



**Call for expression of interest to  
Civil Society Organizations to participate in the  
VIRTUAL CSO Consultation prior to the FAO 32<sup>nd</sup> Regional Conference for  
Europe and Central Asia (ERC)**

**21-23 October 2020**

30 July, 2020

Dear Civil Society Organisations,

As we have already informed you through different communication channels, in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Director-General of FAO in consultation with the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan and after discussions with the Regional Group, has decided to postpone the dates of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Regional Conference for Europe to the second half of 2020. The Civil Society Organisations (CSO) Consultation prior to the 32<sup>nd</sup> Regional Conference has therefore also been postponed.

We are now pleased to update Civil Society Organisations and to issue a call to them to participate in the virtual CSO Consultation, which will be held on **21-23 October 2020** prior to the FAO 32<sup>nd</sup> Regional Conference for Europe and Central Asia (ERC)<sup>1</sup>. We will try to ensure interpretation in the languages that the registered participants request.

Civil Society Consultations are meetings organized autonomously by and for Civil Society actors in the region - prior to the Regional Conferences of the FAO. Their aim is to gather relevant regional input from civil society organizations representing the relevant constituencies (smallholder farmers, fishers, pastoralists and herders, forest dwellers, ethnic minorities and indigenous people, urban poor, agricultural and food workers, rural youth and women, consumers, NGOs). The objectives of these consultations are to discuss key topics pertinent to the region, to evaluate what FAO has done in the previous biennium and analyse and contribute to the specific agenda items of the Conference and gather elements for future actions plans.

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1 <http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/erc32/en/>

In every FAO region, the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC), as a global platform of small-scale food producers and rural workers' organizations and grassroots/community based social movements, is responsible for the facilitation of the FAO-CSO dialogue<sup>2</sup> through its Regional Processes. In our region (Europe and Central Asia), the Consultations are organized by Nyéléni Europe and Central Asia (Nyéléni ECA). For Nyéléni ECA, European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC)<sup>3</sup> serves as the secretariat of the ad hoc Steering Committee of the regional CSO Consultation process. This Steering Committee facilitates the participation of the various organizations and constituencies in the CSO Consultation in the region.

The FAO 32<sup>nd</sup> Regional Conference for Europe and Central Asia will be held between 2-4 November 2020. The main sessions of the Conference includes a Ministerial Roundtable,, where participants will discuss sustainable food systems and healthy diets in Europe and Central Asia. The roundtable aims to outline the status of nutrition and sustainable food systems and identify inter-linkages and related challenges and opportunities in the region.

A second major topic to be covered on the opening day of the Conference is that of finding solutions for youth employment and development opportunities in rural areas. The Conference will discuss the situation analysis of smallholders, family farms, and rural youth in agriculture, including a review of strategies that can potentially foster the revitalization of rural areas in the region in the plenary session.

Discussions during the CSO consultation will also include the implementation of the Peasants Rights Declaration, UN Decade of Family Farming, youth, gender and feminism, Agroecology, UN Food Systems Summit 2021, etc.

The Civil Society Consultation agenda will prepare CSO inputs relative to the items to the FAO 32<sup>nd</sup> Regional Conference (ERC). During the Consultation, representatives will also discuss how best to facilitate meaningful FAO civil society cooperation at national and regional levels within the framework of the regional initiatives. The spokespersons, identified by the plenary at the CSOs Consultation will be registered to attend the Regional Conference by FAO in November and present the CSO vision there during the debates on behalf of those organisations that will have participated in the CSO consultation.

In order to ensure the balanced participation of different groups, regions and constituencies, a strict quota system for selecting participants in the CSO Consultation will be applied by the ad-hoc CSO Steering Committee. Geographic and gender balance will also be considered.

The working languages of the CSO meetings will be English and Russian as confirmed and other languages should this prove necessary.

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2 <http://www.foodsovereignty.org/>

3 <http://www.eurovia.org/>

Please circulate this call for expression of interest and information within your networks. If you would like to be considered to participate in the regional CSO Consultation, please contact **Olcay Bingol** on behalf of the ad-hoc Steering Committee: **info@nyeleni-eca.org** **latest by 7 September, 2020** by sending an email with short description (max 150 words) of:

- your organisation and its link with the Food Sovereignty movement and
- your personal role within your organization.
- your interest in the topics which will be discussed including: nutrition and food systems, rural youth, UN Food Systems Summit, the Declaration on peasants' rights, and the UN Decade of Family Farming

Best regards,

**Ad-hoc Steering Committee of the Regional CSO Consultation**

- *Ramona Duminicioiu and Elene Shatberashvili*, ECVC-European Coordination Via Campesina
- *Judith Hitchman*, URGENCI - The International Network of Community Supported Agriculture
- *Rodion Sulyandziga*, CSIPN - Centre for Support of Indigenous Peoples of the North
- *Fernando Garcia Dory* - ESN European Chapter / WAMIP - The World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples
- *Aida Jamangulova*, ADI, Agency of Development Initiatives
- *Andrea Ferrante*, Schola Campesina