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THE NEW STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK OF THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY 2011 – 2020 AND TO THE AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS

Note by the Executive Secretary

INTRODUCTION

1. The present note has been provided by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in order to inform the deliberations of the fifth meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention. The note provides brief information on the new Strategic Framework of FAO and its relevance to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011 – 2020 and to the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, as well as information on some relevant recent, ongoing and scheduled implementation activities.

2. The submission has been reproduced in the form and language in which it was provided to the Secretariat.

* UNEP/CBD/WGRI/5/1.

**THE NEW STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK OF THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THE
STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY 2011 – 2020 AND TO THE AICHI
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1. In 2013, the Thirty-eighth Session of the FAO Conference reviewed and approved the new Strategic Framework 2010-19 which determines the future strategic direction of the Organization.¹ Achieving food security for all is the core of FAO's work – to make sure people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives. FAO's three main goals are: the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition; the elimination of poverty and the driving forward of economic and social progress for all; and, the sustainable management and utilization of natural resources, including land, water, air, climate and genetic resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

2. The strategic framework identified key considerations that should lead the future activities of the FAO. Some of them strongly relate to the need to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity in order to achieve food security. The growing trend in global food demand is expected to reach a need for a general 70 percent increase by 2050. This suggests growing scarcities of agricultural land, water, forest, marine capture fishery and biodiversity resources. Competition over natural resources for food and non-food products is not new, but the nature and the intensity of the competition has changed significantly in several ways during the past decade; a tendency which is expected to continue. Consumption of cereals and oilseeds for the production of biofuels has increased, as well as other uses such as biomass as a substitute for petrochemicals. Depletion of natural resources will imply increasing environmental social and economic costs of ecosystem services, reduced resilience and increased vulnerability of small-scale farmers. The impact of this process will be felt in a reduced capacity of communities and countries to ensure food security and improve the livelihood of rural populations. Climate change is now evident and is expected to increase in the decades to come, in spite of the measures that may be taken to mitigate it. It already impacts on agriculture, forests and ocean fisheries and these impacts are expected to increase in the future with variations between subsectors and regions.

3. On the basis of the analysis carried out for the identification of the new Strategic Framework, and taking into consideration FAO's broad mandate, seven development challenges have been identified and selected as those that appear to have a special significance and urgency for the work of FAO's, member countries and other development actors. These are: Challenge 1 Increasing the production of agriculture, forestry and fisheries and its contributions to economic growth and development while ensuring sustainable ecosystem management and strategies for adaptation to, and mitigation of climatic change; Challenge 2. Eradicating food insecurity, nutrient deficiencies and unsafe food in the face of increasing food prices and high price volatility; Challenge 3. Improve the quality and balance of food consumption and nutrition; Challenge 4. Improve the livelihood of the population living in rural areas including smallholder farmers, foresters and fisher folk and in particular women, in the context of urbanization and changing agrarian structures; Challenge 5. Ensure a more inclusive food and agriculture systems at local, national and international levels; Challenge 6. Increase resilience of livelihoods to agriculture and food security threats and shocks; Challenge 7. Strengthen governance mechanisms for the needs for food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries systems at national, regional and global levels.

4. The process identified 5 Strategic Objectives which are now leading the work of the Organization. The conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity components are common elements throughout the whole Strategic Framework and are key element to address the five Strategic Objectives.

- As per SO1 “Help eliminate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition” sustainable management of biodiversity has a key role in allowing smallholders, farmers, pastoralists and others dependent on natural resources such as foresters and fisherfolk throughout the world to fight hunger and

¹ FAO Conference document C 2013/7 available at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/027/mg015e.pdf>

food insecurity while also coping with ongoing and future social and environmental changes. The ongoing work on the different nutritional capacity of the different varieties and breeds will also be a key element to address malnutrition issues at local level.

- To address the challenge of SO2 “Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable” there will be the need to increase our ability to identify and enhance the role of ecosystem services, particularly in terms of their effects on resource use efficiency and response to risks, as well as their contribution to environmental conservation.
- As of SO3 “Reduce rural poverty” it should be noted that many of the rural poor are subsistence producers, family farmers or landless agricultural workers. They include fisherfolk, pastoralists, and forest-dependent peoples with limited access to productive means. The diversity of the ecosystems that surround them is their most valuable source of livelihood and wellbeing. Climate change, other environmental threats and population growth and migration are putting disproportionate pressure on livelihoods in rural areas where poverty is already entrenched and people have the least resilience. Sound management of natural resources and ecosystems will need to go hand in hand with efforts to reduce poverty.
- To “Enable inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems” as indicated in SO4, FAO will support countries to improve their capacity to design and implement better policies, regulatory frameworks and standards, and to provide public services related to plant and animal health, food safety and quality, including on the reduction of waste.
- SO5 aims to “Increase the resilience of livelihoods to disasters”. This strategic objective sees ecosystems and their biodiversity playing a key role. Disasters and crises vary from earthquake or a violent coup d'état, a drought-flood cycles. They can strike suddenly or unfold slowly, in any case the role of environmental managers such as farmers, pastoralists, foresters, fisherfolk, will be key in making these environment more resilient and less prone to disasters and crisis.

5. FAO has developed a number of global initiatives and partnerships that approach agriculture and environmental issues in an integrated manner maintaining human well being, poverty eradication and food security as their main aim. These initiatives range from the identification of Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS), to the ‘One Health’ approach that aims to restore social and ecological resilience to achieve global health security for humans and agriculture production systems at the same time; from the nutrition and biodiversity initiative that aims at mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and sustainable use for improved human nutrition and well-being to the Blue Growth initiatives which is defined as “the sustainable contribution, and conservation, of living renewable resources in the marine and fresh water ecosystems as well as adjacent coastal and inland ecosystems, to food and nutrition security and poverty alleviation.” FAO’s Global Action on Pollination Services for Sustainable Agriculture has also been established to support the facilitation and coordination of the International Pollinators Initiative. FAO also holds the secretariat of other important initiatives such as the Global Soil Partnership, established in recognition of the central role of soil resources, including soil biodiversity, as a basis for food security and their provision of key ecosystem services, and of the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management, established to promote conservation through the sustainable management of terrestrial vertebrate wildlife in all biomes and geographic areas and to increase cooperation and coordination on sustainable wildlife management issues among its members and partners. The Forest and Landscape Restoration (FLR) Mechanism is also being established within FAO to support the implementation, monitoring and reporting of FLR at the country level, re-establishing ecosystem functions at the landscape scale and at the same time contributing to the achievement of the Bonn Challenge of restoring at least 150 million hectares of degraded land by 2020.

6. The FAO Conference is informed by a number of intergovernmental bodies which include the Technical Committees on Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and other Statutory Bodies, such as the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, where countries deliberate, at global or regional level, on several issues related to mandate of the FAO. These intergovernmental bodies have developed a number of biodiversity related instruments that vary from global conventions and treaties

(e.g. the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the International Plant Protection Convention, hosted by FAO) to policy instruments for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity (e.g. the Global Plans of Action on genetic resources for food and agriculture) to management guidelines and codes of conduct (e.g. the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries).

7. The national implementation of these instruments and initiatives should see collaboration across stakeholders involved in different sectors. Such collaboration should be seen as win-win approaches to solve long standing problems involving the unsustainable use of resources, the conflicting needs and priorities at local levels and others. The agriculture and environment sectors become in this way strong allies in the process to achieve healthy ecosystems and human wellbeing. Their implementation at national level should contribute to the achievement of many Aichi targets.

8. The Strategic Framework does not identify a detailed roadmap from 2014 to 2019 however a number of specific activities and outputs can be identified within the different programmes of work of the different parts of FAO such as the Multi-Year Programme of Work of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the Joint Work Plan of the Secretariats of the CBD and of FAO and its Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the Joint Work Programme of the CBD and IPPC Secretariats as well as major ongoing projects and initiatives. These initiatives, milestones and activities mainly contribute to Aichi Targets 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, and 16 as well as in a lesser extend to many of the others. A list of indicative initiatives, activities and milestones towards 2020 is presented below.

In 2014-2015

- Second Report on *the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*
- Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA).
- Global sustainable fisheries management and biodiversity conservation in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction Program (2014-2019).
- FAO support to CBD Secretariat regional capacity building workshops on ecosystem conservation and restoration.
- IPPC support to CBD Secretariat workshops on the management of invasive alien species and cooperation on the production of technical resources for training in the management of invasive alien species.
- ABS –Draft elements to facilitate domestic implementation of access and benefit-sharing for different subsectors of genetic resources for food and agriculture.
- Management of ecosystem services in relation to food and agriculture.
- Financial and technical support to regional CBD ecosystem restoration workshops in the Near East/North Africa, South America, Southeast Asia and Eastern/Southern Africa.

In 2016/2017:

- Improving and sustaining production intensification through integrated management of agricultural landscapes (Africa).
- Blue Growth – sustainable aquaculture development and intensification as a means to meeting the opportunities of the blue economy.
- Integrated approaches to efficiency of resources use.
- Building sustainability through food and agriculture.
- *The State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture*.

- *The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources.*
- Assessment of the implementation of the Second Global Plan of Action for plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

In 2018/2019:

- Development of elements related to the Code of Conduct of Responsible Fisheries and associated tools for assessing their implementation, aimed to maintain a broad genetic basis and to ensure sustainable use and conservation of aquatic genetic resources
- Review of implementation of the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources
- ABS – Review of existing access and benefit-sharing instruments and their impact on genetic resources for food and agriculture

In 2020-2021:

- Third Report on the *State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* and consideration of the Second Global Plan of Action for adoption
- Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA)
- Review of implementation of the Global Plan of Action on Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
