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منظمة الأغذية  
والزراعة للأمم  
المتحدة

联合国  
粮食及  
农业组织

Food and  
Agriculture  
Organization  
of the  
United Nations

Organisation des  
Nations Unies  
pour  
l'alimentation  
et l'agriculture

Продовольственная и  
сельскохозяйственная  
организация  
Объединенных  
Наций

Organización  
de las  
Naciones Unidas  
para la  
Alimentación y la  
Agricultura

# FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific

## Thirty-second Session

Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 10–14 March 2014

## PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA

### SENIOR OFFICERS MEETING

10–12 March 2014

#### I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

1. Election of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Appointment of Rapporteur
2. Adoption of Agenda and Timetable

*(Please see Plenary Session items from 3 to 8 on page 5)*

#### II. REGIONAL AND GLOBAL POLICY AND REGULATORY ISSUES

##### 9. State of food and agriculture in Asia and the Pacific region, including future prospects and emerging issues

Trends in various indicators of food insecurity and malnutrition in the region will be analysed and discussed, along with the role of investment, subsidies, public goods and gender in addressing emerging issues. The paper will highlight key aspects of the regional rice strategy, sustainable intensification of aquaculture, regional livestock sector development and the role of family farming in ensuring sustainable food security, with attention to subregional specificities. Government actions in these areas, including those emanating from various global initiatives as well as the FAO Conference, will also be examined with a view to learning lessons and deriving best practices for the region.

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## **10. Update on the Committee on World Food Security**

The outcomes of the CFS, as well as initiatives related to Responsible Agricultural Investment and the Agenda for Action in countries in protracted crises will be discussed.

## **11. Realizing economic opportunities in agriculture to promote greater food security in Pacific Island Countries**

Inclusive economic development and strengthened food security can be facilitated by greater attention to building the capacity of Pacific island farmers and food processors to improve their competitiveness in both domestic and export food markets. This paper examines the key factors impacting on competitiveness of PICs' agricultural products and makes some suggestions on the selection of which value chains offer potential for sustainable growth and strengthened food security. The needs in regards to public sector support and stronger collaboration with the private sector are also explored. Members will be invited to discuss options and share experiences on strengthening food security by building inclusive and efficient food value chains and enhancing public-private collaboration.

## **12. Meeting farmers' aspirations in the context of green development**

Pressures for green development are accelerating globally and encompassing rural sectors, including agriculture, forestry and fisheries. Calls for improved and more environment-friendly rural practices cover a broad range of spheres. These include: lowering carbon emissions, reducing pollution (especially of waterways, but also air, soils, etc.), minimizing loss of biodiversity, enhancing animal welfare, improving food safety, and building more efficient and inclusive food chains. At the same time, vast numbers of farmers and other rural dwellers remain entrenched in poverty and subsistence livelihoods, with little capacity or incentive for change. Widening income gaps between rural and urban areas are driving urban migration, particularly of younger and more able people, potentially reducing productivity and further reducing capacity for change in rural areas. With attention to subregional specificities, this paper will explore and identify environment-friendly ways to reduce rural poverty, promote improved employment opportunities and livelihoods, and enable rural people to meet their aspirations while at the same time delivering greener rural development outcomes for sustainable growth.

## **13. Restoration of grasslands and forests for climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the promotion of ecosystem services**

Forests and grasslands constitute 57 percent of the land in the Asia-Pacific region and, while not used directly for crop production, provide vital ecosystem services (e.g. water and climate regulation) in support of agriculture. Furthermore, these lands offer vast potential to contribute to climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration and to climate change adaptation through, for example, maintaining and enhancing biodiversity. However, this potential is curtailed by practices that degrade the land and water systems upon which food production ultimately depends. Asian grasslands, for example, are estimated to degrade at a rate of more than 2 million hectares per year while the cumulative area of degraded lands potentially available for forest restoration in the region is estimated at more than 400 million hectares. This paper will discuss the many ways to achieve socio-ecologically sound approaches for the management of grasslands and forests that restore and enhance their ecosystem services in support of food security and livelihoods.

### III. PROGRAMME AND BUDGET MATTERS

#### 14. Priorities for FAO Activities in the Region

The Regional Conference will consider how FAO activities have addressed previously agreed regional priorities during 2012-13 and will provide guidance on areas of regional priority for 2014-15 and 2016-17. The discussion will be informed by the Reviewed Strategic Framework 2010-19, Medium Term Plan 2014-17 and Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15 approved by the FAO Conference in June 2013; priorities and recommendations of the Regional Technical Commissions; a synthesis of Country Programming Frameworks; and the plans and priorities of partners such as the Regional Economic Organizations, CSOs and the Private Sector.

#### 15. Decentralization and Decentralized Offices Network

Ongoing efforts to improve and strengthen the work of FAO's country offices network in the region will be reviewed and recommendations formulated to enhance the Organization's effectiveness and efficiency at country level.

### IV. OTHER MATTERS

#### 16. Date and place of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific

#### 17. Any other matters

#### INFORMATION NOTES<sup>1</sup>

##### a) Regional rice strategy for Asia and the Pacific

The rice economy of Asia has been going through important structural changes for some years now. These include the deceleration of yield growth rate, scarcity of natural resources (water, land) as well as labour, negative environmental impacts, price spikes and disruptions of trade, and effects of climate change. These issues are being increasingly addressed by recent FAO Regional Conferences (APRC). Recognizing that these are inter-related issues that need to be addressed in a holistic manner, the 31<sup>st</sup> APRC in March 2012 requested that FAO coordinate the development of a regional rice strategy. In response, FAO RAP initiated in 2013 the formulation of a regional rice strategy. This information paper will present the synthesis of the regional rice strategy based on the detailed analysis underway.

