



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

NERC/16/REP

REPORT

Rome
Italy
9-13 May
2016

Thirty-third Session of the FAO Regional Conference for the Near East

FAO Member Nations in the Near East Region

Afghanistan	Kuwait	Saudi Arabia
Algeria	Kyrgyzstan	Somalia
Azerbaijan	Lebanon	Sudan
Bahrain	Libya	Syrian Arab Republic
Cyprus	Malta	Tajikistan
Djibouti	Mauritania	Tunisia
Egypt	Morocco	Turkey
Iran, Islamic Republic of	Oman	Turkmenistan
Iraq	Pakistan	United Arab Emirates
Jordan	Qatar	Yemen

Date and place of the Sessions of the FAO Regional Conferences for the Near East

First	- Cairo, Egypt, 2-14 February 1948
Second	- Bloudane, Syria, 28 August – 6 September 1951
Third	- Cairo, Egypt, 1-9 September 1953
Fourth	- Damascus, Syria*, 10-20 December 1958
Fifth	- Tehran, Iran (Islamic Republic of), 21 September – 1 October 1960
Sixth	- Tel Amara, Lebanon, 30 July – 8 August 1962
Seventh	- Cairo, Egypt**, 19-31 October 1964
Eighth	- Khartoum, Sudan, 24 January – 2 February 1967
Ninth	- Baghdad, Iraq, 21 September – 1 October 1968
Tenth	- Islamabad, Pakistan, 12-22 September 1970
Eleventh	- Kuwait, Kuwait, 9-19 September 1972
Twelfth	- Amman, Jordan, 31 August – 9 September 1974
Thirteenth	- Tunis, Tunisia, 4-11 October 1976
Fourteenth	- Damascus, Syria, 9-16 September 1978
Fifteenth	- Rome, Italy, 21-25 April 1981
Sixteenth	- Nicosia, Cyprus, 25-29 October 1982
Seventeenth	- Aden, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, 11-15 March 1984
Eighteenth	- Istanbul, Turkey, 17-21 March 1986
Nineteenth	- Muscat, Oman, 13-17 March 1988
Twentieth	- Tunis, Tunisia, 12-16 March 1990
Twenty-first	- Tehran, Iran (Islamic Republic of), 17-21 May 1992
Twenty-second	- Amman, Jordan, 3-6 July 1994
Twenty-third	- Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco, 26-29 March 1996
Twenty-fourth	- Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic, 21-25 March 1998
Twenty-fifth	- Beirut, Lebanon, 20-24 March 2000
Twenty-sixth	- Tehran, Iran (Islamic Republic of), 9-13 March 2002
Twenty-seventh	- Doha, State of Qatar, 13-17 March 2004
Twenty-eighth	- Sana'a, Republic of Yemen, 12-16 March 2006
Twenty-ninth	- Cairo, the Arab Republic of Egypt, 1-5 March 2008
Thirtieth	- Khartoum, the Republic of the Sudan, 4-8 December 2010
Thirty-first	- Rome, Italy, 14-18 May 2012
Thirty-second	- Rome, Italy, 24-28 February 2014
Thirty-third	- Rome, Italy, 9-13 May 2016

*Known as the United Arab Republic from 01/03/1958

**Known as the United Arab Republic until 02/09/1971

REPORT

Rome
Italy
9-13 May
2016

Thirty-third Session of the FAO Regional Conference for the Near East

**Food and Agriculture Organization of the
United Nations**

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this information product do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) concerning the legal or development status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The mention of specific companies or products of manufacturers, whether or not these have been patented, does not imply that these have been endorsed or recommended by FAO in preference to others of a similar nature that are not mentioned.

The views expressed in this information product are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of FAO.

© FAO, 2016

FAO encourages the use, reproduction and dissemination of material in this information product. Except where otherwise indicated, material may be copied, downloaded and printed for private study, research and teaching purposes, or for use in non-commercial products or services, provided that appropriate acknowledgement of FAO as the source and copyright holder is given and that FAO's endorsement of users' views, products or services is not implied in any way.

All requests for translation and adaptation rights, and for resale and other commercial use rights should be made via www.fao.org/contact-us/licence-request or addressed to copyright@fao.org.

FAO information products are available on the FAO website (www.fao.org/publications) and can be purchased through publications-sales@fao.org.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Pages
SUMMARY OF MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS		i-iv
		Paragraphs
I.	Introductory Items	
	Organization of the Conference	1-2
	Inaugural Ceremonies	3-5
	Election of Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Rapporteur	6-8
	Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable	9
	Statement by the Director-General of FAO	10
	Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council	11
	Statement by the Chairperson of the 32 nd Session of the Regional Conference for Near East	12
	Statement by the Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security.	13
	Statement by the Spokesperson of the Civil Society Organizations	14
	Priority of Country and Regional Needs	15
II.	Regional and Global Policy and Regulatory Issues	
	A. Livestock Contribution to Food Security in the Near East and North Africa Region	16-18
	B. Fisheries and Aquaculture: Application of FAO's Blue Growth Initiative	20-22
	C. Small-scale Farmers and Women Empowerment in the Near East and North Africa Region	23-24
	D. Updates on Committee on World Food Security	25-26
III.	Programme and Budget Matters	
	A. Results and Priorities for FAO in the Near East and North Africa Region	27-28
	B. Decentralized Offices Network	29-30
IV.	Other Matters	
	A. Multi-year Programme of Work for the Regional Conference for the Near East	31
	B. Summary of the Recommendations of FAO Regional Commissions and Major Meetings in the Near East	32-33
	C. Summary of the Progress made in the Implementation of the Recommendations of the 32 nd Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East	34-35
	D. Ministerial Declaration	36-37
	Concluding Items	
	Date and place of the 34 th Regional Conference for the Near East	38
	Adoption of the Report	39-40
	Closure of the Regional Conference	41
	Appendices	Pages
	Appendix A – Agenda	11
	Appendix B – List of documents	12
	Appendix C – Ministerial Declaration on Food Security, Stability and Peace	14
	Appendix D – Ministerial Declaration Food Security and the Agricultural Sectors in a Changing Climate	15-16

SUMMARY OF MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

Matters for the Attention of the Council

The Council is invited to review and endorse the following programme and budgetary issues.

A. Results and Priorities for FAO in the Near East and North Africa Region

The Regional Conference

- welcomed the actions undertaken and results achieved during 2014-15 to address regional priorities (paragraph 28.a).
- supported the continuation of the Regional Initiatives for the 2016-17 biennium: (i) Regional water scarcity initiative; (ii) Small-scale agriculture for inclusive development; (iii) Building resilience for enhanced food security and nutrition; as well as attention to food safety, agricultural trade and market information; and looked forward to annual reporting by FAO on results (paragraph 28.b).
- noted the request of Lebanon and Egypt to be focus countries for the Regional Initiatives in the Near East (paragraph 28.c).
- highlighted the importance of sound statistics and information for decision-making, early warning and measuring the effectiveness of interventions by countries and FAO (paragraph 28.d).
- emphasized the necessity of country support and ownership of FAO work through Regional Initiatives to support national policies and priorities (paragraph 28.e).
- urged FAO and member countries to strengthen the role of non-governmental and civil society organisations at all levels for achieving better progress in the implementation of the Regional Initiatives and programmes (paragraph 28.f).
- urged FAO to work with member countries in collaboration and partnership with sub-regional, regional and international institutions, particularly for work in countries affected by regional crises (paragraph 28.g).
- requested FAO to strengthen the institutional capacity of countries to respond to crises (paragraph 28.g).
- stressed the importance of resource mobilization and requested FAO and Member countries to work together to mobilize resources from development partners, including international financial institutions and regional development banks in order to ensure the implementation of regional initiatives and country programmes (paragraph 28.h).
- urged countries to contribute to the Regional Trust Fund agreed in previous Regional Conferences⁶ for addressing the emerging transboundary issues affecting countries under crises and spreading to other continents (paragraph 28.i).
- urged FAO to support Somalia in resource mobilization and building national capacity and resilience for food security and nutrition in line with its new National Strategy (2016-2019) (paragraph 28.j).
- underlined the need for continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization and importance of forward-looking strategic planning to address the trends and challenges in the region (paragraph 28.k).
- requested the full alignment between the FAO Strategic Objectives and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out in the 2030 Agenda (paragraph 28.l).
- agreed that recent important global developments including the SDGs, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the ICN2 Framework for Action and the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025) will guide national and regional action and FAO's work in food and agriculture in the future (paragraph 28.m).
- noted the developments in some countries in the region concerning (i) conflict and upheaval

⁶ NERC/12/REP: para. 68; NERC/14/REP: para. 31 k

and related social and economic impacts, in particular forced displacement and migration; (ii) unsatisfactory economic growth; (iii) youth unemployment; (iv) rising levels of import dependence and exposure to market shocks; (v) high levels of malnutrition in different forms; and (vi) transboundary animal and plant pests and diseases and food safety, and looked forward to further analytical work by FAO as a basis for guiding future work in the region (paragraph 28.n).

B. Decentralized Offices Network

The Regional Conference

- supported the proposed principle and general criteria for reviewing FAO coverage and recognized the need to update the coverage of FAO offices in the region (paragraph 30.a).
- noted the progress made in strengthening decentralized offices network and efforts in decentralization, through flexible arrangements, responding better to region and country needs (paragraph 30.b).
- noted the integration of the Multidisciplinary Team in the Regional Office for Near East and North Africa (RNE) in Cairo and requested that its capacities be adequate to the demands and challenges of the region (paragraph 30.c).
- requested FAO to undertake an independent assessment of its technical capacity, as per the recommendation of the 153rd session of FAO Council in December 2015, particularly in the decentralized offices (paragraph 30.d).
- endorsed the establishment of a Sub-regional Office for Mashreq countries in Lebanon and appreciated the offer and readiness of Lebanon (logistically, administratively and financially) to host this office in line with related previous decisions (paragraph 30.e).

Matters for the Attention of the Conference

The Conference is invited to review and endorse the following global and regional policy and regulatory matters.

A. Livestock Contribution to Food Security in the Near East and North Africa Region

The Regional Conference:

- encouraged countries to invest in sustainable development of the livestock sector to increase local production with a special focus on sheep fertility and lamb growth, and sustainable feed production (paragraph 17.e).
- urged countries to reinforce, with the support of FAO and partners, the governance of the veterinary services to effectively prevent, control and eradicate animal diseases at national, regional and global levels (paragraph 17.f).
- urged countries to implement the Global Plan of Action for animal genetic resources (paragraph 17.g).
- requested countries to enhance policies in support of emergency and rehabilitation activities in the livestock sector (paragraph 17.i).
- urged countries, with the support of FAO, to enhance capacities and raise awareness on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in line with Conference resolution 4/2015 (paragraph 17.j).
- requested countries to promote natural resource management systems built on participation of smallholders, pastoralists and communities at large (paragraph 17.k).
- urged FAO in collaboration with OIE, WHO and other international organizations to strengthen support to Members by assisting in:
 - a. developing collaborative strategies and plans to manage transboundary animal disease risks, especially in times of crisis, improving disease reporting, monitoring of livestock movements, strengthening quarantine systems, and cross-border research and dialogue (paragraph 18.a).
 - b. developing sustainable animal source food systems, particularly those that are focused on the rural poor, and their better integration into national value chains (paragraph 18.b).
 - c. the nexus between emergency and rehabilitation in the livestock sector, especially in Member Nations affected by conflicts and protracted crises, through developing national and regional projects responding to threats of transboundary animal diseases and zoonoses as well as protecting and rehabilitating livestock sector (paragraph 18.c).
 - d. sustainable development of livestock sector, including improved meat, leather and wool production, processing and adding value to adapted local breeds through capacity building and facilitating experience sharing among countries (paragraph 18.d).
 - e. implementation of the Animal Production and Health Commission for NENA as an Article VI body (paragraph 18.e).
- welcomed the offer from Jordan to establish and host an Emergency Center for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD) (paragraph 18.e).
- recommended refraining from unilateral measures not in accordance with international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, and which endanger food security and nutrition, as stated in the 1996 Rome Declaration and speed up addressing the ongoing conditions in some countries of the region (paragraph 19).

B. Fisheries and Aquaculture: Application of FAO's Blue Growth Initiative

The Regional Conference:

- endorsed the application of the FAO Blue Growth Initiative in the region and its components, including ecosystem services, economic growth, environmental benefits and social development, within the framework of the three Regional Initiatives (paragraph 21.c).

- noted the offer of Kuwait to be a focus country for the Blue Growth Initiative and FAO technical assistance on fisheries and aquaculture sector, and also to promote value addition along the fish supply chain in the region (paragraph 21.d).
- urged countries to safeguard the interests of small-scale and traditional fishing communities in the face of multinational illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU) (paragraph 21.f).
- called on member countries to sign the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IUU) Agreement (paragraph 21.g).
- requested FAO to:
 - a. support Member countries through organising knowledge and experience sharing events, and building capacity to develop sustainable and viable fishery and aquaculture industry in the region (paragraph 22.a).
 - b. assist countries to assess fishery resources at both country and regional level, information sharing, compilation and dissemination by regional Fish Monitoring Centre, to be established as data and information repository (paragraph 22.b).
 - c. develop guidelines on carrying out environmental impact assessments for aquaculture projects (paragraph 22.c).
 - d. promote the technical knowledge and capacities in the areas of fisheries and aquaculture, including through South South Cooperation (paragraph 22.d).
 - e. support countries in combating fish related diseases in the region (paragraph 22.e).

C. Small-scale Farmers and Women Empowerment in the Near East and North Africa Region

The Regional Conference:

- urged countries, with the support of FAO, to expand the use of high-yielding and drought-tolerant varieties of crops, pasture and rangeland species (paragraph 24.e).
- encouraged Member Nations to strengthen support to family farmers, invest in programmes to reduce rural poverty and improve opportunities for market access and livelihoods (paragraph 24.f).
- requested FAO to promote South-South cooperation to support family farmers (paragraph 24.g).
- urged FAO to enhance its cooperation with UNIDO and other international organizations for the development and introduction of appropriate agro-machineries and technologies to enhance the productivity in the agriculture sector and along the supply chain (paragraph 24.h).
- requested FAO to provide technical assistance for safe use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers through the use of good agricultural practices guided by the Codex Alimentarius Texts and Standards (paragraph 24.i).

D. Updates on CFS

The Regional Conference:

- encouraged all stakeholders to disseminate, promote, make use of the “Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (CFS-RAI)”, “Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises (CFS-FFA)” and Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGT) (paragraph 26.b).
- encouraged all stakeholders to implement the recommendations resulting from the policy roundtables on “Food Losses and Waste in the Context of Sustainable Food Systems”, “Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture for Food Security and Nutrition” and “Water for Food Security and Nutrition” (paragraph 26.c).
- encouraged member countries to engage actively in the ongoing CFS activities under the CFS Multi-Year Programme of Work for 2016-17, especially in areas of increasing importance to the region, such as the SDGs and Nutrition (paragraph 26.d).

I. Introductory Items

Organization of the Conference

1. The Thirty-third Session of FAO Regional Conference for the Near East (NERC-33) was held in Rome, Italy, from 9 to 13 May 2016. The Regional Conference was organized in two parts: a Senior Officers' Meeting from 9 to 11 May and a Ministerial-level Meeting from 12 to 13 May.
2. The Regional Conference was attended by 153 participants. This included delegates from 25 out of the 30 member nations of the region, 3 observer nations, and 2 non-observer member nations as well as representatives from 3 international non-governmental organizations, 5 intergovernmental organizations, 2 private sector organizations, 3 civil society organizations, and 5 organizations of the United Nations.

