

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE**  
**38/3 MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

15 July 2020

**MEETING MINUTES**

**1. Opening of the meeting**

The Chairperson of ECA (Mr Paul KIERNAN) opened the meeting and welcomed the Members of the Executive Committee to the third meeting after the 41st Session of the ECA. Furthermore, the Chairperson thanked the Members for their flexibility and availability and the Secretariat and REU staff for their support.

The participants list is presented in Annex 1.

**Adoption of the agenda**

The meeting agenda was adopted without any changes.

The adopted meeting agenda is presented in Annex 2.

**2. Procedures for the adoption of the minutes of the ECA ExCom meetings**

Mr Piotr WLODARCZYK, the Acting-Secretary of the ECA, introduced the draft of the document on the Procedures for the adoption of the minutes of the ECA ExCom meetings. The document was requested at the previous meeting of the ExCom to create a solid base for a clear, quick and transparent process for the drafting and adoption of the minutes.

The ExCom endorsed the procedure and decided that the timeline for the review and adoption of the minutes will be shortened to 15 working days. The ExCom agreed that the procedures will apply starting from the minutes of the current meeting.

The ExCom agreed that the endorsed procedures for the adoption of the meeting minutes will in future be incorporated into the “ExCom Information Document”, which is currently under development.

Mr KIERNAN highlighted that the speedy review will allow the minutes to serve as a tool for effective engagement of the ECA (both ERG and non-ERG) Members as well as informing them of the ECA-ERC updates in a timely manner.

The adopted procedures of the minutes are presented in the Annex 3.

**Action:**

The ECA Secretariat is requested to include the endorsed procedures in the “ExCom Information Document” at a later stage.

The ECA Secretariat is requested to apply the endorsed procedures to the minutes of the current ECA ExCom meeting.

**3. Update on the status of preparations for the 32nd Regional Conference for Europe**

Mr Nabil GANGI informed the ExCom that, after consultation with the ERG, the new dates proposed for the 32nd Session of the Regional Conference for Europe (ERC) are from 2-4 November 2020. The said dates are currently under consideration by the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The

modality of the ERC is to be decided depending on the evolving situation with the COVID-19 pandemic and the relevant national regulations concerning in-country and international travel in the region.

He noted that the meeting documents in all language versions (En, Fr, Ru and Es) are already available on the website of the 32nd Session of the ERC (<http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/regional-conferences/erc32/documents/en/>), except for two documents:

- ERC/20/2 - Sustainable food systems and healthy diets in Europe and Central Asia;
- ERC/20/5 - Results and Priorities of FAO in the Region, and its Web Annex 4.

Mr Goran STAVRIK added that the English version of the paper on Results and Priorities for FAO in the Region should be published online by the end of this week, with other language versions following later. Mr STAVRIK also confirmed that the Report of the 41st Session of the ECA, as background paper of the ERC, was published in all four languages. Furthermore, he clarified that the ECA Chairperson will be invited to give a brief presentation of the Report at the ERC, requesting the Members' approval of the 41st ECA Session recommendations. Mr STAVRIK brought to the attention of the ExCom that the ERC has a long history with webcasting and video recording of its sessions, thus the previous discussions on ECA at ERC sessions are also available online.<sup>1</sup>

Mr Paul KIERNAN asked the ERC Secretariat and the ECA Secretariat to implement a procedure for the notification of the ExCom Members about the publication of ECA and ERC papers on the official websites. This procedure should be incorporated into the ExCom Information Document, including how ExCom will inform non-ERG members of ECA and ERC.

**Action:**

The ECA and ERC Secretariat to inform ExCom Members of the web publication of ECA and ERC meeting documents and incorporate this procedure into the ExCom Information Document, including how ExCom will inform non-ERG members of ECA and ERC.

Mr Goran STAVRIK to circulate the link to video recordings of past ECA discussions at ERCs to ExCom.

#### **4. Roles and responsibilities of the ExCom in relation to ECA and ERC**

Mr WLODARCZYK introduced the draft ExCom Information Document, preparation of which was requested by ExCom. He thanked the ECA Chairperson and ExCom Members for providing questions that will help shape the document. He added that, in the opinion of the Secretariat, it will be useful to generally review the questions at the meeting and try to identify the overall modality for their proceeding. He further explained that the current version of the document is the first draft only, and at the moment is not presented for any kind of endorsement by ExCom. He also explained that, at this stage, the draft does not attempt to answer the questions raised by ExCom regarding the roles and responsibilities of the ExCom in relation to the regional governing bodies, as they will need to be carefully considered. He requested that the ExCom presents its view on the purpose, scope and overall approach of the future "ExCom Information Document", taking current draft as an example.

The ExCom Members thanked the Acting-Secretary of the ECA for drafting the document, as the draft reflected well the expectations of the ExCom, and provided clear information on working modalities of ExCom, useful to its current and future memberships. The Chairperson emphasized that the purpose of this new document is to initiate the conversation on how to formulate in a clear and comprehensible way where ExCom stands in relation to ECA, ERC and its engagement with ERG/non-ERG members for the purpose of engaging the membership more effectively. Mr KIERNAN also highlighted the important question of how ExCom could engage the ECA membership in Rome and how ExCom can involve

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fao.org/europe/commissions/conference/en/>

everyone in the region in this dialogue, considering that the Central Asian countries are not members of the ERG.

ExCom requested that the ExCom Information Document include an introduction paragraph on ECA, ERC and its membership (ERG / non-ERG). ExCom further requested that the document establish clear procedures for engaging all members (ERG and non-ERG) to ensure all members receive the same information, at the same time, and have the same opportunities to engage.

Regarding next steps, ExCom recommended that ECA Secretariat proceed with addressing the procedural questions provided by ExCom. The additional questions provided by ExCom will then be addressed through a consultative approach during a future ExCom meeting.

ExCom agreed that the goal of the document was not to redefine the roles and responsibilities of the ExCom and ECA in the region, but to provide a clear explanation to the complex legal text in broad terms clarifying the existing processes, including charts and timelines, to create a document which can be used by both current and future ExCom Members.

**Action:**

The ECA Secretariat to expand the draft i.a. by addressing the procedural questions and issues raised by ExCom, and present it at the next ECA ExCom meeting, along with the questions or issues that require further discussion.

**5. Review and recommendations on the REU Work Programme 2020-2021: RI 1: Implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT)**

Mr Morten HARTVIGSEN presented the agenda item and responded to questions from Members. He explained what the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGT) are and how the transition from the awareness raising towards the implementation has taken place. Mr HARTVIGSEN also explained the four types of land tenure projects/activities that the FAO is currently focusing on, emphasizing that eight years after endorsement of the VGGT, this is mainstreamed and fully taken into consideration in FAO activities, particularly in tackling the issue of land fragmentation in the region. He also introduced the LANDNET – a growing informal network of land tenure professionals, the recent meeting of which was organized by FAO in Galicia, Spain in November 2019.

ExCom Members thanked Mr HARTVIGSEN for the informative presentation and expressed their interest in obtaining the list of best practice recommendations on behalf of the FAO land tenure team and an overview of the relevant projects in the region, planned for implementation in 2020-21.

**Action:**

ECA Secretariat to share with the Members the presentation of Mr HARTVIGSEN as an annex to the meeting document covering this agenda item as well as the overview of current land tenure projects in the region and the list of best practice recommendations on behalf of the FAO REU land tenure team.

**6. Draft work plan and meeting schedule of the ECA Executive Committee for 2019-2021**

The Acting-Secretary of ECA presented the updated version of the draft work plan and meeting schedule of the ExCom for the current biennium, based on the changes that have happened under the impact of the COVID-19 situation, such as the postponement of the ERC (possibly to November) or shifting the ExCom 38/3 meeting from May to July.

Overall, Members expressed their agreement with the work plan and meeting schedule, with the following change:

- Due to the fact that the next ECA ExCom meeting is scheduled for November 2020, which would be after the 32nd Session of ERC, an additional meeting at the end of September or beginning of October should be included in the work plan. This additional meeting would allow focused discussions on ERC issues before the 32nd Session of ERC, as well as to continue the started dialogue on roles and responsibilities of ExCom.

On request from Mr KIERNAN, the ECA Secretariat confirmed to the ExCom that any meeting document prepared for the ExCom in relation to the possible topics of the 42nd Session of the ECA will be publicly available on the ECA web page, as per the usual practice for the ECA ExCom meeting documents, and can be shared with broader audience.

The list of the main tasks and the schedule of meetings of the ExCom for 2019-2021, as modified and agreed at the meeting, is presented in Annexes 4 and 5.

**Action:**

ECA Secretariat to add an ECA ExCom meeting for September/October to the work plan.

**7. Any other business**

N/A

**8. Closing of the meeting**

The Chairperson thanked the ExCom Members for their participation and contribution, as well as the ECA Secretariat for the good preparation of background documents and their support throughout the meeting, and closed the meeting.

**Annex 1****EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE****38/3 MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

15 July 2020  
Online meeting

**PARTICIPANTS LIST**

	<b>Role</b>	<b>Country/Organization</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Present/Absent</b>
1.	ECA Chairperson	Ireland	Mr Paul KIERNAN	Present
2.	ECA 1st Vice-Chairperson	Slovak Republic	Ms Zora WEBEROVA	Present
3.	ECA 2nd Vice-Chairperson	Cyprus	Mr Marios GEORGIADIS	Present
4.	ExCom Member	Albania	Ms Lorena PULLUMBI	Present
5.	ExCom Member	Czechia	Mr Jiří JÍLEK	Present
6.	ExCom Member	Georgia	Ms Ekaterine ZDIADADZE	Present
7.	ExCom Member	Hungary	Ms Lilla EGRI	Present
8.	ExCom Member	Italy	Ms Graziella ROMITO	Present
9.	ExCom Member	Serbia	Ms Daria JANJIĆ	Absent
10.	Deputy Regional Representative, Secretary of the ERC	FAO REU	Mr Nabil GANGI	Present
11.	Senior Field Programme Officer, ERC Secretariat	FAO REU	Mr Goran STAVRIK	Present
12.	Programme Coordination and Planning Officer	FAO REU	Ms Erzsebet ILLES	Present
13.	Land Tenure Officer	FAO REU	Mr Morten HARTVIGSEN	Present
14.	Acting Secretary of ECA	FAO REU	Mr Piotr WLODARCZYK	Present
15.	ERC-ECA Secretariat	FAO REU	Ms Zsafia HORVÁTH	Present
16.	ERC-ECA Secretariat	FAO REU	Ms Olga PETROVA	Present

**Annex 2****EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE****38/3 MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

15 July 2020

14.00-16.00 hrs (Rome time)

Online meeting

**AGENDA**

No.	Agenda Item Title	Document No./Link	Presenter
	Opening of the meeting	-	KIERNAN
1.	Adoption of the agenda	ECA_ExCom/38/3-1	EXCOM MEMBERS
2.	Procedures for the adoption of the minutes of the ECA ExCom meetings	ECA_ExCom/38/3-2	WLODARCZYK / EXCOM MEMBERS
3.	Update on the status of preparations for the 32nd Regional Conference for Europe	-	GANGI / STAVRIK
4.	Roles and responsibilities of the ExCom in relation to ECA and ERC	ECA_ExCom/38/3-3	WLODARCZYK
5.	Review and recommendations on the REU Work Programme 2020-2021: RI 1: Implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT)	ECA_ExCom/38/3-4	HARTVIGSEN
6.	Draft work plan and meeting schedule of the ECA Executive Committee for 2019-2021	ECA_ExCom/38/3-5	WLODARCZYK
7.	Any other business	-	PARTICIPANTS
	Close of the meeting	-	KIERNAN

### Annex 3

#### PROCEDURE FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE ECA EXCOM MEETINGS

##### Minutes of the ExCom meeting

The minutes are the written record of the ExCom meeting. The minutes shall be terse, factual and structured, following the sequence of the adopted agenda of the meeting. The minutes should include the following:

- a. place and date of the meeting;
- b. relevant discussion points and statements;
- c. decisions made by the ExCom;
- d. required actions to be taken after the meeting is concluded;
- e. annexes, including at least the list of participants and the adopted agenda.

The minutes shall not be transcripts of the discussions nor shall they be considered a detailed report of the meeting. The minutes should reflect the debate at the meeting and contain specific action points for the Members and/or for the ECA Secretariat, as the case may be.

The process of preparation of the minutes, including taking notes at the meeting, drafting the minutes, sending the draft for comments, revising the draft based on the comments, submission for approval, and posting, is conducted by the ECA Secretariat.

##### Adoption and publication of the minutes

Following the ExCom meeting:

- within five working days the ECA Secretariat prepares the first draft of the minutes, considering internal reviews, where appropriate, and shares the draft with the ExCom Members via online channels;
- within four working days the ExCom Members provide their comments;
- within three working days the ECA Secretariat reviews all received comments, revises the draft minutes accordingly and shares the revised draft minutes with the ECA Chairperson and the Vice-Chairpersons for approval;
- the Chairperson may decide to circulate the draft to the ExCom Members, for confirmation; the minutes should be approved by the ExCom within two working days;
- once approved, within one working day the minutes are published on the ECA Website<sup>2</sup> by the ECA Secretariat.

The minutes should be posted no later than 15 working days after the meeting. The ECA Secretariat should notify the ExCom Members about the posting of the minutes, including the link to the relevant website.

### Annex 4

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.fao.org/europe/commissions/eca/executive-committee/en/>

**Annex 4**

The main tasks of the ECA Executive Committee in 2019-2021

No.	Task	Background documents	Timeframe (ExCom meetings)
1.	Review of the main themes and the status of preparations for the 32nd ERC (Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 5-7 May 2020)	Draft ERC agenda	December 2019
2.	Review of the status of preparations for the 32nd ERC (2020)	ERC Secretariat update	April, July and Sep/Oct 2020
3.	Review and recommendations on the REU Work Programme 2020-2021	REU technical reports	April, July and November 2020
4.	Roles and responsibilities of the ExCom in relation to ECA and ERC	Draft ExCom Information Document	July, Sept/Oct and November 2020
5.	Identification of topics for the 42nd Session of ECA (2021)	Draft list of topics for the ECA Session agenda	November 2020
6.	Preparation of the 42nd Session of ECA (2021), including strategic thinking on improving modalities, impact and strategic engagement	Draft agenda for the ECA Session	November 2020 February, May and June 2021
7.	Outcomes of the 32nd ERC	ERC Report	February 2021
8.	Preparation of the 2021 Informal Consultation	Draft agenda for the IC	February 2021
9.	Identification of the main themes for the 33rd ERC (2022)	Draft list of topics for the ERC agenda	February, May and June 2021
10.	Review of progress made by REU on the recommendations of the 41st Session of ECA	REU report	February and May 2021
11.	Outcomes of the 2021 Informal Consultation	IC report	May 2021



**Annex 5**

The draft work plan and schedule of meetings of the ExCom for 2019-2021

Meeting	Timeframe	Scope of the agenda
38/1	December 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of the main themes and the status of preparations for the 32nd ERC (Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 5-7 May 2020)</li> </ul>
38/2	April 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of the status of preparations for the 32nd ERC (2020)</li> <li>Review and recommendations on the REU Work Programme 2020-21: RI2: Food Loss and Waste</li> </ul>
38/3	July 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of the status of preparations for the 32nd ERC (2020)</li> <li>Review and recommendations on the REU Work Programme 2020-2021: RI 1: Implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT)</li> </ul>
38/4	September/ October 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roles and responsibilities of the ExCom in relation to ECA and ERC</li> <li>Review of the status of preparations for the 32nd ERC (2020)</li> </ul>
38/5	November 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of the outcomes of the 32nd ERC (2020)</li> <li>Roles and responsibilities of the ExCom in relation to ECA and ERC</li> <li>Preparation of the 42nd Session of ECA, including strategic thinking on improving modalities, impact and strategic engagement</li> <li>Identification of topics for the 42nd Session of ECA (2021)</li> <li>Review and recommendations on the REU Work Programme 2020-2021: RI3: Mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services in the agriculture sector</li> </ul>
38/6	February 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of the outcomes of the 32nd ERC (2020)</li> <li>Identification of topics in preparation of the 33rd ERC (2022)</li> <li>Preparation of the 42nd Session of ECA (2021), including strategic thinking on improving modalities, impact and strategic engagement</li> <li>Preparation of the 2021 Informal Consultation</li> <li>Review of progress made by REU on the recommendations of the 41st Session of ECA</li> </ul>
38/7	May 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identification of topics in preparation of the 33rd ERC (2022)</li> <li>Preparation of the 42nd Session of ECA (2021), including strategic thinking on improving modalities, impact and strategic engagement</li> <li>Review of progress made by REU on the recommendations of the 41st Session of ECA</li> <li>Outcomes of the 2021 Informal Consultation</li> </ul>

Meeting	Timeframe	Scope of the agenda
38/8	June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identification of topics in preparation for the 33rd ERC (2022)</li><li>• Preparation of the 42nd Session of ECA (2021), including strategic thinking on improving modalities, impact and strategic engagement</li></ul>