Chairperson, Members of the Council,

I am pleased to present the Report of the 138th Session of the Programme Committee.

The 138th Session of the Programme Committee was held from 20 to 24 May 2024 and its Report is submitted to the Council in document CL 175/10. The Programme Committee had 15 items on its agenda. I would like to highlight the following matters for the attention of the Council.

In relation to the Preparation for the Medium Term Plan 2026-29 – Regional Priorities, the Committee welcomed the priorities expressed by the three Regional Conferences for Asia and the Pacific, Near East, and Latin America and the Caribbean, and looked forward to those of Africa, Europe and Central Asia, and North America, as well as guidance on technical priorities stemming from the Technical Committees, at its November session, which will guide the preparation of the Medium Term Plan 2026-29 and Programme of Work and Budget 2026-27 as well as the upcoming revision of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31.

The Committee welcomed the Evaluation of Programme Priority Area (PPA) BN4 – Reduction of Food Loss and Waste (FLW) and Management Response, appreciated FAO’s ongoing commitment to reduction of FLW and its key role in addressing FLW globally, and welcomed the importance given to strengthening the technical capacity at both FAO headquarters and the Decentralized Offices.

Regarding the Evaluation of FAO’s Cash and Voucher Assistance and Management Response, the Committee expressed appreciation for the Evaluation and for its findings, and recognized the need to strengthen partnerships and to sustain coordination, including with the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), to better share knowledge and further leverage technical capacities.

The Committee congratulated FAO on being awarded the King Hassan II of Morocco Great World Water Prize during the 10th World Water Forum, and looked forward to further updates on the collective FAO results achieved on water.

The Committee welcomed the Follow-up report on Joint evaluation of collaboration among the United Nations Rome-based Agencies, appreciated the action taken and changes achieved to date, and encouraged further action to strengthen FAO’s joint collaborative activities with the other RBAs and to further strengthen and deepen its collaboration across the UN system.

The Committee recognized the progress made in strengthening engagements with civil society organizations and welcomed FAO’s initiative to update the accreditation procedure for international non-governmental organizations, ensuring clarity and transparency of the process, and looked forward to updates.

With regard to the Report of the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System: Review of management and administration in the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (JIU/REP/2023/5), the Committee appreciated the Management Response and Reflections (CL 175/14/Sup.1), looked forward to further deliberation on this topic, and requested FAO to regularly update the relevant Governing Bodies on progress made in implementing the formal and informal recommendations.

The Committee also welcomed the 2024–27 Action Plan for the Implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors, encouraged Members to support its implementation through the provision of voluntary contributions and welcomed the alignment of the 2024-27 Action Plan with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, now known as the Biodiversity Plan, including at the Target level.

Dear Members of the Council, I would like to invite you to review the Report of the 138th Programme Committee. For your convenience, this Report includes an executive summary and suggested actions.
I am pleased to provide any further explanations you may have regarding this Report.

Ms Yael Rubinstein
Chairperson of the 138th Session of the Programme Committee