



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

**Concerning the establishment of a Strategic Partnership**

**between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the  
Commission of the European Communities in the field of development and  
humanitarian affairs**

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**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the**  
**Commission of the European Communities**

*Considering the Communications of the Commission of the European Communities ('the Commission') to the European Council and Parliament on "Building an Effective Partnership with the United Nations in the Fields of Development and Humanitarian Affairs"<sup>1</sup> and on "The European Union and the United Nations: the Choice of Multilateralism"<sup>2</sup>;*

*Considering the Framework Cooperation Agreement between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations ('FAO') and the Commission<sup>3</sup>, dated 6 June 1991, stepping up their cooperation in the food and agriculture sectors including fisheries and forestry;*

*Considering the Arrangement on Procedures for Technical Cooperation concluded between FAO and the Commission<sup>4</sup>, on 27 January 1993;*

*Considering the Agreement between FAO and the European Community<sup>5</sup>, dated 17 July 2003 on adherence of FAO to the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement between the European Community and the United Nations;*

The Commission and FAO hereby establish a strategic partnership ('the Partnership') with the aim of enhancing and increasing the effectiveness of both partners in their efforts to achieve their common goals and objectives in the field of development and humanitarian affairs.

The legal basis for the Partnership is article 302 of the Treaty of the European Communities and the Constitution of FAO.

**A. GOAL AND OBJECTIVES**

1. Through the Partnership, the Commission and FAO will work towards the shared goal of reducing poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development targets, by making the greatest possible contribution to alleviating rural poverty and hunger in developing countries.
2. The present Partnership complements and further develops within the fields of development and rehabilitation assistance the current overall cooperation between the Commission and FAO, which is promoted in accordance with their common interests.
3. In particular, the objectives of the Partnership are:
  - To foster close collaboration at global, regional and country levels between the Commission and FAO on matters pertaining to food security and rural development.

<sup>1</sup> COM (2001) 231 final

<sup>2</sup> COM (2003) 526 final

<sup>3</sup> Agreement signed in Rome on 06.06.1991 by Member of the Commission Abel Matutes and FAO Director-General Edouard Saouma

<sup>4</sup> Exchange of letters between Commissioner Abel Matutes and FAO Director-General Edouard Saouma of 5 and 27.01.1993 respectively

<sup>5</sup> Agreement signed in Brussels on 17.07.2003 by Commissioner Poul Nielson and FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf

- To build upon each others' comparative advantage to improve the coherence and facilitate the complementarity of their respective approaches and to develop strategies and make specific contributions towards achieving food security and reducing rural poverty in developing countries.

- To provide a more interactive, transparent, financially predictable and easier to monitor framework for cooperation between the Commission and FAO.

4. The objectives of the Partnership will be achieved through:

- Enhanced policy dialogue and reciprocal exchange of information between FAO and the Commission.

- Enhanced cooperation in the field between FAO Representations and Commission Delegations.

- Financial cooperation, where there is added value, relevant impact, common interest and adequate capacities of FAO, concerning the Commission's priorities, and with due regard to the relevant legal bases and programming documents.

## B. SCOPE

1. The geographical scope of the Partnership is limited to those countries classified as 'developing' according to the OECD-DAC list of aid recipients<sup>6</sup>.
2. FAO and the Commission will seek to work closely together on matters of mutual interest related to development and rehabilitation assistance at global, regional and country levels.
3. In countries where both parties have common interests, they will aim, by cooperating, to harmonize their respective country support or cooperation strategies based on national policies, priorities and strategies, taking into consideration the principles of coherence, coordination and complementarity. In particular, the partners will seek synergies in areas of common interest, where there is added value.

## C. AREAS FOR POLICY DIALOGUE

Policy issues of mutual concern include mainly:

1. Working progressively towards achieving food security, as a multi-dimensional concept covering food availability, access to food, lessen of vulnerability and improving individual nutrition, in order to reduce poverty in developing countries.
2. Supporting the broad range of aspects that contribute to sustainable rural development and improvement of rural livelihoods, addressing policies, institutions, and capacities, in addition to technologies and markets.

<sup>6</sup> DAC List of Aid Recipients as at 1 January 2003

3. Strengthening the capacity of developing countries to face the challenges, but also to seize the opportunities of improving food safety and food quality, and its consequences in terms of health, trade, value adding at farm level and ultimately livelihoods, considering among others the links with phytosanitary issues and animal health.
4. Promoting the sustainability of natural resources, focusing on land, water, fisheries and forests.
5. Increasing aid effectiveness by ensuring and enhancing coordination between donors and United Nations agencies, as well as by reinforcing dialogue with the governments of targeted countries.

#### D. ARRANGEMENTS

FAO and the Commission agree to apply the following operational arrangements for the Partnership:

1. Policy dialogue between the Commission and FAO in relation to this Partnership will be elaborated through formal, regular, bilateral meetings, where discussions will take place on policy matters of common interest to the two partners. Senior level meetings shall be held once a year between the Director-General responsible for development in the Commission, or a representative nominated by him, with the participation of other concerned Commission services, and the Assistant Directors-General in FAO, or their nominated representatives, to review progress of work in the priority areas of cooperation and to discuss policy, technical and operational issues related to furthering the objectives of the Partnership.
2. The focal points for the Partnership will be, on the one hand the Directorate-General responsible for development in the Commission, and on the other, the Technical Cooperation Department in FAO. The focal points shall ensure coordination of the implementation of the Partnership within their respective organizations.
3. Technical meetings may be held between officials of the Commission and FAO with notification to, and participation, as far as possible, of liaison officials from the FAO Technical Cooperation Department, the FAO Liaison Office with the European Commission in Brussels and the Permanent Representation of the European Commission to FAO in Rome. At field level, meetings may be held between the representatives of the European Commission Delegations and FAO Representations, with information to the respective focal points. These would cover practical matters of cooperation, in particular the implementation of projects, and the preparation of documents.
4. The Commission and FAO may invite the other party to participate in working groups, conferences and seminars relevant to the Partnership, in conformity with their respective applicable rules.
5. The annexed working document is not an integral part of this Memorandum. It only provides technical guidance facilitating the implementation of the cooperation between the Commission and FAO under this Memorandum.



**E. FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK**

1. Financial assistance by the Commission to activities undertaken by FAO shall, unless otherwise agreed in exceptional circumstances, be in accordance with the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement between the European Communities and FAO, which entered into force on 17 July 2003.
2. Programming of resources made available by the Commission in the context of this Partnership will be carried out in conjunction with the relevant parties representing those countries or regional groupings for which the funds are earmarked.
3. The partners will within the Partnership also consider possibilities of an enhanced, more predictable, multi-year financial cooperation in area(s) agreed under the Partnership.
4. Enhanced financial cooperation will be essentially and initially focussed on achieving food security, with an initial emphasis on food security information systems and other activities in that field.
5. Financial support may be identified progressively in the areas laid down in Section C of this Memorandum.
6. Both partners acknowledge that effective policies and institutional capacities at national and regional levels are an essential basis for achieving the general goals of food security and rural poverty reduction. Financial cooperation provided under this Partnership will therefore be provided in ways that strengthen and develop policies and institutional capacities in the countries concerned.

**F. ENTRY INTO FORCE AND DURATION**

The Partnership shall enter into force at the date of the signature of this Memorandum. The content of the Partnership should be reviewed within the overall arrangements laid down in Section D of this Memorandum, on the basis of mutual agreement of the partners. This Memorandum may be terminated by either Party upon giving six (6) months' prior written notice to that effect to the other Party.

Date *Brussels, 13 September 2004*

For the Commission of the European Communities	For the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
	
Poul NIELSON Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid	Jacques DIOUF Director-General

