

ERC/08/REP

REPORT

Innsbruck, Austria
26 and 27 June 2008

**Twenty-sixth FAO
Regional Conference
for Europe**



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Date and place of FAO Regional Conferences for Europe

First	-	Rome, Italy, 10-15 October 1949
Second	-	Rome, Italy, 10-15 October 1960
Third	-	Rome, Italy, 8-13 October 1962
Fourth	-	Salzburg, Austria, 26-31 October 1964
Fifth	-	Seville, Spain, 5-11 October 1966
Sixth	-	St. Julian's, Malta, 28-31 October 1968
Seventh	-	Budapest, Hungary, 21-25 September 1970
Eighth	-	Munich, Germany, Fed.Rep. of, 18-23 September 1972
Ninth	-	Lausanne, Switzerland, 7-12 October 1974
Tenth	-	Bucharest, Romania, 20-25 September 1976
Eleventh	-	Lisbon, Portugal, 2-7 October 1978
Twelfth	-	Athens, Greece, 22-27 September 1980
Thirteenth	-	Sofia, Bulgaria, 4-8 October 1982
Fourteenth	-	Reykjavik, Iceland, 17-21 September 1984
Fifteenth	-	Istanbul, Turkey, 28 April-2 May 1986
Sixteenth	-	Cracow, Poland, 23-26 August 1988
Seventeenth	-	Venice, Italy, 3-7 April 1990
Eighteenth	-	Prague, Czechoslovakia, 24-28 August 1992
Nineteenth	-	Killarney, Ireland, 6-10 June 1994
Twentieth	-	Tel Aviv, Israel, 29 April-3 May 1996
Twenty-first	-	Tallinn, Estonia, 25-29 May 1998
Twenty-second	-	Porto, Portugal, 24-28 July 2000
Twenty-third	-	Nicosia, Cyprus, 29-31 May 2002
Twenty-fourth	-	Montpellier, France, 5-7 May 2004
Twenty-fifth	-	Riga, Latvia, 8-9 June 2006
Twenty-sixth	-	Innsbruck, Austria, 26-27 June 2008

REPORT
of the
FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE

Twenty-sixth Session
Innsbruck, Austria, 26 and 27 June 2008

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS
Rome, 2008

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SUMMARY OF THE MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

Report on FAO activities in the Region 2006-07 with a focus on the achievement of the World Food Summit targets and the Millennium Development Goals, and future priorities

For the attention of Governments

The Conference:

welcomed the establishment by the UN Secretary-General of the High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, and noted that the EU is determined to play its full part in implementing the Declaration adopted by acclamation in Rome on 5 June 2008 at the FAO High-Level Conference on World Food Security (para 14).

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

highlighted the importance of FAO technical assistance in the Western Balkans, Turkey and in the Commonwealth of Independent States (para 12);

stressed that FAO assistance to rural development in the Western Balkans supports the aspirations of these countries to EU Membership, and strengthens the capacities of governments to deliver public goods for agricultural growth (para 12);

expressed support for the FAO initiative to review experience and assist in increase of ODA by new EU Member States (para 12);

agreed with the recommendations of the Independent External Evaluation that a more programmatic approach should be taken by FAO towards the design of the field programme, including an assessment of the impact of actions taken (paras 11 and 13);

welcomed the formulation of National Medium-Term Priority Frameworks (NMTPFs), as a basis for FAO country work, with the close involvement of governments, civil society and the international community and the leadership of FAO's decentralized offices (para 13).

FAO and adaptation to climate change in the European Region

For the attention of Governments

The Conference:

underlined the importance of climate change issues and recognized the particular role of the European region in both climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies (paras 19 and 21);

highlighted the complexity of causes of climate change and of the assessment of its impacts on agriculture, forestry and water management and noted that agriculture, forestry and fisheries have the potential to contribute to the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions, through (i) labelling of products with their corresponding climate change impacts, (ii) organic farming, and (iii) the diversification of agriculture (paras 19 and 20);

discussed strategic responses to climate change through, on one hand, further deregulation of trade and agricultural production, referring to unfair competition from countries with high subsidies for agriculture and barriers to trade, and on the other, through new instruments to deal with climate change impacts (para 23);

urged that further studies be focused on measures for mitigation of greenhouse gases and noted that specific adaptation measures would be required to alleviate climate change impacts on farm costs, incomes, employment and migration (para 19).

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

urged FAO to set a high priority and allocate sufficient resources for activities in this field, including analyses of climate change causes, policy scenarios and outlook studies with regional focus, particularly with regard to adaptation measures in agriculture, forestry and fisheries and recommended that FAO develop a special integrated programme on climate change issues and collaborate on this subject with other specialized United Nations agencies such as UNFCCC, IPCC and GEF (paras 20 and 21);

recognized the need for additional resources for the implementation of a special programme on climate change issues, and endorsed the proposal to establish an FAO intergovernmental trust fund for these activities (para 20);

recommended that FAO should include the East European and Central Asian region in its analyses, in close collaboration with the European Commission on this subject (para 21);

recommended that a specialized FAO Climate Change Assessment Unit should initiate the elaboration of a region-specific “Strategy on FAO activities related to climate change mitigation and adaptation” and urged FAO to organize workshops and a high-level meeting on climate change impacts and adaptation measures for Europe (para 22).

Update on the High-Level Conference on World Food Security held in Rome in June 2008

For the attention of Governments

The Conference:

noted the links between shortages of staple grains on international markets, soaring food prices and climate change as well as the use of food commodities for the production of biofuels and stressed the impact of food prices on food security in low-income food deficit and importing countries (para 26);

agreed that the present global food crisis had structural roots and that an increase of investment in agriculture and rural infrastructure, low in recent decades, was needed, combined with a new approach to sustainable agriculture (para 26).

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

took note of FAO's support to selected countries under the Initiative on Soaring Food Prices (para 26).

Matters arising from the 34th Session of the FAO Conference

For the attention of Governments

The Conference:

noted that recent increases in food prices have emphasized how essential it is to have an effective FAO, which indicates the importance of FAO reform (para 29);

stressed the importance of FAO within the United Nations system, and supported the continuation of reforms to strengthen the comparative advantages of FAO and its collaboration with the other UN Rome-based organizations (para 35).

emphasized that time is short for the conclusion of the tasks of the working groups to make recommendations to the Conference Committee, with consensus on a number of points giving assurance that a reform agenda would be agreed by the member countries (para 31);

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

welcomed the Director-General's leadership in the reform process and commended senior management for its active participation in the reform (para 30);

expressed support for IEE recommendation 4.11 on a strengthened role for Regional Conferences and the inclusion of Regional Conferences within the governance structure of FAO to perform an oversight role in the regions (para 32);

suggested that Regional Conference Chairs be appointed and remain in office between sessions and present the Regional Conference report to the FAO Council and the Conference (para 32);

expressed support for IEE Recommendations 4.7 and 4.8 under which the Regional Conferences would report to the FAO Conference on political and technical matters and to the Council regarding budget and finances (para 33);

urged the Council to take into account the reports of Regional Conferences on work priorities as well as programmes and budgetary matters in its recommendations to the FAO Conference and in the biennial programme of work (para 33);

noted that the ERC is the only FAO Regional Conference which has a body — the ECA — for the preparation of the agenda and recommendations and stressed that this experience be shared with other regions which may consider establishing a similar body (para 34).

Promotion of traditional regional agricultural products and food:

A further step towards sustainable rural development

For the attention of Governments

The Conference:

agreed that, in addition to safety/hygiene and nutrition, geographic origin (Geographic Indication (GI), protected designation of origin (PDO), protected geographical indication (PGI)) were an important indicator of food quality, and regulations were necessary to protect both consumers and farmers (para 37);

acknowledged the importance of networks such as INFOODS, the European Food Information Resource Network (EuroFIR) and the Food Composition Data-base Network for Central and Eastern Europe (CEECFOODS), for the documentation of local foods and for the provision of data on their nutrient composition (para 41).

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

noted that FAO's interest in the topic of traditional and quality production in the European region was timely, welcomed the report and FAO's activities in this area and acknowledged that this is an important area for FAO assistance in the region (paras 37 and 42);

recommended that FAO integrate issues of traditional food into all areas of work and initiate research and technical assistance on this issue (37);

acknowledged the important support by FAO and its partners in the cross-cutting initiative on biodiversity for food and nutrition and specific quality tied to geographic origin, and recommended strengthening both (para 37);

recommended that FAO provide technical assistance in the area of quality linked to geographic origins (para 38).

Date, place and main theme(s) of the Twenty-seventh FAO Regional Conference for Europe

For the attention of Governments

The Conference:

agreed that the next (27th) Regional Conference for Europe in 2010 be held in Armenia. The offer from Azerbaijan to host the 28th Regional Conference in 2012 will be conveyed to the Director-General for decision, in consultation with Members of the region (para 45).

Any other business

For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

noted the proposal made by the Delegation of Kyrgyzstan that the name of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe be changed to "FAO Regional Conference for Europe and Central Asia" and was informed that it would be forwarded to the FAO Council for decision (para 47).

INTRODUCTION

1. The Twenty-sixth FAO Regional Conference for Europe was held in Innsbruck, Austria on 26 and 27 June 2008 at the invitation of the Government of Austria.
2. The List of Participants is given in Appendix A to this Report.

OPENING CEREMONY

3. The Director-General of FAO, Mr Jacques Diouf, welcomed the participants to the Conference and expressed appreciation to the Government of Austria for the generous hospitality and excellent facilities that had been provided for the Conference.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRPERSON, VICE-CHAIRPERSONS AND APPOINTMENT OF RAPPORTEUR

4. The Conference unanimously elected the Austrian Federal Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, His Excellency Mr Josef Pröll, as Chairperson of the Conference. He welcomed the participants to the Conference and expressed his pleasure at hosting such an important event. He stressed that this Conference was meeting at a time when the international community faces new challenges in the area of rural development and rural livelihoods for meeting the aims of the World Food Summit and the Millennium Development Goals. He noted that the items to be discussed under the Ministerial Roundtable were designed to address two of these new challenges — climate change and rural development. The promotion of traditional regional food products responds to the challenge of rural development in the European region. Minister Pröll expressed his support to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and indicated that the world community needs a reformed FAO to assist countries in meeting these challenges.
5. The delegate of Armenia, First Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Mr Samvel Avetisyan, was elected as the Vice-Chairman of the Conference.
6. Ms Irina Medvedeva, Deputy Head of Division, Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, was elected Rapporteur.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

7. The Conference adopted the Agenda as given in Appendix B to this report and the Timetable for the session with three additional proposals. The delegation of Slovenia informed the Conference that it would like to make a statement under Agenda Item 8. The delegation of Kyrgyzstan proposed the addition of an item under Agenda Item 13, “Any other business”. The delegation of Poland asked that the Deputy Director-General of FAO, Mr James Butler, provide the Conference with an update on the High-Level Conference on World Food Security held in Rome from 3 to 5 June 2008.

STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

8. The Director-General delivered his Statement to the Regional Conference, the text of which is attached in Appendix D to this report.

STATEMENT BY THE INDEPENDENT CHAIRMAN OF THE FAO COUNCIL

9. The Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council, Mr Mohammad Saeid Noori Naeini delivered a Statement, the text of which is attached in Appendix E to this report.

REPORT ON FAO ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION 2006-2007 WITH A FOCUS ON THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE WORLD FOOD SUMMIT TARGETS AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS, AND FUTURE PRIORITIES¹

10. Under this item, the Secretariat outlined the activities in the European Region in the 2006-2007 biennium and particularly welcomed the delegations from Central Asia and from the Republic of Montenegro to the Conference.

11. The Conference welcomed the document provided by the Secretariat; one Member Nation regretted that it did not include an assessment of the impact of actions taken by FAO.

12. The Conference highlighted that the technical assistance work of FAO in the countries of the Western Balkans, Turkey and in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was of paramount importance. It was stressed that the work of FAO on rural development in the Western Balkans supports the aspirations of these countries for Membership in the European Union, and strengthens the capacities of governments to deliver appropriate public goods and services for agricultural growth. Support was also expressed for the FAO initiative of organizing a side event on Official Development Assistance (ODA) from new EU Member States.

13. The Conference agreed with the recommendations of the Independent External Evaluation that a more programmatic approach should be taken by FAO towards the design of the field programme. To this end, National Medium-Term Priority Frameworks (NMTPFs) should be formulated as a set of evolving national priorities on the basis of which FAO would agree to work with the countries of the region. It was suggested that formulation of the NMTPFs should involve governments, civil society and the international community, led by FAO's decentralized offices.

14. The Conference welcomed the establishment by the United Nations Secretary-General of the High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, and noted that the EU is determined to play its full part in implementing the Declaration adopted by acclamation in Rome on 5 June 2008 at the FAO High-Level Conference on World Food Security.

15. A Representative from the Regional FAO/NGOs-CSOs Consultation² for Europe intervened on this item, underlining that the present world food crisis has changed the atmosphere of debates on food and agriculture and change of policies is called for. FAO has as a UN agency responsibility to promote the right to food and address the structural causes of the food crisis to support achieving food sovereignty and promote sustainable agriculture and rural development.

GLOBAL AND REGIONAL EMERGENCY ISSUES³

16. The item, introduced by the Secretariat, highlighted the activities of the Organization in addressing global and regional emergencies. The introduction stressed activities in Moldova and Tajikistan, where FAO responded to country requests to alleviate, respectively, the impact of drought and severe winter weather conditions. It was also noted that the difficulties experienced as a result of soaring food prices focus the attention of the international community on the need for greater public and private investment in agriculture.

¹ ERC/08/2

² Held in Innsbruck on 23 and 24 June 2008. The Statement is attached as Appendix I to this Report.

³ ERC/08/INF/8.

17. There were no interventions regarding this Agenda Item.

FAO AND ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE EUROPEAN REGION⁴

18. The item was introduced by the Secretariat. The Chairperson, Mr Samvel Avetisyan, First Deputy Minister for Agriculture of Armenia, opened the discussion of the Ministerial Roundtable by noting the importance for agriculture in Europe and Central Asia of the two items for discussion on the Agenda.

19. During the discussion of the item, delegations highlighted the complexity of determining the causes of climate change, as well as assessing its impacts. The Conference noted the significant interlinkages between climate change and agriculture, forestry and water management. It was suggested that agriculture, forestry and fisheries have the potential to contribute to the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions, through (i) labelling of products with their corresponding climate change impacts, (ii) organic farming, and (iii) the diversification of agriculture. The Conference urged that further studies be focused on measures for mitigation of greenhouse gases. At the same time, due to the expected pace of climate change, it was noted that specific adaptation measures would be required to smooth and alleviate climate change impacts on farm costs, incomes, employment and migration.

20. The Conference underlined the importance of climate change issues and urged FAO to set a high priority on its activities in this field, particularly with regard to adaptation measures in agriculture, forestry and fisheries. In this connection, recommendation was made to FAO to develop a special integrated programme on climate change issues and collaborate on this subject with other specialized United Nations agencies such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The Conference recognized the need for additional resources for the efficient implementation of a special programme on climate change issues, and endorsed the proposal to establish an FAO intergovernmental trust fund earmarked for activities on climate change mitigation and the adaptation of agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

21. The Conference recognized the particular role of the European region in both mitigation and adaptation strategies. Several delegations reported on national climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and urged the exchange of information and experiences on these issues. The Conference encouraged FAO to allocate sufficient resources to the elaboration of comprehensive analyses on climate change causes, policy scenarios and outlook studies with a regional focus on potential impacts from climate change. The Conference recommended that FAO should include the East European and Central Asian region in its analyses, in close collaboration with the European Commission on this subject.

22. The Conference recommended that a specialized FAO Climate Change Assessment Unit should initiate the elaboration of a region-specific “Strategy on FAO activities related to climate change mitigation and adaptation”. FAO was furthermore urged to organize a series of expert level workshops and a specialized high-level meeting on climate change impacts and adaptation measures for Europe. Outcomes should be adequately presented to other regions of the world.

23. The Conference discussed strategic responses to climate change mainly from two points of view: several delegations supported further deregulation of trade and agricultural production, referring to unfair competition from countries with high subsidies for agriculture and barriers to trade. Others called for new instruments to deal with climate change issues adequately. FAO was

⁴ ERC/08/3 and ERC/08/3 Sup.1.

urged to include the vital issue of policy responses to mitigate the effects of climate change on the agendas of the above-mentioned workshops and high-level meetings.

24. A Representative from the Regional FAO/NGOs-CSOs Consultation⁵ for Europe intervened on this item, underlining that non-sustainable farming practice and trade flows are contributing to climate change. Since European agriculture is a major contributor to greenhouse gases' emission, an assessment of the impact of intensive livestock and crop production is needed, combined with analysis of climate change impacts on agriculture and promotion of sustainable farming systems.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS STEMMING FROM THE DEBATE IN THE 35TH SESSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE (ECA) ON “THE ROLE OF FAO IN KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA REGION” AND “FAO’S ENGAGEMENT IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM REFORMS”

25. The Rapporteur of the 35th Session of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA) informed the Conference that the ECA had deliberated on its Agenda and no controversial points were raised on these items. The conclusions and recommendations of the discussions on items 4 and 5, which were the object of the technical preparation for the Conference, were submitted for endorsement to the Conference, and are attached as Appendices G and H to this report.

UPDATE ON THE HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY HELD IN ROME IN JUNE 2008

26. The outcomes of the FAO High-Level Conference on World Food Security, including salient points of the Declaration were summarized for the Conference by the FAO Deputy Director-General, Mr James Butler. The Conference expressed appreciation for the presentation and took note of FAO's support to selected countries under the Initiative on Soaring Food Prices. The Conference noted links between present shortages of staple grains on international markets, soaring food prices and climate change. In addition, it called attention to the relation between soaring food prices and the use of food commodities for the production of biofuels, and to the impact of food prices on food security in low-income food deficit and importing countries. The Conference agreed that the present global food crisis had structural roots and an increase of investment in agriculture and rural infrastructure, low in recent decades, was needed, combined with a new approach to sustainable agriculture. One delegation proposed that governments in developing and transition economies increase the target share of agriculture and rural development in GDP and investment.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 34TH SESSION OF THE FAO CONFERENCE⁶

27. The FAO Regional Representative for Europe and Central Asia, Ms Maria Kadlecikova, opened the item for information.

28. The Vive-Chairperson of the FAO Conference Committee, Ms Agnes van der Hoeven-van Ardenne, made a presentation on the Independent External Evaluation (IEE) and FAO reform which concluded that while the world community needs FAO, the Organization requires substantial reform. She stressed that FAO needs to be managed better, it requires a new work

⁵ Held in Innsbruck on 23 and 24 June 2008. The Statement is attached as Appendix I to this Report.

⁶ ERC/08/INF/7

culture, it should be better governed by the member countries and it needs to focus its activities more effectively. Such reform could take many years, and requires a sustainable mechanism to monitor its implementation. Successful reform presupposes active and positive participation from all stakeholders. However, she noted that management had not taken enough independent action to enact the IEE recommendations. Finally, she stressed that the immediate challenge of the reform process was agreement on an Action Plan for rapid reforms in the short and long terms by the Special Session of the FAO Conference to be held in November 2008. The PowerPoint presentation of Ms van der Hoeven-van Ardenne is included in this Report as [Appendix F](#).

29. The Conference noted that recent increases in food prices have emphasized how essential it is to have an effective FAO, which indicates the critical importance of substantial reform.

30. Though the reform process is far from complete, there are already grounds for confidence that a reformed FAO will be able to address the challenges of the Twenty-First Century. The Conference welcomed the Director-General's leadership in the reform process and commended senior management for its active participation in the reform.

31. The Conference emphasized that time is short for the successful conclusion of the tasks of the working groups in order to make their recommendations available to the Conference Committee. However, there is already consensus on a number of key points in each of the three working groups, giving assurance that a reform agenda would be agreed by the member countries.

32. The Conference expressed support for IEE recommendation 4.11 on a strengthened role for Regional Conferences and the inclusion of Regional Conferences within the governance structure of FAO. It was proposed that Regional Conferences should consider issues where regional coherence could play a role and perform an oversight role of FAO in their regions. In order to make this proposal more attainable, the Conference suggested that Regional Conference Chairs be appointed on the basis of their technical competence and remain in office between the two sessions and present the Regional Conference reports to the FAO Council and the Conference.

33. The Conference additionally expressed support for IEE Recommendations 4.7 and 4.8 under which the Regional Conferences would report to the FAO Conference on political and technical matters and to the Council regarding budget and finances. In addition, the Conference urged the Council to take into account the reports of the technical committees and the Regional Conferences on work priorities as well as programmes and budgetary matters in its recommendations to the Conference and in its final decision on the biennial programme of work of the Organization.

34. The Conference noted that the Regional Conference for Europe is so far the only FAO Regional Conference which has established a body — the European Commission for Agriculture (ECA) — with the aim to assist the Conference in the preparation of its agenda and recommendations. It was highlighted that the ECA fulfilled the basic expectations and its mandate, although there was still room for improvement. It was also stressed that the experience in this respect could be shared with other regions which may consider establishing a similar body.

35. The Conference stressed the importance of FAO within the United Nations system, and supported the continuation of the reform process that would strengthen the comparative advantages of FAO and its collaboration with the other Rome-based UN agencies and Bioversity International.

PROMOTION OF TRADITIONAL REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS AND FOOD: A FURTHER STEP TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT⁷

36. The item was introduced by Ms Barbara Burlingame, Senior Officer, FAO Nutrition Assessment and Planning Service, who highlighted the importance of protecting and promoting biodiversity, traditional foods, agricultural practices and geographic origins for improving livelihoods, nutrition and food security for rural people.

37. The Conference welcomed the report and FAO's activities in this area and acknowledged that this was an important area for FAO to focus attention in the region. The Conference recommended that FAO integrate issues of traditional food into all its areas of work (e.g. food security programmes) and initiate a programme for research and technical assistance on this issue. A number of Member Nations highlighted the strong relationship between climate change and the issues associated with traditional foods, and recommended FAO to consider this in its projects and programme of work. The Conference acknowledged the important support provided by FAO and its partners in the cross-cutting initiative on biodiversity for food and nutrition and specific quality tied to geographic origin, and recommended strengthening both. Several delegations declared their willingness to provide funding for seminars and workshops on the topic of traditional foods.

38. The Conference agreed that, in addition to safety/hygiene and nutrition, geographic origin (Geographic Indication (GI), protected designation of origin (PDO), protected geographical indication (PGI)) was an important indicator of food quality, and regulations were necessary to protect both consumers and farmers. Several delegations recommended that FAO's assistance should include development of definitions, classification systems, mapping local foods and biodiversity, and documentation of their composition (nutrients and bioactive non-nutrients). The Conference recommended that FAO provide technical assistance in the area of food quality linked to geographic origins.

39. Several Member Nations urged FAO to direct more efforts towards market access and consumer awareness of high value traditional products, acknowledging that traditional agriculture practices are often the only farming methods possible in difficult agro-climatic areas. Several delegations agreed that "organic" was a quality designation important for consumers and significant for a sustainable environment, and countries needed FAO's support in establishing a regulatory framework for implementing and protecting this designation.

40. Many delegations highlighted the Mediterranean Diet as rich in biodiversity and nutritionally healthy. The promotion of the Mediterranean Diet could play a beneficial role in the sustainable development of agriculture in the Mediterranean region.

41. The Conference acknowledged the importance of networks such as INFOODS, the European Food Information Resource Network (EuroFIR) and the Food Composition Data-base Network for Central and Eastern Europe (CEECFOODS), for the documentation of local foods and for the provision of data on their nutrient composition.

42. The Conference noted that FAO's interest in the topic of traditional and quality production in the European region was timely. The European Commission was planning to launch a consultation on the future development of regulation policies related to agricultural product quality in October 2008, which would include issues related to traditional and regional products. This consultation would solicit views from all interested stakeholders, including those outside the European Union interested in food and agriculture quality regulation within the European Union.

⁷ ERC/08/4

43. Many delegations remarked that the goal of increased global food production, including biofuels, should be balanced against the need to protect biodiversity, ecosystems, traditional foods and traditional agricultural practices.

44. A representative from the Regional FAO/NGOs-CSOs Consultation⁸ for Europe intervened on this item, indicating the need for specific support for development of development of traditional local knowledge-based agricultural systems in marketing, producers' cooperation and short product chains. Different forms of regulation of product standards as well as seed and genetic resources management are needed for small-scale farms.

DATE, PLACE AND MAIN THEME(S) OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE

45. The Conference agreed that the next (27th) Regional Conference for Europe in 2010 be held in Armenia. The offer from Azerbaijan to host the 28th Regional Conference in 2012 will be conveyed to the Director-General for decision, in consultation with Members of the region.

46. The Meeting did not propose at this stage themes for the next Regional Conference.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

47. The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan proposed that the name of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe be changed to "FAO Regional Conference for Europe and Central Asia". The Delegations of Tajikistan and Armenia voiced support for the proposal of the Delegation of Kyrgyzstan. The Chair noted the proposal and informed the Conference that it would be forwarded to the FAO Council for decision.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

48. With some amendments, the text of the draft report was adopted by the Conference.

49. The Delegation of Hungary proposed that a description of the Study Tour attended by delegations during the morning of 27 June 2008 be appended to the Conference report as Appendix J.

CLOSURE OF THE CONFERENCE

50. On behalf of the Director-General, the Regional Representative for Europe and Central Asia expressed her deep gratitude and appreciation for the warm and generous hospitality which the host Government had extended to all delegations. In addition, she extended her thanks to the Secretariat and to the delegations for their work during the Conference.

51. The representative from Austria thanked the delegations, the Secretariat and the organizers, as well as the interpreters for their valuable support and effective participation during the Conference.

52. The Chairperson paid tribute to the active participation of all delegations which had enabled the Conference to conclude its heavy agenda in a timely manner. In particular, he referred to the lively exchange of views which had taken place during the Ministerial Round Table and expressed the hope that future Conferences would continue to experience a high-level and enhanced participation from all the members of the Region.

⁸ Held in Innsbruck on 23 and 24 June 2008. The Statement is attached as Appendix I to this Report.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS
LISTA DE PARTICIPANTES

Chairperson
Président
Presidente

Austria

Vice-Chairperson
Vice-Président
Vicepresidente

Armenia

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APPENDIX B

AGENDA

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

1. Opening Ceremony
2. Election of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

II. STATEMENTS

4. Statement by the Director-General
5. Statement by the Independent Chairman of the FAO Council

III. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND INFORMATION

6. Main conclusions and recommendations stemming from the debate in the 35th Session of the European Commission on Agriculture on “The role of FAO in knowledge exchange and capacity building in the Europe and Central Asia Region” and “FAO’s Engagement in the United Nations System Reforms”
7. Report on FAO Activities in the Region 2006-07 with a focus on the achievement of the World Food Summit targets and the Millennium Development Goals, and future priorities
8. Matters arising from the 34th Session of the FAO Conference
9. Global and Regional Emergency Issues
10. FAO and adaptation to climate change in the European region
11. Promotion of traditional regional agricultural products and food: A further step towards sustainable rural development

IV. OTHER MATTERS

12. Date, Place and Main Theme(s) of the Twenty-seventh FAO Regional Conference for Europe
13. Any other business
14. Adoption of the Report
15. Closure of the Conference

APPENDIX C

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

ERC/08/1 Rev.1	Provisional Annotated Agenda
ERC/08/2	Report on FAO Activities in the Region 2006-07 with a focus on the achievement of the World Food Summit targets and the Millennium Development Goals, and future priorities
ERC/08/3	FAO and adaptation to climate change in the European region
ERC/08/3 Sup.1	FAO and adaptation to climate change in the European region Options for FAO's role and notes on methodology
ERC/08/4	Promotion of traditional regional agricultural products and food: A further step towards sustainable rural development

INF SERIES

ERC/08/INF/1 Rev.1	Information Note
ERC/08/INF/2 Rev.1	Provisional Timetable
ERC/08/INF/3 Rev.1	List of Documents
ERC/08/INF/4	Statement by the Director-General
ERC/08/INF/5	Provisional List of Delegates
ERC/08/INF/6	Statement of Competence and Voting Rights by the European Community (EC) and its Member States
ERC/08/INF/7	Matters arising from the 34 th Session of the FAO Conference
ERC/08/INF/8	Global and Regional Emergency Issues

LIM SERIES

ERC/08/LIM/1	Main conclusions and list of recommendations stemming from the debate in the 35 th session of the ECA on item: The role of FAO in knowledge exchange and capacity building in the Europe and Central Asia Region
ERC/08/LIM/2	Main conclusions and list of recommendations stemming from the debate in the 35 th session of the ECA on item: FAO's Engagement in the United Nations System Reforms

APPENDIX D

STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

*Mr Chairman,
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Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Introduction

It is an honour and a great pleasure for me to be here with you for this Twenty-sixth FAO Regional Conference for Europe, which is being held in the picturesque Austrian city of Innsbruck. I should like to express my deep gratitude to the Government and people of Austria for their warm welcome and the hospitality extended to the delegations. I also wish to thank the authorities of the host country for having covered the travel and accommodation expenses of some countries so that all the region's Member Nations can be present today.

State of food insecurity in the world, Europe and Central Asia

Hunger and poverty are the two major scourges of humanity. The World Food Summit of 1996 and the Millennium Summit had therefore set the goal of halving hunger and undernutrition by 2015. Alas, twelve years later, we must conclude that progress towards that goal has been very insufficient. If we compare the base period of 1990-92 with the most recent available estimates, we see that the downward trend of reduction in the number of hungry people has unfortunately been reversed. While there were 854 million undernourished people in the world in 2001-03, the total rose to 862 million in 2002-04. The developing countries have seen an increase of 7 million undernourished people to the 823 million of the base period (1990-92) of the World Food Summit (WFS) commitments.

However, the data show that the countries in transition have recently made progress towards the realization of the WFS target. The number of people suffering from hunger in those countries fell by 2.2 million between 2001-03 and 2002-04 (from 24.7 to 22.5 millions), a reduction of 9 percent. This improvement occurred mainly in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), where most of the region's undernourished live.

Growth of per capita GDP and agricultural production in the region

As in most parts of the world affected by food insecurity, hunger in Europe and Central Asia derives from rural poverty and natural and man-made disasters, rather than from a total lack of food at the macroeconomic level.

In the past ten years, some of the poorest countries have posted the largest gains in per capita national income, notably the countries of the Transcaucasus and Central Asia, while growth has been slower in the countries of Western and Eastern Europe. Also, per capita agricultural production has risen more rapidly in the Transcaucasus and Central Asian countries, and more slowly in Western and Eastern Europe.

Constraints to food security

But this positive trend of the last ten years might be coming to a halt. The last two years have seen significant price hikes for most basic food commodities, impacting heavily on the food security of the most vulnerable groups. In 2007, world food prices rose 40 percent. Such an escalation of prices has had a destabilizing impact on many poor countries. Since the autumn of 2007, I have taken a number of initiatives to sensitize policy-makers and civil society on the measures that are needed to address this problem.

FAO's Initiative on Soaring Food Prices

In March 2008, FAO and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) organized a conference on soaring food prices, during which both organizations called for bold policy measures to contain price increases. FAO experts consider that there is a significant agricultural potential in Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine. With a favourable policy environment and investments in infrastructure, at least 13 million hectares could be returned to production, without major cost to the environment. Moreover, crop yields in those three countries are three times lower than in Central, Eastern and Western Europe, which employ modern inputs and use contract farming systems to reduce market risks.

However, governments have often responded to higher food prices by imposing export restrictions, undermining the existing marketing channels. Instead of encouraging investment, such policies have led to the cancellation of export contracts and to lower prices paid to farmers.

Other constraints to food security in the region

For the past two years, agricultural production and food security in the region have been undermined by pests, diseases and emergencies. FAO has launched projects to supply pesticides and other products. It has organized regional consultations to address the transboundary migration of locusts and diseases. The countries of the Transcaucasus have been affected by avian influenza, foot-and-mouth disease and African swine fever.

FAO has always advocated an approach based on prevention, giving priority to institution building, training of national officers and early detection. It has spearheaded the control of transboundary diseases and pests through the mobilization of international expertise and the necessary financial resources. In this connection, I should like to highlight the close and fruitful cooperation that exists between FAO and its major partners in the region: namely the World Health Organization, the World Organization for Animal Health and the European Commission.

In the last two years, FAO has responded to emergency situations in the Russian Federation, in Tajikistan and in the Republic of Moldova. It has helped poor rural households rebuild their livelihoods, in particular through livestock with high-value agricultural products. It has provided seeds and animal feed to farmers affected by snowfall and drought.

Agenda of the Regional Conference

During this Twenty-sixth Regional Conference, you will be informed of FAO's activities in the region. Emphasis has been placed on the achievement of the World Food Summit target and the Millennium Development Goals.

In addition, of particular interest would be the recommendations emanating from the Ministerial Round Tables on "FAO and adaptation to climate change in the European region" and on the "Promotion of traditional regional agricultural products and food".

