COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

BETWEEN

THE UNITED NATIONS REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

AND

THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO)

I. PREAMBLE

1. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), herein after collectively referred to as the "Regional Commissions" and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, hereinafter referred to as "FAO".

2. Reaffirming their commitment to working together to enhance the impact of the work of the United Nations in the areas of agricultural and rural development and food and nutrition security in response to the needs of Member States through this Cooperation Framework, the Regional Commissions and FAO, herein after referred to as "the Parties", agree as follows:

II. GENERAL PURPOSE OF COOPERATION

The general purpose of the cooperation between the Regional Commissions and FAO is to enhance their joint impact through collaboration. Considering that the mandates of both the Regional Commissions and FAO cover agricultural and rural development, food and nutrition security, and the sustainable management of natural resources, including land, water and forests, job creation and poverty eradication, the Regional Commissions and FAO agree to work together to achieve overarching objectives in order to:

(a) Promote sustainable agricultural and rural development, food and nutrition security, and the sustainable management of land, water and forests, and support Member States in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other internationally agreed development goals, with particular emphasis on MDG 1 to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, the goal of the World Food Summit (WFS) to halve the number of undernourished people and MDG 7 on ensuring environmental sustainability, in the context of sustainable development; and

(b) Promote coherence and achieve synergies for a more effective response of the United Nations to the priorities of national partners in the mandated areas of the Regional Commissions and FAO.
III. FOCUS AND MODALITIES OF COOPERATION

1. The Regional Commissions and FAO agree to collaborate, coordinate and complement each other in:

   (a) Assisting Member States in their efforts to implement and achieve the MDGs, the commitments of the WFS and other internationally agreed development goals;

   (b) Sharing knowledge on policies, programmes, and emerging priorities to support sustainable agricultural and rural development, food security, eradication of poverty and hunger; job creation; sustainable management of land, water and forests; agricultural value chain management; rural finance and institutions; and the impact of trade, agriculture technology and development policies on economic growth and poverty;

   (c) Addressing issues that could benefit from regional or multi-country involvement; as well as those that are trans-boundary in nature or that would benefit from inter-country collaboration; and

   (d) Using the comparative strengths of each of the concerned Parties to promote organizational synergies at the global, regional, national and local levels.

2. The Parties may agree on any focus area for joint priority collaboration, as required, to support the implementation of this Cooperation Framework.

3. The following focus areas are hereby agreed upon:

   I. United Nations summits and international conferences

      Consultations and follow-up at the regional level to relevant summits and international conferences of the United Nations and of FAO.

   II. Regional coordination

      Support to Regional Coordination Mechanisms with the aim of maximizing the complementarities of both the Regional Commissions and FAO.

   III. Knowledge management

      Knowledge sharing and management, including sharing of lessons learned, good practices and publications; collection, analysis and dissemination of relevant data and statistics on agriculture, food security, land, water and forests; collaboration on expert roster management and development; development of regional knowledge-sharing networks and management of regional pool of knowledge and linkages with global and in-country knowledge-sharing mechanisms.

   IV. Regional and inter-regional technical cooperation

      Joint needs assessments, as well as design and implementation of key regional technical cooperation projects in areas of common interest, linking normative analytical and operational work and, where applicable, joint catalytic support to key South-South cooperation initiatives at the inter-regional, regional, sub-regional and country levels.
V. Human resources development

Increased joint staff training and exchanges, including secondments.

VI. Country-level policy and programming

The Regional Commissions and FAO will jointly put their policy, analytical, planning and knowledge capacities and knowledge services at the service of country-level policy and programming initiatives as requested by the programme countries. The Parties will consult and assist each other, as appropriate, in the preparation and implementation of the FAO-Government Country Programme Framework. Where relevant, the Parties may assist the United Nations Country Teams with the preparation and implementation of the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks.

VII. Advisory Services at the country level

Where relevant and appropriate, close coordination of advisory services will be provided to governments, including joint missions, as appropriate, to achieve synergies and increase impact, including consultations before, during and after advisory missions, and exchange of other relevant reports.

VIII. Cooperation at regional and global levels

FAO and the Regional Commissions will undertake joint initiatives and activities including joint events, meetings and publications as well as consultations at regional and global levels within the framework provided by this agreement.

IV. EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND MODALITIES OF CONSULTATIONS

1. The Regional Commissions and FAO recognize that effective collaboration depends upon open, comprehensive and regular exchange of information at both the global and regional levels.

2. The Regional Commissions and FAO agree to make appropriate arrangements at both the global and regional levels to inform each other of their strategic direction and substantive priorities.

3. The Regional Commissions and FAO agree that each Regional Commission and the corresponding Regional Office of FAO should make suitable arrangements to facilitate the exchange of information within their respective regions. In doing so, they agree to optimize the use of existing collaboration mechanisms, and to that effect:

i. As per the mandate given by ECOSOC resolution 1998/46, each Regional Commission will continue to organize annual inter-agency meetings under the RCM, including any working groups established thereunder, aimed at improving coordination among all United Nations Offices, Specialized Agencies, Funds and Programmes in their respective regions. The Regional Coordination Meetings will cover topics of common interest, as appropriate. Each Regional Commission will consult with FAO on the convening of those meetings, in which FAO will actively participate at senior level.
ii. FAO will invite, in accordance with the applicable rules, decisions and practices of the competent bodies of FAO, the relevant Regional Commission to participate as an observer to the respective Regional Conferences of FAO, and to meetings of the technical committees of FAO, including the Committee on World Food Security, the Committee of Agriculture, the Committee on Fisheries, the Committee on Forestry and the Committee on Commodity Problems.

iii. Each Regional Commission will inform the FAO Regional Representative regularly of activities planned or implemented in the countries of its respective region. Likewise, FAO will inform, through its relevant Regional Offices, each Regional Commission on a regular basis of activities planned or implemented at the regional level.

4. The Regional Commissions and FAO agree to hold regular consultations at the global and regional levels to review the planning, implementation, and outcomes of cooperation activities as well as discussing results, challenges, opportunities and problems. The parties further agree that the global consultations will be at the level of Executive Heads of both Parties.

V. REGIONAL AGREEMENTS

Subject to the applicable procedures of the Parties, the Regional Commissions and the corresponding Regional Offices of FAO may decide to develop bilateral agreements to govern their region-specific cooperation, in line with this Cooperation Framework.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

1. The Regional Commissions and FAO agree that the focal points for overseeing the implementation of cooperation at the global level are:

   i. For the Regional Commissions: the Regional Commissions New York Office (with this office responsible for consulting with and keeping the Regional Commissions informed as required); and

   ii. For FAO: The Office for Communication, Partnerships and Advocacy and the Office of Support to Decentralization.

2. The Regional Commissions and FAO agree that the focal points for regional level cooperation will be:

   i. For the Regional Commissions (including their sub-regional offices and subsidiary organizations): A senior official designated by the Executive Secretary in each Regional Commission; and

   ii. For FAO (including Regional, Sub-regional and National Offices within the region): A senior official designated by the Assistant Director-General/Regional Representative of the respective Regional Office.

3. The responsibilities of the focal points at the global and regional levels may include the following and any other action they might deem appropriate, for the effective conduct of their role:
i. The focal points for cooperation at the global level will be responsible for facilitating the implementation of all institutional aspects of this Cooperation Framework and the identification of opportunities for cooperation. Responsibilities and tasks will include establishing effective communication; promoting awareness concerning this Cooperation Framework; and ensuring adequate representation of both Parties in all related normative policy and operational activities implemented in accordance with this Cooperation Framework. The focal points will also be responsible for initiating and managing a joint mid-term review in 2015 of the results and impact of cooperation between the two Parties initiated under this Cooperation Framework after three years of implementation.

ii. The focal points at the regional level in each Regional Commission and corresponding FAO Regional Office will be responsible for ensuring that synergies are developed and maintained to optimize the complementarities and cost-effectiveness of the collaboration and support offered by the FAO Regional Offices and the Regional Commissions to countries and regions.

4. The Regional Commissions and FAO recognize that the involvement of both organizations in joint cooperation activities needs to be publicized. The parties agree that:

i. There will be public acknowledgement of the role and contribution of each organization to cooperation projects in all public information documentation related to such cooperation; and

ii. The use of emblems of each of the Parties in documentation related to this Cooperation Framework will be subject to prior written approval of the Parties.

VII. TERMS AND REVIEW OF THE COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

The Regional Commissions and FAO agree that:

i. The term of this Cooperation Framework will be effective from the date of signature by both parties for an initial period of five years;

ii. A joint mid-term review will be carried out in 2015 with any necessary amendments to the agreement being made at that time;

iii. This Cooperation Framework will continue to provide the umbrella for cooperation after the initial period unless otherwise amended by both Parties.

VIII. PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES

Nothing in this Cooperation Framework shall be construed as a waiver of the privileges and immunities of any of the Parties.
IX. SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

Any controversy, claim or dispute arising from or in connection to this Cooperation Framework shall be settled through negotiation between the Director-General of FAO and the Executive Secretaries of the five Regional Commissions or the Regional Commission concerned.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, duly appointed representatives of the Regional Commissions and FAO, respectively, have on behalf of the Parties signed the present Cooperation Framework in six original copies in English.

Date: 4 April 2013

For the United Nations Regional Commissions

Carlos Lopes
USG and Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

Sven Alkalaj
USG and Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)

Noelene Heyzer
USG and Executive Secretary, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and Coordinator of the Regional Commissions

For the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

José Graziano da Silva
Director-General
Alicia Barcena
USG and Executive Secretary
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

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