

**Web Annex 1:****The VII Meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)*****Memorandum of Understanding and Joint Action Plan between FAO and SCO Secretariat***

1. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation is a permanent intergovernmental international organization, which is comprised of eight Member States (People's Republic of China, Republic of India, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Russian Federation, Republic of Tajikistan, Republic of Uzbekistan), all of which are members of FAO. The SCO Secretariat is based in Beijing, China. The yearly rotational chairpersonship of the Organisation is currently (since 15 September 2022) held by the Republic of India.
2. FAO and the SCO Secretariat started their partnership with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed in Tashkent, Uzbekistan in November 2019 on the sidelines of the 18th meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of Government. The MoU is underpinned by a common goal of ensuring food security and sustainable development for present and future generations, framed by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Cooperation under the MoU includes areas of common interest such as climate change mitigation, sustainable management of natural resources, digitalization in agriculture, food markets, improved phytosanitary and veterinary frameworks, support to healthy diets in urban areas, and other important fields of mutual interest.
3. For implementation of the MoU a more concrete and time-bound Joint Action Plan between FAO and SCO Secretariat was developed for 2020-2023, which includes joint activities under priority areas in the form of policy dialogues, expert consultations/workshops, exchanges of information and technical recommendations.
4. In the framework of the Joint Action Plan, FAO and the SCO Secretariat convened the following technical consultations/webinars:
  - March 2021: Webinar on “Food Security in SCO Member States: Smart Agriculture development” – held in partnership with the SCO Demonstration Base for Agricultural Technology Exchange and Training in Yanglin (China). The discussion was based on a technical presentation by FAO on opportunities and challenges of digital transformation and presentations from SCO Member States. Participants included representatives of governments, ministries of agriculture, the private sector and academia.
  - August 2021: FAO-SCO Food Systems Summit Independent Dialogue, organized in partnership with the Russian Federation. The independent dialogue of SCO Member States on Sustainable Food Systems Development was organized in anticipation of the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit. During the dialogue, SCO Member States discussed functioning and development of food systems, highlighted recurring problems in countries, discussed possible solutions and shared best practices in food security practices.
  - September 2022: Technical consultation on agrifood trade promotion among SCO Member States, organized in partnership with Uzbekistan. This meeting aimed to help FAO and SCO Member States to better understand the potential for growth in agrifood trade, both among SCO Member States and with countries outside the SCO, and the means by which this trade can be facilitated, including trade facilitation policies, green corridors and wholesale distribution centres.

***VII Meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture of the SCO Member States***

5. On 25 July 2022, the VII Meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture of the SCO Member States was convened in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The meeting brought together the Deputy Prime Minister of Uzbekistan, Ministers responsible for food and agriculture from India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and Deputy Ministers from China, Pakistan and Russia in person and virtually.
6. The meeting focused on the current state of affairs in food and agriculture of the SCO Member States. Ministers shared their views and reconfirmed their commitment to strengthen cooperation among scientific research organizations and academia; exchange of best practices; maximize technological potential; coordinate the work on climate change adaptation and mitigation and agrifood trade. Ministers also agreed to continue working on natural resources management and soil preservation.
7. The Deputy Prime Minister of Uzbekistan, who chaired the meeting, confirmed the need for strengthening dialogue with international organizations (including FAO) on early response to ensuring food security, developing sustainable agriculture and improving livelihoods. The Chairperson also suggested convening a Joint FAO-SCO Forum on Soil Conservation Technologies.
8. FAO joined the Ministerial Meeting and made an intervention on the recent and upcoming joint activities of FAO and the SCO Secretariat, and reassured the Heads of Delegation of its continued provision of substantial technical support to the countries together with the SCO Secretariat in the areas outlined in the MoU and in the Joint Action Plan. FAO called on ministers to continue work and cooperation on transforming agrifood systems to be more resilient and inclusive, ensure access to nutritious food, continue sustainable management of natural resources, support sustainable production and consumption, increase responsible investment in agriculture and rural areas, and prevent food loss and waste.
9. FAO suggested holding the next technical consultation on resilient agrifood systems in the context of pandemic, climate change and conflicts.