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Organización de las
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COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Multi-year Programme of Work of the Committee on Agriculture: A progress report of MYPOW 2016-2019 and a draft MYPOW 2018-2021

Executive Summary

This document provides the progress report of the COAG Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) 2016-2019 and the draft COAG MYPOW 2018-2021. The current COAG MYPOW has been developed on the basis of guidance received from the Committee and intends to provide a solid basis for guiding its work in the 2018-21 period. The document is presented as a rolling plan, presenting the method of work of the Committee and follows the format already set out by the Committee in 2012.

Suggested action by the Committee

Committee is invited to:

- 1) Review the progress report of the implementation of the approved MYPOW 2016-19 in accordance with its overall objectives and mandate.
- 2) Approve the proposed MYPOW 2018-2021 as set out in the Annex.

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COAG 26

I. Background

1. At its 23rd Session (21 - 25 May 2012), the Committee reviewed, amended and approved its draft MYPOW 2012-2015. As a rolling plan, the Committee adopted its second MYPOW 2014-2017 at its 24th Session (29 September - 3 October 2014), and its third MYPOW 2016-2019 at its 25th Session (26-30 September 2016). The development of the COAG MYPOW conforms to the recommendations embodied in Actions 2.70 to 2.72 of the Immediate Plan of Action for FAO Renewal (IPA), and adheres to the periodicity specified by the IPA in terms of the timeframe covered by the programme as well as the submission of timelines of progress reports to Governing Bodies.
2. As underscored by the Committee, the first three MYPOWs of the Committee provided an important step towards the improvement of COAG's efficiency and transparency. The MYPOW guided the work of COAG and the Secretariat over the last six years. The Secretariat provided regular progress reports to the Bureau, the Committee, Council and Conference.
3. The current document has been developed based on the guidance received from the Committee, the Council and the Conference and intends to provide a solid basis for guiding the work of the Committee in the 2018-2021 period.

II. Progress Report on the MYPOW: Results for 2016-2018

A. Strategy, priority setting, and budget planning

4. The Committee organized its 25th session from 26-30 September 2016. In view of global emerging challenges, the Committee held substantive discussions on matters related to: *Strategy for FAO's Work on Climate Change, Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) Follow-up, Update on FAO's Work on Antimicrobial Resistance, FAO's Work in the Food and Agriculture Sector under the Strategic Framework, The Global Agenda for Sustainable Livestock, Reports of the 3rd and 4th Session of the Plenary Assembly of the Global Soil Partnership (GSP), The Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems, The International Year of Pulses, Achieving Sustainable Rural Development through Agricultural Innovation, The World Programme for the Census of Agriculture 2020, Agriculture and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Report on Implementation of the Recommendations of the 24th Session of COAG, Observance of the World Bee Day, International Year of Plant Health, and the International Year of Camelids.*
5. The Committee endorsed the document "Draft Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Soil Management"; the proposal by the Government of Slovenia to establish observance by the UN System of a World Bee Day to be celebrated on 20 May of each year; the proposal by the Government of Finland to establish observance by the UN system of 2020 as the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH); and recognizing the importance of Camelids for food security, poverty reduction and livelihoods, especially in arid lands, the Committee supported the principle of establishing an International Year of Camelids.
6. The Committee organized nine side events of relevance to priority or topical issues on the agenda: food security and sustainable agriculture in the 2030 agenda, harnessing biodiversity for sustainable agriculture in a changing world, the role of agriculture in climate change, the International Year of Plant Health, GIAHS, the anti-microbial resistance, incentives for sustainable agriculture and the role of smart soil and water information, sustainable livestock and the application of genome sequencing for sustainable agriculture and food security.
7. The decisions and recommendations by the 25th Session of COAG were reported, reviewed and adopted by the 155th Session of Council as well as the 40th Session of Conference, providing a solid basis for the strategy, priority setting and budget planning of the Organization.

