

170th Session of the Council

Sub-item 9.2: Report of the 36th Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (Dhaka, Bangladesh, 8-11 March 2022)

The 36th Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific was the first of the FAO Regional Conferences to convene both Senior Officials and Ministerial Sessions, back-to-back, in hybrid modality over four consecutive days. Over 1 100 participants registered, of which more than 400 registered to attend in person. The Conference was fully-digital and completely paperless in keeping with the Organization's corporate policy on environmental sustainability. It was also the first Regional Conference (globally) with in-person participation of FAO's Director-General, Dr QU Dongyu. Ministers and Vice-Ministers, representing 37 countries out of the region's membership of 45, delivered in-person or virtual statements in Plenary. Six side events and three Ministerial Roundtables were organized, anchored to agrifood systems transformation.

The Conference:

- Recognized that the Asia and the Pacific region has been seriously impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and renewed their commitment to a deep transformation of agrifood systems to regain lost ground on food insecurity, malnutrition, poverty and unemployment.
- Emphasized the role of digitalization in transforming agrifood systems to be more inclusive and climate resilient.
- Highlighted the need for a more systemic and coordinated approach among key sectors and stakeholders to create an enabling environment that makes the digitalization of agrifood systems more inclusive and sustainable, while addressing associated regulatory issues.
- Emphasized that there is no "one size fits all" solution for building climate resilient agrifood systems and to take into account that each nation has different levels of vulnerabilities and respective needs for development.
- Acknowledged the strategic role FAO has played in One Health to date, with technical support focused on zoonotic diseases, transboundary animal diseases, antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and food safety and the importance of its role in the Tripartite with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the World Health Organization (WHO).
- Emphasized the need for a more systematic and coordinated approach among key sectors and stakeholders for the sustainable management and utilization of biodiversity for food and agriculture in the Pacific region.
- Recognized the major actions carried out by FAO and the results achieved in 2020 and 2021, and the delivery and outcomes of FAO's work in the region, with over 500 projects, having particularly adapted them to the context and conditions created by the unforeseen and unprecedented pandemic.
- Noted the transformational change in the Organization and its technical units, including at regional and country level to address multifaceted development challenges.
- Endorsed the four Regional Priorities identified for the 2022-2023 biennium based on key trends, issues and challenges in Asia and the Pacific region.
- Recognized the relevance of the individual Programme Priority Areas (PPAs) mapping to each of the four Regional Priorities in the proposed results framework and to the achievement of the four betters to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- Welcomed the initiation of the new FAO Strategy on Climate Change, its vision and Theory of Change and its alignment to the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31.
- Welcomed the development of FAO's first-ever Science and Innovation Strategy as a key tool to contribute to the implementation of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and commended its transparent and inclusive consultation process.

H.E. Muhammad Abdur Razzaque, Chairperson of the Ministerial Session of the 36th Session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific