

# **Manual on Regional Conferences**

Office of Support to Decentralized Offices  
(OSD)  
April 2017

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This Manual on Regional Conferences presents guidelines detailing the responsibilities, functions, activities and procedures to be followed in organizing the Regional Conferences. A checklist of actions required in the preparation and conduct of the Regional Conferences is provided in Annex-1. The timetable to be observed for the critical activities in preparing for the Regional Conferences is set out in Annex-3.

### 1.1 General

1.1.1 The Thirty-sixth Session of the FAO Conference (18-23 November 2009) adopted Resolution 6/2009 which, *inter alia*, refers to Rule XXXV of the Basic texts of the Organization. The main provisions regarding the functions of the Regional Conferences are set out in paragraph 1 of this Rule which reads as follows: “There shall be Regional Conferences ... which shall normally meet once every biennium in non-Conference years”. The functions of the Regional Conferences shall be:

- a) To provide a forum for consultation on all matters pertaining to the mandate of the Organization within the region, including any special issues of interest to the Members in the concerned region;
- b) To provide a forum for the formulation of regional positions on global policy and regulatory issues within the mandate of the Organization or having implications in respect of the mandate and activities of the Organization, including with a view to promoting regional coherence on global policy and regulatory matters;
- c) To advise on and identify the special problems of their respective regions and priority areas of work which should be taken into account in the preparation of the planning, programme and budgetary documents of the Organization and suggest adjustments to these documents;
- d) To review and advise on the plans, programmes or projects carried out by the Organization which impact upon the region;
- e) To review and advise on the performance of the Organization in the region in contributing to the achievement of results against relevant performance indicators, including any pertinent evaluations.

1.1.2 The Thirty-sixth Session of Conference approved a definition of the Governing Bodies of FAO, which include the Regional Conferences.<sup>1</sup> “ (...) The Governing Bodies comprise the Conference, the Council, the Programme Committee, the Finance Committee, the Committee on Constitutions and Legal Matters, the Technical Committees referred to in Article V, paragraph 6(b) of the Constitution and the Regional Conferences (i.e. for Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Near East)”.

1.1.3 Under Resolution 8/2009<sup>2</sup>, the Thirty-sixth Session of the Conference decided that the Council would exercise a major role in respect of planning of work and definition of performance measures for the Regional Conferences, as well as in respect of monitoring and reporting performance against performance indicators for the

---

<sup>1</sup> See [Volume II.B of the Basic Texts](#)

<sup>2</sup> See [Volume II.D of the Basic Texts](#)

Regional Conferences. Resolution 10/2009<sup>3</sup> of the Thirty-sixth Session of the Conference on the reform of the programming, budgeting and results-based monitoring system assigned a key role to the Regional Conferences in the preparation of the Strategic Framework, the Medium-Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget.

1.1.4 Following the decision of the 106<sup>th</sup> session of the Council (30 May–1 June 1994) of progressive decentralization from Headquarters, and its endorsement by the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference (20-31 October 1995), the responsibility for organizing and convening the Regional Conferences was assigned to the Regional Offices (ROs).

1.1.5 Due consideration should also be given to the procedures contained in the Administrative Manual, Sections 135 (FAO Statutory Bodies), 530 (Conference Arrangements), and 602 (Correspondence Handbook).<sup>4</sup>

## **2. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **2.1 Regional Offices (ROs)**

2.1.1 The ROs, in close collaboration with the Office of Support to Decentralized Offices (OSD) and the Conference, Council, and Protocol Affairs Division (CPA), take the initiative in all matters related to the organization and conduct of the Regional Conferences. Overall responsibility lies with the ADG/Regional Representative (ADG/RR) who will establish internal mechanisms for effective monitoring and management of the progress of preparations and for providing guidance as needed. The ADG/RR in the concerned region shall appoint the Deputy Regional Representative as Secretary, and such other support officers and assistants as may be required, who shall perform such duties as the functioning and work of the Regional Conference may require, including the preparation of the records of its proceedings. The Secretary shall service the Regional Conference. The major responsibilities of the Secretary under the supervision of the ADG/RR include:

- i) designating the Conference Secretariat;
- ii) subject to the provisions of paragraph 530.2.3 of the FAO Administrative Manual, initiating negotiations with the host government regarding the venue and facilities of the Regional Conference;
- iii) at least six months prior to the proposed date for the Regional Conference, the ADG/RR in the concerned region, after consultation with the Chairperson, shall send a communication to the Members of the Regional Conference. The communication shall contain a brief outline of the programmes of the Organization of interest to the region and of the outcome of the previous session of the Regional Conference and invite Members to review suggestions made concerning the organization of the next session of the Regional Conference, with

---

<sup>3</sup> See [Volume II-F of the Basic Texts](#)

<sup>4</sup> In the case of the Regional Conference for Europe (ERC), reference is also made to the Rules of Procedure for ERC, which were adopted at the 29<sup>th</sup> ERC in 2014 (<http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/030/mk083E.pdf>).

particular reference to the first draft Provisional Annotated Agenda of the session.<sup>5</sup>

- iv) preparing the draft Provisional Annotated Agenda, taking into account recommendations of the previous Regional Conference and other relevant Governing Bodies, seeking ideas from within subregional offices (SROs), technical departments and, the Members through regional consultations and/or the Regional Groups (RGs) of FAO (if required, for RGs in Rome, CPA may provide assistance).
- v) finalizing, after consultation with the Chairperson, the draft Provisional Annotated Agenda for approval by the Director-General;
- vi) ensuring timely preparation, clearance and dispatch of the agreement letter to the host country, the third-person letters of invitation upon conclusion of the agreement letter and all pertinent documents to invited countries and organizations and observers (see: <http://www.fao.org/unfao/govbodies/gsbhome/gsb-regconf/en/>, consulting the heading “observers” for each Regional Conference);
- vii) establishing a Regional Editorial Committee responsible for the overall quality and the timely completion of Conference documentation;
- viii) arranging for computer access from the venue to FAO facilities to allow for remote translation of in-session documents and reports;
- ix) ensuring, in close consultation with CPA, the availability of suitable simultaneous interpretation equipment and services at the Conference site; and
- x) making arrangements for payment for goods and services required for the preparations for and supervising the conduct of the Conference.

2.1.2 The ROs develop and maintain accurate and up-to-date records of Members of the region, as well as intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which are working in the region.

2.1.3 Three months before the opening date of the Conference, the ADG/RR should submit to ODG a short note - not exceeding one page - containing information on the Conference’s main topics, key policy issues and any specific questions that may be raised. The note should also highlight issues which may require prior guidance from ODG.

## **2.2 Office of Support to Decentralized Offices (OSD)**

2.2.1 In consultation with CPA, OSP and other units concerned, OSD reviews proposals submitted by the RO for: the Provisional Annotated Agenda, Timetable, and List of Documents. OSD seeks ODG’s guidance for the clearance routing of the

---

<sup>5</sup> See Volume I of the Basic Texts – General Rules of the Organization (GRO) – Rule XXXV, paragraph 4(a)

pre-session documents (see paragraphs 7.9.2 and 7.9.3 below). OSD assists the RO in getting clearance from the Deputy Director-General Operations (DDO) and, as appropriate, the Deputy Director-General Climate and Natural Resources (DDN), the Deputy Director-General Programmes (DDP) and ODG.

2.2.2 OSD serves as the direct link between Headquarters and the RO and assists in expediting responses to submissions and queries.

2.2.3 CPA in collaboration with OSD periodically reports to the DDO and ODG on the status of preparation of documentation for the Conference

## **2.3 Conference, Council and Protocol Affairs Division (CPA)**

2.3.1 **CPA** is responsible for scheduling the dates, in consultation with the RO, for the Regional Conferences within the schedule of sessions of the Governing Bodies as set out in Conference Resolution 10/2009. If necessary, CPA arranges informal meetings with the Regional Groups of Permanent Representatives in Rome to seek inputs for and comments on the draft Provisional Agenda. CPA also advises the ROs on the countries to be invited as members or observers in the respective regions. CPA is also responsible for the translation of pre-session and in-session documents as well as final reports, using remote translation services whenever feasible; and the recruitment of translators and interpreters, as may be required (MS 530.4.11). CPA further provides advice on matters related to the organization and conduct of the Regional Conferences (MS 530.2).

2.3.2 CPA establishes contact with the Conference Secretary/Conference Affairs Officer regarding the participation of the Independent Chairperson of the Council (ICC). The Conference Secretary provides the budget code for ICC travel and all travel arrangements are made by CPA. An advance copy of the statement to be delivered at the Regional Conference is sent to the RO to facilitate interpretation and translation. Arrival/departure times, local transportation requirements and individual requests for bilateral meetings are conveyed to the RO and an assistant is responsible for the coordination of this during the actual proceedings.

2.3.3 CPA also prepares and clears through ODG formal first-person letters of invitation from the Director-General to Ministers for Agriculture of countries in the region and further finalizes and dispatches them, not less than 60 days in advance of the session. Although the letter is not sent to the Minister for Agriculture of the host country, a copy should be sent to the FAOR in the host country or to the Permanent Representative for countries where no FAOR is present.

2.3.4 CPA assists the ROs in ensuring the availability of suitable simultaneous interpretation equipment and services at the Conference site.

2.3.5 In collaboration with the ROs, CPA will ensure full language coverage of the Regional Conferences (documents translation and interpretation), as follows:

ARC:	Arabic, English, French; Spanish (documentation only) and Portuguese (interpretation only)
APRC:	Chinese, English, French and Russian
ERC:	English, French, Russian and Spanish

LARC: English, French and Spanish  
NERC: Arabic, English and French

2.3.6 CPA assists the ROs by posting documents of the Conference on the FAO web site dedicated to the Regional Conference, as soon as they are available and no later than six weeks before the Conference opening.

In principle, the webpage is activated upon dispatch of the final agenda to Members, which is posted mandatorily in all languages of the RC. Before the documents dispatch/webposting date (i.e. six weeks before the Conference opening), any document ready in all languages of the RC can be published.

These documents should be prepared using the FAO Template for meeting documents (please see Annex 10) and uploaded to the electronic Document Processing Request (e-DPR) system. For more information on the templates, an e-mail should be sent to [FAO-Meeting-Template-Support@fao.org](mailto:FAO-Meeting-Template-Support@fao.org). To publish documents on the FAO web site and include them in the Corporate Document Repository, as soon as they are available in all the languages of the Conference, the RO should send an e-mail to CPAC and CPAM ([Translation-Programming@fao.org](mailto:Translation-Programming@fao.org)) confirming that the final version to be web-posted is uploaded to the e-DPR system.

## **2.4 Departments/Divisions and the Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management (OSP)**

2.4.1 The relevant departments/divisions, the Regional Strategic Programme Coordinators (RSPC) and OSP advise the ADG/RR on the proposals for agenda items to be sent to the Members of the Regional Conference and assist the RO in the preparation and technical clearance of Conference documents.

2.4.2 A lead department is designated as responsible for the technical content and consistency of all relevant pre-session documents and designates, in consultation with the ADG/RR, appropriate officers for drafting pre-session documents.

2.4.3 The departments/divisions, upon request by the RO, may nominate staff members to attend the Regional Conference to introduce pertinent agenda items and draft the corresponding sections of the final report, if deemed necessary.

## **2.5 Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development Division(OPC)**

2.5.1. The Partnerships Unit (OPCP), in close collaboration with the regional Partnership Officers, will liaise with global and regional civil society platforms and networks to assist them in all matters related to their participation in the Regional Conference, including the organization of a regional civil society consultation prior to the Regional Conference. The Partnerships Unit clears the Non State Actors (Civil Society Organizations, Producers Organizations and Cooperatives, Academia and Research Organizations, Private Sector) and INGOs invitations list. .

## **3. PROGRAMMING OF REGIONAL CONFERENCES**

### **3.1 Venues and dates**

3.1.1 The sessions of the Regional Conference shall, to the extent possible, be held in the territory of one of its Members in pursuance of a decision taken by the Regional Conference in consultation with the Director-General.

3.1.2 The dates for the Regional Conferences are originally proposed by CPA when preparing the Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies and other Main Sessions, in consultation with the ROs. The calendar of sessions proposed by the Secretariat shall conform to the schedule of sessions of the Governing Bodies as set out in the Annex to Conference Resolution 10/2009 and is subject to approval by the FAO Council.

### **3.2 Preparation of Session Programming Form (SPF)**

3.2.1 The RO submits the SPF for the Regional Conference to CPA, when making proposals for meetings in the Programme of Work and Budget, at least 12 months before the opening date of the Conference.

3.2.2 The SPF must contain full information on title, date(s) and place, constitutional authority, participants, languages, documentation and related requirements, costs, etc.

3.2.3 The RO updates the SPF as changes occur (e.g. changes in venue or dates) and submits it to CPA.

## **4. PROGRAMMING OF REGIONAL DIALOGUE WITH NSAs**

### **4.1 Civil Society**

4.1.1 Civil Society Consultations are meetings organized autonomously by Civil Society actors in the region<sup>6</sup> one month prior to the Regional Conferences, meant to gather key stakeholders representing all constituencies as well as countries, in order to discuss key topics pertinent to the region, evaluate what FAO has done in the previous biennium (according to what was agreed upon at the previous Regional Conference), as well as specific agenda items of the Conference. The agenda of the Civil Society Consultation should therefore be aligned as much as possible with that of the Regional Conference. By discussing and consolidating their perspectives on the topics and themes of the Regional Conference, Civil Society actors articulate their voices and present a common view to Member States and senior officers.

4.1.2 The Civil Society Consultation constitutes an integral part of the Conference. The facilitation of the organization of the CSOs consultations is entrusted by FAO (through OPCP), in accordance with the principles of autonomy and self-organization, to a global network of civil society organizations with members active in all the regions

4.1.3 A Steering Committee is set up in the region and entrusted responsibility for overall coordination. The steering committee will be of a manageable size (5-7 persons), and composed by:

- representatives of organizations member of the global network and working in the region

---

<sup>6</sup> The organizational part is still supported by the Regional Conference secretariat to ensure close coordination with the host government where appropriate.

- representatives of organizations members of other relevant regional networks
- representative of an organization based in the host country.

4.1.4 Three spokespersons identified during the Consultation should bring the voices and concerns of Civil Society both to the senior officer and the ministerial segments of the Regional Conference.

4.1.5 The Revised Guidelines for Civil Society participation in FAO Regional Conferences provide detailed guidance on the programming of regional Civil Society Consultations (see Annex 14 for Revised Guidelines).

## **4.2 Private Sector**

4.2.1 The regional Private Sector associations might come together prior or during the Regional Conference to consult and prepare coordinated position to be presented by a selected spokesperson to the regional conference.

4.2.2 Specific guidelines for the participation of the private sector in FAO Regional Conferences will be drafted by OPC and annexed to this manual. Until the guidelines come into effect, Regional Partnership Officers in close consultation with OPC will provide guidance to regional private sector associations facilitating this dialogue.

## **5. NEGOTIATIONS WITH HOST GOVERNMENT**

### **5.1 Preliminary negotiations**

5.1.1 Once the host country is decided upon, the RO initiates preliminary negotiations with the host government through correspondence or a mission from the RO. The FAOR, where available, should be fully involved in these discussions for further follow-up with the government, as may be required.

5.1.2 The RO must clear with CPA, with a copy to OSD, any changes to the proposed dates as may arise in the discussions with the host government before committing the Organization. When finalizing these dates, any possible clash with national or regional festivities for which celebration might adversely affect attendance and actual holding of the Regional Conference should be avoided.

5.1.3 The preliminary negotiations are initiated no less than 10 months before the opening date of the Conference. The discussions, involving the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Agriculture, are intended to clarify the obligations of the host government and of FAO.

### **5.2 Preparation and issuance of agreement letter**

5.2.1 The formal agreement letter, together with the memorandum of responsibilities (see models in Annex 4), should be cleared with CPA and is finalized for dispatch under the signature of the ADG/RR, with copies to ODG, DDO, CPA, LEG and OSD, no later than eight months before the opening date of the Conference. Changes to the template memorandum of responsibilities should be cleared by the responsible Units, including LEG as necessary.



5.2.2 The agreement letter is sent to the main addressee of the host country with copies to the copyholders as prescribed in the official channels of communication for that country. It is also copied to the Embassy of the host country where the RO is located (if applicable).

5.2.3 The agreement letter is sent to the government through the FAOR when present in the country. The host government's formal acceptance of the agreement letter should be expected within six weeks after its submission. The RO should follow up closely with the host government. Once received, the formal communication of acceptance should be forwarded to ODG, DDO, CPA, LEG and OSD.

## **6. PREPARATION AND DISPATCH OF INVITATIONS**

### **6.1 Third-person invitation letter**

6.1.1 Third-person letters of invitation are drafted and cleared by the RO five months before the opening date of the Regional Conference. They are dispatched by the ADG/RR, no later than four months before the opening date of the Regional Conference (copied to ODG, DDO, OSD and CPA), to Members of the Regional Conference, observer countries and observer organizations (see relevant FAO RO Web site and the Governing and Statutory Bodies Web site for Members of the Regional Conference and Observer Countries of the respective regions).

6.1.2 The RO must seek clearance of the list of invitees. The following focal points will clear the list as indicated below:

- i) CPA for Members and observer countries;
- ii) LEG for IGOs
- iii) OPCP for INGOs/CSOs; and
- iv) LON and LOG for UN System Organizations; and
- v) ODG for final clearance through OSD.

6.1.3 The third-person letters of invitation to Members of the Regional Conference, observer countries and observer organizations are dispatched to the main addressees, and copies for information to the copyholders, as indicated in the official channels of communication pages on the intranet site at:

[http://intranet.fao.org/departments/cpa/protocol\\_services/official\\_correspondence/corr\\_dir/#c14203](http://intranet.fao.org/departments/cpa/protocol_services/official_correspondence/corr_dir/#c14203), with copies to the embassies at the site of the RO (see Annex 6 for model letter). The Provisional Annotated Agenda, the Provisional Timetable, the Provisional List of Documents and the Information Note (see para. 7.7.2) are normally attached.

6.1.4. An open invitation letter will also be sent to the Civil Society Organization(s) appointed to organize the Civil Society Consultation prior to the Regional Conference. The letter will invite three civil society spokespersons to participate and interact in the discussions and debates during the senior officers and ministerial segments of the Regional Conferences. These spokespersons will be identified and designated during the Civil Society Consultation.

6.1.5 The translation of the third-person letters of invitation is arranged by the RO, as appropriate and upon dispatch of the invitations, the documents attached to it should be published on the RC web page.

## **6.2 Invitations to Members not located in the region**

6.2.1 Members, not geographically located in a particular region, may be granted observer status at the Regional Conference upon written request to the Director-General, subject to approval of the Regional Conference.

6.2.2 After notification by OSD/ODG of the Director-General's approval, the RO issues a third-person letter of invitation (see paragraph 6.1 above).

## **6.3 Invitations to Non-member States**

6.3.1 Non-member States may, upon written request to and with the approval of the Council, be invited to send an observer to the Regional Conference. In cases of urgency, however, where there is insufficient time to consult the Council, the Director-General may on request invite such non-member States to send an observer to such meetings.

6.3.2 The procedures are similar to those in paragraph 6.2 above.

## **6.4 First-person letter from the Director-General to Ministers**

6.4.1 A special first-person letter is addressed by the Director-General to all Ministers for Agriculture in the invited countries, except that of the host country (see paragraph 2.3.3), inviting them to attend the Regional Conference. This letter should make specific reference to the third-person letter of invitation and should be dispatched not less than 60 days before the opening date of the Conference.

6.4.2 CPA prepares a draft of this letter (in consultation with OSD) and submits it to ODG, copied to RO and OSD, at least one month before the dispatch date (see Annex 7 for model letter). Once cleared by ODG, the letter is finalized for signature and dispatched by CPA, copying sample of the letter and list of recipients with dates of dispatch to RO and OSD. Following the dispatch of this letter, it is the practice for the host government to send a letter to the same Ministers for Agriculture with a copy to FAO. The RO should follow up this matter through the FAOR in the host country, if applicable.

## **7. PREPARATION OF AGENDA AND PRE-SESSION DOCUMENTS**

### **7.1 Development of the draft Provisional Annotated Agenda**

7.1.1 The RO initiates action for preparing the draft Provisional Annotated Agenda, taking into account recommendations of the previous Regional Conference and other relevant Governing Bodies, seeking ideas from within SROs, technical departments and Members through regional consultations and/or the RGs of FAO based in Rome (with CPA's assistance) (see paragraph 2.1.1. iv) This process should begin 15 – 11 months before the opening date of the Conference.

7.1.2 The proposals for the draft Provisional Annotated Agenda are consolidated by the Regional Conference Secretary and should include the standing items on the Agenda. A brief, not exceeding 15 lines, is prepared for each suggested topic indicating

the rationale, scope and intended impact. Agenda items for discussion should, to the greatest extent, focus on policy issues and be limited to two or three subjects only, taking into account the specificities of the Region.

7.1.3 In developing the Agenda, the RO is guided by the following:

- i) the Regional Conference will have a technical Senior Officers Meeting followed by a Plenary Session (at Ministerial level), except in the case of the Regional Conference for Europe. A period of half-a-day will be observed between these two sessions to enable the Secretariat to finalize the report of the technical session for the Ministers;
- ii) the Conference should not last more than five consecutive days;
- iii) there should be a maximum number of 12 sittings, including any side events (unless special arrangements are made in advance to cover special/side events);
- iv) the duration of each sitting should be of three hours maximum; and
- v) the number of items on the agenda should be restricted to those which could be efficiently examined during the 12 sittings.

## **7.2 Approval of the draft Provisional Annotated Agenda**

7.2.1 The RO prepares a proposal for the draft Provisional Annotated Agenda for review with the respective Regional Group of Permanent Representatives in Rome, 10 months before the opening date of the Conference.

7.2.2 If its assistance has been required, CPA transmits the pertinent comments of the respective Regional Groups to the RO for consideration, with copy to OSD no later than 9.5 months before the opening date of the Conference.

7.2.3 The RO submits the consolidated draft Provisional Annotated Agenda, together with the Provisional Timetable and List of Documents (see paragraph 7.6), to OSD for review by CPA, OSD, OSP, DDO and other relevant units, and for ODG final approval, no later than 8 months before the opening date of the Conference.

7.2.4 ODG's approval of the draft Provisional Annotated Agenda should be given within two weeks to facilitate the timely preparation of pre-session documents. The RO will be accordingly advised by OSD.

7.2.5 The final draft Provisional Annotated Agenda is circulated with the third-person letters of invitation which are despatched, together with the Provisional Timetable and List of Documents (and Information Note if ready), no later than four months before the opening date of the Conference (see paragraph 6.1.3 above).

7.2.6 The Provisional Annotated Agenda is also despatched, under cover of a formal first-person letter of invitation by the Director-General, by CPA not less than 60 days in advance of the session.

### **7.3 Establishment of a Regional Editorial Committee**

7.3.1 The preparation of the Conference pre-session documents is the responsibility of the RO with the collaboration of the technical divisions and SP teams. The ADG/RR establishes a Regional Editorial Committee comprising technical officers with experience in the fields covered in the agenda, under the chairpersonship of the Conference Secretary to ensure that all Conference documentation meets the required standards of FAO, including wordage.

### **7.4 Schedule for the preparation of documents**

7.4.1 As soon as the draft Provisional Annotated Agenda is approved by ODG, the RO prepares a schedule of documentation in the e-DPR system, indicating for each document, *inter alia*: the officers/office responsible for drafting; the date by which the draft must be ready for final processing; and the date by which it must be dispatched (see Annex 8 for a model schedule).

7.4.2 Preparation of the schedule is done in collaboration with the drafting officers and should reflect the fact that pre-session documents, except in the case where a Member requested to insert an item in the final Agenda after its dispatch, must be submitted for translation, in final cleared format, at least ten weeks before the session so that they can be translated and dispatched, in all languages, to governments at least six weeks before the opening date of the Regional Conference. Translation of pre-session documents is carried out by CPA, in accordance with the information provided on the intranet at:

[http://intranet.fao.org/departments/cpa/translation\\_and\\_reproduction\\_of\\_documents/](http://intranet.fao.org/departments/cpa/translation_and_reproduction_of_documents/).

7.4.3 Once approved by the ADG/RR, the schedule is circulated to all concerned, copying CPA and OSD. The schedule is used by the Conference Secretary to monitor the preparation of documents.

7.4.4 A pre-session document should not normally exceed 5,000 words. Where an exception appears unavoidable, the originating office/officer, through the Conference Secretary, should submit a request for a waiver on the required form for the approval of the DDO (Office Memorandum DG/94/1611 of 22 December 1994 refers) – Annex 13 is a model waiver request, at least one month before the document is due for final review in the RO, i.e. 5.5 months before the opening date of the Conference.

7.4.5 Each document for discussion, should include an Executive Summary and an introductory boxed paragraph indicating the action and/or decision that the Conference is expected to take, in a form ready for inclusion in the Conference report (please see sample of cover page for pre-session documents in Annex 10).

7.4.6 Twelve weeks before the opening date of each Regional Conference, CPA, in consultation with OSD, will start issuing a weekly update of Monitoring Report of Governing Body documents (using the schedule report exported from the e-DPR system and adjusted according to the sample in Annex 8) for reporting to ODG and informing the respective RO and technical units of the status of all key elements of the preparation process, particularly drafting, clearance, translation and uploading of pre-session documents.

7.4.7 The report of the Civil Society Consultation should be treated as another in-session document, translated (when necessary) immediately after finalization and duplicated, using conference facilities, so that it can be made available to conference delegates in time for them to take it into consideration during their deliberations.

## **7.5 Electronic distribution of documents**

7.5.1 The RO should favour “paper smart” distribution of pre-session documents to Headquarters, the host government and other countries and observer organizations by communicating the link to the web page of the RC documentation, directly or through FAORs.

7.5.2 The RO must regularly review its electronic distribution list.

7.5.3 In close collaboration with CPA, the RO should ensure that all provisional and pre-session documents are posted on the FAO web site, in the languages of the Regional Conference, as soon as available and no later than six weeks before the Conference opening (see paragraph 2.3.6 above).

## **7.6 Provisional Timetable and Provisional List of Documents**

7.6.1 When consolidating the draft Provisional Annotated Agenda (see paragraph 7.2.2), the Conference Secretary prepares a Provisional Timetable, distributing the agenda items over the available time. This Provisional Timetable should be as realistic as possible in relation to the importance of each item for the region and for the Organization. Additionally, it will be the basis on which the number of interpreters, and the duration of their contracts, will be decided, in close consultation with CPA.

7.6.2 The Provisional Timetable must also allow adequate time for preparing the sections of the draft report and for its review by delegates. If possible, at least half-a-day is set aside before the Plenary/Ministerial session at which the draft report is approved.

7.6.3 The Provisional List of Documents is also prepared on the basis of the approved first draft Provisional Annotated Agenda.

The RO submits, together with the Provisional Annotated Agenda, the Provisional Timetable and the List of Documents to OSD for review by CPA, OSD, OSP and DDGs and for ODG final approval.

7.6.4 The Provisional Timetable and Provisional List of Documents are circulated with the third-person letter of invitation (see paragraph 6.1.3 above).

## **7.7 Information Note**

7.7.1 An Information Note is prepared by the Conference Secretary and finalized in cooperation with the Government Liaison Officer during the preparatory mission to the host country (see paragraph 10.1.1 below).

7.7.2 The Note contains information on Conference arrangements; working languages; the name and address of the Government Liaison Officer; formalities for entering the host country (visa and health requirements); foreign exchange rates; communication and transport facilities and arrangements; hotel accommodation and prices; climate; etc. (Annex 9 is a model Information Note). The Note is finally approved by the ADG/RR.

7.7.3 The Information Note should be circulated, if feasible, with the third-person letter of invitation (see paragraph 6.1.3 above).

## **7.8 Preparation and review of pre-session documents**

7.8.1 The Conference Secretary regularly monitors progress in drafting pre-session documents against the indicative timetable (Annex 3) and must be alert to the need for intervention, involving the Regional Editorial Committee, as necessary.

7.8.2 Requests for the preparation of draft documents are made within two weeks of the approval of the draft Provisional Annotated Agenda and, in any event, no later than seven months before the opening date of the Conference.

7.8.3 The draft documents are submitted to the RO at least six months prior to the opening date of the Conference to permit their review for language consistency, technical content and length by the Regional Editorial Committee.

7.8.4. Within four weeks, the drafts are circulated by the RO to the lead technical division who will be responsible for controlling and ensuring the quality of the content of each document.

7.8.5 The review process should be completed and comments forwarded to the RO within four weeks, i.e. four months before the opening date of the Conference.

## **7.9 Consolidation of comments/editing/clearance of final draft pre-session documents**

7.9.1 The comments received are consolidated by the Regional Editorial Committee, the manuscripts edited and the final draft documents prepared.

7.9.2 OSD will seek guidance from ODG on the clearance of documents, in particular regarding which pre-session documents should receive final approval by ODG and which by which Deputy Directors-General and the Assistant Directors-General of the lead technical department concerned at Headquarters. In the latter case, the ADG of the lead technical department will be responsible for the technical quality and consistency of the document (see paragraph 2.4.2 above).

7.9.3 Three and a half months before the opening date of the Conference, the final draft documents are submitted for clearance, according to the level of clearance requested by ODG, i.e. generally ODG or DDG, through OSD with copy to CPA and directly to the ADG of the lead technical department concerned at Headquarters.

7.9.4 Clearance of the final draft pre-session document is required within two weeks of the document's receipt, i.e. 3months before the opening date of the Conference. OSD

assists the RO in getting clearance from the DDO and, as appropriate, DDN, DDP, and ODG.

## **7.10 Processing of approved pre-session documents**

7.10.1 The RO is responsible for the final typing and formatting in original language version of pre-session documents, while the translation and final formatting of other language versions is carried out by CPA (see the information at [http://intranet.fao.org/departments/cpa/translation\\_and\\_reproduction\\_of\\_documents/](http://intranet.fao.org/departments/cpa/translation_and_reproduction_of_documents/)). The documents of INF series, subject to CPA agreement, may be translated locally with final quality check by the Meeting Programming and Documentation Service (CPAM). CPA will define the guidelines, format and style to be used for the final printing of documents to ensure uniformity and quality.

7.10.2 To ensure timely circulation, the final text of all pre-session documents must be ready for translation, typing and processing at least ten weeks (2.5 months) before the opening date of the Conference. Standard layout formats for FAO documentation are used to ensure uniform presentation.

7.10.3 The RO should fully exploit all possible opportunities for “PaperSmart” pre-session documents, i.e. uploading them to the web and reducing or eliminating printed copies (see paragraph 7.5 above).

7.10.4 One hard copy and one electronic copy should be taken to the Conference site for printing/reproduction on location, if required, as a less costly alternative to shipping printed copies from the RO.

7.10.5 All pre-session documents should be uploaded on the RC web page at least six weeks before the opening date of the Conference (see paragraph 7.5.3 above). The master version (usually in English) of the documents should be uploaded upon finalization and the translated versions will be uploaded as they become available.

## **8. APPOINTMENT OF SECRETARIAT STAFF**

### **8.1 General**

8.1.1 The RO determines and nominates, for the endorsement of the DDO and approval of ODG, the Conference Secretariat staff, staff presenting Agenda items and Side Events facilitators who will be required to support and service the Regional Conference (see paragraph 2.2.1 above).

8.1.2 The Conference Secretary is the Deputy Regional Representative (Administrative Circular 2016/14). In case the position is vacant, the Conference Secretary is nominated 15 months before the opening of the Conference by the ADG/RR and endorsed by ODG. The Conference Affairs Officer is nominated by the Conference Secretary and endorsed by the ADG/RR. The rest of the Secretariat staff is designated at least five months before the opening date of the Conference.

### **8.2 Subregional Coordinator (SRC)**

As members of the Conference Secretariat, these senior officers will:

8.2.1 Assist the ADG/RR in welcoming and liaising with heads of delegations from the Subregion.

8.2.2 Arrange meetings of heads of delegations from the Subregion with the Director-General and the ADG/RR.

8.2.3 Provide the ADG/RR with general assistance in the affairs of the Conference, as may be assigned to him/her.

8.2.4 Work closely with the Conference Affairs Officer, particularly during the time when the latter is fully engaged in the Director-General's meetings with delegates.

### **8.3 Secretary of the Regional Conference (Conference Secretary)**

8.3.1 The Conference Secretary is the Deputy Regional Representative. In case the position is vacant, the Conference Secretary is nominated by the ADG/RR and endorsed by ODG. He/she is appointed at least 15 months before the opening date of the Conference to allow for adequate preparations (see paragraph 8.1.2 above).

