

43rd Session of the Conference

Secretariat Response to sub-item 11.2: Report of the 36th Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (Dhaka, Bangladesh, 8-11 March 2022)

The FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific thanks the United States of America for its kind words of appreciation and reaffirms its commitment towards implementing the recommendations of the report. FAO organized the Asia-Pacific Symposium on Agrifood Systems Transformation in October 2022 with Ministers and Convenors; the first post-UN Food Systems Summit (FSS) knowledge-based accelerator event and a platform for exchange of knowledge and foster learning across agrifood systems.

FAO is pleased to inform Australia that, driven by the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Solutions Platform, Pacific Members have highlighted digitalization in their food systems transformation roadmaps. They are being assisted to mobilize resources and partnerships (including South-South and Triangular Cooperation) for expertise from advanced Asian countries and supporting the identification, profiling and upscaling of Pacific-developed digital tools.

Support to the SIDS on climate change includes:

- building national capacity in early warning, early action and implementation of short-term actions targeting the most vulnerable in Niue and the Cook Islands;
- responding to the eruption of the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai Volcano and tsunami through the support of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Government of Belgium and USAID Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs;
- responding to the aftermath of the recent dual Category 4 cyclones in Vanuatu with a team of 21 expert staff on the ground;
- a feasibility study with the University of Technology, Sydney on anticipatory action with the next phases at national and community levels, utilizing information from Fiji, Palau, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu;
- conducting a number of pre-cyclone disaster risk management trainings in Fiji;
- conducting trainings for the Pacific SIDS negotiators on the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture (KJWA), gender equality in agriculture and loss and damage in preparation for the sessions of the Subsidiary Bodies of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and COP 27; and
- endorsement of a set of recommendations on food security, agriculture and climate change at the 8th Regional Meeting of the Pacific Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services in March 2023.

FAO is pleased to update the United Kingdom on its cooperation with two regional fishery bodies in the execution and development of two GEF International Water Ecosystem based projects in the Bay of Bengal and Gulf of Thailand. There are also awareness raising and capacity building workshops planned for marine fishery stock assessment in cooperation with Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) and the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organization (BOBP-IGO), the use of fishery support mechanisms in cooperation with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the exploration of fishery management as an "other effective area-based conservation measure" (OECM) with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). FAO is also delivering capacity building and policy support to combat IUU fishing and the implementation of the FAO Port State Measures Agreement under a global programme.

FAO is pleased to update New Zealand that the Organization is leading a comprehensive programme of consultation and guidance to support countries to engage better with the global climate change framework. We have delivered:

- a series of online consultations on COP 26 outcomes and scaling up resilient and low emission landscapes in partnership with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) organizations (March 2022) and a follow-up webinar (May 2022);
- a series of events on emissions measurements, monitoring and reduction from rice paddy soils and livestock (June, October- December 2022);
- region-specific events, during COP 27, including the launch of a new Green Climate Fund (GCF) Readiness project for enhanced climate finance and implementation of KJWA priorities in Southeast Asia and unlocking climate finance for agrifood system transformation (December 2022);
- a new publication with the World Business Council for Sustainable Development on scaling up private sector investment in sustainable rice (November 2022);
- workshops on an investment roadmap for agricultural climate services and pathways to net zero for agrifood and land use systems in Asia (December 2022); and
- an e-learning course on the UNFCCC, with ASEAN Secretariat and GIZ¹, to advocate for action in support of agriculture sector priorities (March 2023) and lead the resilient food systems stream at the upcoming Asia Pacific Adaptation Forum in August 2023.

FAO's social protection programmes are concentrated in Asia and respond to urgent demands for shock-responsive social protection for ASEAN and policy integration approach for natural resources management in Bangladesh and India. They will be extended into the Pacific region.

FAO appreciates the comments by Australia and New Zealand on the Pacific sub-regional plan on biodiversity mainstreaming across agricultural sectors, which will be presented for sub-regional consultation later in 2023. The suggestion to include biosecurity systems and associated actions is well noted. Stakeholder consultations in the 14 Pacific Island countries are currently underway and a briefing for Australia and New Zealand will be held in July 2023. In collaboration with the Pacific Community, the New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries, the Australian Government Departments of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and Foreign Affairs and Trade, FAO has delivered online One Health courses and plans to deliver more capacity building and consultation workshops for high-level officials on One Health governance, policy and actions. FAO has supported a World Bank Pandemic Fund proposal for the Federated States of Micronesia and more proposals will follow in the next round.

¹ The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH