



COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Twenty-eighth Session

18 - 22 July 2022

Multi-Year Programme of Work of the Committee (MYPOW)

Executive Summary

This document provides the progress report of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) 2020-2023 and the draft COAG MYPOW 2022-2025. The current COAG MYPOW has been developed on the basis of guidance received from the Committee and intends to provide a solid basis for guiding its work in the 2020-23 period. The document is presented as a rolling plan, presenting the method of work of the Committee and follows the format already set out by the Committee in 2012.

Suggested action by the Committee

The Committee is invited to:

- *review* the progress report of the implementation of the approved MYPOW 2020-23 in accordance with its overall objectives and mandate; and
- *approve* the proposed MYPOW 2022-2025 as set out in the Annex.

Queries on the substantive content of the document may be addressed to:

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I. Background

1. At its 23rd Session (21-25 May 2012), the Committee reviewed, amended and approved its draft MYPOW 2012-2015. As a rolling plan, the Committee adopted its second MYPOW 2014-2017 at its 24th Session (29 September-3 October 2014), its third MYPOW 2016-2019 at its 25th Session (26-30 September 2016), its fourth MYPOW 2018-2021 at its 26th Session (1-5 October 2018) and its fifth MYPOW 2020-2023 (28 September-2 October 2020). The development of the COAG MYPOW conforms to the recommendations embodied in Actions 2.70 to 2.72 of the Immediate Plan of Action for FAO Renewal (IPA), and adheres to the periodicity specified by the IPA in terms of the timeframe covered by the programme as well as the submission of timelines of progress reports to Governing Bodies.

2. As underscored by the Committee, the first five MYPOWs of the Committee provided an important step towards the improvement of COAG's efficiency and transparency. The MYPOW guided the work of COAG and the Secretariat over the last ten years. The Secretariat provided regular progress reports to the Bureau, the Committee, Council and Conference.

3. The current document has been developed based on the guidance received from the Committee, the Council and the Conference, and intends to provide a solid basis for guiding the work of the Committee in the 2022-2025 period.

II. Progress report on the MYPOW: results for 2020-2022

A. Strategy, priority setting, and budget planning

4. The Committee organized its 27th Session from 28 September to 2 October 2020¹. With a view to address global and emerging challenges, the Committee held substantive discussions on matters related to:

- Livestock Sector contributions to achieving SDGs;
- Preventing, anticipating and responding to high-impact animal and plant diseases and pests;
- Proposal for the establishment of a COAG Sub-Committee on Livestock;
- Progress report on the implementation of FAO Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) 2016-2020, and the proposal for a new FAO Action Plan on AMR 2021-2025;
- Update on COVID-19 and its impact on food security and nutrition, and food systems;
- Operationalizing a food systems approach to accelerate delivery of the 2030 Agenda;
- Rationale for a new FAO Food Safety Strategy;
- Agricultural transformation and the Urban Food Agenda;
- Voluntary Code of Conduct for Food Loss and Waste Reduction;
- Rural Youth Action Plan;
- Enabling smallholders and family farmers to access appropriate innovation, information and advisory services for sustainable agrifood systems;
- Terms of Reference of the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture;
- Implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors;
- Towards a Global Programme on Sustainable Dryland Agriculture in collaboration with the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (WASAG) in a Changing Climate;
- Report of the Global Soil Partnership (GSP);

¹ www.fao.org/3/ne021en/ne021en.pdf

- FAO's work on Rangelands and Pastoralism, and Proposal for an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists;
- Proposal for an International Day of Plant Health; and
- Proposal for an International Year of Date Palm.

5. The Committee endorsed the proposal by the Government of Mongolia to establish the observance by the United Nations system of an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists in 2026; the proposal by the Government of Zambia to establish the observance by the United Nations system of an International Day of Plant Health, to be celebrated on 12 May each year; and the proposal by the Government of Saudi Arabia to establish the observance by the United Nations system of an International Year of Date Palm on an exceptional basis in 2027. In view of the exceptional situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the COAG 27 session was held in fully virtual format, and no side events were organized.

6. The decisions and recommendations by the 27th Session of COAG were reported, reviewed and adopted by the 165th Session of Council, the 42nd Session of Conference (C 42), as well as the 166th Session of Council providing a solid basis for the strategy, priority setting and budget planning of the Organization.

