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REPORT OF THE TWENTIETH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA

**Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia
16 -20 February 1998**



**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

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TWENTIETH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA**

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 16 - 20 February 1998

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY OF MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS	<u>Pages</u> 3 - 7
---------------------------------	-----------------------

Paragraphs

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

Organization of the Conference	1 - 2
Inaugural Ceremony	3 - 15
Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairmen and Appointment of Rapporteurs	16
Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable	17

II. STATEMENTS

Statement by the Director-General of FAO	18
Statement by the Executive Director of WFP	19 - 20
Country Statements and General Debate	21
Report on FAO Activities in the Region 1996-97	22

III. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Report of the Technical Committee	23 - 24
Resolution ARC/98/RES	25

IV. CONCLUDING ITEMS

Any Other Business	26
Date and Place of the Twenty-First FAO Regional Conference for Africa	27 - 29
Adoption of the Report of the Conference (including the Technical Committee Report)	30
Closure of the Conference	31 - 38

APPENDICES

A:	Agenda of the Regional Conference
B:	List of Participants
C:	List of Documents
D:	Opening Address by the President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, His Excellency Dr. Negaso Gidada
E:	Statement by the Director-General of FAO
F:	Report of the Technical Committee

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Country Statements and General Debate

For the Attention of Governments

The Conference:

1. emphasized that food security, especially household access to food, was crucial to African countries, as it was the key to political stability without which economic and social development would be unattainable; (Paragraph 21a)
2. noted that the private sector was currently playing an important role in the social and economic development of many African countries, and stressed the need to associate it with various activities in follow-up to the World Food Summit; (Paragraph 21c)
3. observed that climatic changes including the “El Nino” phenomenon were having adverse effects on the food production potential of several countries, and recommended regional and sub-regional cooperation as well as the support of the international community in devising appropriate solutions; (Paragraph 21 d)
4. noted the varied conditions that led to internal upheavals and conflicts in some countries with their negative effects on food production, and recommended that neighbouring countries and the international community cooperate with the affected countries in finding appropriate solutions; (Paragraph 21 h)

For the Attention of FAO

The Conference:

5. agreed that strategies which involved increased women’s participation in policy and decision making contributed to increased food security and recommended that necessary programmes and policies be implemented by countries to favour in particular women’s access to technology, appropriate extension services and credit; (Paragraph 21 g)
6. noted the complex multi-sectoral character of food security and urged FAO to support regional economic groupings in the development of joint food security policies and strategies; (Paragraph 21i)
7. appreciated the value of participation by countries in the TCDC programme as an instrument of South-South Cooperation and urged that this be further expanded; (Paragraph 21m)

Report on FAO Activities in the Region 1996-97 - ARC/98/2

For the Attention of Governments

The Conference :

8. appreciated the results of the Pilot Phase of the Special Programme for Food Security and called for coverage of the whole continent; (Paragraph 22b)
9. expressed appreciation for FAO's Investment Centre activities and encouraged the mobilization of additional funds from Regional and Sub-Regional Banks as well as donors for more effective implementation of investment programmes; (Paragraph 22e)

For the Attention of FAO

The Conference:

10. stressed the need for strengthening the capacities of the Regional and Sub-Regional Offices in the area of livestock production and animal health care including shelter for poultry and swine as well as animal feed production; (Paragraph 22d)
11. supported the priority given to sustainable management of natural resources, and urged that more attention be given to watershed development and management as the basis for the conservation and rehabilitation of lands as well as for sustainable irrigation schemes in Africa; (Paragraph 22f)
12. approved the future orientation of the Regional Programmes which involve a Strategic Framework for the post-World Food Summit era and the absolute priority which food security represents for the region and endorsed the policy objective of increased food production and food security through:
 - i. expansion of irrigated agriculture as planned in the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS);
 - ii. conservation and rehabilitation of lands;
 - iii. increased empowerment of rural women in food production;
 - iv. capacity building for non-governmental organizations and farmers' associations for food security and sustainable agriculture;
 - v. integrated management of terrestrial, marine and freshwater resources;
 - vi. strengthening of national and regional institutions' capacity and regional cooperation in the control of plant and animal pests and diseases.
(Paragraph 22i)
13. noted with satisfaction the beginning of trilateral cooperation among African countries and FAO, through the Director-General's "South-South Cooperation" initiative and FAO's different partnership programmes, especially TCDC, and recommended that such cooperation be further strengthened;(Paragraph 22 j)

Report of the Technical Committee: World Food Summit (WFS) Follow-up

For the Attention of Governments:

The Conference:

14. emphasized the need to use the expertise available in the Regional and Sub-Regional Offices of FAO to find solutions to problems associated with livestock; (Paragraph 12h)

15. further recommended that the existing cooperation between FAO and various regional and sub-regional groupings and commissions be further strengthened; (Paragraph 12m)

For the Attention of FAO

The Conference:

16. underlined the importance of the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS) in realising the objective of food security and recommended that the Director-General of FAO intensify his laudable efforts to mobilize funds for financing projects within this framework; (Paragraph 12c)

17. further recommended that the existing cooperation between FAO and various regional and sub-regional groupings and commissions be further strengthened; (Paragraph 12m)

18. recommended the preparation by the Regional Office of a synthesis of African national reports to facilitate the work of the Africa Group at the meeting of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in 1999; (Paragraph 12n)

19. commended FAO for the FIVIMS which is a major effort for quantifying food security needs and recommended that FAO intensify its efforts in this direction; (Paragraph 12o)

Report of the Technical Committee: Agricultural Policy for Sustainable Use and Management of Natural Resources

For the Attention of Governments

The Conference:

20. took cognizance of the need for Member States to develop and harmonize their national forestry and agricultural policies as specified in Agenda 21 of the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED); (Paragraph 13i)

21. noted that countries outside the Africa Region had experience in watershed development and management which could be of direct benefit to countries of the region and recommended the development of capacities in this area through FAO's TCDC Programme, focusing on marginal zones and poorest farmers; (Paragraph 13j)

22. endorsed the conclusions and recommendations highlighted in paragraph 62 of the document which is attached as Annex A for presentation to the Plenary Session of the 20th FAO Regional Conference for Africa, for consideration and possible adoption; (Paragraph 13n)

For the Attention of FAO

The Conference :

23. recommended that the document define the role of the private and public sectors in the agricultural development process; (Paragraph 13e)
24. recommended further analysis related to issues of privatization and land tenure; (Paragraph 13f)

Report of the Technical Committee: Representation of the Region on the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)For the Attention of Governments

The Conference:

25. recommended that for the period 1999-2002 the regional representative to the CGIAR be selected by Association for strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) and from its sub-region, in view of the fact that in 1994, the regional representative was selected from the Southern African centre for Cooperation in Agricultural Research (SACCAR) sub-region for the period 1994-98 and that in 1996, the regional representative was selected from Conference of Directors of Agricultural Research in Western and Central Africa (CORAF) sub-region for the period 1997-2000; (Paragraph 15d)

Report of the Technical Committee: Progress on the Common African Agricultural Programme (CAAP)For the Attention of Governments

The Conference:

26. recommended that participants constitute themselves into promoters of CAAP, and in this regard, urged member countries to designate CAAP focal points in their respective ministries; (Paragraph 16e)

For the Attention of FAO

The Conference :

27. recommended that the Director-General continue to monitor progress on CAAP, and report to the 21st Regional Conference on cooperation on CAAP development received from Member States since the 20th Session and corresponding achievements; (Paragraph 16f)
28. further recommended that the Director-General continue to support the OAU/AEC Secretariat, to the extent possible, in moving the CAAP process forward; (Paragraph 16g)

Report of the Technical Committee: Forest Genetic Resources

For the Attention of FAO

The Conference:

29. recommended that FAO collaborate with the African Timber Organization in planning a Workshop for the Central African Region, similar to those which were scheduled for the Southern and Eastern African Sub-Regions in collaboration with IPGRI, ICRAF, SADC and IGAD; (Paragraph 17c)

Date and Place of the Twenty-First FAO Regional Conference for Africa

For the Attention of FAO

The Conference:

30. was reminded of the usual practice in the selection of the venue for its next Session and in this regard consultations were continuing for the selection of a host country from the Central African Region. The decision would be communicated to FAO in due course. However, the Cameroon delegation informed the Conference that its country would be willing to host the 21st Regional Conference if that was the outcome of the consultations; (Paragraph 27)

31. The delegation of Egypt offered to host the Twenty-First FAO Regional Conference for Africa in case a host could not be found from the Central African Region. (Paragraph 28)

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

Organization of the Conference

1. The Twentieth Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa was held in the United Nations Conference Centre, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 16 to 20 February 1998.
2. The Conference was attended by 179 delegates from 46 Member Nations of the Region, 25 of which were represented at ministerial level; 15 observers from Member Nations outside the Region, one observer from the Holy See, 26 representatives of the United Nations Specialized Agencies, 26 observers from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. A list of participants is given as Appendix B. The list of documents is given in Appendix C.

Inaugural Ceremony

3. The inaugural ceremony was held at the same venue and the Conference was formally opened by the President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, His Excellency Dr. Negaso Gidada. Opening statements were also made by the Director-General of FAO, Dr. Jacques Diouf, the UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Secretary of the ECA, Dr. K. Y. Amoako and the Acting Secretary-General of the OAU, Ambassador A. Haggag.
4. In opening the Conference, the President welcomed all to this Session which was dedicated to issues of food security and sustainable rural and agricultural development in Africa. He reminded delegates of the enormity of the task ahead, as it concerned both the economic needs of the African peoples and the dignity and self-respect of all Africans. He recalled the immense agricultural potential of the continent and said that despite some successes, we were not yet in a position to claim that Africa's difficulties were behind her because we were yet to ensure sustainable growth and development in all areas of economic activity, including the agricultural sector.
5. He stressed that Africa still remained a region of incalculable human misery and that the problems of hunger and food insecurity were likely to persist unless urgent, determined and concerted actions were taken. Appropriate policies and strategies designed to promote sustainable rural and agricultural development and food security through increased food self-sufficiency in line with the objectives of the Rome Declaration on World Food Security, needed to be put in place. He elaborated on Ethiopia's experience in trying to ensure food self-sufficiency and food security at the national level. He urged the Conference to come up with sound and practical recommendations that would address Africa's agricultural and food security challenges.
6. The President finally expressed his sincere appreciation to the Director-General and his staff for their contributions to food security and overall agricultural development, and he wished the Conference successful deliberations. The full text of the President's statement is contained in Appendix D.

7. In his Statement, the FAO Director-General thanked the highest authorities of Ethiopia for their warm welcome and cordiality and recalled strong emotions on his return to Ethiopia, a country that epitomized all the diversity, wealth and potential of the continent as well as challenges associated with food security and sustainable utilization of natural resources. He said that FAO was keen to reinforce the excellent cooperation it had with the OAU and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in their common concern for social and economic development of the continent.

8. The Director-General highlighted the main achievements of the Organization which, *inter alia*, included the World Food Summit (WFS) and the consequent initiatives to implement the resulting Plan of Action, the Special Programme for Food Security operational in 29 countries, 17 of which are in Africa, the Emergency Prevention System for Transboundary Animal and Plant Pests and Diseases (EMPRES) and the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information Mapping System (FIVIMS). He mentioned various workshops which had provided assistance to countries in areas of policy, property rights, trade and nutrition and affirmed that the Organization would work closely with the World Trade Organization (WTO), World Bank and UNCTAD in future trade negotiations. Furthermore, he outlined benefits of the WFS such as Telefood, "Food for All" campaigns and South-South Cooperation. He mentioned a series of inter-agency cooperation activities for implementing and monitoring the Summit Plan of Action.

9. He also briefly identified other achievements resulting from FAO initiatives which have had world-wide impact, relating to plant genetic resources, forests and fisheries as well as in the areas of information dissemination and management, grassroots participation and the role of women as well as FAO's concern for promoting investment in agriculture.

10. Finally, the Director-General underlined how the restructuring and decentralisation of FAO had proceeded under severe budgetary constraints and recalled the worsening food situation in Africa and its underlying causes. This had necessitated assigning the highest priority to food security involving the harnessing of water programmes for effective utilization and conservation of land resources, fisheries and forestry and the application of appropriate science and technology research systems. The related emphasis on sustainable utilization and management of natural resources and food security was necessary as they posed a challenge in Africa which had to be addressed. It was thus appropriate that these issues were to be underscored during the Conference. The full text of the Director-General's statement is contained in Appendix E.

11. In his statement Dr. K. Y. Amoako, UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Secretary of the ECA, welcomed all to the Economic Commission for Africa and to the UN Conference Centre especially the FAO Director-General and the FAO delegation and expressed his appreciation for their tireless efforts in working with member countries to address the issues of food production and food security. He recalled the problems of Africa's agriculture and food situation and the inadequate responsiveness of agriculture to the broad policy reforms undertaken in the continent and highlighted the enormous challenges for Africa in matching its population growth with its natural resources.

12. He affirmed that while these challenges were formidable, they could be surmounted and enumerated some success stories in this regard. He commended FAO in general and the Director-General in particular for the outstanding work that had been done in promoting food security. In this connection, he mentioned ECA's activities in the same area, and assured the Conference that areas and modalities for enhancing the existing partnership between the two sister organizations would be developed in the near future.

13. In his statement the Organization for Africa Unity (OAU) Acting Secretary-General, Ambassador A. Haggag, thanked the Director-General for the good cooperation OAU had been having from FAO and assured him of OAU's confidence in the work of FAO to improve the quality of life of the African peoples. He expressed appreciation for the initiative taken by FAO to establish a Subregional Office for Southern and East Africa and drew attention to the fact that in spite of the outstanding activities carried out by the OAU Member States themselves, by FAO, the OAU Secretariat, international, regional organizations and the donor community, the food situation in Africa was on the whole very serious and alarming.

14. He catalogued the shortcomings of the African economic situation resulting from conflicts, nutritionally inadequate diets, dwindling food reserves and poor agricultural strategies, the burden of external debt, unfavourable international trade and natural disasters. However, he believed that the continent had potential with its vast nutritional resources from both land and sea. Activities such as the World Food Summit offered the will and national commitment to eradicate hunger in the countries of Africa where attainment of world food security was acknowledged as the most pressing challenge facing humanity. He applauded FAO and its Director-General for bringing the issue of food and nutrition into focus and reiterated OAU support to FAO's laudable initiatives in developing strategies for agriculture and food security.

15. He maintained that economic integration and cooperation at the sub-regional and regional levels played a major role in Africa's overall development and that the spirit of cooperation among member States was stronger than ever. In this regard he referred to the Common African Agricultural Programme (CAAP), a joint effort between FAO and OAU which was designed to ensure food security. Finally, he urged that the Conference serve as a major reference point for assessing the quality and quantity of sustainable food and agricultural development in Africa and recalled the need for peace to ensure this development.

Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairmen and Appointment of Rapporteurs

16. The Conference considered the recommendations made by the Africa Group of Permanent Representatives to FAO in Rome regarding the officers to service this session of Conference, and approved by acclamation the composition of the bureau as follows:

Chairman:	Dr Seyfu Ketema, Minister of Agriculture of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
First Vice-Chairman:	Mr Mawampanga Mwana Nanga, Minister of Agriculture and Livestock of the Democratic Republic of Congo
Second Vice-Chairman:	Mr Roland C. Massaquoi, Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Liberia
Rapporteur:	Dr Khorshed Ginwala Ambassador of South Africa to Italy and Permanent Representative to FAO

Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

17. The Conference then considered and adopted the agenda and timetable (Appendix A).

II. STATEMENTS

Statement by the Director-General of FAO

18. The Director-General made his statement during the inaugural ceremony, which is reproduced in Appendix E.

Statement by the Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP)

19. In her statement to the Conference, Ms Bertini enumerated areas in which significant progress had been made by the African countries in the economic and political fields and stressed that growth with equity was needed to end hunger in the African context. She justified the need to invest in farmers and not just farming and related this to the emphasis on women during the World Food Summit. She identified the most important role of women in agriculture in African countries and explained that in order to combat malnutrition and hunger, they were the ones who should be targeted.

20. She highlighted the close cooperation between FAO and its Director-General and WFP in implementing follow-up activities to the World Food Summit but most importantly, she pointed out that WFP had made massive investments in the health and nutrition of the people of Africa and supported their efforts to feed themselves. She detailed some of the more recent activities of WFP in assisting African countries and reiterated the success that FAO, IFAD and WFP, working together, had achieved in breaking the vicious cycle of hunger and poverty. Finally, she reiterated that Governments and UN agencies could make a transformation in the lives of the poor by providing the support necessary for women and men and children to move from poverty to self-reliance, from hunger to food security.

Country Statements and General Debate

21. The Conference heard the presentations of 30 delegates and observers under this agenda item as well as that of the Executive Director of the World Food Programme. The Conference commended the Director-General of FAO, Dr. Jacques Diouf, for his outstanding leadership and expressed satisfaction for the efficient way which he had put the world food situation in focus by organizing the World Food Summit which resulted in strong political commitments that should lead to increased food production and food security in many countries in Africa. The Conference reiterated that the primary responsibility for implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action rested with each country. Most of the countries declared that they were implementing the World Food Summit Plan of Action through various programmes and activities that were addressing many of their food production issues. Many had formed WFS National Committees. The Conference concurred that the first TeleFood had been successful in mobilizing civil society and arousing awareness of the serious problem of food security and its adverse consequences for the survival of millions of people in Africa. The funds raised during the event - which were being utilized to support community-based food production schemes run by farmers themselves - gave added relevance to TeleFood.

The Conference noted the constraints affecting sustainable agriculture and rural development in member countries and stressed the importance of technical and economic cooperation among African countries to achieve common goals in the areas of food production, food security and poverty alleviation. In particular, the Conference:

- a. emphasized that food security, especially household access to food, was crucial to African countries, as it was the key to political stability without which economic and social development would be unattainable;
- b. noted that poverty was projected to increase in Africa over the next decade, including slower food production output compared to other regions, and that improvement of the income of rural people should become an important element of national food security strategies;
- c. noted that the private sector was currently playing an important role in the social and economic development of many African countries, and stressed the need to associate it with various activities in follow-up to the World Food Summit;
- d. observed that climatic changes including the “El Niño” phenomenon were having adverse effects on the food production potential of several countries, and recommended regional and sub-regional cooperation as well as the support of the international community in devising appropriate solutions;
- e. emphasized the importance of training, extension and technology transfer in food security and urged countries to create an enabling environment for small producers’ access to them;
- f. observed that agricultural development strategies which gave due consideration to the distribution of improved farming inputs to small producers and access to credit have had a positive impact on food production and urged African countries to take these aspects into account in the formulation of their food security strategies;
- g. agreed that strategies which involved increased women’s participation in policy and decision making contributed to increased food security and recommended that necessary programmes and policies be implemented by countries to favour in particular women’s access to technology, appropriate extension services and credit;
- h. noted the varied conditions that led to internal upheavals and conflicts in some countries, with negative effects on food production, and recommended that neighbouring countries and the international community cooperate with the affected countries in finding appropriate solutions;
- i. noted the complex multi-sectoral character of food security and urged FAO to support regional economic groupings in the development of joint food security policies and strategies;
- j. concurred with the emphasis placed on the conservation, rational utilization and management of natural resources, including water, land, forests and fisheries for sustainable food security for all Africans;
- k. noted that a number of Governments were progressively liberalizing and deregulating their agricultural markets as a measure aimed at achieving food security;
- l. noted external debt as a constraint to allocating sufficient funds to agricultural and rural development;

m. appreciated the value of participation countries in the TCDC programme as an instrument of South-South Cooperation and urged that this be further expanded.

Report on FAO Activities in the Region 1996-97 - ARC/98/2

22. The Conference congratulated FAO for the clear and succinct report on its activities during the biennium. It expressed appreciation for the devotion of the Director-General and his staff in implementing FAO programmes in the Region. It noted that continued population growth has further increased pressure on the natural resource base resulting in the depletion of soil fertility, accelerated desertification and water stress, particularly in drought-prone agro-ecological areas while 54 percent of the population of the region live in absolute poverty. The Conference further noted with concern that Africa was the only region where poverty had been increasing. It welcomed the decentralization process which had brought FAO closer to Member Nations thus enhancing the impact of its programmes. It urged FAO to continue good work and to formulate more development assistance programmes in order to promote consistent economic recovery in the Region. The Conference, in particular:

a. commended FAO for implementing the recommendations of the 19th Regional Conference for Africa, specifically with regard to the promotion of research, technology assessment and expansion of the Special Programme for Food Security to additional countries in the region thus bringing the total of operational programmes to 16.

b. appreciated the results of the Pilot Phase of the Special Programme for Food Security and called for coverage of the whole continent.

c. noted the results of the Emergency Prevention System (EMPRES) for Transboundary Animal and Plant Pests and Diseases and called for its expansion to other countries.

d. stressed the need for strengthening the capacities of the Regional and Sub-Regional Offices in the area of livestock production and animal health care including shelter for poultry and swine as well as animal feed production.

e. expressed appreciation for FAO's Investment Centre activities and encouraged the mobilization of additional funds from Regional and Sub-Regional Banks as well as donors for more effective implementation of investment programmes.

f. supported the priority given to sustainable management of natural resources, and urged that more attention be given to watershed development and management as the basis for conservation and rehabilitation of lands as well as for sustainable irrigation schemes in Africa.

g. noted that the International Scheme for the Conservation and Rehabilitation of African Lands (ISCRAL) was an on going programme of work of the Regional and Sub-Regional Offices designed to foster rational land use by applying physical and biological measures to conserve soil and water, thereby restoring fertility and curbing erosion.

h. commended FAO for the success of the Integrated Pest Management Project, especially for the training of farmers through the Farmer Field Schools, which had enabled farmers in their crop production efforts to achieve higher revenue and save on the high cost of pesticides.

i. approved the future orientation of regional programmes which involves a Strategic

Framework for the post-World Food Summit era and the absolute priority which food security represents for the region, and endorsed the policy objective of increased food production and food security through:

- i. expansion of irrigated agriculture as planned in the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS);
 - ii. conservation and rehabilitation of lands;
 - iii. increased empowerment of rural women in food production;
 - iv. capacity building for non-governmental organizations and farmers' associations for food security and sustainable agriculture;
 - v. integrated management of terrestrial, marine and freshwater resources;
 - vi. strengthening of national and regional institutions' capacity and regional cooperation in the control of plant and animal pests and diseases.
- j. noted with satisfaction the beginning of trilateral cooperation among African countries and FAO, through the Director-General's "South-South Cooperation" initiative and FAO's different partnership programmes, especially TCDC, and recommended that such cooperation be further strengthened.

III. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Report of the Technical Committee:

23. The Report of the Technical Committee, ARC/98/TC, was presented by the Rapporteur for consideration and adoption by the Conference, viz:

ARC/98/4

(Agenda Item 4): World Food Summit: Follow-up

- i. Conclusions and Recommendations: paragraph 12 of the report of the Technical Committee.

ARC/98/3

(Agenda Item 6): Agricultural Policy for Sustainable Use and Management of Natural Resources in Africa

- i. Conclusions and Recommendations: paragraph 13 of the report of the Technical Committee and Document ARC/98/REC attached.

ARC/98/INF/5

(Agenda Item 5): Common African Agricultural Programme (CAAP)

- i. Conclusions and Recommendations: paragraph 16 of the report of the Technical Committee.

ARC/98/5
(Agenda Item 7): Future of the Center on Integrated Rural Development for Africa (CIRDAFRICA)

The Conference received a briefing from the Governing Council on the outcome of its deliberations, including, *inter alia*, that the centre should (i) be maintained, (ii) be provided with adequate financial support by member countries for its revitalization and (iii) be restructured.

ARC/98/6
(Agenda Item 8): Representation of the Region on the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)

i. Conclusions and Recommendations: paragraph 15, The Conference noted that the meeting of ASARECA would take place in Arusha, Tanzania in the last week of February, 1998.

ARC/98/INF/6
(Agenda Item 9): Forest Genetic Resources

i. Conclusions and Recommendations: paragraph 17.

24. After detailed examination and subsequent discussions, the Conference amended and adopted the Report of the Technical Committee. This document is contained in Appendix F.

Resolution

25. The Conference also unanimously adopted the following Resolution: "World Food Summit: Follow-up", ARC/98/RES.

ARC/98/RES

20TH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA

RESOLUTION

WORLD FOOD SUMMIT: FOLLOW-UP

THE CONFERENCE:

Recalling that the World Food Summit (WFS) was convened in Rome from 11 to 17 November 1996 at the level of Heads of State and Government to renew global commitment to the task of eliminating hunger and malnutrition and to achieve sustainable food security;

Noting with appreciation that African Leaders were among the 186 Heads of Delegation which adopted the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and World Food Summit Plan of Action;

Congratulates the FAO and the Director-General for this noteworthy achievement in that the Summit has sensitized the world community and countries to the need to eliminate hunger and malnutrition and to promote sustainable agriculture and rural development.

Having considered the initiatives taken by FAO and FAO Members to implement the Summit Plan of Action.

1. Endorses the ongoing FAO priority programmes formulated in response to the outcome of the Summit including, *inter alia*, Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems (FIVIMS), the expansion of the Special Programme for Food Security and the Emergency Prevention System for Transboundary Animal and Plant Pest and Diseases (EMPRES);
2. Supports the implementation of the Decentralization policy which has brought the activities of the Organization closer and strengthened FAO's ability to support Member Nations in their implementation of the Summit Plan of Action and related programmes;
3. Welcomes the initiatives taken by FAO to prepare draft Strategies for national Agricultural Development – Horizon 2010, for review, amendment and adoption by the Governments concerned;
4. Supports the priority given to water resource development and management, particularly small-scale irrigation under the Special Programme for Food Security;
5. Recognizes the advantages of South-South Cooperation, such as the TCDC programmes promoted by FAO;
6. Welcomes with appreciation the success achieved by the first TeleFood which was organized in conjunction with the 1997 World Food Day and urges Member Nations to take all appropriate measures to promote the TeleFood initiative in 1998 and subsequent years;
7. Encourages FAO to increase the mobilization of donor funding for FAO's programmes and projects;
8. Recommends the use of the expertise available in the Regional and Sub-regional Offices of FAO to find solutions to problems associated with livestock;
9. Recommends that Governments develop policies that involve NGOs and civil society in the effort to ensure food security at the household level, giving full attention to the role of women and the needs of children;
10. Recommends that countries co-ordinate their efforts at the sub-regional and regional levels to monitor and evaluate the follow-up activities of the WFS;
11. Further recommends that the existing cooperation between FAO, the UN System and African Regional and Sub-regional Organizations and Commissions be further strengthened.

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
20 February 1998

IV. CONCLUDING ITEMS

Any Other Business

26. There was none.

Date and Place of the Twenty-First FAO Regional Conference for Africa

27. The Conference was reminded of the usual practice in the selection of the venue for its next Session and in this regard consultations were continuing for the selection of a host country from the Central African Region. The decision would be communicated to FAO in due course. However, the Cameroon delegation informed the Conference that its country would be willing to host the 21st Regional Conference if that was the outcome of the consultations.

28. The delegation of Egypt offered to host the Twenty-First FAO Regional Conference for Africa in case a host could not be found from the Central African Region.

29. The Secretariat then provided the delegations concerned with copies of "The Standard Memorandum of Responsibilities" for Member Nations expressing the wish to host the Regional Conference.

Adoption of the Report of the Conference (including the Technical Committee Report)

30. The Conference then considered and, after some amendments, adopted its Report by acclamation.

Closure of the Conference

31. In a brief statement, FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa Mr B.F. Dada congratulated the participants for a very successful Conference and recalled that the Technical Committee meeting preceding the Conference had deliberated at length upon the progress, prospects and situation of food and agriculture in Africa. Ways and means had been found to harmonize and coordinate agriculture and rural development policies and programmes.

32. Recalling the various documents submitted by the secretariat for consideration by the Conference, he expressed deep appreciation to delegates and observers for their active participation during the Conference and for the high quality of the debate. He referred to the major outcomes of the Conference in endorsing initiatives taken by FAO within the framework of the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and World Food Summit Plan of Action, which include, *inter alia*, Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems (FIVIMS), the expansion of the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS) and the Emergency Prevention System (EMPRES) for Transboundary Animal and Plant Pest Diseases, and congratulated the Conference for adopting the Resolution on World Food Summit Follow-up and supporting FAO's decentralization policy.

33. He enumerated a number of development issues that were raised during the Conference and said that they would be considered for discussions during forthcoming sessions of the Conference. He pledged the continued commitment of FAO and its Regional and Sub-Regional Offices to assist Member States in their agricultural development, food security and poverty alleviation endeavours. He further commended the Conference for the interest shown in some of the programmes of FAO and said that FAO would spare no efforts to work with other organizations and Member States for a full realization of the benefits of these programmes.

34. Finally, he once again expressed his thanks to the President, the Government and people of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for hosting the Conference and for the warm hospitality that was extended to delegates, observers and FAO staff during their stay in Addis Ababa.

35. In moving the vote of thanks, Mrs Edith Z. Nawakwi, Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries of the Republic of Zambia, expressed gratitude and appreciation to the President, the Government and people of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, for hosting the Conference and thanked them for their warm welcome and hospitality. She said that happy memories would be taken back home by all participants. She affirmed that a new partnership had emerged among all participants at the Conference with renewed commitment for sustainable rural and agricultural development and food security and for the eradication of poverty in Africa.

36. She praised FAO for organizing the 20th Session of the FAO Regional Conference and for the initiative taken in formulating the topics discussed. She called for increased collaboration with multilateral and bilateral organizations as well as donor agencies in order to help countries achieve the objectives of the various programmes. She finally thanked the Secretariat and all those who had in various ways contributed to the organization of a successful Conference.

37. In his closing remarks, the Chairman, Dr. Seyfu Ketema, Minister of Agriculture of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, congratulated the participants for a successful Conference and commended all involved including the Secretariat and supporting staff for producing a valuable report. He said that this was an indication of their high sense of duty and dedication. He recalled the speech of the President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the opening Session of the Conference in which he referred to the unreliability of rain-fed agriculture. In this regard he complimented the Conference for coming up with suitable and practical suggestions and recommendations for sustainable agricultural development.

38. Recalling FAO's efforts to eradicate hunger, he congratulated the organizers including the National Executive Committee and Conference staff, for the organization of the Conference. Finally, while expressing hope for a speedy and successful implementation of its decisions and recommendations, he declared the Twentieth Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa closed.

Agricultural Policy for Sustainable Use and Management of National Resources in Africa

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
ADOPTED BY THE TWENTIETH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA

Rapid population growth coupled with serious difficulties policy makers encounter in designing and implementing policies that could promote a widespread gender-sensitive adoption of agricultural technologies and practices that are not only productivity-improving, but also environmentally sustainable, explain the current high rate of natural resource degradation in the region.

The following policy options could be considered by policy-makers in Africa in an effort to achieve a broad-based gender-sensitive agricultural growth and development, while preserving the natural resource base and improving its long-term productive capacity:

1. Create political and social institutions which promote good governance; develop a broad partnership in the area of natural resource use and management.
2. Specify the division of labour between the private sector, farmers, NGOs and government;
3. Using cross-sectoral approaches, design and implement macro-economic and sectoral policy reforms; formulate a national environmental policy; and encourage the development of rural infrastructure and support services;
4. Explore incremental approaches to change in indigenous land tenure; enact laws that specify tenancy rights and ensure security even under customary land tenure arrangements; and develop national land-use planning institution and capacity;
5. Encourage improved relative agricultural commodity prices through liberalization and privatization of product and factor markets;
6. Encourage widespread use of fertilizers and other technology-carrying inputs through improvement in input procurement and delivery systems, and promote the utilization of organic fertilizer;
7. Promote community involvement in the management of livestock resources; improve animal husbandry and privatize, where possible, veterinary services; and encourage destocking through education and better market links and information;
8. Adopt a participatory approach to irrigation policy formulation and appraisal, and encourage the development of farmers-owned and operated irrigation infrastructure;
9. Design a proper fisheries management framework and strengthening regional cooperation;

10. While keeping in mind the existing land tenure, encourage the participation of private sector and individuals in timber and fuelwood planting; privatize the reforestation services, reassess stumpage fees, and facilitate access to soft credit schemes for tree and fuelwood planting, reforestation and rehabilitation of degraded areas;

11. Promote alternative sources of energy inputs, both conventional and renewable, to enhance productivity of the sector and to address rural household energy needs; and

12. Promote the establishment and use, as a decision-making tool, modern environmental information systems.

13. Promote national forestry policies within the context of regional cooperation, taking into account indicators of sustainability - as recommended in Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development - in order to achieve a sound management of the interface between forestry and agriculture in Africa.

In a few words, governments have to create a new partnership of shared responsibilities and mutual assistance among all the stakeholders concerned by agricultural development and thus the sustainability of natural resources.

AGENDATechnical Committee Meeting*16 - 18 February 1998*

- I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS
 - 1. Opening of the Technical Committee
 - 2. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairmen and Appointment of Rapporteur
 - 3. Adoption of Agenda and Timetable
- II. SELECTED ISSUES IN AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
 - 4. Report on the World Food Summit Follow-up
 - 5. Agricultural Policy for Sustainable Use and Management of Natural Resources in Africa
 - 6. Future of the CIRDAFRICA
 - 7. Representation of the Region on the CGIAR
 - 8. Progress Report on the Common African Agricultural Programme (CAAP)
 - 9. Forest Genetic Resources
- III. OTHER MATTERS
- IV. CONCLUDING ITEMS
 - 10. Adoption of the Report of the Technical Committee
 - 11. Closure of the Technical Committee Meeting

Plenary Session*19 - 20 February 1998*

- I INTRODUCTORY ITEMS
 - 1. Inaugural Ceremony
 - 2. Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairmen and Appointment of Rapporteur
 - 3. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable
- II. STATEMENTS
 - 4. Statement by the Director-General
 - 5. Country Statements and General Debate on the Food and Agriculture Situation in the Region.
 - 6. Report on FAO Activities in the Region 1996 - 97
- III. DISCUSSION ITEMS
 - 7. Report on the World Food Summit Follow-Up
 - 8. Agricultural Policy for Sustainable Use and Management of Natural Resources in Africa
 - 9. Future of CIRDAFRICA
 - 10. Progress Report on the Common African Agricultural Programme (CAAP)
 - 11. Forest Genetic Resources
- IV. CONCLUDING ITEMS
 - 12. Any Other Business
 - 13. Date and Place of the 21st Regional Conference for Africa
 - 14. Adoption of the Report of the Conference (including the Technical Committee Report)
 - 15. Closure of the Conference

APPENDIX B

TWENTIETH REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 16-20 February 1998

VINGTIEME CONFERENCE REGIONALE POUR L'AFRIQUE
Addis Abeba, Ethiopie, 16-20 février 1998

PROVISIONAL LIST OF DELEGATES
(As of 20 February 1998)

LISTE PROVISOIRE DES DELEGUES
(Au 20 février 1998)

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First Vice-Chairman: Premier Vice-Président	Mr. Mawampanga Mwana Nanga Minister for Agriculture and Livestock of the Democratic Republic of Congo
Second Vice-Chairman: Deuxième Vice-Président	Mr. Roland C. Massaquoi Minister for Agriculture of Liberia
Rapporteur:	Dr. Khorshed Ginwala Ambassador of South Africa to Italy and Permanent Representative to FAO

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Second Vice-Chairman : Deuxième Vice-Président:	Mr. Eric G. Eastman, Deputy Minister Ministry of Agriculture, Planning and Development of the Republic of Liberia
Rapporteur:	Dr. Khorshed Ginwala Ambassador of South Africa to Italy and Permanent Representative to FAO

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LIST OF DOCUMENTS

- ARC/98/1 Provisional Annotated Agenda
- ARC/98/2 Report on FAO Activities in the Region 1996-97
- ARC/98/3 Agricultural Policies for Sustainable Use and Management of Natural Resources in Africa
- ARC/98/4 World Food Summit Follow-Up
- ARC/98/5 Future of the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Africa (CIRDAFRICA)
- ARC/98/6 Representation of the Region on the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)

INF SERIES

- ARC/98/INF/1 Provisional List of Documents
- ARC/98/INF/2 Provisional Timetable
- ARC/98/INF/3 Information Note
- ARC/98/INF/4 Statement of the Director-General
- ARC/98/INF/5 Progress on the Common African Agricultural Programme (CAAP)
- ARC/98/INF/6 Forestry Phylogenetic Resources

**OPENING ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA, HIS EXCELLENCY DR. NEGASO GIDADA,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE INAUGURAL CEREMONY OF THE
20TH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA**

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 19th February 1998

Honourable Ministers,

H.E. Dr. Jacques Diouf, Director-General of the
Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations,

H.E. Dr. K.Y. Amoako,
Executive Secretary of the Economic
Commission for Africa,

H.E. the Assistant Secretary General
of the Organization of African Unity,

Dear Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to welcome you all to Addis Ababa for this important Regional Conference which is called upon to address issues of food security and sustainable rural and agricultural development in Africa. This 20th FAO Regional Conference for Africa provides our Ministers, with the mandate in this vital area, the opportunity to share experiences and exchange views on the challenges we face with regard to achieving food security in our respective countries and to carrying out successful programmes of sustainable rural and agricultural development.

Your task is extremely important, not only in terms of the economic needs of our peoples but also from the point of view of African dignity and African self-respect. Continent which fails to feed itself and countries and peoples who depend on others for their food requirement can hardly be taken seriously by partners and by others. Therefore, because of a whole range of reasons, there is no greater and a more urgent priority for Africa than achieving food security through sustainable agricultural development.

Honourable Delegates,

Our Continent is a region of immense potentials, including in the agricultural area. We indeed have great possibilities for changing the economic situation in our region as we in fact have begun to do over the past few years. That Africa is not destined to wallow in poverty has become obvious as a result of some real progress achieved by a number of African countries over the past four to five years. The political gains we have made are notable. So have been the gains registered in the economic area. These have been the results of bold economic reform measures taken by these African countries and of the adoption of appropriate macro-economic policies with the necessary monetary and fiscal discipline.

But we are not yet in a position to claim that Africa's difficulties are behind it because we are yet to ensure sustainable growth and development in all areas of economic activity, including in the agricultural sector. In this regard, there is a lot to be done to ensure sustainable development in Africa. Despite some encouraging developments in recent years, Africa still remains a region of incalculable human misery which is the key explanation for the so many conflict situations that have marked the Continent's recent history. There are millions of people in our region who do not have enough food to meet their basic nutritional needs. The problems of hunger and food insecurity in Africa are likely to persist and even increase dramatically unless urgent, determined and concerted actions are taken.

Honourable Delegates,

We have to overcome these challenges by promoting appropriate policies and strategies. These policies should be realized by mobilizing and galvanizing agricultural resources through improved agricultural practices, the development of agricultural infrastructure and introduction of modern inputs. These and other measures designed to foster sustainable rural and agricultural development in general and food security and food self-sufficiency in particular, are in line with the objectives of the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

This Conference coming as it does a little more than a year after the summit provides you an opportunity to consider the experiences of each country in the implementation of the Rome Declaration. In my capacity as a member of the Board of patrons of the World Food Summit, I am particularly hopeful that your deliberations will come up with sound recommendations that will help us meet the challenges of implementing the seven commitments, freely and solemnly made by all our countries and development partners at the World Food Summit in Rome.

Honourable Delegates,

We in Ethiopia have taken a series of measures designed to ensure food self-sufficiency and food security at the national level. We have devised an economic policy based on "Agricultural-Development-Led Industrialization Strategy". The bedrock of this strategy is achieving accelerated growth in the agricultural sector through, among other things, enhancing productivity in small-holdings and encouraging large-scale farms where suitable.

In the implementation of this strategy, the extension packages that have been put in place have played a pivotal role. As a result, agricultural production of small-holder farmers participating in the packages has increased two-to-three folds compared with those using traditional farming practices. We are at present in the process of expanding this exercise to include farmers in low moisture areas as well as devising a mechanism to create effective agricultural information system and to expand the scope of the extension program.

In Ethiopia as well as in many other countries rain-fed agriculture continues to be unreliable. In this context, the introduction and development of small-scale irrigation schemes become vital to feed our ever-increasing populations. Consequently, we in Ethiopia are making efforts to build and expand micro-dams in rural areas as well as to make the best use of our rivers in our pursuit of sustainable development.

Ethiopia has been exposed to recurrent manifestations of environmental changes such as that triggered off by the El-Niño. Such unforeseen situations will continue to have dire consequences on our development efforts in general and our rain-dependent agriculture in particular. All these reasons make it imperative for us to use our existing water resources for irrigation purposes. One of the major paradoxes of our agricultural situation is that while Ethiopia has abundant water resources, the country has for too long been facing cyclical drought leading to famine because of unwarranted dependence on rain-fed agriculture. We have decided that this cannot be allowed to continue, thus the new emphasis is on decreasing reliance on rain-fed agriculture. The goal of course is to bring about sustainable agricultural transformation which is the common challenge of us all and for the promotion of whose objective, I am confident, this Conference will make significant contribution.

Honourable Delegates,

I wish before concluding to express my sincere appreciation to the Director-General and to his staff for their effort to make food security and over-all agricultural development a reality in Africa. Finally, I would like to wish you all a successful Conference and fruitful deliberations.

I Thank You.

APPENDIX E**STATEMENT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL TO THE
TWENTIETH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA**

*Mr Chairman
Distinguished Ministers
Your Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen*

It is always with strong emotions that I return to Ethiopia, the cradle of humanity, the cradle of Africa; a country that alone epitomizes all the diversity, wealth and potential of the continent, but also the challenges that are associated with food security and the sustainable utilization of natural resources; a country whose people and government have shown exceptional courage in facing up to these challenges.

Allow me, Mr. Chairman, on behalf of all the participants at this Conference, to thank the highest authorities of Ethiopia for their warm welcome and cordial hospitality.

It is symbolic that this meeting should take place in Addis Ababa, the headquarters of the Organization of African Unity and of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, where we find ourselves today. These two institutions are key partners in our common concern for the social and economic development of the continent, and FAO is keen to reinforce the excellent cooperation it maintains with both.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Just three months ago, the Conference of FAO met in Rome where it reviewed the state of food and agriculture in the world and the past and future activities of the Organization.

(State of food and agriculture)

While the overall world economy grew by a satisfactory 4.2 percent in 1997, the food and agriculture situation was one of contrasts. Agricultural production only increased by an estimated 1.1 percent and cereal stocks are still below the security threshold. Furthermore, development aid has hovered in recent years at a nominal US \$60 billion and has therefore fallen in real terms, while the portion of this aid earmarked for agriculture slumped from US \$16 billion in 1988 to some US \$10 billion in 1996.

(Principal achievements of the Organization)

(Implementation of the Summit Plan of Action)

FAO's activities in the previous biennium were marked by the World Food Summit held in November 1996 and several initiatives have now been undertaken to implement the resulting Plan of Action:

- 150 national strategies for agriculture and food security towards the year 2010 have been drafted with the governments of developing Member Nations and others in transition, including all the countries of Africa;
- the Special Programme for Food Security is now operational in 29 countries, including 17 in Africa, and under formulation in 40 others, including 19 in Africa;
- the Emergency Prevention System for Transboundary Animal and Plant Pests and Diseases has scored a number of successes, in particular against rinderpest and the desert locust in the regions most exposed to these scourges, particularly in Africa;
- finally, the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information Mapping System has been put in place.

At the same time, the Organization has continued to help the developing Member Nations to implement the Marrakesh agreements, organizing regional workshops and executing national projects. Its assistance has focused on agricultural policy, the prospects opened up by the "Decision on Measures Concerning the Possible Negative Effects of the Reform Programme on Least-Developed and Net Food-Importing Developing Countries", intellectual property rights, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, technical barriers to trade and the international standards of the Codex Alimentarius. The Organization will also step up its action to assist in the preparation of future trade negotiations, working closely with the WTO, the World Bank and UNCTAD.

In accordance with the directives adopted by the Summit, FAO has also encouraged the launching of "Food for All" campaigns to mobilize civil society. A number of countries have already initiated a process of national consultation to this effect. The "TeleFood 1997" operation that was broadcast by some one hundred television channels in over 70 countries gave 500 million viewers an added insight into the problems of hunger and malnutrition and laid the foundations of a system for the raising of funds which - already this year - will finance small projects of direct assistance to rural communities in developing countries, helping them boost production. As endorsed by the last Conference of FAO, TeleFood is to be an annual event in celebration of World Food Day. The next edition will be held from 16 to 18 October 1998 and will be larger in scale than last year.

Finally, interagency co-operation for implementing of the Summit Plan of Action has been put in place, with the establishment of a Network on Rural Development and Food Security led by FAO and IFAD. The mechanism for monitoring the Summit Plan of Action has also been set up and the Committee on World Food Security will evaluate progress at its next session, as you will yourselves for the Africa region.

(Other achievements)

Among the other FAO initiatives with world-wide impact undertaken during the 1996/97 biennium, I should like to mention:

- with regard to the sustainable use of natural resources, the adoption of the World Plan of Action of the International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources and the revision of the International Plant Protection Convention;

- as regards forests, programmes focusing on the contribution of forestry to food security, on effective and responsible forest management and on maintaining a balance among the economic, ecological and social benefits of forests; assistance in formulating national forestry programmes; support to the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and to the Eleventh World Forestry Congress hosted by Turkey;
- regarding fisheries and aquaculture, and in the framework of the Kyoto Plan of Action on the Sustainable Contribution of Fisheries to Food Security and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, reinforcement of the regional bodies and the staging of 21 technical consultations on the management of marine fishery resources of different regions. Work on aquatic genetic resources has been stepped up and studies have been carried out on the impact of the “El Niño” phenomenon.

(Processing, analysis and dissemination of information)

The annual report *State of Food and Agriculture* continues to be the main source of general information in this area and now includes a section on developments in food security in follow-up to the Summit. This document is complemented by *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture* and *State of the World's Forests*. The *Sixth World Food Survey* was published in 1996. As for the long-term world outlook for agriculture and food security, a study will be carried out on the likely scenario until 2015, with a more general evaluation taking us to 2030.

(Modern information and telecommunication technology)

With respect to the dissemination of information, the introduction of new technologies has rationalized and modernized systems, while reducing costs. The World Agricultural Information Centre (WAICENT) now offers ready access to essential information for food security and sustainable rural development: FAOSTAT for statistical data, FAOINFO for textual information and FAOSIS for specialized information systems, in particular on animal genetic resources, pesticides and the Global Information and Early Warning System.

FAO's site on the Internet is posting over 1 million hits each month and is providing information to English-, Arabic-, Spanish- and French-speaking users. At the same time, 2000 CD-ROMs have been distributed in all Member Nations to provide access to WAICENT in areas where the Internet is not yet readily available. These services will be further expanded in 1998-99 to enable Member Nations to take full advantage of the Organization's wealth of documentary information.

(Grassroots participation and role of women)

Actions for the advancement of women are given priority status in the general drive to involve the whole of society in the common pursuit of “Food for All”. FAO's technical departments have been requested to bear gender parity in mind when formulating programmes and projects. The Special Programme for Food Security should improve the access of rural women to technologies, inputs and credit, which is why special emphasis has been placed on poultry raising and market gardening.

(Partnerships)

The Organization has strengthened coordination and co-operation with its partners to ensure that all its programmes can be implemented against a backdrop of budgetary constraint: with the World Bank and the regional banks through new agreements, mainly for the implementation of the Special Programme for Food Security; with the food and agriculture institutions based in Rome, IFAD and WFP; with the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, its Technical Advisory Committee and its institutes; with the other UN agencies under the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination; and with the private sector and the community of non-governmental organizations.

Similarly, co-operation has been stepped up with many Member Nations. Over the past three years, some 1300 experts have been implementing FAO programmes under agreements for co-operation between developing countries and countries in transition and co-operation with academic and research institutions, and by hiring retired experts. In support of the Special Programme for Food Security, a number of South-South co-operation agreements have enabled more advanced developing countries, with FAO assistance, to provide a critical mass of field technicians in the rural communities of other developing countries. Six African countries are - or will soon be - benefiting from such agreements, of which there will be more. Finally, with a view to building national capacities, FAO is looking into training opportunities offered by Member Nations in the areas of its mandate for students and trainees from developing countries and will itself employ young professionals, within the limit of available resources, so that they can add practical experience to their academic training.

(Investment)

One of FAO's ongoing concerns is to promote investment in agriculture. In 1995 and 1996, the Investment Centre prepared 31 investment projects in Africa for a total value of US \$1.25 billion, including US \$762 million from external funds. In 1997, 18 projects were approved for a total of US \$478 million, including US \$328 million of loans.

FAO's Technical Co-operation Programme continues to act as a strong catalyst on account of its defining characteristics of rapid approval, limited project duration, low costs and practical orientation. A total of 168 new projects were implemented in Africa in 1996-97.

(Restructuring and decentralization)

The restructuring of FAO has proceeded under conditions of severe budgetary limitation, with a focus on identifying savings and improving efficiency through decentralization.

Besides reducing the number of staff members - posts fell from 4185 in January 1994 to 3599 in January 1998 - annual savings of US \$25 million have been made by cuts in travel, translations, publications and meetings. Growing attention is now being given to training staff, to raising the contingent of women professionals and to ensuring equitable representation of Member Nations: the number of countries not represented among the staff dropped from 54 in January 1994 to 29 in January 1998, taking into account ongoing recruitment.

The decentralization process is nearing completion: all the new liaison and subregional offices are open; the regional offices have been reinforced; the last operations teams are on their way; Member Nation coverage by the network of FAO representatives has been extended through multiple accreditation and the use of National Programme Officers and National Correspondents. At present, 39 percent of the staff complement are assigned to decentralized offices. The decentralization of policy assistance and project operations will bring FAO more closely in touch with the needs of its Member Nations.

The restructuring process has been accompanied by a delegation of operational, administrative and financial responsibilities to departments at Headquarters and teams in the field, with the establishment of the Management Support Units and tighter audit control in all regional, subregional and country offices.

(Programme of Work and Budget 1998/99)

I should like to conclude this overview of the highlights of the last two years by recalling that the Conference approved a Programme of Work and Budget for 1998/99 with zero nominal growth which, in real terms, equates to a reduction of 3.7 percent. Despite this, however, the Organization has an unanimously endorsed programme which, in contrast to the two previous biennia, will not need adjustment. I think I can safely say that the Organization has successfully completed its period of reform and that it can now look to the future with confidence and buckle down to its appointed mission of helping achieve sustainable food security for all.

(The situation in Africa)

Mr. Chairman,

At the last FAO Regional Conference for Africa, I drew attention to the worsening food security situation in the continent. Unfortunately, matters have not improved; indeed in some countries they have deteriorated. After the good results of 1996, there was a sharp downturn in agricultural production in North Africa in 1997 and only a modest rise of 0.4 percent in the Sub-Saharan region.

The underlying causes of this state of affairs include natural disasters, such as floods, drought and disease, and the armed conflicts that have prompted the massive displacement of rural populations who, in extreme cases, become refugees. Such disasters seriously jeopardize the nutritional situation on the levels of both quantity and quality - and for women and children especially.

At the same time, Africa's annual population growth of almost 3 percent remains one of the highest in the world. Recent United Nations projections indicate that Africa's population will virtually triple by the year 2050 if the current trend prevails, from 758 million people today to about 2 billion. With population growth of this magnitude, food security will continue as an imperative and a challenge: imperative because of the fundamental right of each individual to a wholesome and balanced diet, and challenge because of the need to increase food production in a sustainable manner.

Regrettably, the present picture is one of accelerated degradation of the natural resources upon which agriculture depends. This applies not only to arable land but also to forests which, in Africa more than in any other continent, have paid and continue to pay a high price for poverty, food insecurity and low level of technology. Some 6 million hectares of forest were lost between 1990 and 1995, representing annual deforestation of 0.8 percent, against 0.7 percent for the period from 1980 to 1990.

The frequently cited causes - population growth, overgrazing, inappropriate cropping practices, fuelwood collection and unregulated forest use, together with bush fires and irregular weather - have been added to in recent years by civil wars and their trail of refugees that have devastated large tracts of forest in central Africa.

(Absolute priority to food security)

This rapid overview of the agricultural situation in Africa dispels any doubt that food security should remain the top priority, for this is the world's continent with the highest percentage of malnourished persons. And unless corrective measures are taken, Africa could well find itself with 300 million chronically malnourished by the year 2010.

Furthermore, we need to remember that 43 of the 86 low-income food-deficit countries are in Africa, mainly in Sub-Saharan Africa where two out of every five persons do not have access to an adequate diet. That is why the World Food Summit documentation and the initiatives taken by FAO to implement the Summit Plan of Action pay special attention to Africa.

Plan of Action measures of specific relevance to Africa include the enhanced harnessing of water resources, soil improvement and conservation, the safeguarding and rational use of forests, greater recourse to science and technology to raise agricultural production and productivity, improved conditions for harvesting fishery resources, the integrated and participatory development of the rural world and greater recognition of the role of women.

(Harnessing water, a key factor for food security)

As I have often stated, there can be no food security in Africa without the controlled utilization and conservation of water resources and without intensifying production systems. Irrigation is an important element of security in the face of widely fluctuating rainfall. It is also an ingredient of intensification considering that irrigated land is twice as productive as rainfed

land. Yet only 12 million hectares in Africa are under irrigation out of a potential of more than 40 million, that is 23% of the arable area. The harnessing of water is therefore a core element in FAO's Special Programme for Food Security. The improvement and development of irrigation is a challenge that must be met if we wish to ensure food security for the people of Africa. Experience in the Sahel indicates that rainwater collected from one hectare and used to irrigate another hectare could triple or quadruple production.

(Land resources, the basis of agricultural production)

The African continent is undeniably endowed with immense expanses of land, but most of these have physical or chemical limitations that prevent efficient agricultural production. The improvement and conservation of soil fertility, preservation of humidity and control of erosion need therefore to be important components of agricultural development. It was with this in mind that FAO launched the International Scheme for Conservation and Rehabilitation of African Lands in the early 1990s, a programme setting out to foster rational land use by applying physical and biological measures to conserve soil and water, thereby restoring fertility and curbing erosion. Its operating strategy hinges on helping local populations so that they can participate actively in the implementation of land conservation, improvement and sustainable utilization programmes.

(The essential role of trees and forests)

Millions of Africa's inhabitants depend heavily, for their daily survival, on tree and forest products, whether fruits, fats, animal proteins, fuelwood, building materials or medicines. Hence the importance of such products in FAO's programmes and the increase of initiatives in this area.

Ongoing actions aim firstly to assess the state of forest resources so that their production potential can be fully tapped and any threats to their future identified. FAO's programme of forest resources assessment for the year 2000 was launched back in 1996, with parallel support given to the countries of the region to build their national capacity to estimate and monitor these resources. A vast study on the forest outlook for Africa will be launched this year, shedding light on the status, trends and prospects of forest development in the Region between now and the year 2030 and thus helping determine measures that will revitalize the sector. The second type of action concerns the sustainable management of existing resources and involves the establishment - with the UNEP and the African Timber Organization - of management criteria and indicators to guide the implementation of field operations. Several pilot projects are also under way to test and demonstrate appropriate methods of forestry and forest use. Finally, FAO is closely implicated through its normative actions and its field projects in the conservation of forest and wildlife resources, and in the rehabilitation - through reforestation - of degraded agricultural, pastoral and forest land, particularly in the context of agro-forestry. All these actions are pursued in partnership with regional and subregional organizations, and with many African NGOs.

(Fisheries, an important element of food security)

Fisheries is an important element of food security. Besides improving quality of nutrition, it also contributes significantly to the economies of several African countries in the form of employment, income and foreign exchange. Efforts should therefore be continued to ensure the rational management of fishery resources and the sustainable development of fisheries, particularly artisanal fisheries. In this connection, FAO will continue its work to adapt the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, which was adopted by the Conference of FAO in October 1995, to the context of Africa, and will help with its application. The development of aquaculture also needs special attention as this is an area with strong potential, despite now only accounting for 1.5% of fishery production against 15% world-wide.

(Contribution of science and technology to food security)

As I have mentioned, science and technology need to be better employed if agricultural production is to be efficient and sustainable. This requires the involvement of national agricultural research systems in partnership with the international centres and their Technical Advisory Committee based at FAO headquarters. FAO will continue to help the countries of the region in the planning, organizing and management of agricultural research and in the evaluation and transfer of technologies.

(Integrated and participatory rural development)

FAO's rural development action is based on participatory methods that will reinforce institutional capacity at the grassroots level and access of the least privileged population groups to employment, resources and basic agricultural services. This is a cornerstone of the Special Programme for Food Security. FAO also supports the local networking of rural development institutions to help raise the expertise of individuals, farmer leaders and institutions.

In this context, recognition of the crucial and unassailable role of women in the pursuit of food security is a central feature of FAO's programmes, particularly in Africa. FAO is also helping national and regional institutions to develop their ability to plan the gradual integration of rural women into development programmes.

Finally, I should like to point out that this Conference will be deliberating on the future of the Centre on Integrated Rural Development of Africa, an intergovernmental institution that was set up in response to a request addressed by the African Nations to FAO at the 10th Regional Conference in 1978.

*Mr. Chairman,
Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen*

You will have noted my emphasis on the sustainable utilization and management of natural resources, whether these be water, land, forests or fisheries, for therein lies a major challenge that this continent will have to face if it is to resolve the other challenge of ensuring sustainable food security for all Africans. These two issues are intrinsically linked, in Africa more than elsewhere, and it is in Africa that they feature most prominently. I was therefore very pleased to hear of your representatives' desire to take up these issues at this Conference, thereby endorsing the concerns of the Organization and of the international community as expressed at the World Food Summit and more recently at the first Conference of the Parties to the Convention to Combat Desertification. As you will have seen from the documents before you, it is high time that the governments of the region adopt courageous policies on these two issues and that the international community help them with their implementation. I therefore await the outcome of your deliberations with great interest and wish you every success in your work.

Thank you for your kind attention.

**REPORT OF THE
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE OF THE
TWENTIETH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA**

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 16 - 18 February 1998

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

Organization

1. The Technical Committee of the Twentieth FAO Regional Conference for Africa met from 16 to 18 February 1998, in the United Nations Conference Centre, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
2. The meeting was attended by 139 delegates from 43 Member Nations of the Region, five observers from Member Nations outside the Region, one observer from the Holy See, 19 representatives of the United Nations Specialized Agencies and 22 observers from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

Opening Ceremony

3. The meeting was formally opened by the Honourable Mr Getachew Tekle-Medhin, Vice-Minister of Agriculture of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and addressed by the Assistant Director-General and FAO Regional Representative for Africa, Mr. B.F. Dada.
4. Mr Dada welcomed the delegates on behalf of the Director-General of FAO, Dr. Jacques Diouf, and expressed the sincere and deep appreciation of FAO to the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for accepting to host this Conference and for putting at disposal the excellent facilities of the United Nations Conference Centre. He thanked the National Organizing Committee for its dedication and hard work.
5. He referred to the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and World Food Summit Plan of Action adopted in November 1996. Recalling the goals of the World Food Summit, he called on the Meeting to examine progress made so far in its implementation and make recommendations to achieve or even exceed the goals so as to improve the food security and socio-economic well-being of the most needy.
6. In this connection, Mr Dada underlined the importance of the FAO Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS) and the Emergency Prevention System (EMPRES) for Transboundary Animal and Plant Pests and Diseases and informed delegates that FAO's decentralization process which was nearing completion had brought to the region experts that could provide policy advice and technical assistance to countries in the region. He concluded on the positive note that the meeting's recommendations would assist the Africa region in its quest for food security and improvement in the quality of life of its people.
7. In his opening address the Honourable Vice-Minister welcomed all delegates and observers on behalf of the Government and People of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and said that the choice of Ethiopia as host for the Conference was an honour to his country.
8. He recalled the important task ahead of this Technical Committee's session which traditionally is convened prior to the full ministerial session of the Regional Conference. He highlighted important issues to be covered such as food security and sustainable rural and agricultural development in Africa and expressed his confidence that the ensuing deliberations would result in fruitful and achievable recommendations which would enhance agricultural development on the African continent. Finally, the Vice-Minister pledged his country's continued hospitality to delegates and observers throughout their stay in Addis Ababa.

Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairmen and Appointment of the Rapporteur

9. The meeting unanimously elected Mr Getachew Teklemedhin, Vice-Minister for Agriculture of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, by acclamation, as its Chairman.

10. The meeting then elected, also by acclamation, the rest of the bureau members as follows:

First Vice-Chairman: Mrs Fatma Larbi, Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Tunisia

Second Vice-Chairman: Mr Eric G. Eastman, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Agriculture, Planning and Development of the Republic of Liberia

Rapporteur: Dr Khorshed Ginwala, Ambassador and Permanent Representative to FAO, Embassy of South Africa, Rome

Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

11. Meeting considered and adopted the agenda and timetable. The Agenda is given as Appendix A while the list of documents is shown as Appendix B.

II. TECHNICAL ITEMS

World Food Summit (WFS) Follow-up (ARC/98/4)

12. The meeting recalled that the World Food Summit was convened in Rome from 13 to 17 November 1996 at the level of Heads of State and Government to renew global commitment to the task of eliminating hunger and malnutrition and to achieve sustainable food security. The background document ARC/98/4 for this agenda item was reviewed and the meeting noted that the FAO Regional Conferences had provided major inputs into preparation of the documents presented at the Summit. The outcomes of the Summit, in particular the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and World Food Summit Plan of Action were recapitulated and follow-up activities undertaken so far by Member countries and FAO were presented. The meeting endorsed the initiatives taken by FAO including, *inter alia*, Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS), the expansion of the Special Programme for Food Security and the Emergency Prevention System for Transboundary Animal and Plant Pest and Diseases (EMPRES).

In particular, the meeting:

a. declared that the WFS had been an outstanding success and congratulated FAO and the Director-General for this noteworthy achievement in that not only had the Summit sensitized the world community to the need to eliminate hunger and malnutrition, but had also made countries focus their attention on this goal and on maintaining sustainable agriculture and rural development;

- b. commended the Director-General for the positive results of the ongoing FAO priority programmes formulated in response to the outcome of the Summit as well as implementation of the decentralization policy which had brought the activities of the Organization closer to Member countries through the strengthening of the Regional, Sub-Regional and Country Offices;
- c. underlined the importance of the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS) in achieving the objective of food security and recommended that the Director-General of FAO intensify his laudable efforts to mobilize funds for financing projects within this framework;
- d. noted that countries had set up national committees comprising Government and civil society stakeholders in food security and that related national reports on the first year of implementation of the WFS Plan of Action had been prepared as requested by the FAO Conference;
- e. was apprised of a series of follow-up actions undertaken at the national level which generally involved:
- i) elaboration and adoption of food security strategies - poverty alleviation programmes, irrigation and water control measures - for improved food production and sustainable agricultural growth;
 - ii) revision of national food policies and restructuring of existing institutions to make them more responsive to national food needs;
 - iii) decentralization/devolution of decision making to the grassroots level;
 - iv) liberalization of the macro-economic environment to promote the availability of credit facilities and enhance food marketing and distribution;
 - v) diversification of agricultural produce and the reduction of post-harvest losses to ensure sustainable food production;
- f. endorsed the priority given to effective control and management of water for irrigation;
- g. noted Member countries' intense interest in and high priority accorded to livestock production and protection;
- h. emphasized the need to use the expertise available in the Regional and Sub-Regional offices of FAO to find solutions to problems associated with livestock;
- i. highlighted the advantages of South-South Cooperation and supported programmes, such as the TCDC programmes promoted by FAO;
- j. noted with satisfaction the development of policies on NGOs and civil society as well as for women and children, all with the view to ensuring food security at the household level;
- k. noted initiatives taken by FAO and other Agencies, to implement follow-up activities such as workshops, and action taken by NGOs to translate the WFS Plan of Action into local languages for use by farmers and rural peoples' organizations;
- l. recommended that countries co-ordinate their efforts at the sub-regional and regional levels to monitor and evaluate follow-up activities of the WFS;

- m. further recommended that existing cooperation between FAO and various regional and sub-regional groupings and commissions be further strengthened;
- n. recommended preparation by the FAO Regional Office for Africa of a synthesis of African national reports to facilitate the work of the Africa Group at the meeting of the Committee on Food Security (CFS) in 1999;
- o. commended FAO for the FIVIMS which is a major effort for quantifying food security needs and recommended that FAO intensify its efforts in this direction;
- p. referred to the multi-sectoral nature of food security and urged that efforts continue to liaise with other organizations on such matters; in this connection, it welcomed the on-going cooperation within the UN System and in particular the establishment of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) Network on Rural Development and Food Security;
- q. noted with appreciation the success achieved by the first TeleFood, organized in conjunction with the 1997 World Food Day, and urged member countries to take all appropriate measures to promote the TeleFood initiative in 1998 and subsequent years.

Agricultural Policy for Sustainable Use and Management of Natural Resources (ARC/98/3)

13. The meeting commended the preparation of the document ARC/98/3 for this agenda item as it comprehensively elaborated on the type of policy concerns which would form the basis for developing appropriate national and sub-regional policies and strategies to address issues pertaining to sustainable use and management of natural resources in African countries. The linkages between the sustainability of natural resources, agricultural growth and development, food security and poverty reduction were highlighted. The meeting also noted the quality of the paper and its pertinence to current policy debates in Member states. It also agreed that the paper would serve Member states as a working document in the formulation of their agricultural and food security policies, strategies and programmes. In particular, the meeting:

- a. took note of the fact that the paper was a synthesis of a more comprehensive document being prepared by FAO in collaboration with the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) that the summary recommendations thus were not exhaustive and that the final document is to be published;
- b. recognized the need for prioritization and sequencing of policy recommendations outlined at the country level;
- c. elaborated additional areas of interest which needed to be addressed, such as:
 - i) post-harvest losses; poorly developed agricultural input sector and agro-processing industries; financing in the agricultural sector and indebtedness of Member states;
 - ii) irrigation, training and management;
 - iii) alternative energy sources for use at the rural household level;
 - iv) decentralized institutional arrangements and the definition of responsibilities;

- v) rapid population growth and its impact on the sustainability of the natural resource base;
 - vi) integration of gender perspectives in policy formulation and programme implementation, through the application of the gender analysis framework;
- d. was informed that the term Sub-Saharan Africa should not be used since Africa is one continent;
- e. recommended that the document should define the role of the private and public sectors in the agricultural development process;
- f. recommended further analysis related to issues of privatization and land tenure;
- g. underlined the need to create an appropriate framework for the promotion of irrigation and the utilization of fertilizer and other agro-chemicals in order to increase agricultural productivity, while preserving the sustainability of farmlands;
- h. noted that the privatization of forest development activities should be considered within the framework of the existing land tenure system in each local community;
- i. took cognizance of the need for Member states to develop and harmonize their national forestry and agricultural policies as specified in Agenda 21 of the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED);
- j. noted that countries outside the Africa Region had experience in watershed development and management which could be of direct benefit to countries of the region and recommended the development of capacities in this area through FAO's TCDC programme, focusing on marginal zones and poorest farmers;
- k. concurred with the participatory approach as proposed in the paper for the process of policy formulation and strategies;
- l. review and adoption of the Farming Systems Research/Extension approach to enable poor farmers access new technologies;
- m. noted that while the recommendations made were of a continental nature, each Member state should adopt those policy options that were appropriate to its situation;
- n. endorsed the conclusions and recommendations highlighted in paragraph 62 of the document (attached as Annex) for presentation to the Plenary Session of the 20th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa for consideration and possible adoption.

Future of the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Africa (CIRDAFRICA) (ARC/98/5)

14. The Secretariat introduced this agenda item on the basis of document ARC/98/5 which traced the history of CIRDAFRICA from its original mandate to its current state, with pertinent references to the membership of the Centre, its functions and working strategy, its programme features and activities, and future perspectives. The present predicament of the Centre and its inability to function as it should was highlighted and the attention of the meeting was drawn to the fact that advantage was being taken of the presence of all members constituting the Governing Council of the Centre at the current Session to facilitate the convening of a board meeting which had been in abeyance for quite some time. Such a meeting would enable concrete decisions to be made on the future of the Centre. Specifically, the meeting:

- a. entrusted a sub-committee composed of the Member states of CIRDAFRICA to examine the issue and report to the Governing Council for its decision;
- b. expressed its appreciation to FAO for facilitating a meeting of the Governing Council of the Centre which would be held during this Session of the Regional Conference.

Representation of the Region on the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) (ARC/98/6)

15. Document ARC/98/6 was presented as a standing item on the agenda of the Technical Committee. The meeting noted the importance of agricultural research as an integral element in finding solutions to the issues of food insecurity, malnutrition, poverty alleviation and natural resource degradation and in follow-up to the World Food Summit. It was apprised of the current status of agricultural research in the region as well as the recent developments in the CGIAR system including a preparatory meeting held in Indonesia in 1996 and the Global Forum on Agricultural Research convened in Washington, DC, USA, in 1997. Delegates were reminded of the need for effective participation on the Board of the CGIAR the criteria for selecting members from the Region and their responsibilities. The meeting:

- a. decided to establish a sub-committee comprising Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, FAO and SPAAR to meet and recommend a candidate for approval by the Technical Committee;
- b. considered the existing sub-regional research organisations to be a suitable framework for effective representation of the region in the CGIAR;
- c. was reminded that by accepting the regional representation, it would become binding on the country and sub-regional organization to ensure that the incumbent was included in the country's delegation to the next Regional Conference;
- d. recommended that for the period 1999-2002 the regional representative be selected by ASARECA and from its sub-region, in view of the fact that in 1994, the regional representative was selected from the SACCAR sub-region for the period 1994-98 and that in 1996, the regional representative was selected from CORAF sub-region for the period 1997-2000.

III. OTHER MATTERS

Progress on the Common African Agricultural Programme (CAAP) (ARC/98/INF/5)

16. The meeting considered this item on the basis of document ARC/98/INF/5. It reviewed the background and purpose of CAAP, work undertaken by the OAU and FAO on its development and the recommendations of the Regional Conference at its previous Sessions. The meeting noted the various actions proposed for the re-launching of the CAAP process which had been deadlocked due to the slow response of member states to repeated requests by the OAU/AEC (African Economic Community) Secretariat for their comments and suggestions on the existing draft CAAP framework document. In particular, the meeting:

- a. renewed its endorsement of the requests of the OAU/AEC Secretariat for comments and suggestions by Member States on the existing CAAP framework document;
- b. urged the OAU/AEC Secretariat to make all the background documents on CAAP available to Member States, to facilitate their response to the requests for observations on the CAAP framework documents and mobilization of various stakeholders for its development and eventual implementation;
- c. commended the OAU and FAO on their development work on CAAP and encouraged them to continue to promote it;
- d. called on the OAU/AEC and Member states to continue to emphasize the importance of CAAP and to seek all possible cooperation from the Regional and Sub-Regional groups in the development of CAAP;
- e. recommended that participants constitute themselves as promoters of CAAP, and in this regard, urged Member countries to designate CAAP focal points in their respective ministries;
- f. recommended that the Director-General continue to monitor progress on CAAP, and report to the 21st Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa on cooperation on CAAP development received from Member states since the 20th Session and corresponding achievements; and
- g. further recommended that the Director-General continue to support the OAU/AEC Secretariat, to the extent possible, in moving the CAAP process forward.

Forest Genetic Resources (ARC/98/INF/6)

17. The Meeting noted that document ARC/98/INF/6 was essentially an information document. It reviewed the proposal for action on the conservation, management, sustainable utilization and enhancement of forest genetic resources discussed at the Thirteenth Session of the FAO Committee on Forestry held in March 1997, and at the Tenth Session of the FAO Panel of Experts on Forest Genetic Resources held in September 1997. Actions taken by FAO in response to recommendations passed in these fora were then outlined. The meeting:

- a. acknowledged the importance of forest resources in Africa and the significance of their management and decided to recognize the document as one of the working documents;

- b. recognized the vast extent of forest cover in the Central African region (which is more than 80 percent of 250 million hectares of dense forest) and the importance of many aspects of forestry phylogenetic resources, such as preservation of the environment, provision of energy to households, contribution to food security and provision of medicinal plants;
- c. recommended that FAO collaborate with the African Timber Organization in planning a Workshop for the Central African region, similar to scheduled for the Southern and Eastern African sub-regions in collaboration with IPGRI, ICRAF, SADC and IGAD.

IV. CONCLUDING ITEMS

Adoption of the Report of the Technical Committee

18. The meeting considered its report and adopted it after some amendments.

Closure of the Technical Committee Meeting

19. In a brief closing speech to the Technical Committee, Assistant Director-General/FAO Regional Representative for Africa Mr B.F. Dada pointed out the efficient work done by the delegates during the preceding few days and mentioned the unique opportunity for the presentation of national reports traditional with such meetings. He recalled the high quality of the deliberations on the major policy documents and thanked all the delegates and observers for their support in ensuring a successful outcome of the Technical Committee meeting. He further confirmed that the final report of the meeting would be transmitted to the Regional Conference for appropriate action. He once more thanked the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for the excellent facilities made available for the smooth running of the meeting and for the warm reception accorded to all participants. Finally, he wished those delegates who might be leaving a safe journey back home and those who might be staying a pleasant stay.

20. Similarly, the Chairman, Mr Getachew Teklemedhin, Vice-Minister for Agriculture of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, expressed thanks and appreciation to the Bureau, the FAO Secretariat, the presenters of documents, the ECA - for the excellent facilities made available for the meeting - and all those who had facilitated the successful outcome of the meeting in one way or the other. He then formally closed the meeting.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
ADOPTED BY THE TWENTIETH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE
FOR AFRICA

Rapid population growth coupled with serious difficulties policy makers encounter in designing and implementing policies that could promote a widespread gender-sensitive adoption of agricultural technologies and practices that are not only productivity-improving, but also environmentally sustainable, explain the current high rate of natural resource degradation in the region.

The following policy options could be considered by policy-makers in Africa in an effort to achieve a broad-based gender-sensitive agricultural growth and development, while preserving the natural resource base and improving its long-term productive capacity:

1. Create political and social institutions which promote good governance; develop a broad partnership in the area of natural resource use and management.
2. Specify the division of labour between the private sector, farmers, NGOs and government;
3. Using cross-sectoral approaches, design and implement macro-economic and sectoral policy reforms; formulate a national environmental policy; and encourage the development of rural infrastructure and support services;
4. Explore incremental approaches to change in indigenous land tenure; enact laws that specify tenancy rights and ensure security even under customary land tenure arrangements; and develop national land-use planning institution and capacity;
5. Encourage improved relative agricultural commodity prices through liberalization and privatization of product and factor markets;
6. Encourage widespread use of fertilizers and other technology-carrying inputs through improvement in input procurement and delivery systems, and promote the utilization of organic fertilizer;
7. Promote community involvement in the management of livestock resources; improve animal husbandry and privatize, where possible, veterinary services; and encourage destocking through education and better market links and information;
8. Adopt a participatory approach to irrigation policy formulation and appraisal, and encourage the development of farmers-owned and operated irrigation infrastructure;
9. Design a proper fisheries management framework and strengthening regional cooperation;
10. While keeping in mind the existing land tenure, encourage the participation of private sector and individuals in timber and fuelwood planting; privatize the reforestation services, reassess stumpage fees, and facilitate access to soft credit schemes for tree and fuelwood planting, reforestation and rehabilitation of degraded areas;

11. Promote alternative sources of energy inputs, both conventional and renewable, to enhance productivity of the sector and to address rural household energy needs; and
12. Promote the establishment and use, as a decision making tool, modern environmental information systems.
13. Promote national forestry policies within the context of regional cooperation, taking into account indicators of sustainability - as recommended in Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development - in order to achieve a sound management of the interface between forestry and agriculture in Africa.

In a few words, governments have to create a new partnership of shared responsibilities and mutual assistance among all the stakeholders concerned by agricultural development and thus the sustainability of natural resources.



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