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Продовольственная и
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Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

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PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Hundred and Forty-first Session

Rome, 3-7 November 2025

**Bioeconomy for Sustainable Food and Agriculture -
Biennial progress and future directions**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Global interest in bioeconomy is accelerating, with a growing number of countries and regions adopting dedicated strategies. However, cooperation remains fragmented, prompting calls for coherence and international cooperation. Multilateral initiatives, including the G20, have advanced discussion of principles, metrics and other critical issues.
- FAO is the first United Nations entity to elevate bioeconomy to a corporate priority through its Programme Priority Area (PPA) on Bioeconomy for Sustainable Food and Agriculture (PPA BE2) in the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31. The Medium Term Plan 2026-29 establishes four key components of FAO's work on bioeconomy: 1) data, information and knowledge 2) partnerships, 3) policy coherence and 4) bioeconomy innovations on the ground.
- During the 2024-2025 biennium, FAO Governing Bodies have increasingly discussed bioeconomy, with the 44th Session of the FAO Conference reaffirming its importance, calling for policy coherence, capacity development and knowledge sharing. FAO Technical Committees and Regional Conferences set priorities spanning partnership facilitation, circular approaches, inclusive engagement, livelihoods, biodiversity product value chains and region-wide policy and monitoring systems.
- In response to the mandates on bioeconomy of global relevance issued during the 27th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO 27) and the 29th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG 29), FAO launched a process to establish a Global Multistakeholder Partnership on Bioeconomy for Sustainable Food and Agriculture. In response to COFO 27, FAO began a webinar series laying the ground for an international conference on forest-based bioeconomy early 2026. Also, in response to COAG 29, FAO supported the COAG Bureau in considering options for a possible Member dialogue on bioeconomy.
- Looking ahead to the next biennium (2026–2027) and beyond, FAO will continue spearheading efforts towards more harmonized bioeconomy monitoring and assessment frameworks; leveraging its convening power to facilitate multilateral collaboration on bioeconomy; and promote the uptake of bioeconomy innovations for agrifood systems transformation through results-driven, programmatic approaches, aligned with the 2026–2027 Biennial Theme “Fostering Innovation for Food Security”.

GUIDANCE SOUGHT FROM THE PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

The Programme Committee is invited to take note of developments in FAO's work on bioeconomy for sustainable food and agriculture and to provide guidance as deemed appropriate.

Draft Advice

The Committee:

- **recognized FAO's continued leadership and progress in advancing bioeconomy for sustainable food and agriculture, amid growing global interest and cooperation.**
- **encouraged FAO to further strengthen its focus on data, information and knowledge, partnerships, policy coherence and implementing bioeconomy innovations, as set out in the Reviewed Strategic Framework 2022-31 and recommendations of the 44th Session of the FAO Conference.**
- **welcomed the progress updates regarding options for a possible Member dialogue on bioeconomy and consultations towards the establishment of a global multistakeholder partnership on bioeconomy for sustainable food and agriculture and looked forward to Members' deliberations at relevant FAO Governing Bodies including the Council, emphasizing the importance of inclusive dialogue and engagement with all Regions and stakeholders.**

I. Introduction

1. Global interest in bioeconomy is accelerating. Twenty-three countries have already adopted national bioeconomy strategies and 3 multi-country bioeconomy strategies have been developed, with at least 15 more country strategies in development¹. When bioscience-related strategies are included, this number rises to nearly 60². While this growing recognition of bioeconomy's potential for national and regional development is promising, the current global governance on bioeconomy remains fragmented. Countries are therefore looking for greater coherence through international cooperation.
2. This global momentum is evident across diverse fora, most notably the G20 Bioeconomy Initiative (GIB). Launched under Brazil's G20 Presidency in 2024, the GIB produced ten voluntary High-Level Principles on Bioeconomy “*recognizing the remarkable potential of bioeconomy to contribute to building a sustainable future and fostering economic growth for all*”, agreed upon by the G20 Leaders’ Summit³.
3. This vision has been carried forward under South Africa's G20 Presidency in 2025, with specific emphasis on developing metrics for shared understanding of bioeconomy, tailored support for the African context, innovative financing mechanisms, and strengthening global partnerships for implementation⁴.
4. The respective Communiqués of the 2024 Global Bioeconomy Summit⁵ and the 2025 Berlin Agriculture Ministers' Conference⁶ both emphasize clear commitments towards more structured, multilateral engagement on bioeconomy with the latter also expressing support for establishing a FAO-facilitated global multistakeholder partnership on Bioeconomy for Sustainable Food and Agriculture.
5. A commensurate uptick in outlook and policy guidance documents on bioeconomy is noticeable. Since 2023, international institutions including UNCTAD/SMEP⁷, WEF⁸, Nature

¹ FAO. 2023. *Dashboard on bioeconomy strategies and related actions for sustainable development*. [online]. Rome, FAO. [Cited 11 July 2025]. <https://www.fao.org/in-action/sustainable-and-circular-bioeconomy/dashboard/en/>

² Gomez San Juan, M., Harnett, S. & Albinelli, I. 2023. *Sustainable and circular bioeconomy in the climate agenda: Opportunities to transform agrifood systems*. Rome, FAO. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/79fe360c-71bc-4718-aa9d-28953e641181>

³ G20 Brazilian Presidency. 2024. *G20 Rio de Janeiro Leaders’ Declaration*. <https://g20.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/G20-Rio-de-Janeiro-Leaders-Declaration-EN.pdf>

⁴ European Commission. 2025. The European Commission participated in the inaugural meetings of the G20 Research and Innovation Working Group and the G20 Initiative on Bioeconomy. [online] [Cited 1 September 2025]. https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/news/all-research-and-innovation-news/european-commission-participated-inaugural-meetings-g20-research-and-innovation-working-group-and-2025-03-12_en

⁵ IACGB (International Advisory Council on Global Bioeconomy). 2024. *Global Bioeconomy Summit 2024 Communiqué*. <https://gbs2024.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/IACGB-Communique-24October2024.pdf>

⁶ GFFA (Global Forum for Food and Agriculture). 2025. *17 Berlin Agriculture Ministers’ Conference 2025 Final Communiqué: Farming a Sustainable Bioeconomy*. https://www.bmlch.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/EN/_International-Affairs/gffa-2025-communicue-en.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=2

⁷ UNCTAD/SMEP (UN Trade and Development/Sustainable Manufacturing and Environmental Pollution Programme). 2025. *Beyond the technical loop: Driving the circular bioeconomy through global policy coherence*. <https://unctad.org/system/files/non-official-document/smep-circular-bioeconomy-brief-11-may-2025.pdf>

⁸ WEF (World Economic Forum). 2025. *From Policy to Practice: Actionable Recommendations for a Commercial Bioeconomy*. <https://www.weforum.org/publications/2025/01/From-Policy-to-Practice-Actionable-Recommendations-for-a-Commercial-Bioeconomy-2025.pdf>

Finance⁹, the IACGB¹⁰, the OECD¹¹ and the United Nations Environment Programme and IEMP¹² have published guidance on the topic. Regional programmes and groups such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme¹³ and the European Commission¹⁴ have also published context-specific guidance. In 2024 alone, FAO released a global stocktaking report¹⁵ and a global opportunities paper¹⁶ on bioeconomy alongside a bioeconomy toolbox¹⁷ to assist the development of sustainable bioeconomy strategies. FAO is well-placed to continue supporting and shaping this rapidly evolving agenda.

6. The Programme Committee last discussed the importance of bioeconomy for sustainable food and agriculture at its 137th Session in November 2023¹⁸. Members welcomed FAO's knowledge base and progress report on bioeconomy and acknowledged the important role that bioeconomy can play in agrifood systems transformation, asking for further discussion in the Technical Committees and other FAO Governing Bodies¹⁹.

7. This document summarizes key global developments on bioeconomy and provides an update on FAO's efforts to advance bioeconomy as a key pathway for sustainable food and agriculture in 2024-2025, including through discussions in its Governing Bodies and outlines future directions for 2026-2027 and beyond.

II. FAO's work on Bioeconomy for Sustainable Food and Agriculture in the context of the Programme of Work and Budget 2024-2025

8. The FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 includes Bioeconomy for Sustainable Food and Agriculture as one of its 20 Programme Priority Areas (PPA BE2) under the aspiration of a *better environment*, making FAO the first United Nations entity to elevate bioeconomy to a strategic corporate priority of this level. This confirms the unique leadership role of FAO in advancing sustainable bioeconomy as a key approach for supporting the Sustainable Development Goals

⁹ Nature Finance. 2024. *The Global Bioeconomy*. <https://www.naturefinance.net/resources-tools/global-bioeconomy-g20-stocktake/>

¹⁰ IACGB. 2024. *Bioeconomy globalization: Recent trends and drivers of national programs and policies*. https://www.iacgb.net/lw_resource/datapool/systemfiles/elements/files/52440fb0-f35d-11ee-9ed1-dead53a91d31/current/document/Global_Bioeconomy_-_April_2024_IACGB.pdf

¹¹ OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). 2023. *Carbon Management: Bioeconomy and Beyond*. OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/b5ace135-en>.

¹² United Nations Environment Programme & International Ecosystem Management Partnership. 2024. *Global Bioeconomy Assessment: Coordinated Efforts of Policy, Innovation, and Sustainability for a Greener Future*. <https://wedocs.unep.org/20.500.11822/45332>.

¹³ Tadesse, G., Glatzel, K., and Savadogo, M. (Eds.) 2024. *Advancing the Climate and Bioeconomy Agenda in Africa for Resilient and Sustainable Agrifood Systems*. ReSAKSS 2024 Annual Trends and Outlook Report. Kigali and Washington, DC: AKADEMIYA2063 and International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). https://www.resakss.org/sites/default/files/ReSAKSS_AW_ATOM_2024_Full%20Report_web.pdf

¹⁴ Korosuo, A., Borzacchiello, M.T., Giuntoli, J., Lasarte Lopez, J., M'Barek, R., Mubareka, S.B. and Camia, A. 2024. *Trends in the EU bioeconomy - update 2024*. Luxembourg. https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2760/0141556_JRC140285.

¹⁵ Albinelli, I., Gomez San Juan, M., Lester, G., Nijmeijer, M. & Neretin, L. 2024. *Bioeconomy for food and agriculture: A global stocktaking study*. Environment and Natural Resources Management Working Paper, No. 101. Rome, FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd2490en>

¹⁶ FAO. 2024. *Bioeconomy for sustainable food and agriculture: a global opportunity – Position paper*. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd1976en>

¹⁷ Gomez San Juan, M. 2024. *The bioeconomy toolbox – A guide to support the development of sustainable bioeconomy strategies and policies*. Environment and Natural Resources Management Working Paper, No. 99. Rome, FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc8856en>

¹⁸ FAO. 2023. Bioeconomy for sustainable food and agriculture. Document PC 137/INF/8. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/e875c3e2-fc73-455f-a1ac-6efa5340f9e6/content>

¹⁹ FAO. 2023. Report of the Council of FAO: 174th Session. Document CL 174/RE. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/ea99cfa4-a841-44b3-928c-823eca7c3da7/content>

(SDGs), including SDG 12 on responsible consumption and production²⁰. FAO's PPA BE2 envisions "A sustainable bioeconomy that balances economic value, social welfare, food security and nutrition with environmental sustainability promoted through formulation and implementation of coherent evidence-based policies and practices in micro and macro environments, using technological, organizational and social innovations."

9. The FAO Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2026-29 emphasizes a transformative approach to bioeconomy, marking a strategic shift from broad global narratives to actionable, context-specific implementations and use of programmatic approaches. The inclusive participation of women, youth, Indigenous Peoples and vulnerable groups in bioeconomy development is emphasized²¹.

10. PPA BE2 has four key thematic components:

- a) **Enhance access to data, information and knowledge** to help address the size, trade-offs and potential of bioeconomy for sustainable agrifood systems.
- b) **Forge partnerships** between governments, development partners, civil society, research institutions, the private sector and other stakeholders at global, regional and national levels on bioeconomy for sustainable food and agriculture.
- c) **Enhance policy coherence** and integrate bioeconomy in national development agendas.
- d) **Deploy bioeconomy innovations on the ground** using programmatic approaches with a focus on pollution prevention and reduction along value chains, including plastic pollution, preventing and reducing food loss and waste, and urban systems.²²

The paragraphs that follow summarize progress in 2024-2025 for each component.

11. FAO continuously expands and refines the **data, information and knowledge** that underpins bioeconomy development, ensuring its accessibility for a wide range of audiences. For example, in 2024, FAO published the reports *Bioeconomy for food and agriculture: A global stocktaking study*²³ and *Bioeconomy for food and agriculture: A global opportunity position paper*.²⁴ The 2025 publication on *Indicators for sustainable bioeconomy: Towards building a monitoring and assessment framework* and its accompanying database of over 4 000 carefully categorized indicators were developed by FAO in close collaboration with the G20 Initiative on Bioeconomy.²⁵ It offers a prioritization approach that supports indicator selection from the database through easily replicable steps, helping bioeconomy monitoring efforts to become more readily comparable across diverse contexts. Shorter documents, such as *Globefish Insights: Unlocking the promise of Bioeconomy in Aquatic Food Systems*²⁶ or a submission to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) highlighting the bioeconomy's potential to contribute to climate change mitigation through waste management²⁷ draw attention to bioeconomy opportunities targeted to specific interest

²⁰ Document C 2025/7: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/62e91f34-65db-448f-af6e-2a5c0ec2667c/content>

²¹ FAO. 2025. *The Director-General's Medium Term Plan 2026-29 and Programme of Work and Budget 2026-27*. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/208c1e64-63fc-4b8e-9d06-c3ad68c4a0c0/content>

²² *Ibid.* Collaborations with other, relevant PPAs, including BE4 (Achieving Sustainable Urban Food Systems) and BN4 (Reducing Food Loss and Waste) are underway.

²³ Albinelli, I., Gomez San Juan, M., Lester, G., Nijmeijer, M. & Neretin, L. 2024. *Bioeconomy for food and agriculture: A global stocktaking study*. Environment and Natural Resources Management Working Paper, No. 101. Rome, FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd2490en>

²⁴ FAO. 2024. *Bioeconomy for sustainable food and agriculture: a global opportunity – Position paper*. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd1976en>

²⁵ FAO. 2025. *Indicators for sustainable bioeconomy: Towards building a monitoring and assessment framework*. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd6761en>.

²⁶ FAO. 2025. *Globefish Insights: Unlocking the promise of Bioeconomy in Aquatic Food Systems*. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/837849ea-c01c-4395-aa0e-fd53b44ff9f8>

²⁷ FAO. 2025. *Submission by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in relation to Sharm el-Sheikh mitigation ambition and implementation work programme in accordance with the Decision 4/CMA.4, para 8 and 11*.

areas. Socio-economic aspects of bioeconomy are explored in publications such as the *Youth-led initiatives in the bioeconomy*.²⁸ Meanwhile, updated statistical resources on forestry, such as the *Global forest product facts and figures 2023*,²⁹ provide essential data on forest-based bioproducts (production, trade and consumption trends), with preparations underway for the next edition. In 2024, FAOSTAT launched a new bioenergy database, collating data between 1990–present for over 200 countries and territories.³⁰ Publications including *Building a sustainable bioeconomy in Africa through forest products*³¹, *Fostering linkages between sustainable wood supply and forest and landscape restoration in Asia and the Pacific*³², *Promoting bioeconomy through agriculture practice in Eastern Europe and Central Asia*³³ and *Sustainable and Circular Bioeconomy in Forest-based Industries: How to Get There*³⁴ provide insights at regional level.

12. FAO also offers awareness-raising activities and capacity development initiatives around the world. For example, in Asia and the Pacific, a regional bioeconomy network was set up to foster knowledge exchange and coordination. To date the network has delivered a series of talks³⁵ and dialogues³⁶ focusing on different technical aspects of bioeconomy, with an upcoming regional Bioeconomy Innovations and Investment Platform in November 2025. Bioeconomy case studies are part of the discussion on *Leveraging Policy for Gender-Inclusive Access to Finance and Circular Innovation in the Agricultural Sector in the Arab Region* in November 2025. Collaborating with the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) and its eight Member States, FAO in 2024 launched an Amazon Bioeconomy Investment Programme³⁷ based on the FAO Hand-in-Hand Initiative³⁸. In 2025, case studies from Bolivia, Brazil and Peru will spotlight innovative financial mechanisms to unlock the potential of sustainable bioeconomy. At the global level, FAO organized the Global Agrifood Biotechnologies Conference in June 2025, with a session dedicated to *Biotechnology applications in a sustainable bioeconomy*.³⁹

13. Multistakeholder and international **partnerships** continue to play a central role in advancing sustainable bioeconomy solutions. FAO continues to engage in relevant global fora, including the Global Bioeconomy Summit held in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2024,⁴⁰ the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture held in Berlin, Germany, in 2025⁴¹ and the G20 Initiative on Bioeconomy (GIB), launched by Brazil in 2024 and advanced by South Africa in 2025. Through collaborative programmes such as European Union (EU) Forest Governance and Value Chains, the Forest and Farm Facility, the UN-REDD, the Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism, Sustainable Wildlife

https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/SubmissionsStaging/Documents/202507251541---MWP_6th-Dialogue_FAO-submission.pdf

²⁸ FAO. 2024. Youth-led initiatives in the bioeconomy. <https://www.fao.org/agrifood-economics/publications/detail/en/c/1708091/>

²⁹ FAO. 2024. *Global forest products facts and figures 2023*. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd3650en>

³⁰ <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/BE>

³¹ FAO. 2024. Building a sustainable bioeconomy in Africa through forest products <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/4b3280aa-bea4-4953-aa8f-b3fef11f4db1>

³² FAO. 2024. Fostering linkages between sustainable wood supply and forest and landscape restoration in Asia and the Pacific. Bangkok. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/7ec00f6a-ce7c-4a4d-8b75-e565673878ba>

³³ FAO. 2024. Promoting bioeconomy through agriculture practice in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/4b3280aa-bea4-4953-aa8f-b3fef11f4db1>

³⁴ FAO & United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). 2024. *Sustainable and Circular Bioeconomy in Forest-based Industries: How to Get There*. https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2025-02/2326211_E_PDF_WEB.pdf

³⁵ <https://www.fao.org/in-action/sustainable-and-circular-bioeconomy/bioeconomy-in-asia-pacific/bioeconomy-talks/en/>

³⁶ <https://www.fao.org/in-action/sustainable-and-circular-bioeconomy/bioeconomy-in-asia-pacific/dialogues/en/>

³⁷ <https://www.fao.org/americas/news/news-detail/inversion-bioeconomia-amazonica/en>

³⁸ Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Suriname, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Peru.

³⁹ <https://www.fao.org/biotechnology/fao-biotechnology-conference-programme/biotechnology-applications-in-a-sustainable-bioeconomy/en>

⁴⁰ <https://www.fao.org/in-action/sustainable-and-circular-bioeconomy/resources/news/details/en/c/1726372/>

⁴¹ <https://www.fao.org/in-action/sustainable-and-circular-bioeconomy/resources/news/details/en/c/1733962/>

Management, and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration (FOLUR) Impact Program, FAO has supported producer organizations, policymakers and practitioners to expand sustainable value chains, restore degraded landscapes and integrate forest-based livelihoods into food security strategies. From a fisheries perspective, joint initiatives such as the GloLitter Partnerships have addressed marine plastic pollution by promoting gear recycling and biodegradable alternatives. FAO continues to be an active member in and to lead the Secretariat of the Global Bioenergy Partnership (GBEP) since its establishment in 2006. GBEP, with its more than 90 members between governments and international organizations, is currently refining guidance on the use of the GBEP sustainability indicators for bioenergy to be applied in the broader context of bioeconomy through a series of technical webinars in 2025. In Latin America and the Caribbean, FAO collaborates with the Pan-Amazon Network for Bioeconomy, a multistakeholder alliance aimed at promoting locally led sustainable bioeconomy across the Amazon biome. As further detailed below, an inclusive consultation process to inform the possible development of a new, global bioeconomy partnership is also underway.

14. A dual approach is needed to enhance **policy coherence** to create an enabling environment for bioeconomy: FAO supports countries in developing their dedicated bioeconomy strategies as well as integrating bioeconomy into other national and regional development strategies. In the first case, *The bioeconomy toolbox: A guide to support the development of sustainable bioeconomy strategies and policies*⁴², published in 2024, represents an important milestone, offering countries step-wise guidance based on concrete experiences from FAO partner countries. For the second case, the 2024 framework on *Enhancing the sustainability and financing of forest-based value chains*⁴³ provides practical guidance on assessments, upgrading strategies and financing mechanisms to ensure that policies support sustainable development goals. Similarly, the 2025 *Guidelines on Sustainable Aquaculture*⁴⁴ supports the incorporation of fish by-products into aquafeeds, illustrating how bioeconomy and circular approaches can be mainstreamed into regulatory systems. Additionally, the report on *Sustainable Nitrogen Management in Agrifood Systems*⁴⁵, the forthcoming *Global Plan of Action for Sustainable Livestock Transformation*, the *LEAP Guidelines on the role of livestock in circular bioeconomy systems*⁴⁶, the forthcoming *Framework on One Health in Agrifood Systems* and the *Global Forest Resources Assessment 2025*⁴⁷ all incorporate specific elements and guidance on bioeconomy, with a view to facilitating holistic planning. Amongst other efforts, FAO is supporting the development of the Strategic Bioeconomy Plan for the Amazon Region and policy guidelines to boost bioeconomy in the Pacific.

15. **Bioeconomy innovations on the ground** are increasingly demonstrating the practical benefits of bioeconomy approaches for communities and ecosystems. In Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, bio- and phytoremediation of soil contaminants are being assessed through dedicated soil trials. In Côte d'Ivoire, the BIODAF and BIODAF II projects use Black Soldier Fly larvae to transform organic food waste into high-value agricultural inputs, supporting urban climate action and agrifood resilience simultaneously.⁴⁸ In Pakistan, a GEF-supported project is promoting the valorization of banana pseudostems, which are usually burned in the field or discarded in landfills, as value-added textiles, with the potential to reduce the chemical, greenhouse gas and water footprints from both banana and cotton production. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, bioeconomy entry points are being identified in the açai and quinoa real value chains. In forestry, producer organizations and communities are developing sustainable value chains for wood and non-wood forest products⁴⁹,

⁴² <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/da351014-0795-4cc7-9e7d-90cfc46685bc> and <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/41165e35-5732-4a74-81fa-9ecd36f7936d>

⁴³ Boscolo, M., Lehtonen, P., Di Girolami, E. & Duong, G. 2025. *Enhancing the sustainability and financing of forest-based value chains*. Rome, FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd5197en>

⁴⁴ FAO. 2025. *Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture*. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd3785en>

⁴⁵ <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/detail/FAO-nitrogen-use-efficiency-report/en>

⁴⁶ FAO. 2024. Guidelines on the role of livestock in circular bioeconomy systems For public review. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd1948en>

⁴⁷ <https://www.fao.org/forest-resources-assessment/en>

⁴⁸ <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/story/the-harmless-soldier-fighting-mounds-of-harmful-waste/en>

⁴⁹ <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/4b3280aa-bea4-4953-aa8f-b3fef11f4db1>

including agroforestry systems and restoration activities. In fisheries, innovative products such as fish powder are being incorporated into school feeding programmes in Ghana and Malawi, contributing to improved nutrition while promoting circular use of resources. Other locally-led initiatives are valorizing by-products from fisheries, such as chitin extraction in Chile, collagen production in Colombia, fish silage production in several Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and fish leather production from discarded fish skins by female factory workers. These skins are later converted by local artisans into souvenirs for tourist markets, offsetting the need to import costly animal leather from the mainland.

III. Bioeconomy in FAO Governing Bodies

A. Overview of Governing Body decisions on bioeconomy

16. Since its establishment as a PPA in the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, substantive discussions and Members' recommendations on bioeconomy have proliferated across FAO Governing Bodies. Most recently, the 44th Session of the FAO Conference "*reiterated the importance of bioeconomy for sustainable agrifood systems; encouraged continued dialogue on bioeconomy in the COAG, other technical committees and FAO Council with a view to further support policy coherence, capacity development and knowledge sharing on bioeconomy for sustainable food and agriculture*"⁵⁰.

17. Among these diverse Governing Body discussions and decisions on bioeconomy summarized in **Annex 1**, three of the work areas mandated by COFO 27 and COAG 29 are of global relevance and advancing swiftly: preparations for an international summit on forest-based bioeconomy; consultations towards the development of a global multistakeholder partnership on bioeconomy and a possible Member dialogue on bioeconomy. The following sub-headings summarize related progress.

B. Preparations for an international conference on the contribution of the forest sector to sustainable bioeconomy

18. COFO 27 "*invited FAO to convene, subject to availability of extrabudgetary resources, an international conference on the contribution of the forest sector to sustainable bioeconomy and to present its results at the 28th Session of the Committee on Forestry, and to the appropriate Sessions of the FAO Council and Conference*"⁵¹. In response and with the generous support of Austria and Finland, the Country- and Organization-Led Initiative (COLI) on Sustainable Forest-based Bioeconomy Approaches was launched at the 20th UN Forum on Forests (UNFF20)⁵². As part of the COLI, FAO is facilitating a global webinar series⁵³ to inform the 2026 COLI Summit (taking place in Vienna, Austria, on 23-25 February 2026). The Summit will serve as the international conference envisioned by COFO 27, with its outcomes to be presented at COFO 28 and UNFF21. These efforts were complemented by global advocacy, including observance of the International Day of Forests (IDF) 2025 under the theme "Forests and Food", highlighting the central role of forests in food security, nutrition and livelihoods.

C. Towards the development of a global multistakeholder partnership on bioeconomy

19. COFO 27 "*encouraged FAO (...) to initiate a global bioeconomy partnership and cooperation*"⁵⁴ while COAG 29 *inter alia* "*recognized the need to initiate a multistakeholder global*

⁵⁰ FAO. 2025. *Report of the Conference of FAO, 44th Session*, paragraph 54(d).

<https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/c3bec0d2-dca2-4794-b8fa-5ab8566804b6/content>

⁵¹ FAO. 2025. *Report of the 27th Session of the Committee on Forestry (Rome, 22-26 July 2024)*, paragraph 13(d). <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/f8e9edba-1ead-4791-926f-f9b950969c66/content>

⁵² <https://www.bmluk.gv.at/en/coli/coli--coli.html>

⁵³ <https://www.fao.org/forestry/our-focus/forest-products/sustainable-forest-based-bioeconomy-approaches/en>

⁵⁴ FAO. 2025. *Report of the 27th Session of the Committee on Forestry (Rome, 22-26 July 2024)*, paragraph 13(c). <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/f8e9edba-1ead-4791-926f-f9b950969c66/content>

*bioeconomy partnership for sustainable agrifood systems to serve as a catalyst for the development of policies, strategies, and plans, building capacities, knowledge systems, and incentives at global, regional, national, subnational and local levels and encouraged FAO, subject to available resources, to develop a proposal to this end, including the envisaged engagement of Members, UN entities and other stakeholders, as appropriate, to be presented for consideration at a future FAO Council Session, while taking into account the views expressed during COAG 29 in this regard”.*⁵⁵

20. With the support of the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the project “Towards Establishing the Global Partnership on Bioeconomy for Sustainable Food and Agriculture (GP-BSFA)” was launched as a deliverable of the 2025 Global Forum for Food and Agriculture.⁵⁶ This endeavor received strong support, as reflected in the Final Communiqué endorsed by 62 ministers for Agriculture.⁵⁷

21. Between March and July 2025, FAO and partners organized five regional consultations;⁵⁸ two Project Advisory Group (PAG) meetings;⁵⁹ two UN Environment Management Group Nexus Dialogues;⁶⁰ a focus group discussion at the 1st International Conference of the Latin American Bioeconomy Network conference in Costa Rica; a private sector consultative meeting; and a dedicated youth consultation. In total, over 530 stakeholders across all major stakeholder groups (government, academia, private sector, civil society and the UN system) from over 70 countries participated in this consultation process, making this one of FAO’s most inclusive preparatory processes for an emerging multistakeholder platform.

22. The inputs received have reaffirmed a shared recognition that bioeconomy offers a crucial pathway to transform agrifood systems, making them more, efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable. While bioeconomy transcends various sectors including food and agricultural sectors, establishing a global multistakeholder bioeconomy partnership specifically focused on sustainable agrifood systems would strategically address the most pressing benefits and trade-offs, cater to the urgent needs of developing countries, and cover most of the biological resources on which bioeconomy is built. With agrifood systems as a starting point, cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination could be promoted during implementation.

23. Feedback from the consultations converged around four core pillars, which also closely resemble the four key thematic components of FAO’s PPA BE2. **To improve the knowledge base**, participants highlighted the necessity for robust data, harmonized metrics, and regional knowledge hubs, addressing gaps in baseline data and fragmented systems, with initiatives tailored to local contexts. **To stimulate investments and partnerships**, stakeholders emphasized blended finance, investment matchmaking, and stronger multi-stakeholder platforms to bridge early-stage financing gaps and support innovation scaling. **Promoting policy coherence** emerged as crucial, with calls for coordinated cross-sectoral policies, rights-based safeguards and alignment with major international frameworks, while allowing for region-specific approaches. **Scaling up technical support and capacity building** was felt as necessary to assist small and medium enterprises, technology transfer, entrepreneurship, and inclusive peer learning, with particular focus on youth, women and Indigenous

⁵⁵ FAO. 2025. *Report of the 29th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (Rome, 30 September – 4 October 2024)*, paragraph 18(g). <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/6a819c57-9c5e-4d85-b287-a22ccb085124/content>

⁵⁶ <https://msc.gffa-berlin.de/app/uploads/sites/5/2025/01/Deliverable-2025-GFFA-FAO-Project-Bioeconomy-Partnership-English.pdf>

⁵⁷ https://msc.gffa-berlin.de/app/uploads/sites/5/2025/01/GFFA25_FinalCommunique_EN.pdf

⁵⁸ Regions covered: Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Near East and North Africa, with over 360 participants engaged. The North America consultation is expected to be held in September 2025.

⁵⁹ Meetings were held at the beginning and at the end of the consultation process which convened international experts to provide technical and governance guidance.

⁶⁰ Mobilizing the UN system and external partners to link bioeconomy to global environmental governance and financing agendas. <https://unemg.org/nexus-dialogue-on-sustainable-bioeconomy/>

Peoples. Overall, consultations supported phased, inclusive, and regionally adapted implementation of potential future partnership activities, maximizing global coherence and local relevance.

24. Drawing on the rich inputs received, draft terms of reference and a governance framework for the partnership are in preparation for discussion at a future Session of the FAO Council, in line with the mandate from COAG 29.

D. Progress on options to engage Members in dialogue during the intersessional period of COAG

25. COAG 29 “requested FAO, within its mandate and subject to available resources, to develop possible options, in consultation with and guidance from the COAG Bureau, on ways to engage Members in dialogue during the intersessional period of COAG on approaches to bioeconomy for sustainable food and agriculture, to be presented for consideration at a future FAO Council Session”⁶¹.

26. Between November 2024 and July 2025, the COAG Bureau, with support from the Office of Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment (OCB), explored options for Member dialogue on bioeconomy approaches during the intersessional period. A background note and survey were developed and circulated to Bureau members in April 2025, with the deadline extended twice to ensure broad participation. At survey closure in July 2025, 17 Members representing six of FAO’s seven Regional Groups⁶² had shared their views, providing diverse perspectives to inform FAO Management on Members’ priorities for engagement on bioeconomy.

27. The dialogue options outlined in the background paper and included in the survey covered: **Consultations with Members** (informal, usually linked to Governing Bodies); an **Ad hoc open-ended Working Group**; a **Subsidiary/Ad hoc Body reporting to COAG or Consultation** processes mandated by a future COAG Session; a **Group of Friends**; and the “**Other**” modality.

28. The survey also gathered feedback on the possible objectives of a Member dialogue, including: **Exchanging lessons learned and experiences** between Members in developing and implementing **coherent bioeconomy policies and strategies** that align with relevant global and regional frameworks; **Enhancing capacities of developing countries** to develop and implement effective bioeconomy strategies, including through South-South and Triangular Cooperation; Developing **common metrics and reporting frameworks** for bioeconomy and bio-based value chains; Developing **global guidelines and standards** for bio-based products, technologies and practices; **Foresight**: keeping under review bioeconomy technologies, practices and processes, alongside their potential impacts; and the “**Other**” modality.

29. While views on the content and format of a potential Member dialogue on bioeconomy varied, there was broad consensus in the COAG Bureau that a dialogue on bioeconomy was welcome. Drawing on this consultation process, the COAG Bureau will provide guidance to FAO Management as an input for the finalization of an options paper to be presented for consideration at a future FAO Council session. In the meantime, preparations by Brazil and the European Union (EU) towards the jointly launching of a Group of Friends on bioeconomy are underway.

IV. Outlook on bioeconomy

F. Upcoming global milestones

⁶¹ FAO. 2025. *Report of the 29th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (Rome, 30 September – 4 October 2024)*, paragraph 18(d) <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/6a819c57-9c5e-4d85-b287-a22ccb085124/content>

⁶² Asia (Indonesia, Japan), Europe (Austria, France, Ireland), Latin America and the Caribbean (Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela), Near East (Jordan- two inputs, and Lebanon), North America (United States of America- two inputs, and Canada) and Southwest Pacific (Australia). No inputs were received from African Members.

30. Key upcoming events for bioeconomy include:
- a. The final **G20 Johannesburg Summit**, held from 22 to 23 November 2025 in South Africa. Inputs from the three preparatory meetings of the G20 Initiative on Bioeconomy will be provided, with an emphasis on Africa's unique opportunities and challenges. FAO's contributions have emphasized developing harmonized monitoring and assessment frameworks and advancing a global multistakeholder partnership on bioeconomy.
 - b. **The 30th Session of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP30)** in Brazil from 10-21 November 2025, where Bioeconomy and Biotechnology are one of the Brazilian Presidency's "30 priorities for COP30". On this occasion, the 2025 *Climate Technologies Progress Report* will be launched – dedicated to bioeconomy this year, with contributions from FAO experts. FAO will also launch its "Forest-positive buildings" approach at COP30, which encourages the increased use of sustainably produced wood in construction.
 - c. **The COLI Summit** in Austria from 23-25 February 2026, as described above.
 - d. The **International Day of Forests**, on 31 March 2026, will be dedicated to "Forests and Economies"⁶³.
 - e. **The Global Bioeconomy Summit**, anticipated to take place in the latter half of 2026 in Ireland, in the context of Ireland's EU presidency.

G. FAO's work on Bioeconomy for Sustainable Food and Agriculture in the biennium 2026-2027

31. Since the integration of bioeconomy in the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, FAO has emphasized building the global narrative on bioeconomy, justifying its relevance for sustainable agrifood systems transformation and the broader 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. To support this, it has produced a number of cornerstone publications, including the *Aspirational principles and criteria for a sustainable bioeconomy (2021)*, *Sustainable and circular bioeconomy in the climate agenda: Opportunities to transform agrifood systems (2022)*, *Sustainable and circular bioeconomy in the biodiversity agenda: Opportunities to conserve and restore biodiversity in agrifood systems through bioeconomy practices (2022)*.

32. With this foundation now laid, the work is moving beyond the development of global narratives. As set out in the MTP 2026-29 and the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2026-27, FAO looks forward to advancing results-driven and scalable programmatic interventions that target more efficient, inclusive, resilient, equitable and sustainable agrifood systems. A summary outlook follows for each PPA BE2 component.

33. **Enhance access to data, information and knowledge:** A central focus identified in the MTP exercise is the advancement of robust, harmonized, and accessible data systems, which are crucial for enabling evidence-based policy and investment decisions for bioeconomy. FAO is committed to consolidating data and information to support robust decision-making related to the bioeconomy, including biomass use, land and water allocation, environmental and social impacts, value chain traceability, and circularity. FAO will continue to disseminate global data and methodologies for assessment. FAOSTAT datasets on bioenergy production and consumption and on the production and trade of forest products will be updated annually, and new datasets, for example on forest sector employment, the potential of engineered wood products in climate change mitigation and trade in key non-wood forest products such as forest nuts, mushrooms and bamboo, are anticipated for release. Building on the *Indicators for sustainable bioeconomy: Towards building a monitoring and assessment framework* report and database, FAO will seek to expand the development and piloting of indicators and metrics for sustainable bioeconomy. Gender-disaggregated data and gender assessments will be emphasized, recognizing that women and men often participate differently across bioeconomy in agrifood systems, with distinct roles, access to resources and benefits.

⁶³ <https://www.fao.org/collaborative-partnership-on-forests/initiatives/international-day-of-forests/en>

34. With respect to knowledge products and tools, FAO is continuously intensifying efforts to ensure that resources, such as digital toolkits, reports, and curated case studies, are tailored to specific national contexts. There are several forthcoming deliverables such as a compilation of case studies for Europe and Central Asia, bioeconomy opportunities for food loss and waste reduction in the Near East and North Africa, or a study into the contribution of sociobiodiversity products from the Amazon, mainly amazon fruits and non-timber forest products, to the economy.

35. **Forge partnerships:** Through the inclusive consultation process facilitated in 2025, FAO laid the foundation for launching a global partnership on bioeconomy for sustainable food and agriculture. A forthcoming session of the FAO Council will seek Members' guidance on the draft terms of reference and governance framework in support of the partnership's establishment.

36. **Enhance policy coherence:** Drawing on its core function around policy advice, FAO will continue to support bioeconomy mainstreaming in national development strategies, guided by coordinated diagnostics, trade-off analyses and harmonized monitoring. Systematic engagement through Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs) will ensure institutional capacity and context-specific readiness. FAO will furthermore update and expand its *Dashboard on bioeconomy strategies and related actions for sustainable development*, as a one-stop-shop analysing existing bioeconomy strategies and their interconnections with relevant national plans related to biodiversity, climate change and agrifood systems transformation.

37. **Deploy bioeconomy innovations on the ground:** FAO will give priority to innovative finance solutions, including strategic use of existing environment and climate funds such as GEF and Green Climate Fund (GCF), blended finance and collaboration with international financial institutions to incentivize catalytic investment in bioeconomy for sustainable agrifood systems.

38. Priority technical domains include bio-based products (including ones that valorize waste streams where bioenergy and bio-based plastics alternatives), nutrient and input recycling, regenerative agricultural inputs, and urban bioeconomy innovations. Inputs from FAO's Decentralized Offices emphasize both local context and systemic transformation. For example, across Africa, the ongoing *Green Cities in Action for Africa* programme, city-scale bioeconomy innovations such as black soldier fly for organic waste valorization and decentralized biogas production are being prototyped. Under FAO's One Country One Priority Product (OCOP) initiative, countries have prioritized key value chains – for example, Morocco is focusing on the carob tree, with its contributions to the food, medicine, and cosmetics industries, while promoting restoration of degraded forest landscapes, enhancing rural livelihoods and driving green economic growth across the region. In the Pacific, a GEF-supported initiative in Vanuatu leveraging bioeconomy approaches to secure sustainability certification for tourist resorts and to introduce advanced waste-to-energy systems is being developed, reflecting both environmental and economic co-benefits. The *Restoring and Sustaining Landscapes Together (RESULT) Asia-Pacific*⁶⁴ will build collaboration that, among other benefits, enhance a sustainable supply of feedstock for bioeconomy.

39. Further momentum is expected following the endorsement of the 44th Session of the FAO Conference, which selected "*Fostering Innovation for Food Security*" as the Biennial Theme for 2026–27. This provides a timely institutional platform for mainstreaming bioeconomy innovations across agrifood systems, promoting evidence-based, scalable and context-adapted solutions in line with both regional and global sustainability targets.

⁶⁴ <https://www.fao.org/in-action/forest-landscape-restoration-asia/result-asia-pacific/en>

Annex 1. Discussion documents and decisions on bioeconomy in FAO Governing Bodies (2024–2025)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Month</i>	<i>Governing Body session</i>	<i>Documents</i>
2024	<i>March</i>	38th Session of the Regional Conference for Latin America and Caribbean	Discussion document: LARC/24/2: Priorities for FAO in the region under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022–31 Report: LARC/24/REP, paragraph 26
	<i>May</i>	34th Session of the Regional Conference for Europe	Discussion document: ERC/24/13 Rev.1 Report on the outcomes of the debate of the Joint Session of the 42nd European Forestry Commission (EFC) and the 81st UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI) Report: ERC/24/REP, paragraph 43(g)
	<i>July</i>	36th Session of the Committee on Fisheries	Information document: COFI/2024/INF/18: Bioeconomy for sustainable food and agriculture Report: NFI/R1459, paragraph 18(d)
	<i>July</i>	27th Session of the Committee on Forestry	Discussion document: COFO/2024/4: Enhancing the contribution of forestry to bioeconomy – opportunities and challenges Report: C/2025/24, paragraph 13
	<i>October</i>	27th Session of the International Commission on Poplars and Other Fast-Growing Trees Sustaining People and the Environment	Report of the 27th Session of the International Commission on Poplars and Other Fast-Growing Trees Sustaining People and the Environment
		29th Session of the Committee on Agriculture	Discussion document: COAG/2024/11: Bioeconomy for Sustainable Food and Agriculture Report: C/2025/21, paragraph 18
	<i>December</i>	176th Session of the Council	Report: CL 176/REP, paragraphs 20(j) and 26 (b),(m)
2025	<i>April</i>	177th Session of the Council	Report: CL 177/REP, paragraph 8(g)
	<i>May</i>	13th Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture	Discussion document: COFI/AQ/XIII/2025/5: Thematic focus 2: Aquaculture and the circular economy

		66th Session of the Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-based Industries (ACSFI)	Report: 66th ACSFI Report
	<i>June-July</i>	44th Session of the FAO Conference	Discussion document: C 2025/3: Medium Term Plan 2026-29 and Programme of Work and Budget 2026-27 Report: C 2025/REP, paragraph 54(d)
	<i>September</i>	34th Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission	Discussion document: LACFC/2025/7 Advancing forest-based bioeconomy approaches in Latin America and the Caribbean
	<i>September</i>	20th Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade	Discussion document: COFI:FT/XX/2025/8: Sustainable Value Chain for Competitive Markets
	<i>September-October</i>	27th Session of Near East Forestry and Range Commission	Information document: NEFRC/2025/INF/3 Bioeconomy Opportunities in the Region
	<i>November</i>	141st Session of Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission	Discussion document: APFC/2025 Advancing sustainable forest-based bioeconomy approaches in Asia and the Pacific (forthcoming)