8.3.2 The Conference Secretary reports to the ADG/RR for the successful preparation, general organization and conduct of the Conference in all phases. Details of the responsibilities are summarized as follows:

- i) serves as Chairperson of the Regional Editorial Committee;
- ii) briefs the Chairperson of the Conference;
- iii) maintains the Timetable approved by the Conference;
- iv) drafts the Order of the Day and keeps delegates informed of all activities associated with the Conference;
- v) prepares, with the support of the Reports Officer, a summary of recommendations for Conference and Council and edits the final report;
- vi) clears press releases;
- vii) authorizes the distribution of documents and other material provided by delegations; and
- viii) assists the Chairperson in preparations, including presentations, for the Regional Conference reporting to the Council, in the areas of their respective mandates, on programme and budget matters and to the Conference on policy and regulatory matters.

### **8.4 Conference Affairs Officer**



8.4.1 The Conference Affairs Officer is nominated by the Conference Secretary and endorsed by the ADG/RR. The Conference Affairs Officer<sup>7</sup> assists the Conference Secretary. He/she is responsible for the physical planning and servicing of the Conference; he/she is the holder of the imprest account and acts as Disbursing Officer. During the preparatory stage, he/she ensures that all commitments, which have been established in the exchange of letters with the host government, are being fulfilled.

8.4.2 The duties of the Conference Affairs Officer include:

- i) maintaining advance contact with the Government Liaison Officer;
- ii) ensuring adequate preparations at the Conference site (see paragraph 10.2 below);
- iii) servicing the Conference, in particular the registration and preparation of lists of delegates and observers; and for supervising the work of the interpreters, translators (only if necessary), Documents Officer/Assistant and other Conference support staff to ensure timely and orderly production and distribution of documents on a “print on demand” basis;
- iv) ensuring availability, at the Conference site, of copies of reports of previous Regional Conferences, reports of most recent sessions of the FAO Conference and Council, the FAO Basic Texts, the Programme of Work and Budget for the biennium and the Guide on Conduct of Plenary Meetings;
- v) authorizing dispatch of official mail; and
- vi) ensuring return of equipment and supplies to the RO; and closing the imprest account at the end of the Conference.

## **8.5 Partnership Officer**

8.5.1 The Partnership Officer assists the Conference Secretary and liaises with the CSOs in all matters related to their participation in the Regional Conference, including the organization of the regional civil society consultation prior to the Regional Conference.

8.5.2 The duties of the Partnership Officer include:

- i) preparing and seeking preliminary clearance from OPC of the list of CSOs/INGOs to be invited to Regional Conference as observers before sending it to OSD for ODG Approval ;
- ii) liaising with global network of civil society organizations in charge of the facilitation of the CSOs Consultation, in order to ensure the establishment of the Steering Committee;

---

<sup>7</sup> If the Regional Conference is organized in a country with an FAOR it is advisable that the FAOR be appointed as Conference Affairs Officer.

- iii) liaising with the Steering Committee of the CSOs consultation to define timing and venue of the CSOs consultation;
- iv) liaising with the Steering Committee of the CSOs consultation to ensure publication and dissemination of a call for expressions of interest for regional CSOs to participate in the process;
- v) ensuring timely web posting of the call for expressions of interest in the news section of the Conference web page;
- vi) Providing the Steering Committee of the CSOs consultation with information on the Conference documentation as soon as it is available (Provisional Annotated Agenda and the Pre-session documents);
- vii) liaising with the Steering Committee of the CSOs consultation to ensure timely submission of the concept note indicating the justification of the composition of the organizing committee, methodology, agenda and programme of the consultation;
- viii) ensuring timely submission by the steering committee of the list of participants to the CSOs consultation and verifying that the list of participants ensures a balanced representation as per related FAO's guidelines.
- ix) liaising with the Steering Committee of the CSOs consultation to ensure the registration to the Regional Conference of the Spokespersons selected by the Consultation;
- x) liaising with the Steering Committee of the CSOs consultation to ensure the timely submission of the Civil Society Consultation final statement as well as the report consolidating the technical input to the different Regional Conference agenda items and pre-session documents;
- xi) ensuring the delivery of the Civil Society Consultation final statement and of the report consolidating the technical input to the different Regional Conference agenda items and pre-session documents as appropriate.

## **8.6 Reports Officer**

8.6.1 The Reports Officer, nominated by the ADG/RR, is responsible for the preparation of the draft report of the Conference, and the preparation and editing of the final draft (see paragraph 10.1.7 below). In this connection, he/she should consult with country delegates, as necessary.

## **8.7 Conference Information Officer**

8.7.1 The Regional Communication Officer is usually designated as the Conference Information Officer. He/she is responsible for public information coverage of the Conference and serves as the Organization's link with the media.

8.7.2 The Conference Information Officer will undertake a preparatory public information mission to the host country at least two months before the opening date of the Conference (see paragraph 10.1.4 below).

8.7.3 The Conference Information Officer establishes contact with the local and foreign media (print and electronic) and arranges for their attendance and accreditation at the Regional Conference.

8.7.4 The Conference Information Officer issues press releases (having first cleared them with OCC and the Conference Secretary) and other information material for distribution and use throughout the region.

8.7.5 He/she makes the necessary arrangements for the Director-General's press conferences and press releases.

8.7.6 At the end of the Conference, the Conference Information Officer reports to OCC on his/her activities in covering the media and information aspects of the Conference, copying ODG and OSD.

## **8.8 Conference Information Technology Officer/Assistant (ITO)**

8.8.1 The Conference ITO will:

- i) define the specifications of the system and equipment requirements for proper electronic support at the Conference site;
- ii) analyse the local IT infrastructure in the host country and evaluate its adaptability to the above specifications;
- iii) define the requirements and make arrangements with CPA for carrying out the remote translation of in-session documents and reports from the Conference site;
- iv) ensure the proper functioning of the hardware/software and communications system throughout the duration of the Conference; and
- v) coordinate with the Conference Documents Officer/Assistant and CPA the remote translation activities for all in-session documents and reports during the Conference.

## **8.9 Conference Documents Officer/Assistant**

8.9.1 The Conference Documents Officer/Assistant manages the documents desk at the Regional Conference.

8.9.2 His/her major responsibilities include:

- i) preparing and supervising the documents desk; printing on demand any document from the web page and keeping a set of large documents ready to be reproduced if required; and briefing staff provided by the host government;

- ii) ensuring the smooth distribution of documents requested by delegates, during the Conference at the documents desk and in the meeting room, as well as the timely distribution to interpreters of all in-session documents and written statements;
- iii) distributing, after clearance by the Conference Secretary, documents and other material provided by delegations;
- iv) keeping a set of all statements made by heads of delegations;
- v) ensuring timely web posting of all in-session documents;
- vi) maintaining close liaison with officers responsible for drafting in-session documents, the Reports Officer, translators (where applicable), the typing pool and those in charge of documents' reproduction;
- vii) maintaining contact with the Conference ITO and CPA to ensure the flow of remote translation of all in-session documents and reports to and from the Conference site;
- viii) providing the delegations with information on the availability of documents;
- ix) coordinating with the Conference Affairs Officer the shipment back to the RO of printed statements from delegations and reusable background material.

## **8.10 Technical Officers and Side Event Facilitators**

8.10.1 Technical officers from the RO and/or SRO are nominated to attend the Regional Conference to cover specific items. Their responsibilities include introducing agenda items as required, in particular those for which they prepared the documentation, participating in the debates and drafting the sections of the report covering the particular agenda item.

8.10.2 Technical officers from Headquarters and Side Event Facilitators may be designated by their Directors, on request from the ADG/RR, to attend the Conference and be responsible for agenda items and side events not covered by technical staff from the RO, if deemed necessary. This may include introducing agenda items, participating in the debates and drafting the text of the Conference report on items within their competence. In such cases DDO endorsement and ODG approval is necessary (see paragraph 8.1.1 above).

## **8.11 Servicing staff**

8.11.1 Servicing staff includes secretaries and assistants. The number of staff required depends on the level of support from the host government, and is determined by the Conference Affairs Officer, in consultation with the Conference Secretary, and cleared by the ADG/RR before approval by ODG

8.11.2 The RO should consult with CPA to assist in securing the services of interpreters and translators (if desired) from Headquarters (see paragraph 9.1 below).

## **9. IN-SESSION LANGUAGE SERVICES**

### **9.1 Interpretation**

9.1.1 The interpretation requirements (see also Administrative Circular 2006/7 available at the following link: <http://intranet.fao.org/departments/cpa/interpretation/>) will be decided in close consultation between the RO and CPAM. CPAM will determine the composition and balance of the team between freelance and staff interpreters, taking due consideration of costs involved. Details on the composition of teams can be found on Intranet under CPA pages.

9.1.2 The RO will ensure the availability of suitable simultaneous interpretation equipment and services, in close consultation with CPA by submitting the Request for Conference Staff (Adm 35) at least four months before the opening date of the Conference.

9.1.3 CPA may request the assistance of the RO to build up a roster of regional freelance interpreters, from which it may draw to meet Conference requirements.

### **9.2 Translation**

9.2.1 The RO will secure all arrangements for the use of remote translation by CPA from Headquarters for in-session documents and reports. The Conference ITO is responsible for identifying these requirements and implementing the remote translation from the location of the Conference. Should exceptional circumstances preclude the use of remote translation, the RO shall seek the guidance of CPA for use of staff or approved freelance translators.

9.2.2 Four weeks before the Conference, the Conference Documents Officer/Assistant will submit to CPAM a detailed schedule of in-session translation for planning purposes. Within one week CPAM will clear the schedule or request amendments.

## **10. CONFERENCE MANAGEMENT**

### **10.1 Pre-conference servicing**

10.1.1 Preparatory visit to host country. A preparatory mission to the host country comprising the Conference Secretary, Conference Affairs Officer, Conference ITO and, where available, the FAOR or UNDP Resident Representative (UNDP/RR) in the host country, takes place shortly after the letter of agreement is acknowledged by the host government. The mission takes along a sample flag (to determine the size of the flag pole), identification tags and nameplate stands. The mission seeks to:

- i) discuss and resolve issues arising from the obligations in the memorandum of responsibilities;
- ii) ensure full awareness by the host Government of its responsibilities, costs involved and the time required for successful preparation of Conference facilities;
- iii) establish contact and forge working relations between the Conference Affairs Officer and the Government Liaison Officer;
- iv) review the facilities and services available on the basis of the detailed standard checklist (Annexes 1 and 2) focusing, in particular, on the Conference hall and facilities, offices, interpretation equipment, furniture and supplies, computers and ancillary equipment, communication facilities especially in relation to remote translation and the availability of adequate local support staff; and
- v) finalize the Information Note.

10.1.2 Financial arrangements. The ADG/RR is the allottee of funds for meeting expenses regarding the preparations for and organization of the Regional Conference. The Conference Affairs Officer, as the disbursing officer, effects financial arrangements for mobilizing adequate funds at the site. He/she ensures that arrangements are made for opening an imprest account at the site to cover local expenditure directly related to the Conference, i.e. payment for the Director-General's hospitality and related expenses; Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) for freelance interpreters; advances on travel authorizations; and other general operating expenses.

10.1.3 Shipping arrangements. The Conference Affairs Officer, in consultation with the Conference Secretary, arranges for the provision of equipment and supplies, which are not provided by the host government, including interpretation equipment, flags, table signs, computers, background material, etc. The list of requirements is determined on the basis of the preparatory visit and follow-up discussions with the Government Liaison Officer. The Conference Affairs Officer then arranges for the shipment(s) including copies of pre-session documents, if necessary. Discussions with the Government Liaison Officer, FAOR and/or UNDP/RR in the host country determine to whom a copy of the shipping order is sent for clearance of shipments. The Conference Affairs Officer, in consultation with the Conference Secretary, arranges the return shipment to the RO of the equipment and supplies after the Conference.

10.1.4 Public information. The Conference Information Officer, in consultation with OCC, will prepare a media strategy for the Conference and will visit the host country two months before the opening date of the Conference to establish contact with the host government and the media and take appropriate measures for adequate press/media liaison and coverage (see paragraph 8.6.2 above).

10.1.5 Director-General's Activities/Stay/Official Hospitality. The Conference Affairs Officer, in consultation with the Conference Secretary, seeks clearance from OSD of the Director-General's official hospitality. OSD consults with ODG in order to avoid conflict with the Director-General's schedule. Arrangements, including identification

of a suitable caterer and source of duty-free items (through FAOR or UNDP/RR) are initiated during the preparatory mission and finalized one month before the opening date of the Conference. The Conference Affairs Officer prepares the invitation cards and obtains, from the Government Liaison Officer, an updated list of local VIPs.

10.1.6 Outline of responsibility for agenda items. Each agenda item is the responsibility of a technical officer assigned with the approval of ODG. This officer will:

- i) provide updated information in a concise introduction of the item to the Conference;
- ii) take notes of the discussions as necessary;
- iii) intervene in the debate when requested by the Chairperson;
- iv) respond to questions at the conclusion of the discussion; and
- v) prepare the appropriate section of the draft report on that item.

10.1.7 Instructions for preparing the draft report. At each session the Regional Conference shall approve a report embodying its conclusions, recommendations and decisions, as per CPA standards. The report is usually drafted by the Reports Officer and a small group of delegates under the leadership of a Rapporteur.

10.1.8 The report should, where available, use the Multi-year Programme of Work of the Regional Conferences.

10.1.9 The Reports Officer draws up, in consultation with the Conference Secretary, a work schedule for the preparation of the draft Conference report for the approval of the ADG/RR, at least one month before the opening date of Conference. The schedule lists:

- i) the technical officer assigned to introduce the item;
- ii) the time of discussion for each agenda item;
- iii) the length of the section of the draft report;
- iv) the officer responsible for drafting each section; and
- v) the deadline for submission of drafted sections.

10.1.10 The report is drafted and issued in sections as the Conference proceeds. The Reports Officer, under the authority of the Conference Secretary, ensures that:

- i) each concerned officer prepares his/her section;
- ii) the proper clearances have been obtained; and
- iii) the report is edited in accordance with the guidelines set out in Annex 11 of this Manual.

10.1.11 In the identification of the meeting venue and in all organization aspects, the Secretariat of the meeting should be aware of the environmental impacts of the session. The Conference Secretariat might refer to the *Greening Meeting Checklist* in the Green Meeting Guide developed by UNEP and available at this url:  
<http://www.greeningtheblue.org/sites/default/files/GreenMeetingGuide.pdf>.

## **10.2 On-site arrangements**

10.2.1 Arrival of key secretariat staff. The ADG/RR, SRC/s, Conference Secretary, Conference Affairs Officer, Conference Information Officer, Conference ITO and Conference Documents Officer/Assistant (and Chief interpreter) should arrive at least five days before the opening date of the Conference to oversee the final preparations. Prior arrangements are to be made with the Government Liaison Officer to ensure readiness and provision of offices with office furniture and supplies to permit efficient functioning from the day of arrival. Arrangements are also finalized with the Government Liaison Officer for staffing and servicing the Conference.

10.2.2 Checking and setting up arrangements at Conference site. The advance team immediately begins checking and setting up the Conference hall; documents and registration desks; offices; interpretation booths, telephones and faxes; e-mail and Internet connections; transportation; reproduction facilities; computers and other equipment; and arrangements for the inaugural ceremony of the Conference (a checklist is provided in Annex 2). All arrangements must be in place to permit the Secretariat to be fully operational one day before the opening date of the Conference.

10.2.3 Arrival of other staff. Conference staff from the RO arrive two days before the opening date of the Conference. Their specific responsibilities and functions are assigned by the Conference Affairs Officer in consultation with the Conference Secretary. In any event, a plan of work is drawn up in advance of their arrival clearly outlining reporting relationships. The host government's support staff should also report two days before the opening date of the Conference. The Conference Affairs Officer and the Government Liaison Officer must establish pre-arranged procedures for coordinating and, where feasible, integrating the two groups of support staff. Technical officers from the RO and/or SRO and Headquarters should arrive at least one day before the opening date of the Conference.

10.2.4 Registration and List of Delegates/Participants. A special desk, near the entrance of the Conference hall, is set up for reception, registration and information. Staff assigned to handle registration should be on duty one day before the opening date. At least one of the receptionists/registration clerks must be able to speak English and the others should speak the language(s) of the Conference. The desk is kept open for the duration of the Conference, one hour before and one hour after the Conference working hours. The RO supplies official FAO printed registration forms for the registration of all participants at the Conference, unless on-line Registration facilities have been established. This exercise is overseen by the Conference Affairs Officer who is also responsible for issuing a Provisional List of Delegates and Observers within 24 hours of the opening of the Conference.



10.2.5 Distribution of documents. A documents desk is located near the entrance to the plenary hall to distribute documents to delegates on a “print on demand” basis. It is supervised by the Conference Documents Officer/Assistant who, in collaboration with the Conference Affairs Officer, ensures that requests are correctly attended. Non-FAO documents may be distributed only when cleared by the Conference Secretary. The documents desk is staffed by clerks fluent in the languages of the Conference.

10.2.6 Preparation of the Order of the Day. Every day, the Conference Secretary prepares the Order of the Day for the following day and ensures that it is translated, printed and made available to participants early in the morning. The Order of the Day indicates the time and place of meetings for the day, the background documents to be considered and any special announcements. It also provides information on field trips, receptions, etc., and should be kept as brief as possible.

10.2.7 Processing and distribution of in-session documents, including the draft report. The Conference Secretary supervises the processing of in-session documents, including the draft report. The remote translation of in-session documents and reports should be carried out by CPA at Headquarters, unless precluded for technical reasons. As early as possible, the Conference Secretary informs CPA of the requirements for the remote translation of in-session documents and reports. The draft report is prepared and translated in sections as they become available, in order to avoid undue stacking towards the end of the Conference. All in-session documents are published on the FAO web site as soon as they are available, and a limited number of printed copies are distributed through the documents desk (see paragraph 10.2.5 above).

## **11. POST CONFERENCE MANAGEMENT**

### **11.1 On Site**

11.1.1 Disposal of surplus materials and supplies. Unused supplies - stationery and related consumables - are returned to the host government at the end of the Conference. Where the RO provided a significant proportion of such supplies, the surplus is handed over to the FAOR or UNDP/RR, as appropriate.

11.1.2 Disposal of copies of in-session documents, flags and other non-disposable material and equipment. The Conference Affairs Officer ensures that adequate copies of all in-session documents, ministerial statements and the draft report are packed together with flags and other non-disposable material and equipment for shipment to the RO.

11.1.3 Payment of Invoices and closing of financial arrangements. After the closing of the Conference, the Conference Affairs Officer ensures that all outstanding accounts are settled and invoices paid and that the imprest account is closed.

### **11.2 At the Regional Office**

11.2.1 Issuance of Thank You letter to host Government. Immediately after the conclusion of the Conference, the Conference Secretary drafts a Thank You letter to the host government to be issued under the signature of the ADG/RR (see Model Letter, Annex 12). This is done within one week after the conclusion of the Conference.

11.2.2 Finalization of Conference report. The Reports Officer, within one week of returning to the RO, finalizes the Conference report incorporating the summary of main recommendations and attaching all necessary annexes. The Report will be submitted to both the FAO Council and Conference as a Conference document. The report will present at the beginning a boxed text highlighting the main programme and budgetary matters contained in the report to be brought to the attention of Council. Likewise, the boxed text for the Conference will highlight the main policy, international frameworks and regulatory matters.

11.2.3 Clearance of Conference report. The final Conference report is cleared by the Conference Secretary and the ADG/RR.

Within two weeks after the end of the Regional Conference, the final report with text boxes containing matters for the Council attention and matters for the Conference attention should be sent through OSD with copy to CPA for review before submission for ODG final clearance. Within three weeks after the end of the Regional Conference, the clearance process should be completed.

11.2.4 Processing and distribution of final report. After clearance by ODG, the RO should immediately submit the final Conference report<sup>8</sup> to CPA for translation into the languages of the Regional Conference with a deadline of two weeks. Thereafter, upon instruction by the RO, the final report together with the List of Delegates/Participants (as a separate document) is published on the FAO Governing and Statutory Bodies Website

<http://www.fao.org/unfao/govbodies/gsbhome/gsb-regconf/en/>).

The Regional Conference report will then be made available as a Conference document, in all FAO languages and webposted within three weeks from the submission date to CPA.

11.2.5 Review of Conference Arrangements. Within one month of the end of the Regional Conference, the RO undertakes a review of the entire preparatory process and the conduct of the Conference involving all participating RO staff. The ADG/RR subsequently submits an assessment of the preparation process of the Conference to OSD, and if warranted, prepares specific recommendations with a view to improving the Manual on the Regional Conferences.

11.2.6 In due time, in accordance with the Calendar of FAO Governing Bodies, the Conference Secretary assists the Chairperson in preparations, including presentations, for the Regional Conference reporting to the Council, and the Conference (see paragraph 8.3.2.v) above).

---

<sup>8</sup> Please note to adjust the Regional Conference title on the final report's cover pages to include the word "Session", in line with the change of status of Regional Conferences

**CHECKLIST OF ACTIONS REQUIRED BY THE REGIONAL OFFICE**

I. **BEFORE THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE**

A. **At the Regional Office**

- 1) Designate Conference Secretary and submit the name for ODG approval through OSD.
- 2) Designate Conference Affairs Officer and submit the name for ADG/RR approval.
- 3) Prepare Session Programming Form (SPF) and submit to CPA.
- 4) Undertake preliminary negotiations with Host Government to seek agreement in principle.
- 5) Prepare and issue agreement letter and memorandum of responsibilities after CPA clearance.
- 6) Make arrangements for preparatory mission to host country.
- 7) Develop draft Provisional Annotated Agenda seeking inputs from Members through regional consultations, Permanent Representatives, Regional and Subregional Offices, and technical departments.
- 8) Submit consolidated draft Provisional Annotated Agenda for ODG approval, through OSD with a copy to CPA.
- 9) Develop schedule of documentation through the electronic Document Processing Request (e-DPR – please see Annex 8) system (in accordance with approved agenda) specifying for each document, divisions/officers responsible, length and deadline for clearance by ODG or ADG of lead technical department concerned.
- 10) Prepare third-person letter of invitation to Members of the region, UN System Organizations, Observer countries, Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).
- 11) Seek clearance from CPA of list of Members, LON and LOG of the list of UN System Organizations, LEG of the list of IGOs and OPC of the list of CSOs to be invited.
- 12) Prepare and issue Provisional Timetable and Provisional List of Documents.
- 13) Prepare and issue Information Note.
- 14) Upon receipt of formal Host Government agreement, issue third-person letters of invitation, with copies of approved Provisional Annotated Agenda, Provisional Timetable, Provisional List of Documents and Information Note, copying ODG, OSD and CPA.
- 15) Monitor the preparation of pre-session documents through the schedule exported from the e-

DPR system.

- 16) Circulate drafts of pre-session documents for review by relevant technical units/divisions.
- 17) Consolidate comments, edit and prepare final draft pre-session documents.
- 18) Seek clearance of final draft pre-session documents from ODG or from the DDGs or directly from the ADG of the lead technical department concerned, as appropriate.
- 19) Process final pre-session documents – ensure translation by CPA/review/edit/print-on-demand.
- 20) Distribute pre-session documents to participating countries and their Permanent Representatives to FAO, and organizations through communication of the link to the web page of the RC documentation, directly or through FAORs.
- 21) Approach CPA for sourcing interpreters/translators when necessary.
- 22) Arrange for remote translation of in-session documents and reports, through CPAM, including preparation of in-session schedule of translations.
- 23) Prepare the required list of the Regional Conference Staff to allow CPA to recruit interpreters (and translators only if required).
- 24) Submit for ODG approval, through OSD, a list of secretarial and technical staff required for servicing the Conference and participating in debate, including technical officers from outside the RO (if necessary).
- 25) Prepare travel authorizations for staff attending the Conference.
- 26) Make arrangements for the preparatory public information mission.
- 27) Make arrangements for shipping required materials/supplies/equipment from the RO to the Conference site.
- 28) Forward a copy of the shipping order to FAOR, UNDP/RR and Government Liaison Officer.
- 29) Obtain ODG's decision on Director-General's hospitality, through OSD.
- 30) Prepare invitation cards for Director-General's hospitality.
- 31) Arrange with caterer for Director-General's hospitality.
- 32) Arrange for duty-free items (through FAOR or UNDP/RR).
- 33) Make arrangements for the transfer of adequate funds from the RO to FAO Representation in the host country to cover expenses (DSA for freelance interpreters, Director-General's hospitality, general operating expenses, etc.).
- 34) Obtain updated list of Ministers in the region from CPA (one month before the Conference).

35) Assign responsibility and provide instructions for preparing the draft report.

**B. At the Conference site – During preparatory mission**

**NB:** The preparatory mission should include the Conference Secretary, Conference Affairs Officer, Conference ITO, Conference Assistant and the FAOR (or UNDP/RR) in the host country, where available. The mission should take with it a sample flag (for determining size of flagpole), identification tags, nameplate stand, etc.

The opportunity should be taken to establish contact and working relations with the Government Liaison Officer. The mission reviews in detail the services and staff to be provided and the arrangements to be made by the Host Government (see Annex 2).

- 36) Select and check premises and all required facilities on the spot (against checklist).
- 37) Check availability of flag poles inside and outside the Conference hall.
- 38) Determine, with Government Liaison Officer, local Conference support staff requirements.
- 39) Check location of Director-General's hospitality and obtain estimated cost (if applicable).
- 40) Check availability of duty-free items.
- 41) Obtain information on hotels, hotel rates and meal prices.
- 42) Finalize Information Note with Government Liaison Officer.
- 43) Provide Government Liaison Officer with text for signs outside Conference hall (formal title in appropriate languages).
- 44) Check transportation for Director-General, FAO Secretariat and delegates.
- 45) Obtain diplomatic list for Director-General's function from FAOR or UNDP/RR.
- 46) Check availability and type of computers and printers and their compatibility with RO computer software programmes.
- 47) Check availability of e-mail facility and the feasibility of remote translation.
- 48) Check availability of printing equipment with Internet access (to print from FAO website), photocopying and reproduction machines.
- 49) Check availability of simultaneous interpretation equipment and booths and ensure their conformity with ISO standards.
- 50) Give Government Liaison Officer sample identification tags.
- 51) Check telephone/fax lines/e-mail connections to Headquarters and RO.

52) Check currency exchange facilities/arrangements.

C. At the Conference site – Immediately prior to Conference

NB: Arrangements should be made for staggered arrival of Conference secretariat. The Conference Secretary, the Conference Affairs Officer, Information Officer, ITO, Documents Officer/Assistant, Conference Assistant and, if necessary, the Chief Interpreter should arrive at least five days before the start of the Conference. Prior arrangements should be made with the Government Liaison Officer to ensure reception and provision of offices with furniture and supplies to permit effective functioning from the day of arrival.

53) Finalize arrangements with Government Liaison Officer for staffing and servicing the Conference.

54) Assign a Senior Officer among the Secretariat to keep orderly and accurate records of the Director-General's meetings and discussions with heads of delegations during the Conference.

55) Contact the UNDP/RR (where there is no FAOR) for brief/update on any developments concerning Conference preparations.

56) Obtain documents and equipment from customs (where applicable).

57) Obtain stationery from Host Government.

58) Print documents received through e-mail (where applicable)<sup>9</sup>.

59) Prepare documents and registration desks.

60) Prepare an internal administration note to FAO Secretariat staff (regarding morning briefing meetings, hours of work, collection of DSA, channels of communication) and a telephone directory with a list of FAO officers and Conference Secretariat staff.

61) Prepare Conference hall (interpretation equipment, name-plates/seating arrangements for inaugural ceremony and flags in alphabetic order, etc.).

62) Make arrangements outside Conference building (see Annex 2, paragraph I.6).

63) Check that printers, reproduction and photocopying machines and computers are in working order.

64) Check with local protocol/Government Liaison Officer arrangements for Director-General's accommodation, transportation and reception at airport.

65) Check that telephone/fax/e-mail facilities have working links to Headquarters and with the RO.

---

<sup>9</sup> Keeping in line with the PaperSmart policy being put in place

- 66) Check that the remote translation link and arrangements with Headquarters, including the possibility for diversion through the RO, are working satisfactorily.
- 67) Check that offices are adequately furnished.
- 68) Obtain list of Host Government staff servicing the Conference.
- 69) Coordinate official receptions with Government Liaison Officer.
- 70) Prepare invitations for Director-General's hospitality and dispatch local invitations in good time (if applicable).
- 71) Check that first aid arrangements at the Conference site are adequate.
- 72) Coordinate the list of arrivals with Government Liaison Officer.
- 73) Prepare first Order of the Day.
- 74) Obtain notice boards.
- 75) Ensure that the first Provisional List of Delegates is continuously updated for issuance on opening morning.
- 76) Arrange briefing session with the prospective Conference Chairperson.
- 77) Circulate to FAO staff, schedule for preparing the draft report, as approved beforehand by the ADG/Regional Representative.
- 78) Start registering all participants on standard registration cards on the day preceding the opening of the Conference, unless on-line Registration facilities have been established.

## II. DURING THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE

- 79) Prepare the Provisional List of Delegates and Observers and issue it within 24 hours of the opening of the Conference.
- 80) Each day, draft the Order of the Day for the following day and distribute it to participants each morning.
- 81) Prepare procedural and briefing notes for the Chairperson as required. These notes as well as other written introductory notes should be made available to interpreters, in advance.
- 82) Arrange for the introduction of agenda items as required.
- 83) Process, type final originals/obtain final language versions via remote translation by CPA or translate *in situ* (if remote translation technically precluded), print and distribute approved in-session documents including sections of the draft report.
- 84) Arrange interviews/meetings for the Director-General as directed.

85) Issue press releases and other public information material for distribution and use locally throughout the region.

### III. AFTER THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE

#### A. At the Conference site

86) Pay all invoices and finalize financial arrangements.

#### B. At the Regional Office

87) Issue a Thank You letter to the Host Government within one week of the end of the Conference.

88) Finalize/edit/clear the Conference report.

89) Ensure translation of the approved Conference report, by CPA, to all official languages of the region.

90) Post the final Conference report on the web as well as the final List of Delegates (separately).

91) Conduct a review of the entire exercise, prepare notes/recommendations for improving on the next cycle of preparations.



**ARRANGEMENTS TO BE MADE BY THE HOST GOVERNMENT**

The present document supplements the **Memorandum of Responsibilities** approved by FAO and the Host Government.

**CONTENTS**

	<u>Paragraphs</u>
I. Services and on-site arrangements	1 - 9
II. Staff	10 - 11
III. Supplies and stationery	12
Annex 2-A: List of staff to be provided by the Host Government	
Annex 2-B: List of equipment and supplies to be provided by the Host Government	
Annex 2-C: Office accommodation for FAO Secretariat	
Annex 2-D: Minimum standards for simultaneous interpretation equipment	

**I. SERVICES AND ON-SITE ARRANGEMENTS**

1. Services

It is usual for the Host Government to set up an Organizing Committee to ensure that the physical facilities and services required for the smooth running of the Conference are adequate and available on time. The FAO Representative, the Conference Secretary and the Conference Affairs Officer are consulted by the Committee.

The Organizing Committee usually comprises the Government Liaison Officer, who participates in preparations and works with the FAO Secretariat before and during the Conference; an Assistant Government Liaison Officer with responsibility for day-to-day arrangements and to take charge of the Conference service staff; a Protocol Officer; a Press Officer; a Security Officer; and a Transportation Officer, who coordinates the transportation of participants and members of the FAO Secretariat. The Government Liaison Officer and the Assistant Liaison Officer should be designated by the Host Government at the time when the memorandum of responsibilities is accepted.

2. Reception of participants

Participants generally begin to arrive a few days before the opening of the Conference, departing at various times thereafter.

The Host Government makes arrangements to facilitate the issuance of entry visas and to meet participants at the airport to expedite customs and immigration formalities. The Organizing Committee should form for this purpose a Reception Committee, headed by the Protocol Officer, to assist the participants on their arrival and departure.

### 3. Transportation of participants and the Secretariat

The Host Government generally provides transportation for the participants on arrival and departure between the point of landing and the hotels. An appropriate number of vehicles are placed at the disposal of the Reception Committee for this purpose.

Transportation is also provided for participants and FAO Conference Secretariat between the Conference hall and their hotels and for official receptions if held in a third location. The Transportation Officer has at his/her disposal a pool of cars and buses for this purpose and takes charge of all transport arrangements. A certain number of vehicles are reserved for heads of delegations and FAO senior staff.

In addition to the general transport pool, one omnibus should be permanently assigned to the interpreters' team and one car should be permanently assigned to each of the following:

- i) the Director-General of FAO;
- ii) the Independent Chairperson of the Council of FAO;
- iii) the FAO ADG/Regional Representative; and
- iv) the FAO Assistant Directors-General attending the Conference (one each).

**NB:** These numbers are verified during the preparatory mission.

### 4. Tax exemption

It is customary for the Host Government to exempt participants from national taxes in hotels and restaurants.

### 5. Identification badges

The Host Government provides identification badges in four different colours, for delegates, press, Organizing Committee staff and FAO staff.

### 6. Arrangements outside the Conference building

It is traditional for the Host Government to set up, on one side of the main entrance to the Conference building, a board or a banner, 2 x 4 m, painted in white, with the FAO emblem and the name and dates of the Conference in black letters in the official languages of the Conference. The flags of the Host Government and of the United Nations are flown outside the Conference building, with the UN flag on the right when facing the building. Both flags should be of the same dimensions (180 x 300 cm or 240 x 360 cm). Where facilities exist for a wider display, the flags of the Member Nations in the region may also be displayed outside the building. In this case, in accordance with the United Nations practice, the flags are flown in English alphabetical order, with the UN flag in the centre.

## 7. Inaugural ceremony of the Conference

An inaugural ceremony is usually held to mark the opening of the Conference. If the ceremony is not taking place in the agreed Conference hall, arrangements will be made to ensure that simultaneous interpretation equipment and booths are also available where the ceremony is held. The following matters are to be considered:

### (a) Invitees

In addition to the FAO Member Nations in the region and observers invited by FAO, the heads of diplomatic missions in the host country, the agricultural attachés of the Member Nations of the region and, where available, the heads of missions of the United Nations and specialized agencies, as well as dignitaries of the Host Government are usually invited to the inaugural ceremony of the Conference. The list of invitees is agreed on by the FAO Secretariat of the Conference and the Protocol Officer of the Host Government. Invitations are issued by the Host Government. Copies of the list are made available on request to national delegations and agencies for use in connection with official receptions.

### (b) Protocol for the order of speakers at the inaugural ceremony

In accordance with the United Nations practice:

- i) the Director-General of FAO (or his representative) opens the proceedings;
- ii) the official representative of the Host Government, in general the Head of State or the Head of Government, inaugurates the Conference and gives a short welcoming address;
- iii) the Director-General of FAO (or his representative) replies to it, and declares the inaugural ceremony closed.

Details of timing, length of proceedings, post-inauguration reception at the Conference opening site, etc. should be worked out in consultation with the Conference Secretary and Conference Affairs Officer.

### (c) Seating arrangements on the rostrum

In conformity with FAO protocol, the Director-General is seated at the centre of the rostrum, the official representative of the Host Government on his right and the FAO ADG/Regional Representative on his left. All speakers at the inaugural ceremony are seated on the rostrum; their places are determined jointly by the Protocol Officer of the Host Government and the FAO Secretariat of the Conference.

(d) Seating arrangements in the Conference hall

Seating arrangements for personalities and officials invited to the inaugural ceremony are made by the Host Government in accordance with local protocol, with due consideration to the rank of senior FAO officers attending the Conference.

8. Conference support services

(a) Post, telephone, facsimile and internet

A Post, Telegraph and Telephone Office is opened near the Conference hall two days before the Conference opens and remains open up to one day after the Conference closes. A facsimile service is also made available for use by the FAO Secretariat. Special arrangements may not be required where the Conference takes place at a hotel.

The facsimile and telephone numbers are established at least three months before the Conference opens to permit the delegates to be duly informed.

Access to internet will be provided and managed at the cost of the Host Government.

All communication facilities within the territory of the Host Government (mail, telephone, facsimile, e-mail and internet access) in connection with the Conference or originated by it are provided free of charge to FAO by the Host Government.

(b) Banking and foreign currency exchange

It is helpful to establish a service in the Conference building to take care of banking and foreign currency exchange facilities depending on the situation in the host country. This service should commence two days before the Conference opens and should remain open up to one day after it closes.

(c) Delegates' lounge

The delegates' lounge, with comfortable seats for 30 to 40 people and preferably with direct access to the snack bar, should be near the main Conference hall. It should be equipped with some computers and, if feasible, e-mail/internet access for use by delegates.

(d) First aid

A first-aid service under the care of a nurse should be set up in the Conference building and remain open during working hours. Arrangements should also be made with a local doctor and hospital to be available in case of need, and ambulance transport should be on call.

(e) Travel desk

The Host Government should make arrangements with a travel agency to open a travel desk in the Conference building starting one day before the Conference opens and

remaining open up to one day after its close. A booklet describing the principal centres of interest nearby is usually made available to participants by the Host Government.

(f) Cloakroom

Adequate cloakroom facilities and service should be provided in the Conference building.

9. Conference rooms

(a) Description of the plenary hall

The plenary hall must be large enough to accommodate the delegates of FAO Members, representatives and observers as well as FAO Secretariat staff and the press. Additional seats should also be available for guests invited to the inaugural ceremony. The plenary hall will be adequately equipped for simultaneous interpretation in all languages of the Conference. Equipment and booths will be in conformity with ISO standards.

i) Seating arrangements on the rostrum

The rostrum should be arranged as follows:

Seven seats at the table of the rostrum. At the Chairperson's place, there is a bell to announce the commencement of meetings and a gavel. An additional row of about ten seats is arranged behind the rostrum for senior officials and FAO Secretariat staff.

ii) Arrangement of the plenary hall (see drawing at the end of this Annex)

A comfortable seat for each head of delegation from the Member Countries of the region is arranged behind a horseshoe-shaped table. Behind each of these seats, three or four seats are available for other members of the delegation. Delegates are seated in English alphabetical order. Behind the horseshoe, rows of tables and chairs are arranged for representatives and observers. The order is as follows: (i) delegates from Member Nations of the region; (ii) observers from invited countries not belonging to the region; (iii) the Holy See; (iv) representatives of United Nations Agencies in the United Nations order of precedence; (v) observers of Intergovernmental Organizations; and (vi) observers of Non-governmental Organizations. Behind these rows, some additional seats are made available. On the sides of the horseshoe, two tables are set up for the press and the secretariat.

iii) Flags in the plenary hall

As a general rule, the flags (90 cm x 150 cm) of all FAO Member Countries in the region and the UN flag are also displayed in the plenary hall, behind the rostrum. The FAO logo is placed behind the rostrum, above the flags. FAO supplies the flags.

(b) Description of committee room

Apart from the large Conference hall, one committee room accommodating around 40 persons seated at tables is also needed.

(c) Simultaneous interpretation

The committee room will be adequately equipped for simultaneous interpretation in all languages of the Conference. Equipment and booths will be in conformity with ISO standards.

Annex 2-D lays down the minimum standards for simultaneous interpretation equipment.

All seats in the plenary hall and in the committee room should be equipped with a headset connected to a language selector whereby the listener can select one of the Conference languages. Microphones should be provided as follows:

at least four on the rostrum;  
at least one for every two delegates; and  
at least one for every three observers.

(d) Digital recording

The proceedings in the plenary hall should be recorded on audio files (MP3). The Host Government provides FAO with appropriate equipment.

(e) Office accommodation for FAO Secretariat

At least 20 workstations suitably furnished and equipped with telephones and access to internet, are needed for the FAO Secretariat, as described in Annex 2-C.

## II. STAFF

10. The Host Government recruits the local personnel required to strengthen the FAO Secretariat. They are employed by the Host Government, which is responsible for their remuneration and the payment of overtime previously authorized by the officer-in-charge of Host Government personnel. They should preferably work in shifts, as required by the work of the Conference.

11. The Conference Secretary and the Conference Affairs Officer are provided on the agreed dates of their arrival, with messengers. The remainder of the personnel supplied by the Host Government report for duty five days before the opening date of the Conference. They comprise the following:

(a) Officers designated by the Host Government:

Liaison Officer  
Assistant Liaison Officer  
Protocol Officer  
Press Officer  
Security Officer

Transportation Officer (and assistants)

(b) Office personnel and technicians supplied by the Host Government

The minimum personnel requirement is set out in Annex 2-A.

(c) The secretariat supplied by FAO comprises:

Conference Secretary

Conference Affairs Officer

Conference Assistant

Subregional Coordinator/s

Partnership Officer

Information Officer

Information Technology Officer/Assistant

Reports Officer

Interpreters

Translators (where desirable)

Documents Officer/Assistant

Registration Assistants

Interpretation equipment operator (only if FAO provides interpretation equipment)

III. SUPPLIES AND STATIONERY

12. All the supplies listed in Annex 2-B are put at the disposal of the FAO Conference Affairs Officer by the Host Government as soon as possible after his/her arrival, and in any case, not less than three days before the Conference is due to open.





LIST OF STAFF TO BE PROVIDED BY THE HOST GOVERNMENT\*

- .. Typists\*\*
  
- .. Operators for reproduction machines
  
- .. Documents clerks
  
- .. Interpretation equipment operator
  
- .. Technicians for maintaining of equipment (computers, electrical equipment, air conditioners, access to internet, etc.)
  
- .. Recording technician
  
- .. Cloakroom attendant
  
- .. Ushers/messengers
  
- .. Cleaners
  
- .. Nurse

\* To work in shifts and at night, if necessary.

\*\* Able to use appropriate word processing computer software.

**LIST OF EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES TO BE PROVIDED BY  
THE HOST GOVERNMENT**

A. Minimum furniture for at least 20 workstations

8 Executive desks	5 Shelves
14 Desks	28 Tables
13 Armchairs	6 Small low tables
5 Sofas	20 Coat-and-hat racks or stands
6 Typewriting desks	35 Waste-paper baskets
106 Chairs	
5 Cabinets	

B. Office equipment

- 10\* Computers/Laptops with FAO standard software configuration
- 3 Fast photocopying machines
- 2 Fax machines for FAO use
- 5 Laser printers – actual numbers depending on physical layout

All equipment must be state of the art and in perfect working condition at all times.

C. Interpretation equipment

- 1 Booth per Conference language equipped according to the requirements set out in Annex 2-D, plus one booth for recording
- 35 Microphones
- 300 Listening apparatus

D. Recording equipment

Digital recording software and hardware

E. Telephone in each office and at the documents distribution desk

F. Electronic mail equipment software and connections, and internet access

G. Carafes and drinking glasses in sufficient number for Conference hall, offices and for interpreters' booths

\* Actual numbers to be finalized during preparatory mission.

#### H. Office supplies

#### I. Plates with the following indications in the Conference languages:

Bank	Travel Office
Press	Cloakroom
Post Office	First Aid

All other plates with the names of the Member Countries and Organizations for use on the rostrum and in the Conference hall are furnished by FAO.

#### J. Miscellaneous

If necessary, air conditioners and/or an adequate number of electric fans are provided in the Conference hall, the committee rooms, interpreters' booths, offices, the delegates' lounge, the typing room, etc.

### STATIONERY

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Estimated quantity</u>	
1.	Photocopying/ laser printer machine paper	400	reams
3.	Envelopes, ordinary letter (23.5 x 10 cm)	100	
4.	Brown envelopes, medium (25 x 30 cm)	100	
5.	Brown envelopes, large (25 x 37.5 cm)	100	
6.	Manila folders	50	
7.	Writing pads (20 x 15 cm)	300	
8.	Paper punch (2 holes)	4	
9.	Paper punch (3 holes)	4	
10.	Ball-point pens	200	
11.	Pencils	200	
12.	Staplers, large, with supply of long staples	3	
13.	Staplers, small, with staples	10	
14.	Paper clips	20	boxes
17.	Elastic bands	2	boxes
19.	Scotch tape	5	rolls
21.	Erasers (typewriter)	2	
22.	Erasers (pencil)	10	
23.	Pencil sharpeners (wall type)	2	
25.	Scissors	4	

---

**NB** Although every effort has been made to give an accurate estimate of requirements of equipment and supplies, the above quantities should be regarded as indicative. Precise figures will be determined during the preparatory mission and may vary from one case to another.

Unused supplies will be returned to the Host Government at the close of the Conference.

OFFICE ACCOMMODATION FOR FAO SECRETARIAT

Description of 22 offices/workstations required for FAO Secretariat:

<u>Office No.</u>	<u>F o r</u>	<u>Number of offices</u>
1	Chairperson of the Conference	1
2	Secretary to Chairperson	1
3	Independent Chairperson of the Council	1
4	Director-General	1
5	Secretary to Director-General	1
6,7	Assistant Directors-General (to be assigned as required)	2
8	ADG/Regional Representative	1
9	Secretary to ADG/Regional Representative	1
10	Conference Secretary	1
11	2 secretaries	1
12	Subregional Coordinator(s)	1
13	Conference Affairs Officer	1
14	Reports Officer	1 (large)
15,16,17	Translation Service	3
18,19	FAO Officers	2 (large)
20	Typing Pool (FAO typists and those supplied by the Host Government)	1 (large)
21	Room for reproducing and collating documents	1 (large)
22	Press	1 (large)
	Total	22

Office furniture

The offices listed above should be suitably furnished. The minimum would be as follows:

Offices No. 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8 (Director offices)	1 executive desk 1 table 6 chairs 2 armchairs and comfortable sofa 1 small low table
---	--

Offices No. 2, 5 and 9 (Secretaries)	1 desk 1 small cabinet 2 chairs
---	---------------------------------------

Offices No. 10, 12 and 13	1 executive desk
---------------------------	------------------

(Executive offices)	1 table
Office No. 14 (Reports Officer)	1 desk 1 table 6 chairs 1 PC 1 laser printer
Offices No. 11, 15, 16 and 17 (Secretaries, Translators)	2 desks 1 desk for typist 1 PC 4 chairs 1 laser printer
Offices No. 18 and 19 (FAO Officers)	4 tables 4 chairs
Office No. 20 (Assistants)	2 desks for typists 6 PCs 8 chairs 2 cabinets or shelves 1 fast photocopying machine 1 laser printer
Office No. 21 (Documents)	4 tables (for collating) 4 tables (for machines) 2 state of the art photocopying machines 6 chairs shelves for paper stock
Office No. 22 (Press room for journalists)	2 desks 3 tables 8 chairs 3 armchairs 1 small table 1 PC Several telephones

Note 1: Workstations 14 to 22 could also be pooled in an open space

Note 2: A sufficient number of offices should also be provided for the Host Government secretariat. It is important that the offices of the Government Liaison Officer and Assistant Liaison Officer be as close as possible to the office of the FAO Conference Affairs Officer.

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION  
EQUIPMENT

In cases where the Host Government provides simultaneous interpretation equipment for FAO sessions, conferences or seminars the following minimum standards will apply<sup>10</sup>:

EQUIPMENT IN THE MEETING HALL

1. **Listening Equipment:** Listeners shall be provided with a receiver fitted with a channel selector and volume control, and with a light, comfortable and sensitive headset.

The receiver shall include one channel for each language used in the meeting, plus one for the original language, so that participants can listen to a speaker either:

- directly by selecting the original language channel; or:
- through interpretation by selecting the appropriate channel.

2. **Speech reinforcement equipment:** In the presence of a public address system, its volume control shall be completely independent from that of the simultaneous interpretation system so that lowering the volume of the public address system shall not reduce the sound level supplied to the interpreters through their headsets.

3. **Sound quality:** When the conference hall is occupied and the installation is in working order, all the links in the chain "speaker-control box-interpreter's headsets" must provide the correct reproduction of audio-frequencies between 150 and 12000 Hz.

4. **Microphones:** At least one moveable tabletop microphone shall be provided for each 3 participants. The microphone shall incorporate an on/off switch and a clearly visible warning light to show when the microphone is on.

If microphones are operated by participants, the microphone circuits shall be arranged so that:

- not more than one microphone can be on at any given moment;
- the Chairman's position is provided with the means of cutting out all other microphones in the hall.

If the microphones are not operated by participants, the control panel shall be placed so that its operator has full visibility of the hall and is close to the interpreters.

5. **Visual Aids:** Visual aids for the participants, such as screens or blackboards, shall be positioned so as to be easily visible from the interpreters' booths.

---

<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that these standards are for mobile equipment but can also be considered as the strict minimum for fitted installations already built. If any new Conference facility is planned, a copy of International Standard ISO-2603 should be obtained from the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

6. If there is a podium it should also be fitted with one standing microphone and lectern for formal speeches.

### **INTERPRETERS' BOOTHS**

7. **Dimensions and layout:** For dimensions and layout, see sketch below.

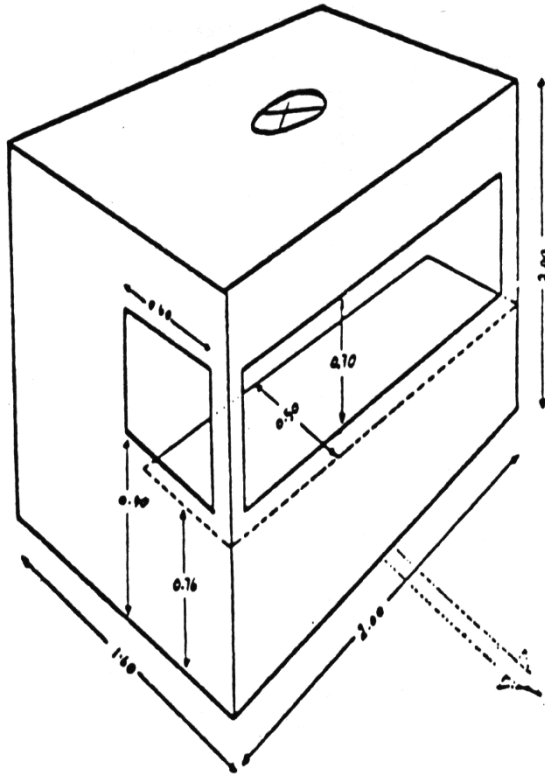
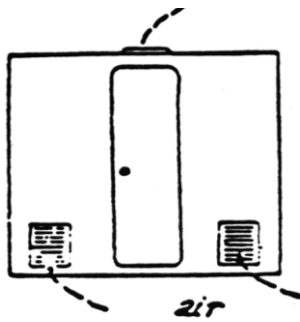
8. The full technical requirements for built-in simultaneous interpretation booths can be found in ISO Standard 2603:1998 and for mobile booths in ISO Standard 4043:1998.

9. The following check-list contains the minimum requirements to be verified with the supplier well before the meeting. The FAO Interpretation Group will be happy to answer any questions and communicate with the supplier directly: Fao-Interpretation@fao.org

1. There must be one booth for each language used in the meeting, e.g. 6 languages = 6 booths.
2. The booths must have a clear view of the whole room. Mobile booths must be placed on a raised platform (25-30 cm high).
3. The screen must be easily legible from all the booths, otherwise monitors must be provided in each booth.
4. Each interpreter must have an individual console (with microphone, headset, controls).
5. Each booth must accommodate 2 interpreters seated comfortably.
6. The Arabic and Chinese booths should be large enough to accommodate 3 interpreters. The consoles must allow other outgoing channels to be selected, i.e. so that an Arabic interpreter can interpret not only into Arabic but also from Arabic into English, French or Spanish and so that a Chinese interpreter can interpret into Chinese but also from Chinese into English or French.
7. Table lamps must be provided to allow interpreters to read texts or take notes when the room lights are off.
8. Each booth must have adequate ventilation, as doors need to be kept closed during the meeting.
9. The installation must be completed the day before the meeting to allow the team-leader to check the equipment and resolve any problems.
10. The equipment supplier's technician must be present in the vicinity of the booths throughout the conference.

# INTERPRETERS' BOOTH

## Rear Elevation



## Two typical booth arrangements

Microphones and lamps should have some form of flexible neck.

To nearest participant: 2.00

### NOTES

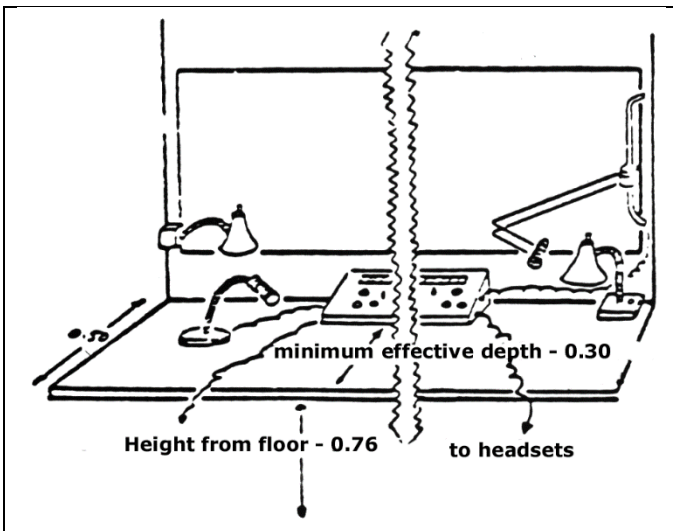
Windows: double-glazed; front window right across booth;

Table: **strong enough to take weight of control panel + documents + two interpreters leaning on it**;

minimum effective depth 0.30; table extends right across booth;

Access: Outward opening rear door or heavy curtain;

Ventilation: silent roof fan; rear intake vents.



N.B. Care should be taken not to place the booths anywhere that would hinder exit in case of emergency.



**TIMETABLE - PREPARATION FOR THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE**

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>MINIMUM TIME REQUIRED BEFORE OPENING DATE</b>
1. Appointment of Conference Secretary and Conference Affairs Officer (8.1)	15 months
2. RO to request proposals for Agenda items including to Members - through regional consultations and/or Permanent Representatives (7.1)	15 months
3. Approval of venue by ODG (3.1)	12 months
4. RO to submit Session Programming Form (SPF) to CPA (3.2)	12 months
5. RO to submit draft Provisional Annotated Agenda to Members ( FAO Regional Groups of Permanent Representatives, (through CPA if required) (7.2)	10 months
6. RO to start preliminary negotiations with Host Government (5.1)	10 months
7. Receipt of comments and views of Regional Groups of Permanent Representatives on the draft Provisional Annotated Agenda (7.2)	9.5 months
8. Receipt of Host Government agreement, in principle (5.2)	9 months
9. Preparation/finalization of agreement letter and memorandum of responsibilities (5.2)	8 months
10. RO to submit consolidated draft Provisional Annotated Agenda together with Provisional Timetable and List of Documents, to OSD for Headquarters review and ODG clearance. (7.2)	8 months
11. ODG approves Provisional Annotated Agenda, Provisional Timetable and List of Documents and provides guidance on clearance routing	7.5 months
12. RO to prepare a schedule of documentation in the e-DPR system for ADG/RR approval (7.4)	7 months
13. Assigning responsibilities for preparing Agenda items (7.8)	7 months
14. Receipt of Host Government's acceptance of agreement letter (5.2)	7/6.5 months
15. Completion of draft pre-session documents and 1 <sup>st</sup> review by Regional Editorial Committee (7.8)	6 months
16. RO to submit draft pre-session documents to technical divisions for clearance, copying OSD (7.8)	5 months
17. Approval of Conference Staff Secretariat (8.1)	5 months
18. Preparatory mission from RO to host country (10.1)	5 months
19. RO to obtain clearance of the list of invitees through OSD (CPA for Members and observer countries, LOG and LON for UN System Organizations, LEG for IGOs, OPC for INGOs/CSOs and final clearance from ODG) (6.1)	5 months
20. RO to draft third-person letter of invitation and clear it with the ADG/RR (6.1)	5 months

21. RO to draft Information Note and clear it with the ADG/RR (7.7)  
5 months
22. Dispatch of third-person letters of invitation<sup>11</sup> from RO to Members  
and organizations (6.1) 4 months
23. Completion of review and clearance of draft pre-session documents by  
technical divisions (7.8) 4 months
24. RO to send CPA the required Request for Conference Staff (Adm.  
35E) to allow recruitment of interpreters (9.1) 4 months
25. Final review of draft pre-session documents by Regional Editorial  
Committee (7.9) 4-3.5 months
26. RO to submit final draft pre-session documents to OSD for ODG and  
DDGs' clearance, and directly to the ADG of lead technical  
department concerned, as appropriate (7.9) 3.5 months
27. RO to prepare and send an open invitation letter to the Civil Society  
Organization(s) appointed to organize the CSO consultation (6.1)  
4 months
28. Approval of final draft pre-session documents by ODG, DDG or  
ADG/s, as appropriate (7.9) 3 months
29. OSD to return approved pre-session documents to RO (7.9) 3 months
30. ADG/RR to submit to ODG a short note - not exceeding one page -  
containing information on the Conference's main topics, key policy  
issues and any specific questions that may be raised (2.1) 3 months
31. CPA to draft first-person letters to Ministers for Agriculture for ODG  
clearance (6.4) 3 months
32. RO to process approved draft pre-session documents and request CPA  
to translate them, copying OSD (7.10) 2.5 months
33. RO to submit final Provisional Annotated Agenda to ODG, through  
OSD (7.2) 2.5 months
34. CPA to dispatch Director-General's first-person letters to Ministers  
for Agriculture<sup>12</sup> (6.4) 2 months
35. Shipping of supplies, materials, equipment, etc. from RO to the  
Conference site (10.1.3) 2 months
36. Preparatory public information mission from RO to host country  
(8.6) 2 months
37. Communication to participating Governments and Organizations of  
the availability of pre-session documents through the link to the FAO  
web site dedicated to the RC (7.10) 1.5 months
38. Finalization of arrangements for Director-General's official hospitality  
(10.1) 1 month
39. Reports Officer to submit to ADG/RR work schedule for preparing  
draft Conference report (10.1) 1 month
40. Conference Documents Officer/Assistant to submit to CPAM a  
detailed schedule of in-session translation for planning purposes  
(9.2) 1 month

---

<sup>11</sup> With following attachments; Provisional Annotated Agenda, Provisional Timetable, Provisional List of Documents and Information Note.

<sup>12</sup> See footnote 9 above.

41. Arrival of key Secretariat staff (ADG/RR, SRC/s, Conference Secretary, Conference Affairs Officer, Conference Information Officer, Conference Documents Officer/Assistant and Conference ITO at venue (10.2) 5 days
42. Arrival of the remaining Conference staff, including Host Government staff (10.2) 2 days
43. Arrival of Technical officers from the RO and/or SRO and Headquarters 1 day
44. Staff assigned to handle registration 1 day

**MODEL AGREEMENT LETTER FOR HOST COUNTRY FACILITIES AND  
MEMORANDUM OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

Ref: (Code Number)...

FAO Regional Conference for (with ordinal number) (Place and Date)

Reply requested by -----  
\_\_\_\_\_

Sir/Madam/Excellency,

I have the honour to refer to the offer to provide host facilities for the \_\_\_\_\_ FAO Regional Conference for \_\_\_\_\_ made on behalf of your Government by the Delegation of \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_ FAO Regional Conference, which was confirmed by a letter dated \_\_\_\_\_ addressed to the Director-General by the Honourable/His Excellency/Her Excellency \_\_\_\_\_, Minister of \_\_\_\_\_.

The Director-General very much appreciates the generous offer made by your Government. It is now proposed to hold the Regional Conference in \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.

The Conference is being convened under the provisions of Article IV.6 of the FAO Constitution, and is subject to the approval of the \_\_\_\_\_ Session of the FAO Conference. It is intended to invite all Member Nations of the FAO \_\_\_\_\_ Region as well as those Governments and selected Organizations of the United Nations system listed in Appendix A to the attached Memorandum of Responsibilities. Some Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), the lists of which will be communicated to your Government as soon as it is available, will also be invited. Prior to the Regional Conference but as an integral part of it, a CSO Consultation will be held.

The number of participants, including the FAO Secretariat, will be about \_\_\_\_\_.

The Conference will be conducted in \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (*languages*).

I should like to draw your attention to the Memorandum of Responsibilities, which lists the responsibility to be assumed by the Host Government and by FAO for the Conference. Part II of this Memorandum sets out the responsibilities of the Host Government with regard to privileges and immunities and the granting of visas and all necessary facilities to participants.

I should greatly appreciate receiving your Government's acceptance by email ([...@fao.org](mailto:...@fao.org)) of the responsibilities outlined in the attached Memorandum by \_\_\_\_\_, so that invitations and documents may be prepared and issued in good time. This letter and your reply will constitute the Agreement covering the Conference.

Accept, Sir/Madam/Excellency, the assurance of my high consideration.

Assistant Director-General/Regional Representative

**MODEL MEMORANDUM OF RESPONSIBILITIES TO BE ASSUMED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF (host country name) AND BY THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOR THE (ordinal number) FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR (region)**

The following provisions set out the respective responsibilities to be assumed by the Government of *(host country name)*, hereinafter referred to as the Host Government, and by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, hereinafter referred to as FAO. This is necessary to ensure the smooth conduct of the *(ordinal number)* FAO Regional Conference for *(region)* and the CSO Consultation, hereinafter referred to as the Conference, which forms part of the Regular Programme of the Organization.

The Conference will be held in *(city)* from.....to..... *(date)*. The CSO Consultation will be held in *(city)* from...to... *(date)*. A copy of the “Standard Guidelines for Arrangements of FAO Regional Conferences”, giving further details of the personnel, services and facilities referred to in this Memorandum will be submitted directly to the Government Liaison Officer mentioned in paragraph 10 below.

FAO will be responsible for organizing the Conference, issuing all invitations and circulating the Provisional Agenda.

All *(number)* Member Nations of the FAO *(name)* Region, the Holy See, selected Organs and Specialized Agencies of the UN System as well as a number of IGOs and CSOs will be invited (see Appendix A). A list of CSOs in the region to be invited to the Consultation will be provided in due course.

Furthermore, in accordance with the Constitution, General Rules and Principles of FAO, other Member Nations of the Organization and International Organizations in relationship with FAO may be represented by observers at the Conference, should they so request. Non-member Nations, members of the United Nations, any of its Specialized Agencies or the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) may also, on request and with the approval of the FAO Council or the Director-General, in accordance with the Organization’s Basic Texts, attend the Conference in an observer capacity. The number of participants, including the FAO Secretariat, will be about *(number)*; the number of participants for the CSO Consultation is expected to be approximately ...)

The Conference and the CSO Consultation will be conducted in *(languages)*.

**PART I - OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF FAO**

A. Staff (at FAO’s cost in accordance with FAO regulations)

FAO will:

1. Designate the Secretary of the Conference.
2. Make available, a Conference Affairs Officer, a Reports Officer, one Information Officer, one Information Technology Officer/Assistant, a Documents Officer/Assistant, qualified interpreters and translators, and the required Conference Secretariat staff. The recruitment of such staff will be the responsibility of FAO.

B. Material, Supplies and Services

FAO will:

3. Provide documents for the Conference.
4. Provide a set of flags of all Member Nations of the FAO (*name*) Region and a set of desk plates with the names of all participating Countries and Organizations.
5. Provide any special material or supplies required for the conduct of the Conference, including transport up to and return from the point of entry into the host country, it being understood that any material or supplies provided by FAO remain the property of FAO.
6. Issue and distribute the Report of the Conference, after its conclusion.

**PART II - RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HOST GOVERNMENT WITH REGARD TO PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES FOR FAO AND PARTICIPANTS**

The Host Government undertakes to:

7. Accord, for the purpose of the Conference and the CSO Consultation, to delegates, representatives and observers, and to FAO, its property, funds and assets, as well as to FAO staff, all the privileges and immunities provided for in Article VIII, paragraph 4, and Article XVI, paragraph 2 of the Constitution and Rule XXXVIII-4 of the General Rules of the Organization, and specified in the provisions of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies.
8. Grant visas and all necessary facilities to all delegates, representatives, observers, FAO staff and consultants attending the Conference and the CSO Consultation.
9. Hold FAO and its staff harmless in respect of any claim by delegates, representatives and observers or by other third parties arising out of the Conference, except where it is agreed by the Host Government and FAO that the claim arises from gross negligence or wilful misconduct of such staff.

**PART III - OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HOST GOVERNMENT**

A. Staff

The Host Government will:

10. Nominate a Government Liaison Officer who will be responsible for the coordination of local arrangements and facilities for the Conference. A representative of a national CSO should be nominated to coordinate arrangements for the CSO Consultation.
11. Make available local typists, related assistance and services required for the conduct of the Conference and CSO Consultation.

12. Bear all necessary cost of the staff provided, including salaries, overtime and subsistence allowances, if required, and travel to and from the Conference and CSO Consultation.

B. Facilities and Equipment

The Host Government will provide or pay for:

13. One Conference hall, with seating and table space for (*number*) persons, and fully equipped for simultaneous interpretation in (*number*) languages (see Appendix B)<sup>13</sup>; one smaller meeting room to accommodate 35 to 40 persons; a delegates' lounge to seat some 40 persons and adequately furnished offices close to the Conference hall and space for duplication and collation of documents. A meeting room for the CSO Consultation fully equipped for simultaneous interpretation in languages to accommodate between 40 and 60 persons.
14. Computers, duplicating facilities, other equipment as required and wifi coverage.
15. Transport to the meeting site and return to FAO of any equipment not available in the country, should the Host Government request FAO's assistance in supplying it.

C. Supplies and Services

The Host Government will provide:

16. Office supplies, stationery and paper as required.
17. Facilities for the local reproduction of in-session documents needed for the Conference.
18. Telephone and postal services within the host country, free of charge, as well as e-mail services and internet access/wifi coverage in connection with the work of the Conference and the CSO Consultation.
19. First-aid facilities for delegates, representatives, observers and staff.

D. Transport

The Host Government will:

20. Provide transport within the host country for delegates, representatives and staff as required for the conduct of the Conference and CSO Consultations; this may also include transport from airport to hotel and hotel to meeting site depending upon local circumstances.
21. Provide or pay the cost of transport within the host country and customs clearance of all material and supplies provided by FAO (see paragraphs 3 to 5). In case of

---

<sup>13</sup> For reference, see attached standards in Annex 2-B of this Manual.

transport by air the obligation will start from the international airport where the goods arrive.

Signature:.....

Signature:.....

The Honourable/His Excellency/Her Excellency.....  
Main addressee of host country  
(On behalf of the Government of .....

Name  
Assistant Director-General  
Regional Representative for the .....  
(On behalf of FAO)

Date:.....

Date:.....



Model of Appendix A to ANNEX 4

LIST OF FAO MEMBERS AND OBSERVERS INVITED TO  
THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE

- I. LIST OF MEMBER NATIONS (and Member Organization, if applicable) IN THE REGION
- II. OBSERVERS (Member Nations and Member Organization, if applicable)
- III. ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
- IV. INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
- V. CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS
- VI. ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

Delegates and observers	.....
Secretariat	.....
	_____
<b>Total</b>	.....
	=====

**MODEL THIRD-PERSON LETTER OF INVITATION**

Invitation to the \_\_\_\_\_ FAO Regional Conference for \_\_\_\_\_

(Place and Date)

Reply requested by \_\_\_\_\_

---

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has the honour to extend an invitation to attend the \_\_\_\_\_ FAO Regional Conference for \_\_\_\_\_, which will be held at the \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_, at the kind invitation of the Government of \_\_\_\_\_. The Plenary Session will take place on \_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, preceded by a Technical Committee Meeting from \_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. The Inaugural Ceremony of the Conference will take place at \_\_\_\_\_ hours on \_\_\_\_\_.

The Conference is being convened under the provisions of Article IV-6 of the FAO Constitution. It is open to all Member Nations in the FAO \_\_\_\_\_ Region, to representatives of the United Nations Bodies and Specialized Agencies, and also to observers and selected Civil Society Organizations. Expenses incurred in connection with attendance at Regional Conferences and travel of representatives and observers shall be borne by the Governments or Organizations concerned.

The meetings will be conducted in (languages).

Copies of the Provisional Annotated Agenda, the Provisional Timetable, the Provisional List of Documents are enclosed. Further documents and information related to the Conference may be downloaded, as soon as available from the following website -----.

The Assistant Director-General/Regional Representative would appreciate receiving by, \_\_\_\_\_ the names, official titles and addresses of the representatives designated to attend.

**MODEL FIRST-PERSON LETTER**  
**FROM THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

Sir/Madam/Excellency,

I have the honour to refer to the \_\_\_\_\_ FAO Regional Conference for the \_\_\_\_\_ which will be held in \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, from \_\_\_ to \_\_. An invitation has already been sent on \_\_\_\_\_ to your Government through the established channels. A copy is enclosed for your information.

I hope you will share with me the view that this Conference is of particular importance. The Agenda has been prepared in close consultation with the Permanent Representatives of the \_\_\_\_\_ Member Nations based in Rome. It will provide an opportunity for Governments to contribute to \_\_\_\_\_. It is important that the regional perspective is reflected in the \_\_\_\_\_.

Your presence at this important Conference will enhance its discussion on the important questions placed before it and thus ensure its success. Despite your numerous obligations and responsibilities, I sincerely hope that you will be able to lead your country's delegation at this Conference.

I look forward to the pleasure of meeting you in \_\_\_\_\_.

Accept, Sir/Madam/Excellency, the assurance of my highest consideration.

Director-General

**SCHEDULE OF DOCUMENTATION THROUGH THE  
ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT PROCESSING REQUEST (e-DPR) SYSTEM**

**SAMPLE**

Deadline for Submission to CPAM:				10 weeks before RC opening							
Deadline for Dispatch:				6 weeks before RC opening							
<b>Job No.</b>	<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Resp. Officer</b>	<b>Words</b>	<b>Forecasted date in CPAM</b>	<b>Effective date in CPAM</b>	<b>Translation deadline</b>	<b>Document Status</b>	<b>Web Status</b>	<b>General Notes</b>
MC720	APRC/12/1*	Provisional Annotated Agenda	2	ADG/RR	2500		06/12/2011	20/12/2011	Despatched/Webposted*	CEFR	Any pertinent info on doc status
MC750	APRC/5	....	..	...	2000		...	...	Final translation*	E	

Date of dispatch to Member Governments ..... (six weeks before Conference opens)

\*Terminology for reporting on status of documents: Planned – Being prepared - Departmental clearance – ODG clearance - Advance translation (also combined ODG clearance/Advance translation, as appropriate) – Final translation – Despatched/Webposted

**Model****Preparation Activity Monitoring Sheet (PAMS)****Annex 8A**

No.	Activity	Due Date	Current Status	Remarks
<b>1</b>	<b>General</b>			
1.1	Acceptance of Host Govt. responsibilities			
1.2	Approval full list of Secretariat			
1.3	Preparation mission to Host Country			
1.4	Dispatch 3rd-Person Invitation Letter			
1.5	Dispatch 1st-Person Invitation Letter			
1.6	Conference Venue			
1.7	Arrangements for Interpretation			
1.8	Arrangements for Remote Translation			
1.9	Public Information mission to Host Country			
1.10	Arrangements for DG's official Hospitality			
<b>2</b>	<b>Pre-Session Documents</b>			
2.1	--RC/02/2 – Approval			
2.2	--RC/02/3 – Distribution			
<b>3</b>	<b>INF Documents</b>			
3.1	--RC/02/INF/4 - DG Statement			
3.2	--RC/02/INF/5 – Distribution			
<b>4</b>	<b>CSO Consultations – Funding</b>			

**MODEL**

<b>FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR _____</b>
<b>Place and Date</b>
<b>INFORMATION NOTE</b>

**Conference arrangements**

1. The FAO Regional Conference for \_\_\_\_\_ will be held at \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. The inaugural ceremony of the Conference will take place at \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ hours on \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The normal working hours of the conference will be \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ hours, unless otherwise decided by the Conference.
3. An “Order of the Day” will be issued daily, giving detailed information of the Conference business, the timetable of meetings, items to be discussed and other information of general interest.
4. The Provisional Annotated Agenda ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) has been circulated with the invitation letter.
5. FAO will provide the Secretary of the Conference, assisted by a number of FAO staff whose names and functions will be included in a list to be issued on the first day of the Conference.

**Working languages**

6. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. The documentation will be issued in \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and in English.

**Press liaison and information**

7. For the duration of the Conference, an FAO Information Officer, assisted by a Press Officer of the Government of \_\_\_\_\_, will provide contacts with the press and be responsible for matters concerning information to the public.
8. Journalists will be accredited on presenting two passport size photographs and a letter of assignment from their editor or employer to the accreditation desk at the Conference venue.

## Documentation

9. The working documents will be made available to all governments and organizations invited, before the Conference opens. Delegates and observers are requested to bring their own copies of documents to the meetings and to refrain from requesting additional copies. Documents drafted during the Conference will be available at the documents distribution desk, outside the Conference hall. The desk will also deliver mail and messages and deal with general inquiries. The Website of the Conference with the documentation is: *[insert link]*

## Draft recommendations and amendments

10. Delegates who wish to submit draft recommendations or other documents requiring a decision by the Conference are requested to provide an electronic version of their texts in \_\_\_\_\_ or English to the Conference Secretary,. Delegates wishing to circulate other written material related to the Agenda of the Conference are requested to deliver \_\_\_\_\_ copies in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ copies in English to the Secretariat for distribution.

## Advance communications of text of speeches and statements

11. When prepared speeches or statements are to be made, it would help the Secretariat and ensure accuracy in interpretation, if an electronic version of the texts could be submitted to the Secretariat of the Conference in advance. *[It would be useful to add a generic email address for each RC].*

## Correspondence

12. All correspondence concerning the Regional Conference should be addressed to the **Conference Secretary** at the FAO Regional Office for \_\_\_\_\_ P O Box \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ (fax: \_\_\_\_\_) (tel.: \_\_\_\_\_) (e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_)

and copied to the **Government Liaison Officer** at the addresses below.

Liaison Officer (FAO Conference)

Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

During the Conference the address of the **Conference Secretary** is:

Conference Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_ Regional Conference for \_\_\_\_\_

Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

13. Postal, telephone, facsimile, email and internet access/wifi coverage services will be provided at the Conference premises as well as a travel and tourist information desk.

## Conference Venue

*[Provide brief information on the location.]*



### **Formalities for entry into \_\_\_\_\_**

14. Travellers to \_\_\_\_\_ requiring an entry visa are advised to obtain one from a diplomatic mission or consulate of \_\_\_\_\_ prior to the date of travel. In the event that no diplomatic mission or consulate exists in a particular country, travellers should inform the Government Liaison Officer and the Conference Secretary, at the addresses indicated in paragraph 12 above, providing full name as in the travel document, date and place of birth, nationality, passport number, date and place of issue, validity, port of entry and expected duration of stay in \_\_\_\_\_, in order to ensure that a visa will be granted on arrival.

15. Travellers arriving from infected areas would require a valid international certificate of vaccination against \_\_\_\_\_. Health authorities of \_\_\_\_\_ also advise that travellers should be vaccinated against \_\_\_\_\_ at least \_\_\_\_\_ days prior to the date of travel.

16. Participants are advised to provide advance notice at least three weeks prior to arrival of the name of carrier, flight number, time of arrival and other related information to the Government Liaison Officer in \_\_\_\_\_, to ensure that they are properly met on arrival at the international airport of \_\_\_\_\_. Participants are advised to mark their luggage clearly in order to facilitate identification.

17. The authorities of \_\_\_\_\_ will make special arrangements for participants upon their arrival, assist them with formalities regarding immigration, visas, customs, collection of luggage and provide them with transport to their respective hotels. Similar arrangements will be made at the end of the Conference.

18. All participants in the Conference are advised to finalize, at an early date, return travel arrangements. Immediately upon arrival in (country name), participants are advised to contact the travel desk at the Conference premises for special internal visits for spouses and for the reconfirmation of their departure date and time.

### **Foreign exchange and banking**

19. Participants may bring with them to \_\_\_\_\_ (indicate the foreign currency restrictions, if any). The foreign exchange and banks will provide the necessary information and measures of exchange rates and transfer. A bank/foreign exchange desk will be available on the conference premises. The monetary unit is the \_\_\_\_\_. At the time of going to press the exchange rate is approximately \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Medical services and first aid**

20. Medical and first aid services will be available at the Conference premises. Medical services could also be provided by hotels.

### **Hotel accommodation**

21. Requests for hotel reservations should be made on the printed form appearing in Annex 9-A, as soon as possible, by sending the original to the Government Liaison Officer at \_\_\_\_\_ and a copy to the Conference Secretary at \_\_\_\_\_ (see paragraph 12 above), no later than \_\_\_\_\_.

22. Accommodation will be available for participants and their families at the hotels listed in Annex 9-B.

23. At check-in, hotels may require guests to present a credit card or to make an advance cash payment. It should be noted that participants are required to settle their own hotel bills on departure, including meals, bar, tips, telephone, laundry, etc.

### **Registration**

24. All delegates and observers are requested to register, soon after arrival, at the Conference hall \_\_\_\_\_, so that they can be provided with identification tags. The registration desk will be open on \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_ to \_\_\_ hours and on \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ hours. The Conference secretariat will issue a Provisional List of Participants on the first day of the Conference. The secretariat should be notified of any corrections or additions to this list. Only registered participants will be issued special badges, which will permit them to enter the Conference meeting venues.

### **Weather and time**

25. \_\_\_\_\_ is located between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ degrees north/south of the equator. During the month of \_\_\_\_\_ the weather in \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_. It is advisable to bring \_\_\_\_\_ clothing.

26. The country is on \_\_\_\_\_ (Time).

### **Electricity**

25. The voltage in \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_ volts AC ( \_\_\_ HZ).

**HOTEL RESERVATION AND NOTIFICATION OF ARRIVAL FORM**

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Family name                      Given name

2. Country/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Title and position: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Address (postal, or e-mail): \_\_\_\_\_

5. Attending as: // Delegate    // Observer    // Secretariat

6. Accompanied by spouse: // Yes            // No

Name of spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Dates of anticipated stay in                      : \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

8. Arrival information: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Hour: \_\_\_\_\_

Airline and flight No.: \_\_\_\_\_ From (city): \_\_\_\_\_

9. Hotel accommodation desired: // Single            // Double

10. Please indicate hotel names by order of preference A: \_\_\_\_\_ B: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: Each participant is required to complete the above form in duplicate and send one copy to each of the addresses below as soon as possible, preferably one month before the Conference, even if complete flight information is unavailable. You may communicate flight information details at a later date.

- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| (a)    Liaison Officer (FAO Conference) | (b)    The Conference Secretary |
| Tel.: _____                             | FAO Regional Office for _____   |
| Fax: _____                              | PO Box _____                    |
| E-mail: _____                           | Tel.: _____                     |
|   | Fax: _____                      |
|   | E-mail: _____                   |

**LIST OF HOTELS**

<u>Address</u>	<u>Distance to Conference venue</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Tariff</u>
1. P O Box Tel.: Fax:	minutes	Single Double Suite	

FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR  
AFRICA/ASIA AND THE  
PACIFIC/EUROPE/LATIN AMERICA AND  
THE CARIBBEAN/THE NEAR EAST

<b>Thirty-first Session</b>
<b>Place, Country, Date</b>
<b>Document Title</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b> ....
<b>Matters to be brought to the attention of the Regional Conference</b> ....
<i>Queries on the substantive content of the document may be addressed to:</i> Mr/Ms [name] Title Division/Department/Office Tel: +... (or e-mail address)

**I. Introduction**

1. ....

**II. Title**

**A. Sub-title (if required)**

2. ....

**GUIDELINES FOR DRAFTING OF FINAL REPORTS OF  
FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCES**

1. In keeping with the recommendations of the Hundred and Ninth and Hundred and Tenth Sessions of the Council (18-21 October and 2-3 November 1995, respectively), and the Twenty-eighth Session of the Conference (20-31 October 1995) requesting the Director-General to make additional savings by reducing costs for governance, the following report drafting instructions were adopted by the 1996 round of Regional Conferences, for immediate implementation.

- a) Drafts on each item should be as short as possible, and be written in the past tense.
- b) Drafts should include essentially the Regional Conference's recommendations with the appropriate verb indicating each one underlined. Reports on items which are basically for debate and do not necessarily result in recommendations, such as items on the country statements and general debate on the state of food and agriculture should be synthesized insofar as possible. There should not be a separate paragraph for each country statement.
- c) The Report should be action-oriented rather than reflect the various positions expressed during debate, it should focus on the conclusions, decisions and recommendations of the Regional Conference. References to individual or collective positions should be avoided.

2. The model found in the Annex 11-A shows the format in which reports of Regional Conferences should be drafted, in line with the agreed policy.

**Summary of main recommendations**

3. This summary is prepared by the Conference Secretary after the approval of the report. Since the Regional Conferences became Governing Bodies and now report to Council and Conference, respectively, on programme and budget matters, and on regulatory, global frameworks and policy matters, the new format comprises a cover page with two sections: (i) "Matters requiring the attention of the Council" and (ii) "Matters requiring the attention of the Conference"

**MODEL – REPORTING ON THE CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The Conference commended and endorsed the Report of the \_\_\_\_\_. It expressed appreciation for the valuable work being undertaken by \_\_\_\_\_ and agreed to the programme of work contained in its report. In particular the Conference:

- a) recommended that \_\_\_\_\_.
- b) urged that \_\_\_\_\_.
- c) agreed with \_\_\_\_\_.
- d) agreed with \_\_\_\_\_.
- e) supported \_\_\_\_\_.
- f) supported FAO's work programme on \_\_\_\_\_.

2. The Conference also took note of the offer of the Government of \_\_\_\_\_ to convene \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ with the technical input from FAO.

(date)

copies as per Correspondence Directory, plus:

ODG

OSD

CPA

ADG/RR chrono

**MODEL - THANK YOU LETTER**

**ADAPTED FORM**

**APPRECIATION OF HOSPITALITY NOTE**

The Regional Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has the honour to refer to the \_\_\_\_ FAO Regional Conference \_\_\_\_ which was held in \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_.

The Regional Representative, on behalf of the Director-General, wishes to express his appreciation to the Government of \_\_\_\_\_ for its kind hospitality in serving as host for this Conference.



**MODEL - REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF THE 5 000-WORD RULE**

Document Symbol & Title .....

.....

Estimated required length (words) .....

Reason for exceeding 5 000 words .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Submitting Officer: .....

Name

.....  
Title

.....  
Signature and date

Waiver granted:

Refused:

.....  
Deputy Director-General Operations

.....  
Date

## **Revised guidelines for Civil Society participation in FAO Regional Conferences**

### **1. Introduction: Civil Society participation in FAO Governing Bodies**

One of the priorities of FAO nowadays is giving renewed emphasis to FAO's strategic partnerships with civil society, social movements and producers' organizations that give organizational, economic, and social clout to smallholder farmers, pastoralists and those who rely on fishing and forestry for their livelihoods. FAO needs strong civil society and producer organizations as key partners in the effort to eliminate hunger for more than 750 million people and to respond to the different structural challenges that our world faces today.

In past years, starting in 1996 with the World Food Summit, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have been progressively more active in FAO conferences and technical committees in a number of areas, including policy dialogue at all levels (national, regional and global).

Since then, regional civil society consultations have been regularly organized in conjunction with FAO Regional Conferences to ensure broader engagement and support for FAO policy discussions and decision-making at regional level by providing governments with an opportunity to hear and consider the views of the civil society stakeholders that constitute their citizenship as well as in playing a key role monitoring the implementation of decisions made.

The present document is meant to provide practical guidance to FAO staff on how to engage with Civil Society actors to strengthen their participation and contribution to FAO Regional Conferences.

#### **1.1 Trends in the participation of Civil Society in Regional Conferences**

In the past, CSOs took part in Regional Conferences as observers, and it was, and still is, standard procedure for the Chair of FAO governing body sessions to call on observers to intervene in agenda items, time permitting, once Members have concluded their interventions. On an ad hoc basis, a CSO statement was allowed to be presented at the Plenary Meeting and/or appended to the official report of the Regional Conference.

These practices, in line with the global trend towards inclusion – CFS reform, the SDGs - have evolved over the years towards increased space for CSO contributions to Regional Conferences. Efforts for closer involvement of CSOs have been exemplified on occasions in which Chairs have allowed CSO representatives to take the floor during the course of the discussions interacting with Member states.

FAO has been increasingly moving towards newer approaches for more inclusive forms of policy dialogue, as a result of experience gained over the years and recent trends being followed by many Organizations.

#### **1.2 Regional Conferences 2012 - 2016: lessons learned and new approaches**

In the 2012 round of Regional Conferences, a novel proposal was put forward to invite three civil society spokespersons<sup>14</sup> to participate and interact in the discussions and debates during the senior officers (in the European case during the ECA meeting) and ministerial segments of the Regional Conferences. This step ahead in civil society participation allowing CSO representatives to partake in discussions and debates at any time during the Conference, as opposed to after the interventions of member states, was piloted with positive results in the 2012 round of Regional Conferences.

From this experience, it became clear that the decision-making authority of FAO Members was not diminished in any way during the debates, but rather enhanced and broadened by ensuring that their decisions were taken after due consideration of the views of civil society stakeholders in their regions. Similarly, the contributions made by the civil society spokespersons enriched the technical discussions during the senior officers' meetings.

Based on the 2012 experience, the participation of Civil Society in the Regional Conferences can be of two types:

1. **As Civil Society spokespersons**, participating in the debates during the Regional Conference and reading the official declaration from the Civil Society Consultation. This applies to those CSOs selected by the regional CSOs during the civil society consultation prior to the Regional Conferences.
2. **As observers**, as outlined in the FAO basic texts. This applies to International NGOs (INGOs) holding formal status with FAO.

Regardless of the type of participation, all the Civil Society Organizations involved play then a key role in supporting the implementation of the decisions made at the Regional Conferences.

One of the main objectives of the CSO Regional Consultations is to have CSO perspectives and contributions to the specific debates that are carried out during the Regional Conferences, and that those contributions are based on the documents that are prepared for each item of the agenda. Taking into account this objective, and based on 2016 experience, Civil Society Consultations should be organized a month prior to the Conference. In this way the actors in the region will be able to discuss and consolidate more effective technical contribution to the discussions of the different agenda items during the Conference as well as the specific input to the pre-session documents.

## **2. Civil Society Consultations**

Civil Society Consultations are meetings organized autonomously by and for civil society actors in the region prior to the Regional Conferences, meant to gather key actors, from different constituencies and countries, in order to discuss key topics pertinent to the region, take into consideration what FAO has done in the previous biennium (according to what was agreed upon at the previous Regional Conference), and discuss on specific agenda items of the Conference. The consultations must be organized and conducted in close coordination with the FAO Regional Offices and in line with FAO applicable rules, procedures, practices and guidelines.

### **2.1 Launch of the preparation process**

---

<sup>14</sup> Civil society spokespersons are selected during the Civil Society Consultations that are organized in relation to the Regional Conferences.

The Facilitation of the organization of the CSOs consultations is entrusted by FAO, in accordance with the principles of autonomy and self-organization, to a global network of civil society organizations with members active in all the regions.

The selection is made by OPCP based on considerations such as:

- the degree of representativeness and outreach of all constituencies,
- the presence and extent of a track record of constructive engagement in FAO processes,
- the familiarity with FAO rules and procedures.

Specifically the following criteria are applied:

- *Relevance to FAO's Mandate and to the debate topic:*  
The CSOs network has expert knowledge on food systems, food and nutrition security and/or other areas related to FAO's work, and it is committed to FAO's mandate to reduce poverty and eliminate food insecurity worldwide.
- *Legitimacy and Representativeness:*  
The CSOs network maintains strong linkages and relationship with the communities and population groups involved, who participate in a concrete and effective way in relevant decision-making processes to define priorities and strategies.
- *Independence:*  
The work of the CSOs network is autonomous and not subject to external influence or control from private firm interests, financial institutions, political parties and Government control. Its sources of funding are transparent and free from any stringent condition that could weaken its action and undermine its legitimacy as an independent actor of change.
- *Transparency:*  
The CSOs network demonstrates a consistent pattern of making decisions and implementing actions in accordance with internal rules, norms and regulations that are known and understood by all concerned. Adequate information about decisions and actions is freely and constantly provided in accessible ways and in forms that are easily understood by all concerned.
- *Consultation mechanisms:*  
The CSOs network has clear mechanisms in place to consult the represented constituency before and throughout the consultations, ensuring a continuous and two-way flow of information and feedback between the delegates and the broader constituency which they represent.
- *Balanced representation:*  
The CSOs network represents different constituencies (small farmers, landless, agricultural workers, fishers and fish workers, pastoralists and herders, forest dwellers, ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples, urban poor, consumers, NGOs, women and youth) and has clear capacities to involve them in the consultations. The Priority will be given to organizations representing small-scale food producers.

The selected global networks have the responsibility of acting as a facilitator ensuring that, taking into account the regional specificities, the preparation process and the realization of the civil society consultation follow, in all regions, coherent processes in line with FAO rules, procedures, strategies and policies – in particular the FAO Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations and the Guidelines for ensuring balanced representation of Civil Society in FAO meetings and processes. The facilitator should make an active effort to involve relevant organization from the regions, in particular organizations that are relevant to the work of FAO

in the region, regardless of whether they are like-minded, similarly organized or adopting stances and expressing positions in line with its own.

## **2.2 Steering Committee for the preparations of the Consultation**

A Steering Committee is set up and entrusted responsibility for overall coordination. The steering committee, will be of a manageable size (5-7 persons), and composed by:

- representatives of organizations members the global network and working in the region
- representatives of organizations members of other relevant regional networks
- representative of an organization based in the host country

The selection is made based on considerations such as:

- the degree of representativeness and outreach of all constituencies,
- the presence and extent of a track record of constructive engagement in FAO processes,
- the familiarity with FAO rules and procedures.

Specifically the following criteria will be followed as per paragraph 2.1:

- Relevance to FAO's Mandate and to the debate area:
- Representativeness:
- Independence:
- Transparency:
- Consultation mechanisms
- Balanced representation

It is crucial to note that the Steering Committee entrusted responsibility to organize the Civil Society Consultation has the obligation to reach out to member and non-member organizations alike, ensuring pluralism and diversity and the widest possible involvement of civil society organizations active in the region.

The terms of reference for the Steering Committee are detailed in a Guidance note for the preparation process.

The FAO Regional Partnership Officer will liaise on behalf of the Conference Secretariat with the Steering Committee to facilitate and ensure the appropriate preparation process and the holding of the CSOs consultation.

The mandate of the Steering Committee expires at the end of the Regional Conference. For the organization of the following round of regional consultations, a new Steering Committee will be formed. In order to guarantee transparency and inclusiveness, its composition should be renewed involving also organizations that weren't members of the previous one.

## **2.3 OPCP support to the Regional Office**

The FAO Regional Offices (the Secretary of the Regional Conference and Regional Partnership Officer) will be assisted by OPCP during all the organization process of the CSOs consultation.

Specifically OPCP will support ROs in:

- liaising with global network of civil society organizations in charge of the facilitation of the CSOs Consultation, in order to assure:
  - The establishment of the Steering Committee;

- The publication and dissemination of a call for expressions of interest for regional CSOs to participate in the process;
- The submission by the steering committee of the concept note indicating the background and justification of selected themes, the composition of the organizing committee, methodology, agenda and programme of the consultation
- The clearance on time of the list of participants in the CSOs consultation for submission to OSD for final clearance.
- The submission of the report consolidating the technical input to the different Regional Conference agenda items and pre-session documents
- Verifying that the list of participants has a balanced representation as per related [guidelines](#).

## **2.4 Timing**

Civil Society Consultations have to be organized a month prior to the Conference. The exact dates for the civil society consultation are determined by FAO Regional Office and the Secretariat of the Regional Conference together with the organizers.

## **2.5 Choosing the Venue**

The venue will be identified considering the specific regional contexts and the following aspects:

- Willingness of the RC host country to host also the CSOs consultation
- Cost effectiveness
- Enabling environment for CSOs work
- Possibility for the FAO officers of Regional Office to participate

Possible venue are:

- RC host country
- FAO Regional Office
- Another country in the region (Specific request duly justified).

Necessary facilities (meeting rooms, office space and equipment, interpretation and interpretation booths and equipment etc.) might be made available by the Host Government on the same terms as for the Conference. In these cases, the Host Government should be informed of the CSO consultation in advance, preferably when the memorandum of understanding on the hosting of the Regional Conference is being negotiated, in order to enable them adequate time to plan for the support of the CSO consultation.

## **2.6 Funding**

The Civil Society Consultation, which constitutes an integral part of the Regional Conference, should be accordingly considered in the financial arrangements for the Conference. The overall funds allocated for the Regional Conference should also support the organization of the CSOs consultation.

## **2.7 Call for expressions of interest and choosing participants**

A call for expressions of interest for regional CSOs to participate in the process should be disseminated through:

- CSOs channels and web pages,
- FAO Regional Conference web page (published in the section “news”)
- FAO partnership web page (published in the section “events”)

The call should provide a reasonable timeframe and relevant contact details to express their interest in participating.

The expressions of interest are then considered by the steering committee to prepare the list of participants. It should respect the principle of balanced representation, ensuring that different constituencies, genders, age groups and geographic origins are represented as evenly as possible in accordance with FAO’s guidelines<sup>15</sup>.

The list of organizations showing interest to participate through the open call and the final list of participants identified should be shared with FAO as soon as available and at least a month before the CSOs consultation.

FAO Regional Office (Regional Partnership Officer), with the support of the CSOs team of OPCP, will evaluate the compliance of the list with the principles of balanced representation and will give its feedback to the steering committee.

## **2.8 Deciding on the agenda and programme**

The agenda, timetable and programme of the consultation will be defined by the Steering Committee in charge of organizing the consultation. The agenda must be related to the points for discussion of the Regional Conference agenda.

The FAO Regional Office and/or headquarters should facilitate this process, particularly ensuring that CSOs have early access to the agenda and background documents of the Regional Conference in order to ensure that inputs from the Consultation are aligned with points on the Conference agenda. In addition, the organizing committee may wish to include in the agenda one or more topics relevant to the CSOs in the region.

## **2.9 FAO and host country participation**

A brief presentation on each agenda item should be delivered by relevant technical officers of the FAO regional office (usually those who prepare the background documents) to introduce the subject and answer to any question that may arise. After briefly answering questions from the floor, the FAO staff would leave the room (unless invited to stay) to allow participating CSOs discuss internally as needed to elaborate their positions, contributions and suggestions on each agenda item.

The opening and the closing of the Consultation may be performed by the Minister responsible for the Regional Conference in the host country together with the ADG/RR of FAO in the Region (or their representatives as appropriate) and the Secretary of the Conference.

## **2.10 Outputs**

---

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/a-au892e.pdf>

From the Civil Society Consultations three main outputs are expected:

*i) Selection of spokespersons*

Three spokespersons<sup>16</sup> (with one CSOs representative acting as spokesperson per agenda item), identified during the Consultation through an open, transparent, collegial decision to be made in plenary involving all participants, should bring the voices and concerns of civil society both to the senior officers' and the ministerial segments of the Regional Conference.

*ii) Document consolidating contributions to the relevant agenda items*

Written contributions to the relevant agenda items to be presented during the Regional Conference will be drafted and discussed in the plenary. The document consolidating this contribution will be shared with the Regional Conference Secretariat.

*iii) Final declaration*

A final declaration is drafted and approved in plenary that will be read by one of the spokespersons during the Ministerial Segment of the Regional Conference, preferably on the first day. The presentation of the Civil Society Consultation final declaration/statement will be included in the agenda/timetable of the Regional Conference. The declaration needs to be presented early enough on in the conference for its content to be taken into consideration during the intergovernmental discussions.

The consultation documents should be treated as other documents, translated (when necessary) after finalization and duplicated, using conference facilities, so that it can be made available to conference delegates in time for them to take it into consideration during their deliberations and facilitate the reporting during the Regional Conference.

### **3. Participation of the selected spokespersons in the Regional Conference**

The spokespersons identified by the plenary are registered to attend the Regional Conference by FAO. The spokespersons will be allowed to participate in the senior officers and ministerial segments of the Regional Conferences and interact with member states. The spokespersons will be seated in a clearly designated area near the observers but separate enough for the Chair and Member States to visibly see them and identify them as civil society spokespersons. One CSO representative will act as spokesperson per agenda item and one intervention per agenda item is guaranteed for the CSOs spokesperson. Time permitting other interventions could be granted to the CSOs.

All the positions expressed by Civil Society representatives during the Regional Conference, including both their interventions in the course of the debate and their statements addressed to the Conference, need to be captured in the proceedings and in the report of the Regional Conference, if there is no objection from member states of the region. Where positions cannot be fully captured in the main body of the report, the CSO declaration/statement and the document consolidating written contributions to the relevant agenda items should be attached as annex, with any other key CSO positions included.

---

<sup>16</sup> Where circumstances allow, and upon agreement by the Chair of the Regional Conference, one or two additional representatives might be identified during the CSO Consultation as spokespersons for the sake of improving coverage of relevant agenda items, as appropriate.



#### **4. Participation of Organizations as Observers in the Regional Conference**

Organizations holding formal status with FAO (according to the rules outlined in the FAO basic texts for the three categories of Formal status granted by FAO: Specialized, Consultative and Liaison) and other organizations can participate as observers in the Regional Conferences.

The FAO Regional Office through the Regional Partnership Officer will prepare the list of organizations that it wishes to invite as observers to the regional conference based on: i) past attendance to the regional conference; ii) formal status of the organization; iii) ongoing activities and collaborations with FAO; iv) strategic interest in having the organization present at the discussion as per the agenda item, etc.

The Regional Office through the Partnership Officer will submit to OPC for preliminary clearance the list of organizations that it wishes to invite as observers.

OPCP will submit the cleared list officially to OSD who will obtain clearance from the Office of the Director General (ODG) and then submit the cleared list to the FAO Regional Office.