



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

ERC/24/REP

REPORT

Rome, Italy

**14-17 May
2024**

(hybrid)

Thirty-fourth Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe

Required citation:

FAO. 2024. Report of the 34th Session of the Regional Conference for Europe, Rome, Italy

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Georgia	Poland	(Associate Member)
Germany	Portugal	

Date and place of FAO Regional Conferences for Europe

First	-	Rome, Italy	10-15 October 1949
Second	-	Rome, Italy	10-15 October 1960
Third	-	Rome, Italy	8-13 October 1962
Fourth	-	Salzburg, Austria	26-31 October 1964
Fifth	-	Seville, Spain	5-11 October 1966
Sixth	-	St. Julian's, Malta	28-31 October 1968
Seventh	-	Budapest, Hungary	21-25 September 1970
Eighth	-	Munich, Germany, Fed. Rep. of	18-23 September 1972
Ninth	-	Lausanne, Switzerland	7-12 October 1974
Tenth	-	Bucharest, Romania	20-25 September 1976
Eleventh	-	Lisbon, Portugal	2-7 October 1978
Twelfth	-	Athens, Greece	22-27 September 1980
Thirteenth	-	Sofia, Bulgaria	4-8 October 1982
Fourteenth	-	Reykjavik, Iceland	17-21 September 1984
Fifteenth	-	Istanbul, Türkiye	28 April-2 May 1986
Sixteenth	-	Krakow, Poland	23-26 August 1988
Seventeenth	-	Venice, Italy	3-7 April 1990
Eighteenth	-	Prague, Czechia	24-28 August 1992
Nineteenth	-	Killarney, Ireland	6-10 June 1994
Twentieth	-	Tel Aviv, Israel	29 April-3 May 1996
Twenty-first	-	Tallinn, Estonia	25-29 May 1998
Twenty-second	-	Porto, Portugal	24-28 July 2000
Twenty-third	-	Nicosia, Cyprus	29-31 May 2002
Twenty-fourth	-	Montpellier, France	5-7 May 2004
Twenty-fifth	-	Riga, Latvia	8-9 June 2006
Twenty-sixth	-	Innsbruck, Austria	26-27 June 2008
Twenty-seventh	-	Yerevan, Armenia	13-14 May 2010
Twenty-eight	-	Baku, Azerbaijan	19-20 April 2012
Twenty-ninth	-	Bucharest, Romania	2-4 April 2014
Thirtieth	-	Antalya, Türkiye	4-6 May 2016
Thirty-first	-	Voronezh, Russian Federation	16-18 May 2018
Thirty-second	-	Tashkent, Uzbekistan	2-4 November 2020 (virtual)
Thirty-third	-	Łódź, Poland	10-13 May 2022 (hybrid event)
Thirty-fourth	-	Rome, Italy, hosted by the Republic of Moldova	14-17 May 2024 (hybrid event)

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SUMMARY OF MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

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- **The role of innovation and digitalization in the sustainable use of natural resources to accelerate the implementation of climate-resilient and low-emission pathways in agrifood systems**
Paragraph 17 a) to j)
- **Building resilience through agrifood systems transformation**
Paragraph 20 a) to e)
- **FAO's response to the multiple crises in Europe and Central Asia**
Paragraph 24 a) to f)
- **Implications on world food security and agriculture, including global food prices, arising from the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine**
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- **How to fight against food loss and waste**
Paragraph 31 a) to d)
- **Regional results, priorities, the four betters and the Sustainable Development Goals**
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- **Learning from evaluations of FAO's work in Europe and Central Asia (2020–2023)**
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- **Country Office Network – Current status and way forward: A policy paper**
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- **Governance matters**
Paragraph 49 a) to h)

MATTERS REQUIRING THE ATTENTION OF THE CONFERENCE

- **The role of innovation and digitalization in the sustainable use of natural resources to accelerate the implementation of climate-resilient and low-emission pathways in agrifood systems**
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- **Building resilience through agrifood systems transformation**
Paragraph 19 a) to n)
- **FAO's response to the multiple crises in Europe and Central Asia**
Paragraph 22 a) to l)

- **Implications on world food security and agriculture, including global food prices, arising from the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine**
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- **Financing to end hunger for today and tomorrow (SDG2)**
Paragraph 28 a) to k)
- **How to fight against food loss and waste**
Paragraph 30 b) to d)
- **Global and Regional food security outlook**
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- **Regional results, priorities, the four betters and the Sustainable Development Goals**
Paragraph 35 j)
- **Country Office Network – Current status and way forward: A policy paper**
Paragraph 41 b) and e) to k)
- **Report from the Outcome of the Debate of the Joint Session of the 42nd European Forestry Commission (EFC) and the 81st UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI)**
Paragraph 43 a) to h)
- **Report on the work of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC)**
Paragraph 45 c) and g)
- **Report on the work of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish)**
Paragraph 48 b) and d)
- **Governance matters**
Paragraph 49 a) to h)

I. Introductory Items

A. Organization of the Regional Conference

1. The Thirty-fourth Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe (ERC), hosted by the Republic of Moldova, was held at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy, from 14 to 17 May 2024.
2. The Regional Conference was attended by 214 participants, including eight Ministers, ten Deputy Ministers and State Secretaries, and representatives from 53 Members. Three Member Nations, four United Nations (UN) organizations, four intergovernmental organizations, and eight representatives of civil society organizations were in attendance, along with four private-sector companies and representatives from two institutions in the research and academia sector.

B. Election of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Appointment of Rapporteurs

3. Mr Vladimir Bolea, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Food Industry of the Republic of Moldova, was elected as Chairperson of the 34th Session of the Regional Conference for Europe.
4. Ms Anila Denaj, Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Albania, was elected as first Vice-Chairperson.
5. His Excellency Abat Fayzullaev, Ambassador, Permanent Representative to FAO, Embassy of Uzbekistan in Rome was elected as second Vice-Chairperson.
6. Mr Michel Leveque, Alternate Permanent Representative, Permanent Representation of France to the United Nations,¹ Ms Katarzyna Kowalska, Main Specialist, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (Poland),² and Ms Krisztina Bende, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations organizations³ were appointed as Rapporteurs.^{4,5}

C. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

7. The Regional Conference adopted the Agenda (*Appendix C*) and the Timetable.

D. Statement by the Director-General

8. The Director-General, Dr QU Dongyu, delivered a statement to the 34th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe, which may be found in document ERC/24/INF/4 on the ERC34 website.⁶

E. Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council

9. The Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council, Mr Hans Hoogeveen, delivered a statement to the 34th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe, which may be found in document ERC/24/INF/5 on the ERC34 website.⁷

¹ Elected through secret ballot vote. *Appendix A* contains the secret ballot vote result sheet.

² Elected by general consent.

³ Elected by general consent.

⁴ The Regional Conference voted against the election of Ms Ekaterina Vybornova, Alternate Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to FAO and other UN Agencies in Rome, through secret ballot vote. *Appendix B* contains the secret ballot vote result sheet.

⁵ France and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland registered reservations on the process followed for the election of Rapporteurs as being inconsistent with Rule XII of the General Rules of the Organization. The detailed elements in this respect can be consulted in the records of the session.

⁶ The full text of the statement is available at:

<https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/f944cc18-50a6-40dd-b3fc-2d953f6be74f/content>

⁷ The full text of the statement is available at:

<https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/45cbb57e-036d-42ee-8966-bf454064c10c/content>

F. Statement by the Chairperson of the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for Europe (ERC)

10. Mr Marcel Beukeboom, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United Nations Organizations in Rome, delivered a statement as Second Vice Chairperson of the Thirty-third Session of the ERC, which may be found in document ERC/24/INF/6 on the ERC34 website.⁸

G. Statement by the Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)

11. The Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), Ms Nosipho Nausca-Jean Jezile, delivered a statement to the 34th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe, which may be found in document ERC/24/INF/7 on the ERC34 website.⁹

H. Statement by the Spokesperson for the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) Consultation

12. Ms Ana Benoliel Coutinho, Spokesperson of the Civil Society Organizations, delivered a statement to the 34th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe, which may be found in document ERC/24/INF/8 on the ERC34 website.¹⁰

I. Statement by the Spokesperson for the Private Sector Consultation

13. Mr Alexander Anton, Spokesperson of the private sector consultation delivered a statement to the 34th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe, which may be found in document ERC/24/INF/9 on the ERC34 website.¹¹

II. Regional and Global Policy and Regulatory Matters

A. The role of innovation and digitalization in the sustainable use of natural resources to accelerate the implementation of climate-resilient and low-emission pathways in agrifood systems

14. The Regional Conference discussed document ERC/24/2, *The role of innovation and digitalization in the sustainable use of natural resources to accelerate the implementation of climate-resilient and low-emission pathways in agrifood systems*.¹²

15. The Regional Conference acknowledged that the use of technology and all other innovative approaches must pursue the clear objective of contributing to the transformation of agrifood systems and are a means to achieving sustainable development and a world free of hunger.

