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FOOD & AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION
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GLOBAL MODEL FAO 2026

SIMULATION HANDBOOK

THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION AND ITS CONFERENCE

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) was established in 1945 to lead international efforts to defeat hunger and improve food security and nutrition. Its work connects agriculture, livestock, fisheries, forestry, natural resources and rural livelihoods. FAO helps countries develop evidence-based policies, improve agricultural production and food systems, respond to emergencies affecting food and agriculture, and share information and technical expertise.

FAO is a specialized agency of the United Nations. Its Member Nations use its governing bodies to establish priorities, approve programmes and budgets, and guide the Organization's work. FAO does not generally legislate for countries: most Conference resolutions recommend actions to Members or direct work within FAO's mandate. National governments remain responsible for decisions under their own laws.

The FAO Conference is the Organization's supreme governing body. It meets in regular sessions, ordinarily every two years, to determine policy and approve the Programme of Work and Budget, among other responsibilities. In this simulation, delegates represent FAO Members negotiating a Conference resolution on an agrifood issue.

A SHORT HISTORY OF FAO'S PRIORITIES

FAO was created in the aftermath of the Second World War, when preventing hunger and rebuilding agricultural production were urgent international priorities. Over time, its work broadened from improving production and gathering agricultural statistics to addressing food insecurity, rural poverty, natural resource management, nutrition, food safety, climate-related pressures and the resilience of agrifood systems.

Today, FAO works toward the four improvements in its Strategic Framework 2022–31: better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life, leaving no one behind. These objectives are connected: for example, a country seeking to increase food production must also consider the use of water and soil, the livelihoods of small-scale producers and the nutritional value of food.

IMPACT OF FAO ON OUR LIVES

FAO's work affects how food is grown, traded and consumed. Countries draw on FAO data to understand food insecurity; on its technical guidance to improve farming and fisheries; and on international standards developed through bodies associated with FAO, including the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the International Plant Protection Convention, to help protect food safety and plant health. FAO also supports countries facing crop pests, animal diseases, droughts and other threats to food production.

FAO STRUCTURE AND DECISION-MAKING

The Conference

The Conference brings together FAO Members to set the Organization's broad policy direction, consider reports and recommendations, adopt resolutions and make key governance decisions. Conference decisions can guide FAO's future work, but a Conference resolution should not promise that FAO can compel governments to change domestic law or automatically provide funds that have not been approved.

The Council

The Council is FAO's executive governing body between Conference sessions. It considers policy and programme matters, reviews recommendations from committees and prepares matters for the Conference. Delegates should understand this relationship because many Conference resolutions arise from prior work by the Council or technical committees.

Technical committees and other bodies

FAO's technical committees include the Committee on Agriculture (COAG), Committee on Fisheries (COFI), Committee on Forestry (COFO) and Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP). They examine specialized issues and make recommendations through FAO's governing processes. The Programme Committee and Finance Committee also advise on programme and budget matters. Regional Conferences provide opportunities for Members to identify regional priorities.

Director-General and Secretariat

The Director-General leads FAO's Secretariat, which carries out the Organization's approved programme, provides technical assistance and prepares reports for Members. When delegates want FAO to develop guidance, assist countries upon request or report on implementation, they should identify a realistic Secretariat function and consider staffing, financing and existing work.

FAO regions

For regional coordination, FAO commonly works across Africa; Asia and the Pacific; Europe and Central Asia; Latin America and the Caribbean; and the Near East and North Africa. These are FAO regional groupings and should not automatically be replaced with the UN General Assembly's regional groups. Delegates should follow the country assignments and regional groupings provided for their simulation.

OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUPS

The following working groups will be simulated in this conference:

- Open-Ended Working Group 1: Safe Food and Healthy Diets
- Open-Ended Working Group 2: Sustainable Soil Management for Food Security
- Open-Ended Working Group 3: Biodiversity in Agrifood Systems
- Open-Ended Working Group 4: Responsible Antimicrobial Use in Agrifood Systems

The conference's simulations address challenges in agrifood systems. Each delegation should consult the study guide, annotated bibliography, official country statements, relevant FAO documents and any Zero Draft issued for its assigned topic. The conference organizers will provide the final topic-to-committee assignments separately; this handbook does not assume an unconfirmed committee structure.

Examples of FAO-relevant areas include sustainable soil management for food security, biodiversity in agrifood systems, responsible antimicrobial use in agrifood systems, and healthy diets and better nutrition. These examples describe subject areas, not a final programme or allocation of sessions.

What delegates should research

- What is the specific problem, and what evidence shows its scale and consequences?
- Which national laws, policies, programmes and priorities shape your government's position?
- What has FAO already done, and what have relevant FAO governing bodies or international partners agreed?
- Which implementation gaps remain, and what technical, financial or political constraints explain them?
- Which realistic actions could Members undertake, and what assistance could FAO provide within its mandate?
- What compromises would your delegation accept to achieve consensus without abandoning essential priorities?

STAGES OF THE SIMULATION

Opening plenary and organization of work (formal meeting)
The presiding officer opens the session and introduces the agenda and organization of work. The proposed organization of work explains when delegates will hear expert briefings, meet in informal consultations, negotiate text and return to a formal meeting. The meeting seeks to adopt the organization of work by consensus. Delegates should follow the conference-specific schedule distributed by the Secretariat.

Briefing by an FAO expert (formal meeting)
Where an expert briefing is scheduled, delegates hear an explanation of the issue, existing FAO initiatives and practical challenges. They may ask questions that clarify evidence, responsibilities and the limits of FAO's mandate. A briefing informs negotiations; it does not substitute for a government position.

Informal consultations: General Discussion of the Zero Draft
The Zero Draft is the initial working text. It is a starting point, not a statement of agreement. Delegates should read it carefully, identify paragraphs they support, oppose or want to clarify, and prepare specific amendments. Informal consultations are also an opportunity to learn why other governments take different positions and to identify language that may bridge those differences.

A productive amendment does more than announce a broad aspiration. It identifies who should act, what action is proposed, how it could work and, when appropriate, how progress would be assessed. Delegates should check whether the action is already being undertaken by FAO or Members before proposing a new mechanism.

Once the Plenary meeting is adjourned, the FAO Conference will transition into informal consultations of Open-Ended Working Groups where they will first have an informal discussion on the Zero draft in regional groups. An Open-Ended Working Group is a negotiating group in which participation is open to all Member Nations represented in the simulation, rather than limited to a fixed membership. For this conference, each group is assigned one topic and brings delegations together to negotiate a single draft resolution. These groups are part of the conference's organization of work. Their informal consultations allow delegations to propose amendments and seek consensus before the negotiated text is submitted for formal consideration by the simulated FAO Conference. This discussion should be very general in nature and focus on articulating a delegation's priorities, what paragraphs they think need to be elaborated and what paragraphs perhaps should be deleted from the text.

STAGES OF THE SIMULATION (CONT.)

Regional discussions and preparation of amendments
Delegates are encouraged to meet with others in their regional group who share a particular policy concern. These discussions can help delegations compare priorities and prepare proposals to amend the Zero Draft of the their resolution. Regional coordination does not prevent delegates from working across regions during the simuilation.

At the appropriate time during the first regional meeting, delegates should turn their attention to drafting amendments which can be proposed either individually on behalf of the country they represent, on behalf of a group of delegates or even on behalf of the entire region they are a member of. This is a time to start developing relationships with other delegations, identifying which delegations are supportive of your positions, which ones are opposed, what barriers might make it difficult to find common ground and strategizing how to overcome these barriers. Amendments will be inserted into the Zero draft of the resolution duirng the Line-by-Line Review which will be displayed on a screen for further discussion during the Debate of Amendments.

Line-by-line review and compilation text
Delegates examine the preambular paragraphs and operative paragraphs in the order in which they appear in the text. The Bureau will record proposed additions, deletions, new paragraphs, alternate paragraphs, mergers and any other proposed changes in a compilation text so that competing proposals remain visible. When a paragraph is provisionally accepted, it may be marked “agreed ad ref,” subject to confirmation of the whole text.

Debate of amendments and consensus-building
The facilitator normally invites the delegation proposing an amendment to explain its purpose. Other delegations then identify concerns. The goal is to find wording that delegations can accept. The facilitator may guide a moderated discussion or allow delegates to negotiate directly in an unmoderated discussion focused on the text.

If agreement is not possible immediately, disputed language may be placed in brackets and revisited later. Brackets signal unresolved text; they do not mean the proposal has been rejected. Delegates should consider whether a concern can be addressed by defining terms, recognizing national circumstances, adding a safeguard, clarifying the responsible actor or adjusting the implementation timetable.

STAGES OF THE SIMULATION (CONT.)

Final review of the negotiated text

Once the outstanding amendments have been discussed, the facilitator will invite the delegates to look through the entire text one last time to confirm that no delegation maintains a strong objection to any paragraph in either the preambular or operative sections of the resolution. If there are any remaining proposals to make final changes, they will be debated individually as they are raised. Following the final review, delegates will be asked if they wish to be listed as a sponsor of the resolution.

Formal consideration and adoption

When consensus has been reached, delegations who chose not to sponsor the resolution may make a statement, called an Explanation of Position, to put on the public record, any reservations they may still have about one or more paragraphs in the resolution. It is possible to agree to adopt the Resolution without a vote and still have elements within it that a delegation is not entirely pleased with. When this occurs, a delegate can take that floor after the Resolution have been adopted to indicate that their government wishes to disassociate itself from a particular paragraph. The presiding officer then invites the Conference to take action on the negotiated resolution. The conference simulation aims for adoption by consensus, meaning without a vote and without an objection that prevents adoption.

THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

1. The presiding officer does not ask whether “points or motions are on the floor.”
2. Parliamentary motions to set speaking time, enter a caucus or move into voting procedure are not used in this consensus-oriented simulation.
3. A point of order and a right of reply are distinct from the parliamentary motions common at some Model UN conferences; formal interventions are managed by the presiding officer.
4. Delegates do not interrupt speeches or yield unused speaking time to another delegation.
5. Informal negotiations focus on drafting a single shared text rather than competing blocs presenting separate resolutions for a vote.
6. Amendments are discussed and reconciled through consensus, not categorized as friendly or unfriendly.
7. A delegation may make an explanation of position during the formal meeting after negotiations.

DOUBLE DELEGATIONS PROCEDURES

1. The following simulations will include double delegations, that is, two delegates that are assigned to represent the same country: 1) Safe Food and Healthy Diets and 2) Sustainable Soil Management for Food Security. All other FAO simulations will include one delegate per country. While double delegations allow for collaboration and shared responsibility, it also requires a high level of coordination and discipline.

2. G**eneral Principle:** A double delegation must always speak and act as one voice. At the United Nations, a Member State is represented by a single official position, even when multiple diplomats are present. The same principle applies in the simulation. Internal discussion and disagreement may occur privately, but they must never be expressed publicly during formal proceedings.

3. W**hat This Means in Practice:** General Debate
    a. Only one delegate from each double delegation may take the floor during the General Debate.
    b. The statement must reflect a single, unified national position agreed upon by both delegates.
    c. Delegations may divide preparation responsibilities, but public representation must be singular.

4. D**rafting and Merging Resolutions (Vienna Formula)**
    a. During the drafting process double delegates can work together or work on separate paragraphs but must agree on what they propose putting into the text of their resolution.
    b. During the merging process only one delegate per country may:
        i. Serve as a regional group leader or be designated as the lead negotiator speaking on behalf of the region the assigned country belongs to.
        ii. Decide internally which delegate will assume this role at any given stage.
        iii. Alternate roles during different phases of the conference, but not simultaneously.

5. **Communication with Chairs and Head Delegates**
    a. All messages (written or electronic) sent to the Chair, Head Delegate, or Secretariat must reflect the joint position of both delegates.
    b. Double delegations must coordinate before submitting Amendments, Requests, or Objections. Conflicting or uncoordinated messages from the same country may be treated as procedural errors and may be disregarded.

DOUBLE DELEGATIONS PROCEDURES (CONT.)

6. **Submission of Amendments**
   a. Double delegations must jointly agree on which amendments are submitted on behalf of their country.
   b. Delegates may take turns submitting amendments, but each submission must reflect the agreed position of both delegates.
   c. Amendments submitted without internal agreement may be ruled out of order.

7. D**ebate on Amendments**
   a. During debate on a specific amendment, only one delegate may argue on behalf of the country.
   b. Delegates may alternate speaking roles across different amendments, but both delegates may not speak on the same amendment at the same time.
   c. In smaller-group negotiations where multiple amendments are being debated simultaneously, each delegate may participate in a different group.
   d. In all cases, coordination of positions is essential, and both delegates remain responsible for ensuring consistency.

8. S**tatements After Adoption**
   a. If statements are permitted after the adoption of a resolution or outcome document (e.g., explanations of position), the same procedures apply:
      i. Only one delegate may speak on behalf of the country.
      ii. The statement must reflect the jointly agreed position of both delegates.

9. **Internal Coordination**
   a. Delegates in a double delegation are strongly encouraged to:
      i. Divide research and drafting tasks strategically;
      ii. Consult frequently during negotiations;
      iii. Agree in advance on priorities, red lines, and acceptable compromises.
   b. Internal disagreement is a normal part of diplomacy—but it must never appear in formal debate, written submissions, or procedural exchanges.

10. **Key Reminder**
    a. Double delegations mirror real-world diplomatic practice, where multiple officials represent a single national position.
    b. Success depends not on speaking more often, but on effective

TERMS USED IN THE SIMULATION

- **Bureau**: The officers responsible for presiding over the formal meetings of the simulated Conference.
- **Chair or presiding officer**: The official who conducts a formal meeting, recognizes speakers and guides the meeting through its agenda.
- **Facilitator**: The person helping delegations resolve differences over wording during informal consultations.
- **Zero Draft**: The Zero Draft is the initial working text. It is a starting point, not a statement of agreement and is submitted on behalf of the Chair.
- **Compilation text**: A working version that records all proposed wording and competing amendments.
- **Paragraphs and subparagraphs**: Model UN conferences around the world incorrectly refer to sections of a resolution as clauses or sub-clauses. At the United Nations, the sections of a resolution are referred to as paragraphs and sub-paragraphs.
- **Chapeau**: The introductory wording that identifies the addressee of a set of recommended actions, such as “Urges FAO Members to:”.
- **Consensus**: Consensus is a negotiated outcome in whichall countries agree to a decision without a formal vote, even if the recommendations contained within the outcome document do not have the full support of every country. A consensus decision typically meansno delegation actively objects when it comes time to formally adopt a decision.Countries mayexpress reservations aboutparticularpartsof the decision but do not block the decision frombeing taken.In order to reach consensus, delegates often have to be ready to make compromises.
- **Agreed ad ref**: Provisional agreement on wording pending acceptance of the full negotiated document.
- **Bracketed text**: Language on which delegations have not yet reached agreement.
- **Disassociate**: When consensus has been reached and the Resolution is adopted without a vote, any delegate who has chosen not to sponsor the resolution is given the opportunity to make a statement about any reservations they may have about particular paragraphs that are included in the Resolution. It is possible to agree to adopt the Resolution without a vote and still have elements within it that a delegation is not entirely pleased with. When this occurs, a delegate can take that floor after the Resolution have been adopted to indicate that their government wishes to disassociate itself from a particular paragraph.
- **Explanation of position**: A statement clarifying a delegation’s support, concerns or reservations about the adopted outcome.

TERMS NOT USED IN THE SIMULATION

- **Dais**: refer instead to the Bureau, Chair or presiding officer.
- **"House"**: this term is only used to refer to a Parliatment and the FAO Conference does not function as a parliament.
- **"Friendly" and "unfriendly" amendments**: the consensus approach to negotiations is an collaborabtive and inclusive process where are delegations are working together to find common ground. Therefore, these terms are not used at the UN.
- **"Moderated caucus" and "unmoderated caucus"**: the simulation uses moderated or unmoderated debates directed toward agreement on text.
- **"Clauses"**: use paragraphs and subparagraphs.
- **"Honourable Delegates or Honourable Chair"**: These terms are used in a Parliament and since the UN is not a Parliament it is not appropriate to use them during the simulation of UN meetings. When a delegate is given the floor to make a statement during the General Discussion, delegates should begin by saying "Thank you Mr/Madame Chair." Statements are always addressed to the presiding officer not to the delegates.

DRAFTING A FAO RESOLUTION

The following instructions use the attached FAO Conference Resolution 14/2025, "Addressing Antimicrobial Resistance in Agrifood Systems," adopted on 4 July 2025, as the principal example. Its actual structure matters: it begins "THE CONFERENCE,"; contains a series of unnumbered preambular paragraphs; then uses two major action headings, "Urges FAO Members to:" and "Requests FAO to:", each followed by lettered subparagraphs (a., b., c., etc.).

1. Title and institutional heading

A Conference resolution identifies the resolution number and subject when published. Therefore, every resolution adopted in a FAO Conference begins with "THE CONFERENCE."

2. What belongs in the preamble?

The preamble explains why the issue warrants action and places the proposal within FAO's mandate. It may acknowledge previous Conference resolutions, decisions of technical committees and the Council, international commitments, existing FAO initiatives, scientific evidence, and implementation challenges. Preambular paragraphs establish context; they do not instruct governments or FAO to undertake new actions.

Resolution 14/2025 illustrates this sequence. It acknowledges AMR as a global challenge; situates FAO's role within the Quadripartite One Health collaboration; notes the request from COAG and its endorsement by the Council; recalls earlier FAO resolutions and relevant Codex guidance; and describes existing action plans, monitoring systems, financing needs and persistent implementation gaps.

3. What belongs in operative paragraphs?

The operative part describes actions to be undertaken. The attached resolution makes a particularly useful distinction between two target audiences the resolution is aimed at. "Urges FAO Members to:" introduces actions governments are encouraged to undertake. "Requests FAO to:" introduces tasks for the Organization[4], including technical assistance, further guidance, training and reporting.

A strong recommendation identifies an actor and a practical mechanism. For example, instead of merely saying "improve monitoring," a paragraph can identify the information to be collected, the national institutions responsible, how data will be shared and how FAO could support countries[5] that request assistance. Proposed actions should respect national contexts and the Organization's available resources.

DRAFTING A FAO RESOLUTION (CONT).

4. How to write subparagraphs

In the Zero Darft resolutions used in this conference, the two operative headings are followed by lettered subparagraphs. Each subparagraph should express a distinct but related action. Use parallel grammar within a series and keep the addressee clear. Avoid placing actions that belong to national governments under "Requests FAO to:" or placing Secretariat reporting obligations under "Urges FAO Members to:".

5. A short illustrative drafting model

The example below is original teaching text on sustainable soil management, not a quotation from an adopted FAO resolution and not a proposed conference Zero Draft.

THE CONFERENCE,

Recognizing the importance of healthy soils for agricultural production, food security and the livelihoods of rural communities;

Noting the need to strengthen the ability of countries to assess soil degradation and respond to locally identified risks;

Urges FAO Members to:

a. Strengthen national systems for collecting and using information on soil conditions, according to national capacities and priorities;
b. Support farmers in adopting locally appropriate practices that maintain soil fertility and reduce erosion;

Requests FAO to:

a. Provide technical assistance to Members, upon their request, in developing soil-monitoring methods and training programmes;
b. Facilitate the exchange of practical experiences among countries and report on relevant activities through established governing-body processes.

Delegates should follow the formatting of the official FAO resolution supplied for the simulation.

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DRAFTING A FAO RESOLUTION (CONT).

6. Turning evidence into a negotiating proposal

Suppose the research shows that farmers in some countries cannot regularly test their soils. The evidence alone does not establish what the Conference should do. Delegates should ask whether national testing services or FAO-supported soil information initiatives already exist, what limits their reach and what assistance would be useful. A proposal could then encourage Members to expand accessible soil testing where appropriate and request FAO to provide technical training upon request. Other delegations may seek language on financing, data quality, smallholder access or national priorities. Negotiations should reconcile these concerns into a workable text.

7. Reviewing a draft before adoption

- Is each factual claim accurate, and are previous FAO decisions and programmes described correctly?
- Does the proposal fall within FAO's mandate and avoid assuming powers FAO does not have?
- Does it build on existing work rather than duplicate an established mechanism?
- Are the means of implementation, resource implications and national circumstances considered?
- Are proposed reporting requests realistic?

8. Lessons from Resolution 14/2025

The adopted AMR resolution is a useful model because it combines political commitments with practical measures. It recognizes earlier FAO work and international collaboration; urges Members to strengthen national policies, increase investment and improve data collection; and requests FAO to provide technical assistance and develop additional guidance. The resolution also addresses how these commitments will be implemented. It requests FAO to allocate sufficient staff and financial resources to carry out the resolution, establish a framework for monitoring and evaluating progress, and report every two years to the FAO Conference on what has been achieved, what resources have been mobilized, and where further action or assistance is needed. These provisions are important because they establish a process for assessing whether the recommendations in the resolution are being put into practice and identifying problems that may require additional attention.

FINAL REMINDER FOR DELEGATES

The goal is not to produce the longest resolution or the largest number of amendments. It is to negotiate a credible text that recognizes the different circumstances of FAO Members, builds on existing action and identifies feasible areas of cooperation. Good diplomacy requires careful research, clear drafting, listening to objections and finding language that governments with different priorities can accept.

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Simulation Handbook - Food and Agriculture Organization

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