Inaugural Ceremonies

3. The Senior Officers' Meeting was opened with a statement by Mr Louis Lahoud, Director-General of the Ministry of Agriculture, Lebanon, and Mr Abdessalam OuldAhmed, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative, FAO Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa.
4. Mr Lahoud welcomed the participants and officially opened the meeting. Mr OuldAhmed welcomed the participants and highlighted the importance of this meeting in light of the emerging threats and challenges facing the region and its resilience, and the opportunities presented by the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He appreciated the success achieved by the 15 countries in the region in achieving MDG 1 of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. H.E (Mr) Amr Helmy, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt and Chair of the Near East Group, highlighted that the Regional Conference comes shortly after the adoption of the SDGs where many of the new goals fall under the mandate of FAO, and pointed out to the preparation for the Conference of the Parties (COP22) in Marrakesh (Kingdom of Morocco) later this year where the interlinkage between climate change and agriculture will be one of the main areas of focus of the Conference.
5. The Inaugural Ceremony of the Ministerial Meeting was held on 12 May and was opened by His Excellency (Mr) Akram Chehayeb, Minister for Agriculture of Lebanon, Mr José Graziano da Silva, Director-General of FAO, H.E. (Mr) Wilfred J. Ngirwa, Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council, and H.E. (Ms) Amira Gornass, Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

Election of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur

6. The Chairperson of the 33rd Session of the FAO Regional Conference thanked the Organization for the excellent preparation of this Session.
7. The Regional Conference elected Mr. Khaled El-Taweel (Egypt) as Rapporteur.
8. The Conference elected H.E. (Mr) Akram Chehayeb, Minister for Agriculture of Lebanon as Chair and Egypt as Vice Chair of the 34th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for the Near East.

Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

9. The Conference adopted the Agenda and a revised Timetable (Appendix A). Documents submitted to the Regional Conference are listed in Appendix B.

Statement by the Director-General

10. Mr José Graziano da Silva, Director-General of FAO, delivered his statement to the Regional Conference, highlighting the challenges hindering food security and agricultural development in the region, including conflicts, displacement, climate change and water scarcity. In his address, the Director-General outlined the key achievements made by FAO over the last two years while stressing the need for further efforts. He highlighted the potential for collaborative action in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Director-General stressed that peace and food security are interlinked as well as sustainable development. Both sustainable development and peace objectives can be achieved if food is available to everyone. He made an appeal to wealthy countries of the region to support “Food for Peace Initiative” by financing such efforts in countries affected by crisis. He emphasized FAO’s efforts to support member countries through Country Programming Frameworks aligned to the three Regional Initiatives on water scarcity, small scale agriculture for inclusive development, and in building resilience for enhanced food security and nutrition while improving value chains, addressing climate change, natural disasters, and emerging animal health challenges.

Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council

11. H.E. (Mr) Wilfred J. Ngirwa, Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council, addressed the Conference, emphasizing the unique role of the Regional Conference in defining FAO policies and priorities, and the opportunity for enhancing the quality and effectiveness of FAO’s decentralized offices within the framework of the Strategic Objectives of the Organization and the SDGs.

Statement by the Chairperson of the 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for Near East

12. H.E. (Mr) Akram Chehayeb, Minister for Agriculture of Lebanon, delivered the statement of the Chairperson of the 33rd Session of the FAO Regional Conference for the Near East. In doing so, he highlighted the recommendations of the 32nd Session, and briefed the Delegates on activities undertaken and achievements by the Regional Office as a follow up to these recommendations.

Statement by the Chairperson of the CFS on the Outcomes of the 42nd Session of the Committee on World Food Security

13. H.E. (Ms) Amira Gornass, Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), reported on the accomplishments of the CFS over the past two years and the relevance of its work to the FAO Regional Conference, particularly noting the endorsement of the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems and the Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises, as well as policy recommendations on food losses and waste, and fisheries.

Statement by the Spokesperson of the Civil Society Organizations

14. A statement summarizing the conclusions and views of the civil society consultation was provided to the Regional Conference, emphasizing the need to respect the rights and interests of small family farmers, landless farmers, rural women, fishers, agricultural workers, pastoralists and herders, artisans, consumers and youth in all aspects of agricultural development, highlighting the implementation of the recommendations of the Civil Society Organization for Near East and North Africa, convened in Beirut (Lebanon) in April 2016.

Prioritization of Country and Regional Needs

15. Following the Inaugural Ceremony of the Ministerial Meeting, brief statements were made by the Ministers from the following Members: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Mauritania, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. The floor was then given to the Heads of Delegation of the following Members: Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Somalia and the United Arab Emirates. Palestine and WHO made statements as Observers.

II. Regional and Global Policy and Regulatory Issues

A. Livestock Contribution to Food Security in the Near East and North Africa

16. The Conference reviewed the challenges facing the livestock sector and highlighted the need for enhancing investments in livestock systems to improve the level of food security in the region and enhance the sustainable management of natural resources across the region¹.

17. The Conference:

- a) noted the multiple roles played by livestock and its contribution to rural livelihoods, agricultural output and economies of countries of the region;
- b) recognized the changing disease landscape, the threats of transboundary animal diseases and the challenges facing the animal health systems in the region;
- c) noted that these challenges are preventing the livestock sector from taking advantage of the evolving demands for animal source foods and market opportunities in livestock trade;
- d) welcomed the efforts and actions undertaken by countries, FAO and partners in developing strategies and programmes for the control of animal diseases and zoonoses;
- e) encouraged countries to invest in sustainable development of the livestock sector to increase local production with a special focus on sheep fertility and lamb growth, and sustainable feed production;
- f) urged countries to reinforce, with the support of FAO and partners, the governance of the veterinary services to effectively prevent, control and eradicate animal diseases at national, regional and global levels;
- g) urged countries to implement the Global Plan of Action for animal genetic resources, and encouraged countries to expand the use of high yielding, drought- and salt-tolerant forage, pasture and rangeland varieties;
- h) encouraged countries to collaborate on intra- and inter-regional livestock trade and to benefit from opportunities of technology transfer and best practices;
- i) requested countries to enhance policies in support of emergency and rehabilitation activities in the livestock sector;
- j) urged countries, with the support of FAO, to enhance capacities and raise awareness on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in line with Conference resolution 4/2015; and
- k) requested countries to promote natural resource management systems built on participation of smallholders, pastoralists and communities at large

18. The Conference urged FAO in collaboration with OIE, WHO and other international organizations to strengthen support to Members by assisting in:

- a) developing collaborative strategies and plans to manage transboundary animal disease risks, especially in times of crisis, improving disease reporting, monitoring of livestock movements, strengthening quarantine systems, and cross-border research and dialogue;

¹ NERC/16/4 Rev 2

- b) developing sustainable animal source food systems, particularly those that are focused on the rural poor, and their better integration into national value chains;
 - c) the nexus between emergency and rehabilitation in the livestock sector, especially in Member Nations affected by conflicts and protracted crises, through developing national and regional projects responding to threats of transboundary animal diseases and zoonoses, as well as protecting and rehabilitating livestock sector;
 - d) sustainable development of livestock sector, including improved meat, leather and wool production, processing and adding value to adapted local breeds through capacity building and facilitating experience sharing among countries;
 - e) implementation of the Animal Production and Health Commission for NENA as an Article VI body; and welcomed the offer from Jordan to establish and host an Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD);
19. The Conference recommended refraining from unilateral measures not in accordance with international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, and which endanger food security and nutrition, as stated in the 1996 Rome Declaration and speed up addressing the ongoing conditions in some countries of the region.

B. Fisheries and Aquaculture: application of FAO's Blue Growth Initiative

20. The Conference reviewed the document on Fisheries and Aquaculture: application of FAO's Blue Growth Initiative².
21. The Conference:
- a) noted the importance of fisheries, aquaculture and fishing-related activities and the sustainable benefits derived from the oceans, seas, coastal areas and inland water bodies, with a focus on marine fisheries to alleviate the pressure on other food production systems and with minimal use of fresh water resources;
 - b) welcomed the efforts and actions undertaken by countries, FAO and partners on fisheries and aquaculture as the foundation for blue growth opportunities;
 - c) endorsed the application of the FAO Blue Growth Initiative in the region and its components, including ecosystem services, economic growth, environmental benefits and social development, within the framework of the three Regional Initiatives;
 - d) noted the offer of Kuwait to be a focus country for the Blue Growth Initiative and FAO technical assistance on fisheries and aquaculture sector and also to promote value addition along the fish supply chain in the region;
 - e) requested countries to accelerate efforts to address the effects of climate change and pollution on the marine ecosystems of the region;
 - f) urged countries to safeguard the interests of small-scale and traditional fishing communities in the face of multinational illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU); and
 - g) called on member countries to sign the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing.

² NERC/16/5

22. The Conference requested FAO to:

- a) support member countries through organising knowledge and experience sharing events, and building capacity to develop sustainable and viable fishery and aquaculture industry in the region;
- b) assist countries to assess fishery resources at both country and regional level, information sharing, compilation and dissemination by regional Fish Monitoring Centre, to be established as data and information repository;
- c) develop guidelines on carrying out environmental impact assessments for aquaculture projects;
- d) promote the technical knowledge and capacities in the areas of fisheries and aquaculture, including through South-South Cooperation; and
- e) support countries in combating fish related diseases in the region.

C. Small-scale Farmers and Women Empowerment in the Near East and North Africa Region

23. The Conference considered the document on Small-scale Farmers and Women Empowerment in the Near East and North Africa Region and agreed to change “Small-scale farmers” to “Small Family Farming”.³

24. The Conference:

- a) recognized the interlinkage between achieving the SDGs and supporting small-scale agriculture and family farming in the region;
- b) welcomed the efforts and actions undertaken by countries, FAO and partners in developing strategies and programmes for sustainable small-scale agriculture in the region and encouraged countries to develop comprehensive national action plans for its implementation based on relevant studies conducted by FAO in the region;
- c) noted that small family farmers are prone to droughts, floods and diseases, and may have limited access to improved agricultural inputs;
- d) noted the need for agricultural insurance to support small family farmers;
- e) urged countries, with the support of FAO, to expand the use of high-yielding and drought-tolerant varieties of crops, pasture and rangeland species;
- f) encouraged Member Nations to strengthen support to family farmers, invest in programmes to reduce rural poverty and improve opportunities for market access and livelihoods;
- g) requested FAO to promote South-South cooperation to support family farmers;
- h) urged FAO to enhance its cooperation with UNIDO and other international organizations for the development and introduction of appropriate agro-machineries and technologies to enhance the productivity in the agriculture sector and along the supply chain; and

³ NERC/16/6

- i) requested FAO to provide technical assistance for safe use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers through the use of good agricultural practices guided by the Codex Alimentarius Texts and Standards.

D. Updates on Committee on World Food Security

25. The Conference reviewed recent developments and deliberations of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and considered appropriate follow-up actions in the Near East Region⁹
26. The Conference:
 - a) recognized the importance of the CFS as the most inclusive international and intergovernmental platform for all stakeholders to work together in a coordinated way to ensure food security and nutrition for all;
 - b) encouraged all stakeholders to disseminate, promote, make use of the “Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (CFS-RAI)”, “Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises (CFS-FFA)” and Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGT);
 - c) encouraged all stakeholders to implement the recommendations resulting from the policy roundtables on “Food Losses and Waste in the Context of Sustainable Food Systems”, “Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture for Food Security and Nutrition” and “Water for Food Security and Nutrition”; and
 - d) encouraged member countries to engage actively in the ongoing CFS activities under the CFS Multi-Year Programme of Work for 2016-17, especially in areas of increasing importance to the region, such as the SDGs and Nutrition

⁹ NERC/16/8/Rev.1

III. Programme and Budget Matters

A. Results and Priorities for FAO in the Near East and North Africa Region

27. The Conference considered the report on results and priorities for FAO work in the Near East and North Africa Region, covering achievements in 2014-15 and proposals for 2016-17 and beyond⁵, and expressed appreciation for the work of the FAO offices in the region.
28. The Conference:
- a) welcomed the actions undertaken and results achieved during 2014-15 to address regional priorities, particularly through the three Regional Initiatives endorsed by the 32nd Session of the Regional Conference, which had helped to focus FAO's work while allowing flexibility to respond to country priorities and emerging needs;
 - b) supported the continuation of the Regional Initiatives for the 2016-17 biennium: (i) Regional water scarcity initiative; (ii) Small-scale agriculture for inclusive development; (iii) Building resilience for enhanced food security and nutrition; as well as attention to food safety, agricultural trade and market information; and looked forward to annual reporting by FAO on results;
 - c) noted the request of Lebanon and Egypt to be focus countries for the Regional Initiatives in the Near East;
 - d) highlighted the importance of sound statistics and information for decision-making, early warning and measuring the effectiveness of interventions by countries and FAO;
 - e) emphasized the necessity of country support and ownership of FAO work through Regional Initiatives to support national policies and priorities;
 - f) urged FAO and member countries to strengthen the role of non-governmental and civil society organisations at all levels for achieving better progress in the implementation of the Regional Initiatives and programmes geared towards mitigating food insecurity and hunger in the region;
 - g) urged FAO to work with member countries in collaboration and partnership with sub-regional, regional and international institutions, particularly for work in countries affected by regional crises, and requested FAO to strengthen the institutional capacity of countries to respond to crises;
 - h) stressed the importance of resource mobilization and requested FAO and member countries to work together to mobilize resources from development partners, including international financial institutions and regional development banks in order to ensure the implementation of regional initiatives and country programmes;
 - i) urged countries to contribute to the Regional Trust Fund agreed in previous Regional Conferences⁶ for addressing the emerging transboundary issues affecting countries under crises and spreading to other continents;
 - j) recognized the dire situation of Somalia, and urged FAO to support Somalia in resource mobilization and building national capacity and resilience for food security and nutrition in line with its new National Strategy (2016-2019);

⁵ NERC/16/2

⁶ NERC/12/REP: para. 68; NERC/14/REP: para. 31 k

- k) underlined the need for continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization and importance of forward-looking strategic planning to address the trends and challenges in the region;
- l) requested the full alignment between the FAO Strategic Objectives and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out in the 2030 Agenda;
- m) agreed that recent important global developments including the SDGs, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the ICN2 Framework for Action and the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025) will guide national and regional action and FAO's work in food and agriculture in the future; and
- n) noted the developments in some countries in the region concerning (i) conflict and upheaval and related social and economic impacts, in particular forced displacement and migration; (ii) unsatisfactory economic growth; (iii) youth unemployment; (iv) rising levels of import dependence and exposure to market shocks; (v) high levels of malnutrition in different forms; and (vi) transboundary animal and plant pests and diseases and food safety, and looked forward to further analytical work by FAO as a basis for guiding future work in the region.

B. Decentralized Offices Network

29. The Conference considered the document on Decentralized Offices Network.⁷

30. The Conference:

- a) supported the proposed principle and general criteria for reviewing FAO coverage and recognized the need to update the coverage of FAO offices in the region;
- b) noted the progress made in strengthening decentralized offices network and efforts in decentralization, through flexible arrangements, responding better to region and country needs;
- c) noted the integration of the Multidisciplinary Team in the Regional Office for Near East and North Africa (RNE) in Cairo and requested that its capacities be adequate to the demands and challenges of the region;
- d) requested FAO to undertake an independent assessment of its technical capacity, as per the recommendation of the 153rd session of FAO Council in December 2015, particularly in the decentralized offices; and
- e) endorsed the establishment of a Sub-regional Office for Mashreq countries in Lebanon and appreciated the offer and readiness of Lebanon (logistically, administratively and financially) to host this office in line with related previous decisions.

⁷ NERC/16/3/Rev.1

IV. Other Matters

A. Multi-year Programme of Work for the Regional Conference for the Near East

31. The Regional Conference reviewed the previous document (NERC/16/7 Rev.1) of Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW), and approved the revised MYPOW 2016-19 for the FAO Regional Conference for the Near East.

B. Summary of the Recommendations of FAO Regional Commissions and Major Meetings in the Near East

32. The Conference reviewed the recommendations of FAO Regional Commissions and Major Meetings in the Near East.⁴

33. The Conference:

- a) noted the major recommendations of the 22nd Session of the Near East Forestry and Range Commission (NEFRC) and requested FAO to develop a regional forestry and rangeland strategy for NENA;
- b) noted the recommendations of the Eighth Session of the Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI), the Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Central Region (CRC), and the Western Region (CLCPRO) and requested member countries and FAO to implement the recommendations as appropriate;
- c) noted the outcomes and recommendations of major meetings held on water and drought, food security and nutrition, small-scale agriculture, and livestock by FAO and countries in collaboration with partners, and requested member countries to implement these recommendations as appropriate; and
- d) urged FAO to periodically assess the impacts of these commissions and meetings on member countries as well as the extent to which the South-South Cooperation is used for mobilizing technical expertise.

C. Summary of the Progress made in the Implementation of the Recommendations of the 32nd Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East

34. The Conference considered the document on Summary of the Progress made in the Implementation of the Recommendations of the 32nd Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East.⁸

35. The Conference:

- a) requested FAO to improve the geographical distribution of professional staff in FAO and consider recruiting more junior national staff in its decentralized offices in the region;

⁴ NERC/16/INF/6

⁸ NERC/16/INF/5

- b) encouraged countries to utilize the expertise available at national universities and research centres to address the developmental research problems in their countries; and
- c) encouraged countries to link agricultural policies in support to sustainable food consumption and production systems that are conducive to improved nutrition, health and protection of the environment and responsive to national needs.

D. Ministerial Declarations

36. The Conference adopted a Ministerial Declaration on “Food Security, Stability and Peace”, the text of which is in Appendix C.
37. The Conference adopted the proposal of the Kingdom of Morocco for a Ministerial Declaration on “Food Security and the Agricultural Sectors in a changing Climate”, the text of which is in Appendix D.

E. Date and Place of the 34th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for the Near East

38. The Conference accepted the gracious offer of the Government of Lebanon to host the 34th session of the FAO Regional Conference for the Near East, in 2018.

F. Concluding Items

Adoption of the Report

39. The Conference unanimously adopted the report as presented by the Rapporteur.

Closure of the Conference

40. On behalf of the Government of Lebanon, His Excellency, the Minister for Agriculture of Algeria thanked the participants for their positive contributions, which had led to the success of the 33rd Session of the FAO Regional Conference for the Near East. He then declared the Conference closed.
41. Participants expressed their heartfelt appreciation to the Government of Lebanon and FAO for the efficient arrangements, preparation and organization of the Conference at FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy.

APPENDIX A**AGENDA****I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS**

1. Appointment of the Rapporteur
2. Adoption of Agenda and Timetable

II. REGIONAL AND GLOBAL POLICY AND REGULATORY ISSUES

8. Livestock Contribution to Food Security in the Near East and North Africa Region
9. Fisheries and Aquaculture: Application of FAO's Blue Growth Initiative
10. Small-scale Farmers and Women Empowerment in the Near East and North Africa Region
11. Update on the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)

III. PROGRAMME AND BUDGET MATTERS

12. Results and Priorities for FAO in the Near East and North Africa Region
13. Decentralized Offices Network

IV. OTHER MATTERS

14. Multi-year Programme of Work for the Regional Conference for the Near East
15. Any other matters

Information Notes:

- Summary of the Progress made in the Implementation of the Recommendations of the 32nd Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East
- Summary of the Recommendations of Regional Commissions and Major Meetings in the Near East
- Status of the Near East Forests: Challenges and Development Potentials
- Agriculture in the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development: the need to address cross-sectoral interactions in the Near East and North Africa Region
- Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) Follow-up
- Food Losses and Waste (FLW) Work at Regional and National Level
- South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Agricultural Development and Food Security in the NENA Region: Challenges and Opportunities

APPENDIX B**LIST OF DOCUMENTS****DISCUSSION ITEMS**

NERC/16/1/ Rev.3	Provisional Annotated Agenda
NERC/16/2/Rev.2	Results and Priorities for FAO in the Near East and North Africa Region
NERC/16/3/Rev.1	Decentralized Offices Network
NERC/16/4/Rev.2	Livestock Contribution to Food Security in the Near East and North Africa
NERC/16/5	Fisheries and Aquaculture: Application of FAO's Blue Growth Initiative
NERC/16/6	Small-scale Farmers and Women Empowerment in the Near East and North Africa Region
NERC/16/7/Rev.1	Multi-year Programme of Work for the Regional Conference for the Near East
NERC/16/8/Rev.1	Update on the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)

INF SERIES

NERC/16/INF/1/Rev.1	Information Note on NERC
NERC/16/INF/2 Rev.2	Provisional Timetable
NERC/16/INF/3 Rev.2	Provisional List of Documents
NERC/16/INF/4	Statement by the FAO Director-General
NERC/16/INF/5	Summary of the Progress made in the Implementation of the Recommendations of the 32nd Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East
NERC/16/INF/6	Summary of the Recommendations of Regional Commissions and Major Meetings in the Near East
NERC/16/INF/7/Rev.1	Status of the Near East Forests: Challenges and Development Potentials
NERC/16/INF/8	Agriculture in the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development: the need to address cross-sectoral interactions in the Near East and North Africa Region
NERC/16/INF/9/Rev.1	Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) Follow-up
NERC/16/INF/10/Rev.1	Food Losses and Waste (FLW) Work at Regional and National Level
NERC/16/INF/11	South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Agricultural Development and Food Security in the NENA Region: Challenges and Opportunities
NERC/16/INF/12	Statement by the Chairperson of the 33 rd Session of the Regional Conference for the Near East
NERC/16/INF/13	Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council
NERC/16/INF/14	Statement by the Chairperson of the CFS
NERC/16/INF/15	Statement by the Spokesperson of the Civil Society Consultation

OD SERIES

NERC/16/OD/1	Order of the Day
NERC/16/OD/2	Order of the Day
NERC/16/OD/3	Order of the Day
NERC/16/OD/4	Order of the Day
NERC/16/OD/5	Order of the Day

WEB DOCUMENTS

(<http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/regional-conferences/nerc33/documents/en/>)

List of Delegates and Observers

Order of the Day

APPENDIX C**MINISTERIAL DECLARATION ON
“FOOD SECURITY, STABILITY AND PEACE”**

We, Ministers and Heads of Delegation of the Near East and North Africa Regional Conference,

1. Deeply concerned by the dramatic deterioration of the food security nutrition, and food safety situation, particularly among children in some countries of the Near East and North Africa Region as a consequence of conflicts, occupation and protracted crisis in the region;
2. Aware that food insecurity, climate change, poverty, unemployment and occupation could trigger of conflict and crisis;
3. Mindful that there can be no food security without peace, and no lasting peace without food security;
4. Conscious of the need for stability and peace for development efforts to bear fruits in the short, medium and long-term;
5. Reiterate the importance of inclusive and sustainable development, that fully encompasses the agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and livestock and gives equal employment and development to the vulnerable people including youth and women, in the framework of promoting peace and stability in the region;
6. Acknowledge the central role of FAO in establishing strategies and policies to eradicate food insecurity hunger and malnutrition and to build resilience to shocks, crisis and conflicts as a means to achieve stability and peace in the region;
7. Welcome the greater engagement of FAO in raising public awareness to the intricate link between food security, stability and peace, in the framework of the newly adopted Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development;
8. Reaffirm our commitment to work hand-in-hand with FAO towards the achievement of the common goals and objectives in the region.

Rome, 13 May 2016

APPENDIX D

**MINISTERIAL DECLARATION ON
“FOOD SECURITY AND THE AGRICULTURAL SECTORS IN A CHANGING CLIMATE”**

We, the Ministers of agriculture of NENA, recognize that climate change is a threat to our most fundamental human rights. It undermines our ability to eradicate extreme poverty and feed the world’s almost 800 million food insecure people. Over 70 percent of NENA’s poorest inhabitants live in rural areas, the majority of whom earn income from the agricultural sectors (crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture) and other natural resources. As a result, they are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. By some estimates, climate change could increase the number of malnourished people by 600 million by 2080 unless we take immediate action. Other estimates suggest that the impact of climate change on food availability could result in an additional 500 000 deaths by 2050.

The fundamental connection between food security and climate change is reflected in two key international agreements reached in 2015.

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development includes sustainable development goals (SDGs) on eradicating poverty in all its forms; ending hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture; and taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- The Paris Agreement on Climate Change recognizes the “fundamental priority of safeguarding food security and ending hunger, and the particular vulnerabilities of food production systems to the adverse impact of climate change”. The agreement emphasizes climate change adaptation, particularly for the world’s most vulnerable inhabitants and countries. Developed countries reiterated their commitment to channel at least **USD 100 billion** in annual climate finance to developing countries by 2020.

The Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) we submitted ahead of COP21 in Paris outline our climate change policy priorities. Agriculture, forestry and land use feature prominently, reflecting the central importance of these sectors for our economies and societies. With the requisite levels of financial and technical support, we are committed to work with the international community to implement the agriculture, forestry and land use components of our INDCs.

We have a common vision that investment in productive and resilient agricultural development are vital to ensuring that our countries and particularly our poorest and most food insecure inhabitant continue to prosper in spite of climate change.

We recognize that well-targeted investments in agriculture can simultaneously improve natural resource management, and contribute to mitigating climate change by easing the pressures that drive deforestation and improving soil health. Investments in agriculture can often generate these important environmental benefits at little or no additional cost.

We encourage developed countries, private sector actors, civil society and international organizations to work with us. It will be particularly to:

- Scale up disbursement of the climate finance pledges made before and at COP21 and pledge additional resources with a view to meeting the target of channelling at least USD 100 billion in annual climate finance to developing countries by 2020;

- Increase financial and technical support for climate change adaptation, with a particular focus on the agricultural sectors and small holder agricultural producers; and
- Improve coordination when providing technical and financial support, including by aligning support with existing work

Rome, 13 May 2016

