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**FOLLOW-UP ON THE EVALUATION OF FAO'S WORK IN TENURE,
RIGHTS AND ACCESS TO LAND
AND OTHER NATURAL RESOURCES**

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Introduction

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1. This Follow-up to the Evaluation on FAO's work on tenure, rights and access to land and other natural resources¹ has been prepared through a consultative process under the leadership of the Office of the Deputy Director-General, Coordinator for Natural Resources, which houses the Organization's core expertise on tenure, and involved headquarters departments/offices and decentralized offices that work on tenure.
2. The Evaluation was presented to the 110th session of the Programme Committee (7-11 May 2012). The Committee appreciated the quality of the Evaluation report, agreed with the recommendations and welcomed the fact that Management had accepted all of them.²
3. In line with FAO's policy on evaluations, this report provides an update on the status of implementations of the actions set out in the Management Response. Upon request by the Office of Evaluation (OED), the report introduces a Management Action Record Scoring (MAR Score) on a six point scale, in which FAO Management self-assessed the level of adoption and implementation of recommendations.
4. The agreed actions have been implemented in the context of two important developments. First, the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT) were endorsed by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) on 11 May 2012. The VGGT represent an unprecedented international agreement on improving the governance of tenure and access to land, fisheries and forests. Second, the period of follow-up has included the development of FAO's reviewed Strategic Framework and Strategic Objectives. The CFS³ and the FAO Council⁴ both requested that the VGGT be included as a priority in the reviewed Strategic Framework and that they are taken into consideration in relevant work programmes.
5. FAO is committed to supporting the implementation of the VGGT, which are now the standard for use in all FAO's work on tenure.⁵ The VGGT thus provide the framework for the comprehensive implementation of the recommendations of the Evaluation of FAO's work in tenure, rights and access to land and other natural resources and are prominent in the reviewed Strategic Framework.

I. Achievements

6. Of the eight recommendations, Management had identified five actions that could be implemented without further funding, i.e. recommendations 1-4 and 7. Work carried out for these recommendations includes assessing strategic options for strengthening work on tenure, rights and access in line with the goals of countries. These actions were implemented in the context of the planning for the reviewed Strategic Framework and preparation of the Strategic Objectives, and with the work being coordinated through an interdepartmental mechanism that has recently been formalized as a Task Force (Recommendations 1 and 7). Other activities included publicizing more widely the outputs on tenure through social media and a newsletter regularly issued and through a redesigned Web site that provides a single entry point to all FAO's publications on tenure (Recommendation 2); the inclusion of systematic monitoring and evaluation in the formulation of new projects and support to CFS to address the VGGT as a central part of monitoring of its decisions (Recommendation 3); and the development of a more regionally-balanced programme of support to countries by including tenure and the VGGT in briefings given to all FAO Representatives on their appointment, by including tenure in relevant Country Programme Frameworks and by encouraging participants at eleven regional workshops to consider how the VGGT could be used in their countries (Recommendation 4).
7. The remaining three recommendations were identified to require additional funding. With regard to Recommendation 5 on staff training, voluntary contributions have enabled the

¹ PC 110/4; PC 110/4 Sup.1

² CL 144/11 para. 9.a)

³ CL 144/9; C 2013/20

⁴ CL 144/REP

⁵ Director-General's Bulletin No. 2013/73

preparation of e-learning modules on tenure and the VGGT. These modules are designed for a general audience and so are appropriate for FAO staff who are not tenure specialists. In addition, specific training has been provided to the Investment Centre (TCI) on using the VGGT in FAO's work on investments. Voluntary contributions have also enabled FAO to strengthen its role in providing advice on large-scale land acquisitions and a detailed technical guide is being prepared (Recommendation 8). Finally, only preliminary work has been possible for Recommendation 7, which called for dedicated cover for tenure, rights and access support for emergencies. An Emergencies and Tenure post has been included in the Umbrella Project for the VGGT, which is the basis for multidonor voluntary contributions, but as yet no donor has assigned funding for this post. However, funding from UN-REDD+ voluntary contributions has been allocated for a consultancy post on tenure in the context of climate change.

8. The actions taken have thus also responded to the Programme Committee's requests on the importance of prioritization and for a clear vision and strategy aligned to FAO's strategic direction, and the need for robust monitoring, evaluation and accountability framework. The Programme Committee further noted shortcomings related to knowledge transfer, capacity building and FAO's role and work on policy at the country level and underlined the need for increased partnerships with other UN agencies, civil societies and the private sector. These concerns are being addressed in the Umbrella Project for the VGGT, which was formulated subsequent to the evaluation, and which has five components: awareness raising, capacity development, support to countries, partnerships, and monitoring and evaluation.

9. The Programme Committee highlighted the need for continuing the work on the global level, with a critical mass at headquarters and enhanced delivery at the country level. In this regard, FAO's capacity has been expanded through the creation of two new posts funded through the Regular Programme: a Forestry Officer (Forest Resources Tenure) at headquarters and a Land Tenure Officer in the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. Further expansion of capacity is being provided through voluntary contributions in the form of project posts in the Subregional Office for Eastern Africa, the Africa Land Policy Initiative Secretariat hosted in UNECA, and in Nigeria. These decentralized posts are supplemented by project posts at headquarters, which allow for an increased level of work on capacity development and support to countries.

10. The Programme Committee recognized the importance of FAO's role as a neutral actor in the global tenure, rights and access architecture as a comparative advantage for the Organization. As a result of the global recognition of the VGGT, FAO is working in diverse and growing partnerships, including with countries, civil society and private sector organizations, and academia and research institutes.

11. Expanding the work on tenure in the context of the VGGT requires considerable additional resources. Following the official endorsement of the VGGT, FAO has worked closely with interested donor partners to build a programme to support the uptake of the VGGT by countries in accordance with their priorities and circumstances. After a period of about 18 months of resource mobilization, a total of approximately USD 26 million has now been mobilized through voluntary contributions by Belgium, Denmark, European Union, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

II. Challenges and way forward

12. The Evaluation of FAO's work on tenure, rights and access to natural resources occurred at an advantageous time. It coincided with the finalization of the VGGT, which are now regarded as the international standard for work on tenure. Following the endorsement by CFS, the implementation of the VGGT has been encouraged by the United Nations General Assembly, L'Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, the Berlin Agriculture Ministers' Summit and the G20 and G8. Civil society organizations and major private sector business enterprises have similarly advocated for the implementation of the VGGT.

13. In addition, through the re-orientation of the Organization's strategic direction and the preparation of new Country Programming Frameworks, FAO is now positioned to work more

effectively with member countries, civil society, private sector and UN agencies and other international organizations to improve tenure in the context of national food security. FAO's work on tenure is being implemented through new cross-cutting Strategic Objectives that are closely aligned with the most relevant and urgent development problems faced by countries and the development community.

14. The Organization is committed to expanding collaboration with civil society and the private sector within the framework of its new strategies for working with these partners. Civil society and private sector organizations played influential roles during the consultation and negotiation phases of the VGGT and their continued participation is vital with the focus now being on support to implementation.

15. FAO has worked closely with donor partners to establish a firm foundation for support to applying the VGGT. Over the next three years, voluntary contributions are being provided for continuing the work on awareness raising, capacity development, and strengthening of partnerships, and for expanding the work on support to countries and on monitoring and evaluation. However, gaps remain and there is a need for continued resource mobilization and collaboration with donor partners in order to meet the increasing number of requests from countries to improve their tenure arrangements. An important aspect of responsiveness to countries should be the creation of tenure capacity in all regional offices, while ensuring a critical mass of expertise on tenure at headquarters for work at the global level.

16. Even as the initial three-year phase of support to the VGGT is getting underway, FAO seeks to engage partners in working towards the next phase. Resource mobilization is a lengthy process and early actions are needed to avoid gaps in support when the funding for the initial phase is fully expended in 2016. Such actions should serve to place the support for the VGGT firmly in the post-2015 development agenda. Ways to increase impact and cost-effectiveness should be explored, including by moving to a longer period for funding, for example with the five-year programme of work of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics.

Guidance sought

17. The Programme Committee may wish to note progress in the implementation of the Evaluation recommendations and provide its views on the follow-up report.

Accepted evaluation recommendations	Action Agreed	Comments on actions taken, including reasons for actions not taken	Impact (changes) of actions taken in terms of programme, policies and/or procedures	MAR score (see below) ⁶
<p>Recommendation 1: FAO should carry out an assessment of its strategic options for strengthening its Tenure, rights and access (TRA) work in relation to achieving the basic goals of FAO and its members.</p>	<p>1.1 Initiate an interdepartmental collaborative process for strengthening FAO's work on tenure within the framework of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure, as developed through the CFS-led intergovernmental negotiations, and in line with FAO's strategic planning exercise. The process will emphasize knowledge-sharing and capacity development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of the reviewed Strategic Framework and its Strategic Objectives (SOs) provided the context for the assessment and planning of FAO's work on tenure, rights and access in relation to the basic goals of the Organization and its Members. • The interdepartmental collaborative process brought together representatives of units that work on tenure. The informal interdepartmental mechanism that had been in place at the time of the endorsement of the VGGT has been formalized as a Task Force (DG Bulletin 2013/73). The process addressed knowledge sharing and capacity development, which are also relevant to Recommendations 2, 5 and 7. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VGGT have been integrated in work plans for implementing the PWB 2014-15, where appropriate. 	6
<p>Recommendation 2: Publicize more widely the outputs of its normative work.</p>	<p>2.1 Publicize more widely FAO's publications on tenure, which the Evaluation acknowledges are a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of FAO publications on tenure is increasing following the endorsement of the VGGT as a result of voluntary contributions from the European Union, Finland, Germany, Switzerland and IFAD. Publications are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following its redesign, the average number of monthly visits to the FAO tenure Web site rose from about 2 400 to around 4 600 and the number of subscribers to the VGGT newsletter increased from 	6

⁶ **1 - None:** no action was taken to implement the recommendation; **2 - Poor:** plan and actions for implementation of the recommendation are at a very preliminary stage; **3 - Inadequate:** implementation of the recommendation is uneven and partial; **4 - Adequate:** implementation of the recommendation has progressed; there is no evidence yet of its results on the intended target; **5 - Good:** the recommendation has been fully implemented and there is some initial evidence of its impact on the intended target; **6 - Excellent:** there is proven evidence that the recommendation has had a positive impact on its intended target.

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	<p>valuable resource, by disseminating knowledge and developing capacity to support the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure through:</p> <p>2.2 Use of social media;</p> <p>2.3 A redesign of the FAO Web site on tenure in order to more closely integrate information on FAO's work on tenure;</p> <p>2.4 Strengthen communication means that were developed for the preparation of the Voluntary Guidelines.</p>	<p>in the form of technical guides on specific aspects of the VGGT (gender; forestry; and free, prior and informed consent) and an introductory e-learning module of the VGGT, and other guides and modules are being developed. Information on new and existing publications have been shared in various ways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2 Work on tenure has been promoted through six different FAO Twitter accounts and Facebook to reach an expanding audience. • 2.3 A new FAO Web site on tenure was launched immediately following the endorsement of the VGGT. This Web site is regularly updated and provides a single entry point for all FAO's publications on tenure, covering land, fisheries, forests, gender and indigenous peoples, and legal aspects. • 2.4 A newsletter in English, French and Spanish, initiated during the process of consultation and negotiation of the VGGT, was redesigned to improve its readability and is used to share information, including when new material is published. The distribution list of the newsletter is routinely updated, for example by adding participants of regional and national 	<p>1 500 to 2 500.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a result of the improved communication, the VGGT have been accessed about 23 000 times through the Internet compared with the approximate 25 000 printed copies that have been disseminated by end-2013. Of technical guides to be published recently, the guide on forest tenure was accessed electronically over 4 000 times in three months, and the guide on gender and tenure was accessed over 6 000 times since its launch. • The e-learning Web page, which was launched at CFS in October 2013, had been accessed over 1 600 times by 31 December 2013, and over 200 people had registered for the introductory e-learning course. 	

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		<p>workshops to raise awareness of the VGGT.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition, FAO's publications on tenure were disseminated at the recent 11 regional workshops to raise awareness of the VGGT, and are similarly promoted in the current series of national workshops. 		
<p>Recommendation 3: Undertake more systematic monitoring and evaluation of project performance.</p>	<p>3.1 Include appropriate measures for evaluation in the design of relevant projects and in accordance with the recently revised evaluation provisions for projects funded by Voluntary Contributions (FPC/2011/01).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following their endorsement, FAO has worked with donor partners on resourcing the work on the VGGT. The voluntary contributions support a multidonor Trust Fund project, which is complemented by "sister projects" where donors have specific reporting requirements. Measures for evaluation have been included in all the projects funded by voluntary contributions, consistent with FAO's standard requirements. Ongoing technical support is being provided to the CFS Open-Ended Working Group on Monitoring. CFS 40 endorsed the proposal to focus CFS monitoring on the Committee's major, strategic and catalytic products, of which the VGGT is one of its most important outcomes to date and will be a central element of monitoring. 	<p>Too early to report on impact.</p>	<p>4</p>

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<p>Recommendation 4: Devise ways to develop a more balanced programme of support to member countries in the area of land tenure.</p>	<p>4.1 Improve communication with FAO Representatives to facilitate requests for technical assistance in tenure from member countries and the inclusion of tenure in Country Programming Frameworks in recognition that support to member countries is demand-driven, and in collaboration with other development partners. Increased scope for technical assistance to improve tenure governance in accordance with the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure is anticipated, and this will continue to incorporate normative tools for knowledge sharing and capacity development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three approaches were used to provide a greater balance among regions regarding country support in the area of land tenure. • Information on the VGGT was sent to FAO Representatives following the endorsement, and tenure and the VGGT are included in briefings given to all newly appointed FAO Representatives. • Draft Country Programming Frameworks were systematically reviewed and recommendations were made, as appropriate, with regard to the application of the VGGT. • During 2012-13, financial support from Switzerland and the European Union enabled the holding of 11 regional workshops to provide an introduction to the VGGT and to encourage participants to think how the VGGT could be used in their countries. Some 650 people, representing all stakeholder groups and from 140 countries, participated in the workshops which were held in Africa (Cameroon, Rwanda), Asia and Pacific (Fiji, Thailand), Europe and Central Asia (Bulgaria, Ukraine), Latin America and Caribbean (Colombia, Guyana), and Near East (Jordan, Morocco, United Arab Emirates). Workshops to raise awareness at the national level started in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VGGT have been included in 13 CPFs (Africa: Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Gabon, Lesotho, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda; Asia: Lao People's Democratic Republic, Sri Lanka, Viet Nam; Europe: the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; and Latin America: Panama). They are also included in the Pacific Multi-Country CPF Document. 	5

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		2014, with the first workshops being held in Niger and Senegal and with voluntary contributions of France.		
<p>Recommendation 5: Provide HQ, regional, sub-regional and country level staff with training and learning resources on tenure, rights and access issues.</p>	<p>5.1 Initiate an interdepartmental collaborative process, contingent on the availability of resources, to provide staff training, including through electronic-learning courses, in the framework of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training within FAO was launched with over 20 TCI staff members to raise awareness of the VGGT and stimulate thought on how to use them in TCI's key areas of work on identifying and preparing investment projects, upstream investment support, and capacity development and technical assistance. The exercise provides a basis for training of other FAO staff. In addition, briefings on the VGGT and tenure have been given to staff in the RAP office. • Voluntary contributions have been secured for the preparation of a series of e-learning modules on tenure in the framework of the VGGT. The first introductory module is available on the FAO tenure Web site and other modules are in preparation. These modules are designed primarily for a wide audience and are appropriate for FAO staff members who are not experts in tenure. The introductory module has been widely publicized within FAO and 40 FAO staff had registered for the module during the period from October to end-2013. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks to the e-learning modules, FAO staff have increased technical knowledge and ability to address tenure when providing support to countries. 	5

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<p>Recommendation 6: Provide dedicated cover for TRA support for emergencies.</p>	<p>6.1 Pursue funding and/or secondment for dedicated support for work on tenure and emergencies in the broader framework of Disaster Risk Reduction, Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change, and in the context of rural-urban food and nutrition security issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A position on Emergencies and Tenure has been included in the VGGT “Umbrella Project. The Umbrella Project is the basis for the Multidonor Trust Fund project, and participating donors have identified elements of the project to support. However, no donor has yet chosen to fund the dedicated post on tenure and emergencies. In the context of Part 6 of the VGGT “Responses to climate change and emergencies”, funding from UN-REDD+ voluntary contributions has been approved for a consultancy post on tenure in the context of climate change. • In addition, work on tenure and emergencies has continued to be carried out under the Regular Programme, with an emphasis on tenure, natural resources and disaster risk management. 	<p>Pending.</p>	<p>2</p>

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<p>Recommendation 7: FAO should be proactive in pursuing TRA issues that are of concern to the Organization in the context of moving towards its Members' fundamental goals.</p>	<p>7.1 Initiate an interdepartmental collaborative process to identify and respond to key issues of tenure in the framework of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure. Action on this recommendation will be taken jointly with action on Recommendation 1.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Recommendation 1. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See recommendation 1. 	6
<p>Recommendation 8: Strengthen FAO's role in providing advice and guidance on large scale land acquisitions by foreign investors.</p>	<p>8.1 Initiate an interdepartmental collaborative process to provide advice and guidance on large-scale land acquisitions in the framework of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration between NR, ES and TC was initiated on large-scale land acquisitions. Guidance, in the form of a detailed technical guide on agricultural investments and access to land, is being prepared with the support of voluntary contributions provided by Switzerland through the multidonor trust fund. In addition, as part of FAO's work on improving an understanding of large-scale land acquisitions, a research paper was prepared on investment chains behind large-scale land deals. • FAO is working with donor partners to provide advice on agricultural investments and tenure to Ethiopia (with funding from Italy) and to raise awareness of investors from China (with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO has increased capacity to provide advice on tenure aspects of large-scale agricultural investments. 	4

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		<p>funding from the United Kingdom). Additional guidance on the VGGT and investment is being provided including, for example, through a seminar for potential investors from Arab countries (with funding from Kuwait).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO technical support is being provided to the CFS Open-Ended Working Group responsible for the development of “Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment (RAI) in the context of food security and nutrition” in order to aid consistency and complementarity between these principles and the VGGT. 		