

171st Session of the Council

Item 6.2: Report of the 28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (18 - 22 July 2022)

The Committee on Agriculture (COAG) held its 28th Session from 18 to 22 July 2022 and was conducted as a hybrid event for the first time. Of the 136 Members of the Committee, 118 registered for the Session, including nine Ministers. A total of 778 participants registered for the event.

The Report of the 28th Session of COAG is submitted to the Council in document *C 2023/22*. The Committee reviewed the 27 items on its agenda, as highlighted below.

COAG 28 endorsed the Report of the First Session of the Sub-Committee on Livestock and approved its revised *Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) 2022-2025*.

The Committee endorsed the proposed *Strategic Priorities for Food Safety within the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31* and recommended that it be submitted to the FAO Council through the Programme Committee.

The Committee provided guidance on One Health and recommended FAO to strengthen cooperation between the Quadripartite and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) to consider plant health; to enhance data integration and sharing across sectors; and to assist Members on national One Health early warning frameworks for rapid risk assessments of animal and zoonotic disease threats.

The Committee requested FAO to continue the implementation of the *FAO Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) 2021-2025*, in close collaboration with the Quadripartite, and to support Members in the implementation of AMR actions, as well as AMR management throughout the food supply chain to reduce the need for and to promote the responsible and prudent use of antimicrobials in agrifood systems.

The Committee discussed the anticipated report *The Future of Food and Agriculture – Drivers and triggers for transformation*, and recommended FAO to reinforce its strategic foresight and Members to use these foresight products to inform national development strategies for sustainable agrifood systems.

With a view to enable smallholders and family farmers to access and participate in appropriate innovation, information and advisory services, COAG 28 recommended FAO to further develop and promote participatory approaches for agricultural research and pluralistic extension and advisory services.

COAG 28 welcomed progress made in the implementation of the UN Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028 (UNDF) and invited FAO to ensure family farmers are prioritized within the implementation of its strategies on Science and Innovation and on Climate Change.

The Committee discussed the item on agriculture and forestry linkages, presented to both COAG and the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO), in line with the Council's request to strengthen coordination on cross-sectoral matters and to present papers dealing with interrelated issues between agriculture and forests to both Committees. COAG recommended FAO to continue collecting and analysing science and evidence-based data on agriculture and forestry interdependencies, including on the direct and underlying drivers of deforestation and land degradation. In addition, the Committee invited FAO to conduct a global assessment of the status and scaling-up potential of agroforestry, and to report on progress to COAG 29.

The Committee welcomed progress in the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors and its 2021-2023 Action Plan, and requested to continue consultations for the finalization of the 2024-2027 Action Plan, taking into account developments under other relevant fora.

On the State of the *World's Land and Water Resources for Food and Agriculture* report, COAG 28 recommended to consider reporting these issues through a regular flagship publication to address the need for sufficient, reliable information and analyses for informed policy decisions and programmes.

With a view to address water scarcity, COAG 28 recommended FAO to step up the work of the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (WASAG), to undertake an assessment of existing water tenure arrangements, and to initiate a Global Dialogue on Water Tenure matters.

The Committee, acknowledging the need for improved intersectoral collaboration and governance to address plastic use throughout agrifood systems, recommended FAO to address knowledge gaps through inclusive consultations with Members and relevant stakeholders, and to develop, within its mandate, a Voluntary Code of Conduct on the sustainable use of plastics in agriculture, to be presented to COAG 29.

The Committee welcomed the progress on the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and recommended FAO to address the restoration of agricultural production ecosystems within its policies and programmes.

The Committee endorsed the new Global Soil Partnership (GSP) Action Framework 2022-2030. On the proposed institutionalization of the GSP, it recommended FAO to prepare an in-depth analysis to be submitted to the 11th GSP Plenary Assembly, and its recommendations to be provided to COAG 29.

COAG 28 commended the development of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031 and of the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy (2022-25), and requested FAO to continue open consultation processes for refining, respectively, the action plan and the high-level framework for the development of regional action plans.

The Committee reviewed FAO's Programme of Work in the Agrifood Sectors under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, and encouraged FAO to maintain its efforts towards a reinvigorated business model to maximize impact at country level and to continue to strengthen its normative and standard-setting work.

The Committee commended the implementation of the recommendations of its 27th Session and approved its Multi-Year Programme of Work for 2022-2025.

Further, COAG 28 endorsed the draft Conference Resolution for the proposal for an International Day of Potato for approval by the 171st Session of the Council and adoption by the 43rd Session of the Conference.

Ms Julie Emond, Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture