

170th Session of the FAO Council

Item 5: FAO thematic Science and Innovation Strategy

Recent sessions of FAO Governing Bodies have put a strong focus on science, technology and innovation and Members are increasingly requesting FAO's support to harness science and innovation.

The 132nd Session of the Programme Committee and the 168th Session of the Council welcomed the initiative to develop the first-ever FAO Science and Innovation Strategy (the Strategy), with the overall aim of strengthening implementation of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Strategy was developed through an inclusive and transparent process, with the participation of all Members through formal sessions of Governing Bodies (including the Regional Conferences in 2022), as well as two informal consultations, informal meetings with Regional Groups, and an informal meeting with Regional Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons called by the Independent Chairperson of the Council.

The Strategy aims to strengthen FAO's work on science and innovation by providing Organization-wide guidance, coherence and alignment on science and innovation. Science and innovation serve as a foundation for the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and have cross-sectoral relevance across the Organization's programme of work. Innovation and technology are two of the four accelerators of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 intended to speed up progress and maximize efforts in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At the same time, science underpins all four accelerators (technology, innovation, data, and complements [governance, human capital, and institutions]). As such, science and innovation are integrated throughout the 20 Programme Priority Areas (PPAs), the accelerators, and cross-cutting themes.

The vision of the Strategy is a world free from hunger and malnutrition, where the potential of science and innovation is fully leveraged to overcome complex social, economic and environmental challenges of agrifood systems in a globally equitable, inclusive and sustainable manner.

The goal is for Members to harness science and innovation to realize context-specific and systemic solutions for MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for *better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life*, leaving no one behind, in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Strategy is grounded in the following guiding principles: Equity-based; Gender-equal; Evidence-based; Needs-driven; Sustainability-aligned; Risk-informed; and Ethics-based.

The Strategy focuses on three pillars, which group together nine outcomes. Action under the pillars will be catalysed by two cross-cutting enablers: transformative partnerships and innovative funding and financing. The pillars are:

- I. Strengthening science and evidence-based decision-making;
- II. Supporting innovation and technology at regional and country level; and
- III. Serving Members better by reinforcing FAO's capacities.

Monitoring will be fully aligned with the causal results chains and SDG targets established in the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, reflecting all three dimensions of sustainability. For the technology and innovation accelerators, monitoring will be linked directly to the relevant Key Performance Indicators (KPI), while activities under the PPAs will be measured through the most relevant SDG indicators.

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