B. Intersessional activities

7. During the intersessional period, the COAG Secretariat and the Bureau conducted the following several activities as follows:

i. The 27th Session of COAG requested FAO to revise the Voluntary Code of Conduct for Food Loss and Waste Reduction,² in consultation with Members and under the guidance of the COAG Bureau. FAO obtained written comments and suggestions from Members during the period for receiving comments (7 December 2020-18 January 2021). In addition, Members provided comments and suggestions during a virtual consultation that took place from 12 to 13 January 2021. FAO prepared a revised version on the basis of these comments and suggestions, that was reviewed by Members during virtual consultations held from 15 to 17 March and from 1 to 2 April 2021 to agree on the text before submission of the document to C 42.

ii. At its 42nd Session, the FAO Conference endorsed the Voluntary Code of Conduct for Food Loss and Waste Reduction³ and the proposal for the establishment of a Sub-Committee on Livestock⁴. The Conference adopted the following resolutions: Resolution 4/2021 "Eradication of Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) by 2030"⁵; Resolution 5/2021 International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists⁶; Resolution 6/2021 International Day of Plant Health⁷, and Resolution 7/2021 International Year of Date Palm⁸. The resolutions for the proclamation of the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists and the International Day of Plant Health, were subsequently adopted by the UN General Assembly on 28 February and 29 March 2022, respectively.

iii. Bureau meetings: the COAG Bureau held 13 meetings from October 2020 to April 2022 to monitor COAG 27 recommendations and actions and prepare the COAG 28 agenda. Technical briefings on the follow-up on COAG27 recommendations and matters of relevance for the Bureau were held on a regular basis. An informal meeting of the Bureau with FAO technical divisions and offices was held on 5 July 2021 to review potential topics proposed for

² www.fao.org/3/nf393en/nf393en.pdf

³ www.fao.org/3/ng170en/ng170en.pdf (para 45 (a))

⁴ www.fao.org/3/ng170en/ng170en.pdf (para 47)

⁵ www.fao.org/3/ng170en/ng170en.pdf (para 46, Appendix C)

⁶ www.fao.org/3/ng170en/ng170en.pdf (para 48, Appendix D)

⁷ www.fao.org/3/ng170en/ng170en.pdf (para 49, Appendix E)

⁸ www.fao.org/3/ng170en/ng170en.pdf (para 50, Appendix F)

the COAG 28 agenda. The draft agenda was prepared in a consultative process with contributions from technical divisions, FAO Regional Offices and Bureau Members, and Regional Groups, under the overall guidance of the Bureau. The draft provisional agenda was approved by the Director-General on 4 January 2022.

iv. Joint Bureau meetings: since 2015, the FAO Technical Committees (TCs) have embarked on strengthening collaboration and coordination to respond to the recommendation of the Evaluation of FAO Governing Bodies. This includes discussion of common topics during their respective sessions with the aim of enhancing collaboration to provide coordinated inputs to the FAO Council and Conference. On 25 October 2021, an informal meeting of the Chairpersons of TCs with Senior Management was held and reconfirmed the continuing collaboration among the TCs.

v. At its 164th and 165th Sessions, FAO Council requested FAO “to showcase and promote existing and complementary practices between agriculture activities and the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of forests, avoiding deforestation and maintaining ecosystem services, noting that agriculture and forestry can synergistically support sustainable development”.ⁱ It also suggested that Committee on Forestry (COFO) “review the drivers of the expansion of agricultural land in the light of sustainable forest management”ⁱⁱ and “requested strengthening coordination between COFO and COAG on cross-sectoral matters, and recommended that future papers dealing with interrelated issues between agriculture and forests be presented to both COFO and COAG”.ⁱⁱⁱ On this basis, a discussion paper was developed on the “Agriculture and Forestry linkages” to be presented to the 28th Session of COAG and the 25th Session of COFO, with the aim to highlight opportunities for closer integration between the agriculture and forestry sectors to address global challenges, including ending hunger, halting deforestation, combatting climate change and biodiversity loss.

