



PROCESS FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE MAIN TECHNICAL THEME FOR THE FOURTY-THIRD SESSION OF ECA

(prepared by the ECA Secretariat)

At the 39/1 meeting of the Executive Committee (ExCom) in February 2022 the Secretariat of ECA presented an overview of the process for the identification of the main technical theme for the Forty-third Session of the ECA, which is tentatively to be held on 26-28 September 2023. The ExCom welcomed the overview and requested that at the next meeting the Secretariat present the draft invitation for the call for proposals for the theme, along with additional accompanying materials, which would be shared with the Members of the region.

The ECA Secretariat has drafted the invitation and updated the information on main topics covered by previous sessions of the ERC and ECA. The draft invitation is presented in Annex 1, and the topics are presented in Annex 2.

The ExCom is invited to:

- confirm the process for the identification of the main technical theme for the Forty-third Session of the ECA, as presented at the 39/1 ExCom meeting in February 2022¹
- review and provide feedback on the draft invitation for the call for the ECA Session main technical theme, as presented in Annex 1
- note the list of main themes covered at previous sessions of the ERC and ECA, as presented in Annex 2.

¹ Available as Appendix 1 to the minutes of the 39/1 meeting of the ExCom at <https://www.fao.org/europe/events/detail-events/en/c/1473006/>

Annex 1. Draft invitation for the call for the ECA Session main technical theme

Dear Members of the European Commission on Agriculture,

The Secretariat of the European Commission on Agriculture (ECA) would like to thank you for your participation in the Forty-second Session of the ECA and to kindly invite you to provide your input into the **preparation of the Forty-third Session of the ECA**, which is tentatively planned to be held in Budapest, Hungary, on 26-28 September 2023.

The technical content is key for the Sessions of the ECA. As recommended by the Assessment of the ECA conducted in 2017 (<https://www.fao.org/3/bt620e/bt620e.pdf>), “each ECA session should focus on one technical theme, of interest to the entire membership, to be tackled from different perspectives, e.g. ongoing initiatives, innovation, technologies, policies, management capacity development needs and opportunities, etc.”. Moreover, “whenever relevant and appropriate, the ECA theme should align with the biennial theme selected by the FAO Conference”.

The ECA Assessment Report further recommends that “the fine-tuning of the theme would require a robust consultation process with all institutional owners of the ECA”.

In this context, **Members of the ECA are hereby kindly invited to** analyze the needs of their respective countries and of the region that fall within the scope of the current FAO biennial theme and to **propose a main technical theme for the next Session of the ECA**, considering the recommendations of the 2017 ECA Assessment.

It should be noted that the FAO biennial theme for the years 2022-2023, adopted by the Forty-second FAO Conference, is “Agriculture Food Systems Transformation: From Strategy to Action”.

Members are also kindly invited to note that Sessions of the ECA look at their main themes from different perspectives, which are indicated in sub-topics under the overarching main theme. Suggestions on sub-topics describing possible perspectives for discussing the main theme will be most welcome, should Members wish to identify and share them.

For reference, Members may kindly find attached the list of main themes covered in the past Sessions of the Regional Conference for Europe and the European Commission on Agriculture.

Members of the ECA are kindly **invited to submit their proposals for the main technical theme for the Forty-third Session of the ECA by 30 June 2022** to the ECA Secretariat (ERC-ECA-Secretariat@fao.org).

The Secretariat of ECA further informs that all submitted proposals will be reviewed by REU and by the Executive Committee of the ECA. The Executive Committee will select one or more preferred proposals, for which they will seek agreement with the FAO Regional Representative. Once agreed, this proposal will become the main technical theme for the Forty-third Session of the ECA, and will form the basis for the preparation of its technical background documents.

For any further information, please do not hesitate to contact the ECA Secretariat (ERC-ECA-Secretariat@fao.org).

Annex 2. Main themes covered at previous sessions of the ERC and ECA**Main topics covered at previous sessions of the European Commission on Agriculture**

42nd ECA – Budapest, Hungary, 19-21 January 2022 ([ECA/42/21/REPORT](#))

1. Transforming food systems in Europe and Central Asia for improved nutritional outcomes
2. Better production to increase access to diverse, nutritious foods
3. Territorial approaches and community development to drive local change and prevent all forms of malnutrition

41st ECA – Budapest, Hungary, 1-2 October 2019 ([ECA/41/19/REPORT](#)):

1. Plant health in Europe and Central Asia - relevance, trends and developments
2. Plant pests and diseases in the context of climate change and climate variability, food security and biodiversity risks
3. Impact of global trade and human mobility on the health of agricultural crops and forests in Europe and Central Asia

40th ECA – Budapest, Hungary, 27-28 September 2017 ([ECA/40/17/REPORT](#)):

1. The effect of climate change on animal diseases, trade and food security in the REU region
2. Antimicrobial resistance (AMR): the loss of a major defence to the emerging challenge?
3. Disease occurrence tracking, strategic response to TADs and informed decision making

39th ECA – Budapest, Hungary, 22-23 September 2015 ([ECA/39/15/REPORT](#)):

1. Innovation in family farming in Europe and Central Asia
2. Combating land degradation for food security and provision of soil ecosystem services in Europe and Central Asia – International Year of Soil 2015
3. Gender-sensitive analysis of social protection programs for rural residents
4. Addressing social and economic burden of malnutrition through nutrition-sensitive agricultural and food policies in the region of Europe and Central Asia

**Regional and global policy and regulatory topics covered at current and previous
Regional Conferences for Europe**

33rd ERC – Łódź, Poland, 10-13 May 2022

1. The road to transformative agrifood systems in Europe and Central Asia – Regional actions to implement the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31
2. Sustainable food value chains for nutrition, a practical approach for transforming agrifood systems for healthy diets in Europe and Central Asia

32nd ERC – Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 2-4 November 2020 ([ERC/20/REP](#)):

1. Sustainable food systems and healthy diets in Europe and Central Asia
2. Solutions for Youth, Employment and Developing Rural Areas in relation to the United Nations Decade of Family Farming

31st ERC - Voronezh, Russian Federation, 16–18 May 2018 ([ERC/18/REP](#)):

3. Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems in Europe and Central Asia in a Changing Climate
4. E-agriculture: the Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for the Development of Sustainable and Inclusive Food Systems and Trade Integration

30th ERC - Antalya, Turkey, 4–6 May 2016 ([ERC/16/REP](#)):

1. The Sustainable Development Goals and their implications for agriculture and rural development in Europe and Central Asia region
2. Pulses for improving balanced nutrition and healthy food systems in Europe and Central Asia - International Year of Pulses 2016

29th ERC - Bucharest, Romania, 1–4 April 2014 ([ERC/14/REP](#)):

1. Food Losses and Waste in Europe and Central Asia
2. International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) in Europe and Central Asia

28th ERC - Baku, Azerbaijan, 16–20 April 2012 ([ERC/12/REP](#)):

1. Policies for Food Security in the Region: Challenges and Perspectives – Food outlook towards 2050

27th ERC - Yerevan, Armenia, 13–14 May 2010 ([ERC/10/REP](#)):

1. Policy response to challenges in agriculture and rural development in the Europe and Central Asia Region: sharing experience and enhancing cooperation in the Region

26th ERC - Innsbruck, Austria, 26–27 June 2008 ([ERC/08/REP](#)):

1. FAO and adaptation to climate change in the European region
2. Promotion of traditional regional agricultural and food products: A further step towards sustainable rural development

25th ERC - Riga, Latvia, 8–9 June 2006 ([ERC/06/REP](#)):

1. Contribution of rural development in meeting the World Food Summit (WFS)/Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the Region
2. The view of the European Region on the role of FAO as provider of global public goods
3. Strengthening Regional Cooperation and assisting countries in controlling Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in Europe, including CIS countries

24th ERC - Montpellier, France, 5–7 May 2004 ([ERC/04/REP](#)):

1. Food Safety and Quality in Europe: Aspects concerning in particular quality, nutritional balance, the importance of agricultural land and cultural heritage (“terroirs”)
2. Agricultural Research: its role and contribution to sustainable rural development
3. Major European Programmes, Initiatives and Fora on Agricultural Research
4. Review of the State of Food and Agriculture in the Region: Focus on Rural Poverty