

## 175th Session of the Council

### Written Correspondence Procedure – inputs from Members - English version

Item 15 – Status of implementation of decisions taken at the 174th Session of the Council (Rome, 4-8 December 2023)

Member Name	Comments
<p>New Zealand (Friday, 24 May 2024 – 14.41)</p>	<p><i>1. With regard to the establishment of the Office of Youth and Women (OYW), all initial steps have been taken to ensure the timely rollout of all functions and operations. Staff recruitments have been initiated and are expected to be completed within the calendar year. Initial office space has been allocated and additional office spaces are being identified. The development of the OYW work plan and the related results framework is planned for the second half of the year, in particular after the recruitment of all senior positions.</i></p> <p>We appreciate the update on the establishment of the OYW and note that we should be receiving an update on the work plan and related results framework at the end of 2024 and assume this update will be provided at Council 176?</p> <p><i>2. Management will continue with regular annual reporting on savings and efficiency measures, including in the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) and the Programme Implementation Report. A business plan and roadmap are under development and will be included in the corporate planning and reporting documents.</i></p> <p>We appreciate the update and look forward to the business plan and roadmap and request an update on the timeframe as to when these will be included in the corporate planning and reporting documents?</p> <p><i>24. The Council requested that Regional Offices organize information sessions for their Members, within reasonable time, on modality, arrangements and provisional dates, for their Regional Conference in 2024 and onwards. (para 44)</i></p> <p>We note the response that “the Regional Offices held several information sessions from December 2023 onwards for Members in the Regional Groups on modality, arrangements, dates and other aspects for preparation of the 2024 Regional Conferences.” For the region of the Southwest Pacific (SWP), as part of the Asia Pacific Regional Conference, had its Senior Official Meetings (SOM) in January 2024, the summer holiday period for the SWP region. The preparation for the SOM meeting was negatively impacted by timing of papers, most papers not available until just prior to the SOM. Also, the connectivity and timing of the SOM for the Southwest Pacific, negatively impacted on engagement of members in the SOM.</p> <p>We are very keen to ensure that all members of the Asia-Pacific are heard equally at the Regional Conferences and in accompanying information sessions, particularly those countries further south who have more challenging time zones to contend with. We would welcome suggestions from the Secretariat as to how these challenges can be considered going forward and happy to contribute to these considerations.</p>

<p>Japan  (Friday, 24 May 2024 – 14.56)</p>	<p>Japan appreciates the FAO for sharing the status of implementation of decisions taken at the 174th Session of the Council.</p> <p>On this agenda, Japan would like to submit the following comments.</p> <p>On paragraph 6 and 7:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Japan appreciates that FAO has repeatedly called for urgent measures to save the Gaza residents, and that it has been conducting all kinds of analyses related to food security, nutrition, etc. for the Gaza Strip and communicating to the world the impact of the situation in Gaza.</li> <li>• Japan has been providing assistance to Palestine, including the Gaza Strip, in conjunction with the FAO by providing necessary equipment and materials for agriculture and fisheries, as well as technical assistance, training, and guidance to related sectors.</li> <li>• Japan would like to request FAO to further monitor the impact of the situation in Gaza, including the implementation status of such ongoing assistance.</li> </ul> <p>On paragraph 8 and 9:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Japan appreciates that FAO has been conducting all kinds of analyses and communications regarding the situation in Ukraine related to food security, nutrition, etc. in collaboration with the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) and other organizations.</li> <li>• Russia's aggression against Ukraine caused a significant impact on access to food around the world especially for vulnerable populations.</li> <li>• Japan has provided food assistance to Middle East and African countries and others, as well as support for the restoration of agriculture and grain exports from Ukraine, including through the FAO.</li> <li>• Japan would like to request FAO to further monitor the situation of global food security affected by Russia's aggression against Ukraine.</li> </ul>
<p>United States of America  (Friday, 24 May 2024 – 15.17)</p>	<p>The United States welcomes FAO's updates on the status of implementation of decisions taken at the 174th Council and takes note of the information presented in the document.</p> <p>We would like to present some additional comments by correspondence for FAO's consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council recommended that Management develop a business plan and roadmap detailing planned initiatives and expected efficiency gains and savings, together with measurement indicators. FAO marked this as completed, but indicated in the text that the plan and roadmap were still under development. When does FAO expect to finalize the business plan and roadmap?</li> <li>• We appreciate FAO's ongoing work and collaborations in relation to the situation in Gaza, including the needed emphasis on the importance of emergency agricultural interventions for enhanced food and nutrition security. FAO reported its immediate plan is to provide barley fodder, water tanks, animal shelter, and veterinary kits through the Rafah crossing. Given it is currently closed, what alternate modalities are FAO considering?</li> <li>• We appreciate FAO's continued production of reports and high-quality analytical products spotlighting the</li> </ul>

	<p>negative impact of Russia’s war against Ukraine on global food security and look forward to the production of products including market analyses, reports co-produced with organizations such as the World Food Programme (WFP), and additional events and webinars.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finally, while we strongly support FAO’s enhanced collaboration with other UN entities, we would appreciate elaboration on how FAO plans to strengthen its partnerships specifically with UN Resident Coordinators.</li> </ul>
<p>Canada (Monday, 27 May 2024 – 17.05)</p>	<p>Canada would like to seek clarification about the method used to determine whether an action has been “completed” rather than “ongoing”. For example, of note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2. The requested development of business plan and roadmap detailing planned initiatives and expected efficiency gains and savings for the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) which is in the development process but marked as “completed”.</li> <li>• 10. The Hand-in-Hand (HIH) dashboard “is progressing well, with a new version being developed”.</li> <li>• 16. A “substantial overhaul of FAO’s internal procedures and its relationships with international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) holding formal status is currently underway” but marked as “completed”.</li> </ul> <p>The binary status column may not provide sufficient nuance in this regard – “Complete” and “Ongoing” do not reflect all options. Consideration could be given to including an additional column such as “Completion expected by” or “To be addressed by” (tagging CL 176, the Committee on Forestry (COFO 27), etc), which could be more accurate and insightful for Members.</p> <p>Canada requests additional insights on items from previous Councils which may have been set as “on-going” or pending further work. In this regard, expanding the scope of the document to include other remaining outstanding items from previous sessions of Council could be beneficial (rather than limiting the scope to only the preceding session of Council (in this case CL 174).</p> <p>Under Item 1, Canada looks forward to the development of the Office of Youth and Women (OYW) work plan and the related results framework.</p>
<p>Philippines on behalf of the Asia Regional Group (Tuesday, 28 May 2024 – 13.58)</p>	<p>On behalf of the Asia Regional Group, the Philippines would like to thank the Secretariat for the status report on the implementation of decisions taken at the 174th Session of the Council held in Rome from 4-8 December 2023.</p> <p>With regard to FAO's plans for the establishment of regional knowledge hubs, we note that updates will be provided as plans for the establishment of regional knowledge hubs progress.</p> <p>We understand that regional knowledge hubs are seen by FAO as a means to foster flexible and context-specific responses by FAO and as one of many implementing arrangements for the FAO Strategic Framework (<a href="#">Programme Implementation Report [PIR] 2022-2023</a>, p. 52). The Asia Regional Group welcomes efforts such as these, which operate under a "no one size fits all" principle, and which intends to accelerate access of Member States to knowledge and innovation that can support our respective agrifood systems transformation pathways to contribute towards the attainment of our Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We would therefore wish to see a concept note about regional knowledge hubs for review, discussion and prospective approval at the earliest opportunity by the appropriate FAO Governing Body. A timeline on when to see such a concept note will be much appreciated.</p>

<p>United Kingdom (Tuesday, 28 May 2024 – 18.04)</p>	<p>The United Kingdom thanks FAO for this update and underlines the importance of tracking the implementation of decisions actions agreed, also more broadly. Indeed, we would like FAO to suggest how this can be done systematically across different governing bodies. This could also include a rolling update on progress on implementation of evaluation recommendations through the Programme Committee and audit recommendations through the Finance Committee. Similarly for Council, it would be helpful to have a rolling update report on past Council decisions, rather than just focusing on the previous session.</p> <p>We note that some of the updates do not necessarily always neatly fit into the categories of ‘completed’ or ‘ongoing’. Some of the actions listed contain a number of elements, some of which may be complete, with others ongoing, requiring a more nuanced response.</p> <p>For example, on number 2, where Council “...recommended that Management develop a business plan and roadmap detailing planned initiatives and expected efficiency gains and savings, together with measurement indicators...”, it is good to hear that a “business plan and roadmap are under development”. However, this is clearly ongoing, whereas the implementation status is marked as completed. This is also reflected in the 199th Finance Committee discussion on the matter, which “looked forward to receiving further information on the business plan and roadmap at its session in November 2024, including on the planned form of reporting on efficiencies and savings, both accrued and anticipated.” More information on the timing of the completed business plan and roadmap would be helpful.</p> <p>Similarly, on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative (number 10), while the report notes that “the <u>ongoing</u> development of the Hand-in-Hand (HIH) dashboard is <u>progressing well</u>” the action is marked as completed – and not ongoing. At the same time, this also underlines the need for greater clarity in Council decisions. Here, for example, “The Council (...) encouraged the ongoing development of the HIH monitoring and evaluation dashboard and further reporting on progress of the Initiative”, and in that sense, <i>ongoing development</i> could be considered as being done. Nevertheless, the spirit of the action is clearly that the dashboard should be complete and available at the time of reporting. If that is not the case, a timeline would be helpful for members to track progress towards full implementation.</p> <p>Once again, we thank FAO for this report and look forward to i) proposals from FAO on how the reporting mechanism for Council could be further improved; and ii) management proposals on how the Organization could share information that it has for its own tracking purposes to provide clearer regular reporting on the implementation status of all agreed decisions and actions on a rolling basis, and not necessarily just for Council. This would be extremely helpful for Members, also in terms of demonstrating the progress that FAO is making in responding to decisions and agreed recommendations to help continually strengthen the Organization and its delivery.</p>
<p>Australia (Tuesday, 28 May 2024 – 22.14)</p>	<p>Australia appreciates FAO’s work in addressing the Council’s recommendations. However, we do query the categorisation of some items as being complete when it is stated that work is ongoing on a range of matters. So, using item 2 as an example: “The Council (...) recommended that Management develop a business plan and roadmap detailing planned initiatives and expected efficiency gains and savings, together with measurement indicators, and requested regular annual reporting on efficiencies and savings, both accrued and anticipated; (para 10 (j))”.</p> <p>This is listed as completed with the following comment:</p>

	<p>“A business plan and roadmap are under development and will be included in the corporate planning and reporting documents.”</p> <p>We would appreciate Management’s guidance on the categorisation of items as completed or ongoing (and suggest for the ongoing items perhaps an estimation of expected completion be included).</p> <p>Further, given a number of items have and will continue to be discussed at consecutive Council sessions, perhaps going forward, the scope of the document could address the status of implementation from <b>previous Council sessions</b> – a similar approach is taken in the Finance Committee (e.g. FC 199/13 Rev.1).</p>
<p>European Union (Friday, 7 June 2024 – 17.19)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I am honoured to write to you on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.</li> <li>2. Albania, Georgia, Iceland, Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, San Marino and Türkiye align themselves with this statement.</li> <li>3. We thank FAO for updating Member States on the status of implementation of the decisions taken at the 174th Session of the Council and we take note of the information presented in document CL 175/LIM/3.</li> <li>4. We acknowledge FAO’s regular annual reporting on savings and efficiency measures, including on the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) and the Programme Implementation Report, we request regular annual reporting on efficiencies and savings, both accrued and anticipated and we recall FAO’s commitment to include a business plan and roadmap in the corporate planning and reporting documents.</li> <li>5. We note that the progress update on the establishment of the Office of Youth and Women does not contain precise information on the number of permanent staff, the budget for 2024, the work plan and other matters that are necessary for the Council to provide relevant guidance on its implementation.</li> <li>6. We are looking forward to the development of a work plan for the Office of Youth and Women and for the related results framework, and we request FAO to report back on its activities at the next session of the Council so as to keep the membership informed on progress in this regard.</li> <li>7. We welcome the progress made on the implementation of integrated water resources management, and more generally FAO’s increased attention to the role of water throughout its programmes and policies.</li> <li>8. Finally, we request that FAO continue its efforts on the issues still ongoing in relation to the outcomes of the 174th FAO Council, so that they can be evaluated in the next cycle of Governing Bodies meetings.</li> </ol>