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FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE

Thirty-second Session

Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 5-7 May 2020

Report from the Outcome of the Debate of the 41st Session of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)

Executive Summary

The European Commission on Agriculture (ECA) held its 41st session in Budapest, Hungary, from 1 to 2 October 2019. As recommended in the assessment of the ECA undertaken in 2017, the session focused on a main technical theme. This theme, as decided by the ECA Executive Committee in 2018, was plant health in Europe and Central Asia.

Apart from plant health, other agenda points of the session included reports on gender issues in the region and on the implementation of recommendations from the previous ECA session (the 40th session, held in Budapest, Hungary, from 27 to 28 September 2017), the main technical theme of which was animal health.

Furthermore, the ECA elected its new Executive Committee.

This document contains the text of the Report of the 41st Session of the ECA. Additional material, including background documents used to support the discussions, can be found on the ECA website (<http://www.fao.org/europe/commissions/eca/eca-41/en/>).

The 41st Session of the ECA adopted a number of recommendations, which can be found in Appendix C of the session report.

Plant health issues

The main plant health-related recommendations directed to Members focused on the review of national phytosanitary systems and the enhancement of national phytosanitary capacities, as needed, to match the pest risk-related challenges posed by such current global developments as the continuous increase in international trade in plants and plant products, including Internet trade, and the increase in international movements of people. When reviewing their national systems, countries were recommended to consider the International Plant Protection Convention Strategic Framework for 2020-2030 and plant health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Members were invited to support the use of new technologies in plant health, mitigate climate

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change effects, and protect the environment. Members were also encouraged to support the activities under the International Year of Plant Health 2020.

Subsequently, Members were invited to support phytosanitary research programmes aiming at collecting more information on the impacts of climate change on plant pests; to develop strategies to deal with the expansion of pests; to seek synergies between plant health-related and climate change-related activities; and to enhance their national, regional and global cooperation on plant health issues, including with biodiversity bodies.

It was recommended that countries review the state of their implementation of international standards on phytosanitary measures and their needs for further plant health-related guidance. It also was recommended that countries take action in relation to human mobility and Internet trade as pathways for pests.

The ECA recommendations for FAO focused on providing technical support for countries in building their phytosanitary capacities and raising awareness of the importance of plant health issues for food security and economic development. Recommendations also focused on the need for the collection of data on links between climate change and pest challenges and on supporting the enhancement of phytosanitary capacities to protect national territories and international trade, including through the implementation of international standards. It was also requested that FAO support training programmes aiming at sharing knowledge on pest risk challenges and on ways to address them, and to support countries' efforts to enhance their international cooperation on plant health issues.

Gender issues

ECA did not adopt any new recommendations on gender issues. However, the Commission has made several gender-related observations, calling for a holistic approach in tackling the causes of gender inequalities, paying continuous attention throughout the region to the mainstreaming of such gender-related issues as access to income-generating opportunities, the use of income, entrepreneurship, and the building of partnerships to create an enabling environment for women-inclusive value chains.

Recommendations of the Fortieth Session of the ECA

The recommendations of the Fortieth Session of the ECA concentrated on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and transboundary animal diseases. During the forty-first session of the ECA, a report was delivered on activities undertaken by the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia in that respect. The ECA noted the progress made and agreed on a number of related issues, which may be considered by Members. The issues included support for FAO's One Health approach, the need for international cooperation on AMR, the responsible use of antibiotics, and improving data collection systems. The full list of these issues is available in the ECA session documents. No formal recommendations were adopted.

Suggested action by the Regional Conference

The Regional Conference is invited to review and endorse the report and the recommendations of the 41st Session of the ECA.

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Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

ECA/41/19/REPORT

REPORT

Forty-first Session of the European Commission on Agriculture

Budapest, Hungary

1-2 October 2019

Previous sessions of the European Commission on Agriculture (known as the European Committee on Agricultural Technology from 1949 to 1952 and as the European Committee on Agriculture until 1956) are as follows:

- | | | |
|------------|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Preparatory Meeting | Paris, 27–28 June 1949 |
| 2. | First Session | Rome, 26-30 September 1949 |
| 3. | Second Session | Geneva, 27-30 March 1950 |
| 4. | Third Session | Rome, 25-28 June 1951 |
| 5. | Fourth Session | Rome, 3-6 June 1952 |
| 6. | Fifth Session | Rome, 26-29 May 1953 |
| 7. | Sixth Session | Rome, 14-18 June 1954 |
| 8. | Seventh Session | Rome, 20-24 June 1955 |
| 9. | Eighth Session | Rome, 7-11 May 1956 |
| 10. | Ninth Session | Rome, 17-21 June 1957 |
| 11. | Tenth Session | Rome, 19-23 May 1958 |
| 12. | Eleventh Session | Rome, 25-29 May 1959 |
| 13. | Twelfth Session | Rome, 15-19 May 1961 |
| 14. | Thirteenth Session | Rome, 13-18 May 1963 |
| 15. | Fourteenth Session | Rome, 17-21 May 1965 |
| 16. | Fifteenth Session | Rome, 15-20 May 1967 |
| 17. | Sixteenth Session | Rome, 23-26 October 1968 |
| 18. | Seventeenth Session | Rome, 7-11 September 1970 |
| 19. | Eighteenth Session | Rome, 8-12 May 1972 |
| 20. | Nineteenth Session | Rome, 17-21 June 1974 |
| 21. | Twentieth Session | Rome, 17-23 June 1976 |
| 22. | Twenty-first Session | Rome, 19-23 June 1978 |
| 23. | Twenty-second Session | Rome, 23-27 June 1980 |
| 24. | Twenty-third Session | Rome, 21-25 June 1982 |
| 25. | Twenty-fourth Session | Innsbruck, Austria, 18-22 June 1984 |
| 26. | Twenty-fifth Session | Chania, Greece, 8-12 June 1987 |
| 27. | Twenty-sixth Session | Porto, Portugal, 23-26 May 1989 |
| 28. | Twenty-seventh Session | Herrsching, Germany, 1-5 July 1991 |
| 29. | Twenty-eighth Session | Valletta, Malta, 27 September – 1 October 1993 |
| 30. | Twenty-ninth Session | Bled, Slovenia, 2-6 October 1995 |
| 31. | Thirtieth Session | Nitra, Slovakia, 8-11 October 1997 |
| 32. | Thirty-first Session | Rome, 12-14 October 1999 |
| 33. | Thirty-second Session | Rome, 7-8 March 2002 |
| 34. | Thirty-third Session | Rome, 1-2 March 2004 |
| 35. | Thirty-fourth Session | Riga, Latvia, 7 June 2006 |
| 36. | Thirty-fifth Session | Innsbruck, Austria, 25 June 2008 |
| 37. | Thirty-sixth Session | Yerevan, Armenia, 11-12 May 2010 |
| 38. | Thirty-seventh Session | Baku, Azerbaijan, 17-18 April 2012 |
| 39. | Thirty-eighth Session | Bucharest, Romania, 1-2 April 2014 |
| 40. | Thirty-ninth Session | Budapest, Hungary, 22-23 September 2015 |
| 41. | Fortieth Session | Budapest, Hungary, 27-28 September 2017 |
| 42. | Forty-first Session | Budapest, Hungary, 1-2 October 2019 |

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Forty-first Session of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA) was held in Budapest, Hungary from 1 to 2 October 2019.
2. Representatives from 33 Member Countries and one member organization participated in the ECA session. Fourteen observers and four civil society organizations also participated.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

3. Ms Galina Jevgrafova, Acting Chairperson of the European Commission on Agriculture, opened the Forty-first Session of the ECA, welcomed the delegates and thanked the Government of Hungary for hosting the ECA.
4. Mr Sandor Farkas, Minister of State of the Ministry of Agriculture, Hungary, welcomed the delegates to the Forty-first Session of the ECA and expressed his satisfaction that Hungary was hosting this meeting. He spoke of significant economic damage that is threatening the environment due to climate change and the introduction of new pests. As the new European Union plant health legislation will enter into force on 14 December 2019, Hungary will focus on the appropriate communication of changes in the plant health legislation, he said. He also gave attention to the importance of smallholders in the region and the growing demand for locally produced and healthy food.
5. On behalf of FAO, Mr Vladimir Rakhmanin, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Europe and Central Asia, welcomed the participants and expressed his gratitude to the Government of Hungary for its hospitality and dedication to supporting the work of FAO. He emphasized the importance of the work of the European Commission on Agriculture in producing practical solutions to common problems in the region. The subject of this ECA session – protecting plants in agriculture and natural environments from pests – is at the very heart of FAO’s mandate, he said. Pests can hamper food security, and related threats are especially high now, since international trade facilitates the movement of pests while climate change helps them establish in new areas.
6. Mr Rakhmanin invited all the Members to attend the FAO Regional Conference for Europe (ERC), which will take place on 5–7 May, 2020, in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The Regional Representative also mentioned that FAO is actively supporting countries in the region on plant health issues with the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO), and therefore the United Nations’ declaration of 2020 as the International Year of Plant Health is particularly important for FAO.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

7. The Commission adopted its Agenda as given in Appendix A of this Report and the Timetable.

APPOINTMENT OF THE RAPPORTEUR

8. Ms Zora Weberova (Slovakia) and Mr Tim Kränzlein (Switzerland) were appointed as Rapporteurs of the ECA.

UPDATE ON THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PLANT HEALTH IN 2020 (INF ITEM)

9. Mr. Ralf Lopian, Chair of the International Steering Committee for the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH), introduced the item and underlined that the IYPH has already provided its first positive outcome – awareness-raising on plant health issues, which has been made the subject of this ECA session. As a result of the IYPH events and activities, decision-makers and the public should become more knowledgeable about plant health. The year brings to the forefront the need for increased resources at all levels, strengthened capacity and further development activities. International cooperation is imperative to prevent and contain the spread of plant pests, hence the need to cooperate both regionally and internationally. The IYPH addresses a number of sustainable development goals (SDGs), namely SDG 1 (no poverty), SDG 2 (zero hunger), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production), SDG 13 (climate action) and SDG 15 (life on land). Climate change transforms epidemiology and the distribution of pests. In the future, Europe will be even more affected, including by the introduction of new pests.

PLANT HEALTH IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA – RELEVANCE, TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS

10. The Session was opened by a discussion that included panelists Mr Avetik Nersisyan, FAO Senior Agricultural Officer, IPPC Secretariat; Mr Radovan Pokorný, Professor at Mendel University; Mr Robert Hunter, Executive Director at Crop Life International; Mr Juan Antonio Garcia Villalva, a representative of civil society. Mr Ralf Lopian served as moderator. The panel discussed significant threats posed by pests to food security and the environment. Apart from the damaging impacts on crop production, forestry, environment and food security, there are significant impacts on the international trade of plants and plant products. The panel emphasized that plant health is an international issue that should be managed globally.

11. Among other issues, the panelists highlighted the following challenges and opportunities:

- There is insufficient training, education of experts, research and the sharing of knowledge on issues relating to plant health.
- There is a need for information sharing and reporting on pests at national and international levels to help and enhance timely reactions to threats and the identification of proper measures to be taken against pests.
- There is a need to establish and enhance regulatory frameworks in line with the IPPC Strategic Framework 2020–2030, expected to be adopted by the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) in 2020.
- There is a need to strengthen the capacities of national plant protection organizations (NPPOs) to address current and emerging pest risks.
- There is a need for harmonized phytosanitary regulations that enable international trade while preventing the spread of pests.
- The regulatory frameworks need to accommodate requirements in response to e-commerce as a pathway for the movement of pests and diseases.
- Insufficient attention is paid to long-term soil quality preservation as a precondition for the cultivation of healthy plants.

- There is a need for the use of agroecology to enhance the soil fertility and resilience of production systems.

12. The Commission:

- a) **Noted** the challenges and opportunities related to plant health mentioned by the panelists.
- b) **Emphasized** that the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH) 2020 was an opportunity to raise global awareness on: a) how protecting plant health can help end hunger, reduce poverty, protect the environment and boost economic development; and b) the importance of plant health for societies and national economies.
- c) **Encouraged** the adoption of IPPC Strategic Framework 2020–2030, which would be the basis for the phytosanitary activity of the next decade and which would facilitate increased international cooperation on plant health issues at global and regional levels.
- d) **Suggested** that Members review their national phytosanitary systems, especially against the implementation of international agreements and standards and develop strategies to address possible gaps.
- e) **Noted** the importance of raising awareness about regional collaboration and nature-based solutions in minimizing the impacts of plant pests, both those already present and those that may invade.
- f) **Invited** FAO to support national plant health capacity building through ensuring increased and sustainable IPPC funding for additional international cooperation on plant health issues at global and regional levels.

13. The Commission adopted all other recommendations as listed in paragraphs 32 and 33 of ECA/41/19/3 (see Appendix C).

PLANT PESTS AND DISEASES IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND CLIMATE VARIABILITY, FOOD SECURITY AND BIODIVERSITY RISKS

14. The Commission noted the potential effects of climate change on both biotic and abiotic factors in crop systems, changing their production capacity. Moreover, it examined the complexity of the relationships among climate change, cropping systems and the future effects of climate-related pest movements on pest-related losses.

15. The Commission emphasized a need to:

- a) **Support** national and international research programmes, such as Euphresco, with the aim of gathering more information on the impacts of climate change on issues related to plant health, such as the distribution or behaviour of pests or the resilience of plants to pest infestations.
- b) **Develop** strategies – especially in the areas of surveillance, monitoring, preparedness, prevention and pest management – to deal with more frequent geographical range expansions of pests and diseases.

16. The Commission:

- a) **Highlighted** that the prevention, detection and control of plant pests and diseases play a crucial role in achieving a more sustainable food system while protecting natural ecosystems and the economy.
- b) **Noted** the continued support to European and international research programmes aiming to gather more information on the impacts of climate change on plant health-related issues, such as the distribution or biology of pests or the resilience of plants to pest infestations.
- c) **Supported** international collaboration at subregional, regional and global levels in the sharing of information and experiences on the impacts of climate change on plant damaging organisms.
- d) **Noted** the information provided by Finland and its invitation to participate in the first international plant health conference to take place in Helsinki from October 5 to 8 2020.
- e) **Supported** increased farmer to farmer exchange of agroecological knowledge to synergistic methods to manage and improve plant and soil health and mitigate climate change.

17. The Commission further called for the Members to:

- a) **Implement** appropriate and effective phytosanitary measures while taking into account the needs of international trade.
- b) **Engage** in developing strategies in the areas of surveillance, monitoring, prevention and pest management to step up preparedness and control in confronting the challenges of climate change and variability.
- c) **Integrate** elements related to plant health into national strategies, with regard to climate change, invasive alien species, biodiversity and the environment.
- d) **Build** strong and ambitious international partnerships.
- e) **Adopt** more climate-resilient technologies and expand regional cooperation and coordination.
- f) **Ensure** risk identification and mitigation sharing of information and raising of awareness among key stakeholders about existing pests and diseases.
- g) **Encourage** countries to consider not only the resilience of plants but also the resilience of entire ecosystems when applying the recommendations.
- h) **Stress** full support of the future role of all the major international players in this field, in particular FAO and the IPPC, and be ready to further engage in plant health international activities.

18. The Commission adopted recommendations listed in paragraphs 26 and 27 of background document ECA/41/19/4 (see Appendix C).

IMPACT OF GLOBAL TRADE AND HUMAN MOBILITY ON THE HEALTH OF AGRICULTURAL CROPS AND FORESTS IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

19. The Commission examined trade (including e-commerce) and human mobility, which are considered the major means of the movement of pests between countries and continents.

The introduction of pests into new areas may bring enormous threats to plants in agriculture and natural environments. Pest risks in international trade are difficult for individual countries to handle and require international cooperation and harmonization of measures. NPPOs should be supported and their capacities strengthened to match the emerging threats.

20. The Commission highlighted the need to:

- a) **Support** additional guidance, activities or measures, including inspection and harmonized diagnostic techniques that can be implemented to enhance national capacities and improve pest risk management in the international trade of plants.
- b) **Support** awareness-raising campaigns and activities that will reduce existing and emerging pest risks coming from human mobility, in particular informing travellers about the risks of introducing non-native pests.
- c) **Support** the implementation of relevant international standards and recommendations relating to the assessment of pest risks (PRA) in order to prevent the spreading of pests with consignments in trade.
- d) **Identify** and exploit cooperation opportunities on subregional, regional and global levels among NPPOs and other official bodies (e.g. customs agencies) in order to increase national capacities to address common challenges related to plant health.

21. The Commission adopted all other recommendations as listed in paragraphs 29 and 30 of the background document ECA/41/19/5 (see Appendix C).

ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY IN THE REGION: UPDATE ON PROGRESS MADE, WITH SPECIAL FOCUS ON FAO SUPPORT TO RURAL WOMEN IN INCOME DIVERSIFICATION

22. The Commission took note of advancing rural gender equality in the Europe and Central Asia region and, in particular, the case of the pilot activities carried out to support rural women in income diversification, entrepreneurship and rural crafts under the Regional Gender Equality Strategy and Action Plan for 2019–2022.

23. The Commission:

- a) **Noted** a need for a holistic approach to tackle the root causes of gender inequality and unequal power relations in rural areas. This requires targeted actions focusing on women, as well as gender mainstreaming in all programs. It is important to help countries in the region to make necessary adjustments in relevant agricultural and rural development frameworks.
- b) **Noted** that the challenges women face – such as their workloads, their decision-making power over products and their control over the use of income – should be broadly addressed.
- c) **Emphasized** that income-generating activities such as manufacturing crafts create opportunities for the economic empowerment of women. It is important to ensure that women are involved in and benefit from all phases of the value chain.
- d) **Encouraged** the creation of income-generating opportunities for vulnerable groups of the population and the facilitation of their participation in craft value chains.

- e) **Emphasized** the need to couple value chain activities with developing women's entrepreneurship, leadership and technological skills to enable them to benefit from a wider range of social and economic opportunities.
- f) **Encouraged** the building of partnerships with other organizations and governments to create an enabling environment for women-inclusive value chains, including through financing market linkages, infrastructure and other enabling factors.

24. The Commission was in agreement with the background document ECA/41/19/6.

PROGRESS MADE BY THE FAO REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA ON THE MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FORTIETH ECA

25. The Commission noted the progress made by the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia on the main recommendations of the Fortieth Session of the ECA. Specifically, the Commission:

- a) **Emphasized** the need for a "One Health" approach that encompasses the protection of human health, animal health and the environment.
- b) **Noted** that no single country and no single sector can provide adequate solutions in isolation and stressed the need to face the challenge of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) together.
- c) **Promoted** the prudent and responsible use of antibiotics in all sectors, supporting initiatives to strengthen hygiene, biosecurity, animal welfare and nutrition.
- d) **Suggested** consolidating and improving surveillance and data collection systems, as well as boosting research and innovation.
- e) **Stressed** the need to phase out the use of antibiotics to increase yield and promote growth.
- f) **Encouraged** better understanding of interactions among the environment, human health, agriculture, aquaculture and animal husbandry in order to develop efficient strategies to fight AMR based on a "One Health" approach.
- g) **Called** on FAO, the World Organisation for Animal Health regional Commission for Europe and the FAO/World Health Organization Codex Regional Coordinating Committee for Europe to continue to actively contribute and build synergies at regional level.
- h) **Stressed** the need to agree at the global level on a way for all countries to contribute actively at national level in the fight against AMR.
- i) **Supported** current initiatives to revise and strengthen guidelines and standards to face the AMR challenge.
- j) **Underscored** the international dimension of AMR, which requires cooperation regionally, globally and on all levels.

26. With regard to the recommendations on the 2017 assessment of the ECA, the Commission:

- a) **Supported** the improved modality of the ECA, with focus on technical theme.

- b) **Stressed** that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development should serve as an umbrella for all ECA sessions in the future.
- c) **Welcomed** the continued ECA focus on FAO Regional Initiatives and on setting the Agenda of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe.
- d) **Emphasized** that all sessions should be concluded with clear recommendations feeding into the FAO Regional Conference for Europe and forming the basis for political decisions.

27. The Commission was in agreement with the background document ECA/41/19/7.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1)

28. The Commission elected Mr Paul Kiernan (Ireland) as a Chairperson of the Executive Committee, Ms Zora Weberova (Slovakia) as a First Vice-Chairperson and Mr Marios Georgiades (Cyprus) as a Second Vice-Chairperson of the Executive Committee for a two-year period in compliance with the Rules of Procedure.

29. Six members of the Executive Committee who were elected by the Commission include Ms Lorena Pullumbi (Albania), Mr Jiří Jílek (Czechia), Ms Ekaterine Zviadadze (Georgia), Ms Lilla Egri (Hungary), Ms Graziella Romito (Italy), and Ms Daria Janjic (Serbia).

30. The newly elected Chairperson thanked Ms Galina Jevgrafova, the outgoing Chairperson, for her dedication and efforts made in her respective capacity, and Ms Aulikki Hulmi (Finland), Ms Khatia Tsilosani (Georgia), Mr Ali Recep Nazli (Turkey) and Mr Zoltán Kálmán (Hungary), the outgoing members of the Executive Committee, for their contribution to the work of the Executive Committee over the past years.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

31. The Commission made no additional comments on the Information Notes under Any Other Business, and noted the presented Information Notes as stated in ECA/41/19/INF/4, ECA/41/19/INF/5 and ECA/41/19/INF/6.

32. Uzbekistan invited Members to the 32nd Regional Conference for Europe, which will take place from 5 to 7 May 2020, in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

DATE AND PLACE OF THE FORTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE ECA

33. The Commission welcomed the offer of Hungary to host the Forty-Second Session of the ECA in Budapest in 2021, with the date to be decided by the Executive Committee in collaboration with FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, but not later than six months prior to the 33rd Regional Conference for Europe in compliance with the ECA Rules of Procedure.

REVIEW AND ENDORSEMENT OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION

34. The report was endorsed *en bloc* with changes in paragraphs 9 and 10, paragraph 11 in bullet points 5 and 6, paragraph 20 in point a, added points d. and e. to paragraph 16, and some further editorial changes by the Commission according to the comments made by Member States.

Appendix A**ANNOTATED AGENDA****I. Introductory Items**

- 1. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable**
- 2. Appointment of the Rapporteur**

II. Main technical theme: Plant health in Europe and Central Asia**3. Plant health in Europe and Central Asia – relevance, trends and developments**

This agenda item is introduction to the main technical theme of the Session. It covers general aspects of plant health in Europe and Central Asia, including the current environment for plant health operations, as well as ideas for possible main areas of development for the nearest future. This point will be supported with a background paper and introduced through a panel discussion, where representatives of various technical areas will present from their perspective the key challenges in plant health relevant for the region, as well as ideas for possible ways to address those challenges.

Members will be invited to take note of the relevance of plant health for Europe and Central Asia, review the background document and provide guidance on future activities at national and regional levels.

4. Plant pests and diseases in the context of climate change and climate variability, food security and biodiversity risks

This agenda item will be introduced by a background paper which will address impacts of global challenges, such as climate change, on plant health, especially related to the risk of movement or establishment of pests in new areas, impacts of plant pests on relevant aspects of socio-economic development in the region as well as pest-related risks to the environment. Roles of national and international bodies, as well as research institutions, in preventing or managing the plant health-related challenges will be emphasized, and the need for international cooperation analysed.

Members will be invited to consider the climate change-related plant pest risks as well as options for addressing them in the region, review the background paper and provide guidance on future activities at national and regional levels.

5. Impact of global trade and human mobility on the health of agricultural crops and forests in Europe and Central Asia

This agenda item with the supporting background paper will focus on international trade of plants and plant products, as well as human mobility as important means, by which plant pests may be moved internationally and which have both been increasing in recent decades. Both involve certain risks of movement of pests from their native ranges to new areas, potentially creating threats to agricultural crops or plant resources in the environment generally. This agenda point will also address roles of official national plant health organizations and their

international cooperation aiming on prevention of risks of spread of pests between countries and continents. Another important aspect that will be emphasized here is the need to raise the awareness of relevant stakeholders, including general public, on pest risks relating to movements of goods and people.

Members will be invited to take note of the human-related aspects of plant health in the region, review the background paper and provide guidance on future activities at national and regional levels.

III. Other matters

6. Advancing gender equality in the region: update on progress made, with special focus on FAO support to rural women in income diversification

The agenda item is a standing item for the sessions of the ECA. The Secretariat will present a background paper, which will provide an update on progress made by the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia in advancing gender equality in the region and on activities carried out to support rural women in income diversification, entrepreneurship and rural crafts in the framework of the Regional Initiative for strengthening agrifood trade and market integration, contributing to FAO's Strategic Objective to build more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems.

Members will be expected to review the document and provide guidance and views regarding the work on gender mainstreaming in the region.

7. Progress made by the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia on the main recommendations of the Fortieth ECA

This agenda item will focus on updates, in particular on a) progress made on antimicrobial resistance and b) follow-up regarding the recommendations of the 2017 Assessment of the European Commission on Agriculture.

It is expected that Members will review the progress made and provide guidance for further implementation.

8. Election of Members of the Executive Committee

9. Any other business

10. Date and place of the Forty-second Session

11. Review and endorsement of the Report of the Commission

Closing of the Session

Information items

Update on the International Year of Plant Health in 2020

Increasing the effectiveness of National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO) operations is necessary to sufficiently address plant pest-related challenges, and it will require allocation of sufficient resources. Currently, plant health is often not resourced at a level reflecting its importance, which may be due to the low level of awareness of the impacts of plant health. These considerations have led to the formulation of the proposal and then to the decision by the General Assembly of the United Nations to hold an International Year of Plant Health in 2020, with the aim to strengthen global, regional, and national plant health structures and activities through raising the awareness of its relevance for enhancing food security, economic development and environmental protection.

The Secretariat in cooperation with the Chairperson of the IYPH International Steering Committee will provide an update on the background and scope of the IYPH, as well as the calendar of its main global events and options for Members to contribute to its success.

The UN Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028: Family Farming and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The UN Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028 (UNDF) provides an excellent opportunity for FAO to further enhance the support to smallholders and family farms under the Regional Initiative on Empowering Smallholders and Family Farms for Improved Livelihoods and Poverty Reduction (RI 1) in collaboration with the Member countries and through partnerships with other international organizations, donors, civil society, academia and the private sector.

In most of the FAO programme countries in Europe and Central Asia, farm structures are dominated by smallholders and small family farms, and the large majority of farms use less than 5 hectares of land. The small farms have at the same time many needs and constraints and require support in many technical fields. The Decade is a very good opportunity to mobilize additional resources to support development of small farms into commercial family farms, supporting diversification of the rural economy by creating new jobs, also for youth, women and vulnerable groups. This very much requires an integrated and cross-sectoral approach.

The Secretariat will provide an overview of planned FAO contributions in relation to the UN Decade of Family Farming.

FAO's support to climate change adaptation and mitigation activities in Europe and Central Asia region

The ECA countries fully embark on the 2030 Agenda and embrace the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), while building on their food and nutrition security achievements in recent decades. However, climate change is expected to have both direct and indirect adverse impacts on these countries' agricultural productivity, including changing rainfall patterns, increasing frequency and severity of hydrometeorological hazards such as droughts, storms and floods, and increased outbreaks and geographical redistribution of animal and plant pests and diseases, potentially undermining the ability to ensure regional food and nutrition security, eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development.

The Secretariat will provide updated information related to the work carried out by FAO's Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia to support countries respond to the challenges of climate change.

Appendix B**LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

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| ECA/41/19/2 | Provisional Timetable |
| ECA/41/19/3 | Plant health in Europe and Central Asia - relevance, trends and developments |
| ECA/41/19/4 | Plant pests and diseases in the context of climate change and climate variability, food security and biodiversity risks |
| ECA/41/19/5 | Impact of global trade and human mobility on the health of agricultural crops and forests in Europe and Central Asia |
| ECA/41/19/6 | Advancing gender equality in the region, providing support to rural women in income diversification |
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Appendix C

ENDORSED RECOMMENDATIONS

PLANT HEALTH IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA - RELEVANCE, TRENDS
AND DEVELOPMENTS
([ECA/41/19/3](#))

Recommendations to Members:

- 1) **Analyse** the IPPC Strategic Framework for 2020–2030 as the basis for work in the coming decade, as well as consider options for increased international cooperation on plant health issues at global and regional levels.
- 2) **Support** the activities under the International Year of Plant Health in 2020, aiming at raising awareness on the importance of plant health for societies and national economies.
- 3) **Audit** and Report at the national level the progress made in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals relevant for plant health.
- 4) **Review** the national phytosanitary systems, especially against the implementation of international agreements and standards, and develop strategies to address possible gaps.
- 5) **Ensure** that the capacities of national plant protection organizations are sufficient to address existing and emerging plant health challenges.
- 6) **Promote** adaptation and implementation of environmentally sound practices as the core elements of integrated pest management.
- 7) **Support** the implementation of new and existing technologies in addressing old and new threats in plant health by targeting efforts of governments and other actors to maximize benefits and minimize possible safety and societal risks.
- 8) **Raise awareness** that regional collaboration and ecologically based approaches are essential in minimizing the impacts of plant pests, both those already present and those which may invade.

Recommendations to FAO:

- 1) **Support** the strengthening of national phytosanitary systems and plant health regulatory regimes by regional workshops, trainings, and promotion by different agencies, and reduce the high level of heterogeneity currently found across the region.
- 2) **Raise** awareness of the impact of plant pests and diseases on food security, nutrition and economic development across the region.
- 3) **Raise awareness** on the need to pay particular attention to pathways for the movement of plant pests between countries in different parts of the region, between regions, and between continents, including transboundary pests as well as new trade routes.

**PLANT PESTS AND DISEASES IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND
CLIMATE VARIABILITY, FOOD SECURITY AND BIODIVERSITY RISKS**
([ECA/41/19/4](#))

Recommendations to Members:

- 1) **Support** national or international research programmes aiming to gather more information on the impacts of climate change on issues related to plant health, such as the distribution or behaviour of pests or the resilience of plants to pest infestations.
 - 2) In confronting the challenge of climate change and variability, **develop** strategic plans to include a landscape perspective and develop cropping systems that have greater resilience at the national level.
 - 3) **Develop** strategies – especially in the areas of surveillance, monitoring, preparedness, prevention and pest management – to deal with more frequent geographical range expansions of pests and diseases.
 - 4) **Ensure** that national plant protection organizations take into account the aspects of plant health related to climate change in their activities, and ensure that their capacities are adequate to address those challenges.
 - 5) **Integrate** elements related to plant health into national strategies, with regard to climate change, invasive alien species, biodiversity and the environment.
 - 6) **Support** and take part in international collaboration at subregional, regional or global levels and in the sharing of information and experiences on the impacts of climate change on plant pests and diseases.
- 2)

Recommendations to FAO:

- 1) **Support** regional efforts to determine the trends of climate change effects on pest epidemiology and ecology, host distribution, and pest impacts.
- 2) Through Regional Initiative 3 in Europe and Central Asia, **strengthen** mechanisms for regional data collection and evidence building and develop plans and build capacities in addressing climate change issues, where relevant for plant health.
- 3) **Promote** efforts to increase knowledge and enhance understanding of the effects of climate change on interactions in agroecosystems.
- 4) **Support** the international collaboration and development of capacities, resources and expertise to track emerging pests and their new aggressive strains under climate change and to respond accordingly with improved pest management practices.

**IMPACT OF GLOBAL TRADE AND HUMAN MOBILITY ON THE HEALTH OF
AGRICULTURAL CROPS AND FORESTS IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA**
([ECA/41/19/5](#))

Recommendations to Members:

- 1) **Consider** how the relevant international standards and recommendations relating to the assessment of pest risks (PRA) can best be implemented to prevent movement of pests with consignments in trade.
- 2) **Consider** what additional guidance, activities or measures, including inspection and diagnostic techniques, can be implemented to enhance national capacities and improve pest risk management in the international trade of plants.
- 3) **Consider** activities (e.g. awareness-raising campaigns) that may reduce pest risks coming from human mobility.
- 4) **Consider** the implementation of the CPM “Recommendation on Internet trade (e-commerce) in plant and other regulated articles” to prevent pest risks arising from Internet trade.
- 5) **Integrate** elements related to plant health into national strategies, with regard to invasive alien species, biodiversity and the protection of the environment.
- 6) **Identify** and exploit cooperation opportunities on subregional, regional and global levels in order to increase national capacities to address common challenges related to plant health.

Recommendations to FAO:

- 1) Through REU Regional Initiative 2, **support** Members in their participation in the development and effective implementation of internationally adopted standards and procedures to support local and international markets and develop efficient agrifood systems.
- 2) **Evaluate** whether training programmes are sufficiently in place and coordinated to maintain and improve the abilities of phytosanitary staff in identifying and addressing pest risks coming from human-driven activities.
- 3) **Support**, on a continuing basis, training programmes run by FAO and other regional and international agencies.
- 4) **Promote**, at the international level, the adoption of the IPPC, ISPMs and international recommendations relevant for the prevention of human-driven pest movements.
- 5) **Support** farmers, advisory services and consultants by updating their knowledge, skills and practices with respect to current and new pest threats to their crops.