8. Report to the High Level Policy Forum (HLPF) 2021: the Chairperson of COAG with the assistance of the Secretariat reported to the HLPF 2021 with the theme, “*Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development*”, and to the HLPF 2022 with the theme “*Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*”⁹ as part of FAO’s corporate submission, presenting the main decisions of COAG 27. FAO’s corporate input summarizes policy deliberations related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of FAO Technical Committees and other intergovernmental bodies hosted in FAO, including evidence, main gaps, key challenges and opportunities and recommendations stemming from individual bodies’ contribution.

9. Following the endorsement by COAG 27 and C 42, the Animal Production and Health Division (NSA) operationalized the COAG Sub-Committee on Livestock (Sub-Committee) by establishing its Secretariat and mobilizing the needed initial funding support. The agenda for the First Session of the Sub-Committee was prepared in a consultative process with contributions from technical divisions and decentralized offices, partners, and Bureau Members, under the overall guidance of the COAG 28 Bureau.

10. The Sub-Committee on Livestock held its First Session from 16 to 18 March 2022 in virtual modality. Of the 133 Members of COAG, 123 registered their delegations for the Session. Six Members of the Organization, two United Nations agencies, seven Intergovernmental Organizations, seven Non-Governmental Organizations and six private sector representatives participated as observers.¹⁰

⁹ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf#hlpf2022>

¹⁰ www.fao.org/coag/sub-committee-on-livestock/first-session/en

11. The Sub-Committee elected its Chairperson and Bureau and discussed substantive items related to i. Sustainable livestock for food security, nutrition, and poverty reduction, including:

- Contribution of livestock to food security, sustainable agrifood systems, nutrition and diets;
- Good practices to sustainably enhance the productivity of small-scale livestock producers; and
- Integrating the livestock sector into national climate actions by considering its adaptation and resilience to climate change, and contribution to biodiversity and ecosystem services.

ii. One Health, comprising:

- Strengthening national coordinated capacities to manage the risks of animal diseases and emerging zoonoses through the One Health approach;
- Progress towards the eradication of Peste des Petits Ruminants; and
- Alternative feed practices to promote responsible use of antimicrobials.

iii Other Matters, including:

- Alignment of FAO's work on livestock to the Strategic Framework 2022-31;
- Holistic and evidence-based reporting on the livestock sector; and
- The Multi-Year Programme of Work of the Sub-Committee on Livestock.

12. The Sub-Committee on Livestock brought its findings and recommendations to the attention of COAG 28.¹¹

C. Advice on global policy and regulatory matters

13. The Committee presented its recommendations to the Conference including those related to the priorities for the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31. The recommendations were fully endorsed by the Conference at its 41st Session.

D. Work planning

14. The deliberations at the 27th Session of COAG have enabled the formulation of a concise report embodying specific action-oriented recommendations to be presented to the FAO Council and Conference.

15. During that session the Committee approved its MYPOW for the period 2020-23 and the Progress Report of MYPOW 2018-20.

16. As a rolling document, the MYPOW 2020-23 was submitted to the 27th Session and the report of 2020-2023 is presented for approval to the present session of the Committee.

E. Working Methods

17. In line with the endorsed MYPOW 2020-23, 13 regular intersessional Bureau meetings have been facilitated by the Chairperson and the Bureau composed of representatives of all seven Regional Groups with support from the Secretariat. In addition, the Chairperson participated in the joint meeting of the Technical Committees' Chairpersons with FAO Senior Management, which discussed way to further strengthen the collaboration by addressing common themes and cross cutting topics. Six of the Bureau meetings were devoted to the preparation of the agenda of the 28th Session of COAG, with the

¹¹ <https://www.fao.org/3/ni966en/ni966en.pdf>

first one held with relevant technical divisions on 5 July 2021 to start identifying priorities and potential topics for the COAG 28 agenda.

18. Due to the protracted COVID-19 pandemic, and the prevention measures in place by the host country, the periodic Bureau meetings were held as virtual meetings (6 November 2020, 15 January, 5 March, 13 April, 18 May, 5 July, 8 September, 8 October 2021, 1 February and 4 March 2022). The 9th (5 November 2021), 10th (7 December 2021) and 13th (12 April 2022) Bureau meetings were held in hybrid format. The Bureau reviewed in its meetings the potential implications of the prevailing COVID-19 situation on the COAG 28 session preparations and priorities for the agenda. Following the endorsement of the FAO Governing Bodies' meeting calendar by the 168th Session of the FAO Council (29 November–4 December 2021), the 28th Session of COAG was confirmed to be held from 18 to 22 July 2022.