Intersessional activities

8. During the intersession period, the secretariat and the Bureau conducted several activities as follows:

- i) As per COAG 25 recommendation, the Bureau of COAG established an Informal Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) on sustainable funding for the FAO/WHO food safety scientific advice programme. The OEWG held two meetings in Rome, on 28 February 2017 and 20 September 2017. It discussed the various funding options and identified three potential tracks (enhanced member contributions; contributions from non-state actors; setting up a blind multi-donor trust fund open to state and non-state actors). The outcomes of the OEWG were further discussed at the Joint Meeting of the 122nd Session of the Programme Committee and 169th Session of the Finance Committee (6 and 9 November 2017)¹. The FAO Council at its 158th Session in Rome on 4-8 December 2017 subsequently endorsed² the Report of the Joint Meeting (see detailed report in the document COAG/2018/13). The 159th Session of FAO Council in June 2018 “stressed the need for sustainable funding for FAO’s work and activities relating to scientific advice for food safety and the Codex Alimentarius in line with the recommendation from the Joint Meeting of the 122nd Session of the Programme Committee and 169th Session of the Finance Committee for allocation of unspent Trust Fund balances for the Blind Trust Fund.”
- ii) Bureau meetings: the COAG bureau organized eight meetings to prepare the COAG 26 agenda and for the establishment and organization of the OEWG on the sustainable funding for FAO/WHO food safety scientific advice.
- iii) Joint Bureau meetings: since 2015, the FAO Technical Committees have embarked on strengthening collaboration and coordination to respond to the recommendation of the Evaluation of FAO Governing Bodies. During their respective sessions in 2016 three common topics were discussed, namely the 2030 Agenda, the FAO’s Climate Change Strategy and the Follow-up to ICN2. This was done with an aim of enhancing collaboration to provide coordinated inputs to the FAO Council and Conference. Three joint meetings of the Bureaux of the Technical Committees were held in 2017. It was noted that the cooperation has proven to be very successful leading to discussing common items on the agendas of the 2016 session. On the basis of the Secretaries proposal, biodiversity mainstreaming (for COFI, COFO and COAG), Agenda 2030 and SDGs, climate change and nutrition were identified by Joint Bureaux as crosscutting items to be discussed by each committee during their 2018 sessions.
- iv) To enhance the coordination further, the Chairpersons of the Technical Committees, during their December 2016 meeting agreed to organize a joint side event to present countries with the conclusions and recommendations of the discussions of the Technical Committees on the 2030 Agenda, as the most overarching and inclusive topic. The Joint side event was organized during the 155th Session of Council. The outcome was a better understanding of the progress made and the opportunities and challenges encountered, as well as the impact of these on the work of the Organization.
- v) Report to the High Level Policy Forum (HLPF) 2018: the Bureau of COAG with the assistance of the secretariat reported to the High Level Policy Forum (HLPF) 2018 on SDGs of ECOSOC under the theme **Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies**. The Goals to be reviewed in depth were: **Goal 17, Goal 6, Goal 7, Goal 11, Goal 12 and Goal 15**.

¹ <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mv224e.pdf>

² http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/bodies/CL_158/CL158_Rep_EN.pdf

- vi) A subcommittee on climate change: the Bureau explore the issue with FAO (CBC Division) and it was agreed that with the adoption by the 40th session of the FAO Conference of the biennial theme “Climate change and its impact on the work and activities of FAO” for the biennium 2018-19, the need for an ad-hoc sub-committee on climate change could be reviewed in consideration of the outcomes of discussions around the Biennial Theme and track record of implementation of the Climate Change Strategy. Further discussion on the possible creation of a sub-committee should consider whether it should be under the sole remit of COAG or also engage other Technical Committees, in particular COFI and COFO.

B. Advise on global policy and regulatory matters

9. The Committee presented its recommendations to the Conference including those related to the Strategic Objectives. The recommendations were fully endorsed by the Conference at its 40th session.

C. Work planning

10. The deliberations at the 25th Session of COAG have enabled the formulation of a concise report embodying specific action-oriented recommendations to be presented to the FAO Council and Conference.
11. During that session the Committee approved its MYPOW for the period 2016-19 and the Progress Report of MYPOW 2014-16.
12. As a rolling document, the MYPOW 2016-19 was submitted to the 25th Session and that of 2018-2021 is presented for approval to the present session of the Committee.
13. The agenda for the 26th Session of COAG has been elaborated by the Bureau in close consultation with countries, Regional Groups and the Secretariat.

D. Working Methods

14. In line with the endorsed MYPOW 2016-19, eight regular intersessional Bureau meetings have been facilitated by the Chairperson and the Bureau composed of representatives of all seven regional groups with support from the Secretariat. In addition, the Bureau participated in three joint meetings of the Technical Committees' bureaux where the issue of strengthening collaboration through discussing cross cutting topics and the organization of a joint side event were discussed. Two of the Bureau meetings were devoted to the preparation of the agenda of the 26th Session of COAG.

ANNEX - Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) of the Committee on Agriculture (2018-2021)

I. Overall Objectives for the Committee on Agriculture

The Committee on Agriculture (COAG) conducts periodic reviews and appraisals, on a highly selective basis, of agricultural and nutritional problems, with a view to proposing concerted action by Member Nations and the Organization. It advises the Council on the overall medium- and longer-term work programme of the Organization relating to agriculture and livestock, food, natural resources and nutrition, with emphasis on the integration of all social, technical, economic, institutional and structural aspects related to agricultural and rural development in general³. It provides well-founded advice and action-oriented recommendations to the Conference on global policy and regulatory matters, in its areas of mandate.

II. Results for 2018-2021

A. Strategy, priority setting, and budget planning

Result: The Organization has a clear strategy, well-defined priorities and programmes on issues of relevance to the Committee, and the international community at large is provided with up-to-date information on the world situation, global major trends and drivers of change in agriculture and livestock, food and nutrition and natural resources management.

Indicators and targets:

- Key global and regional developments including global major trends and drivers of change in the areas of mandate identified, including through the Regional Conferences and part of the regular sessions of COAG;
- Committee's recommendations made on the pertinent aspects of the Strategic Framework, the Medium Term Plan (MTP) and the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) reflected in the Council Report.

Output: Clear, precise and consensual recommendations on strategy, priorities, programmes and budget for the Organization made by the Committee are favourably considered by Council and provide a solid basis for its guidance and decisions.

Activities:

- Review the current situation in its areas of mandate, including issues of topical significance to Regional Groups and the international community;
- Address issues of high priority and emerging issues identified by the Regional Conferences and other FAO's bodies;
- Review decisions and recommendations from other FAO governing and statutory bodies and committees;
- Review implementation of the PWB in areas falling within the committee's competence;
- Formulate clear consensual, timely and well-developed recommendations on the strategies, priorities, programmes, and budget in areas falling within the committee's competence;
- Organize side events of relevance to priority or topical issues on the agenda;

³ Rule XXXII 6 a) and b) of the Basic Texts

- Specific issues of topical significance are addressed during the scheduled sessions.

Working methods

- Chairperson continuously and effectively liaises with the secretariat;
- Intersessional work by the Bureau, supported by the secretariat to identify topics of significance for the agenda;
- Chairperson and the Bureau, through consultations, to facilitate member nations participation during intersessions.
- Collaboration with other relevant FAO Governing (in particular Council, and other Technical Committees) and statutory bodies.

B. Advice on global and regulatory matters

Result: Based on the Committee's recommendations, the FAO, through its Conference, and taking into consideration regional priorities, gives clear, relevant and useful advice on major policy and regulatory issues confronting the globe, regions, and individual member nations, within the areas of competence.

Indicators and targets:

- Member nations obtain value from the deliberations of COAG, using the advice and recommendations to guide domestic and regional actions and policies as reported by FAO;
- Clear and specific recommendations made in a timely manner by COAG to the Conference regarding global policy and regulatory matters in its areas of mandate;
- Committee's recommendations made on global policy and regulatory matters are reflected in the Conference Report.

Output: Clear, precise and consensual recommendations for Conference on policy and regulatory frameworks or instruments.

Activities:

- Report to the Conference on global policy and regulatory issues arising out of its deliberations;
- Review the status of relevant international instruments, including codes of conduct in areas of competence for the Committee;
- Consider possible solutions with a view to support concerted action by Members themselves or collectively through FAO and other relevant bodies on issues or concerns in areas of competence for the Committee;
- Identify and review new trends and emerging issues in the areas of competence;
- Develop recommendations and guidance for the consideration of the Conference.

Working methods

- Close collaboration with relevant FAO Departments and Units through the Chairperson and the Bureau;
- Chairperson and the Bureau, through consultations, to facilitate member nations participation during intersessions.

III. Work planning

Result: COAG works effectively and efficiently, in an action-oriented, transparent and inclusive way.

Indicators and targets:

- COAG agendas are focused and responsive to emerging needs;
- COAG agendas are coordinated with other Technical Committees as appropriate;
- COAG reports are concise and contain specific, action-oriented recommendations to both Council and Conference;
- COAG documents are made available in all FAO languages four weeks before the session commences;
- Continuity in terms of inter-sessional work;
- Level of participation of COAG members in the planning and inter-sessional work of the Committee.

Outputs

- Multi-year Programme of Work 2018-2021 for COAG adopted in 2018;
- Progress report on COAG's MYPOW approved in 2018.

Activities:

- Consider ways to improve the conduct of sessions, including more efficient use of the time available;
- Focus side events on key issues;
- Facilitate coordination with other Technical Committees as well as Regional Conferences;
- Work out clear modalities for the election and operation of the Bureau with a view to enhancing continuity between sessions;
- Pay continued attention to effective arrangements for the formulation of agendas and drafting of the final report;
- Enhance consultative participation of COAG members in planning and inter-sessional work of the Committee;
- Regular review of methods of work, including through indicators and targets specified in the MYPOW.

IV. Working methods

The work of the Committee is based on the review of worldwide trends in sectoral policies and regulations within the areas of competence. It collaborates with statutory and other bodies under FAO auspices, liaises with the Programme Committee on strategy and priority matters, and with the Finance Committee on financial and budgetary matters. It collaborates with other relevant FAO Governing Bodies, liaises with other international organizations active in the areas of agriculture, food and nutrition. It undertakes regular inter-sessional activities facilitated by the Chairperson and the Bureau and with proactive support from the Secretariat. It encourages and facilitates participation of farmer's, private sector's and civil society's organizations as observers. Enhance the participation of COAG members in planning and inter-sessional work of the Committee, through consultations, in order to facilitate member nations participation during intersessions.

V. Outstanding and strategic issues to be tracked overtime by COAG future sessions

The critical analysis of the agendas of the past COAG sessions as well as the analysis of the global trends and emerging issues in the global agricultural development agenda showed that a number of global issues may remain important as potential issues for future discussions by the committee as they relate to FAO's strategies. Although it is a challenge to predict future COAG agenda in the next 4 to 6 years, issues such as population growth, urbanization, competition for natural resources, rapid evolution in science, biotechnology and technology innovations, sustainable agriculture and food systems, nutrition, increasing climatic variability, women and youth empowerment, smallholder farmers, sustainable soil management, sustainable livestock development, transboundary pests and diseases, mainstreaming biodiversity, and agroecology would remain in the centre of COAG discussions and deliberations, and should be tracked over time.