16. The Regional Conference called upon Members to:

- a) promote harmonized and adaptive policy frameworks to create a responsible and equitable enabling environment for innovation and digitalization in natural resources management, biodiversity and climate action while ensuring the safe and productive use of emerging technologies;

⁸ The full text of the statement is available at:

<https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/f1e5534c-1d62-4112-ae0-4b52309f216d/content>

⁹ The full text of the statement is available at: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/fddbff7c-14ef-4a51-a009-99a89bcce77f/content>

¹⁰ The full text of the statement is available at:

<https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/94194265-3316-4def-9115-9255ad8b7450/content>

¹¹ The full text of the statement is available at:

<https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/e243c1b3-6f41-4514-98e6-d65fad27921f/content>

¹² This document is available at: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/6a888f3b-ea9b-4c15-80fb-f456ef35ebe5>

- b) catalyse investments in digital public infrastructure, develop institutional and human capacities, and implement incentive structures and support mechanisms to facilitate the widespread adoption of innovative practices and digital technologies to reduce emissions and utilize natural resources sustainably, especially for smallholders and vulnerable groups;
 - c) emphasized that knowledge transfer should increase among Members and that close collaboration in utilizing digitalization and innovation is required – including with farmers and local communities, the private sector, civil society organizations, research and academia – with attention to data governance and ownership;
 - d) promote the capacity development of agricultural innovation systems, including agroecology, for co-creation and bridging gaps among scientific advancements and innovative technologies and their adoption for the sustainable use of natural resources; and
 - e) encourage research and development in climate-smart technologies and harness public–private partnerships to translate advancements into practical solutions.
17. The Regional Conference requested FAO to:
- a) facilitate intersectoral engagement for the improved governance of water, land and forest resources, while fostering knowledge exchange, collaboration and the development of harmonized policies for an innovation-friendly environment and emphasizing sustainable and inclusive technologies that leave no one behind (including women and girls in rural areas, youth, smallholders and vulnerable groups);
 - b) accelerate the implementation of flagship initiatives, such as the 1000 Digital Village Initiative, to address the rural digital divide and invest in democratizing technologies such as digital public goods while enhancing accessibility, accountability, data protection and independent control and fostering equitable digital opportunities;
 - c) expand climate change support for resilience, adaptation and emission reduction in alignment with the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022–2031 and its Action Plan (2022–2025), the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy, the *FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors*, and the upcoming Action Plan for the period 2024–2027;
 - d) provide updates on how different parts of the Organization are working together (through an intersectoral food systems lens) on issues of climate, nature and biodiversity, soil health, livestock, land use and sustainable production;
 - e) align its innovation and digitalization efforts with existing initiatives such as the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;
 - f) work together with academic and research partners on research and development in climate-smart technologies and agroecological and other innovations and their adoption;
 - g) collaborate with other organizations (e.g. Rome-based Agencies, the Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centres [CGIAR] and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) to promote the highest standards and best practices in data governance, while ensuring the right to privacy, the protection of personal data and intellectual property rights and the independent monitoring of data policies by also using the Committee on World Food Security Policy Recommendations on Strengthening Collection and Use of Food Security and Nutrition Data;
 - h) provide updates on how FAO’s work on digitalization and innovation is contributing towards the COP28 UAE Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems, and Climate Action and FAO’s intersectoral plans to bring together its work across the Conferences of the Parties (COPs) of the three Rio Conventions;
 - i) facilitate access to data, knowledge and digital services to enhance adaptive capacities and support transformative innovations towards nature-positive, climate-resilient and low-emission food systems; and

- j) cultivate a culture of innovation across various levels (technological, institutional, social, policy and financial) and digitalization through an inclusive, human rights-based and gender-sensitive approach.

B. Building resilience through agrifood systems transformation¹³

18. The Regional Conference discussed document ERC/24/3, *Building resilience through agrifood systems transformation*.¹⁴

19. The Regional Conference recommended Members to:

- a) draft national resilience policy frameworks that contribute to the achievement of sustainable agrifood systems according to the guidelines of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in line with the FAO Strategic Framework 2022–31 and considering the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030;
- b) develop and implement sustainable policies for diversification in the agrifood systems sector (including the use of diverse and resilient crops, livestock breeds, agronomy techniques and agroecological approaches), and improve awareness among local family farms to help them adopt these policies through inclusive extension and advisory services and appropriate incentives, considering synergies and trade-offs with other policies;
- c) conduct risk assessments that comprise the main hazards, identify the most vulnerable population groups and address the root causes of risks, including using a One Health approach, with relevant resilience policies;
- d) strengthen access to information on climate-smart advisory and early warning systems, including alerts and agroclimatic advisories tailored to the needs of small farms, forecasting potential climatic risks and supporting decision-making on risk management;
- e) adopt unified national methodologies for disaster loss and damage assessments in agriculture and enhance data collection, analysis, reporting and tools to produce harmonized information on the impacts of disasters in agriculture to support evidence-based policy decisions;
- f) disseminate data and knowledge to smallholders via extension or advisory services, and provide training and technical assistance on transboundary pests and diseases, food safety and plant protection;
- g) encourage local entrepreneurship as a means of diversification and building resilience, supporting the development of short and local value chains;
- h) support investments in infrastructure and technology for risk proofing to minimize the impacts of disasters on agrifood systems, including upgrading local cold storage facilities, distribution centres and local transportation networks;
- i) develop and promote digital solutions for improved information and communication processes, particularly for the connectivity of smallholders by improving their access to agrifood services, markets and knowledge;
- j) expand opportunities for rural women and other vulnerable groups to gain economic empowerment, both within and beyond agricultural settings, by promoting access to decent employment, fostering local female entrepreneurship, integrating women into inclusive value chains, addressing earnings disparities and lightening the burden of women's unpaid labour;
- k) support the development of voluntary local farmers' cooperations and associations that provide opportunities for networking and that enhance resilience by implementing risk-share mechanisms, shock-responsive social protection systems and risk insurance and by securing funding for local emergency assistance funds;

¹³ Considered under written correspondence procedure.

¹⁴ This document is available at: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/0f0ec1ef-2472-4e7e-8315-740113711b1a>

- l) adopt comprehensive risk financing and agricultural insurance programmes for small-scale farmers, involving innovative private and public partnerships and strengthening stakeholder collaboration, including at the local level;
 - m) develop emergency response preparedness and crisis management plans specific to subsectors in agrifood systems, involving all relevant stakeholders, and use early warning systems to mitigate the impacts of disasters; and
 - n) seek opportunities for regional cooperation to strengthen the resilience of agrifood systems, utilizing a multistakeholder approach.
20. The Regional Conference called upon FAO to:
- a) support Members, through the Regional Priority Programmes, in determining (e.g. via food systems assessment approaches), developing, refining and implementing policies and tools to build resilient agrifood systems, including through agroecological and other innovative approaches (in this regard, resilience-building strategies must prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable);
 - b) continue using the humanitarian–development–peace nexus approach, combining immediate relief requirements with long-term development objectives, and continue developing partnerships in this regard;
 - c) work with regional and national coordinating mechanisms and bodies to analyse, at regional and country levels, the impacts of multifaceted challenges in combating malnutrition and food insecurity, particularly on women, youth and people in vulnerable situations, and revitalize agrifood systems, particularly in rural areas;
 - d) support Members in building the needed capacities and knowledge in resilience, including through the necessary statistical and analytical tools, and sharing best practices from inside and outside the region; and
 - e) support efforts in creating opportunities for regional cooperation to strengthen the resilience of agrifood systems, utilizing a multistakeholder approach.

C. FAO’s response to the multiple crises in Europe and Central Asia

21. The Regional Conference discussed document ERC/24/4 Rev.1, *FAO’s response to the multiple crises in Europe and Central Asia*, which provides information related to the implication of the COVID-19 pandemic, war in Ukraine and climate change implications.¹⁵

22. The Regional Conference called upon Members to:
- a) seek collective action to increase the resilience of agrifood trade and markets;
 - b) provide humanitarian and social protection responses to vulnerable groups;
 - c) promote the affordability of healthy diets, with sustainability considerations, through a rapid and efficient agrifood systems transformation;
 - d) refrain from imposing ad hoc export restrictions and diversify sources of imported foods;
 - e) invest in trade infrastructure and logistics to improve inspection efficiency and promote transparency in trade operations;
 - f) increase responsible investments in agriculture to enhance agrifood system productivity and resilience;
 - g) invest in and promote the use of digital technologies in the agriculture sector to mitigate, among other things, the adverse effects of wars and conflicts on the agriculture sector and on food security;

¹⁵ This document is available at: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/4b6d06dd-48ce-438d-991d-c8c8ea3725b6/content>

- h) establish and strengthen veterinary services and livestock disease surveillance systems to effectively address animal health threats in the region;
 - i) reinforce the One Health approach and strengthen international partnerships in addressing interlinked challenges, including the tackling of antimicrobial resistance;
 - j) strengthen food security and nutrition information, assessment and analysis systems for timely responses and informed policy decisions, especially during episodes of market turbulence;
 - k) develop new or improve existing national food security strategies to address short-term shocks and ensure a resilient recovery; and
 - l) promote regional cooperation in science and innovation to share knowledge and expertise, and develop innovative solutions to common challenges.
23. The Regional Conference highlighted:
- a) FAO's role in the humanitarian–development–peace nexus to address food insecurity, with a particular focus on vulnerable populations and the reduction of inequalities; and
 - b) the importance of FAO's assessments and studies carried out to promote the understanding of the impacts of the multiple crises in the region, including relevant information on markets and trade.
24. The Regional Conference called upon FAO to:
- a) continue its support for global sustainability and climate goals within its mandate in pursuit of its strategic objectives on food security and nutrition, continue to develop modelling and analysis capacities for the delivery of information and scenarios on the impacts of crises in food and agriculture, and assist countries on the recommendations put forward to Members in the referenced document;
 - b) seek to work in a collaborative manner with other ongoing initiatives – such as those related to water and land governance, COP28 UAE Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems, and Climate Action, and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework – to address the effects of climate change on agrifood systems;
 - c) continue efforts to address the crises through immediate measures and through medium- and long-term interventions strengthening resilience of smallholders utilizing a nexus approach for a sustainable economic recovery in the region following a systemic approach, including agroecology;
 - d) cooperate with organizations active in responding to emergencies, in particular the other Rome-based Agencies;
 - e) plan and implement priority interventions, taking into account issues of gender equality and youth dimensions; and
 - f) continue support for resilience-building interventions on climate change, desertification and biodiversity loss to transform food systems.

D. Implications on world food security and agriculture, including global food prices, arising from the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine

25. The Regional Conference decided by votes^{16,17,18} to adopt the proposal contained in document ERC/24/16/Add.1. Accordingly, the 34th Session of the ERC adopted the following decision:
26. The Regional Conference:
- a) **recalled** and **reaffirmed** its decision adopted at its 33rd session;
 - b) **recalled** the decision adopted by the FAO Council at its 169th, 170th, 171st and 172nd sessions, as well as the report of the 43rd session of the FAO Conference, and stressed the need to continue their full implementation;
 - c) **reaffirmed** its commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, extending to its territorial waters;
 - d) **expressed** its solidarity and support for Ukraine and its people, as well as its appreciation for neighbouring countries and host communities for their generous support and volunteer efforts to reach out to those in need;
 - e) **expressed** grave concern at the devastating impact of the Russian Federation's illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine on global food security as Ukraine and the Black Sea region are one of the world's most important suppliers of grain and agricultural produce;
 - f) **stressed** that matters of food security shall be de-weaponized and that Russian Federation's actions that negatively affect production and supply of food create global risks that are unacceptable and harm vulnerable countries the most;
 - g) **deplored** the unilateral termination of the Initiative on the Safe Transportation of Grain and Foodstuffs from Ukrainian Ports, known as the "Black Sea Grain Initiative (BSGI)", by the Russian Federation on 18 July 2023, stressing the benefits that this Initiative has brought along for global food security;
 - h) **strongly condemned** the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine, its systematic attacks on port infrastructure, grain and oil storage facilities in Ukraine and called upon Russia to immediately cease hostilities in order to resume agricultural production and its unimpeded export from Ukraine fully;
 - i) **expressed** preoccupation about the negative effects of the Russia's full-scale military invasion of Ukraine, which caused the deaths of thousands and ruined the lives of millions of Ukrainian people in addition to the extensive damage to civilian infrastructure and huge transboundary damage to the environment, on the trends in the region and globally, presenting a paramount obstacle to progress;
 - j) **recalled** that the actions referred to above by the Russian Federation and Belarus have been characterized by the FAO Council as incompatible with the objectives and purposes of the Organization and therefore amount to a violation of Member Nation obligations under the FAO Constitution, and **considered** that the Russian Federation and Belarus could not be regarded as Member Nations contributing towards the success of the Organization in line with Rule XXII.3 b) of the General Rules of the Organization and so should not be elected as

¹⁶ The Regional Conference rejected the proposed amendments contained in document ERC/24/18 by a majority of the votes cast through a roll call vote, with votes cast: 37, majority required: 19, votes for: 1, votes against: 36, abstentions: 4. *Appendix E*: roll call vote results sheet.

¹⁷ The Regional Conference rejected a proposal, by a majority of the votes cast through a roll call vote, to conduct a secret ballot voting process in relation to the proposal contained in document ERC/24/16/Add.1. Roll call vote with total votes cast: 37, majority required: 19, votes for: 1, votes against: 36, abstentions: 4. *Appendix F*: roll call vote results sheet.

¹⁸ The Regional Conference adopted the proposal contained in the document ERC/24/16/Add.1 by a majority of the votes cast through a roll call vote with total votes cast: 37, majority required: 19, votes for: 36, votes against: 1, abstentions: 4. *Appendix G*: roll call vote results sheet.

Council Members from the Europe Regional Group until such time as their actions are no longer in contravention of the objectives and purpose of FAO's Constitution;

- k) **appreciated** the efforts of Ukraine, in collaboration with partners, in supplying its agricultural products to 40 countries through its established maritime corridor as well as the "Grain from Ukraine" humanitarian initiative carried out in partnership with the World Food Programme, under which more than 200,000 tons of Ukrainian agricultural products have already been delivered to Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Yemen and Sudan;
- l) **expressed appreciation and support** for FAO's work in support of Ukraine and its government, which aims at restoring food security and self-sufficiency in front-line communities, restoring critical agricultural production and value chains, including through demining agricultural land, and enhancing coordination and technical support to the functioning of critical food system services;
- m) **welcomed** FAO's response to mitigate and monitor the impact of the Russian Federation's war of aggression on food security globally and in Ukraine and **requested** FAO to continue to assess the damage to Ukrainian agriculture and food sector within its internationally recognized borders, as well as the reconstruction and rehabilitation costs of Ukrainian agriculture due to loss and damage resulting from the Russian Federation's war of aggression; **noted** in this respect the establishment on 12 May 2023 by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Ministers of the Council of Europe of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and **called** on FAO to co-operate with the Register so as to facilitate its work and achieve the objectives set out in General Assembly Resolution ES-11/5 of 14 November 2022;
- n) **requested** FAO to report regularly to Members, including through FAO Governing bodies, on actions taken with respect to the above;
- o) **decided** to remain seized on this matter and to add this matter to the agenda of the next regular session of the Regional Conference for Europe;
- p) **decided**, in accordance with Rule VI.5 of its Rules of procedure, that the present decision shall be communicated to all Members and brought to the attention of the general public under the form of a press release published immediately after the end of the session in all FAO languages and in which the present decision shall be reproduced in its entirety.

