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Regional Technical Commissions' contribution to the Regional Priorities

I. Introduction

1. The quadrennial review of the FAO Strategic Framework and preparation of a new Medium-Term Plan (MTP) 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19¹, which were approved by the Conference² in July 2017, took place in 2015 and 2016 through the Regional Conferences and Technical Committees.

2. As part of this process, a structured regional strategic review was carried out to identify the main trends and issues in food and agriculture in the Europe and Central Asia Region and their implications for FAO's future work in the region.

3. The priorities of FAO's work in 2018-19 in the region, as agreed by the European Regional Conference (ERC)³, are:

- 1) Formulating effective policies for sustainable and inclusive growth for farmers and the rural population with emphasis on smallholders and family farms within overall agricultural and development policies;
- 2) Enhancing outreach towards new markets through alignment of trade, food safety and SPS policies to meet WTO commitments and international food safety and quality requirements through value-chain development;

¹ C 2001/73 Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19 <http://www.fao.org/3/a-ms278e.pdf>

² Report of the 40th Session of the Conference of FAO, Rome, Italy, 3-8 July 2017 <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mu208e.pdf>

³ Report of the 30th Session of FAO Regional Conference for Europe, Antalya, Turkey, 4-6 May 2016 <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mq752e.pdf>

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- 3) Promoting sustainable natural resource management, combating land degradation and desertification, including mitigation and adaptation to climate change, which will be key areas of action in the medium and long term;
- 4) Addressing food insecurity and reduction of all forms of malnutrition, which are major challenges in the medium and long term.

4. As part of the regional governance there are six technical Commissions in the Europe and Central Asia Region with focus on technical issues, established under Articles VI and XIV of the FAO Constitution.

- Basic texts **Article VI**⁴ [Regional commissions established by the Conference or the Council, which are open to all Member Nations and Associate Members whose territories are situated wholly or in part in one or more regions, to advise on the formulation and implementation of policy and to coordinate the implementation of policy]. For Europe and Central Asia region these are: the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA); the European Forestry Commission (EFC) and the European Inland Fisheries Advisory Commission (EIFAAC).
- Basic texts **Article XIV**⁵ [Regional commissions established under an Agreement approved by the Conference on questions relating to food and agriculture with autonomous budget.]. For Europe and Central Asia region these are: the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM); the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish) and, the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (EuFMD)⁶.

5. Considering the cross sectorial nature of the new Sustainable Development Goals there is an increased need for better coordination and coherence at the regional level including identifying linkages among the different regional technical commissions (while taking into consideration their institutional and operational diversity). As Article-VI bodies, the ECA (since 22nd Session of the ERC in 2000), EFC and EIFAAC (both since 30th Session of the ERC in 2016) report to the European Regional Conference and *'should review technical aspects and issues of importance to the region within its mandate and present recommendations for the ERC to consider in its policy discussions and deliberations'*⁷. At its 5th session on 10-12 October 2016, CACFish decided to also report to the ERC. The GFCM and EuFMD have so far not yet made this formal agreement.

6. The Assessment of the ECA, as well as the outcomes of the Informal Consultation in Budapest, Hungary, 29-30 May 2017⁸ highlighted the importance of collaboration among the regional technical commissions. The purpose of this document is to provide the European Commission on Agriculture with an overview of the priorities of each of the technical commissions in the region and therefore display possible linkages among the commissions as basis for identifying synergies and initiating a dialogue to identify coherence.

7. The remainder of this document is divided in two main sections:

- Section II outlines the main priorities of the relevant commission, the linkages to the FAO strategic framework and the contribution of the commission to supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Region.

⁴ Basic texts of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mp046e.pdf#page=11>

⁵ Basic texts of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mp046e.pdf#page=11>

⁶ The current document does not reach out to the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease, as it operates more independently from FAO.

⁷ ERC Multi-Year Plan of Work approved by the ERC at its 30th session in May 2016.

⁸ Minutes of the Informal Consultation, 29-30 May 2017, http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/reu/europe/documents/events2017/IC/Minutes_en.pdf

- Section III provides conclusions and follow-up recommendations.

II. Outline of the main priorities of the Commissions in the Region

A. European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)⁹

1. Main priorities of work of the Commission for 2018-19

8. The main purpose of ECA is to assist Member Governments in undertaking joint action and cooperating on agricultural technological and policy issues, including research, education, extension as well as issues related to nutrition and agricultural economy. Another objective is to encourage and facilitate cooperation between international governmental and non-governmental organizations concerned with agriculture in Europe¹⁰. In line with the agreement from the 20th Session of the ECA, the ECA is a preparatory body of the European Regional Conference. The ECA's mandate covers assessing and identifying regional priority areas to be reviewed and to be forwarded to the ERC for approval.

9. Therefore, the ECA's 2018-2019 work will be closely linked to the priority areas identified by the 30th Session of the Regional Conference for Europe (See para 3 above). With reference to the ECA's mandate, its contribution to these priority areas are as follows:

10. Priority 1 – Smallholders and empowerment of Family Farmers

- Revitalization of rural areas, reduction of out-migration, infrastructure development for smallholders such as an access to advisory services, innovative practices and education facilities to increase their competitiveness, equitable access to and distribution of land;
- Improvement of tenure systems, further application of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT);
- Empowerment of rural women, support to professional education and support to social protection services for the most disadvantaged groups.

11. Priority 2 – Agrifood Trade and Market Integration

- Alignment of trade and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) policies with World Trade Organization (WTO) commitments, capacity development of member countries' food safety agencies for food safety risks analysis (risk management, risk assessment and risk communication);
- Technical assistance in upgrading value chains for selected food products, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises, including small- and medium-sized farmers and food business operators.

⁹ European Commission on Agriculture website, <http://www.fao.org/europe/commissions/eca/en/>
Report of the 39th Session of the European Commission on Agriculture, Budapest, 22-23 September 2017
<http://www.fao.org/3/a-mo701e.pdf>

¹⁰ FAO Governing and Statutory Bodies website, http://www.fao.org/unfao/govbodies/gsb-subject-matter/statutory-bodies-details/en/c/76/?no_cache=1.

12. **Priority 3 – Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and Climate Change**

- Water management and land degradation for most countries of the region;
- Maintenance of biodiversity, reduction of overexploitation of soils;
- Integration of the forestry sector with agriculture, including pasture and range management;
- Climate-smart agriculture for increasing sustainable productivity and income growth, supporting adaptation across the region’s agricultural sector.

13. **Priority 4 – Food Security and addressing forms of malnutrition.**

- Improvement of micronutrient deficiencies, over-nutrition and unhealthy diets for children and adults;
- Development and management of inclusive governance and coordination mechanisms, support for strengthening evidence-based decision-making, availability of food security and nutrition-related data and information;
Concentration on policies, investment, programmes, legal frameworks such as the Food Security Laws and Food Security and Nutrition Programmes.

14. Moreover, the Executive Committee of the ECA has taken note of the preliminary discussions related to the Assessment of the ECA, in particular, that it is considered an absolute priority to enhance the technical focus of the ECA by choosing one theme at a time in order to make it more relevant and useful for its members at large and enable high quality knowledge and experience to be shared. The Executive Committee also considered the 2018-19 Biennial Theme endorsed by the Conference: Climate Change and its impact on the work and activities of FAO. The agenda for the 40th ECA reflect already this focus by choosing “Climate change and transboundary animal diseases” as the main theme for the session. Emphasis during the session was given to the effects of climate change on animal diseases, trade and food security in the region, the growing concern and implications of antimicrobial resistance and the follow-up to the UNFCCC¹¹ Paris agreement.

2. *Linkage between the Strategic Programmes and the priorities of the Commission*

15. Priority 1 is closely linked to **SO3** and the emphasis to provide small holders with innovative practices. It also touches on the issue of farm structures and capacities of small holders in the Region. The priority is also aligned with **SO4** ‘Enable inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems’ and the Regional Specificities ‘Strengthening food security and nutrition in a sustainable manner’ and ‘Providing Policy advice to governments in support of sustainable agricultural production intensification for smallholders’. This includes the Regional Driver 1 ‘Rural livelihoods and rural poverty’.

16. Priority 2 contributes to **SO4** and the Regional Specificity ‘Providing policy and institutional support for the entry of Member States into regional and global trade, standard-setting and organizations of regional economic cooperation’. This includes the Regional Driver 5 ‘Agricultural trade policy’.

17. Priority 3 is linked to the **SO5** ‘Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises’ and Regional Specificity ‘Managing natural resources, including climate change mitigation and adaptation’. This includes Regional Driver 3 ‘Sustainability of food production and food systems’.

¹¹ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

18. Priority 4 is covered by the arms of the **SO1** *'Help eliminate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition'* and the Regional Specificity *'Strengthening food security and nutrition in a sustainable manner'*, as the Priority 1. This includes the Regional Driver 4 *'Food insecurity'*.

3. *Contribution of the ECA to the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*

19. Priority 1 mainly addresses **SDG1** (no poverty) and **SDG2** (zero hunger). In particular, it addresses target 1.4 on access to resources and services and 2.3 on productivity and income growth for smallholders.

20. Priority 2 mainly focuses on **SDG 8** (decent work and economic growth) and **SDG17** (partnerships for the goals) as well as **SDG 2**, **SDG 10** (reduced inequalities) and **SDG 12** (responsible consumption and production). In particular, it addresses target 8.a on trade support for developing / least developed countries, 17.10 on open and non-discriminatory trading system and 17.11 on increasing developing/least developed countries' share of global exports.

21. Priority 3 mainly addresses **SDG6** (clear water and sanitation), **SDG13** (climate action) and **SDG15** (life on land). In particular, it addresses targets 6.5 on integrated water management, 13.1 on resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and 15.1 on sustainable use of lands.

22. Priority 4 mainly puts focus on **SDG 2** (zero hunger). In particular, it addresses targets 2.1 on food security, 2.2 on malnutrition and 2.3 on investment into agricultural infrastructure and services.

B. European Forestry Commission (EFC)¹²

1. Main priorities of work of the Commission for 2018-19

23. The purpose of the European Forestry Commission (EFC) is to provide a policy and technical forum for countries to discuss and address forest issues on a regional basis; to exchange information and, generally through special subsidiary bodies, to advise on suitable practices and action with regard to technical and economic problems, and to make appropriate recommendations in relation to the foregoing. The EFC has one subsidiary body, namely the Working Party on the Management of Mountain Watersheds, and a number of associated working groups, namely the UNECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management; and eight UNECE/FAO Teams of Specialists.

24. EFC has Regional Program of Work through Regional (REU) and Sub-regional (SEC) Offices, which includes following priorities:

25. REU: (i) Ensure sustainable wood mobilization and use of non-wood forest resources, in particular in view of the increased demand for bioenergy, through providing support to member countries in assessing and monitoring forest/tree and wildlife resources; (ii) strengthen country capacity to deal with increasing threats posed by pest movement in expanded international trade coupled with local climatic change, and to implement the Guide to implementation of phytosanitary standards in forestry; (iii) strengthen country capacity to assess and monitor climate change impacts on forests and land resources, and support countries to adapt to climate change and mitigate its impact.

¹² European Forestry Commission (EFC) Web site: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/efc/en/>
Report of the joint session of the 38th European Forestry Commission and the 73rd UNECE Committee on Forest and the Forest Industry <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ae42566b-7204-4b01-9256-51c12295491e/>

26. SEC: (i) Strengthen forest governance, including policy, legal and institutional structures; (ii) establish a forest/tree resource assessment and monitoring system; (iii) foster land-tenure security and forest ownership; (iv) combat deforestation and degradation of forests caused by fuelwood gathering and livestock grazing; (v) restore and sustainably manage mountain watersheds and conserve riparian (tugai) forests; and (iv) adapt to climate change and mitigate its impacts on forests and land resources.

27. In addition, EFC has an Integrated Program of Work with UNECE Committee on Forestry and Forest Industries (COFFI) through the Joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section in Geneva. This includes the following work areas for 2018-2021 period: (i) Data collection, monitoring, and assessment (including FRA and forest statistics); (ii) facilitating forest policy dialogue and advice; (iii) communication and outreach; and (iv) capacity building.

2. *Linkage between the Strategic Programmes and the priorities of the Commission*

28. EFC work priorities are linked with FAO Strategic Objective 2 through the following outcomes: 2.1: Countries increased productivity sustainably while addressing climate change and environmental degradation in agriculture, forestry and fisheries; 2.2: Countries developed or improved policies and governance mechanisms to address sustainable production, climate change and environmental degradation in agriculture, fisheries and forestry; 2.3: Improved implementation of policies and international instruments for sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry; 2.4: Countries made decisions based on evidence for sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry while addressing climate change and environmental degradation.

29. EFC also contributes to Strategic Objective 4 through the following outcomes: 4.1: International standards, trade agreements and voluntary guidelines formulated to improve access to, and functioning of international markets, 4.4: Countries made decisions based on evidence to support agrifood systems development.

3. *Contribution of the ECA to the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*

30. EFC work contributes to the implementation of SDG 15, specifically target 15.1, target 15.2, and target 15.4. EFC works also contribute to the SDG 2, specifically target 2.3 and SDG 7, specifically target 7.2.

C. **European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC)**¹³

1. *Main priorities of work of the Commission for 2018-19*

31. The mission of EIFAAC is to assist countries in long-term sustainable development, utilization, conservation, restoration and responsible management of inland fisheries and aquaculture sector in Europe, consistent with the objectives and principles of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and other relevant international instruments. Its mission is also to support sustainable economic, social, and recreational activities towards these goals through providing advice, information

¹³ European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC) website

<http://www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/eifaac/en>

Report of the 28th Session of EIFAAC, Lillehammer, Norway, 17-19 June 2015 <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4936e.pdf>

and coordination, encouraging enhanced stakeholder participation and communication, and delivering effective research.

32. The specific goals of EIFAAC as outlined in the 2012-2017 Strategy Plan are:

- Goal 1: To continue to develop EIFAAC as the leading pan-European Organisation in Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture in Europe.
- Goal 2: To implement processes and procedures to provide advice through projects and networks in accordance with the requirements of the Members.
- Goal 3: To develop an international network of organizations, stakeholders, communities and intergovernmental organizations that have an interest in Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture to promote EIFAAC objectives in coordination with these bodies.
- Goal 4: To implement EIFAAC structures, process and procedures, in coordination with the FAO secretariat, to ensure efficient delivery for the Members objectives in accordance with best international practice.

33. The work plan for the intersessional period 2015-2017¹⁴ as agreed at the 28th session in Lillehammer, Norway, 17-19 June 2015 continued to focus on priority areas identified by members in 2010, namely:

- 1) Social and economic aspects of inland fisheries and aquaculture;
- 2) Enabling riverine continuity;
- 3) Standardization of sampling techniques, protocols and catch reporting; and
- 4) Citizens to support fisheries science. Promotion of citizen science was considered critical for the data-poor fisheries and for the fish species that attract less research interest. Research on recreational fisheries was also identified as a priority and the Commission agreed to increase focus of aquaculture research, to address the issues facing inland aquaculture across Europe.

34. The 29th session of EIFAAC will be held in Stare Jablonki, Poland, 6-8 September 2017, and the Commission will determine the 2017-2018 work plan. The EIFAAC symposium held immediately before the 29th session will address climate change, “Adaptation of inland fisheries and aquaculture to climate change”. Therefore, it is likely that climate change impacts and adaptation strategies for inland fisheries will be a key discussion point for the Commission.

2. *Linkage between the Strategic Programmes and the priorities of the Commission*

35. The work of the Commission is relevant for all the SOs. In particular, improving European members’ statistical sampling capacity and inland capture fisheries management relates directly to **SO2** – improving fisheries productivity and sustainability. Improved data and research on inland aquaculture improves livelihoods of small scale producers, which is related to **SO3**. Both of these priority areas for inland fisheries development are linked to increased availability of fish as food (**SO1**) and to more resilient food value chains (**SO5**) to natural disasters and climate change by increasing the diversity of employment and food sources.

¹⁴ EIFAAC Work Plan for 2015-2017 <ftp://ftp.fao.org/FI/DOCUMENT/eifac/eifaac28/3e.pdf>

3. *Contribution of the Commission to the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*

36. The work of the Commission is directly related to **SDG1 and SDG2** - no poverty and zero hunger - by promoting improved livelihoods from the inland fisheries and aquaculture sector and micronutrient rich food products for growing populations. Inland aquaculture of non-carnivorous fish species is the most energy efficient way to produce protein in terms of carbon emissions, especially when compared to terrestrial meat production. It thus contributes to **SDG13** on Climate Action. Improved research, data collection and management of inland fisheries and aquaculture sector is related to **SDG 12** – responsible consumption and production. The work of the Commission to improve data collection and research on inland capture fisheries can take the pressure off marine resources and thus contribute indirectly to achieving **SDG14** on Oceans, as well as reduce the incidence of Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in inland waters, for example through better data collection and monitoring of recreational fishers.

D. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)¹⁵

1. *Main priorities of work of the Commission for 2018-19*

37. The main priority of GFCM is the implementation of the Mid-term Strategy (2017-2020)¹⁶ adopted in 2016 by the Commission towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries against the background of SDG 14 and FAO SO2. In this regard, progress is ensured to meet the following five targets by 2020:

- Target 1: Reverse the declining trend of fish stocks through strengthened scientific advice in support of management;
- Target 2: Support livelihoods for coastal communities through sustainable small-scale fisheries;
- Target 3: Curb illegal unreported and unregulated fishing, through a regional plan of action;
- Target 4: Minimize and mitigate unwanted interactions between fisheries and marine ecosystems and environment;
- Target 5: Enhance capacity-building and cooperation, including through the provision of technical assistance and trainings at country level.

38. Besides, implementation of the regional strategy for sustainable aquaculture, through support to countries in the establishment of Allocated Zones of Aquaculture, the definition of environmental indicators and the identification of sites for farming of species, is also in the Commission's focus.

2. *Linkage between the Strategic Programmes and the priorities of the Commission*

39. As indicated under point 1, the implementation of the mid-term strategy is directly linked to **SO2** "Making agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable". There is a strong linkage between the planned work of the Commission and that of FAO in the region, with particular reference to supporting countries in the development and implementation of normative and standard-

¹⁵ General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) website <http://www.fao.org/gfcm/en/>
Report of the 40th Session of GFCM, St Julian's, Malta, 30 May – 3 June 2016
<http://www.fao.org/gfcm/reports/statutory-meetings/detail/en/c/423828/>

¹⁶ GFCM Mid-term Strategy (2017-2020) towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries
http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/faoweb/GFCM/News/Mid-term_strategy-e.pdf

setting instruments, such as international agreements, codes of conduct, technical standards and others, bearing in mind that more than 50% of GFCM CPCs fall under the REU umbrella. GFCM focus on stronger fisheries and aquaculture sector in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea and plays a critical role in employment creation in coastal areas.

3. *Contribution of the Commission to the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*

40. **SDG 14** advocates healthy and resilient marine ecosystems based on multiple targets but eventually relies on regional implementation, particularly through Regional Seas Conventions and Regional Fisheries Management Organizations, such as the GFCM. While SDG 14 can be regarded as embodying a comprehensive strategy calling for phased action at all levels of governance, it is at the regional level where progress is to be secured in the implementation of the targets. In this regard, as indicated under point 1, the mid-term strategy will contribute to accelerating progress in implementing SDG 14 through the tailoring of targets therein to regional priorities and specificities of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

E. Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish)¹⁷

1. Main priorities of work of the Commission for 2018-19

41. The main priority of CACFish is to assist members with regional management and conservation of inland fisheries and aquaculture in its assigned authority under FAOSEC Sub-Regional Office. The area of competence are inland waters of Central Asian states (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan), as well as the Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey). As an Article XIV body, CACFish has the authority to impose binding management recommendations on Members. A strong component of CACFish is development through South-South cooperation and shared knowledge. Adopted activities of the Second Five-year Regional Work Programme (RWP2) of CACFish 2016-2020¹⁸ are:

42. Component 1: Fisheries management through technical assistance for enhancing legal and regulatory frameworks and institutional structures; capacity development for fisheries policy, management, and planning; and fisheries data collection and management.

43. Component 2: Aquaculture development through capacity building for production systems; provision of technical advice on brood stock management; and provision of technical advice on fish feed manufacturing.

44. Component 3: Inland fisheries and conservation through support to inland fisheries management and conservation objectives; provision of technical advice on preservation of genetic resources; workshops on Habitat Rehabilitation for Inland Fisheries; provision of technical advice on the establishment of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) systems in inland fisheries; and provision of technical advice on stocking, restocking and culture based fisheries.

¹⁷ Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish) website <http://www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/cacfish/en>

¹⁸ Second Five-year Regional Work Programme (RWP) of the CACFish2016-2020 <http://www.fao.org/fi/static-media/MeetingDocuments/CACFish/2016/Inf5e.pdf>

45. Component 4: Post harvest and marketing through provision of post-harvest management, food safety and quality and HACCP certification and provision of fish market information.

46. Component 5: Research & capacity development through support to research, technology development, training and education in fisheries and aquaculture and training of researchers, technical ministerial staff, hatchery managers and representatives of fishers' organization,

47. The effective implementation of RWP2 depends on the allocation of an adequate budget, which comes from Member contributions. Currently there are five Members of CACFish (Turkey, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan and Armenia). Other countries have expressed interest and participated as observers in the 5th Session, in Tashkent in October 2016, namely Georgia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. Extra-budgetary funds are available to contribute to CACFish projects for reaching its objectives, such as the FAO-Turkey Partnership Programme (FTPP), FPPP II, and "Capacity Building for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Management in Central Asia" (FishCap)¹⁹.

48. The sixth session of CACFish will be held in Izmir, Turkey in May or June 2018, and the Commission will determine the 2018-2020 work plan at that time. The work programme of the 2016-2018 intersessional period will be evaluated under the Forth Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting in Tbilisi, Georgia in November 2017.

2. *Linkage between the Strategic Programmes and the priorities of the Commission*

49. Components 1, 2 and 3 of the CACFish objectives are related to **Strategic Objective 2**, i.e. to promote the development, conservation, rational management and best utilization of living aquatic resources, as well as the sustainable development of aquaculture in Central Asia and the Caucasus. Given the nature of Small scale inland fishers and fish farmers in the region, the CACFish is also relevant for achieving **SO3**, namely to improve livelihoods and decent work of small scale producers. As post-harvest value chain management, fish market information and the promotion of HACCP certification to ensure food safety are also listed among activities, the Commission also contributes to the implementation of **SO1 and SO4**.

3. *Contribution of the Commission to the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*

50. The work of the Commission is directly related to **SDG1** and **SDG2** - no poverty and zero hunger - by providing technical assistance and capacity building in different areas of fishery and aquaculture, thus increasing production and income of rural populations and contributing to the nourishment of people with a different composition of proteins and micronutrients. Assisting in the establishment of food safety and quality assurance of the fish production chain through enhancing the introduction of the HACCP system is linked to **SDG3**. Technical assistance provided for fisheries management and aquaculture sector contributes to **SDG14**. Support for inland fisheries and conservation, including good management of different water bodies serves as a basis for **SDG6**.

¹⁹ The Commission considered the FishCap project an essential contribution to the work of CACFish for the period 2017-2020 and endorsed its objectives, outcomes, outputs and activities. It was recognized that the FishCap project would enable the Commission to carry out at least one-third of its second Regional Programme of Work (2016-2020). The Commission requested the CACFish Secretariat, FAO and the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock of the Government of Turkey to propose a project with an appropriate budget for FPPP Steering Committee endorsement, to ensure implementation can start in 2017.

III. Conclusions and recommendations

51. The outline of the priorities and work programmes of the different technical commissions in the region demonstrates the in-depth technical analysis and discussions as well as policy recommendations and display obvious linkages among the commission in addressing the challenges for the Region.

52. Following the decision by the ERC in 2016 that EFC, EIFAAC together with the ECA, should systematically report to the ERC, as well as the decision of CACFish on its 5th session on 10-12 October 2016 to also report to the ERC, the need for coordination among the concerned regional commissions was further emphasized. The GFCM is also encouraged to consider making this formal agreement.

53. This would require that all technical commissions review their work and prioritises with the aim to increase coherence with the overarching regional priorities as outlined by the European Regional Conference as well as emphasizing the respective contribution to the achievement of the regional priorities and the respective Regional Initiatives for the region. It would be advisable that each commissions reports against the Regional Priorities at the upcoming ERC, as well as harmonizing their reporting modality and of seeking opportunities for joint debates, presentations and work on themes of common interest at joint side events at the ERC.

54. Taking the universality of the Sustainable Development Goals into consideration, as well as the importance to identify also cross- Strategic Programme synergies, it would be required by the commissions to increase the joint dialogue based on the alignment of their work on SDGs and FAO Strategic Objectives to ensure that priorities identified do not contradict one another through:

- increasing the dialogue and cooperation among the commissions, including the sharing of information on goals and activities and inviting representatives of other commissions to the sessions in order to ensure synergies and harmonization of priority definitions in the Region at member country level as well;
- when required undertaking technical joint sessions and set up joint-expertise groups between the commissions to address overarching issues in technical and scientific areas;
- reorganizing the REU webpage to reflect the work of all the technical commissions to provide more information and raise awareness among countries;

55. The suggested mechanism for the joint work would be that the ERC assigns the coordination of this process to an informal Working Group of the ERC comprising the chairs and secretaries of all the participating regional commissions, under a rotating chairpersonship among the chairs of the regional commissions themselves.

Annex 1**A. Strategic Objectives (SO) of FAO²⁰**

- SO1:** Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition
- SO2:** Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable
- SO3:** Reduce rural poverty
- SO4:** Enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems
- SO5:** Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises

B. Sustainable Development Goals – Agenda 2030²¹

- Goal 1:** End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- Goal 2:** End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- Goal 3:** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- Goal 4:** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- Goal 5:** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- Goal 6:** Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- Goal 7:** Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and clean energy for all
- Goal 8:** Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- Goal 9:** Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
- Goal 10:** Reduce inequality within and among countries
- Goal 11:** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- Goal 12:** Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- Goal 13:** Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- Goal 14:** Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
- Goal 15:** Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
- Goal 16:** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- Goal 17:** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

²⁰ Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19 (page 7) <http://www.fao.org/3/a-ms278e.pdf>

²¹ FAO website on SDGs <http://www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals/en/>

C. SDG targets and indicators included in the 2018-21 Strategic Objective results framework²²

SDG symbol	SDG reference	SDG Targets contributed to	Number of indicators	Reference to SO (in bold for 3 or more indicators)
	SDG 2	8	13	SO1, SO2, SO3, SO4, SO5
	SDG 1	6	10	SO3, SO5
	SDG 15	5	6	SO2, SO5
	SDG 8	4	4	SO3, SO4
	SDG 13	3	4	SO2, SO5
	SDG 14	4	4	SO2, SO3, SO4
	SDG 10	2	2	SO3, SO4
	SDG 5	1	2	SO3, SO5
	SDG 6	1	2	SO2
	SDG 3	1	1	SO1
	SDG 9	1	1	SO4
	SDG 11	1	1	SO5
	SDG 12	1	1	SO4
	SDG 16	1	1	SO5
	SDG 17	1	1	SO4
Total	15	40	53	

²² Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19 (page 12) <http://www.fao.org/3/a-ms278e.pdf>