ⁱⁱ FAO. 2020. *Report of the Hundred and Sixty-fifth Session of the FAO Council* (CL 165/REP). Rome.
<https://www.fao.org/3/ne381en/ne381en.pdf>

ⁱⁱ FAO. 2020. *Report of the Hundred and Sixty-fourth Session of the FAO Council* (CL 164/REP). Rome.
<https://www.fao.org/3/nd238en/nd238en.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ CL 165/REP.

Annex - Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) of the Committee on Agriculture (2022-2025)

I. Overall Objectives for the Committee on Agriculture

The Committee on Agriculture (COAG) conducts periodic reviews and appraisals, on a highly selective basis, of agricultural and nutritional problems, with a view to proposing concerted action by Member Nations and the Organization. It advises the Council on the overall medium- and longer-term work programme of the Organization relating to agriculture and livestock, food, natural resources and nutrition, with emphasis on the integration of all social, technical, economic, institutional and structural aspects related to agricultural and rural development in general¹². It provides well-founded advice and action-oriented recommendations to the Conference on global policy and regulatory matters, in its areas of mandate.

II. Results for 2022–2025

A. Strategy, priority setting, and budget planning

Result: The Organization has a clear strategy, well-defined priorities and programmes on issues of relevance to the Committee, and the international community at large is provided with up-to-date information on the world situation, global major trends and drivers of change in agriculture, livestock, food security and nutrition, natural resources management and for agrifood systems.

Indicators and targets:

- key global and regional developments including global major trends and drivers of change in the areas of mandate identified, including through the Regional Conferences, and part of the regular sessions of COAG; and
- Committee's recommendations made on the pertinent aspects of the Strategic Framework, the Medium Term Plan (MTP) and the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) reflected in the Council Report.

Output: Clear, precise and consensual recommendations on strategy, priorities, programmes and budget for the Organization made by the Committee are favourably considered by Council and provide a solid basis for its guidance and decisions.

Activities:

- Review the current situation in its areas of mandate, including issues of topical significance to Regional Groups and the international community;
- Address issues of high priority and emerging issues identified by the Regional Conferences and other FAO's bodies;
- Review decisions and recommendations from other FAO governing and statutory bodies;
- Review implementation of the PWB in areas falling within the Committee's competence and advise on the implementation of FAO's Strategic Framework 2022-31;
- Formulate clear consensual, timely and well-developed recommendations on the strategies, priorities, programmes, and budget in areas falling within the committee's competence;
- Organize side events of relevance to priority or topical issues on the agenda; and
- Specific issues of topical significance are addressed during the scheduled sessions.

¹² Rule XXXII 6 a) and b) of the Basic Texts.

Working methods:

- Chairperson continuously and effectively liaises with the Secretariat;
- intersessional work by the Bureau, supported by the Secretariat to identify topics of significance for the agenda;
- Chairperson and the Bureau, through consultations, to facilitate Member Nations participation during intersessions; and
- collaboration with other relevant FAO Governing (in particular Council, and other Technical Committees) and Statutory Bodies.

B. Advice on global and regulatory matters

Result: Based on the Committee's recommendations, the FAO, through its Conference, and taking into consideration regional priorities, gives clear, relevant and useful advice on major policy and regulatory issues confronting the globe, regions, and individual Member Nations, within the areas of competence.

Indicators and targets:

- Member Nations obtain value from the deliberations of COAG, using the advice and recommendations to guide domestic and regional actions and policies as reported by FAO;
- clear and specific recommendations made in a timely manner by COAG to the Conference regarding global policy and regulatory matters in its areas of mandate; and
- Committee's recommendations made on global policy and regulatory matters are reflected in the Conference Report.

Output: Clear, precise and consensual recommendations for Conference on policy and regulatory frameworks or instruments.

Activities:

- Report to the Conference on global policy and regulatory issues arising out of its deliberations;
- Review the status of relevant international instruments, including codes of conduct in areas of competence for the Committee;
- Consider possible solutions with a view to support concerted action by Members themselves or collectively through FAO and other relevant bodies on issues or concerns in areas of competence for the Committee;
- Identify and review new trends and emerging issues in the areas of competence; and
- Develop recommendations and guidance for the consideration of the Conference.

Working methods:

- close collaboration with relevant FAO divisions/units through the Chairperson and the Bureau; and
- Chairperson and the Bureau, through consultations, to facilitate Member Nations participation during intersessions.

III. Work planning

Result: COAG works effectively and efficiently, in an action-oriented, transparent and inclusive way.

Indicators and targets:

- COAG agendas are focused and responsive to emerging needs;
- COAG agendas are coordinated with other Technical Committees as appropriate;
- COAG reports are concise and contain specific, action-oriented recommendations to both Council and Conference;
- COAG documents are made available in all FAO languages six weeks before the Session commences;

- continuity in terms of intersessional work; and
- level of participation of COAG Members in the planning and intersessional work of the Committee.

Outputs:

- MYPOW 2022–2025 for COAG adopted in 2022; and
- Progress report on COAG’s MYPOW approved in 2022.

Activities:

- Consider ways to improve the conduct of sessions, including more efficient use of the time available;
- Focus side events on key topical issues;
- Facilitate coordination with other Technical Committees as well as Regional Conferences;
- Work out clear modalities for the election of members and operation of the Bureau with a view to enhancing continuity between sessions;
- Pay continued attention to effective arrangements for the formulation of agendas and drafting of the final report;
- Enhance consultative participation of COAG members in planning and intersessional work of the Committee including by holding informal meetings with the wide Membership; and
- Regular review of methods of work, including through indicators and targets specified in the MYPOW.

IV. Working methods

The work of the Committee is based on the review of global trends in sectoral policies and regulations within the areas of competence. It collaborates with statutory and other bodies under FAO auspices, liaises with the Programme Committee on strategy and priority matters, and with the Finance Committee on financial and budgetary matters. It collaborates with other relevant FAO Governing Bodies, liaises with other international organizations active in the areas of agriculture, food and nutrition. It undertakes regular intersessional activities facilitated by the Chairperson and the Bureau and with proactive support from the Secretariat. It encourages and facilitates participation of farmers’, private sector’s and civil society’s organizations as observers. It enhances the participation of COAG Members in the planning and intersessional work of the Committee, through consultations, in order to facilitate Member Nations participation during intersessions.

V. Outstanding and strategic issues to be tracked over time by COAG future sessions

The critical analysis of the agendas of the past COAG sessions as well as the analysis of the global trends, the emerging issues in the global agricultural development agenda and need to accelerate progress and scale up efforts in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG 1 and 2, showed that a number of global concerns will remain important as potential issues for future discussions by the Committee as they relate to FAO's work. In this context, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on food security and nutrition, and agrifood systems, and related responses, which are unprecedented in scale and complexity, will need to be considered, as well as other threats. This includes the impacts of conflicts, such as the war in Ukraine, shocks and crises on food, agriculture production and on agrifood systems.

The establishment of the COAG Livestock Sub-Committee has strengthened work and coordination on livestock issues thereby contributing to COAG Sessions and deliberations. Its First Session in March 2022 constituted a major milestone, and it will continue to advise COAG on substantive livestock-related matters.

The future COAG agenda will be further informed by relevant regional developments and trends discussed in the Regional Conferences, and by the priorities under the FAO Strategic Framework

2022-31, the MTP and PWB, and its Programme Priority Areas, related to COAG's mandate. In the medium term, it is expected that COAG will continue to consider global, sectoral and regional trends in agricultural development and the transformation towards sustainable agrifood systems, as well as the main challenges expected to be faced by countries and development actors across agrifood sectors.

It is anticipated that COAG will continue to play a leading role in advising on key issues, such as the need to achieve food security and nutrition for all in a growing population, sustainable agriculture and agrifood systems, environmental degradation, the effects of climate change, loss of biodiversity, science, technology and innovations, the increased interdependency of agrifood systems, and rapid urbanization with implications for rural areas, women and youth empowerment, smallholder farmers, family farmers, sustainable livestock development, and addressing transboundary pests and diseases would remain in the centre of COAG discussions and deliberations, and should be tracked over time.