

## **European Commission on Agriculture (ECA)**

### **Ad Hoc Meeting of the Executive Committee**

**29/10/2018**

**14.00 – 16.00 hours**

### **Meeting Minutes**

#### **Present**

**Acting Chairperson:** Mr Spyridon Ellinas (Cyprus)

**Members present:** Ms Galina Jevgrafova (Estonia) (Vice-Chair)

Ms Aulikki Hulmi (Finland)

Ms Graziella Romito (Italy)

Mr Kálmán Zoltán (Hungary)

Mr Paul Kiernan (Ireland)

**Members absent:** Ms Zora Weberova (Slovakia)

Mr Ali Recep Nazli (Turkey)

Ms Khatia Tsilosani (Georgia)

**Other Participants:** Mr Petio Petev (Bulgaria)

Mr Ilya Andreev (Russian Federation)

Ms Gemma Verijdt (Netherlands)

Mr Günter Walkner (Austria)

Mr Damian Kelly (EU)

Ms Novella Maugeri (United Kingdom)

Ms Gemma Cornuau (France)

Mr François Pythoud (Switzerland)

**REU Secretariat:** Ms Ariella Glinni, Secretary of ECA (REU)

Ms Yuriko Shoji, Deputy Regional Representative (REU), Secretary of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the ERC

Mr Piotr Wlodarczyk, Agricultural Officer (REU)

Mr Goran Stavrik

Ms Zsafia Horvath, Meeting and Programme Assistant (REU)

#### **Agenda:**

- 1. Implementation of the recommendations of the Assessment of the European Commission on Agriculture (37/3-3)**

The Acting-Chairperson welcomed the members of the Executive Committee and participants from the European Regional Group (ERG) member countries to the Ad Hoc Meeting of the Executive Committee of the ECA, dedicated to discuss the implementation of the recommendations of the Assessment of the ECA.

### **Implementation of the recommendations of the Assessment of the European Commission on Agriculture** (37/3-3)

Ms Glinni briefly summarized the scope and outcomes of the Assessment of the ECA, which was carried out between October 2016 and April 2017 and presented at the 40<sup>th</sup> ECA session in September 2017. Furthermore, Ms Glinni introduced the suggested guiding questions to support the discussion among the Ex Com and ERG members for the review of the implementation of the Assessment's recommendations as part of the preparation and organization of the 41<sup>st</sup> Session of ECA. This takes into account that the 41<sup>st</sup> Session of ECA will be the first session following the ECA Assessment.

The guiding questions were proposed for reviewing the implementation of the recommendations stemming from the ECA Assessment Report<sup>1</sup>. The main focus was given to identifying the means to enable an inclusive session, support a strong and active participation of delegates and observers, and serve the technical debate and exchange of knowledge at the 41<sup>st</sup> Session by highlighting linkages with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), FAO's Strategic Objectives and Regional Initiatives etc. In this connection, different aspects were considered such as the session format, the profile of delegations and the preparation of background documents.

The discussion covered the following main points:

1. Concerning the preparation and the format of the Session:
  - In line with the ECA assessment's recommendation, a thematic technical focus for each ECA Session is foreseen to enhance the technical discussion. The format of each ECA Session should be designed in a way to enable more interactive discussions. Ideally, a mix of plenary, panel and working group sessions would serve the purpose. It was however noted that delegations usually comprise of 1-2 representatives, which does not allow the participation in several parallel sessions;
  - It was underlined that for a successful Session and active discussions, delegates participating need to be well informed and prepared in advance;
  - Presence of high level delegates from Ministries was considered essential;
  - The delegations representing Members should cover not only political aspects, but also include experts with knowledge of the technical focus of the Session, such as Chief Plant Health Officers, and of the related development objectives, such as reflected by the SDGs;
  - To consider preparing videos related to the thematic technical focus, especially of field experiences, in view of increasing the knowledge of the delegates and facilitate the discussions.

<sup>1</sup> ECA/40/17/7 Web annex: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-bt620e.pdf>

2. Regarding the ECA Session background documents:

- It was highlighted that background documents should be prepared well in advance and should be informative, attract attention on key issues and lead to productive discussions;
- These documents could contain guiding questions as basis for interactive discussions on core issues;
- It is important to highlight the connection between each agenda item, and background document, to the SDGs, such as between plant health and SDGs, and the Regional Initiatives;
- The documents shall be relevant, thought-provoking and attractive for the entire region with a specific focus on the Programme Countries in the ECA region and should encourage their participation;
- To prepare showcase studies related to the thematic technical focus, considering different countries and development contexts in the region to share good practices and to learn from experiences.

3. Other remarks and proposals made for the next ECA session reflecting the ECA assessment recommendations include:

- It was noted that the linkage between the 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the ECA and the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the ERC was not strongly developed and for future Sessions a stronger coordination would be needed;
- It was suggested to liaise with the European Plant Protection Organization (EPPO) for the next ECA session and identify synergies with other plant health related events and initiatives;
- It was recommended to define the additional value the Session is expected to bring on the technical topic, as other international expert meetings will take place in the upcoming period on the same topic.

Referring to the ECA Assessment, the Members of the Ex Com and ERG thanked for organization of the Ex Com ad hoc meeting, which had offered an opportunity for consultation and inclusion of Members' views into the formulation of the ECA agenda and organization of the Session.

**Action:**

1. Secretariat to prepare the second draft of the Annotated Agenda of the 41st Session of the ECA, reflecting the outcomes of the ad hoc meeting, and to present it at the next Ex Com meeting in January/ February 2019.
2. Secretariat to include the follow-up of the ad-hoc meeting as a separate agenda item into the agenda of the next ECA Ex Com meeting in January/ February 2019.
3. Secretariat to share the draft Annotated Agenda of the 41<sup>st</sup> Session of the ECA to the ERG after the next ECA Ex Com meeting.

**Closing of the Meeting:**

The Acting-Chair thanked the Ex Com and ERG members for their participation and contribution, as well as the Secretariat for their support throughout the meeting.