

43rd Session of the FAO Conference

Introduction to Item 11.4: Report of the 37th Session of the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean (Quito, Ecuador, 28 March – 1 April 2022)

Chairperson,

Distinguished Members,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour to address the Conference today, on behalf of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. I will present a summary of the recommendations of the Regional Conference that Ecuador was honoured to host in a hybrid format from 28 March to 1 April 2022.

I would like to single out and thank the 586 participants from 33 Member Nations, including one Head of State, one Prime Minister, one Vice-President, 64 Ministers, Deputy Ministers and Permanent Secretaries, 18 Ambassadors, three Members as observers, representatives of eight United Nations organizations, four intergovernmental organizations, 14 civil society organizations, one representative of the Parliamentary Fronts Against Hunger, 13 private sector organizations, and 13 scientific and academic organizations.

In my presentation, I will focus, specifically, on the section on regional and global policy and regulatory matters.

At the conference, Members unanimously endorsed FAO's Strategic Framework 2022-31, which, in alignment with the United Nations Cooperation Framework for Sustainable Development, calls for supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by transforming toward more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems. The goal is to achieve better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life, leaving no one behind.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, the Regional Conference considered policy issues for the region, under the theme of "Regional results, priorities, the *four betters*, and the Sustainable Development Goals – Part I".

The Conference recognized FAO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, leveraging the Organization's convening power and supporting Members to strengthen the resilience of agrifood systems, guaranteeing food production and supply. It also encouraged FAO to continue its dialogue with Members on the Director-General's initiatives, with a view to maximizing the impact of FAO's work at the national and regional levels.

It welcomed the 78 percent increase in resource mobilization, as compared to the previous biennium. It acknowledged the importance of South–South and Triangular Cooperation, and highlighted that collaborating with the private sector, civil society, the Parliamentary Front Against Hunger, academia and the scientific community, among others, allowed the mobilization of resources, technical exchange, capacity building, knowledge management, the development of innovations and the implementation of good practices.

The Regional Conference highlighted FAO's contribution toward food and nutrition security and recommendations on public policies and regulations, with a special emphasis on nutrition education, school feeding programmes and the promotion of value chains and healthy diets.

It highlighted FAO's support in combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the region. It lamented with concern the ageing trend among agricultural producers and the need to include young

people in agricultural entrepreneurship initiatives and underscored the need for FAO to use multilaterally agreed language.

Members discussed innovations to address rising prices for food and agricultural inputs for better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life. They highlighted political will, commitment and clear goals, as well as public and private investments and resources, institutional changes and sustained capacity development processes as essential to implement, sustain and achieve innovation and impact in the short and medium term.

Chairperson, in this context and in relation to policy and regulatory matters, the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean invites this Conference to review and affirm that FAO:

1. Will continue and intensify its resource mobilization efforts to foster public and private investments in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, FAO's Strategic Framework 2022-31 and Country Programming Frameworks, stressing the importance of proactively identifying and realizing new opportunities to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Organization in the region; and
2. Will give greater importance to prospective analysis, knowledge management, the digitalization of agrifood systems and the improvement of innovative experiences in countries, subregions and regions, especially to promote rural rootedness, with an emphasis on smallholder family farmers, in particular, peasants and Indigenous Peoples.

Reaffirming the importance of the regional commissions, the Conference requested that they hold their regular meetings no later than the first half of the second year of the biennium, so that recommendations and technical decisions could be addressed in a timely and orderly manner ahead of the Regional Conference.

Finally, Chairperson, on behalf of the Government of Ecuador, presided by Mr. Guillermo Lasso, and in my capacity as Chairperson of the 37th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, I thank the Members once again for the confidence placed in our country.

At the same time, I reaffirm before this Conference our satisfaction with FAO's strategic leadership at the global and regional levels, and the need to continue to count on the Organization's technical cooperation and the mobilization of resources necessary to contribute directly to the Sustainable Development Goals – ending poverty, zero hunger and the reduction of inequalities – and to support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Many thanks.

Mr. Pedro Álava González, Chairperson of the 37th Session of the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean