

**Report of the thirtieth session of the**

**COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES**

**Rome, 9–13 July 2012**



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## PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This is the final version of the report as approved by the thirtieth session of the Committee on Fisheries held in Rome from 9 to 13 July 2012.

FAO.

*Report of the thirtieth session of the Committee on Fisheries. Rome, 9–13 July 2012.*

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### ABSTRACT

The thirtieth session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) was held in Rome, Italy, from 9 to 13 July 2012. The Committee reviewed the issues of an international character and the FAO programme in fisheries and aquaculture, and their implementation. The Committee, while stressing the high value of the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture as a flagship publication, recommended that FAO should provide more support to countries in data collection and quality control, as well as consider a simpler classification of stock status. The Committee expressed strong support for the standards and norms of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and its related instruments and agreed on further effort to facilitate their accessibility and more effective implementation. The Committee agreed on the development of best practice guidelines for traceability. The Committee reiterated its support to FAO's collaboration with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and the World Trade Organization. The Committee reiterated the request for additional assistance for aquaculture development in Africa and Small Island Developing States. The Committee requested FAO to develop a conformity assessment framework for aquaculture certification guidelines as well as a draft strategy paper including a long-term strategic plan for the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture and emphasized the specific needs for future work. The Committee urged FAO to reinforce its emphasis on fish as food, ensure that these aspects were not lost in the global and regional frameworks for ocean conservation and management, and assert its leading role in fisheries and aquaculture in ocean governance. The Committee requested FAO to address the issue of hydrocarbon deposits in the oceans and assess possible threats arising from their development. The Committee called for continuous consultation with all stakeholders in the development of the International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries and agreed on the need to develop implementation strategies for the Guidelines. The Committee agreed that illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing continues to be a persistent and pressing problem adversely impacting on sustainable fisheries and food security. The Committee endorsed the terms of reference for the Ad hoc Working Group for the 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures. The Committee requested to convene the second resumed session of the technical consultation on the draft Criteria for Flag State Performance. The Committee reiterated its support for the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels. The Committee agreed that FAO should focus on challenges relevant to its core mandate and must join efforts with partners in better coordination and urged FAO to ensure that fisheries and aquaculture priorities were reflected under the Strategic Objectives. The Committee adopted the revised Rules of Procedure and endorsed the related changes in current practice. The Committee also approved the Multiyear Programme of Work (MYPOW) 2012–2015.

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## GLOBAL POLICY AND REGULATORY MATTERS FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE CONFERENCE

### The Committee:

- i) **Stressed** the need to continue to improve the management of fisheries and encouraged FAO to take leadership in these issues, including formulating global guidelines for sustainability, as well as assisting coastal developing States in strengthening management capacity (para. 19).
- ii) **Encouraged** FAO to continue its excellent cooperation with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) (para. 24).
- iii) **Requested** the FAO Expert Advisory Panel for the Assessment of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) to strengthen its consideration of technical issues related to fisheries management and international trade, consistent with the Panel's terms of reference, while underscoring the primary scientific role of the Panel (para. 34).
- iv) **Agreed** to continue FAO collaboration with the World Trade Organization (WTO) on issues related to trade in fish and fishery products and in particular the fisheries subsidies negotiations in the framework of the Doha Round, bearing in mind the rights and obligations of WTO Members (para. 35).
- v) **Supported** the establishment of an FAO Advisory Working Group on Genetic Resources and Technologies, that would advise FAO on matters concerning aquatic genetic resources and technologies, to enhance international cooperation on aquatic genetic resource management (para. 39j).
- vi) **Urged** FAO to reinforce, in a food security and improved nutrition context, including in the work of the Committee on World Food Security, its emphasis on fish as food and ensure that these aspects were not lost in the development and improvement of the global and regional frameworks for ocean conservation and management, including by enhancing coordination and integration (para. 45).
- vii) **Urged** FAO to assert its leading role in fisheries and aquaculture in ocean governance discussions, debates, policy-setting frameworks and fora (para. 46).
- viii) **Requested** FAO to address the issue of hydrocarbon deposits in the oceans and assess the possible threats to fisheries and food security arising from the development of such deposits (para. 50).
- ix) **Agreed** on the need to develop implementation strategies for the International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries (SSF Guidelines) at various levels including related policy reforms (para. 52h).
- x) **Agreed** that, despite some progress, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing continues to be a persistent and pressing problem which has a significant adverse impact on achieving sustainable fisheries and food security (para. 53).
- xi) **Agreed** that FAO should focus on challenges relevant to its core mandate and must join efforts with partners, including better coordination with other intergovernmental bodies within the United Nations System (para. 63).



**PROGRAMME AND BUDGETARY MATTERS  
FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL**

**The Committee:**

- i) **Recommended** that FAO should provide more support to countries in data collection and quality control (para. 14).
- ii) **Encouraged** further studies of the impact of industrial fishing activities on species corresponding to low trophic levels (para. 20).
- iii) **Underlined** the importance of FAO's work on deep sea fisheries (para. 21).
- iv) **Asked** FAO to provide technical support, including for the development of sustainable management aquaculture plans (para. 22).
- v) **Agreed** that the Secretariat should investigate options for clearly indexing and streamlining the Code and its related instruments (para. 26b).
- vi) **Called for** further analysis on the implementation of the International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (IPOA-Sharks) (para. 26g).
- vii) **Stressed** that attention was required to ensure that bycatch and discards were addressed comprehensively in conservation and management assessments, within an ecosystem approach (para. 26m).
- viii) **Underlined** the importance of FAO's capacity-building activities on market access and value-addition, in particular for small-scale producers and processors in developing countries (para. 28).
- ix) **Agreed** with the terms of reference developed by the Sub-Committee for future work to be carried out in relation to the development of best practice guidelines for traceability (para. 30).
- x) **Agreed** that it would be useful to assess the effect of the ecolabelling schemes on fisheries management and economic returns (para. 33).
- xi) **Reiterated its support for** the work FAO has undertaken with regard to commercially exploited aquatic species of interest to CITES and **stressed** that such work should be funded by the FAO Regular Programme (para. 34).
- xii) **Reiterated** the request for additional assistance for aquaculture development in Africa and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) (para. 39b).
- xiii) **Reiterated** that allocation of financial resources for aquaculture activities of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department be increased (para. 39c).
- xiv) **Encouraged** the Secretariat to attend meetings of other international organizations with related mandates to raise the visibility of fishery (para. 49).
- xv) **Requested** FAO to continue its technical support to regional and national fisheries institutions, in particular regarding small-scale fisheries (para. 50).
- xvi) **Suggested** that FAO examine the impacts of ocean acidification and climate change, cooperate with other organizations on ocean pollution (para. 50).

- xvii) With regard to the development of SSF Guidelines, **expressed support for** the conduct of further national and regional consultations and the convening of an intergovernmental technical consultation in May 2013. It also noted the need for adequate funding to allow for balanced regional participation by governments and wide-ranging participation by civil society organizations (CSOs) and other stakeholders (para. 52b).
- xviii) **Requested** the Secretariat to convene the second resumed session of the technical consultation to make efforts to reach consensus on the draft Criteria for Flag State Performance as soon as possible (para. 55).
- xix) **Reiterated its support** for the Global Record's continued development by FAO, using a phased approach keeping it cost-effective in coordination with other existing initiatives. (para. 56a).
- xx) **Urged** FAO, Members, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and donors to provide financial and technical support to developing States to strengthen all aspects of their capacity to combat IUU fishing (para. 57).
- xxi) **Urged** the Secretariat to ensure that fisheries and aquaculture priorities were reflected under the Strategic Objectives (para. 65).

## **OPENING OF THE SESSION**

1. The Committee on Fisheries (COFI) held its thirtieth session in Rome from 9 to 13 July 2012. The session was attended by 120 Members of the Committee and one Associate Member, by observers from two other FAO Member Nations, the Holy See, by representatives from six specialized agencies of the United Nations (UN) and by observers from 64 intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations. A list of delegates and observers is attached as Appendix B.
2. Mr Mohammed Pourkazemi, Chairperson, twenty-ninth session of COFI, opened the session welcoming the participants.
3. Mr José Graziano da Silva, Director-General of FAO, inaugurated the meeting and delivered a statement noting that all five FAO Regional Conferences requested that emphasis be given to fisheries and aquaculture, and three Regional Conferences, Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, identified aquaculture as a priority. The text of his statement is attached as Appendix D.
4. The Committee noted the Declaration of Competence and Voting Rights presented by the European Union.

## **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SESSION**

5. The Committee adopted the Agenda and Timetable for the session. The Agenda is attached as Appendix A to this Report. The list of documents which were placed before the Committee is shown in Appendix C.
6. The Committee agreed that, as a transitional measure, the Chairperson (Islamic Republic of Iran), First Vice-Chairperson (Norway), and Vice-Chairpersons (Canada, Chile, India, Spain, Zimbabwe) of the twenty-ninth session of COFI will continue serving during the thirtieth session of COFI until the election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the thirty-first session of COFI under agenda item 13.
7. The Committee agreed to consider piracy as a concern for fishing vessels under agenda item 14 "Any Other Matters".

## **DESIGNATION OF THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE**

8. The following Members were elected to the Drafting Committee: Argentina, Burkina Faso, Canada, Colombia, Cyprus, Japan, Kenya, Nauru, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Spain, Sri Lanka and the United States of America. The United States of America chaired the Drafting Committee.

## **ADOPTION OF THE REVISED RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE COMMITTEE AND RELATED CHANGES IN PRACTICE**

9. The Committee reviewed and approved the proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Committee set out in the Appendix to Document COFI/2012/9 including a subsequent further amendment to Rule I paragraph 2 proposed by the COFI Bureau in consultation with Members.

10. The revised Rules of Procedure, as adopted by the Committee, are in Appendix E.
11. The Committee endorsed the changes in current practice as proposed in COFI/2012/9.
12. The Committee agreed that the COFI Bureau of the thirty-first session of COFI would examine the proposal made by Thailand, on behalf of some Members of the Asia Regional Group, for the potential endorsement by the thirty-first session of COFI. The proposal was to change current practice of granting the first Vice-Chairperson the right of claiming the office of Chairperson in the succeeding session. The proposal also involved inserting an additional sentence at the end of the Rule I.1 of the revised Rules of Procedure to read as follows:

*The Chairperson, the first Vice-Chairperson and five other Vice-Chairpersons should be elected from the following regions: one representative from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Near East, North America and Southwest Pacific.*

**WORLD FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE: STATUS, ISSUES AND NEEDS  
(INCLUDING PRESENTATION OF THE STATE OF WORLD FISHERIES AND  
AQUACULTURE [SOFIA] 2012)**

13. The Committee strongly supported the initiative to include SOFIA as a specific agenda item, and suggested that this be continued in future COFI sessions. For future meetings, it requested releasing the SOFIA publication sufficiently in advance of COFI meetings to allow adequate time for review.
14. The Committee stressed the high value of SOFIA as a flagship publication which provides a clear understanding of global status and trends, reference points and setting directions for the future. The accuracy of data and statistics underlay the SOFIA conclusions, therefore the Committee recommended that FAO should provide more support to countries in data collection and quality control. The quality of SOFIA could also be improved by collaborating with regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) to gather more information, and by including more references to explicit information sources.
15. For future editions of SOFIA, the Committee suggested placing emphasis on a number of topics, including monitoring of the implementation of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (the Code), impacts of climate change, ocean acidification and pollution, working conditions for fishing crew members, success stories, for example, international plan of action (IPOA) issues, and positive developments, outcomes of research and development, transshipment of catches, mainstreaming gender aspects, impacts of the evolution of fish trade in the developing world, and insights of bycatch and biodiversity aspects.
16. The Committee stressed the need to ensure that key messages in SOFIA reach policy makers at all levels and the wider public audience. It was suggested that more use be made of SOFIA flyers which could support policy briefs. These could be translated locally into national languages, as needed, for wider distribution, particularly given the limitation on the numbers of printed copies of SOFIA made available to countries.
17. The Committee expressed concern regarding the way in which fish stock status was often reported particularly the negative notion given by reporting of a high percentage of

stocks being fully- or overexploited. In order to ensure accurate interpretation by the general public and avoid the risk of overemphasizing a negative perspective, the Committee recommended the FAO Secretariat consider a simpler classification of stock status, based on sustainability of their exploitation. It was suggested to establish two main categories containing all of the familiar stock status categories, one indicating a biologically-sustainable level of harvesting and another indicating a biologically-unsustainable level of harvesting. The sub-category fully-exploited stocks would then be grouped in the main category of biologically-sustainable level of harvesting. The Committee called on the FAO Secretariat to reference all information sources fully.

18. The Committee expressed concern that where there was some shifting of fishing capacity from areas where there was effective management to areas with less effective management, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing was prone to occur. The Committee noted the need to curtail shifting of fishing capacity that could contribute to IUU fishing.

19. The Committee stressed the need to continue to improve the management of fisheries. This should be achieved through enhancing international, regional and subregional collaboration, in particular between coastal and flag States, aiming at policy coherence, evaluating RFMOs performance and reforming them, as appropriate, while duly examining their complementarities, strengthening policy and legal frameworks in relation to IUU fishing, calling upon Members to consider acceptance of the 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures (the 2009 Agreement), instituting schemes for reduction of overcapacity, and strengthening data collection, in particular for small-scale operations. Also management authorities needed to focus on conservation and management measures on stocks at risk. The Committee encouraged FAO to take leadership in these issues, including formulating global guidelines for sustainability, as well as assisting coastal developing States in strengthening management capacity.

20. The Committee encouraged further studies of the impact of industrial fishing activities on species corresponding to low trophic levels, in order to support the establishment of appropriate levels of catch and effort to mitigate their impact on the ecosystem.

21. The Committee underlined the importance of FAO's work on deep sea fisheries.

22. The Committee emphasized the potential of aquaculture to respond to the growing demand for food fish and to deliver social and economic benefits, while alleviating pressure on wild fish stocks. It stressed that such growth must be done in a sustainable manner and asked FAO to provide technical support, including for the development of sustainable management aquaculture plans. Issues under consideration included sustainably-managing wild fish stocks utilized for fish feed and increasing alternatively the utilization of fish waste, certification of high quality seeds and controlling environmental impacts.

23. The Committee highlighted the positive attributes of fish products as food and a healthy source of proteins and other nutrients. Members emphasized the role of fish in food security and how essential the fisheries and aquaculture sector was in providing food and income to developing countries and combating malnutrition. Concerns were expressed about lower rate of growth in fish consumption in Africa compared to the global trend.

24. FAO was encouraged to continue its excellent cooperation with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

**PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES AND RELATED INSTRUMENTS, INCLUDING INTERNATIONAL PLANS OF ACTION AND STRATEGIES, AND OTHER MATTERS**

25. The Committee expressed strong support for the standards and norms of the Code and its related instruments, to promote sustainable conservation and management, development and use of fish and fisheries products.

26. The Committee:

- (a) was concerned about the low response rate to the questionnaire and encouraged Members to respond to it, alerting the Secretariat if they encountered difficulties;
- (b) agreed that the Secretariat should investigate options for clearly indexing and streamlining the Code and its related instruments with a view to facilitate their accessibility and enable more effective implementation and should report back to the thirty-first session of COFI. This process should not involve a renegotiation of the instruments;
- (c) supported web-based reporting for the questionnaire taking into account bandwidth limitations in some developing countries;
- (d) agreed that there would be merit in undertaking a content review of the questionnaire in order to allow for assessment on the degree of progress for each topic;
- (e) supported gathering more information on regional efforts to implement the Code facilitated by a content review of the questionnaires for regional fishery bodies (RFBs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the introduction of web-based reporting for those entities;
- (f) recognized the need for ongoing assistance from FAO to enable developing countries to implement the Code more effectively including, as requested, the compilation of the questionnaire;
- (g) appreciated the review on the implementation of the International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (IPOA-Sharks) and called for further analysis and for including market States, and an improved record of data collection;
- (h) recognized that further actions by States and RFMOs needed to be taken for shark conservation and management;
- (i) recognized the global increase in aquaculture production and noted, *inter alia*, that the Code provided a framework for aquaculture development and that it was being used for that purpose;
- (j) welcomed the FAO/International Labour Organization (ILO)/IMO collaboration relating to safety-at-sea in the fisheries sector, noting that it should be continued;
- (k) expressed satisfaction that a new safety standard for small fishing vessels had been completed and was being published and that new FAO/ILO/IMO guidelines to assist competent authorities in the implementation of voluntary instruments on the design, construction and equipment of all fishing vessels of all types and sizes had been completed;

- (l) recognized that there was an ongoing need to support the implementation of the Code in relation to small-scale fisheries, acknowledging the importance of these fisheries for food and livelihood security in many countries;
- (m) noted information provided by Members concerning bycatch and discards. The Committee stressed that attention was required to ensure that bycatch and discards were addressed comprehensively in conservation and management assessments, within an ecosystem approach. The connection between bycatch and discards and the impact of fish aggregation devices and food security was underscored; and
- (n) noted ongoing external processes of assembling information on the mitigation of marine mammal bycatch in commercial marine fisheries as well as the need to undertake mitigation measures in all seas.

**DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE COFI SUB-COMMITTEE ON FISH TRADE, HYDERABAD, INDIA, 20–24 FEBRUARY 2012**

27. The Committee endorsed the report of the thirteenth session of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, Hyderabad, India, 20–24 February 2012, and thanked the Government of India for hosting the session.

28. The Committee underlined the importance of FAO's capacity-building activities on market access and value-addition, in particular for small-scale producers and processors in developing countries.

29. The Committee welcomed FAO's ongoing work on value-chains and encouraged FAO to expand this work to include new countries and species.

30. The Committee agreed with the terms of reference developed by the Sub-Committee for future work to be carried out in relation to the development of best practice guidelines for traceability, while some Members noted that they would be an important tool to combat IUU fishing. The Committee emphasized that this work should include the compilation and analysis of best practices and existing standards for different purposes of traceability, including a thorough analysis. The Committee emphasized that this work should include a gap analysis and stressed that the following principles should provide the framework for the analysis:

- (a) not create unnecessary barriers to trade;
- (b) equivalence;
- (c) risk based; and
- (d) reliable, simple, clear and transparent.

31. The Committee expressed its concern at the proliferation of private standards and ecolabelling schemes potentially leading to the creation of trade barriers and restrictions. Some Members supported the adoption of the evaluation framework to assess the conformity of public and private ecolabelling schemes with the FAO Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries (the evaluation framework). Some Members did not support the adoption of the evaluation framework. It was noted that the evaluation framework was publicly available. Some Members called for swift progress towards the evaluation of ecolabelling and certification in the light of the FAO Guidelines.

32. Concern was expressed that some ecolabelling programmes used the FAO logo and this could mislead consumers.
33. The Committee agreed that it would be useful to assess the effect of the ecolabelling schemes on fisheries management and economic returns.
34. The Committee reiterated its support for the work FAO has undertaken with regard to commercially exploited aquatic species of interest to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). The Committee requested the FAO Expert Advisory Panel for the Assessment of CITES to strengthen its consideration of technical issues related to fisheries management and international trade, consistent with the Panel's terms of reference, while underscoring the primary scientific role of the Panel. Members stressed that such work should be funded by the FAO Regular Programme.
35. The Committee agreed to continue FAO collaboration with the World Trade Organization (WTO) on issues related to trade in fish and fishery products and in particular the fisheries subsidies negotiations in the framework of the Doha Round, bearing in mind the rights and obligations of WTO Members.
36. The Committee agreed to include an agenda item dedicated to small-scale fisheries at the next session of the Sub-Committee.
37. The Committee accepted the offer by Norway to host the fourteenth session of the Sub-Committee.

**DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE COFI SUB-COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE, CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA, 26–30 MARCH 2012**

38. The Committee endorsed the report of the sixth session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, Cape Town, South Africa, 26–30 March 2012, and thanked the Government of South Africa for hosting the session.
39. The Committee:
- (a) emphasized the importance of sustainable development of aquaculture as a sector contributing to global food and nutrition security, employment and income generation, while reiterating the need to empower small-scale aquaculture farmers and protect them from the increasing challenges they face;
  - (b) reiterated the request for additional assistance for aquaculture development in Africa and Small Island Developing States (SIDS);
  - (c) reiterated that allocation of financial resources for aquaculture activities of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department be increased;
  - (d) requested FAO to develop a conformity assessment framework for aquaculture certification guidelines and noted that such activities and resulting tools should not create any technical barriers to trade. Some Members expressed concern and reservation to this request;
  - (e) recalled that the implementation of the guidelines on aquaculture certification should be gradual and that it would be necessary to develop, at multilateral level and in coordination with the relevant IGOs, appropriate standards in order to



- ensure that the certification system did not become unnecessary barriers to trade and remained consistent with the referenced international standards;
- (f) requested the Secretariat to prepare a draft strategy paper, including a long-term strategic plan for the Sub-Committee, and circulate it among the Members for comments well in advance of the next session;
- (g) emphasized the need for further work to:
- improve quality and availability of feeds and alternative sources of feed;
  - improve the collection of data and their use in policy development;
  - enhance regional and interregional networking on aquaculture;
  - assist southern African countries contain the spread of epizootic ulcerative syndrome (EUS);
  - assist Asian countries contain the spread of early mortality syndrome (EMS);
  - assist Members improve biosecurity governance, develop capacity in risk analysis, and create networks of aquatic animal health experts;
  - enhance collaboration between FAO and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), and FAO and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD);
  - produce better quality seed;
  - enhance aquaculture governance;
  - improve capacity development in aquaculture technologies through South-South Cooperation;
  - better understand the interaction between wild capture fisheries and aquaculture;
  - promote public private partnerships in aquaculture;
  - understand the ecological and social impacts on aquaculture from ocean acidification and climate change; and
  - develop cold water aquaculture and culture fisheries in reservoirs.
- (h) recognized the need to implement the recommendations of the Asia Regional Ministerial Meeting on Aquaculture for Food Security, Nutrition and Economic Development held in Sri Lanka in July 2011, including the establishment of a global aquaculture fund;
- (i) emphasized the need for revitalizing the Committee for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture of Africa (CIFAA); and
- (j) supported the establishment of an FAO Advisory Working Group on Genetic Resources and Technologies, that would advise FAO on matters concerning aquatic genetic resources and technologies, to enhance international cooperation on aquatic genetic resource management. The need to better differentiate between genetic improvement in the sense of selective breeding and the development of genetically-modified organisms was noted. Some Members considered that these organisms were covered by the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety at the international level.

40. Argentina reiterated a reservation in writing regarding paragraph 14 of the report of the Sub-Committee in relation to the possibility that FAO might prepare a framework for the assessment of the conformity of aquaculture certification plans with the FAO Guidelines.

41. The Committee accepted the offer of the Russian Federation to host the seventh session of the Sub-Committee in St. Petersburg.

## **OCEAN GOVERNANCE AND RELEVANT OUTCOMES FROM RIO+20**

42. The Committee commented on the Rio+20 Declaration as well as on current trends and initiatives with regard to ocean governance and the role that FAO should play in this respect. Many Members recommended to include ocean governance issues on the COFI agenda more regularly. It was understood that the term “governance” was broad and general and that it was not defined in any international agreements and other instruments relevant to the work of this Committee.

43. The Committee recognized the increased visibility and importance given to oceans and fisheries in the final Rio+20 Declaration. It also noted that although many of the issues mentioned were not new to the fisheries community, it was the first time that the strategic role of fisheries for food security and alleviation of poverty was recognized in this type of event.

44. The Committee noted that legal and institutional frameworks for global ocean conservation and management already existed as well as other international fisheries instruments and agreements and focus should be placed on their implementation. In particular the role of RFMOs in implementing conservation and management measures for sustainable fisheries was recognized. The need for FAO to increase its efforts in developing the capacity of Members through the delivery of technical assistance and capacity building was also recognized.

45. The Committee urged FAO to reinforce, in a food security and improved nutrition context, including in the work of the Committee on World Food Security, its emphasis on fish as food and ensure that these aspects were not lost in the development and improvement of the global and regional frameworks for ocean conservation and management, including by enhancing coordination and integration.

46. The Committee stressed the opinion that FAO should be the central UN agency for all fisheries and aquaculture issues and urged FAO to assert its leading role in fisheries and aquaculture in ocean governance discussions, debates, policy-setting frameworks and fora.

47. The Committee emphasized the importance of flag State control and jurisdiction over fishing and fishing-related vessels flying its flag in areas beyond national jurisdictions (ABNJs) and advised greater engagement by States and RFMOs for the conservation and sustainable use of high-seas resources and warned that without the effective engagement by States, either individually or through RFMOs, no progress could be made with regard to the conservation and sustainable use of high-seas resources.

48. The Committee reminded the Secretariat to ensure that there was appropriate consultation with COFI Members before engaging in significant activities not previously decided by the Committee.

49. The Committee encouraged the Secretariat to attend the meetings of other international organizations with related mandates to raise the visibility of fishery activities and their appropriate consideration by these fora and to reinforce a leadership role for global fishery matters. The Committee was informed about a UN workshop on marine protected areas in 2013 and requested that FAO ensured that participants at this workshop be informed about current efforts by flag States and RFMOs with regard to fisheries management in ABNJs, in

particular to note actions taken to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems beyond national jurisdiction and area closures.

50. The Committee requested FAO to continue its technical support to regional and national fisheries institutions, in particular regarding small-scale fisheries. Furthermore, the Committee requested FAO to address the issue of hydrocarbon deposits in the oceans and assess the possible threats to fisheries and food security arising from the development of such deposits. It was suggested that FAO examine the impacts of ocean acidification and climate change, cooperate with other organizations on ocean pollution, and not undertake work in relation to high-seas aquaculture development.

## **RECENT MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS AND FUTURE WORK IN SELECTED FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE ACTIVITIES OF FAO (SINCE THE TWENTY-NINTH SESSION OF COFI)**

### **(A) Update on the development of International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries (SSF Guidelines)**

51. The Committee expressed appreciation and support for the participatory and holistic approach in the development of the SSF Guidelines and noted that the draft Guidelines had already informed national and regional policies. It called for continued consultations with all stakeholders including governments, RFBs, civil society organizations (CSOs) and other interested parties and the opportunity to comment on the guidelines draft text.

52. The Committee:

- (a) recalled the social, economic and cultural importance of small-scale fisheries which provides support for millions of livelihoods, contributes to food security and nutrition, and is critical for social protection and the realization of the right to food in many countries;
- (b) expressed support for the conduct of further national and regional consultations and the convening of an intergovernmental technical consultation in May 2013. It also noted the need for adequate funding to allow for balanced regional participation by governments and wide-ranging participation by CSOs and other stakeholders;
- (c) advised that the SSF Guidelines should address all stakeholders, be simple, practical and easily understood by everyone including members of fishing communities;
- (d) stressed the need for the SSF Guidelines to address the fundamental requirement for small-scale fisheries to be conducted sustainably. In this regard, the importance of applying the ecosystem approach, the adoption of selective fishing gear, and the promotion of community-based and co-management approaches, and when necessary, international management, were underscored;
- (e) emphasized that the SSF Guidelines should give special focus on measures to empower vulnerable fisheries people, including women, children, migrants and indigenous peoples;
- (f) noted the importance of disaster risk management and climate change adaptation for small-scale fishing communities, especially in SIDS;
- (g) underlined the important commercial dimensions of small-scale fisheries in many countries and their need for continued and improved market access;

- (h) agreed on the need to develop implementation strategies for the SSF Guidelines at various levels including related policy reforms and recalled that the twenty-ninth session of COFI had agreed to the establishment and implementation of a Global Assistance Programme which would support this process;
- (i) noted the procedures adopted by the Committee on World Food Security to allow for enhanced multi-stakeholder participation in its deliberations. It was noted that these procedures were specific to the Committee on World Food Security, a Committee which while located in FAO, was not a technical committee of FAO. It was further noted that these procedures had not been formally adopted by the FAO Conference for its governing and statutory bodies;
- (j) noted that many Members reiterated their earlier position on the need for the establishment of a Sub-Committee on Small-Scale Fisheries.

### **(B) Combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing**

53. The Committee agreed that, despite some progress, IUU fishing continues to be a persistent and pressing problem which has a significant adverse impact on achieving sustainable fisheries and food security. Action by all Members, through the implementation of existing tools and instruments and increased cooperation at all levels, was encouraged. It noted the statement from the Africa Group on their efforts and limitations in capacity and capabilities to address IUU fishing and the important role of partnership with international stakeholders.

54. In relation to the 2009 Agreement, the Committee:

- (a) took note of the indications from 26 Members of their ongoing processes to ratify, accept, approve or accede to the 2009 Agreement and their calls for other Members to do likewise with a view to its early entry into force;
- (b) appreciated FAO's series of regional capacity-development workshops to prepare for the entry into force of the 2009 Agreement. The Committee recognized the success of the first workshop (Thailand, April 2012) organized in collaboration with the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC) and encouraged FAO to convene workshops in other regions;
- (c) recognized the importance for State Parties of providing details, as required in Article 16 of the 2009 Agreement, concerning national contact points and designated ports; and
- (d) endorsed terms of reference for the Ad hoc Working Group under Part 6 of the 2009 Agreement, attached in Appendix 1 to document COFI/2012/8, to be applied when the 2009 Agreement enters into force.

55. The Committee noted the need for further progress with the negotiation of the draft Criteria for Flag State Performance and requested the Secretariat to convene the second resumed session of the technical consultation to make efforts to reach consensus on the draft Criteria as soon as possible. The Committee welcomed the efforts of the United States of America to secure funding to support the second resumed session.

56. In relation to the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels, the Committee:

- (a) reiterated its support for the Global Record's continued development by FAO, using a phased approach, with some Members having concern for the need to

avoid duplication, to keep it cost-effective and to ensure coordination with other existing initiatives;

- (b) recognized the necessity of a global unique vessel identifier (UVI), as a key component of the Global Record to identify and track vessels;
- (c) suggested the UVI, as a first step, be applied to vessels above 100 GRT;
- (d) noted the necessity for RFMOs to coordinate their vessel records with the Global Record; and
- (e) appreciated FAO's work to assist developing States to strengthen their national or regional vessel registries.

57. The Committee urged FAO, Members, NGOs and other donors to provide financial and technical support to developing States to strengthen all aspects of their capacity to combat IUU fishing, including their capacity to improve monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) capabilities.

