

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE**  
**39/8 MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

23 June 2023

(Online meeting)

**MEETING MINUTES**

**1. Opening of the meeting**

The Chairperson of the ECA (Mr Marios GEORGIADES) opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the Executive Committee (the ExCom) to the eighth meeting after the 42nd Session of the ECA.

**2. Adoption of the agenda<sup>1</sup>**

The meeting agenda was adopted with no additional item. The adopted meeting agenda is presented in Annex 2.

**3. Impact of the war in Ukraine on food security and related matters<sup>2</sup>**

This item was a recorded presentation delivered by Mr Andrew STEVENSON on behalf of Mr Raimund JEHLE. In the presentation, Mr STEVENSON gave a quick overview on the impacts of the war in general and the recent breach of the Kakhovka Dam in particular. He updated the ExCom on the FAO Response Programme for Ukraine in 2023 and detailed the three pillars of the programme: 1) Restoring food security and self-sufficiency in frontline communities; 2) Restoring critical agricultural production and value chains; 3) Restoring critical agri-food system services. He also mentioned the achievements reached through the Response Programme.

Details are provided in the dispatched PPT.

In the discussion, the following points were raised. They will be forwarded to Mr JEHLE, who will provide written responses to them.

Mr JILEK asked how FAO is planning to address the area around the damaged dam that has affected many farmers on the ground.

Ms POPANDONOVA asked whether FAO was going to provide laboratories for testing in the contaminated area, and if there any recovery plans that FAO is developing to address this issue for small farms and enterprises that were affected by the contamination.

**ACTION:** The Secretariat to circulate Mr STEVENSON's presentation among the ExCom members.

**4. Outcomes of the 2023 Informal Consultation**

Ms ROCCA informed the participants on the outcomes of the REU Informal Consultation for Europe and Central Asia, held on 4-5 May 2023 in Budapest, Hungary. She mentioned the numbers related to the attendance; the purpose of organizing such a consultation in between two Regional Conferences and also the main results and key conclusions of the two half-day long discussions.

Details are provided in the dispatched PPT.

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<sup>1</sup> The draft agenda is available at: <https://www.fao.org/3/cc6668en/cc6668en.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Background information for this agenda item is available at <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cc4655en>

## 5. Identification of topics in preparation for the 34th Session of the ERC (2024)

Mr Nabil GANGI gave a brief presentation on the identification of the topics for the 34<sup>th</sup> Session of ERC that is scheduled for the period of 13-17 May in 2024. He emphasized that a host country for the event still needs to be identified.

He introduced the standard items on the Agenda, which included the introductory items, regional and global policy and regulatory issues (including one or two main topics), programme and budget matters and other matters, including information notes.

He mentioned that during the Informal Consultation in relation to the ERC, Members requested that the outcomes of the United Nations Food Systems Stocktaking Moment (July 2023) and follow up be included in the agenda of the ERC.

Details are provided in the dispatched PPT.

Mr CHAROUTOUNIAN asked for the requirements for hosting the Regional Conference.

The Members of the ExCom expressed their opinions on the three proposed topics and most of them supported the first one (*"The role of innovation and digitalization in the sustainable use of land, forests and water resources to accelerate the implementation of nature-positive, climate-resilient and low-emissions pathways in agrifood systems"*) to be the main topic of the 34<sup>th</sup> Session of the ERC. Members also suggested the possibility to merge it with the second topic (*"Ensuring sustainable and resilient rural development and local food systems for smallholders, family farms and rural communities through an inclusive policy environment, gender-responsive rural advisory services, innovation, digitalization and social protection"*).

## 6. Preparation of the 43rd Session of ECA (27-28 Sep 2023)

Mr WŁODARCZYK presented the background document for this agenda item. He updated the ExCom on the preparations of the Forty-third Session of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA), to be held on 27 and 28 September 2023 in Budapest. He noticed that Annexes to the background paper of this agenda item are not the final ones. Mr WŁODARCZYK updated the ExCom on the following elements: the preparation of the draft annotated agenda of the Session; the preparation of the background papers; preparation of the logistics and preparation of the ECA elections. He underlined that the Secretariat sent a reminder on the ECA elections to all Members on 16 June 2023 and is planning to send another reminder in July, at that time extending the deadline for the submission of nominations. He suggested that the deadline could be extended to 15 August 2023, so that new nominations can be submitted before the deadline for publication of ECA documents, which is 26 August 2023. He also noted that the Secretariat has no grounds to reject any late nominations, irrespective of their time of submission before the elections, and explained that the Secretariat was planning to add this information to the reminder that would be sent out in July.

Mr GEORGIADES raised a possible issue related to voting during the ECA elections. He noted that should the number of nominations exceed the number of vacancies, there will be a need for a secret ballot voting, and the Secretariat may need to consider such possibility when preparing for the Session.

In reply to a question asked by Mr GEORGIADES, Mr WŁODARCZYK explained that the Secretariat is collecting nominations separately for the positions of the ECA Chairperson, the first Vice-Chairperson, the second Vice-Chairperson and other members of the ExCom. He added that this was also how the Secretariat was going to present the nominations to the Members of ECA. He also explained that should for any of the positions the number of candidates exceed the number of vacancies, the Commission would have to vote for this position by secret ballot. If for other positions the number of

candidates is equal to the number of vacancies, the Commission may decide to decide on that position by clear general consent.

The ExCom agreed with the proposed dates by the Secretariat for the 43rd Session of the ECA (27 and 28 September 2023). The ExCom endorsed the proposed Provisional Agenda for the 43rd ECA Session, leaving the possibility to the Secretariat to make small adjustments to the titles of agenda items and to add descriptions of the information items.

**ACTION:**

The Secretariat to prepare for secret ballot voting during the ECA elections.

The Secretariat to send another reminder to the Members on the ECA elections in July and extend the deadline for nominations to 15 August.

**7. Review and recommendations on the REU work programme 2022-2023 in a selected technical area: Food-based dietary guidelines (Regional Priority 4, cross-regional initiative area)**

Mr Keigo OBARA started his presentation with a brief summary on current food security and nutrition issue in the Europe an Central-Asia Region that is marked by the “multiple burden of malnutrition“. He underlined that the cost of healthy diets has been increasing in recent years, which results in reduced affordability of sustainable healthy diets for households.

Dietary guidelines are needed to inform consumers, to suggest healthy forms of diet, and potentially to inform and guide policymaker actions. In order to increase the efficacy of dietary guidelines FAO has been working on developing a Food Systems Based Dietary Guidelines.

Details are provided in the attached PPT.

In the discussion, the following points were raised:

Mr KUSHNAZAROV raised that it is unfortunate that dietary guidelines are not yet developed for Central Asian countries.

Mr HAROUTOUNIAN asked about any plans of FAO for food replacements that could serve as alternatives in the dietary guidelines.

Ms POPANDONOVA raised that the possibility of enlarging the programme would be most welcome and it would be important that governments are made aware of these priority issues.

Mr OBARA reacted to the issues raised:

- He mentioned that efforts are made in order to widen the number of countries where FAO work can be started in relation to the Food Systems Based Dietary Guidelines.
- In relation to bringing into the attention the programme of the governments Mr OBARA said that more stakeholders would be invited to regional meetings of the ongoing TCP beneficiary countries.
- Regarding the food replacements, in the three piloting countries he emphasized that in those countries the food compositions table were missing.

**ACTION:** The Secretariat to circulate the presentation among the ExCom members.

**8. Adoption and publication of the ExCom meeting minutes**

Mr WŁODARCZYK presented the background document for this agenda item. The conclusion of the paper based on the analysis made by the Secretariat shows that the time for adoption and publication of the ExCom meeting minutes is hardly possible to be reduced. The ExCom accepted the amendment of the procedure for the adoption and publication of the minutes of ExCom meetings as presented by

the Secretariat and requested that it be incorporated into the revised ExCom Information Document (EID). With this, the ExCom requested that the Secretariat publish the EID on the ExCom's website.

**ACTION:** The Secretariat to post the ExCom Information Document of the ExCom's website.

## **9. AOB**

No AOB items were discussed.

## **10. Closing of the meeting**

The Chairperson thanked the ExCom members for their participation and contribution throughout the two year-long term. The Chairperson and other ExCom members expressed their appreciation to Mr JILEK for his work, as he is going to finish serving as the member of the ExCom in August. Mr GEORGIADES wished everyone a relaxing holiday season, and closed the meeting.

## Annex 1

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE****39/8 MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

23 June 2023

13.00-16.00 hrs (Rome time)

Online meeting

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

	<b>Role</b>	<b>Country/Organization</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Present/Absent</b>
1.	ECA Chairperson	Cyprus	Mr Marios GEORGIADES	Present
2.	ECA Vice-Chairperson	North Macedonia	Ms Lidija POPANDONOVA	Present
3.	ECA Vice-Chairperson	Russian Federation	Mr Kirill ANTYUKHIN	Absent
4.	ExCom Member	Czechia	Mr Jiří JÍLEK	Present
5.	ExCom Member	Greece	Mr Serkos A. CHAROUTOUNIAN	Present
6.	ExCom Member	Hungary	Ms Evelin LANTOS	Absent
7.	ExCom Member	Serbia	Ms Vedrana ILIĆ	Absent
8.	ExCom Member	Slovakia	Ms Terézia KRAMOLIŠOVÁ	Present
9.	ExCom Member	Uzbekistan	Mr Nuriddin KUSHNAZAROV	Present
10.	Deputy Regional Representative	FAO REU	Mr Nabil GANGI	Present
11.	Acting Secretary of ECA	FAO REU	Mr Piotr WŁODARCZYK	Present
12.	Food Security Officer	FAO SEC	Mr Keigo OBARA	Present
13.	Regional SDG Advisor	FAO REU	Ms Valeria ROCCA	Present
14.	Programme Coordination Specialist and Country Analyst	FAO REU	Ms Cholpon ESENBKOVA	Present
15.	Programme and meeting assistant	FAO REU	Ms Eniko KOTI	Present
16.	Office Assistant	FAO REU	Ms Fanni KAJTAR	Present

## Annex 2

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE****39/8 MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

23 June 2023

13.00-16.00

Online (Zoom)

**AGENDA**

No.	Agenda Item Title	Document No./Link	Presenter
	Opening of the meeting	-	CHAIRPERSON
1.	Adoption of the agenda	ECA_ExCom/39/8-1	EXCOM
2.	Impact of the war in Ukraine on food security and related matters	-	Andrew STEVENSON, (Emergency Response Manager)
3.	Outcomes of the 2023 Informal Consultation	-	Valeria ROCCA (Regional SDG Advisor, REU)
4.	Identification of topics in preparation for the 34th Session of the ERC (2024)	ECA_ExCom/39/8-2	DEPUTY REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE
5.	Preparation of the 43rd Session of ECA (27-28 Sep 2023)	ECA_ExCom/39/8-3	ECA SECRETARY
6.	Review and recommendations on the REU work programme 2022-2023 in a selected technical area: - Food-based dietary guidelines (Regional Priority 4, cross-regional initiative area)	ECA_ExCom/39/8-4	Keigo OBARA (Food Security Officer, SEC)
7.	Adoption and publication of the ExCom meeting minutes	ECA_ExCom/39/8-5	ECA SECRETARY
8.	Any other business	-	PARTICIPANTS
	Close of the meeting	-	CHAIRPERSON