##### b) Sustainable intensification of aquaculture for food and nutritional security in the Asia-Pacific region

Asia and the Pacific region is the global leader in aquaculture with about 90 percent of the world's total aquaculture production. Aquaculture is one of the fastest growing agriculture subsectors, largely due to progressive production intensification in response to rapidly increasing demand. On the one hand the rapid growth of the sector generates significant revenues and contributes to the provision of high-value food items, while on the other hand poorly planned and unregulated intensification and expansion of aquaculture seriously threaten natural environments. While commercialization of aquaculture provides income opportunities, it can also threaten smallholder livelihoods through increased competition in the markets. In view of the finite natural resource base, continuing

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<sup>1</sup> If they so wish, delegates may comment on information notes under 'Any other matters'.

intensification of aquaculture is inevitable to meet the increasing demand. However, it must be socially, environmentally and economically sustainable. This paper discusses the various options and their trade-offs to attain that goal.

**c) Regional action plan for the global strategy to improve agricultural and rural statistics**

The Regional Action Plan of the Global Strategy was prepared in 2011-2012 by FAO, ESCAP and ADB in cooperation with member countries and adopted by APCAS in September 2012 and ESCAP in December 2012. The Global Strategy is a ground-breaking effort which has as one of the key recommendations that agriculture be integrated into national statistical systems. The Regional Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific defines the areas of support that the Asia Pacific region needs in terms of technical assistance, training and research to strengthen national agricultural statistical systems and outlines activities aimed at implementing that support in a sustainable way. The first phase of the implementation of the Plan aims to cover 20 countries over five years with 2013 focusing on three countries: Bhutan, Indonesia and Sri Lanka. The Plan's regional office is housed in FAO RAP since late 2012.

**d) Summary of the recommendations of the Regional Technical Commissions (RTCs)**

The 30th APRC has recognised the five Asia-Pacific regional technical commissions as priority setting bodies in their areas of competence. These statutory bodies of the Organization deal with agricultural statistics, animal production and health, fisheries, forestry and plant protection. This note presents the summary recommendations of the five RTCs covering the following core areas of the RTC's work: capacity building and training, and awareness raising on regional issues; regional assessments, regional subsectoral reviews, and status and trends reporting; establishment of regional networks, regional technical cooperation and exchange; harmonization of data, standards and practices; development of regional standards, codes of practice and best practice guidelines; and advocacy/representation of regional issues in development of global normative instruments. The programme and priority related issues related to the work of the RTC's are covered under agenda item 13.

**e) Joint FAO/WHO Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2)**

The ICN2 is a positive pro-active global policy response by FAO to tackle unacceptably high and persistent levels of malnutrition. The high level conference will be held in FAO headquarters, Rome, 19-21 November 2014. This document aims at increasing the understanding of members on the objectives and intended outcomes of the conference.

**PLENARY SESSION**

13–14 March 2014

**3. Statement by the Director-General****4. Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council****5. Statement by the Chairperson of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific**

The statement of the Chairperson of the 31<sup>st</sup> APRC will provide a brief on the outcome of the deliberations of the 38<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO Conference (Rome, 15–22 June 2013) and the 144<sup>th</sup> Council (Rome, 11–15 June 2012) on matters related to the Asia and Pacific Region.

**6. Statement by the Chairperson of the CFS**

The CFS Chairperson will provide an overview of the main outcomes of the 39th and 40th Plenary Sessions, reporting on the activities undertaken in 2012–2013.

**7. Statement by the Spokesperson of the Civil Society Consultation**

The spokesperson of the Civil Society consultation will present the statement/declaration of the outcome of the consultation.

**8. Prioritization of country and regional needs**

Asia and the Pacific region face various challenges in the food and agricultural sectors, such as food security, climate change, degradation and depletion of natural resources and natural disasters. This session allows the head of country delegations to deliver their statements. Delegates are invited to outline their views on the priorities for addressing national and regional needs in 3 to 4 minutes each.

**Review and endorsement of the Report of the Conference**

The draft report of the Regional Conference, prepared, discussed and approved by the Senior Officers Meeting, will be reviewed and endorsed. The discussion will cover:

- i. Regional and Global Policy and Regulatory Issues;
- ii. Programme and Budget Matters;
- iii. Other Matters.

The Report will be introduced by the Rapporteur.

**Round table on the double burden of malnutrition**

Hunger and malnutrition continue to be major global challenges. FAO estimates that nearly 870 million people were undernourished in 2010–12. Asia and the Pacific region is home to 62 percent of the total population suffering from chronic hunger (563 million). One in three developing country children under the age of five (171 million children) are stunted due to chronic under-nutrition. Micronutrient malnutrition affects around 2 billion people (over 30 percent of the world's population). At the same time, around 1.5 billion people in the world are overweight and 500 million are obese,

with 43 million children under five years of age overweight. This double burden of malnutrition is becoming an increasing challenge for many countries in Asia and the Pacific region, with consequences ranging from increased risk of premature death to a growing burden of diet-related chronic diseases, such as diabetes and some cancers. This paper will discuss the critical role of agriculture and nutrition education, including awareness raising, and how agriculture, food systems and nutrition education can respond to the increasing challenges of the double burden of malnutrition in the region.