

174th Session of the FAO Council

Item 9: Report of the 137th Session of the Programme Committee (Rome, 6-10 November 2023)

I am pleased to present the Report of the 137th Session of the Programme Committee.

The 137th Session of the Programme Committee was held from 6 to 10 November and its Report is submitted to the Council in document CL 174/8.

The Programme Committee had 21 items on its agenda, including nine for information. I would like to highlight the following matters for the attention of the Council.

The Committee decided unanimously to elect Her Excellency Ambassador Ms Nosipho Nausca Jean Jezile of South Africa as Vice-Chairperson of the Programme Committee for the remainder of its term (November 2023 – June 2025).

In relation to the *Rolling Work Plan of Evaluations (update)*, the Committee recognized the achievements of the Office of Evaluation (OED) in responding to the five focus areas of the OED's strategy and recommended the Council to approve it.

Regarding the *Evaluation of FAO's support to life below water (SDG 14)*, the Committee acknowledged FAO's unique position to contribute to SDG 14; appreciated FAO's key contribution to develop capacity in fisheries data collection and stock assessment, appreciated and stressed that despite FAO's considerable efforts and progress, there is room for improving persistent data gaps and discrepancies that undermine data quality, and recommended the need for a long-term programme on these, which are fundamental to improve country reporting on SDG 14.

The Committee welcomed the *Follow-up report on the Evaluation of FAO's role and work on the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus* and appreciated the actions taken on the implementation of the Evaluation recommendations and the impact and changes made to date.

The Committee welcomed the document *Contribution of terrestrial animal source food to healthy diets for improved nutrition*, recognized the gaps in evidence on the risks and contribution of the wide range of terrestrial animal source foods (TASF) to healthy diets, and encouraged FAO to continue working with relevant partners to capture different approaches and knowledge for evidence generation to fill critical gaps in evidence and knowledge.

The Committee congratulated FAO on developing the comprehensive *Conceptual framework for integrated land and water resources management*, commended the collaborative and coordinated work on an ecosystems-based approach with other relevant UN entities, and looked forward to receiving information on relevant Programme Priority Areas (PPAs) that will be targeted for concrete impact in integrated management of land, soil and water resources during the biennium.

The Committee also welcomed the update on *FAO responses to global food security challenges*, expressed appreciation for FAO's policy proposals and technical initiatives in response to the global food security challenges, urged the Organization to continue its efforts in this regard, and appreciated the undertaking by Management to provide updated information on the food security emergency in Gaza and other conflicts.

The Committee acknowledged FAO's efforts in accelerating impact through development of the Global Innovation Model and encouraged systematic integration of innovation and technology into FAO programmes for closing the science, technology and innovation gap.

I would like to invite you to review the Report of the 137th Programme Committee. For your convenience, this Report includes an executive summary and suggested action.

I am pleased to provide any further explanations you may have regarding this Report.

Ms Yael Rubinstein, Chairperson of the 137th Session of the Programme Committee