

Informal Consultation for Europe and Central Asia

4–5 May 2023

Background Note

Session 4

Priority areas for the work programme in the region for 2024–2025 in light of the key challenges and opportunities

Breakout session 4.3

Priority 3: Promoting sustainable natural resources management and facilitating resilience in agriculture, forestry and other land use sectors, including mitigating and adapting to climate change

Objective:

The main objective is to exchange views and collect inputs on the key challenges and opportunities in Europe and Central Asia and to provide recommendations related to the main areas of response as key inputs for the formulation of the FAO work programme 2024–2025 for the Europe and Central Asia region.

Methodology

Country representatives exchange their views on the main challenges and opportunities in the region and explore potential recommendations. The discussions focus on three questions, and the debate is facilitated by FAO staff directly involved in the design and implementation of this regional priority.

The presentation and background note of *“Session 3 - Key challenges and opportunities in the region that might affect the regional priority areas and should be addressed by the FAO work programme 2024–2025”* and of *“Session 2 - Update on FAO’s response to the multiple crises in the region”* serve as a basis for the discussion in the breakout session. The challenges and proposed response areas under Priority 3 have been summarized in Annex I.

Time: 35 minutes

Structure:

1. **Introduction by the group facilitator** (3 min)
2. **Round-table discussion** (30 min)

Guiding questions:

- What do you consider as key challenges related to Priority 3 in the context of your country or the region?
- What emphasis would you give regarding the main areas of response identified under Priority 3 in the context of your country or the region?
- Do you agree with the challenges/areas of response that are proposed in Annex I, or is there any challenge/area of response already included that you suggest de-emphasizing?

3. **Wrap-up by the group facilitator** (2 min)

Annex I

Priority 3: Promoting sustainable natural resources management and facilitating resilience in agriculture, forestry and other land use sectors, including mitigating and adapting to climate change

Challenges	Main areas of response
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Institutional and technical barriers to overcoming and reducing the impacts of climate change, natural resources depletion and environmental pollution.• Lack of enabling political environment and scientific data and limited access to digital and non-digital technologies, knowledge and investments to implement climate-resilient and green agriculture practices.• Although the progress to reach the nationally determined contribution targets is promising in the region, overcoming institutional, legal, technological, financial and associated bottlenecks is a challenge in many countries.• Biodiversity and diverse ecosystems in the region are threatened by changes in land use; intensification in agricultural sectors; agricultural land, pasture and forest degradation; the spread of invasive alien species; and genetic erosion.• In Central Asian countries, excessive water use, limited water resources, limited irrigation area, poor irrigation infrastructure and the increasing frequency and severity of droughts put stress on aquatic ecosystems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regionalize and implement the FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022–2031 and Action Plan, as well as disaster risk reduction and emergencies, supporting countries on the nationally determined contributions.• Implement the Regional Action Plan on Science and Innovation.• Support in mobilizing climate finance, preserving and restoring biodiversity, and promoting digital and non-digital green technologies and innovative and integrated approaches.• Integrate resilience dimensions in forestry, aquaculture and fisheries into national policies and promote the sustainable and climate-adaptive management of forests, aquaculture and fisheries.• Enhance support on water governance; regional collaboration on sustainable water management; work on irrigation schemes; and application of green, water-saving technologies.<input type="checkbox"/> Facilitate solid scientific approaches and create data and evidence for natural resources governance and evidence-based decision-making.<input type="checkbox"/> Promote the green agriculture platform to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and build regional green agriculture partnerships.