COUNCIL

Hundred and Fortieth Session

Rome, 29 November – 3 December 2010

REPORT OF THE TWENTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
(16 – 19 June 2010)

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION 1 - 6

SUSTAINABLE CROP PRODUCTION INTENSIFICATION THROUGH AN ECOSYSTEM APPROACH AND AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT: CAPTURING EFFICIENCY THROUGH ECOSYSTEM SERVICES AND MANAGEMENT 7 - 8

SOIL FOR FOOD SECURITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION 9

GUIDANCE OF THE LIVESTOCK SECTOR – ISSUES AND OPTIONS 10 - 14

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POLICIES AND INSTITUTIONS TO SUPPORT SMALLHOLDER AGRICULTURE 15 - 19

PRIORITIES AND RESULTS UNDER THE MEDIUM-TERM PLAN AND PROGRAMME OF WORK AND BUDGET 2012-13 20 - 39

OTHER MATTERS 40 - 43

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSONS 44

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT 45

Appendix A – Agenda
Appendix B – List of Documents
Appendix C – Countries and Organizations Represented at the Session
MATTERS REQUIRING THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL

The 22nd Session of the Committee:

- supported the FAO Strategy for Sustainable Crop Production Intensification through an ecosystem approach and an enabling environment and requested the Secretariat to refine the programme timetable, provide a financing plan and establish programme indicators (paras. 7-8);
- recommended FAO to significantly strengthen its soils-related capacities (para. 9b);
- invited FAO to explore the possibility for establishing a global soil partnership and requested the Secretariat to prepare the terms of reference for further discussion (para. 9c);
- recommended that FAO continue to provide technical assistance and advice on agro-ecological zoning, promotion of carbon sequestration techniques, land use and tenure and related statistics in partnership with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Bank and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) (para. 9d);
- endorsed FAO’s plan to support and contribute to the Rio+20 process and requested the Secretariat to inform the member countries on the preparatory process (para. 9f);
- requested that FAO, together with actors at all levels, establish the research, technical, institutional, financial and policy conditions necessary for the delivery of goods and services by the livestock sector (para. 12);
- agreed that FAO engage in consultations to establish a global dialogue with a wide range of stakeholders to sharpen the definition of the livestock sector’s objectives and to identify issues that could require intergovernmental action (para. 13);
- recommended that the Secretariat:
  a) undertake a study of the impact of private standards on smallholder market participation;
  b) undertake analytical and policy assessment on smallholder integration in market organizational structures;
  c) collaborate with ministries of agriculture and other relevant ministries to develop their capacity to support improved market access by smallholders;
  d) support business-oriented activities by farmers’ organizations and promote development of value chains that are inclusive of smallholders;
  e) develop close relationships with the private sector that best serve the needs of smallholders;
  f) report on progress and results of the analytical and policy assessment project as well as on the capacity building activities to the CFS and the COAG (para. 19 a-f).
- recommended that future documentation on priorities more clearly identify the proposed areas of emphasis and de-emphasis within each Strategic Objective, taking into account emerging issues, implementation performance reports against Organizational Results indicators, major evaluations, cost considerations and work being undertaken in partnership (para. 20);
- stressed the importance of FAO’s work in the core functions of global standard setting, statistics, policy advice, capacity building, knowledge exchange and technology transfer, and underlined the importance of providing guidance on priorities and areas of emphasis by COAG, in particular in view of limited resources (para. 22);
- reviewed and generally endorsed the priority areas of emphasis presented for Strategic Objectives A, B, D, F, G, H, I, K and L, with detailed views and recommendations provided in paras. 24 to 39.

MATTERS REQUIRING THE ATTENTION OF THE CONFERENCE

The 22nd Session of the Committee:

- endorsed FAO’s plan to support and contribute to the Rio+20 process and requested the Secretariat to inform the member countries on the preparatory process (para. 9-f);
- agreed that FAO engage in consultations to establish a global dialogue with a wide range of stakeholders to sharpen the definition of the livestock sector’s objectives and to identify issues that could require intergovernmental action (para. 13).
INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee on Agriculture (COAG) held its 22nd Session from 16 to 19 June 2010 at FAO Headquarters. Of the 133 member countries of the Committee, 111 were present at the Session. Four Member Nations of the Organization, the Holy See, four UN Organizations, four intergovernmental organizations and 16 Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) participated as observers. The countries and organizations represented at the Session are given in Appendix C. The List of Documents is reproduced as Appendix B.

2. The Committee was informed that the European Union was participating in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of Article II of the FAO Constitution\(^1\).

3. Mr James G. Butler, Deputy Director-General (Knowledge), delivered a statement on behalf of the Director-General.

4. The previously appointed Chairperson Mr Fazil Düşünceli (Turkey) and Vice-Chairpersons Mr Manuel Antonio Álvarez Espinal (Peru – replacing His Excellency Carlos Leyton Muñoz) and Mr Travis Power (Australia – replacing Ms Fiona Bartlett) continued their term until the election of the new bureau at the end of the session.

5. The Committee was assisted by a Drafting Committee composed of Afghanistan, Angola, Argentina (Chair), Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, Philippines, Russian Federation and Saudi Arabia.

6. The Committee adopted the Agenda and Timetable for the Session. The Agenda is reproduced in Appendix A.

SUSTAINABLE CROP PRODUCTION INTENSIFICATION THROUGH AN ECOSYSTEM APPROACH AND AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT: CAPTURING EFFICIENCY THROUGH ECOSYSTEM SERVICES AND MANAGEMENT\(^2\)

7. The Committee supported the FAO Strategy for Sustainable Crop Production Intensification through an ecosystem approach and an enabling environment.

8. With respect to the implementation of the strategy, the Committee:
   a) stressed that the implementation of the strategy requires an integrated holistic approach with social, economic and ecological dimensions (ecosystem services), and that crop production should be seen in the context of the overall food chain;
   b) acknowledged that understanding and acceptance of the benefits of the strategy by producers is essential to its success;
   c) requested the Secretariat to refine the programme timetable, provide a financing plan, establish programme indicators, and ensure flexibility to adapt to local conditions and changing context, embracing an approach of “learning by doing”;
   d) pointed out the need for a broad range of partnerships required at local, national and international level, through governments, NGOs, farmers organizations, agricultural research institutions and the private sector. Collaboration with existing programmes and initiatives should be promoted, and links made with bodies such as the Committee on World Food Security (CFS);
   e) noted that the thematic areas should be tackled concurrently, adding emphasis to post-harvest, access to food, agro-forestry, mountainous areas, gender

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\(^1\) COAG/2010/Inf.3
\(^2\) COAG/2010/3
mainstreaming, youth and employment, and access to natural resources and its responsible governance. Adoption of sustainable crop production intensification by countries should be accelerated well before 2025;

f) highlighted the importance of the role of smallholders and the need to link field and policy based activities;

g) stressed the need for capacity building through training and extension;

h) encouraged awareness and promotion of cooperatives among smallholders;

i) underlined the importance of biodiversity and genetic resources, and their strong links to mitigation of and adaptation to climate change;

j) agreed on the need for the refinement of the programme, and frequent, regular evaluation and reporting on its implementation, including reports on funding.

SOIL FOR FOOD SECURITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION

9. The Committee:

a) recognized the critical role of soils for their productive capacity and their ecosystem services function and their potential to address emerging issues and opportunities related to climate change;

b) recommended FAO to significantly strengthen its soils-related capacities and requested the Secretariat to provide information on present and required human resources in soils across FAO for the consideration of the Programme and Finance Committees for inclusion in the Programme of Work and Budget 2012-2013;

c) invited FAO to explore the possibility for establishing a global soil partnership and requested the Secretariat to prepare the terms of reference for further discussion in the Programme Committee. In preparing such terms of reference, special attention should be given to FAO’s comparative advantage and reliance on existing networks, partnerships and alliances;

d) recommended that FAO continue to provide technical assistance and advice on agro-ecological zoning, promotion of carbon sequestration techniques, land use and tenure and related statistics in partnership with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Bank and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR);

e) acknowledged the importance of FAO’s technical inputs in climate change negotiations within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to eventually include agricultural and land use considerations in support of adaptation and mitigation. It emphasized that the access of smallholders in climate change financing is essential;

f) endorsed FAO’s plan to support and contribute to the Rio+20 process and requested the Secretariat to inform the member countries on the preparatory process;

GUIDANCE OF THE LIVESTOCK SECTOR – ISSUES AND OPTIONS

10. The Committee reaffirmed the crucial role of livestock in food security and livelihoods, both at global and national level, especially for pastoralists and small-scale farmers. It requested that under Strategic Objective B (Increased Sustainable Livestock Production), sector analysis and technical as well as policy and institutional support to member countries be continued.

3 COAG/2010/4

4 COAG/2010/5
11. The Committee confirmed that FAO, within its capacity and mandate, is in a position to address in a balanced and holistic manner the complex social, economic and environmental issues and trade-offs associated with the sector, including climate change considerations; this should be done in synergy and coordination with relevant international agreements and instruments such as UNFCCC so as to avoid duplication of efforts.

12. The Committee requested that FAO, together with actors at all levels, establish the research, technical, institutional, financial and policy conditions necessary for the delivery of goods and services from the livestock sector which would support food security, nutrition, livelihoods, economic development, environmental sustainability and public health.

13. The Committee agreed that FAO actively engage in consultations to continue the global dialogue with a wide range of stakeholders to sharpen the definition of the sector’s objectives, taking into account the disparities between production systems, the proliferation of private standards, countries’ economic development, role of smallholders, importance of export, and status of natural resources. Such consultations should help identify issues that could require intergovernmental action.

14. The Committee deferred further discussions on the proposal concerning the establishment of a subsidiary body or ad-hoc working group on livestock, pending submission of relevant detailed terms-of-reference and administrative and financial implications to be submitted to the next Session of COAG, as specified in its Rules of Procedure.

15. The Committee stressed that the formulation of policies and strengthening of institutions to support small-scale agriculture and facilitate smallholder integration in markets should be an FAO priority.

16. The Committee recognized that the small-scale agricultural sector is characterized by wide heterogeneity and a single definition of smallholders is difficult. It invited the Secretariat to address the different dimensions which characterize small scale, such as farm size, low capital base and skills. FAO’s work should focus on constraints faced by vulnerable population groups, and in particular women farmers.

17. The Committee agreed that farmers organizations and cooperatives can help to overcome difficulties faced by smallholders to participate in markets. It recognized that facilitating dialogue between small farmers, agribusiness and other value chain stakeholders has a catalytic effect. The Committee urged the Secretariat to continue its activities to strengthen cooperatives, farmers’ groups and value chain associations.

18. The Committee noted that the imposition of complex and stringent agricultural commodity standards by the private sector may hinder the integration of smallholders in modern marketing systems.

19. The Committee recommended that the Secretariat:
   a) undertake a study of the impact of private standards on smallholder market participation, taking into consideration the work of other institutions;

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5 Rule VII of Rule J of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) establishes: “(...) the Committee may, on an exceptional basis, establish subsidiary or ad hoc bodies where it considers that such action is conducive to facilitating its own work and will not adversely affect the multidisciplinary consideration of questions submitted to the Committee for examination. (...) Before taking a decision on the establishment of any subsidiary or ad hoc body, the Committee shall examine the administrative and financial implications of such a decision, in the light of a report to be submitted by the Director-General.”

6 COAG/2010/6
b) undertake analytical and policy assessment on smallholder integration in market organizational structures, in order to design new approaches that facilitate their transition to a higher development stage;

c) collaborate with ministries of agriculture and other relevant ministries to develop their capacity to support improved market access by smallholders, including capacity to comply with sanitary and phytosanitary standards;

d) support business-oriented activities by farmers’ organizations and promote development of value chains that are inclusive of smallholders;

e) develop close relationships with the private sector in order to develop partnerships to best serve the needs of smallholders;

f) report on progress and results of the analytical and policy assessment project as well as on the capacity building activities to the CFS and the COAG.

**PRIORITIES AND RESULTS UNDER THE MEDIUM-TERM PLAN AND PROGRAMME OF WORK AND BUDGET 2012-13’**

20. The Committee acknowledged that the priority-setting process for 2012-13 would be one of transition under the new results-based framework. The Committee recommended that future documentation on priorities more clearly identify the proposed areas of emphasis and de-emphasis within each Strategic Objective, taking into account emerging issues, implementation performance reports against Organizational Results indicators, major evaluations, cost considerations and work being undertaken in partnership.

21. The Committee recognized that complementary information regarding priorities was being identified at regional, sub-regional and national level.

22. The Committee stressed the importance of FAO’s work in the core functions of global standard setting, statistics, policy advice, capacity building, knowledge exchange and technology transfer, and underlined the importance of providing guidance on priorities and areas of emphasis by COAG, in particular in view of limited resources.

23. Members noted that in-depth discussions of broader issues (rural development, Right to Food, gender, etc. under Strategic Objectives G, H and K) should also be referred to the CFS and/or the Programme Committee.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE A – SUSTAINABLE INTENSIFICATION OF CROP PRODUCTION**

24. The Committee recognized the importance of Strategic Objective A for achieving food security and livelihoods.

25. The Committee endorsed the priority areas of emphasis and FAO’s comparative advantage in:

   a) sustainable crop production intensification and diversification;
   b) surveillance and monitoring of transboundary plant pests and their control;
   c) international instruments of plant protection, in particular the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC);
   d) plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, including the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (IT-PGRFA) and seed systems;
   e) transfer of technologies and capacity building for improvement of productivity, focusing on smallholder farmers.
26. The Committee recognized that FAO’s activities in crop production should address the effects of environmental degradation and climate change, including rising temperatures and water scarcity affecting crop productivity; and also more attention should be given to reduction of post-harvest losses and related capacity building.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE B – INCREASED SUSTAINABLE LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION**

27. The Committee endorsed the priority areas of emphasis for Strategic Objective B and recommended that particular attention be given to:
   
a) animal and animal-related human disease prevention/control and related data collection and analysis;
   
b) the One-Health approach in this context, as well as to inter-institutional collaboration;
   
c) transboundary animal diseases through the Emergency Prevention System for Transboundary Animal and Plant Pests and Diseases (EMPRES) and effective early warning systems, emphasizing FAO’s comparative advantage;
   
d) strengthening capacity building.

28. The Committee recommended integrated efforts with Strategic Objective I on attending the emergency-rehabilitation-development continuum and with Strategic Objective A on improved quality feed production and agro-pastoral resource management for increased sustainable livestock production.

29. The Committee stressed that the manifestation of the rapid livestock sector growth and development on: (a) food security/poverty alleviation, (b) animal and public health and (c) natural resource management (including water), require urgent clarification in their technical, policy and institutional dimensions.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE D – IMPROVED QUALITY AND SAFETY OF FOODS AT ALL STAGES OF THE FOOD CHAIN**

30. The Committee endorsed the priority areas of emphasis for Strategic Objective D. It considered the normative work of the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission as highly important. It emphasized that food safety should continue as a priority area because of its impact on consumers’ health and international food trade. Members highlighted the importance of FAO’s programme on food safety capacity development to build national institutions and support developing countries’ efforts to apply Codex standards, guidelines and recommendations and participate more effectively in Codex work. The Committee welcomed the work on EMPRES-Food Safety and its integration with the FAO/WHO International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) as well as the work on developing guidance for national policy-makers on investment in food safety management systems.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE F – SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF LAND, WATER AND GENETIC RESOURCES AND IMPROVED RESPONSES TO GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES AFFECTING FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

31. The Committee endorsed the priority areas of emphasis under Strategic Objective F.

32. The Committee commended the proposed work on integrated natural resources management and voluntary guidelines on responsible governance of tenure of land and other natural resources. It requested that work on the Water Platform be initiated in the current biennium. The Committee stressed the need for capacity building related to water and land
resources, genetic resources for food and agriculture and climate change adaptation and mitigation. It invited FAO to play an active role in climate change mitigation and adaptation in coordination with other organizations concerned, and to provide science-based advice to the relevant fora.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE G – ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR MARKETS TO IMPROVE LIVELIHOODS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

33. The Committee reaffirmed the importance of the work on strategies and policies for small producers with a focus on the sustainable increase of agricultural production with food security and poverty reduction objectives. Members also recognized the need for work on inclusive rural development, considering the critical role of rural institutions and employment programmes (particularly for youth and seasonally unemployed).

34. Members emphasized the importance of the work on agribusiness and rural agro-industries, in particular small and medium enterprises, also with a view of expanding rural employment opportunities.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE H – IMPROVED FOOD SECURITY AND BETTER NUTRITION

35. The Committee noted that proposed priority areas of emphasis under Strategic Objective H would be discussed in detail at the forthcoming session of the CFS. With reference to the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics, the Committee reaffirmed the priority of FAO’s work in statistics in terms of both improved collection and access to data. The Members supported work on the implementation of the voluntary guidelines on the progressive realization of the Right to Food at country level, while also confirming support to strengthening Information Systems for Food Security which should integrate nutritional aspects. The Committee reaffirmed the importance of partnerships among the Rome-based agencies and with the CGIAR in this area to avoid overlaps and build synergies. Strengthening the capacities of Member Nations in establishing knowledge networks for agriculture, food security and nutrition was also emphasized. The consideration of the International Conference on Nutrition: 20 years later was deferred until it is further discussed in the CFS.

36. The Committee was assured that paragraph 50 b) of COAG/2010/2 would be reformulated by the Secretariat and submitted to its next session.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE I – IMPROVED PREPAREDNESS FOR, AND EFFECTIVE RESPONSE TO, FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL THREATS AND EMERGENCIES

37. The Committee underscored the need for synergy between Strategic Objective I and the remaining other eight strategic objectives in the context of transition from relief and emergency to rehabilitation and development.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE K – GENDER EQUITY IN ACCESS TO RESOURCES, GOODS, SERVICES AND DECISION MAKING IN THE RURAL AREAS

38. The Committee reaffirmed the importance of mainstreaming gender issues in the policy and technical work of all the other strategic objectives of the Organization, including in its advice to member countries.
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE L: INCREASED AND MORE EFFECTIVE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

39. The Committee endorsed the priority areas of emphasis for FAO support to investment in agriculture and rural development. It underlined the importance of a country-driven approach, and collaboration with international and regional financial institutions. It also stressed the importance of FAO’s assistance to member countries in agricultural investment planning.

OTHER MATTERS

PROPOSALS FOR AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT SESSION

40. The Committee noted the following proposals for possible consideration in the agenda of the next session:
   • mechanization in the agro-forestry sector and in vulnerable ecosystems;
   • linking water and soil to climate change;
   • information technology, sectorial approach and impact of regional economic integration in relation to agricultural and rural development.

41. It was noted that the Bureau would consult with countries and regional groups in order to establish the agenda.

DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT SESSION

42. It was agreed that the 23rd Session of the Committee would meet in Rome in the first half of 2012 and that the exact date would be determined by the Director-General in consultation with the Chairperson.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

43. With reference to the outcomes of the Technical Conference on Agricultural Biotechnologies in Mexico, March 2010, the Committee was informed that resources are needed to increase agricultural productivity, including the review, approval and adoption of biotechnology and other new technologies and innovations that are safe, effective and environmentally sustainable.

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSONS

44. The Committee elected Mr Shobhana Kumar Pattanayak (India) as Chairperson, Mr François Pythoud (Switzerland) and Mr Javad Shakhs Tavakolian (Islamic Republic of Iran) as Vice-Chairpersons.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

45. The report was adopted on Saturday 19 June 2010.
APPENDIX A – AGENDA OF THE TWENTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Item 1. Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons
Item 2. Adoption of Agenda and Timetable for the Session
Item 3. Sustainable Crop Production Intensification Through an Ecosystem Approach and an Enabling Environment: Capturing Efficiency Through Ecosystem Services and Management
Item 4. Soil for Food Security and Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation
Item 5. Guidance of the Livestock Sector – Issues and Options
Item 6. Policies and Institutions to Support Smallholder Agriculture
Item 7. Priorities and Results under the Medium Term Plan and Programme of Work and Budget 2012-13
Item 8. Other Matters
   8.1 Proposals for Agenda Items for the Next Session
   8.2 Any Other Matters*
   8.3 Date and Place of Next Session
Item 9. Adoption of the Report
### APPENDIX B – LIST OF DOCUMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COAG/2010/1</td>
<td>Provisional Agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG/2010/2</td>
<td>Priorities and Results under the Medium Term Plan and Programme of Work and Budget 2012-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG/2010/3</td>
<td>Sustainable Crop Production Intensification through an Ecosystem Approach and an Enabling Environment: Capturing Efficiency Through Ecosystem Services and Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG/2010/4</td>
<td>Soil for Food Security and Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG/2010/5</td>
<td>Guidance of the Livestock Sector— Issues and Options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG/2010/6</td>
<td>Policies and Institutions to Support Smallholder Agriculture</td>
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<td><strong>COAG/2010/INF/Series</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG/2010/Inf.1</td>
<td>Provisional Annotated Agenda and Timetable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG/2010/Inf.2</td>
<td>Provisional List of Documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG/2010/Inf.3</td>
<td>Statement of Competence and Voting Rights submitted by the European Union (EU) and its Member States (MS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG/2010/Inf.4</td>
<td>List of Delegates and Observers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG/2010/Inf.5</td>
<td>Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG/2010/Inf.6</td>
<td>Matters Related to FAO’s Commissions, Treaties and Conventions of Relevance to COAG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG/2010/Inf.7</td>
<td>Climate Change Negotiations at Copenhagen and Beyond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG/2010/Inf.8</td>
<td>Capacity Building for Crop and Livestock Statistics in the Context of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG/2010/Inf.9</td>
<td>Global Monitoring and Early Warning System on Water in Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG/2010/Inf.10</td>
<td>FAO International Technical Conference on Agricultural Biotechnologies in Developing Countries: Options and Opportunities in Crops, Forestry, Livestock, Fisheries and Agro-industry to Face the Challenges of Food Insecurity and Climate Change (ABDC-10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG/2010/Inf.11 – (C2009/15)</td>
<td>Medium-Term Plan 2010-2013 and Programme of Work and Budget 2010-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG/2010/Inf.12</td>
<td>Evaluation Reports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX C – COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED AT THE SESSION

### MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Afghanistan</th>
<th>Gabon</th>
<th>Pakistan</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>Panama</td>
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<td>Paraguay</td>
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<td>Guinea</td>
<td>Qatar</td>
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<td>Bangladesh</td>
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<td>Republic of Korea</td>
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<td>Romania</td>
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<td>Belgium</td>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>Russian Federation</td>
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<td>Benin</td>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>Saint Vincent and the Grenadines</td>
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<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
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<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>Iran (Islamic Republic of)</td>
<td>Serbia</td>
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<td>Burkina Faso</td>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>Slovakia</td>
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<td>Burundi</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Slovenia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>Somalia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cape Verde</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Spain</td>
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<td>Chile</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
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<td>China</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
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<td>Colombia</td>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
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<td>Congo</td>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
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<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
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<tr>
<td>Côte d'Ivoire</td>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>The Former Yugoslav</td>
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<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>Lesotho</td>
<td>Tunisia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cuba</td>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>Libyan Arab Jamahiriya</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic People's Republic of Korea</td>
<td>Madagascar</td>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Democratic Republic of the Congo</td>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
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<td>Zimbabwe</td>
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| Ethiopia    | Netherlands | }
| European Union (Member Organization) | New Zealand | }
| Finland     | Nicaragua | }
| France      | Niger | }
|             | Nigeria | }
|             | Norway | }
|             | Oman | }
OBSERVERS FROM MEMBER NATIONS NOT MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE
Chad; Myanmar; Suriname; Syrian Arab Republic

HOLY SEE

REPRESENTATIVES OF UNITED NATIONS AND SPECIALIZED AGENCIES
International Atomic Energy Agency
Secretariat of the Convention to Combat Desertification
United Nations Environment Programme
World Food Programme

OBSERVERS FROM INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
African Union
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
Intergovernmental Authority on Development
World Organisation for Animal Health

OBSERVERS FROM NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
Compassion in World Farming
Heifer Project International
International Association of Students in Agriculture and Related Sciences
International Federation of Bee Keepers Associations
International Federation for Home Economics
International Federation for Animal Health
International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements
International Federation of Women in Legal Careers
International NGO/CSO Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty
Oxfam International
Practical Action
Rotary International
Soroptimist International
Via Campesina
Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resources Management
Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom