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Food and
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Продовольственная и
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Organización
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para la
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CONFERENCE

Thirty-eighth Session

Rome, 15-22 June 2013

International Year of Family Farming 2014

Executive Summary

In 2008, the initiative to declare an International Year of Family Farming was launched by the World Rural Forum (WRF) in collaboration with major regional networks of family farmers' organizations in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In 2011, taking note of a proposal put forward by the Government of the Philippines, the 37th Session of the FAO Conference proposed that the United Nations declare 2014 as the International Year of Family Farming. At the 66th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations¹, 2014 was formally declared to be the “*International Year of Family Farming*” (IYFF).

FAO was invited to facilitate its implementation, in collaboration with Governments, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and other relevant organizations of the United Nations system as well as relevant non-governmental organizations.

The IYFF aims to raise the profile of family farming and small holder farming by focusing world attention on their important role in alleviating hunger and poverty, providing food and nutrition security, improving livelihoods, managing natural resources, protecting the environment, and allowing a sustainable development, in particular in rural areas.

Preparations for the IYFF have started, including the elaboration of a Master Plan, Terms of Reference for the International Steering Committee, creation of a Multi-donor Trust Fund, adoption of a logo, calendar of events, dissemination of information, enlisting country support and guidance, conceptualization of the IYFF programme, resource mobilization, and the holding of coordination meetings at international level.

Suggested action by the Conference

The Conference may wish to:

- Take note of the information related to the IYFF and to recognize progress and requirements regarding its preparation and implementation.

¹ UNGA Resolution 66/222.

- Express support, guidance and recommendations for the observance of the IYFF.

Queries on the substantive content of this document may be addressed to:

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1. The initiative to declare an International Year of Family Farming was launched by the international NGO, World Rural Forum (WRF), in 2008. The WRF is composed of over 350 organizations from 60 countries in five continents, including major regional networks of family farmers' organizations in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In 2011, taking note of a proposal by the Government of the Philippines, the 37th Session of the FAO Conference proposed that 2014 be declared the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF).
2. The 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) subsequently declared 2014 as the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) and invited FAO to facilitate its implementation in collaboration with Governments, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and other relevant organizations of the United Nations system as well as relevant non-governmental organizations.
3. FAO, together with inputs from IFAD and other partners, proposed to define family farming (which includes all family-based agricultural activities) as a means of organizing agricultural, forestry, fisheries, pastoral and aquaculture production which is managed and operated by a family and predominantly reliant on family labour, including both women's and men's. The family and the farm are linked, co-evolve and combine economic, environmental, reproductive, social and cultural functions.
4. Family farming is one of the most predominant forms of agriculture worldwide, in both developing and developed countries. Diversity of national and regional contexts, in terms of agro-ecological conditions, territorial characteristics, infrastructure availability, policy environment, and demographic, economic, social and cultural conditions, influences family farming structures, activities and functions, as well as livelihood strategies.
5. FAO recognizes the important contribution family farming plays in attaining food security and eradicating poverty as well as in the attainment of the other internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. In the Post 2015 Development consultation process, in particular in the Global Thematic Consultation on Hunger, Food Security and Nutrition, co-led by FAO and WFP, small producers and their organizations, citizens and social movements are included as relevant partners and have their voices listened throughout the process. Representatives of small scale producers, family farmers and cooperatives actively contributed to consolidate a vision and building blocks for a new effective Post 2015 Agenda on Food Security and Nutrition, and the role of small scale producers has been recognized as a crucial factor for permanent change by all stakeholders consulted.
6. **Four specific objectives** have been identified for the IYFF:
 - i. support the development of policies conducive to sustainable family farming;
 - ii. increase knowledge, communication and public awareness;
 - iii. attain better understanding of family farming needs, potentials and constraints; and
 - iv. create synergies for sustainability.
7. Furthermore, the IYFF will engage interested partners and the family farming community in developing country-driven activities throughout the world. It will focus on three global lines of action

that will be implemented in the context of the country-led processes and agreements, and in collaboration with FAO Regional Offices and country representations, together with other partners, particularly IFAD and WFP. The **three lines of action** are:

- i. promote dialogue in policy decision-making processes;
- ii. identify, document and share lessons learned and successful experiences of existing pro-family farming policies at national and/or other levels to capitalize relevant knowledge on family farming; and
- iii. enhance communication, advocacy and outreach.

8. The IYFF preparations have begun. Following the recommendations of the 144th Session of the Council², FAO has set up an inter-departmental Task Force composed of a representative and an alternate from relevant FAO departments and all Regional Offices. The Task Force organizes strategic thinking and preparatory activities for the IYFF, and meets regularly. Moreover, FAO has also established an International Steering Committee (ISC), composed of 12 Permanent Representatives of FAO member governments as well as international organizations, civil society, private sector, and cooperatives and producers organizations representatives. The Philippines were elected to chair the ISC and France to vice-chair position. The ISC will promote family farming at national, regional and international levels, facilitate the stock taking and exchange of experiences, and guide the development of an action plan, including monitoring.

9. The Office for Communication, Partnerships and Advocacy (OCP), acting as the IYFF Secretariat, leads the IYFF implementation process, in collaboration with the ISC and the FAO IYFF Task Force Members.

10. A number of initiatives has been taken to start the preparation for the IYFF, including the elaboration of a Master Plan, Terms of Reference for the ISC members, calendar of events, dissemination of information, enlisting country support and guidance, conceptualization of the IYFF programme, resource mobilization, and the holding of coordination meetings at international level. Following consultations with members of the ISC, a logo has been adopted and the IYFF website has been launched; its content will continue to expand over the entire period of preparation and observation of the year. Moreover, a Multi-donor Trust Fund has been created to receive extrabudgetary funds for the implementation of the three lines of action.

11. In the framework of the IYFF, following the proposals from several countries, National Committees are being established to support country-level activities and link with the global development priorities. These focal points will be appointed by relevant authorities and will interact with the different stakeholders.

² CL 144/INF/7 Rev.2