



# COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS

## Hundred and Twenty-second Session

Rome, 3-5 March 2025

### Update on the Dissemination of Memoranda of Understanding signed by FAO

#### I. Introduction

1. This document is presented to the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (“CCLM” or “the Committee”), recalling that, in the Report of its 121st Session in October 2024, the Committee “*welcomed the update on the dissemination of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) signed by FAO*” and “*looked forward to receiving an update at its future session on further steps to disseminate MOUs concluded with other entities, including academia, research institutions and civil society organizations*”.<sup>1</sup> These considerations were noted by the Council at its 176th Session in December 2024.<sup>2</sup>

#### II. Update on the activities undertaken to disseminate MoUs signed by FAO

##### A. Mandatory dissemination clause

2. The dissemination clause allowing parties to publish an MoU or information about an MoU on their respective websites<sup>3</sup> has been included in all standard FAO templates for MoUs with intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), academia and research institutions, civil society organizations (CSOs) and private sector entities (PSEs). FAO will not sign MoUs that do not contain this mandatory clause. This legal issue has, therefore, now been addressed for all categories of partner.

##### B. Dissemination of MoUs on the CONNECT Portal

3. As of 31 January 2025, 97 MoUs with IGOs have been uploaded to the interim solution on the FAO Members Gateway<sup>4</sup> and 22 active MoUs with PSEs have been uploaded to the CONNECT Portal. The Secretariat has identified 47 active MoUs with academia and research institutions and

<sup>1</sup> [CL 176/11](#), paragraph 10.

<sup>2</sup> [CL 176/REP](#), paragraph 34 c) i).

<sup>3</sup> [CCLM 119/3](#), paragraph 12.

<sup>4</sup> [CCLM 120/3](#), paragraphs 12-14; [CCLM 121/2](#) paragraph 3.

20 active MoUs with CSOs, and is undertaking a case-by-case review of these MoUs to confirm, in each case:

- a) whether the MoU remains in force;
- b) whether the MoU establishes a general framework for collaboration and lays the foundation for a partnership or collaborative relationship;
- c) whether the MoU includes the standard dissemination clause or a similar provision, in the absence of which express consent for dissemination will be sought in line with the procedures applied to the dissemination of MoUs with IGOs and PSEs;<sup>5</sup> and
- d) whether in the absence of express consent for dissemination, the MoU has been terminated.

4. MoUs with academia and research institutions and CSOs will be uploaded to the CONNECT Portal. The final steps to disseminate these MoUs are therefore underway, upon which all MoUs concluded with all categories of partner will be available to Members online.

### *C. Expansion of the CONNECT Portal and expected timeframe*

5. The Partnerships and UN Collaboration Division (PSU) and the Digital FAO and Agro-informatics Division (CSI) continue to work closely to expand the CONNECT Portal so that it will serve as FAO's unified corporate platform for accessing information on all FAO partnerships.<sup>6</sup>

6. The expansion of the CONNECT Portal is expected to be completed by 2026 and, as part of this exercise, a dedicated dashboard enabling Members to access MoUs signed with IGOs, academia and research institutions, CSOs and PSEs is under development.

## **III. Suggested action by the Committee**

7. The Committee is invited to take note of this update, and to make such comments or provide guidance as it deems appropriate.

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<sup>5</sup> [CCLM 119/3](#), paragraph 15; [CCLM 120/3](#), paragraphs 15-20.

<sup>6</sup> [CCLM 121/2](#), paragraphs 8-10.