO decentralized offices network, or discriminating against any nation/region on the basis of the state of development such as transport linkages;

d) Recommended FAO, in line with its mandate and conclusions of the 27th ARC in 2012, (i) to use the food deficit criteria, (ii) to give priority to middle income and low income food deficit countries and (iii) to maintain all country and Subregional offices already in place in African countries.

e) Supported the proposal for review of the decentralized office network in the Africa Region and that the review should be carried out in such a way that the capacity of the network is strengthened by the process. In particular:

i) preserve the principle of "one FAO" and one office per country by fully merging the project-funded resilience teams in Dakar, Nairobi and Johannesburg with respective FAO country office;

ii) the capacity of the Regional Office in Accra should be strengthened in line with the Ministerial decisions of the 2014 Regional Conference for Africa in Tunis;

iii) strengthen the Sub-regional Office in Addis Ababa due to the presence of the African Union and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA);

iv) the capacity of the Sub-regional Office for technical support to countries in Central Africa should be strengthened and remain located in Libreville, noting the commitment of the host government to maintain a sufficient level of support to the Office;

- v) the proposed Sub-regional Office for technical support to countries in West Africa should preferably be located in a francophone country; and in this regard, took note of the offers by Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal to host the Sub-regional Office for West Africa;
- vi) the planned technical officer in Gaborone, Botswana, will be responsible for liaison with SADC and also be designated as the FAOR for Botswana;
- vii) the FAO representation through national correspondents in the Indian Ocean countries of Comoros, Mauritius and Seychelles should be transformed into full time FAO national programme officers under the supervision and leadership of the FAOR in Madagascar;
- viii) the FAO country office in Côte d'Ivoire should be strengthened to work more closely with the African Development Bank and AfricaRice;
- ix) the criterion of transport linkages cannot be used to guide the review process in the Africa region but rather explore other criteria such as population and others that FAO uses in making decisions guided by the fact that FAO interventions are at the national, regional and international levels.

C. Prioritization of Needs of Countries and Subregions by the Subregional Group Representatives

25. Representatives of each sub-region presented a summary statement of their sub-regional consultations, identifying their future needs and priorities.

26. The sub-regional consultation for Central Africa identified three priority areas and related actions to: (i) develop innovative value chains in agriculture, livestock, fisheries, aquaculture and forests; (ii) support the sustainable development of natural resources; and (iii) strengthen the resilience of rural households to shocks and crises; (iv) put in place effective actions for control and prevention of risks and threats related to human, animal diseases and zoonosis (e.g. Ebola, avian influenza, PPR, trypanosomiasis, anthrax, rabies, etc).

27. The sub-regional consultation for East Africa identified five priority areas and related actions to: (i) promote sustainable use and management of natural resources to address the root causes and impact of drought and climate change; (ii) facilitate agricultural transformation, taking advantage of the youth dividend; (iii) increase agricultural production, productivity of crops, livestock and fisheries sectors; (iv) support the design and revision of sub-regional policies and frameworks; (v) provide technical support for the IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience Sustainability Initiative and the CAADP regional investment plan.

28. The Subregional consultation for Southern Africa identified seven priorities and related actions to support: (a) policy and institutional frameworks; (b) sustainable increase in agricultural production, productivity and competitiveness; (c) enhanced sustainable management of natural resources, including land and water; (d) enhanced value addition and improved market access and trade; (e) improved preparedness and resilience for reduced social, economic and climatic vulnerability; (f) increased investment in agriculture and access to finance by smallholders; and (g) improved food and nutrition security. In addition, the consultation agreed the following cross-cutting priorities: gender, youth engagement, climate change adaptation and reducing the vulnerability and impact of HIV/AIDS.

29. The sub-regional consultation for West Africa, based on the Regional Partnership Compact implementation of ECOWAP/CAADP 2025, identified four strategic priority areas and related actions for: (i) regional integration; (ii) the adoption of sustainable intensification routes, adapted to the diversity of ecosystems and the needs of local and national communities; (iii) promotion of value chains; (iv) development of aquaculture and (v) transboundary related matters such as zoonosis and anthro-po-zoonosis (Ebola).

IV. Other Matters

A. Multi-year Programme of Work for the Africa Regional Conference

30. The Conference reviewed the draft Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) 2016-2019 for the FAO Regional Conference for Africa (ARC/16/7).

31. The Regional Conference:

a) Endorsed the MYPOW for the 2016-2019 period to frame the work of the Regional Conference and encouraged the continuation of efforts to strengthen communication of programme outcomes with the Africa Group of Permanent Representatives to FAO, the Africa Union and the Regional Economic Communities.

b) Encouraged regular and systematic review of the performance and efficiency of the Regional Conference in implementing its recommendations, and put in place an operational and concrete mechanism of monitoring, and looked forward with interest to receiving a report at its next session.

B. Concluding Items

List of Proposed Topics for the 30th Regional Conference for Africa

32. The Regional Conference considered suggested topics for the 30th Regional Conference and proposed the following theme: “Sustainable development of agricultural and food systems in Africa: improving the means of production and the creation of decent and attractive employment for youth”.

33. The Conference requested the Africa Group of Permanent Representatives, the Secretariat of the Regional Conference and the Chairperson of the 29th Africa Regional Conference to examine the proposals in order to make a final recommendation on the theme for the 30th Regional Conference.

Date and Place of the 30th Regional Conference for Africa

34. The Regional Conference agreed to hold the 30th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa in Sudan in 2018. Sudan expressed thanks for this proposal and agreed host the 30th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa in 2018. The exact date will be agreed jointly by the selected host country and the Secretariat of the Regional Conference. The Regional Conference noted that Rwanda offered to host the 30th Session of the African Regional Conference. Finally, the Conference noted that the decision for selection of the host country rest with the FAO Council.

C. Any other matters

Ministerial Roundtable

35. A Ministerial Roundtable was held on Friday, 8th April 2016 on 'Strengthening national and regional capacities to effectively implement commitments and increase investments made at national

and continental level for the eradication of hunger and the transformation of food systems in Africa for an inclusive growth and shared prosperity'.

36. The Roundtable focused on three interrelated themes:

- Accelerating Implementation of the CAADP/Malabo Framework with a focus on Programme Governance and Coordination
- Strengthening Partnership for Resource Mobilization
- COP22: The Road to Marrakech - The relevance for Africa

37. The Ministerial Roundtable discussed strategies for Member states to realize the Malabo target of ending hunger by 2025. It highlighted capacity needs in African countries in accelerating the pace of implementation of the Malabo targets and the nature of investments that would be required to do so. It further examined issues of strengthening of partnerships for resource mobilization and how they can contribute to the Malabo strategy and road map. Finally, it discussed the opportunities and challenges facing Africa countries in the era of COP21 and outlined strategies for strengthening the link between climate change and agriculture in the outcome of the COP22, which will be held in Morocco in November 2016.

Side Events

38. During the Regional Conference, three side events were held on 6 April on the following themes:

- 1) Successes in Nuclear Applications: African VetLab Network and Sterile Insect Technique.
- 2) Development of an Action Programme to Address Food and Nutrition Challenges in SIDS.
- 3) Follow up of the 2006 Abuja Declaration on Fertilizer for an African Green Revolution.

39. Recommendations from the side events were as follows:

1) *Successes in Nuclear Applications: African VetLab Network and Sterile Insect Technique* - An integral part of the FAO-IAEA partnership is the FAO/IAEA Agriculture & Biotechnology Laboratories that spearhead the use of 'atoms for peace', with particular emphasis on research for development. Applying cutting-edge isotope and radiation technologies critical value to global agricultural research in the areas of animal production and health, food and environmental protection, insect pest control, plant breeding and genetics, and soil and water management & crop nutrition. The extraordinary expertise that this collaboration provides is often at the forefront of worldwide efforts to fight global hunger and malnutrition, improve environmental sustainability, protect plants and livestock, improve farmers' incomes and ensure safe food for consumers. This collaborative model, unique in the UN system, plays a pivotal support role in the success of nuclear applications in food and agriculture and needs to be support to enable African countries increase their benefits from it.

2) *Development of an Action Programme to Address Food and Nutrition Challenges in SIDS* - The Atlantic and Indian Ocean SIDS (Capo Verde, Comoros, Guinea Bissau, Madagascar, Mauritius, Sao Tome et Principe, and Seychelles) recommended that:

- In the framework of Article 61 of the SAMOA Pathway, FAO should (i) establish a Common Coordination Mechanism for the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway Action Programme and (ii) formulate an Action Programme for Food and Nutritional Security challenges facing the respective SIDS within the context of the SDGs, through:

- i) Increased production, productivity and competitiveness in the agricultural sector;
- ii) Establishment of adequate measures for regional and inter-regional markets for agricultural products, including sanitary and phytosanitary measures;
- iii) Formulation of policy measures and action plans towards improvement of nutrition security, in line with ICN2 recommendations;
- iv) Strengthening the resilience capacities of communities to face climate change and natural disasters challenges;
- v) Facilitation of experience sharing and lessons learned between the Atlantic and Indian Ocean SIDS.

3) *Follow up of the 2006 Abuja Declaration on Fertilizer for an African Green Revolution* - The side event proposed that a high level meeting be convened by interested partners to:

- a) Discuss the outcome of a comprehensive review of successes, lessons learned, challenges and new opportunities, to feed into post 2015 strategies, which will be carried out and disseminated by relevant interested partners.
- b) Update the 2006 Abuja Declaration by widening its to exploit its link with sustainable soil management and propose strategies to be put in place in Africa by 2030 in line with the SDGs and Malabo Implementation Strategy and Road Map.

Abidjan Ministerial declaration

40. At the end of the Conference, Ministers endorsed the Abidjan Ministerial Declaration (Appendix D).

Adoption of the report

41. The Conference unanimously adopted the report as presented by the Rapporteur.

Closure of the Conference

42. On behalf of the participants, H.E. Grace Dinah Akello, Permanent Representative of Uganda to the Rome-Based Agencies and Chair of the Africa Group of Ambassadors in Rome, gave a vote of thanks and expressed utmost appreciation to the President, the Head of Government, and the people of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire for their hospitality and arrangements in hosting the Regional Conference and to FAO for the successful preparation and organization of the Conference.

43. In his closing statement, the Director-General of the FAO congratulated the participants for the high level of participation and constructive debates, thanking them for reaffirming to meeting Africa's 2025 Zero Hunger challenge.

44. On behalf of His Excellency, the President, the Head of Government and the people of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, H.E. Mamadou Sangafowa Coulibaly, Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and Chairman of the 29th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa, thanked the participants for the exceptional attendance and the work achieved. He called on Member states to contribute to implementing the Conference recommendations.

45. H.E. Amadou Gon Coulibaly, Minister of State and Secretary-General of the Presidency of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, in closing the Conference, highlighted the high quality of the discussions and urged all to ensure that the recommendations are translated into tangible outcomes. He noted that although significant progress has already been made towards Africa's agricultural transformation, more still needs to be done and urged African countries and development partners to take appropriate actions that would accelerate the pace of the continent's Agricultural transformation. Finally, he expressed thanks to FAO and Conference delegates for the trust placed in Côte d'Ivoire through H.E. Mamadou Sangafowa Coulibaly, Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development to preside over the Regional Conference for the next two years.

V. APPENDICES

Appendix A. Agenda

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

- 1) Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons, and appointment of Rapporteur
- 2) Adoption of Agenda and Timetable
- 3) Statement by the Director-General
- 4) Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council
- 5) Statement by the Chairperson of the 28th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa
- 6) Statement by the Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security
- 7) Statements on Prioritization of Needs of Countries and Subregions by the Subregional Group Representatives

II. REGIONAL AND GLOBAL POLICY AND REGULATORY MATTERS

- 8) Public Private Partnership for Inclusive Agricultural Growth
- 9) Trends and Issues in Food and Agriculture for Regional and National Action in the context of the SDGs
- 10) Update on the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)

III. PROGRAMME AND BUDGET MATTERS

- 11) Results and Priorities for FAO in the Africa Region
- 12) Decentralized Offices Network

IV. OTHER MATTERS

- 13) Multi-year Programme of Work 2016-2019 for the Regional Conference for Africa
- 14) Proposed List of Topics to be considered for the 30th Regional Conference for Africa
- 15) Date and Place of the 30th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa
- 16) Any other matters

Review and endorsement of the Report of the Conference

Ministerial Roundtable

Appendix B. List of documents**SESSION DOCUMENTS**

ARC/16/1	Provisional Annotated Agenda
ARC/16/2	Public Private Partnership for Inclusive Agricultural Growth
ARC/16/3	Trends and Issues in Food and Agriculture for Regional and National Action in the Context of the SDGs
ARC/16/4	Update on the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)
ARC/16/5	Results and Priorities for FAO in the Africa Region
ARC/16/6	Decentralized Offices Network
ARC/16/7	Multi-year Programme of Work 2016-2019 for the Regional Conference for Africa

INFORMATION DOCUMENTS

ARC/16/INF/1	Information Note
ARC/16/INF/2	Provisional Timetable
ARC/16/INF/3 Rev.2	Provisional List of Documents
ARC/16/INF/4	Statement by the Director-General
ARC/16/INF/5	Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council
ARC/16/INF/6	Statement by the Chairperson of 28 th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa
ARC/16/INF/7	Summary Report of Recommendations of FAO Regional Bodies
ARC/16/INF/8	Reporting on the Recommendations of the 28 th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa
ARC/16/INF/9	Africa Solidarity Trust Fund for Food Security
ARC/16/INF/10	The 21 st Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change / COP 21
ARC/16/INF/11	Fourteenth World Forestry Congress
ARC/16/INF/12	South-South and Triangular Cooperation: Good Practices and Prospects at Country Level in Africa

- ARC/16/INF/13 Rev.3 Ministerial Roundtable - Strengthening National and Regional Capacities to Effectively Implement Commitments and Increase Investments Made at National And Continental Level for the Eradication of Hunger and the Transformation of Food Systems in Africa for an Inclusive Growth and Shared Prosperity
- ARC/16/INF/14 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and FAO's Strategic Objectives: Expected Results in the Africa region
- ARC/16/INF/15 Outcome of the 2015 Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063 and in the context of the Post-2015 Development Agenda
- ARC/16/INF/16 Climate Change and the Agriculture, Forestry and Land Use (AFOLU) Sectors in the Sub-Saharan Africa
- ARC/16/INF/18 Note on Side Events and Subregional Consultations
- ARC/16/INF/19 Second International Conference on Nutrition Follow-up
- ARC/16/INF/20 Outcomes of the Regional Meeting on Agroecology in sub-Saharan Africa

CFS DOCUMENT

- CFS 2015/42 Committee of World Food Security (CFS) Report

WEB DOCUMENTS

List of Participants and Observers

Inaugural Statement by His Excellency Prime Minister of Côte d'Ivoire

Statement by the Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security

Declaration by Civil Society Organization to the 29th FAO Regional Conference for Africa

Abidjan Ministerial Declaration

Appendix C. Declaration by Civil Society Organizations

Honourable Chairperson, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates and Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen

We, the 40 representatives of small and medium-scale farmers, rural women and youth, fisherfolk, agricultural workers, livestock keepers, indigenous peoples, landless peoples, consumers, and NGOs representing national, regional and international CSOs coming from 24 countries met in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on the 1st and 2nd of April 2016 in the frame of the 29th FAO Regional Conference for Africa.

We recognize that the FAO has done a lot to implement some of the recommendations made in the last consultations in Tunis in 2014, mainly on supporting projects for youth and women, and as well as some CSOs' initiatives in a number of countries. However, many recommendations made so far have not been taken into consideration at national and regional levels. This situation is mainly due to the lack of specific monitoring and evaluation systems with clear indicators on these recommendations. We urge the FAO to put into place such instruments with the involvement of CSOs in order to ensure that all the recommendations have accompanying action plans and monitoring and evaluation systems.

We recognize the efforts of FAO to support this opportunity for civil society to collectively debate on our relationship, challenges and demands towards FAO and its members countries, as well as the opportunity to tell you our stories.

We appreciate that FAO has conducted Regional Symposia on Agroecology in order to emphasise that agroecology is able to meet diverse goals such as reducing rural poverty, eradicating hunger and malnutrition; achieving sustainable agriculture and development, increasing climate resilience, reducing dependency on external agro-chemicals and the increasing involvement of local communities and indigenous peoples, especially in the areas of community-level water conservation and women's knowledge of seed-saving and exchange. We also appreciate the commitment by FAO to exchange letters and engage more actively with several global and African CSOs and social movements.

We would like to underscore that, in our vision, there is a distinction between stakeholders and rights holders. We engage in this space with the understanding that stakeholders are those who merely have an interest in any form of agriculture. We, as rights-holders, have a livelihood dependency on the right to produce food, which is protected as a Human Right.

We commend and salute the official adoption of the 2016-2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As CSOs representing communities across the continent, and engaged in this consultation, we are committed to continue the partnership with the FAO at national, regional, and international level towards the achievement of the objectives of the struggle against climate change, the struggle to end poverty in all forms, and the struggle to end hunger.

Nevertheless, we regret that:

- Our governments have been contradictory in their actions by actively sponsoring spaces for the promotion of the destructive industrial agriculture model, which has already been evidenced as a significant contributor to climate change, the grabbing and destruction of land and other resources, as well as the livelihood of our constituencies.
- the exclusion of CSOs in the elaboration and implementation of public policies and projects, including Public-Private Partnerships (PPP), noting that the design and business logic of these partnerships do not see CSOs and grassroots organizations as necessary parts of the equation. The inclusion of CSOs and producer organizations as private partners puts us in an unfairly-balanced negotiation space, considering the overwhelming power of the private sector to influence and guide negotiations.
- Although there are noble intentions by our governments to achieve the SDGs, there aren't any binding commitments to do so. Public accountability mechanisms must be put in place to

monitor the progress (or lack thereof) in the achievement of the SDGs. We further denounce the counter-productive posture of our governments. Their economic and agricultural policy directions allow (and some cases promote) the grabbing of natural resources, destruction of the environment, and flooding of national markets with cheap imported goods. This ultimately undermines theirs, and our own efforts to achieve the SDGs.

- Agroecology is still regarded as being “backwards” and “stuck in the past” due to the fact that it is based on indigenous and local knowledge. Furthermore, there is a significant gap on public policies and financial support to Agroecology, as well as effective dissemination of information on it in Africa. This is aggravated by lack of meaningful consultation and participation of our constituencies in agricultural and rural development policies. There is also limited access to markets for small scale farmers and producers. We denounce the co-optation and misappropriation of concept of agroecology, by multi-national corporations. We understand agroecology as that described in Nyeleni Declaration, Mali, 2015
- Our governments are not taking the urgent, sustainable and proactive steps necessary to curb and mitigate CC. On the contrary, they are lethargic, and often counter-productive by subscribing and adopting false solutions to climate change. These include but are not restricted to carbon-markets, climate-smart agriculture, blue-growth and the endless rounds of meaningless climate negotiations. The already harsh living and working conditions in our constituencies are being hard hit by human-caused climate change, and further aggravated by the current posture of our governments and institutions.

As such, and following our discussions during the 2 days of the Civil Society consultation, **we strongly call for the following from our governments:**

- 1) A legislative framework for the regulation of PPPs must be created, which includes inclusive and transparent spaces for the engagement of CSOs, governments and private sector in the elaboration and monitoring of PPPs. The active transparency and sharing of information on such partnerships is paramount.
- 2) The immediately implementation of the recommendations of the Multi-stakeholder Consultation on Agroecology for Africa.
- 3) The protection of consumers by ensuring that food is safe, nutritious, diverse and sustainably-produced, free of pesticides, antibiotics, and GMOs.
- 4) The prioritization and encouragement of the use of innovative renewable technologies and practices (such as agroecology, biogas, solar and wind energy, etc.). These should be accompanied by the promotion of innovative information systems and technologies. It is crucial that local communities are put at the center of the development, implementation and evaluation of such solutions.

Furthermore, **we strongly call for the following from the FAO:**

- 5) The development of regular reports and statistics on the involvement of CSOs in the negotiations and implementation of PPPs must be supported. The FAO should support producers in taking stock and potentializing the successful experiences in climate resilience.
- 6) The use of its strategic position to encourage the opening of spaces for CSOs in the elaboration, monitoring and evaluation of its processes, as well as continue the involvement of CSOs in the various FAO initiatives.

Finally, we call for the FAO and our governments to:

- 7) Ensure the continued meaningful participation of social movements and CSOs in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of policies, legally binding agreements, strategic programs and FAO-developed guidelines, especially at national and regional level.
- 8) Rigorously pursue of human rights violations in the food and agriculture sector, with serious efforts to ensure corporate accountability, including punitive measures for violators. Relevant existing instruments include, but are not restricted to: the UN Declaration on Human Rights, International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD), the UN Draft Declaration on Peasant Rights and Other People Working in Rural Areas, the Voluntary Guidelines on Governance of Land Tenure, Voluntary Guidelines on Small-Scale Fisheries, the UN Draft Binding Treaty on Transnational Corporations and Human Rights.

Given the significant role of family farming in the food security of nations, in the creation of employment and in the fight against poverty, we call our governments and FAO to express their recognition for this global contribution supporting the call for a declaration for an International Decade of Family Farming by the UN.

Ladies and gentlemen, rural areas are not attractive to young people. They are fleeing to look for jobs and a better life. They want to come back, but they cannot without any livelihood opportunities. To attract the young people back to agriculture we must provide integrated rural development and opportunities, which include access to land, control of value chains, access to markets and innovation. We must join together and fight corporate control of what must be democratic food systems.

Thank you for your attention and to listen to the concerns of civil society. We hope that our governments and FAO heed our call and recommendations in the regional program priorities and implementation.

Our future depends on it.

Done in Abidjan, on 2 April 2016

The African Civil Society Organization Consultation in the framework of the 29th FAO Regional Conference for Africa

Appendix D. Ministerial Declaration on food security and the agricultural sectors in a changing climate

We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations, assembled in Abidjan at the 29th FAO Regional Conference for Africa, recognize that climate change is a threat to our most fundamental human rights. It undermines our ability to eradicate extreme poverty and feed the world's almost 800 million food insecure people. Over 70 percent of Africa's poorest inhabitants live in rural areas, the majority of whom earn income from the agricultural sectors (crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture) and other natural resources. As a result, they are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. By some estimates, climate change could increase the number of malnourished people by 600 million by 2080 unless we take immediate action. Other estimates suggest that the impact of climate change on food availability could result in an additional 500,000 deaths by 2050.

The fundamental connection between food security and climate change is reflected in two key international agreements reached in 2015.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on eradicating poverty in all its forms; ending hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture; and taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

The Paris Agreement on climate change recognizes the "fundamental priority of safeguarding food security and ending hunger, and the particular vulnerabilities of food production systems to the adverse impacts of climate change". The agreement emphasizes climate change adaptation, particularly for the world's most vulnerable inhabitants and countries. Developed countries reiterated their commitment to channel at least USD 100 billion in annual climate finance to developing countries by 2020.

The Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) we submitted ahead of COP21 in Paris outline our climate change policy priorities. Agriculture, forestry and land use feature prominently, reflecting the central importance of these sectors for our economies and societies. With the requisite levels of financial and technical support, we are committed to work with the international community to implement the agriculture, forestry and land use components of our INDCs.

We share a common vision that investment in productive and resilient agricultural development are vital to ensuring that our countries – and particularly our poorest and most food-insecure inhabitants – continue to prosper in spite of climate change.

We recognize that well-targeted investments in agriculture can simultaneously improve natural resource management, and contribute to adapting to climate change and to mitigating climate change impacts by easing the pressures that drive deforestation and improving soil health and access to water. Investments in agriculture can often generate these important environmental benefits at little or no additional cost.

We encourage developed countries, private sector actors, civil society and international organizations to work with us. It will be particularly important to:

enhance the capacity of our countries to improve national institutional governance for direct and international access to climate finance, and to develop transformational policies, programs and projects for climate resilience and low carbon growth, in alignment with UNFCCC COP 21 decisions.

Improve pledges together in 2018 so that all have ambitious targets for 2025 - and then every 5 years thereafter to make sure that African countries can cope with climate impacts and realize their mitigation potential as articulated in their INDCs.

increase financial and technical support for climate change adaptation, with a particular focus on the agricultural sectors and smallholder agricultural producers; and

improve coordination when providing technical and financial support, including by aligning support with existing work related to the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods, among others.

Abidjan, 8 April 2016