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	منظمة الأغذية والزراعة للأمم المتحدة	联合国 粮食及 农业组织	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture	Продовольственная и сельскохозяйственная организация Объединенных Наций	Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Agricultura y la Alimentación
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<b>WESTERN CENTRAL ATLANTIC FISHERY COMMISSION (WECAFC)</b>
<b>TWENTIETH SESSION (HYBRID)</b>
<b>Montego Bay, Jamaica, 8-10 July 2025</b>
<b>Summary of the regional priorities established by the XXXVIII FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean and the potential contribution of fisheries and aquaculture</b>

In Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), fisheries and aquaculture commodities are vital for the well-being of 85 million people, providing food, nutrition and livelihoods security. The region has become one of the world's leading food suppliers, accounting for 14 percent production and 23 percent of agricultural and fisheries exports

However, fisheries and aquaculture systems in LAC face challenges, including climate change, pollution, ineffective fisheries management, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing inefficient value chains, and lack of adequate spatial planning to reduce conflicts of interest and competition between land and water users.

Transformation of aquatic food systems can be a source of multiple opportunities as it will require the introduction and expansion of technological innovations, increased investment in human capital and research, improved policies and regulations, and greater opportunities to advance in gender equality and resilience.

The 38th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean (LARC 38) took place between 11 and 21 March 2024, in two segments: the Senior Officers Meeting (SOM) from 11 to 13 March 2024 and the Ministerial Session from 18 to 21 March 2024.

The Senior Officers Meeting was attended by 526 participants from 33 Members; two Observer Members; one representative of United Nations (UN) organizations, ten intergovernmental organizations; 11 civil society organizations; five Parliamentary Fronts against Hunger representatives; 11 private sector organizations; and 13 scientific and academic organizations. The Ministerial Session was attended by 719 participants from 33 Members, including: one Head of State; one Prime Minister; one Deputy Prime Minister; 28 Ministers; 14 Vice Ministers and five Permanent Secretaries; 15 Ambassadors; three Observer Members; Representatives of eight UN organizations; 13 intergovernmental organizations; six civil society organizations; one Parliamentary Fronts against Hunger representative; six private sector organizations; and ten scientific and academic organizations.

During the course of the RC, Members recommended that FAO should:

1. continue supporting Members in strengthening national policies for food security and nutrition that ensure the human right to food, alleviation of hunger, reduction of all forms of malnutrition, promote the consumption of healthy diets for all and food safety, through instruments such as food labelling, food-systems based dietary guidelines and education on food and nutrition, among others;

2. support Members in the implementation of the four pillars of the CELAC Plan for Food Security and Nutrition and the Eradication of Hunger 2030, endorsed by the Heads of State and Governments of the region in March 2024, and their respective lines of action;
3. provide technical assistance for the design, implementation, evaluation and monitoring of policies and programmes to strengthen family farming in the context of the United Nations Decade of Family Farming (2019-2028);
4. strengthen the capacity of governments to respond to the changing needs of trade to increase transparency and support small and medium enterprises, cooperatives and family farmers to improve their capacity to achieve and maintain their access to markets and participation in global supply chains;
5. continue mobilizing resources towards climate change adaptation and mitigation, as well as conservation and restoration of ecosystems, biodiversity, sustainable water management and soil conservation to improve the sustainability, resilience and efficiency of agrifood systems;<sup>1</sup>
6. support the strengthening of social protection systems in both rural and urban areas, which includes the strengthening of school feeding programmes, as well as the improvement of humanitarian and resilience measures to prevent, mitigate and respond to adverse events on agrifood systems and vulnerable populations, such as women, youth, Indigenous Peoples and other vulnerable groups;
7. expand efforts to promote science, technology and innovation in agriculture and sustainable management of natural resources along the value chain as well as technical, financial and institutional support to resilience and efficiency in agricultural production; and
8. support the High Level Event on Ocean Action “Immersed in Change” and the third United Nations Ocean Conference, recognizing the importance of aquatic foods and products, and continue providing inclusive, effective and sustainable pathways to reduce poverty, secure livelihoods, and underpin food security and nutrition.

Within the *Regional and Global Policy and Regulatory Matters* and regarding *financing to end hunger for today and tomorrow (SDG 2)*, the RC recommended:

9. support Members in the development of data and evidence on how to optimize and evaluate financing for food security and nutrition;
10. support Members in the improvement of monitoring and evaluation systems to determine the effectiveness, efficiency and inclusiveness of policies and investments for food security and nutrition, as well as their contribution, to readjust or reorient such policies;
11. support Members in mobilizing financial resources to contribute to the implementation of the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty and the CELAC Plan for Food Security and Nutrition and the Eradication of Hunger 2030;
12. provide technical recommendations to ensure that food security and nutrition (FSN) outcomes are considered in financial mechanisms;
13. promote the exchange of experiences, South-South and Triangular Cooperation and dialogue among Members through integration and cooperation platforms, such as the CELAC; and identify practices and challenges of the region in terms of financing to end hunger and malnutrition;
14. promote the exchange of experiences and dialogue at regional, national and subnational levels to improve capacities and policymaking on investments and policies aiming at ending hunger and malnutrition;
15. support Members in developing mechanisms to improve and expand the access of family farmers to rural financial services, such as microcredit and insurance;

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, the term “agriculture” includes forestry, fishing, aquaculture and hunting, as well as cultivation of crops and livestock production.

16. observe the need to continue improving technical and financial cooperation among the United Nations Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) to ensure the transformation of agrifood systems<sup>2</sup> in the region;
17. support countries in mobilizing innovative funding mechanisms, such as financial incentives linked to climate change initiatives with food security and education outcomes, as well as private sector investment and scalable financial tools;
18. promote and facilitate meetings and encounters between Members, potential resource partners and international financial institutions to support the mobilization of investments to effectively increase support for the transformation of agrifood systems, as appropriate, and in the shortest possible time;
19. support Members in ensuring that resources are mobilized in accordance with their capacity to effectively address SDG targets, the four Regional Priorities and the CELAC Plan for Food Security and Nutrition and the Eradication of Hunger 2030, to ensure that no one is left behind; and
20. support Members in mobilizing resources in the context of the CELAC Plan for Food Security and Nutrition and the Eradication of Hunger 2030, in coordination with UN agencies and cooperation agencies, to generate access to resources for programmes for family farmers and fisherfolk.

Regarding *the measures to reduce food loss and waste through technological innovation*, the RC recommended:

21. expand efforts to facilitate the incorporation, monitoring and evaluation of the FLW model law and the *Voluntary Code of Conduct for Food Loss and Waste Reduction*, through policy dialogues, exchange of experiences, and the design and implementation of policy support;
22. continue supporting countries in developing and sharing evidence, and building countries' capabilities to collect, generate and analyse data, statistics and information on the status of FLW in agrifood systems throughout the supply chain (production, processing, marketing, consumption, disposal and reuse);
23. continue putting into place integrated programmes, with an emphasis on sustainability, through the promotion of science, technology and innovation; strengthened regulatory, institutional and policy frameworks; awareness; investment promotion; and development and monitoring of initiatives aimed at reducing FLW in agrifood systems along the supply chain; and
24. strengthen the implementation of integrated solutions for FLW prevention and reduction, including policies and regulatory frameworks, and innovative digital solutions, to achieve progress against FLW through multiple agendas, including improving nutrition and reducing the agrifood sector's impact on the climate.

With regards to *resilience in the region through agrifood systems transformation<sup>3</sup> and the use of early-warning systems*, the RC recommended:

25. continue supporting Members in improving risk- and impact-related data and analysis to measure and understand multiple risks and disasters impacts, and to enhance inclusive multi-hazard early-warning systems;
26. support Members in enabling efficient responses and standards for effective and inclusive anticipatory action, preparedness, response and resilience building at local, national and international levels;
27. provide technical support to mainstreaming resilience in emergency responses, development and climate strategies, and to addressing underlying vulnerabilities, such as poverty and inequality, through inclusive rural transformation;
28. support Members in the development of coherent disaster risk management, social, economic and environmental policies, including the mobilization of timely, effective and context-specific investments;
29. support Members in elaborating, mobilizing financing for and implementing resilience programmes and adaptation strategies to overcome specific national contexts and challenges related to climate change,

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<sup>2</sup> As appropriate.

<sup>3</sup> As appropriate

including *inter alia* droughts, floods, soil degradation and desertification, trough building capacities, technology transfer, utilization of satellite imagery and the application of early-warning systems, in Latin America and the Caribbean, particularly within affected areas, such as the Dry Corridor, SIDS countries and vulnerable ecosystems across the region;

30. continue working with Members, United Nations and other regional and international agencies to support the active participation of all vulnerable groups, such as family farmers, Indigenous Peoples, people of African descent, rural youth, women, fisherfolk and forest dependant- peoples, in agrifood systems transformation,<sup>4</sup> at regional, subregional, country and local levels, recognizing their important role in preserving traditional knowledge and practices in building resilience and care for the environment;
31. continue mobilizing resources towards resilient and sustainable agrifood systems, including the provision of technical assistance and support to restore and enhance livelihoods and food security and nutrition in emergency contexts; and
32. support Members in their use of science, technology and innovation, and resource mobilization in increasing resilience in agrifood systems, as well as in increasing regional collaboration through mechanisms such as the Platform of Latin America and the Caribbean for Climate Action on Agriculture (PLACA) and access to financial funds such as the Loss and Damage Fund.

Within the *Programme and Budget Matters*, the RC recommended FAO to:

33. continue the implementation of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to achieve efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems, through four Regional Priorities, as the mechanism to reach Programme Priority Areas (PPAs)' outcomes under Better Production, Better Nutrition, Better Environment and Better Life;
34. provide integrated normative, technical, policy, operational and investment planning support to Members to implement the four Regional Priorities, applying a programmatic approach for greater coherence, efficiency and impact, leaving no one behind;
35. support the effective uptake of technologies, innovations and practices to improve crop, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture systems, encouraging improvements in the enabling environment and in national policies for sustainable agricultural production, including biotechnology; genome editing; no tillage; other technical tools; bioeconomy; climate-resilient agriculture; climate -adapted planting materials; efficiency of irrigation systems; restorative, agroecological and conservation approaches, as well as voluntary guidelines that entail the responsible use of agricultural inputs;
36. support bioeconomy in promoting sustainable production of food and environmentally sound biobased products and services, through the use and transformation of biological resources, as well as its essential contribution to food security within the region;
37. encourage the effective and sustainable management of all fisheries, and promote sustainable aquaculture intensification and expansion, under the Blue Transformation as a PPA, with emphasis on Caribbean countries;
38. highlighted the potential of FAO's Blue Transformation as a PPA, in the context of Latin America and the Caribbean region, to increase the contribution of fisheries, aquaculture and aquatic foods value chains to provide a more significant proportion of nutritious foods and resilient livelihoods, and the effective management of all fisheries in the region;
39. support Members in the development of policy and technical measures towards sustainable, productive and resilient livestock systems, addressing the national capacities of surveillance, detection and early response to disease outbreaks to tackle the interdependency of the health of people, animals, plants and the environment, within the One Health approach, including by strengthening capacities for biosafety management and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) management;
40. support Members in enhancing sustainable livestock systems within the region, including -small-scale animal farming schemes and camelid producers, to contribute to food security, nutrition, livelihoods and

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<sup>4</sup> As appropriate

inclusive economic growth, while strengthening the management of risk of animal diseases and emerging zoonosis;

41. support access to credit, insurance, extension services and the adoption of digital innovations and relevant technologies, such as artificial intelligence services, to bridge the technology gap for family farmers and vulnerable rural communities, addressing new and emergent agricultural innovations for the region, including by favoring technology transfer from developed countries;
42. support Members in the implementation of the four pillars and their lines of action, as well as the mobilization of resources for the CELAC Plan for Food Security and Nutrition and the Eradication of Hunger 2030, continuing to support the implementation, monitoring and reporting of national policies to reduce hunger, food insecurity and all forms of malnutrition, promote food safety, food and nutrition education, and address the access, affordability and consumption of healthy diets for all, while taking into account Members' capacities, necessities and priorities;
43. provide technical assistance and support Members in mobilizing financial resources to strengthen their statistical and analytical capacity to produce information on agrifood systems and nutrition for better decision -making;
44. continue supporting the improvement and expansion of social protection mechanisms, strengthening the linkages between education, health and agriculture, including school feeding programmes, considering the potential benefits of linking public procurement systems to family farmers and fisherfolk;
45. continue supporting Members in modernizing national food supply and marketing systems, boosting the local economy, promoting inclusive markets for family farming in both urban and rural areas, and transforming agrifood systems, as appropriate;
46. support Members in developing their food supply chains and trade with the aim of promoting the inclusion of family farming and small- and medium--size enterprises in markets and international trade to contribute to food security and nutrition; facilitate climate, environmental and food security financing mechanisms to Members to support the fulfilment of international environmental commitments, considering the negative impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution;
47. support the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity and the restoration of ecosystems services, such as soil and water, and promote an inclusive approach to ensure the delivery of services and the enhancement of livelihoods;
48. support Members in the transformation and resilience of agrifood systems<sup>5</sup> through the establishment and implementation of agricultural practices, policies and programmes, in support of climate resilience, adaptation and mitigation;
49. support Members in the improvement of water management, through the development of policies, capacity development, knowledge exchange, and technological and social innovation;
50. assist in the development of comprehensive early-warning systems for multiple hazards and sectors, to prevent, prepare, restore and recover rural livelihoods, food security and nutrition, and agriculture assets and production in disasters, socioeconomic crises and conflicts;
51. provide technical assistance for the design, implementation and evaluation of policies and programmes in the context of the United Nations Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028, the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030 and the International Year of Camelids 2024;
52. provide technical assistance and support policy dialogue to promote the social, economic and productive inclusion of family farmers and small-scale producers, rural women and youth, Indigenous Peoples, and people of African descent, through improved access to productive resources and services, capacity development, decent employment and economic opportunities;
53. continue providing technical support for the implementation of investment plans through the Hand-in--Hand Initiative, in coherence with local contexts and priorities;

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<sup>5</sup> As appropriate

54. continue promoting regional technical exchanges, sharing of best practices, capacity development and knowledge management, through South-South and Triangular Cooperation, and through coordinated work between Members and their regional and subregional organizations;
55. assist Members in the production, use and conservation of biological resources, including related knowledge, science, technology and innovation to provide information, products, processes and services to all economic sectors, with the aim of moving towards a sustainable economy, in line with the concept of bioeconomy;
56. provide technical assistance to Members for the development and implementation of legal, policy and institutional frameworks on food loss and waste, including the generation of statistical data for better decision -making;
57. strengthen governments' capacities to support market access for agrifood products and enhance transparency in agricultural markets in the context of dynamic commercial conditions, through the collection and dissemination of relevant information on trade in food, agricultural commodities and raw material in support of national, regional and global policies;
58. support Members in the facilitation of access and equitable participation of rural communities in poverty and vulnerability, such as family farmers, fisherfolk, Indigenous Peoples, people of African descent, rural women and youth, in initiatives and investments related to climate and environmental financing, and other biodiversity and conservation efforts related to the sustainability of agrifood systems;
59. strengthen governments' capacities to ensure the protection and promotion of traditional knowledge systems of Indigenous Peoples, people of African descent and other traditional rural communities to ensure the fulfillment of their collective and individual rights, the sustainable management of their lands and natural resources, and the diversification of agrifood systems in the region; and
60. continue supporting Members in the adoption of an integrated approach to fire management that protects forests as a source of food and avoids the damaging effects of uncontrolled fires to both the environment and agrifood systems, while reducing the risks to both human and animal life.