

***REPORT***

**Amman  
The Hashemite  
Kingdom of Jordan  
26 – 30 January  
2014**

**NEAR EAST  
FORESTRY  
AND RANGE  
COMMISSION**

**Twenty first Session**



**Food  
and  
Agriculture  
Organization  
of  
the  
United  
Nations**

## PREVIOUS SESSIONS OF THE COMMISSION

First session	Tehran, Iran	24-29 September 1955
Second session	Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt	27 October – 1 November 1958
Third session	Adana, Turkey	30 April – 5 May 1962
Fourth session	Beirut, Lebanon	15-22 June 1964
Fifth session	Amman, Jordan	25-30 September 1967
Sixth session	Tehran, Iran	25-30 April 1970
Seventh session	Baghdad, Iraq	30 November– December 1974
Eighth session	Khartoum, Sudan	23-28 February 1978
Ninth session	Nicosia, Cyprus	6-10 June 1983
Tenth session	Tunis, Tunisia	29 June – 3 July 1987
Eleventh session	Ankara, Turkey	15-19 October 1990
Twelfth session	Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt	21-24 October 1996
Thirteenth session	Damascus, Syria	6-9 December 1998
Fourteenth session	Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran	1-4 July 2000
Fifteenth session	Khartoum, Republic of the Sudan	28-31 January 2002
Sixteenth session	Beirut, Republic of Lebanon	24-27 May 2004
Seventeenth session	Larnaka, Cyprus	5-9 June 2006
Eighteenth session	Khartoum, Republic of the Sudan	18-21 February 2008
Nineteenth session	Hammamet, Tunisia	5-9 April 2010
Twentieth session	Antalya, Turkey	29 January – 2 February 2012

**FO:NEFRC/2014/REP**

**REPORT**

**of the**

**TWENTY FIRST SESSION**

**of the**

**NEAR EAST FORESTRY AND RANGE COMMISSION**

**Amman, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan  
26 – 30 January 2014**

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS**  
**Regional Office for the Near East**  
Cairo, 2014

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**SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS****FOR THE ATTENTION OF  
MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE COMMISSION**

The Commission:

- Recommended countries to designate forestry or rangelands organizations as country focal points for the NEFRC and that heads of these organizations represent their countries in the Commission.
- Recommended the establishment of a system of permanent sample plots across the region in a cooperative effort to monitor impacts.
- Urged countries to continue developing and enhancing forest inventory systems as a basis for informing climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and measures and requested FAO to support countries' efforts in this regard.
- Recommended that countries consider the establishment of a coordination mechanism for providing input from the region to UNFF and that FAO provide support in this regard.
- Stressed the need for sustained funding for forestry training and research, particularly physical restructuring and soft skills. The region could work together with FAO to specify needs further for discussion with donors or integration into Country Programming Frameworks.
- Highlighted the need for sound information and data on direct and, particularly, on indirect contributions of forests and rangelands to food security and nutrition and requested FAO support to countries in this regard.
- Recommended countries to raise the awareness of decision-makers of the value of forest monitoring and use of the resulting data, and requested FAO to support countries in this regard.
- Recommended countries and FAO to define criteria and indicators for sustainable forest and rangeland management which also include the contribution of sylvo-pastoral and agro-sylvo-pastoral systems to food security and nutrition.
- Recommended that countries and FAO work to increase the awareness of policy-makers on the importance of and benefits to be gained by sustainable dryland forest and rangeland management and restoration in an effort to raise the profile of drylands on the political agenda in the region and increase related investments.
- Highlighted the close relationship between forest and rangelands management, and recommended countries and FAO to pay adequate attention to the economic values of forests and rangelands.
- The Commission requested FAO and countries to collaborate in setting up a working group or network on forest monitoring for countries of Near East and North Africa.

## **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **FOR THE ATTENTION OF COFO/FAO**

The Commission:

- Noted with satisfaction the achievements of FAO since the 20<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission and recommended to strengthen regional and sub-regional cooperation for better addressing forest and rangeland related issues.
- Recommended FAO to strengthen partnership with countries and scale-up the activities on treated waste water and to consider establishment of a working group on rangelands under COFO.
- Requested FAO to put in place mechanisms for capacity development and develop guidelines tailored to the region's needs and context.
- Requested FAO's continued support to access climate change financing for adaptation and mitigation, including through sub-regional programmes for climate change adaptation, and encouraged countries to develop such programmes.
- Requested FAO to support the development of integrated policies aiming to halt and reverse the deterioration of watershed areas.
- The Commission further noted the need for full understanding the complexity of managing watersheds including the impacts of external drivers and encouraged FAO to play an active role in this regard.
- Requested FAO to continue to provide technical assistance to countries for the finalization and implementation of their Great Green Wall Action Plans and for securing financial support for these efforts.
- Noted that forests can contribute to solving many developmental challenges and the Commission recommended that the role of forests be fully captured in the Strategic Framework.
- Noted the need for forestry to develop a common understanding of the role and relevance of emerging concepts such as the green economy, and recommended FAO to support this and ensure that forests and their contributions are properly recognized.
- Also requested FAO to strengthen its role in the global forest architecture.
- Further noted the role of FAO support in country activities and requested FAO to pay particular attention to the implications of the ongoing political and economic changes in several parts of the region and develop cooperation with countries accordingly.
- Noted the need for policies being based on sound information, and recommended countries to develop national forest and rangeland inventory systems to collect timely and reliable data that can support development of forest policies and improve planning and requested FAO to support countries' efforts.
- Requested FAO to give adequate attention to policies and programmes for halting deforestation and protecting water sources in particular in the Near East and include in the COFO agenda the issue of dryland forests and low forest cover countries.



- Suggested, as a possible topic, to examine how FAO can help in addressing the impact of crises on sustainable forest and rangeland management. It recommended FAO to identify suitable influential speakers from all regions to showcase the relevance of forests.
- Expressed a strong preference for a standalone forest SDG that would include rangelands, wildlife, trees outside forests and mountains and requested FAO to support this proposal.
- Stressed the need for sustained funding for forestry training and research, particularly physical restructuring and soft skills. The region could work together with FAO to specify needs further for discussion with donors or integration into Country Programming Frameworks.
- Highlighted the need for sound information and data on direct and, particularly, on indirect contributions of forests and rangelands to food security and nutrition and requested FAO support to countries in this regard.
- Recommended FAO to provide additional support to complete outstanding reports on the State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources.
- Urged FAO to include in the Toolbox guidance on implementing the landscape approach, including in watersheds, and information on traditional knowledge. The Commission stressed the need to make the Toolbox widely accessible and requested FAO to provide training on the use of the Toolbox once completed.
- Requested FAO to increase its efforts in supporting countries on the above areas both in normative and operational work, and in particular in capacity building and training; and to facilitate international cooperation on forest fires.
- Noted that the Voluntary Guidelines will be a source of inspiration to amend existing national guidelines. The Commission requested FAO to inform member countries on the plan of action for implementing the Guidelines and to support countries upon request.
- Highlighted that evolving partnerships are key mechanisms for promoting sustainable development. Existing successful partnership models should be adapted and replicated. It was recommended that civil society and the private sector should join forces with national and international institutions to enable this.



## INTRODUCTION AND OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The Twenty-first Session of the Near East Forestry and Range Commission (NEFRC) and the Third Near East Forestry Week (NEFW) were held in Amman, Jordan, from 26 to 30 January 2014, at the kind invitation of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The meetings attracted 262 participants for the opening session. The Commission session was attended by 36 representatives from 15 member countries and 6 representatives from global and regional intergovernmental organizations. *Annex B* provides a full list of NEFRC participants. Parallel to the Commission's session, the third NEFW was attended by 143 participants from 16 countries. Both sessions were conducted in Arabic and English.

2. The 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the Commission and the Third Near East Forestry Week were held under the common theme of “*Sustainable management of forest and rangelands: towards a green economy in the Near East and North Africa*”. Through this theme, the 21<sup>st</sup> NEFRC and related activities during the week strived to bring sustainable management of forest and rangelands to the center of green economy discussions. They also aimed to provide an opportunity for the participants of the NEFRC and wide spectrum of other stakeholders with an interest in forest and rangeland issues to share knowledge and exchange experiences.

3. Six side events and three joint events as well as a series of sessions were held during the Third Near East Forestry Week. The list of side events is given in *Annex F*.

4. In the opening session which was honored by his Excellency Dr Akef Alzubi, Minister of Agriculture of Jordan, Mr Fadi Shraideh, Director of the IUCN Regional Office of West Asia drew attention to the importance of integrating forest and rangelands in local planning, the benefit of sharing experiences and knowledge and the need to support local communities. He emphasized the importance of the week in presenting international experiences and ensuring partnerships needed in developing policies, legislation and investment.

5. Mr Eduardo Rojas-Briales, Assistant Director-General for Forestry, expressed, on behalf of the Director-General, FAO's gratitude to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. He noted that the FAO Conference expressed appreciation for the inclusive and transparent priority setting in FAO-Forestry based on the inputs of the Regional Forestry Commissions. He referred to the crucial role of forest and rangelands in addressing the increasing water stress and recurrent droughts in the region. He noted also the crucial role of forests in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) process and outlined many important steps and events planned for 2015. He recalled that as part of the celebration of the First International Day of Forests, the Director-General of FAO had launched a call for a “Zero illegal deforestation initiative” related to the “Zero hunger challenge” of the UN Secretary-General. He referred to FAO's new Strategic Framework that will enable stronger support to country action and regional collaboration.

6. H.E. Dr Akef Alzubi, , opened the Twenty-first Session of the Commission and the Third Near East Forestry week on behalf of the Prime Minister of Jordan, H.E. Dr Abdullah Elnsour. He expressed his Government's pleasure to host the session. He highlighted the long-term plan to manage forest and rangelands resources and Jordan's needs to revise its forest policy and strategies towards sustainable management with participation of local communities. He emphasized the importance of cooperation and collaboration within the region to tackle water scarcity, climate change under the Near East political, social, economic and institutional transformations.

## ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS (Item 2)

7. Under the guidance of Mr Ali Temerit (Turkey), the outgoing Chairman of the Commission, the provisional agenda (FO:NEFRC/2014/1) was adopted (see *Annex A*). The documents considered by the Commission are listed in *Annex C*.

8. In accordance with the provisions of Rules II-1 and II-5 of its Rules of Procedure, the Commission elected the Chair, two Vice-Chairs and one Rapporteur. The composition of the Bureau is as follows:

Chairman:	Mr Issa Al Shobaki (Jordan)
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice-Chairperson:	Mr Osman Omar Abdalla (Sudan)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chairperson:	Mr Rafik Aini (Tunisia)
Rapporteur:	Mr Fahd Ghazi Saleh El Harbi (Saudi Arabia)

9. Mr Abdelhamied Adam Hamid, Senior Forestry Officer, FAO Regional Office for the Near East, Cairo, served as Secretary of the Commission.

### **FOLLOW-UP ON REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE COMMISSION (Item 3)**

#### **(i) Secretariat report on FAO and country activities in the Region and follow up on the requests and recommendations of the 20<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission**

10. The Secretariat presented document FO:NEFRC/2014/2 entitled “ *Secretariat report of FAO and country activities in the region and follow-up on requests and recommendations of the 20<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission*”. The Commission noted with satisfaction the achievements of FAO since the 20<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission and recommended to strengthen regional and sub-regional cooperation for better addressing forests and rangelands related issues. The Commission further recommended FAO to strengthen partnership with countries and scale-up the activities on treated waste water and to consider establishment of a working group on rangelands under COFO.

11. The Secretariat presented a synthesis of activities undertaken by Member countries during the period of 2012-2013. It reported that only 9 of the 27 members provided reports on the measures taken to implement the recommendations. The Commission recommended countries to designate forestry or rangelands organizations as country focal points for the NEFRC and that heads of these organizations represent their countries in the Commission.

### **VALUATION OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF FOREST AND RANGELAND TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE NEAR EAST (Item 4)**

12. This session was organized jointly with the Third Near East Forestry Week. The Secretariat presented document FO:NEFRC/2014/4 “*Green economy in the Near East – Challenges and prospects: Valuation of the contribution of forest and rangeland to sustainable development in the Near East region*” describing the green economy concept, its opportunities for forestry and rangelands to contribute to the green economy in the Near East Region, and the importance of valuation of contributions of forests and rangelands in this context. Possible actions for enhancing these contributions could include, inter alia, maintaining and increasing natural capital (e.g. through the Great Green Wall Initiative), promoting the production of green forest and rangeland products and services, creating green jobs, devising payment for ecosystem services schemes, broadening the range of services from forests and rangelands including through ecotourism, and developing systems for green accounting. Valuation can lead to increased direct investments in the forests and rangelands sectors essential for sustainable management and restoration, and to advancing the green economy. Experts from the Netherlands, Jordan and Pakistan presented case studies and valuation methods used in Jordan and Pakistan.

13. The ensuing discussions highlighted also data collection challenges and the need for identifying suitable and common methodologies and guidelines for valuation. The need for sharing outcomes of technical studies, behavioral changes in society and persuading the beneficiaries to pay for services was also noted.

14. Participants invited FAO to support countries’ efforts to build a team of experts to look at equity, economic efficiency and environment related issues and make valuation as a continuous process. They emphasized the need for increasing among decision makers, the understanding and awareness of

the total economic value of forests and rangelands, thereby supporting the creation of enabling environments for increased investments in their sustainable management. Participants requested FAO

to put in place mechanisms for capacity development and develop guidelines tailored to the region's needs and context.

## **PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF FOREST AND RANGELAND TOWARD GREEN ECONOMY IN THE NEAR EAST (Item 5)**

### **(i) Forests, rangelands and climate change**

15. The Secretariat presented document FO:NEFRC/2014/3.3 "*Facilitating sub-regional cooperation on forests, rangelands and climate change adaptation*" with an overview of recent developments in international climate change policy and financing. It informed the Commission of FAO support for sub-regional cooperation in climate change adaptation in the Near East. FAO stands ready to respond to requests by Near East countries or sub-regions for support in forest, range and climate change adaptation and mitigation

16. The Commission stressed the importance of capacity development, including through the UNREDD programme, to enable countries to fulfill their commitments under UNFCCC on measurement, verification and reporting.

17. The Commission requested FAO's continued support to access climate change financing for adaptation and mitigation, including through sub-regional programmes for climate change adaptation, and encouraged countries to develop such programmes.

18. The Commission underlined the need for forest ecosystem monitoring as a means to assess the impact of climate change on forest and range resources, and recommended the establishment of a system of permanent sample plots across the region in a cooperative effort to monitor impacts. The Commission urged countries to continue developing and enhancing forest inventory systems as a basis for informing climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and measures and requested FAO to support countries' efforts in this regard.

### **(ii) Watershed management**

19. The secretariat presented document FO:NEFRC/2014/3.4 "*Watershed management in the Near East*" underlining the importance of watershed management and informing the Commission of areas where watershed management is integrated within FAO's new Strategic Framework.

20. FAO provided further insight to its work focusing at different levels (local, national, regional and global) to support upland conservation and reiterated its commitment to facilitate exchange of knowledge and information on watershed management with countries also from other regions.

21. The Commission expressed gratitude for FAO's continued engagement in supporting and promoting the sustainable management of watersheds.

22. The Commission requested FAO to support the development of integrated policies aiming to halt and reverse the deterioration of watershed areas.

23. The Commission noted the importance of conducting new adaptive research and identifying and disseminating traditional techniques. The Commission further noted the need for full understanding the complexity of managing watersheds including the impacts of external drivers and encouraged FAO to play an active role in this regard.

24. The Commission noted the importance of secure tenure rights to facilitate sustainable management of watersheds and mountain areas. The relevance of the Voluntary Guidelines for responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests was also highlighted.

### **(iii) The Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative**

#### **(iv) Guidelines for restoring the resilience of forest landscapes in drylands**

25. This was a joint session of the Commission and Near East Forestry Week. The secretariat presented document FO:NEFRC/2014/3.1 “*The Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative*” (GGWSSI), and FO:NEFRC/2014/3.2 “*Global guidelines for restoring the resilience of forest landscapes in drylands*”. Other presentations included ICARDA’S Experience in Rangelands Rehabilitation and Management in the Near East and North Africa Region: Case of Sustainable Development of Landscape Depressions in Pastoral Ecosystems, Rangeland Vegetation Monitoring and Assessment using Digital Vegetation Cover Technique (DVCT) by Dr. Mounir Louhaichi (ICARDA); and Community-based Rangeland Rehabilitation: The Case Study and the Royal Botanic Garden of Jordan by Dr. Mustafa Shudiefat.

26. The session highlighted that the GGWSSI seeks to foster a harmonized approach for sustainable land management and restoration and to support a mosaic of related actions in the Sahara and Sahel countries. Appreciation was expressed to FAO for its support and the need for continued assistance to countries to finalize their GGWSSI action plans was noted. Participants stressed the need for technical methods and tools to support dryland forest and rangeland management and restoration in the region; the global guidelines on dryland forest landscape restoration and the DVCT are two such tools. The session highlighted successful experiences in rangeland management in the region. It underlined the importance of community-based and participatory approaches for dryland forest and rangeland restoration and the need to ensure that actions result not only in ecosystem restoration but in monetary benefits to the land users. It underlined the necessity of providing support to local communities to help them through the transition to sustainable land management practices. Participants stressed the need for capacity development and for support in monitoring progress and impacts of restoration efforts.

27. The Commission recommended that countries and FAO work to increase the awareness of policy-makers on the importance of and benefits to be gained by sustainable dryland forest and rangeland management and restoration in an effort to raise the profile of drylands on the political agenda in the region and increase related investments.

28. The Commission requested FAO to continue to provide technical assistance to countries for the finalization and implementation of their Great Green Wall Action Plans and for securing financial support for these efforts.

### **GLOBAL ITEMS OF RELEVANCE FOR THE REGION ((Item 6)**

#### **(i) The new Strategic Framework for FAO**

29. The secretariat presented document FO: NEFRC/2014/5 “*The new Strategic Framework for FAO*”. In introducing the agenda item, ADG Rojas-Briaes described the key elements of and the process for developing the strategic framework as well as the way forestry elements have been incorporated in all five Objectives. He further explained how the guidance from COFO supported the development of the strategy. He invited the Commission to give further guidance on this work and in particular on the potential need for revising FAO’s Forestry Strategy so that it could be fully aligned with the new Strategic Framework.

30. In the course of the discussion, Commission Members expressed support for the new Strategic Framework and stressed the need for FAO focusing on sustainable development related issues on a holistic and integrated manner. It was noted that forests can contribute to solving many developmental challenges and the Commission recommended that the role of forests be fully captured in the Strategic Framework.

31. The Commission also noted the need for forestry to develop a common understanding of the role and relevance of emerging concepts such as the green economy, and recommended FAO to support this and ensure that forests and their contributions are properly recognized.

#### **(ii) Strategic Evaluation of FAO's Role and Work in Forestry: Management Response**

32. The secretariat presented document FO:NEFRC/2014/8 "*Strategic evaluation of FAO's role and work in forestry: Management Response*". ADG Rojas-Briales explained the relevance of the findings of the evaluation in shaping FAO Forestry's work globally and regionally both on the normative and operational areas. The evaluation largely contributed to sharpening the focus on several key areas, being more responsive to Members' needs and strengthening the collaboration between global, regional and country levels. It also requested FAO to strengthen its role in the global forest architecture.

33. The Commission took note of the report with appreciation and encouraged FAO to fully implement the recommendations. The Commission further noted the role of FAO support in country activities and requested FAO to pay particular attention to the implications of the ongoing political and economic changes in several parts of the region and develop cooperation with countries accordingly.

#### **(iii) UNFF10 outcomes**

34. The Secretariat presented document FO:NEFRC/2014/6 "*UNFF10 outcomes*" recalling that key issues included forests' role in economic development, the follow up to Rio+20, means of implementation and the review of the international arrangement on forests.

35. The Commission noted the need for policies being based on sound information, and recommended countries to develop national forest and rangeland inventory systems to collect timely and reliable data that can support development of forest policies and improve planning and requested FAO to support countries' efforts.

36. The Commission recommended that countries consider the establishment of a coordination mechanism for providing input from the region to UNFF and that FAO provide support in this regard.

37. The Commission requested FAO to give adequate attention to policies and programmes for halting deforestation and protecting water sources in particular in the Near East and include in the COFO agenda the issue of dryland forests and low forest cover countries.

#### **(iv) Preparations for the XIV World Forestry Congress**

38. The Secretariat presented document FO:NEFRC/2014/7 "*Preparations for the XIV World Forestry Congress*" explaining the nature, scope, expected outcomes, key themes and the progress in preparing for the Congress and invited the Commission's input in this regard.

39. The Commission suggested, as a possible topic, to examine how FAO can help in addressing the impact of crises on sustainable forest and rangeland management. It recommended FAO to identify suitable influential speakers from all regions to showcase the relevance of forests.

40. The CBD Secretariat indicated their interest in contributing to making the Congress a success.

41. Members were encouraged to provide further contributions in writing to the Commission secretary.

#### **(v) The UN development agenda beyond 2015: sustainable development goals**

42. The Secretariat presented document FO:NEFRC/2014/9 "*The UN development agenda beyond 2015: Sustainable development goals*" (SDGs) and the background and process of formulating these

goals that will shape the UN development agenda beyond 2015. An Interagency Technical Support Team for Forests prepared a Forest Issue Brief that will be the basis for the Open Working Group's review of forests-related issues at its 8<sup>th</sup> and last session in February 2014.

43. The Secretariat highlighted the importance of having governments deciding between the following options: promoting a standalone goal on forests; or a broader SDG on natural resources with forest issues mainstreamed into relevant SDGs through targets and indicators.

44. Commission Members noted, in this context, the key role played by the forest sector in sustainable development, particularly by contributing to food security, nutrition, biodiversity conservation, adaptation to climate change, environment protection and economic development.

45. The Commission highlighted the close relationship between forest and rangelands management, and recommended countries and FAO to pay adequate attention to the economic values of forests and rangelands. The Commission expressed a strong preference for a standalone forest SDG that would include rangelands, wildlife, trees outside forests and mountains and requested FAO to support this proposal.

#### **FORESTRY EDUCATION AND KNOWLEDGE IN THE NEAR EAST (Item 7)**

46. The discussion was based on the Secretariat presentation of document FO:NEFRC/2014/15 "*Strengthening forestry education and research in the Near East*" explaining the background and modalities for a possible advisory panel on forest knowledge as well as the steps taken since the last COFO to promote forestry education and research within FAO's work.

47. The Commission noted the need for a solid knowledge base for SFM and research and education as key in providing this. It was further noted that forestry education should go beyond the sector's boundaries and contribute to better understanding of the importance and role of forests by various stakeholders and the societies at large.

48. The Commission also noted the challenges related to both finding employment by forestry graduates and finding qualified employees with medium-level education and suggested that these be considered in education programmes.

49. The Commission stressed the need for sustained funding for forestry training and research, particularly physical restructuring and soft skills. The region could work together with FAO to specify needs further for discussion with donors or integration into Country Programming Frameworks.

#### **IN SESSION SEMINAR (Item 8)**

##### **(i) Forests for Food Security and Nutrition. Follow-up to the conclusions of the International Conference**

50. The Commission considered the secretariat presentation of document FO:NEFRC/2014/17 "*Forests for Food Security and Nutrition. Follow-up to the conclusions of the International Conference*".

51. The Commission noted the need to harmonise forest, rangeland, wildlife and food security policies and encourage countries to exchange information on these areas.

52. The Commission highlighted the need for sound information and data on direct and, particularly, on indirect contributions of forests and rangelands to food security and nutrition and requested FAO support to countries in this regard.

53. The Commission recommended countries and FAO to define criteria and indicators for sustainable forest and rangeland management which also include the contribution of sylvo-pastoral and agro-sylvo-pastoral systems to food security and nutrition.



**(ii) State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources (SoWFGR)**

54. The Secretariat presented "*The State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources and the global plan of action for the conservation, sustainable use and development of forest genetic resources*" (FO: NEFRC/2014/14), reporting on progress in developing the report and the action plan.

55. Commission members expressed appreciation for the technical assistance provided by FAO for the preparation of their country reports and looked forward to seeing these reflected in the global report. The Commission recommended FAO to provide additional support to complete outstanding reports. The Commission noted the potential value in strengthening links between the SoWFGR process and the Silva Mediterranea working group on genetic resources.

**(iii) Sustainable forest management toolbox**

56. On the basis of Secretariat Note FO:NEFRC/2014/10, "*Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Toolbox*", the Commission considered the development of this comprehensive package of knowledge, technical tools and best practices in sustainable forest management.

57. The Commission welcomed the initiative, commending its innovativeness and value to support sustainable forest management. The Commission encouraged the eventual expansion of the scope of the Toolbox to provide guidance on forest policy, institutions, community participation and intersectoral collaboration.

58. The Commission urged FAO to include in the Toolbox guidance on implementing the landscape approach, including in watersheds, and information on traditional knowledge. The Commission stressed the need to make the Toolbox widely accessible and requested FAO to provide training on the use of the Toolbox once completed.

**(iv) Voluntary Guidelines on national forest monitoring**

59. The Secretariat presented document FO:NEFRC/2014/11 entitled "*Voluntary Guidelines on National Forest Monitoring*". The Commission thanked FAO for developing the Guidelines and confirmed their usefulness.

60. Members shared with the Commission information on their forest and forest ecosystem monitoring programmes, including efforts to involve local communities. The Commission recommended countries to raise the awareness of decision-makers of the value of forest monitoring and use of the resulting data, and requested FAO to support countries in this regard.

61. Commission Members offered their support for the development of these Guidelines. The Commission requested FAO and countries to collaborate in setting up a working group or network on forest monitoring for countries of Near East and North Africa.

**(v) Shaping the FAO Fire Management Umbrella Programme, managing wildfire related risks at the landscape level and improving inter-agency coordination**

62. The Commission discussed the issue of forest fires on the basis of document FO:NEFRC/2014/12 which presented main achievements and initiatives for implementing previous decisions of COFO and regional forestry commissions.

63. The Commission noted with appreciation the work of FAO in supporting countries to prevent, fight and mitigate the impact of forest fires. Members recalled to role of and the need for investing in preventive forest management, fire management strategies, monitoring and early warning systems, capacity building, international cooperation. The importance of collaboration between administrations and local communities were strongly emphasized.

64. The Commission requested FAO to increase its efforts in supporting countries on the above areas both in normative and operational work, and in particular in capacity building and training; and to facilitate international cooperation on forest fires.

**(vi) Voluntary Guidelines on the responsible governance of land tenure, fisheries and forestry**

65. The Secretariat presented document FO: NEFRC/2014/13 on “*Voluntary Guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forestry*”, providing an overview of the development process of the Guidelines, its content, and follow-up actions undertaken to support countries to apply the Guidelines, including:

- awareness raising,
- developing technical guides to translate the general principles to more practical mechanisms, and
- coordinating with other relevant FAO and partner programmes.

66. The Commission noted that the Voluntary Guidelines will be a source of inspiration to amend existing national guidelines. The Commission requested FAO to inform member countries on the plan of action for implementing the Guidelines and to support countries upon request.

**Joint session with the Commission**

67. This shared session with the Commission focused on partnerships for ensuring sustainable delivery of ecosystem services. The history, structure and activities of the Mountain Partnership were explained, including how the Partnership promotes the inclusion of mountain issues in the global agenda and the importance of including mountain communities in the decision making process. The relevance of policy-science dialogues was explained for increasing the contributions of Mediterranean forests to sustainable development, and specifically, to prevent research and policy fragmentation. The importance of partnerships for developing green value chains was described. Biodiversity management and rehabilitation projects under the Partnership between Holcim Lebanon and the Regional Office of Western Asia of the IUCN were presented.

68. The discussions highlighted that evolving partnerships are key mechanisms for promoting sustainable development. Existing successful partnership models should be adapted and replicated. It was recommended that civil society and the private sector should join forces with national and international institutions to enable this.

**CONTRIBUTION TO FAO GOVERNANCE: INPUT TO THE COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY AND THE REGIONAL CONFERENCES (Item 9)**

69. The Secretariat presented document FO: NEFRC/2014/16 “*Contribution to FAO governance – input to the Committee on Forestry and the Regional Conferences*” explaining the renewed governance structure of FAO and the role and relevance of inputs from regional forestry commissions to regional and global governing bodies.

70. The Commission developed its recommendations for COFO and the Regional Conference for the Near East, accordingly. These recommendations are contained in *Annex D* and *Annex E*, respectively.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Item 10)**

71. The Secretariat presented the Commission with the video spot prepared for the International Day of Forests on 21 March and invited countries to use it in their national TV networks. Countries were kindly requested to signal their intention in this regard to the Forestry Department.

72. The Commission was informed of the Extraordinary Session of the Silva Mediterranea Statutory network, which will be held immediately after the Committee on Forestry session in Rome in June to discuss the findings of the evaluation and the future of this body. Members of Silva Mediterranea were strongly encouraged to attend.

73. The Commission was also informed that all country reports prepared for the State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources are being used in the preparation of the global report and that these country reports will be posted on the FAO website, pending approval by the respective countries.

#### **DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION (Item 11)**

74. The Commission welcomed the proposal *in absentia* of the Government of Algeria to host the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Near East Forestry and Range Commission. The Commission requested the NEFRC Secretariat to consider this proposal when deciding on the date and venue of the next Session in consultation with member Governments in the region.

#### **ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> SESSION (Item 12)**

75. The Commission adopted the report as amended.

#### **CLOSURE OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> SESSION AND THE 3<sup>RD</sup> NEAR EAST FORESTRY WEEK (Item 13)**

76. Upon the conclusion of the session, the Chairman of the Commission thanked all delegates for the deliberations and active participation in the meeting. He also thanked FAO and its Regional Office and the Commission's Secretariat for the smooth running of the meeting. Mr Andrea Berloff, FAO Representative in Jordan, who addressed the audience on behalf of the Director-General of FAO, thanked the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for having hosted the Commission and for the excellent arrangements that had contributed to the meeting's success. The speakers also commended the interpreters and translators for their work and made a special mention to the organisations and institutions that had provided valuable materials for display during the Third Near East Forestry Week.

77. His Excellency, Dr Radi Altarawneh, Secretary General for the Minister of Agriculture of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan commended the good standard of debate and work of the Commission and declared the Commission closed on 30 January 2014.

## AGENDA

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Election of officers
3. Follow up on requests and recommendations of the 20<sup>th</sup> Session of the NEFRC
4. Valuation of the contribution of forest and rangeland to sustainable development in the Near East
5. Promoting sustainable management of forest and rangeland toward Green Economy in the Near East
  - Forests, rangelands and climate change
  - Watershed management
  - The Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel initiatives
  - The guidelines for restoring the resilience of forest landscapes in drylands
6. Global items of relevance for the Region
  - The new Strategic Framework for FAO
  - Strategic Evaluation of FAO's Role and Work in Forestry: Management Response
  - UNFF10 outcomes
  - Preparations for the XIV World Forestry Congress
  - The UN development agenda beyond 2015: sustainable development goals
7. Forestry education and knowledge in the Near East
8. In session seminar
  - Sustainable forest management (SFM) toolbox
  - Voluntary guidelines on national forest monitoring
  - Forests for Food Security and Nutrition. Follow-up to the conclusions of the International Conference
  - State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources
  - Shaping the FAO Fire Management Umbrella Programme, managing wildfire related risks at the landscape level and improving inter-agency coordination
  - Voluntary Guidelines on the responsible governance of land tenure, fisheries and forestry
9. Contribution to FAO governance: input to the Committee on Forestry and the Regional Conferences
10. Any other business
11. Date and place of the next session
12. Adoption of the report of the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the Near East Forestry and Range Commission
13. Closure of the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of NEFRC and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Near East Forestry Week

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2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chairperson:	Mr Rafik Aini (Tunisia)
Rapporteur:	Mr Fahd Ghazi Saleh El Harbi (Saudi Arabia)
Secretary:	Mr Abdelhamied Adam Hamid (FAO)

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**LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Title</b>
1	FO:NEFRC/2014/1	Provisional Agenda
3	FO:NEFRC/2014/2	FAO and country activities in the region and follow-up on requests and recommendations of the 20th Session of the Commission
4	FO:NEFRC/2014/4	Green economy in the Near East – Challenges and prospects: Valuation of the contribution of forest and rangeland to sustainable development in the Near East region
5	FO:NEFRC/2014/3.1	The Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative
	FO:NEFRC/2014/3.2	Global guidelines for restoring the resilience of forest landscapes in drylands
	FO:NEFRC/2014/3.3	Facilitating sub-regional cooperation on forests, rangelands and climate change adaptation
	FO:NEFRC/2014/3.4	Watershed management in the Near East
6	FO:NEFRC/2014/5	The new Strategic Framework for FAO
	FO: NEFRC/2014/6	UNFF10 outcomes
	FO:NEFRC/2014/7	Preparations for the XIV World Forestry Congress
	FO:NEFRC/2014/8	Strategic Evaluation of FAO's Role and Work in Forestry: Management Response
	FO: NEFRC/2013/9	The UN development agenda beyond 2015 : Sustainable development goals
7	FO:NEFRC/2014/15	Forestry education and research in the Near East
8	FO:NEFRC/2014/10	Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Toolbox
	FO:NEFRC/2014/11	Voluntary Guidelines on National Forest Monitoring
	FO:NEFRC/2014/12	Shaping the FAO Fire Management Umbrella Programme, managing wildfire-related risks at the landscape level and improving inter-agency coordination
	FO:NEFRC/2014/13	Voluntary Guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forestry
	FO:NEFRC/2014/14	The State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources and the global plan of action for the conservation, sustainable use and development of forest genetic resources
9	FO:NEFRC/2014/16	Contribution to FAO governance - Input to the Committee on Forestry and the Regional Conferences

FO: NEFRC/2014/17      Forests for Food Security and Nutrition. Follow-up to the conclusions of the International Conference

**Information documents**

FO:NEFRC/2014/Inf.1      Information Note for participants

FO:NEFRC/2014/Inf.2      Provisional Timetable

FO:NEFRC/2014/Inf.3      List of Documents

**ANNEX D****NEFRC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ATTENTION OF COFO**

<b><i>Priority issues for COFO to consider</i></b>	<b><i>Expected outcome of the considerations (information/decision)</i></b>	<b><i>Possible follow up activities for COFO and FAO (link to Annex 2)</i></b>	<b><i>RFC</i></b>
Forests, rangelands and watersheds in drylands and in LFCCs	Decision/recommendation for work priorities for the future; support to regional initiatives such as the Tehran Process	Analyze conditions, collect and share lessons learned, review key challenges, support the development of policies and programmes for addressing them	NEFRC
Forests and the SDGs	Information/Decision	Advise members and FAO on possible future steps for promoting the recognition of forests in the SDGs	NEFRC (EFC, APFC, NAFC)
Valuation of ecosystem services from forests and rangelands	Information and further guidance	Advise members and FAO on possible actions including strengthening FAO's work on this area	NEFRC (NAFC)
Forests in the new Strategic Framework	Information and further guidance	Advise FAO on including forests and rangelands in the new Strategic Framework	NEFRC (APFC, NAFC)
Role of forests and rangelands in climate change mitigation in particular through Carbon sequestration	Information and further guidance	Advise members and FAO on strengthening this forest function and on better accessing related financial resources	NEFRC

## ANNEX E

**NEFRC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR  
THE NEAR EAST**

<i>Priority issues for the RC to consider</i>	<i>Expected outcome of the considerations (information/decision)</i>	<i>Possible follow up activities for FAO (link to Annex D)</i>
<b>Regional Conference for the Near East</b>		
Positioning forests and rangelands properly in developmental policies and strategies	Information and possible guidance for countries and FAO to recognize the full value of the contribution of forests and rangelands to sustainable development and recognize them properly in developmental policies, strategies and programmes	Work on understanding the full value of goods and services, support the development of integrated, cross-sectoral policies, strategies and programmes and support their implementation
Recognize the special role of forests and rangelands and through this enhance synergies among the Rio Conventions	Information and possible guidance for countries to enhance collaboration on the national and regional levels	Support countries in developing related policies, strategies and programmes
Recognize the need for building capacity of institutions and individuals on forests and range in the region as relates to the areas under FAO's new Strategic Framework	Guidance for FAO to focus its programmes on capacity building and related education/extension.	Give stronger focus to activities in support of capacity building and education

**Third Near East Forestry Week  
List of Side events**

**A. THEME: VALUING FORESTS AND RANGELAND ECOSYSTEMS: AN ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE (DAY 1)**

1. **Economic Valuation of Forests & Rangeland Contribution in the Near East region** (Joint session with the Near East Forestry and Range Commission)
  - Green economy in the near east challenges and prospects: valuation of the contribution of forest and rangeland to sustainable development in the near east region - *Illias Animon*
  - Environmental Economic Valuation of the HIMA System in Jordan - *Amer Jabarin*
  - Economic Evaluation of Forest Based Eco-tourism: Evidence from Murree Hills-Pakistan, *Sarwat Mirza*
2. **Experiences of Economic Valuation cases from North Africa, Egypt, Morocco & Jordan**
  - Application of ecosystem valuations in Jordan- *Ele John Saaf*
  - Wire hills forest: a sustainable management program - *Guliano Ramat*
  - Forest Evaluation in North Africa - *Paolo Prosperi*
  - Valuation of rangelands Case study: Omayed Biosphere Reserve (OBR) in the Western Coastal Desert of Egypt - *Boshra Salem*

**B. THEME: GOVERNING FOREST & RANGELAND ECOSYSTEM (DAY 2)**

3. **Forests & Rangeland Governance for Better Resilience** (Joint session with the Near East Forestry and Range Commission)
  - The great green wall for the Sahara and the Sahel initiative - *Nora Berrahmouni*
  - ICARDA's Experience in rangeland rehabilitation and management in NENA region: Case of sustainable development of landscape depressions in pastoral - *Mounir Louhaichi*
  - Community-Based Rangeland Rehabilitation(CBRR) A Case Study at the Royal Botanic Garden of Jordan- *Dr Mustafa Shdaifat*
4. **Forest & Rangeland Restoration and Management**
  - Mangrove forests of the Red Sea Governorate - *Khaled Allam*
  - Legal reflections on the forestry strategy in Jordan - *Iraa Al Turk*
  - Towards an effective natural resource management, Case study of forest and rangeland in Egypt - *Dr Mohammad Talat*

- gvSIG case studies in forestry and environment- *Mario Carrera*

#### **5. Local Community Participation for Better Governance**

- Socotra national park - *Esmail Mohammad*
- Governing forest & rangeland ecosystem Case: a local perspectives - *Khalid Khawaldeh*

### **C. THEME: GREEN ECONOMY: A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (DAY THREE)**

#### **6. Public/Private Partnership for Forest & Rangeland Restoration (Joint Session with the Near East Forestry and Range Commission)**

- A Partnership for Biodiversity - Holcim Lebanon and IUCN ROWA - *Garace Elazar*
- A Road Map for Mediterranean Forest in the green Economy - *Inazio Martinez de Arano*
- The Mountain Partnership and the NENA Region - *Rosalaura Romeo*

#### **7. Community, Economy & Ecology: Iraq, Lebanon, and Yemen**

- The importance of Mangrove forest in Egypt and role of protected areas, *Abdelwahab Afefe*
- Jabal Moussa: recognition of the three-dimensional value of a Mediterranean forest  
Environmental, Economic, Cultural- *Joelle Barakat*
- Environmental Protection in Southern Iraq: Green Zone Approach - *Sama Al Maroufi*

#### **8. Promoting Sustainable Management of World Heritage Sites in Forest & Rangelands Towards Green Economy**

- Issues and problems related to TABE'A in Libya *Alhassan Boukhariallah*
- TABE'A – Nature and World Heritage - *Haifa AbdulHalim*
- Mangrove in Wadi ElHitan world heritage site - *Dr. Mohammed Sameh*
- Can Socotra Island be an example for the green economy? - *Saeed Omar*



## MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

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Algeria  
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Egypt  
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Iraq  
Jordan  
Kuwait  
Kyrgyzstan  
Lebanon  
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya  
Mauritania  
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Saudi Arabia (Kingdom of)  
Somalia  
Sudan  
Syrian Arab Republic  
Tajikistan  
Tunisia  
Turkey  
United Arab Emirates  
Uzbekistan  
Yemen

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Vertical line 3

Vertical line 4

Vertical line 5