

## 165th Session of the Council – written correspondence procedure

### Item 14: Arrangements for the 42nd Session of the Conference

#### **Independent Chairperson of the Council Response to written inputs by the Council**

1. The Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) appreciates Members' comments with regard to Item 14, *Arrangements for the 42nd Session of the Conference* and in particular, acknowledges Members' support for the four proposals outlined in the document CL 165/18, Working Methods of the Conference, to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Conference proceedings.
2. With regard to Canada's comment on FAO Policy concerning relations with international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), the conditions for the attendance by INGOs to the FAO Conference is outlined in Rule XVII of the General Rules of the Organization (GRO) and is determined according to its formal status in relation to FAO, categorised as consultative status, specialised consultative status, or liaison status. Part M of Volume II of the Basic Texts outlines the FAO Policy concerning relations with INGOs. A list of INGOs invited to attend the Conference is included in a document (c.f. C 2019/13 Rev.1) submitted to the Conference at each of its Sessions. Those INGOs in consultative status with FAO are invited to attend the Conference in accordance with the Rule XVII.3 of the GRO. The Director-General may invite other INGOs who do not have formal consultative status with FAO, to attend the Conference Session subject to the approval of the Conference, in line with Rule XVII.4 of the GRO. These organisations are listed in the document submitted to the Conference under Appendix D.
3. With regard to Agenda Item 15, Biennial Theme, on the Provisional Agenda of the 42nd Session of the Conference, this theme will be submitted to the Conference at its 42nd Session for its endorsement, following consideration by the Council at its 166th Session in April 2021, in line with the recommendation of the 39th Session of the Conference (June 2015). The Conference in July 2021 will be required to endorse a biennial theme for consideration by Governing Bodies at sessions taking place during the 2022-23 biennium. The aim of the biennial theme is to increase the focus of Governing Bodies Sessions on the priorities and strategic global issues contained in the Strategic Framework. The introduction of a biennial theme for sessions of Governing Bodies stems from the Independent Review of FAO Governance Reforms (C 2015/25) and in the context of Action 2.1 of the Immediate Plan of Action for FAO Renewal (IPA) which implies a more proactive role for the Governing Bodies in agenda setting for substantive dialogue and policy setting. The biennial theme should ensure that the Conference, Regional Conferences and Technical Committees systematically address important challenges and issues of global and regional dimensions with a view to formulating policy options.
4. The ICC recognises the need for adequate time management at the Sessions of the Conference in particular should the Conference agree to schedule meetings of the Commission I and Commission II consecutively, to the extent possible. The ICC notes that any time limits to interventions by Members during the General Debate of the Conference shall be addressed by the Council at its 166th Session in April 2021.
5. In response to the request by Canada to re-name sub-item 10.6 under the Regional Conferences of the provisional agenda of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Conference to read "Report of the Sixth Informal Regional Conference for North America (22-23 October 2020)" the provisional agenda will be adjusted accordingly.
6. Finally, the ICC takes note of the comment by Korea regarding the uncertainties surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic situation and its potential impact on the 42nd Session of the Conference. The Secretariat, in consultation and coordination with the ICC and FAO Members, will carefully monitor the

situation and develop alternative scenarios to ensure the continuity and integrity of the governance process.