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## Fourth Executive Board Retreat: Matrix of Issues and Actions to Strengthen IFAD's Governance

### Note to Executive Board representatives

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For: Approval

## Recommendation for approval

The Executive Board is invited to approve the matrix, and the dates for the next retreat in 2019 proposed in paragraph 5.

### Fourth Executive Board Retreat: Matrix of Issues and Actions to Strengthen IFAD's Governance

1. In response to the request made by Executive Board representatives after the second Board retreat in April 2016, the Office of the Secretary (SEC) has regularly prepared a matrix to reflect the issues and actions agreed upon during the Board's annual<sup>1</sup> retreats for the Board's review and approval.
2. The current matrix is based on the version approved by the Executive Board at its 121<sup>st</sup> session in September 2017.<sup>2</sup> It includes an update on the issues contained therein, as well as on issues derived from the Report of the Proceedings of the Fourth Retreat of the IFAD Executive Board,<sup>3</sup> with input from the List Convenors. It is to be seen as a living document, to be updated as needed.
3. The actions listed in the matrix are intended to strengthen collaboration between the Executive Board and Management and lead to an enhanced and constructive working partnership.
4. The matrix will be updated again for approval by the Board after its fifth retreat in April 2019. In the interim, Convenors and Friends may update the matrix as required, based on their discussions.
5. The proposed dates for the next retreat are Wednesday and Thursday, 17 and 18 April 2019.

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<sup>1</sup> See EB 2015/116/R.34, paragraph 2 and EB 2015/116, paragraph 5(e).

<sup>2</sup> See EB 2017/121/R.32.

<sup>3</sup> See EB 2018/124/INF.3.

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Output/Status</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Responsible</i>
1. Further improve Executive Board sessions to make them more strategic and engaging, with particular attention to agenda-setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct short written evaluations of each Board session for real-time reflection and feedback from Member States</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A questionnaire is now distributed to members at the close of each session for immediate feedback</li> <li>The results of the questionnaires distributed over the past three sessions of the Executive Board (September and December 2017 and April 2018) were presented at the fourth Board retreat. Based on representatives' feedback, the questionnaire has been slightly expanded and discussed with Convenors and IFAD Management. The updated questionnaire will be distributed at the September Board session in 2018</li> </ul>	<p>EB124 in September 2018 for updated questionnaire</p> <p>Fifth retreat of the Executive Board in 2019 for stocktaking of feedback provided at EB124, EB125 and EB126</p>	<p>SEC</p> <p>Convenors and Friends</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an agreed procedure and timeline for reviewing the agenda of the upcoming Board session and the forward agenda that allows enough time to consult among and between Lists and build consensus on strategic issues before the session (for instance, by providing Convenors with the draft provisional agenda and the overview of future Board sessions at the same time)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procedures agreed to ensure opportunities for meaningful input to agenda-setting: a draft provisional agenda for each upcoming Board session and the overview of the subsequent two sessions are shared with Convenors soon after the internal preparatory meeting with the President and discussed informally for feedback before the formal Convenors and Friends' meeting with the President</li> </ul>	Ongoing	
2. Continue to enhance the role and modalities of Convenors and Friends <sup>4</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review document EB 2006/89/R.46, annex II (Purpose and procedures of meetings with Convenors and Friends), with a focus on the role of regular consultation within and among the Lists, and beyond the formal meetings with the President</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possible agreement on revisions to the purpose and procedures of Convenors and Friends</li> <li>At a working session with SEC, Convenors looked at the procedures for Convenors and Friends, and agreed that the purpose as approved by the Board in 2006 is still relevant, and that the current informal format should be maintained as it is conducive to frank and open discussions. SEC will update the dedicated page on the Member States Interactive Platform (MSIP) to clarify the important role played by the Convenors and Friends in facilitating efficient and effective governance, and promoting consensus-building and knowledge-sharing among members and between Membership and Management</li> </ul>	SEC to update the Convenors and Friends page and present it prior to the November 2018 meeting of Convenors and Friends	<p>SEC</p> <p>Convenors and Friends</p>

<sup>4</sup> See annex II, EB 2006/89/R.46

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Output/Status</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Responsible</i>
3. Strengthen the governance structure and practices to enable the Board to provide better strategic guidance, with particular attention to the manner in which subsidiary committees report to the Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stocktaking of how subsidiary committees currently operate (rules of procedure, terms of reference (TOR), feedback from staff and members on what works well, and what could be improved)</li> <li>Benchmarking of committee reporting procedures with those of other international financial institutions (IFIs)</li> <li>Discussion and reflection within the subsidiary committees</li> <li>Feedback from members on what is meant by "strategic guidance"</li> <li>Discussion paper for consideration at the April 2018 retreat as one main topic</li> <li>Submission of a paper to the EB124 in September 2018</li> </ul>	<p><b>Output:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possible agreement on revised practices and/or revised TORs and rules of procedure for committees</li> <li>Greater clarity and agreement on best practices</li> </ul> <p><b>Status:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEC carried out a benchmarking exercise with other United Nations agencies and IFIs</li> <li>This matter was discussed extensively during several meetings of the Audit Committee and Evaluation Committee and at the Board retreat (where a discussion paper, as well as a position paper by the Audit Committee, was presented)</li> <li>Accordingly, papers and presentations were shared with the subsidiary bodies and the Board during the process</li> <li>The Audit Committee and Evaluation Committee agreed on measures to manage their meetings more efficiently and report to the Board in a way that ensures timely delivery of key messages and/or recommendations to support strategic guidance by the Board</li> </ul>	EB124 for submission of a document for the Board's review	SEC  The Office of the General Counsel (LEG), in consultation with relevant in-house departments and divisions  Convenors and Friends
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The priority areas arising from the discussion at EB124 will be included in the matrix</li> </ul>	Presentation of the updated matrix at the November 2018 meeting of the Convenors and Friends	SEC
4. Identify opportunities for informal meetings and communication, interaction and discussions among Board representatives and between the Board and Management, as tools for consensus-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion with Convenors to clarify members' expectations and usefulness of meetings</li> <li>Stocktaking and benchmarking with Rome-based agencies</li> <li>Proposal for discussion at a meeting of Convenors and Friends</li> </ul>	<p><b>Output:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreement on a range of options for informal consultation and deliberations</li> </ul> <p><b>Status:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An increasing number of technical and informal meetings are now organized on several topics</li> <li>Informal meetings of Convenors and Friends with the Secretariat are regularly held</li> </ul>	Ongoing	SEC in consultation with relevant departments and divisions  Convenors and Friends

Issue	Action	Output/Status	Time frame	Responsible
<p>4</p> <p>5. Enhance transparency, accountability and access to information through a user-friendly and navigable IFAD website, the MSIP and the IFAD Meeting Application for Networking on Governance (MANGO)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide regular training for members on how to use the various tools and MANGO app, including during induction sessions</li> <li>• Ensure enhanced transparency and that posted information is readily accessible</li> <li>• Present proposals to the Executive Board</li> </ul>	<p><b>Output:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced transparency and readily available information provided to Member States</li> </ul> <p><b>Status:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures have been taken, as provided for in document "Increasing Transparency for Greater Accountability – Action Plan" (EB 2017/122/R.29/Rev.1) approved by the Board in December 2017.</li> <li>• In particular, for governance-related matters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Note was issued on <a href="#">Information Publicly Available from IFAD Sources</a>, which will be periodically updated, outlining publicly available information by document type, source and level of access. The note is available on the IFAD website, MSIP and MANGO app</li> <li>- Starting with the February 2018 meeting, the notes of the Convenors and Friends' meetings are publicly shared, unless Convenors request that access be restricted</li> <li>- Starting in December 2017, the President's opening and closing remarks delivered at Board sessions are publicly disclosed in the four official languages, whereas the decisions and deliberations document (which was provided for information) has been discontinued</li> <li>- Starting in April 2018, and on a confidential basis, the Office of Audit and Oversight Annual Report for 2017 is shared with the Board as a restricted document, and Executive Board representatives have the opportunity to access internal audit reports upon request</li> <li>- Close follow-up and resolution of technical issues that may have arisen due to increased cyber-security applied to IFAD corporate systems, including MSIP</li> <li>- Functionality of the MANGO app has been enhanced to extend the webcasting capacity to those using the Android operating system</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Ongoing	SEC, in consultation with relevant in-house departments and divisions

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Output/Status</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Responsible</i>
6. Organize future annual Executive Board retreats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify dates, venue and facilitator as early as possible</li> <li>Set agenda, prepare relevant documentation, and follow up on the retreat outcomes in a timely manner</li> </ul>	<p><b>Output:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convenors' agreement on venue and facilitator as soon as possible after the previous retreat</li> <li>Timely communication of proposed dates to the Board, for approval</li> <li>Timely organization of the meeting with Convenors as well as meetings between the facilitator and, respectively, the Convenors, the President and the Independent Office of Evaluation of IFAD for agenda-setting and necessary steps</li> <li>Issuance of the report of the retreat proceedings and updated matrix</li> </ul> <p><b>Status:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report and matrix subsequent to fourth retreat posted</li> <li>Agreement reached with Convenors on venue and facilitator for the fifth retreat in 2019</li> <li>Date of the fifth retreat to be approved by the Board at its 124<sup>th</sup> session</li> </ul>	<p>EB124 in September 2018 for approval of the date, as contained in current document</p> <p>Early 2019 for discussion of agenda and arrangements with Convenors at informal meetings and at meetings with the President</p> <p>September 2019 Board session for presentation of report and matrix</p>	<p>SEC, in close consultation with relevant departments</p> <p>Convenors and Friends</p>
7. Review the Framework for Collaboration between the Executive Board and the President of IFAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the framework to take stock of progress made and reflect on next steps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possible update of the framework</li> </ul>	<p>Discussion with Convenors and Friends at the November 2018 meeting, and possibly at a Board session</p>	<p>SEC, in consultation with the Office of the President and Vice-President and LEG</p> <p>Convenors and Friends</p>
8. Improve Executive Board processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore additional ways to further increase efficiency throughout Board processes</li> </ul>	<p><b>Output:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved efficiency of Executive Board processes</li> </ul> <p><b>Status:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment undertaken in 2017 to gather qualitative feedback from Executive Board representatives and senior IFAD staff on the efficiency and effectiveness of SEC, and options for further improvements</li> <li>A Working Paper to Guide Discussions on Improving Executive Board Processes was distributed at the fourth retreat of the Executive Board, and discussed with Convenors at an informal meeting in July 2018</li> <li>A proposal to revise the lapse-of-time procedure discussed with Convenors and Friends for possible submission to the Executive Board</li> </ul>	<p>August 2018 for discussion with Convenors and Friends</p> <p>EB125 in December 2018 for possible inclusion on agenda</p>	<p>SEC, in consultation with the Programme Management Department</p> <p>Convenors and Friends</p>

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