



European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)

37/2 Meeting of the Executive Committee

4 May 2018, 10.00-12.00

Review and recommendations on REU Work Programme 2018-19

Concept note 2018-19

Regional Initiative 3

Sustainable management of natural resources under a changing climate

I Introduction

The 30th European Regional Conference (ERC) in Turkey in 2016 endorsed¹ the priorities for the medium term period within the corporate Medium Term Plan 2018-21, on the basis of the Regional Strategic Thinking process² as follows:

- 1) Formulating effective policies for sustainable and inclusive growth for farmers and the rural population with emphasis on smallholders and family farms;
- 2) Enhancing the reach towards new markets through alignment of trade, food safety and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) policies to meet WTO commitments and through value chain development to meet international food safety and quality requirements;
- 3) Promoting sustainable natural resources management, combating land degradation and desertification, including mitigation and adaptation to climate change;
- 4) Addressing food insecurity and reduction of all forms of malnutrition.

In order to address the agreed regional priorities in the 2018-19 biennium, the ongoing work has been reviewed, taking into account the shift in trends and developments at regional and global level. Particular focus was given to external and internal challenges. Among them are the policy processes in the region related to smallholders, trade, market integration as well as meeting commitments made under the Paris Climate Agreement³, the Rome Declaration on Nutrition⁴ and the Framework for Action agreed at the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2)⁵, and efforts of the countries in the region to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The lessons learned from the implementation of the work programme in 2016-17 shows that there is a need for further coherence and alignment of activities at regional level with the country programmes, thereby increasing synergies and impact both at national and regional level.

In this context the two ongoing Regional Initiatives (RIs) have been revised, a new Regional Initiative on sustainable natural resource management has been conceptualized, as well as support

¹ ERC/16/7 <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mp179e.pdf>

² Regional Strategic Review Paper: <http://www.fao.org/3/b-i6102e.pdf>

³ http://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/convention/application/pdf/english_paris_agreement.pdf

⁴ <http://www.fao.org/3/a-ml542e.pdf>

⁵ http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/sites/default/files/files/107_ICN2-FFA/ML079_ICN2_FfA_en.pdf

in the area of food security and nutrition has been embedded in the three Regional Initiatives as crosscutting field.

- Regional Initiative 1: Empowering small holders and family farms for improved rural livelihood and poverty reduction
- Regional Initiative 2: Improving agri-food trade and market integration
- Regional Initiative 3: Sustainable natural resource management under a changing climate

The Regional Initiatives, as programmatic umbrella, guide and support the implementation of the country programme and regional work plans in a more coherent manner in order to increase country level impact and strengthen the synergies of technical support on key areas that are of concern to countries by focusing on priority areas. The Regional Initiatives' enhanced programmatic approach further ensures that cross-cutting issues such as nutrition, gender, statistics, governance and climate change are adequately addressed and better mainstreamed in the national and regional programmes. It allows to better respond to country demand for coordinated support to the interlinked development processes and the ongoing setting of SDG targets at national level.

Main objective of Regional Initiative 3

Main objective of Regional Initiative 3 (RI3) is to strengthen countries' capacities to achieve Sustainable Natural Resource Management (SNRM) including adaptation and mitigation to Climate Change (CC) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

RI3 intends to provide a mechanism to support member countries of the region to address the interlinked challenges of CC and sustainable natural resource management including degraded natural resources through transitioning to more climate resilient and sustainable food systems. RI3 supports countries to develop context specific interventions that address multiple objectives, including the UN Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Paris Agreement⁶ commitments (Intended Nationally Determined Contributions - INDCs), Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction⁷. In addition, RI3 creates the regional mechanisms to support member states to access environmental climate finance such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF7). RI3 is in line with FAO's new climate change strategy. The RI3 will also work on scaling up agroecology to achieve multiple objectives through integrated practices supported by cross sectoral coherent policies. A multitude of agroecological systems that exist in the region and spread across landscapes serve as an invaluable resource for understanding the essential links between communities, knowledge, culture, biodiversity, landscapes, economy and governance. Hence, RI3 will strengthen transition processes by drawing from agroecological experiences that have shown opportunities.

The Initiative has a lead Strategic Programme SP2, but contributes to Strategic Objective 1, 3, 4 and 5 as well.

⁶ http://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/convention/application/pdf/english_paris_agreement.pdf

⁷ http://www.unisdr.org/files/43291_sendaiframeworkfordrren.pdf

Main components of Regional Initiative 3

1. Improved policy alignment, coordination and cooperation for sustainable use of natural resources, CC and DRR

The main challenges for the work of the regional initiative under this component are to improve policy coherence and the integration of CC into national rural development, agricultural and environmental frameworks and legislation. The conditions under which these challenges tend to be addressed are policies and programme formulation, aimed at strengthening sustainable agriculture, forestry and fisheries, and addressing CC and environmental degradation (2.2.1) as well as improved capacities to facilitate cross-sectorial policy dialogue to develop more integrated strategies (2.2.2) and strengthened capacities of governments and public organizations to formulate and promote risk reduction and crisis management policies, strategies, plans and investment programmes (5.1.1). Another important issue is creating an enabling environment (legislation, incentives, services, etc.) to ensure required sustainable and climate resilient transitions and strengthening national, regional and international collaboration and knowledge exchange to address priorities such as transboundary pests and diseases other threats to production systems caused by CC. Hence RI3 provides sufficient grounds to improve governments' and stakeholders' capacities and to support knowledge generation and advocacy strengthening, for enhancing synergies amongst social protection, nutrition, agriculture and natural resources management, including CC (3.3.2) as well as adoption of more integrated and cross-sectoral practices (2.1.2) and improve coordination and resource mobilization for risk reduction and crisis management (5.1.2). This component will also aim at the provision of support, including awareness raising and capacity development, to ensure effective integration of agriculture, forestry and fisheries into international governance mechanisms, especially in relation to the 2030 Agenda (2.3.1).

2. Effective provision/collection of data, tools and services for effective decision making on addressing natural resource management, CC and DRR

The main focus of the component is to provide support to countries in implementation of SDG indicators under FAO custodianship in order to provide a powerful tool in monitoring progress towards achievement of SDGs. Further emphasis is on improving agro-meteorology services, early warning and hazard mapping, providing support for CC modelling, scenario building and options provision, with adequate gender disaggregated data and strengthened capacities to develop, monitor and use CC and SDG and DRR related data and targets required to meet (I)NDC, UNFCCC Paris Agreement transparency framework, SFDRR-monitor and SDG targets. This component of RI3 will support the improvement of the capacities (technical and managerial) of governments and stakeholders to collect, analyse and report data for decision making (2.4.2,4.3.1) and set up or improve mechanisms to identify and monitor threats and shocks (including climate and natural factors and market/economic factors), assess risks and deliver integrated and timely early warning on food security (5.2.1). This includes improved capacity in assessment and monitoring of all prospects of food security (all pillars). It also covers the GHG emissions for the agricultural sector, and the development of strategic knowledge products (2.4.1).

3. Capacity development for sustainable natural resource management and climate change adaptation and mitigation and disaster risk reduction

The main challenges for RI3 under this component are to strengthen (sub)-national capacities to address (a) sustainable approaches for natural resource management including land

degradation/desertification, degradation and sustainable use of genetic resources, (b) water scarcity, and (c) threats including pest and diseases and natural hazard induced impacts. This would include Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) farm, fisheries and landscape interventions. Coastal and riparian rural communities are particularly at risk to severe weather episodes from CC and require assistance to formulate adaptation policies and to develop DRR strategies (FAO CC strategy 1.i). The capacities of government, communities and other key stakeholders will be strengthened to enhance implementation of policies, strategies, regulatory frameworks and investment plans supportive of inclusive and efficient agri-food systems development (4.2.1). Prevention and mitigation practices are upscaled that reduce the impacts of threats and crises (5.3.1), as well as enabled to assess vulnerability and measure resilience (5.2.2). Another area will be to strengthen/support (sub)-national capacities to prepare for and respond to threats and crises related to climate change (FAO cc strategy 1.d) and to access and integrate climate and environmental financing into national development modalities (GCF, GEF, etc.) (FAO CC strategy 1.b) Furthermore, FAO supports countries in improving their national capacity for emergency preparedness to reduce the impact of disasters and crises (5.4.1) and support context specific analysis and institutionalization processes of non-structural vulnerability reduction practices and measures, like risk transfer (5.3.2). In light of this, mechanisms for piloting, testing or scaling up practices will be used as appropriate capacities and institutions will be strengthened to implement monitor and evaluate policies and international instruments, programmes and legislation that foster sustainable production and address CC and environmental degradation (2.1.1, 2.3.2) and relevant to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and all forms of malnutrition (1.3.2). Nutrition and gender-sensitive emergency response will be provided to the countries affected by a crisis with impact on agriculture in the region.

Partnership under Regional Initiative 3

Considering the broad areas of intervention that fall under CC work, Regional Initiative 3 will be structured to ensure the participation and support of a number of partners with different expertise and cooperate advantages. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) is seen as a strategic partner for climate, agro-meteorological and CC modelling and monitoring interventions. The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) is key for certain Green Climate Fund (GCF) readiness support mechanisms as well as ecosystem based CC adaptation work. The Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), in particular the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), will be key in developing climate smart agriculture interventions in drylands. RI3 will also work closely with national and regional research and capacity building institutions to ensure ownership as well as sustainability of the interventions. RI3 will also assess private sector engagement, in particular regarding financing and upscaling mechanisms. FAO and UNECE have been working together for more than seventy years for the sustainable management of forests in the region through the Joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section in Geneva, including, joint data collection with Forest Europe, monitoring sustainable forest management, forest sector outlook studies, forest market reviews etc, and providing substantial contributions to SDG 15 in the region.

Cross-cutting issues addressed under Regional Initiative 3

RI3 focuses on developing and improving policies and governance mechanisms to address sustainable production, climate change and environmental degradation in a coherent and integrated way by strengthening the elements of governance to undertake natural resources management improvement programmes. In addition, RI3 will help to redesign approaches for effective

integration of agriculture, forestry and fisheries in international governance mechanisms related to the 2030 Agenda, climate change, biodiversity and environmental agendas and international agreements. RI3 helps countries in the region to promote higher profiling of climate change impact on food security and nutrition in financing decisions and make sure that these perspectives are appropriately prioritized in relevant funding bodies related to climate change. RI3 supports political dialogue between countries and encourages better coordination on CC adaptation and DRR, through the collection and exchange of statistical information on threats caused by climate change and natural disasters to food security and nutrition as well as agriculture-related infrastructure. The RI3 supports countries in the region to design and implement comprehensive, gender-equitable policies, strategies and programmes, in the context of disaster risk reduction and climate change, for example, by supporting countries to integrate a gender perspective in their National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) and in the implementation of their NDCs.

Linkage to Agenda 2030 and SDGs

RI3 contributes to several SDGs focusing on strengthening capacities on prevention and mitigation practices, non-structural vulnerability, sustainable consumption and production under SDG 12 and addressing the need for more productive and sustainable agriculture under SDG Target 2.4, and supporting climate change adaptation and mitigation under SDG 13. RI3 furthermore contributes SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation, in particular target 6.4 increasing water efficiency; SDG 13 on climate action in particular targets 13.1 strengthening resilience, adaptation and natural disasters, 13.2 policy integration, 13.3 improved education and capacity building; SDG 14 on oceans and seas; SDG 15 life on land, including targets 15.1 sustainable use and restoration of ecosystems, 15.2 forest management, 15.3 combat desertification and restore degraded land and soil.

Areas of cross-Regional Initiative collaboration

There is a strong cooperation among the three Regional Initiatives taking into account the synergies in their work programme 2018-19. Main focus of the collaboration between the three Regional Initiatives is to support countries in achieving SDGs, with special attention on SDG 1 and 2 and sustainable food and agriculture. Regional Initiative 1 and 2 work closely together on promoting more inclusive and sustainable agri-food systems, including the improvement of nutrition, prevention of food losses and waste at small-scale producer level, and income generation for poor rural producers (3.1.2). Regional Initiatives 1 and 3 complement each other on ensuring that the smallholders and family farmers share equitably in the benefits of climate mechanisms that enable them to improve their productivity and resilience, and supporting them as key actors in sustainably managing the natural resource landscapes (2.1.2). Regional Initiative 2 and 3 complement each other on creating an enabling environment by strengthening institutions' capacity for implementing policies for sustainable production (2.3.2), on developing investment programmes for Climate Smart Agriculture technologies (2.2.1) and on reducing food losses and waste (4.3.1). With the introduction of traditional export commodities from ECA countries to new markets, there is increased demand for information on relevant policies, including packaging regulations, for accessing these markets, reduce product rejection, and to facilitate small-holders to benefit from these market opportunities. To this end, support is coordinated across RIs, with RI2 and RI3 aiming to improve the capacity of governments and stakeholders to use financial resources to eradicate hunger, food insecurity and all forms of malnutrition (1.3.2).