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Update on the development of the new Strategic Framework

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Introduction

1. This document presents an update on the development of the new Strategic Framework of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), which is being developed in the context of global and regional trends and challenges in the areas of FAO's mandate.
2. As called for in the Basic Texts, since 2010 all of FAO's work is guided by a Strategic Framework prepared for a period of ten to fifteen years, reviewed every four years. The Conference at its 36th Session in November 2009, outlined the programme and budget approach which incorporates a Strategic Framework for the Organization defined as:
 - a. A Strategic Framework prepared for a period of ten to fifteen years, reviewed every four years and including, inter alia, an analysis of the challenges facing food, agriculture and rural development and populations dependent thereon, including consumers; a strategic vision, the goals of Members in areas of FAO's mandate, as well as Strategic Objectives to be achieved by Members and the international community with support from FAO, including targets and indicators of achievement.²
3. This document facilitates guidance from the Regional Conference on priorities to be reflected in the development of FAO's new Strategic Framework which will be presented to the Governing Bodies at their first Sessions in 2021. *Annex 1* presents the full roadmap for the process. The Programme Committee and Council have provided feedback on the Strategic Framework process at their session in June and July 2020³. Regional Conferences would usually be the first step in the process leading up to the new Strategic Framework⁴. However, due to the postponement of Regional Conferences and Technical Committee sessions in 2020, FAO will incorporate the input from the Regional Conferences and Technical Committees in relevant documents to be submitted to Programme Committee and Council sessions in November/December 2020.
4. Internally, FAO is initiating thinking around the new Strategic Framework through newly established internal task forces focusing on key areas including the theory of change, strengthening normative work and partnerships, and enhancing alignment with country-level processes and strengthening a shared vision for a "One-FAO" approach.
5. Management looks forward to a consultative strategic thinking process that involves Members, experts, the Rome-based Agencies, other partners and staff and which will fully articulate FAO's vision of a sustainable and food secure world for all.
6. In order to effectively incorporate regional specificities into the review of the Strategic Framework, the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia has initiated a regional process to review trends and challenges in the region, particularly to identify special drivers in the respective subregions and to revisit regional priority areas of work for FAO for 2022-25 and beyond. The regional process will help bridge country demands and global issues under a regional umbrella, focusing on challenges best tackled at regional level. The results of the review are presented in ERC/20/5/Web Annex 7.

² Basic Texts Volume II, Section F. "Implementation of the IPA regarding the reform of the Programming, budgeting and results-based monitoring system" paragraph 1.a)

³ "Provisional Outline of the New Strategic Framework" (PC 128/2) and CL 164/6 Rev. 1, paragraph 7; and CL 164/REP, paragraph 18 a) and b).

⁴ Basic Texts Volume II, Section F. "Schedule for Governing Body Input and Oversight Under The Reformed Programming, Budgeting and Results Based Monitoring Systems"

FAO's Strategic Framework: Context and Content

7. There are four new elements that will guide and/or influence the development of the new Strategic Framework, as outlined below.
8. One element is the further articulation of FAO's new results framework under the overarching framework of the Agenda 2030. In developing the new results framework, FAO will focus on the Sustainable Development Goals and targets most relevant to its mandate and articulate related programmatic priorities and actions.
9. The guidance from the Council at its 163rd Session is also recalled which, in its review of the Evaluation of FAO's Strategic Results Framework,⁵ noted *inter alia* the need for an FAO strategy that is aligned with the Agenda 2030 and the repositioning of the UN development system (UNDS), and an inclusive process for the development of the new Strategic Framework (including results indicators).⁶
10. A second element will be the review of *new global trends and challenges* that will influence food and agriculture in the coming decades. The review would deepen the understanding of the challenges that agriculture, rural development and food systems are facing now and will be facing into the 21st century, and ensure they are appropriately addressed in how FAO does its work, including on issues such as climate change, migration and urbanization.
11. A third element which will guide the development of the Strategic Framework is the *new vision* articulated by the Director-General for a dynamic and innovative FAO in a world where challenges are complex and interrelated and in which food and agriculture, people's livelihoods and wellbeing, as well as preservation of natural resources cannot be addressed in isolation. Agricultural food systems, agro-environment, agro-food industries, nutrition and health will be key aspects to consider. Flexible financing, targeted partnerships and innovations in data management, practices, technologies and institutions will also guide the thinking process.
12. And a fourth element is the "*new normalization*" under the global challenge of COVID-19 and to ensure that FAO has a well-articulated approach. COVID-19 brings a large number of uncertainties but is also an opportunity for FAO to bring to bear its technical expertise and to shape, support and influence the global community's response to the pandemic now and into the future, in response to the changing landscape worldwide.

FAO's Results Framework

13. Based on the larger elements of the longer-term Strategic Framework, **FAO's results framework** guides the planning and monitoring of the Organization's work within a biennium through the Programme of Work and Budget and within the four-year Medium Term Plan. Each level of the results framework represents a different type of result to be delivered, starting from what FAO produces (Outputs) contributing to changes at country or wider level (Outcome) and wider development impacts (Strategic Objective). At the core of the framework are the indicators that measure progress at each level of the results chain, providing the basis for assessing and reporting how FAO's actions contribute to changes at national, regional and global level. The main components of FAO's current results framework are shown in *Annex 2*.
14. As required by the Basic Texts, the new Strategic Framework will include Strategic Objectives to be achieved by Members and the international community with support from FAO. These Strategic

⁵ PC 127/2; PC 127/2 Sup.1

⁶ cf. PC 128/2 Sup.1- *Progress Report by management on implementation of the recommendations of the Evaluation of FAO's strategic results framework*

Objectives will be achieved through a proposed set of programmatic priority areas, linked to the global challenges described above. The programmatic priority areas will embody the interconnectedness and indivisibility of the SDGs, and, in order to achieve measurable, sustainable results on the ground, the priority programmes will work through new initiatives such as the Hand-in-Hand Initiative to develop evidence-based, country-led and country-owned policy solutions.

15. Results will be measured through SDG indicators, as well as through non-SDG indicators for areas not as easily linked to existing SDG indicators, e.g. FAO's normative work. Considering the importance of the SDG indicators for which FAO is custodian or contributing agency, the new results framework will include as a minimum these 26 SDG indicators (*Annex 3*).
16. The 2030 Agenda and the UNDS repositioning require an important reframing of FAO's work at country level. FAO needs to position its work in the context of a unified UN approach and adapt its modalities to respond to the shift in the way the UNDS works in support of transformational change.
17. Considering the need to reinforce national ownership, develop country-contextual responses and ensure effective delivery of development results on the ground, in the context of UNDS repositioning, FAO needs to promote a unified FAO, requiring an appropriate approach to results planning, adopting a programmatic management approach and improving the enabling environment to deliver results more efficiently and more effectively, in particular at country level where the SDG agenda is to be adopted and implemented. Furthermore, accelerating the Organization's shift from a prevalently single project-based approach to a programmatic approach that encompasses policy, investment, and normative work as well as technical and operational assistance, would be important to enhance efficiency, quality and impact.
18. Norms and standards (including related data, information and knowledge) are critical for FAO Members' efforts to implement the Decade of Action for Sustainable Development and other multilateral agreements, and to achieve the SDGs. Normative work is a major comparative strength of FAO as a UN Specialized Agency, complementing its operational/development work, and its visibility will be further enhanced in the new Strategic Framework.

Annex 1: Roadmap for consultation on the FAO Strategic Framework

Date	Governing body meeting	Document
2020		
Programme Committee and the Council		
Jun 8-17	128th Programme Committee	Provisional outline of the Strategic Framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusive consultation process based on FAO's Vision and Goals initiated - Consideration of FAO results framework in the context of Agenda 2030 - Regional specificities
Jul 6-10	164th Council	Provisional outline of the Strategic Framework
Regional Conferences:		
Sep - Nov 2020	35th Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific	Results and priorities for FAO in the Regions Regional Conferences to provide guidance on areas of regional priority for FAO's work in 2020-21 and beyond
	35th Regional Conference for the Near East	
	36th Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean	
	31st Regional Conference for Africa	
	6th Informal North American Regional Conference	
	32nd Regional Conference for Europe	
Sep-Oct	Informal meetings	Draft Theory of Change and Change Management Plan
Technical Committees		
Sep 2020- Mar 2021	27th COAG	Results and priorities in FAO technical areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion of technical priorities at respective Technical Committee meetings
	25th COFO	
	34th COFI	
	73rd CCP	
Programme Committee and the Council		
Nov 9-13	129th Programme Committee	Outline of the Strategic Framework and outline of the Medium Term Plan 2022-25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Further inclusive and broad consultation - Regional and technical priorities incorporated - Governing body inputs incorporated - Update of FAO results framework in the context of Agenda 2030
Nov 30-Dec 4	165th Council	Outline of the Strategic Framework and outline of the Medium Term Plan 2022-25
Dec 2020-Mar 2021	Informal meetings of the regional groups	Draft Strategic Framework

Date	Governing body meeting	Document
2021		
Dec 2020-Mar 2021	Informal meetings of the regional groups	Draft Strategic Framework
Programme and Finance Committees, Joint Meeting and the Council		
Mar 22-26	130th Programme Committee	Strategic Framework Medium Term Plan 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2022-23
Mar 22-26	182nd Finance Committee (FC)	Medium Term Plan 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2022-23
Mar 22	Joint Meeting of 130 PC and 182 FC	Medium Term Plan 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2022-23
Mar 29-Apr 2	166th Council	Strategic Framework Medium Term Plan 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2022-23
Jul 12-16	42nd Conference	Strategic Framework Medium Term Plan 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2022-23

Annex 2: FAO's current results framework (2018-21 Medium Term)

FAO's vision

A world free from hunger and malnutrition where food and agriculture contributes to improving the living standards of all, especially the poorest, in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner.

The three Global Goals of Members:

- eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition, progressively ensuring a world in which people at all times have sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life;
- elimination of poverty and the driving forward of economic and social progress for all, with increased food production, enhanced rural development and sustainable livelihoods; and
- sustainable management and utilization of natural resources, including land, water, air, climate and genetic resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

Strategic Objectives

- 1) Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.
- 2) Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable.
- 3) Reduce rural poverty.
- 4) Enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems.
- 5) Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises.

Additional Objective

- 6) Technical quality, statistics and cross-cutting themes (climate change, gender, governance, nutrition).

Core Functions

- 1) Facilitate and support countries in the development and implementation of normative and standard-setting instruments, such as international agreements, codes of conduct, technical standards and others.
- 2) Assemble, analyse, monitor and improve access to data and information, in areas related to FAO's mandate.
- 3) Facilitate, promote and support policy dialogue at global, regional and country levels.
- 4) Advise and support capacity development at country and regional level to prepare, implement, monitor and evaluate evidence-based policies, investments and programmes.
- 5) Advise and support activities that assemble, disseminate and improve the uptake of knowledge, technologies and good practices in the areas of FAO's mandate.
- 6) Facilitate partnerships for food security and nutrition, agriculture and rural development, between governments, development partners, civil society and the private sector.
- 7) Advocate and communicate at national, regional and global levels, in areas of FAO's mandate.

Functional Objectives

- Outreach
- Information Technology
- FAO governance, oversight and direction
- Efficient and effective administration

Annex 3: FAO SDG custodian and contributing agency indicators

Custodian Indicator	Description
2.1.1	Prevalence of undernourishment
2.1.2	Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)
2.3.1	Volume of production per labour unit by classes of farming/pastoral/forestry enterprise size
2.3.2	Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and indigenous status
2.4.1	Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture
2.5.1	Number of plant and animal genetic resources for food and agriculture secured in either medium- or long-term conservation facilities
2.5.2	Proportion of local breeds classified as being at risk of extinction
2.a.1	The agriculture orientation index for government expenditures
2.c.1	Indicator of food price anomalies
5.a.1	(a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure
5.a.2	Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control
6.4.1	Change in water-use efficiency over time
6.4.2	Level of water stress: freshwater withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources
12.3.1	(a) Food loss index and (b) food waste index
14.4.1	Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels
14.6.1	Degree of implementation of international instruments aiming to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing
14.7.1	Sustainable fisheries as a proportion of GDP in small island developing States, least developed countries and all countries
14.b.1	Degree of application of a legal/regulatory/policy/institutional framework which recognizes and protects access rights for small-scale fisheries
15.1.1	Forest area as a proportion of total land area
15.2.1	Progress towards sustainable forest management
15.4.2	Mountain Green Cover Index

FAO SDG contributing indicators

Contributing Indicator	Description
1.4.2	Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, (a) with legally recognized documentation, and (b) who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and type of tenure
1.5.2	Direct economic loss attributed to disasters in relation to global gross domestic product (GDP)
14.c.1	Number of countries making progress in ratifying, accepting and implementing through legal, policy and institutional frameworks, ocean-related instruments that implement international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and their resources
15.3.1	Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area
15.6.1	Number of countries that have adopted legislative, administrative and policy frameworks to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits