

42nd Session of the Conference

Introduction to Item 26: Proposal for conditions for the FAO Awards

1. The 41st Session of the Conference in 2019 endorsed the recommendation of its General Committee that *“the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC) should carry out inclusive consultations with Members with a view to defining consistent and sustainable conditions for the award of prizes, taking into account the global state of food and agriculture, including options for a phasing out of the oldest awards. The outcome of this process would be referred for the approval by the 42nd Session of the Conference”*
2. Accordingly, a proposal by FAO Management for the establishment of a new set of systematic and sustainable FAO Awards to invigorate the process leveraging the FAO brand is submitted for endorsement by the Conference.
3. This proposal is informed by Members’ inputs provided during the course of inclusive consultations conducted by the ICC from 2019 through 2021. It was considered by the Joint Meeting of the 130th session of the Programme Committee and the 185th session of the Finance Committee. The proposal was reviewed by the 166th session of the Council, which recommended its endorsement by the 42nd Session of the Conference.
4. The proposed new FAO Awards aim to leverage the FAO brand to galvanize excellence in areas under FAO’s mandate; and at the same time to use the recognition, through the Awards, of outstanding achievement in advancing the goals of the Organization to strengthen the FAO brand.
5. The proposed new FAO Awards are conceptualized around topics of institutional relevance and strategic importance, and therefore aim to bolster the sustainability and continued pertinence of FAO’s Awards in line with the guidance provided by the Conference at its 41st Session.
6. These Awards will serve to motivate FAO partners to support activities aimed at achieving FAO’s objectives; and in turn, the achievements of FAO partners will bolster the image of FAO itself. The new Awards will serve as an instrument to enhance the Organization’s efforts aimed at increasing FAO visibility, and at partnership building; and as such to make FAO more valuable to Members, more attractive to donors, more engaging to partners, and more meaningful to its employees.
7. The proposed new annual Awards will consist of a main FAO Champion Award, and four further Awards under the following categories: partnership, achievement, innovation, and employees. These Awards are aimed at replacing existing FAO Awards that are named after former Directors-General and funded through the Regular Programme Budget, to create a systematic, consistent and coherent set of awards.. The new Awards will be conferred annually to no more than a maximum of ten recipients each in the categories of partnership, achievement and innovation.
8. The FAO Champion Award will be awarded either during the regular Conference Session or during the first regular Council Session in non-Conference years. It will be the highest corporate Award, recognizing significant and outstanding contribution towards advancing the overall goals of the Organization. Its monetary value will be commensurate with its status. It is proposed that the prize be set at USD 50 000. For context, three of the current awards have their prize money set at USD 25 000.
9. The FAO Award for Partnership will recognize outstanding cooperation with FAO in advancing the Organization’s work by Members, other UN agencies or international institutions, academic or research entities, and civil society or private sector entities, including media outlets. This Award will be conferred at the first session of the Council every year. It is proposed that the prize be set at USD 10 000 per awardee.
10. The FAO Award for Achievement will recognize specific professional achievements in various sectors and programmes related to the work of the Organization. It will be conferred upon any entity or individual, including FAO teams or employees. This prize will be awarded during the annual World Food Day celebrations. It is proposed that the prize be set at USD 10 000 per awardee.

11. The FAO Award for Innovation will be conferred for ground-breaking innovation in areas under FAO's mandate to a broad spectrum of awardees. Recipients will also include FAO teams or employees. This Award will be granted annually during the second regular sessions of the Council. It is proposed that the prize be set at USD 10 000

12. The FAO Award for Employees will be conferred upon FAO teams or individual employees for exceptional effectiveness and accomplishment in serving the Organization. These awards will be conferred at a dedicated, annual FAO Employee Recognition Award ceremony. There will be no cash prize. In line with Members' guidance, it is proposed to maintain the monetary value for all new Awards except for those in the employee category, or where an employee or FAO team is chosen for an Award in the other categories. In order to support the sustainability of the Awards, it is proposed to establish a new dedicated Trust Fund, with voluntary contributions by Members and other donors. Regular Programme resources will be capped at USD 125 000 each biennium.

13. The Conference is invited to endorse the proposed new set of FAO Awards.

Mr Hak-Fan Lau, Director of Office of Communications