E. Financing to end hunger for today and tomorrow (SDG 2)

27. The Regional Conference discussed document ERC/24/5 Rev.1, *Financing to end hunger for today and tomorrow (SDG 2)*, and welcomed the focus on a systemic approach to financing issues.¹⁹

28. The Regional Conference recommended Members to:

- a) develop a credible understanding of the national costs and mix of finance and investment required to achieve SDG 2, including potential synergies and trade-offs with other relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) targets;
- b) mobilize finance from all available public and private sources by establishing integrated financing strategies that allow for the systematic assessment of the status quo and trends in the financing landscape, while identifying, strategically prioritizing, planning and coordinating public and private finance and investment for SDG 2, aligned with national sustainable development plans;
- c) achieve more with less and sooner by developing efficient and transparent systems that align existing and new financing flows towards SDG 2 targets;
- d) take targeted action to incentivize private sector financing for the SDGs by enhancing the enabling environment and the financial and data infrastructure, lowering the costs and risks of

¹⁹ This document is available at: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/597fbfe0-1c63-4fb9-abc8-3128207c1bde/content>

finance and investment, and improving the bankability of agricultural actors, with a particular focus on small-scale farmers, vulnerable groups (such as women and youth) and agricultural micro, small and medium enterprises;

- e) develop a robust monitoring, evaluation and accountability framework for SDG finance, including associated taxonomy, standards and guidance for all stakeholders to ensure transparency, track progress and optimize impact;
- f) establish public knowledge centres to share lessons and experiences and encourage stakeholder collaboration for financing SDG 2 targets at national and regional levels;
- g) develop integrated national financing frameworks as predicated by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which calls for the SDGs to be implemented through nationally owned sustainable development strategies that are linked to integrated national financing frameworks;
- h) assess how fiscal tools are strategically used to achieve SDG 2, seeking to better integrate public planning and financing systems, mainstream the SDGs into public financial management frameworks, phase out and repurpose public subsidies harmful to SDG 2 so that resources can be redirected towards sustainable agrifood sector practices, strengthen domestic resource mobilization by pursuing reforms and building capacity in evidence-based tax policy formulation and management, and leverage tax policy to incentivize alignment with SDG 2;
- i) attract and better target official development assistance for strategic investments in the agrifood sector that are aligned with SDG 2 and positioned to catalyse and complement private finance and investment (including prioritizing cost-effective and high-impact investments in food security, nutrition and nutrition-sensitive value chain development), while emphasizing the specific needs of women, youth and other vulnerable groups;
- j) adopt a proactive approach to crowd in the private sector through innovative financing solutions, including guarantee funds, impact investment, agricultural value chain finance, public–private partnerships, climate and environmental financing mechanisms, crowdfunding, social impact bonds, blended finance, agritech innovation funds, and philanthropic capital and debt swaps; and
- k) establish taxonomies, standards and monitoring frameworks for SDG finance, promote the Committee on World Food Security Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems and combat “SDG washing”.²⁰

F. How to fight against food loss and waste²¹

29. The Regional Conference discussed document ERC/24/6 Rev.1, *How to fight against food loss and waste*.²²

30. The Regional Conference:

- a) acknowledged the importance of food loss and waste (FLW) reduction for the transformation of agrifood systems to achieve the SDGs in the region;
- b) recommended that Members integrate FLW reduction into their national and regional programmes, policies and strategies dealing with agrifood systems, including those related to climate change and biodiversity, *inter alia*;
- c) recommended the design of informed interventions to address FLW, including further data on how much food is lost and wasted, and where and why it occurs in all stages of the food supply chain; and

²⁰ “SDG washing” is a term used for explaining the practice where actors make claims about their efforts and contributions towards the SDGs, and yet fail to provide concrete evidence to support those claims.

²¹ Considered under the written correspondence procedure.

²² This document is available at: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/8e0d5794-11aa-4aae-bc3b-8ae6127f17b2/content>

- d) recommended that Members invest in creating an enabling environment to support private sector action and facilitate collaboration with all other actors to support FLW reduction at national and subnational levels, facilitate the flow of information, and promote awareness and the sharing of good practices.
31. The Regional Conference called upon FAO to:
- a) provide demand-driven policy and technical support to countries in their FLW reduction efforts, drawing on FAO's technical competence and comparative advantage and contributing to its work in support of the *four betters*;
- b) support integrated solutions for FLW reduction that are tailored to the national context – including policies and regulatory frameworks, infrastructure development, education, community engagement and circular economy approaches – and other innovative solutions to bridge FLW action with multiple agendas, including improving nutrition and reducing the agrifood sector's impact on climate and environment;
- c) support cooperation and coordination among all food value chain actors to address the inefficiencies that lead to FLW, facilitate the flow of information, and promote awareness and the sharing of good practices; and
- d) support resource mobilization for sustainable investments in technological, social and institutional innovations, and support partnership-building strategies to foster the development of regional, national and subnational FLW reduction initiatives (e.g. the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns).

G. Global and regional food security outlook²³

32. The Regional Conference reviewed document ERC/24/7, *Global and Regional Food Security Outlook*.²⁴
33. The Regional Conference:
- a) took note of the information presented, particularly regarding the existing levels of moderate food insecurity in the region;
- b) stressed the importance of a sustainable food system approach in addressing food security in the region, and globally, recognizing the interconnectedness of economic, social and environmental impacts;
- c) recognized the urgent need to work together to address the main drivers of undernourishment and food insecurity in the world, including conflicts and geopolitical tensions, extreme and more frequent climatic events, economic slowdowns and downturns, and persistent inequalities;
- d) underscored the urgency of reassessing our current agricultural practices and crop choices in the context of the accelerating impacts of climate change;
- e) acknowledged FAO's statistical work as the leading agency producing data on food and agriculture, relevant for monitoring food security;
- f) expressed appreciation for FAO's work and role in enhancing market transparency and supporting informed decisions by providing timely and objective data and information, and market assessments and outlook;
- g) underlined the importance of the medium-term projections for national governments and institutions in support of policy decisions and planning, and urged governments to provide FAO with up-to-date and complete data and statistics to allow for timely assessments and analyses to inform policy decisions.

²³ Considered under the written correspondence procedure.

²⁴ This document is available at: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/9540f468-a0e0-4623-9015-60df6085fa83/content>

III. Programme and Budget Matters

A. Regional results, priorities, the *four betters* and the Sustainable Development Goals

34. The Regional Conference reviewed document ERC/24/8 Rev.1, *FAO results in the region – 2022-2023*²⁵ and document ERC/24/9 Rev.1, *Priorities for FAO in the Europe and Central Asia region under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022–31*.²⁶

35. The Regional Conference:

- a) recognized the importance of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022–31 in providing direction for FAO’s work and contributing to the achievement of the SDGs in the region;
- b) noted the multiple shocks – including the COVID-19 pandemic and the war²⁷ in Ukraine that have threatened the socioeconomic stability of the region, highlighting the urgent need for resilient and sustainable agrifood systems, and reaffirmed the role FAO plays in safeguarding food security in the region;
- c) noted the changes in the operating environment in the context of the *four betters* and the measures that FAO has taken to adapt to these changes;
- d) appreciated FAO’s support to Members in the region during 2022–2023 and the achievements under the Regional Initiatives, responding to the main priorities identified at the Thirty-third Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe;
- e) noted the progress in implementing FAO’s key initiatives and new ways of working in the region in 2022–2023 to contribute to supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- f) appreciated FAO’s work on strategic foresight and efforts to incorporate forward-looking analysis into its programming, including at the regional level;
- g) welcomed that FAO fully aligned its country-level planning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework process, thus building on United Nations Development System repositioning efforts to collectively support country ownership and address national SDG priorities and gaps;
- h) noted the importance of new innovative and alternative resource partnerships, as well as strengthened partnerships with the private sector and intergovernmental organizations, among others;
- i) noted the incorporation of the biennial theme for 2024–2025 on integrated water resources management for the *four betters*, and highlighted its relevance for the region;
- j) endorsed the four Regional Priorities, which represent the regional programmatic approach that will guide FAO’s actions in 2024–2025 and beyond, including the regional areas of emphasis, with their contribution to the Programme Priority Areas and the SDG targets;
- k) appreciated the mainstreaming of food security as a cross-cutting issue and stressed the need for a holistic approach; and
- l) noted FAO’s corporate initiatives, such as the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, and the corporate strategies for science and innovation and climate change, as well as their regional approaches and specificities.

²⁵ This document is available at: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/0e9c056b-1513-4043-a1a3-92a63f5e1472/content>

²⁶ This document is available at: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/b6b05d4e-f500-4ef6-bb9d-5ff70d9a7614/content>

²⁷ The Russian Federation considers that the qualification of conflicts as wars has legal consequences; something that does not fall under the mandate of the Regional Conference.

36. The Regional Conference called upon FAO to:
- a) focus more on mainstreaming gender equality and empowerment for women, girls and youth in all activities across the region, including sex and age disaggregated data and gender statistics, and reflecting the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition and the CFS policy recommendations on promoting youth engagement and employment in agriculture and food systems for food security and nutrition;
 - b) further strengthen actions for fighting food loss and waste, promoting the One Health approach, and emphasizing food safety as part of a healthy diet;
 - c) facilitate equal access to the benefits of all forms of scalable innovations based on a full range of innovative technologies, especially in rural areas, and take adequate measures to accompany the development of digitalization;
 - d) mainstream biodiversity, including the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources for food and agriculture, support the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and continue to implement the *FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors*;
 - e) strengthen the systemic approach in line with the SDGs, with an emphasis on sustainable and nature-based solutions and innovative practices such as agroecology, land tenure and good water management, in all areas of work;
 - f) continue follow up actions regarding the war in Ukraine, in line with the decisions adopted by the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for Europe, by the 171st, 172nd and 174th Sessions of the Council, and conclusions reaffirmed by the 43rd Session of the FAO Conference;
 - g) support the transition towards diversified, decarbonized, efficient and more low-input systems by encouraging priority areas of action around sustainable production practices such as agroecology and other innovative practices, with a greater focus on ecosystems; and
 - h) share further information on results-based management implementation in the region as stated in the document *Priorities for FAO in the Europe and Central Asia region under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022–31* and share further details on funding mobilization in the region, with a breakdown of human and financial resources by programme country.

B. Learning from evaluations of FAO's work in Europe and Central Asia (2020-2023)²⁸

37. The Regional Conference considered document ERC/24/10 Rev.1, *Learning from evaluations of FAO's work in Europe and Central Asia (2020–2023)*.²⁹
38. The Regional Conference:
- a) noted the contents of the Office of Evaluation report; and
 - b) highlighted the critical role of national commitment and ownership in establishing institutional frameworks and operational support to sustain results achieved during challenging times.
39. The Regional Conference called upon FAO to:
- a) draw on the key lessons learned and pursue actions in response to the topics and lessons highlighted in the Office of Evaluation report;

²⁸ Considered under the written correspondence procedure.

²⁹ This document is available at: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/93842b56-a233-4bbe-9b85-24b5f9ca6937/content>

- b) continue its efforts to create a comprehensive and consistent monitoring and evaluation system at all levels to enhance the sustainability of FAO's work at the country level and to maximize effectiveness and efficiency;
- c) further improve the implementation of accepted recommendations, especially in relation to design and monitoring, sustainability, programmatic approaches and operations;
- d) continue its work, driven by technical expertise and innovation, on sustainable agriculture development, biodiversity conservation and food systems transformation, in line with the three Regional Priority Programmes;
- e) actively foster and expand its strategic and inclusive collaboration, with particular emphasis on engaging with the private sector;
- f) strengthen gender equality and women's empowerment in all activities in the region, starting with the inclusion of key learning priorities on gender and youth (social inclusion);
- g) support Country Offices in the implementation of recommendations and work with other Regional Offices in sharing lessons learned;
- h) continue strengthening its prioritization of data collection and analysis (including making data more readily accessible, which can enhance analytic capacities to the benefit of farmers and civil society); and
- i) consider whether the analysis derived from evaluations in this region and others could provide further insights into the international architecture for food security and the development of sustainable agrifood systems, and how FAO – with its wealth of knowledge, technical skills and multidisciplinary partners – could help strengthen that at national, regional and global levels.

IV. Other Matters

A. Country Office Network – Current status and way forward: A policy paper³⁰

40. The Regional Conference discussed document ERC/24/11, *Country Office Network – Current status and way forward: A policy paper*.³¹

41. The Regional Conference:

- a) appreciated the update on Decentralized Offices with a proposed way forward to strengthen the Organization's work at country level, in response to guidance from the Governing Bodies and in line with the conclusions of the 2021 Audit of Decentralized Offices' governance structure and capacity, and the findings of the recent Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System(JIU)'s *Review of management and administration in the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations*;³²
- b) requested more information on how the proposals address adequate oversight, risk management, internal controls and other guidance and recommendations from audits and other reviews;
- c) took note of the overarching guiding principles of tailoring the proposed approach to countries' evolution, specificities and needs; building in flexibility, agility and strengthened capacity; reflecting modern ways of operating and delivering; and implementing changes in a progressive manner;

³⁰ Considered under the written correspondence procedure and during the live Session.

³¹ This document is available at: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/ee9df3df-cb3b-4783-9f46-d42f14d063e5/content>

³² The Russian Federation did not support this paragraph since the JIU report and its recommendations were not among the Regional Conference session documents, and, moreover, the report consideration is planned for the upcoming sessions of the appropriate competent Governing Bodies.

- d) noted that some of the proposals, notably those on extrabudgetary-funded projects and programmes, required a broader discussion on the relation between assessed and voluntary contributions, in line with the 43rd FAO Conference resolution on the PWB 2024-2025;
- e) supported the objectives of the proposal for adjustments to the FAO Country Offices network, and welcomed this proposal as a first step in this process that would allow the FAO Country Offices to better respond to Members' expectations for FAO's support and delivery under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and beyond;
- f) called for a clear policy on Country Office Network and for the determination and application of clear criteria for establishing and structuring Country Offices while recognizing the need for flexibility and context-driven decisions, ensuring that FAO's field presence is fit for purpose;
- g) encouraged Management to continue collaborating with relevant UN agencies present in countries, and to support FAO's active participation in the repositioning of the UN Development System at country level; and asked for an overview of the progress that has been made since the last ERC to further align and create synergies with the single action plan under the responsibility of the Resident Coordinator;
- h) requested a detailed overview of all Decentralized Offices, including Regional, Subregional, Country, Partnership and Liaison Offices, and Liaison Offices, with detailed country by country information, and in which of the proposed models they would fall;
- i) requested more information on the Knowledge Hubs and stressed that their establishment and terms of reference be considered by the relevant FAO Governing Bodies;
- j) encouraged FAO to carry out a constructive dialogue with countries and in the relevant Governing Bodies of FAO and with all Members of FAO; and
- k) supported FAO's efforts to propose a decentralization model, to achieve a more efficient and modern FAO Country Office Network through open, transparent and inclusive dialogue with Members and requested regular updates on these matters in the relevant Governing Bodies of FAO and with all Members of FAO.

B. Report on the outcomes of the debate of the 43rd Session of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)³³

42. The Regional Conference reviewed document ERC/24/12 Rev.1, *Report on the outcomes of the debate of the 43rd Session of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)* and endorsed its recommendations.^{34,35,36}

C. Report on the outcomes of the debate of the Joint Session of the 42nd European Forestry Commission (EFC) and the 81st UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI)³⁷

43. The Regional Conference reviewed document ERC/24/13 Rev.1, *Report on the outcomes of the debate of the Joint Session of the 42nd European Forestry Commission (EFC) and the 81st UNECE Committee on Forest and the Forest Industry*, endorsed the report and its recommendations, and called upon FAO to:

- a) utilize the resources earmarked for the Joint Section with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) to strengthen the implementation of the Integrated Programme of Work and better utilize the extensive knowledge and experience of FAO,

³³ Considered under the written correspondence procedure.

³⁴ The Russian Federation did not support the conclusions and recommendations of the 43rd Session of the ECA.

³⁵ This document is available at: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/158bd802-1b87-4b1e-a5c3-8afdb62d598d/content>

³⁶ The Report of the 43rd Session of the ECA was adopted by vote.

³⁷ Considered under the written correspondence procedure.

including strengthening the EFC inputs to the work of the ERC and the Committee on Forestry;

- b) provide technical support to Members for the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework requiring actions in the forestry and agriculture sectors, both at the policy and practice levels, including agroforestry and agroecology;
- c) disseminate knowledge products and tools from the Sustainable Wildlife Management Program as a source of innovative approaches to managing interaction between humans, wildlife and flora;
- d) strengthen policies and actions on land restoration and rehabilitation to address tree mortality due to the effects of climate change in the region;
- e) promote integrated land management to the provision of forest ecosystem services that are essential for agriculture, such as soil protection and erosion control, water storage and supply, pollination and maintenance of food chains;
- f) continue promoting the principles and practices of agroforestry and agroecology as laid out in the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the 26th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO26) in 2022;
- g) consider other topics recommended by the EFC for COFO for the future work of FAO in the region, e.g. “Climate change related to resilience to drought and other disturbances and damage”, “Bioeconomy and value chain development” and “Occupational health and safety in forestry work”; and
- h) consider establishing an International Boreal Forest Day.

D. Report on the work of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC)³⁸

44. The Regional Conference reviewed document ERC/24/14 Rev.1, *Report on the work of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC)*.³⁹

45. The Regional Conference:

- a) affirmed the importance of EIFAAC as a platform for cooperation and exchange in the areas of inland fisheries and aquaculture, and as a contributor to the Blue Transformation of aquatic food systems for future food security, nutrition and resilient livelihoods throughout Europe and welcomed the outcomes of the Thirty-first Session of EIFAAC;
- b) welcomed the increase of EIFAAC to thirty-eight Members, with North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Slovenia joining in the period 2022-2024;
- c) invited Members to implement FAO’s initiative to better link Regional Fishery Bodies (RFB) and Basin Management Organizations for scaling up cooperation towards sustainable inland capture fisheries in the context of food security and nutrition, ideally with a case study;
- d) called upon Members to commit adequate staff time of EIFAAC operational focal points and national fisheries and aquaculture scientists and managers to EIFAAC committees and projects to strengthen collaboration within the EIFAAC network;
- e) acknowledged the efforts of EIFAAC to develop guidance to mitigate the effects of cormorant predation on fish, fisheries and aquaculture, as well as EIFAAC’s work on management of aquatic invasive species and the preparation of fish stocking guidelines;

³⁸ Considered by written correspondence procedure.

³⁹ This document is available at: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/e16b03ef-f0b0-4284-a25b-b418adc94373/content>

- f) emphasized the need to intensify efforts towards conserving and managing migratory species for the sustainability of related sectors; and
 - g) recommended strengthening North–South cooperation between FAO’s RFBs in joint projects, especially with regard to Integrated Water Resources Management in Agriculture.
46. The Regional Conference called upon FAO to:
- a) continue mobilizing resources among Members to produce the highly needed scientific advice for policymaking, management of inland fisheries and aquaculture, and for achieving Blue Transformation in Europe; and
 - b) make a firm commitment to ensuring adequate staff time to the EIFAAC Secretariat.

E. Report on the work of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish)⁴⁰

47. The Regional Conference reviewed document ERC/24/15 Rev.1, *Report on the work of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish)*.⁴¹

48. The Regional Conference:

- a) noted the CACFish work programme activities that have been undertaken, completed or remain as ongoing deliverables during the intersessional period of 2021–2023;
- b) recognized the considerable technical and institutional capacity-building support that has been provided by CACFish during its first decade of establishment and the wide range of issues that have been addressed, including the management and protection of inland fisheries and aquaculture resources and the development of the inland fisheries and aquaculture sectors, which have contributed to promoting the realization of the SDGs and the Blue Transformation for more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable aquafood systems;
- c) took note of the increasing achievements of CACFish and the leading role it plays in addressing the growing challenges faced by the inland fisheries and aquaculture sectors in Central Asia and the Caucasus and in taking forward appropriate management and conservation recommendations; and
- d) called upon FAO to encourage new members to join the commission.

F. Governance matters

49. The Regional Conference:

- a) highlighted the need for continued efforts to ensure FAO’s capacity to deliver effectively on its mandate to ensure a sustainable future and food security for all, both within the region and beyond, in line with the guidance provided by the FAO Governing Bodies and in accordance with the needs and expectations of its Members;
- b) expected further improvements in the region and beyond regarding governance, effectiveness, transparency, impartiality, accountability and risk management, in line with the highest UN standards and in close dialogue with FAO Members;
- c) welcomed the Report of the Joint Inspection Unit of the UN, issued in December 2023, on the *review of management and administration in FAO*, and looked forward to its thorough consideration by the competent FAO Governing Bodies;⁴²

⁴⁰ Considered under the written correspondence procedure

⁴¹ This document is available at: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/d43e26e6-ec59-47be-be10-26092fcd15dd/content>

⁴² The Russian Federation did not support this paragraph since the JIU report and its recommendations were not among the Regional Conference session documents, and, moreover, the report consideration is planned for the upcoming sessions of the appropriate competent Governing Bodies.

- d) called upon FAO to continue efforts in accountability and transparency, including the publication of Memoranda of Understanding concluded by FAO with third parties, and of an open data information portal on FAO's activities, projects and funding;
- e) recalled the need for results-based management and performance reports, with a particular focus on Decentralized Offices and on programmes and projects, including alignment of corporate policies with actions at country level, as well as improved use of country-level knowledge in FAO corporate policies;
- f) recognized the important work carried out by the FAO Office of the Evaluation and the Office of the Inspector General;
- g) requested the change of the name of the "Regional Conference for Europe" to the "Regional Conference for Europe and Central Asia"; and
- h) welcomed FAO's commitment to reviewing the organizational and governance structure, and mechanisms to ensure that they are fit-for-purpose, and provide regular update to the Members.

50. In response to some Members raising the issue of the quality of simultaneous interpretation from Russian into English during the Conference, the Regional Conference requested FAO to maintain the highest standards of translation and interpretation into FAO languages.

G. Date and Place of the 35th Session of the Regional Conference for Europe

51. As no offers were made by the Members, the Chairperson announced that the Director-General will decide on the venue of the 35th Session of the Regional Conference and the exact date, in consultation with the Members of the Europe and Central Asia region.

H. Any other matters

52. The Regional Conference took note of the Information notes.

I. Adoption of the Report of the Regional Conference

53. The Regional Conference adopted the Report by vote.⁴³

J. Closure of the Regional Conference

54. FAO Director-General, Dr QU Dongyu, congratulated participants on a successful Thirty-fourth Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe and extended gratitude to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Food Industry of the Republic of Moldova for hosting and leading the successful organization of the Conference.

⁴³ Roll call vote with total votes cast: 38, majority required: 20, votes for: 37, votes against: 1, abstentions: 1. *Appendix H*: roll call vote results sheet.

V. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – SECRET BALLOT VOTE RESULT SHEET

ERC 34

REPORT OF BALLOT RÉSULTAT DU SCRUTIN RESULTADO DE LA VOTACIÓN	1	ELECTION OF A RAPPORTEUR ELECTION DU RAPPORTEUR ELECCIÓN DEL/DE LA RELATOR(A)	1.8.2023 – 31.7.2027
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1. Ballot papers deposited Bulletin deposés Papeletas depositadas	42	4. Votes for Votes pour Votos en favor	33
2. Abstentions Abstentions Abstenciones	4	5. Votes against Votes contre Votos en contra	5
3. Defective ballots Bulletins nuls Papeletas defectuosas	0	6. Votes cast Suffrages exprimés Votos emitidos	38

7. Majority (more than one half of the votes cast)	20
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Mr Michel Lévêque (France)

is appointed rapporteur
est nommé rapporteur
ha sido nombrado relator

Tellers/Scrutateurs/Escuradores

Ms Ivana Skočajić (Serbia)

Signature.....

Date..... 14 MAY 2024

Mr Gonzalo Eiriz (Spain)

Signature.....

Date..... 14/05/24

Mr Ilja Betlem (Elections Officer)

Signature.....

Date..... 14/5/2024

APPENDIX B – SECRET BALLOT VOTE RESULT SHEET

ERC 34

REPORT OF BALLOT RÉSULTAT DU SCRUTIN RESULTADO DE LA VOTACIÓN	1	ELECTION OF A RAPporteur ELECTION DU RAPporteur ELECCIÓN DEL/DE LA RELATOR(A)	1.8.2023 – 31.7.2027
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1. Ballot papers deposited Bulletin deposes Papeletas depositadas	42	4. Votes for Votes pour Votos en favor	5
2. Abstentions Abstentions Abstenciones	4	5. Votes against Votes contre Votos en contra	33
3. Defective ballots Bulletins nuls Papeletas defectuosas	0	6. Votes cast Suffrages exprimés Votos emitidos	38

7. Majority (more than one half of the votes cast)	20
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Ms Ekaterina Vybornova (Russian Federation)

not appointed rapporteur
n'est pas nommée rapporteur
no ha sido nombrada relatora

Tellers/Scrutateurs/Escuradores

Ms Ivana Skočajić (Serbia)

Signature.....

Date..... 14 MAY 2024

Mr Gonzalo Eiriz (Spain)

Signature.....

Date..... 14/05/24

Mr Ilija Betlem (Elections Officer)

Signature.....

Date..... 14/5/2024

APPENDIX C – AGENDA

I. Introductory Items

1. **Election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons, and appointment of Rapporteurs**
2. **Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable**
3. **Statement by the Director-General**
4. **Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council**
5. **Statement by the Chairperson of the 33rd Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe**

The statement will provide a brief overview of the outcome of the deliberations of the 33rd Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe (Łódź, Poland, 10–13 May 2022) on matters related to the Europe and Central Asia region.
6. **Statement by the Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)**
7. **Statement by the Spokesperson of the Civil Society Organizations (CSO)**
8. **Statement by the Spokesperson of the Private Sector (PS)**

II. Regional and Global Policy and Regulatory Matters

9. **The role of innovation and digitalization in the sustainable use of natural resources to accelerate the implementation of climate-resilient and low-emission pathways in agrifood systems**

This item will examine the role of innovation and digitalization in improving the management of natural resources to promote low-emission and climate-resilient agrifoods that preserve agrobiodiversity and improve water governance in the Europe and Central Asia region.

The background document will analyse the status of net zero and climate- and nature-positive interventions for moving towards climate-resilient, low-emission and climate-neutral agriculture in the Europe and Central Asia region, bringing concrete examples from FAO's collaborative activities with relevant partners on green innovative technologies, digital tools and mechanisms for managing natural resources and agrobiodiversity sustainably. It will also emphasize the role of technology and digital solutions in creating an enabling environment for efficient water governance, including in the context of climate change. It is expected that, based on the background document, the challenges and opportunities of using innovative strategies and implementing mechanisms will be identified and policy recommendations for natural resources and agrobiodiversity management presented to move forward to net zero agrifood systems in the Europe and Central Asia region.

10. **Building resilience through agrifood systems transformation**

This agenda item will examine the fact that rural populations – including in Europe and Central Asia – have been affected by multiple crises, and thus are subject to specific risks, including high poverty rates, uncertain and irregular incomes, a lack of access to decent jobs, a lack of infrastructure and technologies, food insecurity and malnutrition. Agrifood systems transformation provides various opportunities for strengthening resilience; improving economic and social sustainability; addressing equal access to resources, services and information; and leveraging gains for economic and social sustainability, leaving no one behind.

During the discussion, FAO Members, representatives of civil society, research and academia, and the private sector are invited to share inclusive, gender-responsive and innovative good practices and lessons learned. Guidance will be sought on critical actions, priorities and opportunities for regional cooperation and action.

11. **FAO's response to the multiple crises in Europe and Central Asia**

The Europe and Central Asia region has been affected by multiple crises stemming from the war in Ukraine, the effects of climate change and, most recently, the devastating earthquakes in Türkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic in early February 2023, resulting in a triple crisis in food, energy and finance. Among the impacts, food and energy prices, accelerated inflation, tightened financial conditions, increased import bills, disrupted food supply chains, damaged logistics and infrastructure have been steeply rising, thus threatening food security in the region. High retail prices of food, gas and petroleum products remain a major concern. Overall inflation has generally slowed since the peak in the first half of 2022, but food inflation remains high. The most vulnerable countries in the region – including Türkiye and countries in Central Asia, the South Caucasus, Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans – are the most affected by the multiple crises, particularly the poorest segments of the population.

The background document under this item will summarize FAO's response in the region, with emphasis on the short- and long-term impacts of the multiple crises, and will also contain material relevant as background for item 12 below.

During the discussion, Members will be invited to assess FAO's responses to the multiple crises in the region over the past two years, to review the recommendations and share their experiences for improving the Organization's interventions to better serve the needs of affected countries and strengthen their resilience.

12. **Implications on world food security and agriculture, including global food prices, arising from the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine**

This item is included on the Provisional Agenda following request of ERC Members by means of a letter signed by four Members dated 10 April 2024, as well as a separate letter initially signed by 36 Members on 12 April 2024 and later co-signed by 39 Members on 15 April 2024. The background document for item 11 above contains material relevant as background for this item.

During the discussion, Members will be invited to assess FAO's responses in the region over the past two years, to review the recommendations and share their experiences for improving the Organization's interventions to better serve the needs of affected countries and strengthen their resilience.

13. **Financing to end hunger for today and tomorrow (SDG 2)**

This item will discuss the financing necessary to achieve the goal of Zero Hunger, particularly in meeting Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 2.1 and SDG Target 2.2 in the region. The objective of the background document is to provide an understanding of the challenges faced by the region and its countries in financing the implementation of policies. Another important aspect of the document is to provide information on how countries are financing the reduction of food insecurity in the region and what innovative financing solutions are being used – and could be used – to support efforts to achieve SDG 2 targets in the region, in general.

14. **How to fight against food loss and waste**

The document will review the situation regarding food loss and waste in Europe and Central Asia, provide an overview of the work done by FAO in the region and share recommendations for reducing food loss and waste. In the discussion, Members are invited to share their experiences, review the recommendations and provide further guidance for FAO's intervention in this area.

15. **Global and Regional Food Security Outlook**

This agenda item will include a background document that presents a snapshot of the global and regional situation regarding food security, and discusses the short- and medium-term outlook for food commodities, focusing on the prospects of supply, demand and trade (imports and exports). The background document also highlights emerging issues, particularly at the regional level, including short-term market developments and emerging trends, key medium-term trends, and the regional aspects of medium-term production, consumption and trade trends. It will conclude with specific regional issues. Members are invited to share their views and review the findings and trends.

III. Programme and Budget Matters

16. **Regional results, priorities, the *four betters* and the Sustainable Development Goals**

This agenda item will include two background documents related to reporting on the results of implementing the Programme of Work 2022–2023, lessons learned and regional priorities for the 2024-2025 biennium and beyond.

17. **Learning from evaluations of FAO’s work in Europe and Central Asia (2020-2023)**

This agenda item will highlight useful findings and lessons learned from evaluations of FAO’s work in Europe and Central Asia during the past four years. Shared insights will focus on key thematic areas and seek to inform future work across the region.

IV. Other Matters

18. **Country Office Network – Current status and way forward: A policy paper**

This agenda item will provide an overview regarding the status of the review of the Country Office network in the region, and it will highlight measures put into place to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the region’s Decentralized Offices. Members are expected to review the situation and make recommendations.

19. **Report on the outcomes of the debate of the 43rd Session of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)**

A summary report from the deliberations of the 43rd Session of the European Commission on Agriculture, which took place from 27 to 28 September in Budapest, Hungary, will be presented.

20. **Report on the outcomes of the debate of the Joint Session of the 42nd European Forestry Commission (EFC) and the 81st UNECE Committee on Forest and the Forest Industry (COFFI)**

A summary of the outcomes and recommendations of the Joint Session of the 42nd European Forestry Commission and the 81st Session of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Committee on Forest and the Forest Industry, which took place from 20 to 23 November 2023 in San Marino, will be presented.

21. **Report on the work of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC)**

A summary report on the work of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission will be presented.

22. **Report on the work of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish)**

A summary report on the work of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission will be presented.

23. **Governance matters**

24. **Date and place of the 35th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe**

25. **Any other matters⁴⁴**

Adoption of the Report of the Regional Conference

The draft report, introduced by the Rapporteurs, will be reviewed and discussed for endorsement.

Closure of the Regional Conference

⁴⁴ If they wish, delegates may comment on information notes under “Any other matters”.

Information Notes

Report on the outcomes of the debate of the 46th Session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)

The outcomes and recommendations of the 46th Session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean will be presented.

Report on the work of the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (EuFMD)

A summary report on the work of the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease will be presented.

Regional Strategic Foresight for the Europe and Central Asia region

Responding to calls by the 28th Session of the Committee on Agriculture and other Governing Bodies, FAO is currently engaged in foresight exercises for the transformation of agrifood systems at all levels. This information note outlines the findings to date of the regional foresight exercise for sustainable and resilient agrifood systems, ongoing in Europe and Central Asia, and elicits further engagement of Members and other regional stakeholders in strategic foresight to support decision-making processes.

APPENDIX D – LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Symbol	Title
ERC/24/1 Rev.2	Provisional Annotated Agenda
ERC/24/2	The role of innovation and digitalization in the sustainable use of natural resources to accelerate the implementation of climate-resilient and low -emission pathways in agrifood systems
ERC/24/3	Building resilience through agrifood systems transformation
ERC/24/4 Rev.1	FAO's response to the multiple crises in Europe and Central Asia
ERC/24/5 Rev.1	Financing to end hunger for today and tomorrow (SDG 2)
ERC/24/6 Rev.1	How to fight against food loss and waste
ERC/24/7	Global and Regional Food Security Outlook
ERC/24/8 Rev.1	FAO results in the region – 2022-2023
ERC/24/9 Rev.1	Priorities for FAO in the Europe and Central Asia region under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31
ERC/24/10 Rev.1	Learning from evaluations of FAO's work in Europe and Central Asia (2020-2023)
ERC/24/11 Rev.1	Country Office Network – Current status and way forward: A policy paper
ERC/24/12 Rev.1	Report on the outcomes of the debate of the 43rd Session of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)
ERC/24/13 Rev.1	Report on the outcomes of the debate of the Joint Session of the 42nd European Forestry Commission (EFC) and the 81st UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI)
ERC/24/14 Rev.1	Report on the work of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC)
ERC/24/15 Rev.1	Report on the work of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish)
ERC/24/16	Proposal from 28 FAO Members from Europe and Central Asia region for decision by the Regional Conference
ERC/24/16/Add.1	Proposal from 33 FAO Members from Europe and Central Asia region for decision by the Regional Conference
ERC/24/17	Letter of the Russian Federation submitting amendments to the proposed recommendations under item 12
ERC/24/18	Proposed amendments from the Russian Federation under item 12

INF SERIES

Symbol	Title
ERC/24/INF/1	Information Note
ERC/24/INF/2 Rev.2	Provisional Timetable
ERC/24/INF/3 Rev.2	Provisional List of Documents
ERC/24/INF/4	Statement by the Director-General
ERC/24/INF/5	Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council
ERC/24/INF/6	Statement by the Chairperson of the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for Europe
ERC/24/INF/7	Statement by the Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)
ERC/24/INF/8	Statement by the Spokesperson of the Civil Society Organizations (CSO)
ERC/24/INF/9	Statement by the Spokesperson of the Private Sector (PS)
ERC/24/INF/10 Rev.1	Report on the outcomes of the debate of the 46th Session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)
ERC/24/INF/11 Rev.1	Report on the work of the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (EuFMD)
ERC/24/INF/12	Regional Strategic Foresight for the Europe and Central Asia region
ERC/24/INF/13	Statement of Competence and Voting Rights submitted by the European Union and its Member States

APPENDIX E – ROLL CALL VOTE RESULT SHEET

34th SESSION OF THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE, 14-17 May 2024

Proposal: to adopt amendments to a draft decision as contained in Document ERC/24/18

16/5/2024; 12:00

RESULT SHEET/RESULTATS/RESULTADOS/ РЕЗУЛЬТАТЫ

Roll Call Vote/Vote par appel nominal/Votación Nominal/ Поименное голосование

Number of votes cast/ Nombre de suffrages exprimés/ Número de votos emitidos/ Количество поданных голосов	37
Majority required/ Majorité requise/ Mayoría requerida/ Требуемое большинство	19
Votes for/ Votes pour/ Votos en favour/ Голоса за	1
Votes against/ Votes contre/ Votos en contra/ Голоса против	36
Abstentions/ Abstenciones/ Воздержавшиеся	4
Votes for: Votes pour: Votos en favor: Голоса за:	Russian Federation
Votes against: Votes contre: Votos en contra: Голоса против:	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom
Abstentions: Abstenciones: Воздержавшиеся:	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan
No reply: Aucune réponse: Ninguna respuesta: Без ответа:	Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Denmark, Hungary, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

REJECTED/REPOUSÉE/RECHAZADA/ОТКЛОНЕНО



**Elections Officer/ Fonctionnaire électorale/ El oficial de elecciones/ Сотрудник,
ответственный за проведение голосования**

APPENDIX F – ROLL CALL VOTE RESULT SHEET

34th SESSION OF THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE, 14-17 May 2024

Proposal: to conduct a secret ballot vote on the draft decision contained in document
ERC/24/16 Add.1

16/5/2024; 12:30

RESULT SHEET/RESULTATS/RESULTADOS/ РЕЗУЛЬТАТЫ

Roll Call Vote/Vote par appel nominal/Votación Nominal/ Поименное голосование

Number of votes cast/ Nombre de suffrages exprimés/ Número de votos emitidos/ Количество поданных голосов	37
Majority required/ Majorité requise/ Mayoría requerida/ Требуемое большинство	19
Votes for/ Votes pour/ Votos en favour/ Голоса за	1
Votes against/ Votes contre/ Votos en contra/ Голоса против	36
Abstentions/ Abstenciones/ Воздержавшиеся	4
Votes for: Votes pour: Votos en favor: Голоса за:	Russian Federation
Votes against: Votes contre: Votos en contra: Голоса против:	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom
Abstentions: Abstenciones: Воздержавшиеся:	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan
No reply: Aucune réponse: Ninguna respuesta: Без ответа:	Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Denmark, Hungary, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

REJECTED/REPOUSÉE/RECHAZADA/ОТКЛОНЕНО



**Elections Officer/ Fonctionnaire électorale/ El oficial de elecciones/ Сотрудник,
ответственный за проведение голосования**

APPENDIX G – ROLL CALL VOTE RESULT SHEET

34th SESSION OF THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE, 14-17 May 2024

Proposal: to adopt the draft decision contained in document ERC/24/16 Add.1

16/5/2024; 13:00

RESULT SHEET/RESULTATS/RESULTADOS/ РЕЗУЛЬТАТЫ

Roll Call Vote/Vote par appel nominal/Votación Nominal/ Поименное голосование

Number of votes cast/ Nombre de suffrages exprimés/ Número de votos emitidos/ Количество поданных голосов	37
Majority required/ Majorité requise/ Mayoría requerida/ Требуемое большинство	19
Votes for/ Votes pour/ Votos en favour/ Голоса за	36
Votes against/ Votes contre/ Votos en contra/ Голоса против	1
Abstentions/ Abstenciones/ Воздержавшиеся	4

Votes for:
Votes pour:
Votos en favor:
Голоса за:

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom

Votes against:
Votes contre:
Votos en contra:
Голоса против:

Russian Federation

Abstentions:
Abstenciones:
Воздержавшиеся:

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan

No reply:
Aucune réponse:
Ninguna respuesta:
Без ответа:

Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Denmark, Hungary, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

ADOPTED/ADOPTÉE/ACEPTADA/ПРИНЯТО



**Elections Officer/ Fonctionnaire électorale/ El oficial de elecciones/ Сотрудник,
ответственный за проведение голосования**

APPENDIX H – ROLL CALL VOTE RESULT SHEET

34th SESSION OF THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE, 14-17 May 2024

Proposal: to adopt the draft report of the Session, as considered and amended

17/5/2024; 17:00

RESULT SHEET/RESULTATS/RESULTADOS/ РЕЗУЛЬТАТЫ

Roll Call Vote/Vote par appel nominal/Votación Nominal/ Поименное голосование

Number of votes cast/ Nombre de suffrages exprimés/ Número de votos emitidos/ Количество поданных голосов	38
Majority required/ Majorité requise/ Mayoría requerida/ Требуемое большинство	20
Votes for/ Votes pour/ Votos en faveur/ Голоса за	37
Votes against/ Votes contre/ Votos en contra/ Голоса против	1
Abstentions/ Abstenciones/ Воздержавшиеся	1
Votes for: Votes pour: Votos en favor: Голоса за:	Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom
Votes against: Votes contre: Votos en contra: Голоса против:	Russian Federation
Abstentions: Abstenciones: Воздержавшиеся:	Uzbekistan
No reply: Aucune réponse: Ninguna respuesta: Без ответа:	Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Israel, Kazakhstan, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan

ADOPTED/ADOPTÉE/ACEPTADA/ПРИНЯТО



**Elections Officer/ Fonctionnaire électorale/ El oficial de elecciones/ Сотрудник,
ответственный за проведение голосования**

APPENDIX I – STATEMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION FOLLOWING THE ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE 34TH SESSION OF THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE

Statement by the Delegation of the Russian Federation
at the 34th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe
on the adoption of the report

Thank you, Mr Chairperson!

My delegation wishes to make a statement following the adoption of the report and the conclusion of the regional conference. We request that this statement be reflected as an annex to the report.

The Russian Federation is disappointed that the report on the outcome of the Regional Conference for Europe was adopted by a vote. The vote was requested by Belgium on behalf of the 27 EU Member States. Russia did everything possible to avoid this. However, as the Russian President Vladimir Putin, who is on a state visit to China, said today – “ultimatums won’t work”.

The European Union and a number of countries that associated themselves with the EU took a confrontational approach long before the opening of the conference. That is exactly why we are meeting in Rome and not in Chisinau, as originally planned. If the election of our country as one of the rapporteurs of the regional conference had not been blocked for political reasons, the work on the Draft Report would have been faster, simpler and easier. The presence of our representative among the rapporteurs would have been dictated not by political interests, but by the potential for reaching compromise on many issues while the draft was being prepared.

Furthermore, and most importantly, we regret that the only regional conference of one of the most developed regions in the world has not been able to send a positive message to other countries; the situation in Europe is being projected onto other countries and the longer we remain in a state of confrontation, the more difficult it will be for the rest of the world. The Director-General spoke about this at the opening of the conference, the Independent Chairperson of the Council urged us to focus our efforts for the good of the region, for the good of the entire world. Unfortunately, the report was adopted by a vote, it is not a consensus-based document, which opens it up to further challenge in the FAO Council and at the FAO Conference in 2025. This situation has benefited no one, and if the European Union, which requested the vote, considers this its great victory, we are truly sorry. It is not a victory, it is a loss for the whole region.

I thank you for your attention and ask once again that our statement be reflected as an annex to the report!

Thank you.