Main challenges and prospects in the region

*Mr Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

The Commonwealth of Independent States and the countries of Southeast Europe are far more rural and agricultural than those of Western Europe. Urban and periurban agriculture is also a source of income, foreign exchange and remunerative employment. Yet agriculture remains a vulnerable sector and provides a relatively low income because of insufficient crop yields.

FAO's main concern in this region is therefore rural poverty which, in some countries and especially in Central Asia, is accompanied by food insecurity. Yet countries have a large number of qualified specialists in technical fields such as veterinary medicine, fisheries, forestry and agronomy. But what is lacking for agricultural and rural growth are development policies that favour commercial agriculture, and institutions of governance and support for the development of family farms and the private sector. New EU member countries have succeeded to reduce rural poverty, ensure sustainable agricultural growth and to become high-income countries by adapting their policies and institutions. They have invaluable information and expertise elements for the implementation of the process of agricultural transition.

FAO is ready to provide its assistance:

- to adapt policies and institutions to the needs of market-oriented agriculture and international trade standards;
- to advise on the techniques of modern, sustainable agriculture;
- to help countries put in place more reliable food control systems;
- to ensure a sustainable use of forests and other natural resources;
- and, above all, to ensure food security for all.

Finally, FAO needs to be highly effective in carrying out its mandate. That is why, with the support of all Member Nations currently working on the conclusions of the Independent External Evaluation conducted in 2006 and 2007, I am personally committed, and together with me all the Secretariat, to the process of reform initiated by the Conference of the Organization in November 2007.

I wish you a very successful meeting, and thank you for your kind attention.

APPENDIX E

STATEMENT BY THE INDEPENDENT CHAIRMAN OF THE FAO COUNCIL

*Mr Chairman
Mr Director-General of FAO
Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen*

It is my pleasure and indeed an honour to have this opportunity to talk to you, as your elected representative, on our responsibilities, achievements and difficulties in FAO. At the outset I would like to express my sincere thanks to you, Mr Chairman, and through you to your Government for the excellent hospitality extended to all of us in this beautiful city of Innsbruck.

In other FAO Regional Conferences, I shared my views with colleagues on two major and outstanding current issues, namely soaring food prices and progress in follow-up to the Independent External Evaluation (IEE) of FAO. I still believe that these two subjects are the most relevant to talk about. However, the recent successful 'High-Level Conference (HLC) on World Food Security: the Challenges of Climate Change and Biosecurity' has dealt with the first item in depth and most of you have contributed to it and are aware of its outcome. I would like to seize this opportunity to extend my appreciation and congratulations to Dr Diouf, Director-General of FAO, for a job well done. On the other hand, progress on IEE follow-up is an item on our agenda of this meeting and we will discuss it in length later today. Therefore, I will be brief and try to remind ourselves of some important issues which did not receive the attention they deserved for various reasons.

First, soaring food prices and their impact on producers and consumers. I myself and my colleagues actively participated in the HLC, in all meetings of plenary, round tables, NGO and private sector meetings and other side events of the HLC. We prepared a check-list of issues discussed. The two top issues which received most attention and less controversy were :

- necessity to assist small farmer producers and vulnerable consumers in the short, medium and long-term, and
- partnership and real cooperation rather than duplication and separation in our international efforts.

Today, especially after floods in China and the United States of America and with continued drought in Australia, the Near East and some parts of Europe, there can be no doubt that the world is facing an immediate crisis of food price rises and supply shortages. There can also be no doubt that many of the underlying pressures which are contributing to this situation are with us to stay. Indeed we are glad some of them are with us to stay. We are glad that more and more people can afford a more varied and nutritionally balanced diet. We are glad that there is competition for land, for improved housing and improved leisure. We are glad that some poor people are gaining improved livelihoods from serving these demands. But we cannot be glad that in every society, even the richest, there are losers and that many of the poorest countries are overall worse off and facing a greater challenge in feeding their people.

We are only starting to appreciate the breadth and depth of likely changes to the environment, to rural landscapes and to agriculture including fisheries and forests. The degree and impacts of these changes cannot all be predicted, but there is much agreement that they will be profound and have universal effects. This crisis is immediate, the immediate needs of the hungry and malnourished must be addressed. In the immediate this requires an increase in food aid, with the least distortion possible of market incentives to more production. In the coming two years, we must make sure that there is a production increase, in both the Least Developed Countries and globally and that, the increased production gets to those who most need it. At the same time we must get away from the concept of handling each crisis in the most vulnerable populations subject to recurrent climatic disasters as if it were a one-off emergency and institutionalize safety-nets which are underpinned at the international level.

This current food crisis has many causes, economic, social, climatic, demographic, diversification of demand for agricultural products, to name but a few. In the medium- to long-term we must address the causes. Some of this can happen naturally if we let it, especially through a market response, but the markets alone cannot address the problems of the poorest, from livelihoods to safety-nets, the needs for long-term infrastructure investments, climate mitigation and adaptation or natural resource management.

The main responsibility lies with national governments. We must mainstream in all our governments' global policies and negotiating positions the cause of the poor and hungry. We need more production, we need cheaper food and we need the means for people to obtain food, the most basic of all rights after the right to life itself. If the developing world is to have adequate food, this will be as much about Europe's trade policies as its aid. There is a worrying tendency to see this crisis as a possibility to protect Europe's farmers at the expense of developing countries. There are still problems in moving forward with joined up policies for the climate and energy and even more in including the proper place of agriculture and our forests and oceans.

Over the long term, the best way to reduce food prices is to increase agricultural productivity through public investment in agricultural research, rural education, and rural infrastructure, including efficient use of water in agriculture, and the creation of the policy and legal frameworks which facilitate efficient markets and provide a climate for private investment, job creation and productivity gains. The design of innovative risk management instruments such as index-based weather insurance can also increase productivity. Investment in institutions and physical infrastructure in order to develop adequately functioning competitive markets allows the price increases to arrive at the farm gate. Meeting this precondition allows greater market participation. Given the increases in food prices, it also assists in providing to farmers the incentives to expand their production and increase their productivity. While these investments will not reduce food prices in the short term, it is important to keep these longer-term measures in mind or else sustainable food security will not be achieved.

In the medium-term, to avoid monopolistic behaviours along the value chain, to raise the producers' share of the price increases and reduce the prices to consumers, efficient markets are essential. It is important to strengthen the institutions and organizations of smallholder farmers and the small and medium-size businesses in developing countries, while effectively channelling the resources of the international private sector. This will effectively empower developing country producers and create employment, empowering them in the market and in the value chain.

Interventions and policies that increase the collective power of small producers and agricultural workers, and reduce the financing, input supply and marketing transactions costs can also help smallholder farmers, rural workers and small businesses benefit from price increases. Securing access to land and strengthening the rights of the poor to agricultural assets and resources (land, water) should be high on the agenda of all stakeholders, both government and civil society organizations. If access to assets for the poor is promoted, increasing market

participation can be achieved. The benefits from increased market participation mean not only increased incomes but are the greatest driver of expanded production.

This brings me back to the second important point: how are we in the international community going to move forward?

FAO cannot successfully work in isolation. Most of the basic architecture is in place. FAO provides a global forum and support to countries in policy development, capacity building and technology transfer as well as in providing the basic data and analysis, including of trade and even the provision of agricultural inputs in emergencies. The World Bank provides analysis of the macro-environment. The World Food Programme is meeting food requirements in emergencies and chronic deficits as well as institutionalizing safety nets. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) assists the poorest of the poor through pro-poor investment. The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) system should provide the research which cannot be met by the private sector to adapt to change, including climate change, but its agenda has tended to be driven by its founders away from this basic task.

The United Nations Secretary-General has convened a food crisis task force of senior officials in the United Nations system and Bretton Woods Institutions and the Rome-based agencies have initiated work on a common strategy, but despite the best efforts of all the international system, our international system is not working as a coherent whole.

The main organizations have had recent evaluations. All showed the system was not working as a system. All showed room for improvements in the individual organizations. There was mandate creep with components of the system, despite scarce resources, gradually taking up functions performed by others. There were gaps in the architecture, especially as regards funding and overall analysis and there were failures to pursue possibilities for increased effectiveness especially by joined-up action at country level.

There is no time to lose and no time for grand reforms of the international architecture. The diagnosis at the level of the different components of the system is there from recent evaluations. The overall diagnosis is not. The components of the system must move forward together for the wider good but this will not happen if this is not a win-win situation for each of the Organizations and countries. Governing Bodies must start playing a stronger role. We have too long neglected these issues on our agendas despite our membership in all these organizations.

Mindful of, and with high appreciation of the United Nations Secretary-General's initiative to establish a high-level Task Force to Develop a common framework and strategy for coordinated action among key institutional actors on Food Security (CFA), I do believe that we should set up a tightly time-bound review mechanism (six months). This mechanism should build on the existing evaluations, and be tasked with working with the Governing Bodies and Executive Heads of the Organizations (FAO, IFAD, World Bank, WFP and others, including the CGIAR), not only to produce actionable recommendations, but to make the system more effective and responsive. A subsequent phase might, if a momentum develops, examine longer-term adjustments and improvements but the concentration should be on immediate steps forward, based on the existing organizational structure, particularly for coordinated funding; identification of priorities and gaps; definition of roles; and sharing of resources where appropriate, backed by an evaluation and monitoring mechanism based on performance, results and accountability.

Mr Chairman, let me now turn to the important and comprehensive reform which is ongoing in FAO.

As many of you know, as well as having the honour to have been appointed Independent Chairperson of the Council by you, the Membership, you also appointed me Chair of the Conference Committee for Follow-up to the Independent External Evaluation of FAO (IEE).

Since we are going to discuss this subject later today, I limit myself to a few reminders and a major request.

You will all remember that this has been a common journey, with its ups and downs but one which taken as a whole has reinforced our common purpose and unity. In November 2004, the Council agreed to launch an Independent External Evaluation of FAO (IEE). We rolled up our sleeves established a Working Group of the membership as a whole and designed a common set of terms of reference, for a fully independent and professional evaluation. This we requested to provide forward looking proposals as to how to make our Organization "FAO" more effective in the service of us all. The Conference in November 2007 fully endorsed the terms of reference and we established a Committee of the Council to oversee the work.

We chose a highly qualified and professional evaluation team, drawn from all parts of the world and they did not disappoint us. They provided a comprehensive analysis and an extremely comprehensive set of proposals for FAO Reform with Growth. The Director-General has joined us the Membership in welcoming the report, its analysis and proposals. This we did in a Conference Resolution last November, which charted the next stage of our work on the basis of discussions undertaken by Friends of the Chair, involving all members, and which I had the privilege to preside over.

We have now established a Conference Committee of the membership as a whole, with three Working Groups. We are working our way systematically through the findings and recommendations of the IEE, providing our advice to management on the parts which are within their authority and arriving at our own conclusions on the many recommendations which concern us. We need to complete our basic work by July this year so that a Special Session of the FAO Conference in November of this year can chart the way forward, based on an Immediate Plan of Action which includes the elements of a new strategic Framework and Medium-Term plan for FAO.

We have a challenging but exciting opportunity which is not going to come around again quickly if we do not grasp it now to build a stronger Organization to serve us better. This is not a zero sum game where a shrinking pot of resources has to be fought over perpetually by different interest groups among the membership. Of course we have a very legitimate diversity of interests, but we will all gain from more efficiency, and more relevance in what FAO does. We can also have reason for hope that as this increases confidence in the Organization, additional resources will start to flow.

The IEE recommends an enhanced role for regional conferences in FAO's decision making. This Conference along with the other regional conferences this year can provide both impetus and important views for us to take forward in the IEE follow-up process. I hope that you will take this opportunity in your interventions during the Conference and informally to me and other colleagues from your own delegations who are working in Rome to carry our work forward.

Distinguished Members of the Conference,

Europe has played an important and constructive role in this whole process. You provided the lion's share of the financial resources for the Evaluation. You accepted the proposed concept of "Reform with Growth" and, in budget negotiation for the 2008-2009 biennium, you saved this process, by agreeing to the proposed maintenance budget. In other words, you have acted as a bridge-builder in a divide which unfortunately prevailed in FAO for a long time. Now, in our Working Groups, we have ceased insisting on differences across the divide. We are negotiating differences along a continuum, a new expression which was introduced by our colleagues from Africa.

The major request which I mentioned is the request to continue your constructive bridge-building. One of the two Vice-Chairs of the Conference Committee for IEE Follow-up is from Europe, one of the two Co-Chairs of the Working Group on Governance is from Europe. Regarding the other two Working Groups, one is chaired by Europe and the other is vice-chaired by Europe. Your share in this important and delicate process has been and is substantial and outstanding. Change will require an early indication of the availability of extra-budgetary funds, indeed a lack of ambiguity on this will help the process forward. It will also still require plain speaking. My appeal to you is to continue with even more intellect and generosity up to the end. Let us make our contribution for a world free from hunger and poverty.

APPENDIX F

PRESENTATION ON THE INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL EVALUATION (IEE) BY THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE FAO REFORM COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL

Slide 1

The IEE and FAO Reform

Where do we stand now

Where are we going to

Slide 2

The Independent External Evaluation (IEE)

- Most ambitious evaluation of a multilateral organization ever
- TORs, team, process managed by all 192 members
- Evidence based, HQ and field, members surveyed, quality assured
- 109 recommendations for FAO management and members

Slide 3

The Independent External Evaluation (IEE)

- The FAO needs reform
- Strategic focus
- Better management and governance
- New Culture, Structure and Systems
- Better integration into the UN System

Slide 4

The Independent External Evaluation (IEE)

- We need the FAO
- Rising prices oil and food
- Impact of climate change
- Transboundary animal and plant diseases
- Normative work, knowledge, policy
- Global governance

Slide 5**Where do we stand now**

- Three Working Groups, 21 member countries each (7 x 3) + observers
- Working Group I Vision, Strategy, Priorities
- Working Group II Governance
- Working Group III Culture, Structure, Systems
- CoC-IEE for Coordination
- Full participation FAO Management

Slide 6**Where do we stand now**

- Working groups have considered all recommendations
- Many have been agreed, but some fundamental questions remain
- Nothing has been agreed until we decide about everything
- Excellent European coordination (Slovenia)
- Concrete outputs have not yet emerged

Slide 7**Where are we going to**

- Action plan for Immediate Reforms short and longer term (IAP)
- Special Conference November 2008
- Strategic Framework (12 years) and Mid-Term Plan (6 years)
- Conference 2009

Slide 8**Elements of Success****Strategy**

- Clear Priorities based on agreed criteria: such as global need, member priority, comparative advantage FAO
- SF and MTP which enhance FAO's role in knowledge management, global governance, capacity building, policy advice, focus, accountability and transparency
- Linkages technical work with cross cutting themes
- Gender oriented and Sustainable Approach

Slide 9**Elements of Success****Governance**

- Separate tasks Council and Conference
- Council as Executive Body that effectively and transparently oversees FAO's management, guides strategic choices and sets priority
- Conference engaged in global issues, agrees on budget and strategy
- Regional Conferences and Technical Committees enforced role in new budget and planning cycle
- Agreed term limits, selection-process and annual performance report DG

Slide 10**Elements of Success****Culture Structure**

- Delayed and integrated HQ structure, appropriate span of control, delegation of authority, subsidiarity HQ and field, giving and taking responsibilities
- Business plan that substantially re-engineers human resource and financial management, and administrative systems
- Culture of cost awareness and performance

Slide 11**Risks**

- Time
- Hype food/oil crises
- Resistance and perception
- Leadership and communication
- Political will
- Financial resources

Slide 12**Conclusion**

- We need the FAO and FAO needs reform
- Momentum for change must be maintained
- Reform could take many years
- Monitoring implementation reforms
- Leadership from all stakeholders needed

APPENDIX G

MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS STEMMING FROM THE DEBATE IN THE 35TH SESSION OF THE ECA ON ITEM: THE ROLE OF FAO IN KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA REGION

I. Main Conclusions of the discussion

1. The important role of FAO as a knowledge organization was recognized.
2. The view of the IEE, that the role of FAO in knowledge exchange and capacity building is the strongest comparative advantage particularly for Europe and Central Asia countries was stressed.
3. It was underlined that an important amount of knowledge contribution depends on the activities of member countries and the involvement of the private sector.
4. The progress made by FAO in the field of knowledge exchange and capacity building in the region especially in collecting, analysing, interpreting and disseminating agriculture-related information and the gradual transformation towards a more active form of knowledge management was recognized.
5. The use of best practices in knowledge exchange programmes and stressing the importance of subregional collaboration was noted. The special attention to multilingual information tools and portals and the FAO-supported information exchange projects was welcomed.
6. The countries stressed that an important development is the exchange of knowledge and information between developed countries of the EU and countries in transition in the European Region including the five Central Asia countries covered by the office in Ankara. FAO plays an important role both as a facilitator of this exchange and as a provider of knowledge.
7. It was noted that WAICENT has been successful in facilitating digital access to multilingual information on agriculture and rural issues, and the information exchange platforms such as AgroWeb could serve as an important model for successful cooperation.
8. The importance of having available remote editing and updating of Web information through the management of centralized collaboration platforms and other research networks was stressed as in the case of ESCORENA.
9. Information exchange platforms and networks can serve as a good example of promoting international collaboration including the strengthening of the activities of NGOs and the empowerment of civil society in potentially unstable regions within Europe and Central Asia.
10. The necessity has been revealed for adjusting FAO's work to the new international model and for adopting a more integrated approach with special emphasis on action.

II. List of Recommendations

The Commission endorsed the following recommendations:

11. FAO should strengthen the capacity building and developing skills on the basis of the assessed needs of individual countries
12. Capacity building programmes should be prepared on the basis of documented good practices and the private sector's experience.
13. The FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia should take a leading role by enhancing the cooperation of regional universities and research institutions as well as in facilitating and improving the work of the extension service staff in the member countries.
14. FAO should also consider twinning arrangements in the distribution of information and knowledge exchange.
15. The local knowledge exchange system in the region should therefore focus on the local focal points, local scientists and information experts in order not to overlook good practices from the past in the region as well as to identify local/regional centres of expertise.

APPENDIX H

MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS STEMMING FROM THE DEBATE IN THE 35TH SESSION OF THE ECA ON ITEM: FAO'S ENGAGEMENT IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM REFORM

I. Main Conclusions of the discussion

1. The list of recommendations as outlined in paragraphs 41 and 42 of the document ECA/08/3 were endorsed by the Commission to be forwarded to the ERC.
2. The United Nations system of operational activities is seen as unique in its mandate that includes poverty and hunger eradication, sustainable development, conflict prevention, post conflict rehabilitation and peace building.
3. The active role of FAO in the UN reform process together with the ongoing reform process based on findings of the Independent External Evaluation is welcomed and considered essential in order to strengthen the role of food security and agriculture in the multilateral system.
4. FAO has a strong comparative advantage in key areas of its activities, particularly provision of basic global data, and statistics; support to define policies, adapted to the situation of each country; work in emergencies and rehabilitation and defining standards; and support for global conventions on agriculture issues and food safety.
5. FAO is envisaged as a key partner and the reference point in the UN system in the field of sustainable agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry.
6. The UN reform process is also considered as an opportunity to further increase the cooperation of the three Rome based UN agencies including Bioversity International and to combine their respective comparative advantages and complementarities, wherever possible.
7. The progress made in identifying areas of collaboration among the three agencies is recognized although further efforts should be made in light of new emerging needs i.e. with increasing food prices in poor rural areas.

II. List of Recommendations

8. The Commission endorsed the following recommendations from the document:
 - a) The ongoing Delivering as One, United Nations reform process is fully in line with the recommendations of the Independent External Evaluation and is reinforcing the reforms already introduced by the Director-General and endorsed by the Governing Bodies of FAO.
 - i. FAO is encouraged to continue to participate in the Delivering as One Pilot initiative and develop the necessary programming and operational/administrative tools enabling it to provide more efficient and cost-effective assistance to member countries.
 - ii. The Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, the Subregional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Subregional Office for Central Asia are requested to:
 - Participate in the joint work and common efforts of the United Nations Country Team in Albania to finalize the setting-up of the new delivery mechanism of the United Nations System in the country, ensuring that through the NMTPF the key

strategic programme elements of sector programmes such as: regional and rural development; regional economic integration; fisheries and sustainable management of plant and animal genetic resources for conservation of biodiversity and others, are fully reflected in the joint United Nations country programme; that the necessary funding resources are mobilized and allocated, and that the programmes are efficiently implemented, taking into account FAO's status as an NRA;

- Ensure that the experiences gained and the lessons learned in Albania are properly assessed to be used in the coherence frameworks of other member countries of the Region;
- Carry out consultations with member countries in order to identify those countries where FAO should assist in the formulation of the NMTPF and in the preparation of the new UNDAF cycle beginning in 2010, and
- Intensify cooperation with sister United Nations agencies, especially those which are involved in addressing crucial development issues in the region, such as UNCTAD, UNIDO, ILO and the other two Rome-based United Nation agencies, IFAD and WFP, in order to develop joint cluster approaches to the assistance needs arising in the Region.

b) FAO's collaboration with WFP and IFAD in the European Region is still quite limited. The mentioned strategic documents will provide a framework for further strengthening this cooperation. However, the European and Central Asia Region is significant for the NRA status of all three agencies. Based on this situation, the following steps should be undertaken:

- i. The Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, together with WFP and IFAD regional units, should make efforts to identify possibilities to further strengthen the joint analysis of investment possibilities. This is particularly related to the issue of credit provisions to small-scale farmers in the Region.
- ii. Establishment of a virtual working group with the regional units in all three agencies to identify area for joint policy formulation, capacity-building, knowledge management and advocacy.

9. Further recommendations stemming from the discussion were:

a) A joint strategy aiming at the realization of the best possible use of human and financial resources of the three agencies should be developed; based on the four pillars identified by the organizations, which should also include other agencies;

- i. Efforts should be implemented within the more general "UN Delivery as One" operating model and continue in three directions
- ii. Harmonization of business procedures and strengthening of cooperation in administrative domains.
- iii. Elaboration of a joint mechanism of resource mobilization
- iv. Focus on capacity building for beneficiary countries to enable them to implement programmes themselves, improve alignment and make use of national systems

APPENDIX I

STATEMENTS BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FAO/NGOs-CSOs CONSULTATION ON TOPICS RELATED TO THE AGENDA OF THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE

World Food Crisis

The world food crisis has changed the atmosphere of international debates on food and agriculture. However, policies have not yet changed. We are clear that the crisis is rooted in decades of misguided policies and it is not acceptable to further promote “failures as usual”. The crisis which severely affects millions of human beings around the world every day, calls for an urgent and comprehensive revision and re-direction of national and international food and agriculture policies. Food riots in numerous countries have shown that for people food is vital. Food is an indispensable necessity for life – and we note that food provision is mostly done by women. Food is much more than a commodity; access to adequate food is a Universal Human Right that States have to respect, protect and fulfil at all times for every person on this planet.

FAO has principal responsibility to promote the right to food and properly to address the food crisis and its structural causes. FAO, as the United Nations institution responsible for food security and the implementation of the Right to Food Guidelines, has to assume leadership in responding appropriately to the food crisis. Food security is more important than trade, and therefore FAO should not leave this to the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization. We call on policy makers to respond to the world food crisis at the highest political levels and to ensure that any future European and Central Asian policies will foster food sovereignty and never undermine food security.

We are very concerned that many of the recipes which led to the crisis are still proposed as remedies. These include the agrochemical model of production and trade liberalization. We definitely do not “encourage further liberalization processes”, as recommended by the High-Level Conference on Food Security, Climate Change and Bio-energy on 5 June 2008. For us, liberalization is part of the problem, not the solution. We reject any attempt to use the food crisis for the promotion of biotechnology and Genetically Modified Organisms. We do not accept the increasing control by a few transnational corporations of the food chain.

Our alternative vision to the still dominant neo-liberal paradigm is the Food Sovereignty framework. Food Sovereignty is more than Food Security: accountability for realizing the human right to food, access to natural resources and the promotion and protection of smaller-scale, more labour intensive, sustainable and diversified agriculture in all regions have to be at the heart of food and agriculture policy decisions. Women’s equal right to land and other resources and equal influence over political decisions are core elements of food sovereignty. We advocate for a different model of agricultural production which recognizes the multifunctional nature of

agriculture, which is locally based and controlled, biodiverse and which respects social, labour and environmental standards. Farm gate prices should cover production costs.

We demand a different approach to the European Common Agricultural Policy which includes: market regulation by effective supply management and maintenance of minimum intervention stocks; support for small and sustainable family farms and coupling payments to the amount of labour; re-distribution of payments by establishing ceilings and fixed minimum payments to smallholders; powerful and inviting instruments for the promotion of ecological production systems and soil conservation and improvement strategies. The European Union must respect coherence and “Do no harm” principles: Food dumping and any agriculture, trade or investment policies that contribute to violations of the right to food, including in other regions, must be stopped.

Different approaches are needed to deal with specific characteristics between and within Central Asian, Eastern and Western Europe countries. However, transparency and accountability have to rule all national and European agricultural and food policies. We need to fight monopolies, corruption and unfair corporate practices. Strong and independent civil society efforts are required to monitor these policies, especially food prices, strengthen the rights of consumers and the democratic power of citizens. Civil society networking across Europe needs to be strengthened between all regions, between food producers, consumers and other stakeholders to analyse problems, build capacities, and define joint solution-oriented actions.

In conclusion: we demand that FAO¹ and governments² address the world food crisis as a high political priority and as a wake-up call to re-direct current policies towards the promotion of sustainable family and peasant agriculture, food sovereignty and the full realization of the human right to food.

Agriculture, climate change and agrofuels

Unsustainable farming practices and trade flows are contributing to climate change and are, as such, endangering the resilience of agricultural systems to overcome ever faster changes in soil, water and climate conditions. Future food supply and nutrition and the livelihoods of people dependent on natural resources for their physical and economic access to food are equally at risk. At the same time we face the challenge of feeding an increasing world population and so we need to go from a high-carbon, high input form of agriculture to a more diverse low-external input, low-carbon agriculture without losing yield productivity and aimed at gaining higher productivity per hectare.

The European region is a leading global emitter of GreenHouse Gases (GHGs) and European agriculture is responsible for a substantial proportion of these emissions. This is because of: intensive livestock production dependent on imported protein; the conversion of high-carbon soils (peat and forest) to crop production; and the heavy use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides applied with low efficiency on soils with low carbon content, resulting in high N₂O emissions. Bearing these facts in mind, governments and FAO should:

¹ FAO in this document refers to the Regional and Subregional offices for Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

²As appropriate when referring to ‘governments’ we include member states of the European Union, the European Regional Group and Central Asia.

- urgently assess the impact of climate change triggered by these practices (and the supposed remedy through agrofuel production) on the food security and the right to food in the region and third countries
- propose measures to diminish negative impacts by closing nutrient cycles and increasing carbon content of soils (such as favoured by pasture-based cattle farming not reliant on imported feedstuffs and by organic agriculture).

In terms of their resources and capacities, governments and FAO should:

- strengthen their work on a multifunctional and multidisciplinary analysis of climate change and agriculture (including impacts of agrofuels) and adapt data collecting methodologies to take this issue into account
- put priority on analysis and action in terms of climate change mitigation in agriculture and secondly on adaptation
- promote biological, agro-ecological and landscape diversity managed by small-scale family agricultural systems to build up an insurance against future soil, water and climate perturbations.
- implement the findings of the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD), which calls for a move towards more agroecological and smaller-scale production, and change relevant policies accordingly including building on local knowledge and on-farm research and strengthening farmers' movements and organizations.

The fight against Greenhouse Gas Emissions must be seen in the light of a wider challenge to reduce the global footprint of the region, which is inexorably increasing at the expense of vulnerable communities in other regions, which see their local nutrients, water and energy sources exported unsustainably in the form of high-value products, while reaping almost no benefits. As a priority, the EU member states should adopt structural programmes within the CAP to decrease the import of protein crops (currently supplying 75 percent of feed for intensive livestock production), to promote the research of local protein production alternatives and to promote the reduction of meat consumption in citizens' diets. Rather than being dominated by intensive livestock factories, animal husbandry must regain its place as a contributor to sustainable nutrient-recycling farming systems that use less silage, fertilizers and fossil fuels, and better conserve and sustainably use water and biodiversity.

At the same time, it is clear that a substantial proportion of the biomass needed to achieve the proposed mandatory EU agrofuels targets will need to come from third countries, which will cause similar negative impacts, including further land evictions, slave-like working conditions, poverty, hunger, soil and biodiversity erosion and deforestation. We call on EU member states to abandon mandatory agrofuels targets and to end perverse subsidies that create an artificial market demand for agrofuels. EU member states should also consider a wider moratorium on the import of agrofuels until a full impact assessment of food security and human rights including the Right to Food has been completed and accepted. If the EU intervenes in the market, targets should rather be directed towards effective sustainability goals such as improving protein crop autonomy and the market share for organic agriculture.

In order to ensure that the Right to Food, the livelihoods of vulnerable rural populations and locally-controlled rural development are protected, Governments and

FAO should undertake a dialogue with countries in other regions that are expanding the production of agrofuels, or would wish to do so, and are attempting to combat climate change. This would be in order to create, in a participatory manner and based on the precautionary principle, a national framework on land use classification (for food, feed and fuel production, expansion and land conversion), land market regulation and conversion compensation measures. In addition, they should help develop a legal framework to regulate the agrofuel surge and avoid forced evictions.

Technical promotion of bio-energy should focus on local and integrated use of organic waste (biogas) and production of vegetable oils with the potential to lower the costs of local transport and farming systems and to make them more autonomous, productive and sustainable.

Traditional regional agricultural products and food: markets, demand and support policies

The promotion of local and traditional products is essential for realizing food sovereignty and biodiverse and resilient food production.

There is a need for specific support for the development of traditional local knowledge-based agricultural systems, which have excellent performance on each of the pillars of sustainability. This support is needed for:

- market access and promotion of the value of the produce
- networking and cooperation among producers
- direct linking with consumers/citizens
- local processing and marketing infrastructure and other facilities

Agritourism can be a relevant complement to the income of farm families in a vibrant rural community and diverse landscape.

We need a different form of regulation on hygiene standards for products of small-scale farms which are destined for local markets. Because of the current uniform standards, designed for industrial agriculture, local production, processing and knowledge are disappearing.

We need an appropriate regulation for seeds and genetic resources managed by small-scale farmers that provide them with open access to seeds uncontaminated by GMOs. Currently, international agreements and treaties, which prioritize exclusive property rights, are benefiting the interests of TNC seed corporations. National genebanks are increasingly controlled by private corporations. This is worsening at the international level where the largest 10 companies now control 60 percent of the commercial seed market worldwide. Governments are urged to keep seed banks and genetic resources under public control, to keep them free from intellectual property rights. Exclusive user rights (patents, IPRs, seed laws and commercial contracts) restrict local, culturally diversified food production unnecessarily and threaten local knowledge-based traditional agricultural systems.

Now, more than ever, we need food sovereignty.

APPENDIX J

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY TOUR

27 June 2008, 8.00 am to 2.00 pm

The two main themes of the 26th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe: Climate change and Traditional regional products were presented during the half-day Study Tour to the surroundings of Innsbruck where conditions of family farming were introduced. Tour participants visited three farms and were introduced to farm and non-farming activities as well as support policies and instruments used in rural development and less-favoured areas. Promoting traditional products in Austria is part of a wider agricultural and food policy framework that also embraces important support and development issues. Local employment, for example, provided by small food processing and marketing businesses contributes to maintaining economic activities and population in rural areas, especially in less-favoured, remote zones. Traditional products can also strengthen other activities, especially in tourism, as seen in farm of Tost Gerda visited and the gastronomy sector, as in farm Steckholzer – Gasthof Padaun.

Farm description	Tost Gerda Farberhof, Trins	Lutz Josef and Monika Gattererhof, Schmirn	Wolf Daniel Steckholzer in Vals
<i>Location and precipitation</i>	1,200 meters above sea level 908 mm precipitation per year	1,480 meters above sea level 1,400 mm precipitation per year	1,600 meters above sea level
<i>Area of farm and land use</i>	35 hectares grassland and 3 hectares forest	7 hectares grassland 24 hectares mountain pastures	20 hectares grassland 0.04 arable land and 6.6 hectares forest
<i>Livestock on farm</i>	26 dairy cows 25 young stock including calves 24 horses	7 dairy cows 9 young stock including calves 9 pigs	10 suckler cows 25 young stock including calves 2 pigs
<i>Persons working on farm</i>	2 persons full time 1 hired worker part time	2.5 persons full time trainees part time	4 persons full time 1 hired worker full time
<i>Economic activities</i>	dairy farming horses board and care horseback riding farm holidays	dairy farming farm holidays sale of own products	suckler cow husbandry Farm holidays Hotel services and catering
<i>Contact</i>	www.farberhof.at e-mail: g.toast@tirol.com	www.wipptal.net/gattere r e-mail: m.lutz@aon.at	www.tiscover.at/steckholzer e-mail: steckholzer@aon.at