58. The Committee welcomed the announcement by Costa Rica that it would host the Fourth Global Fisheries Enforcement Training Workshop in 2013 to be sponsored by the International MCS Network and encouraged Members to participate in the Network.

59. One Member pointed out that the agenda document and SOFIA 2012 contained some conclusive statements on IUU fishing without supporting data, information and figures which were critical to combat this global menace.

## **FAO'S PROGRAMME OF WORK IN FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE**

### **(A) Vision of the future**

60. The Committee agreed with most of the drivers and vision components presented while understanding that the components were part of a living document that would be expanded to include information gathering and dissemination, and marketing and post-harvest issues, and would be updated with new situations and information.

61. The Committee supported the overall goals of ensuring food security and poverty alleviation through sustainable fisheries and aquaculture and reaffirmed the leading role of FAO in pursuing such goals and setting the global agenda on fisheries and aquaculture.

62. The Committee recommended the ecosystem approach to fisheries and to aquaculture as a framework for translating high-level goals into action through a participatory management process, considering the three pillars of sustainable development.

63. The Committee agreed that FAO should focus on challenges relevant to its core mandate and must join efforts with partners, including better coordination with other intergovernmental bodies within the UN System.

64. The Committee took note of a large number of proposed additional topics that could be addressed in future.

## **(B) Priorities in the Programme of Work and Medium Term Plan (MTP)**

65. The Committee supported the Strategic Thinking Process to determine the future strategic direction of the Organization. This should inform the revision of the FAO Strategic Framework 2010–2019 and the preparation of the MTP 2014–2017. It appreciated the participatory and transparent nature of the process and encouraged further formal and informal dialogue with Members, IGOs, NGOs, CSOs and other stakeholders. It welcomed the process of identifying fewer and more cross-cutting Strategic Objectives for FAO and recognized that the definition of the future Strategic Objectives was work in progress. The Committee urged the Secretariat to ensure that fisheries and aquaculture priorities were reflected under the Strategic Objectives. The importance of FAO's core functions and comparative advantages, and the linkage with its normative and standard-setting work were highlighted.

66. The Committee:

- (a) supported the outcomes of the FAO regional conferences;
- (b) supported FAO to take the lead in implementing Rio+20 outcomes associated with fisheries and aquaculture when appropriate to do so;
- (c) underscored the importance of aquaculture development and requested that it be given more emphasis;
- (d) placed emphasis on country programme frameworks, mitigating the impacts of climate change on livelihoods especially in small-scale fisheries, gender mainstreaming, technical assistance and capacity building in support of sustainable capture fisheries (including inland fisheries), reducing post-harvest losses, improving fisheries statistics, strengthening MCS, and application of technologies to reduce the impacts of fishing, studying the impact of industrial fishing on low-trophic level species, and strengthening flag State performance and improving RFMOs;
- (e) underlined the need for further work to effectively implement the Code and its related instruments and guidelines and the ecosystem approach to fisheries and aquaculture;
- (f) noted the UNGA resolutions addressing deep-seas high seas fisheries and that this work should not be de-emphasized;
- (g) underlined the importance of work in relation to safety-at-sea;
- (h) noted the importance of avoiding certification and ecolabelling schemes from becoming technical barriers to international trade that could be determined to be incompatible with WTO rules; and
- (i) noted that production from capture fisheries could be increased through the improved implementation of fisheries management measures.

67. Some Members noted that the development of the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels, should not be highly emphasized because of concerns about duplication and cost effectiveness.

68. The Committee decided to strengthen dialogue between the Members and the Secretariat through the COFI Bureau on ongoing and future activities and work of the Department.

## **MULTIYEAR PROGRAMME OF WORK (MYPOW) OF THE COMMITTEE**

69. The Committee approved its MYPOW 2012–2015.
70. The Committee stressed that the MYPOW 2012–2015 was an important step to improving COFI's efficiency and accountability.
71. The Committee suggested adding gender aspects to the MYPOW 2012–2015.
72. The Committee requested FAO to initiate performance reviews of the RFBs under its auspices that had not already been assessed.

## **ELECTION OF THE CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSONS OF THE THIRTY-FIRST SESSION OF COFI**

73. The Committee elected Mr Johán H. Williams (Norway) as Chairperson and Mr Fabio Hazin (Brazil) as First Vice-Chairperson. Iran (Islamic Republic of), Morocco, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and the United States of America were elected as Vice-Chairpersons.

## **ANY OTHER MATTERS**

74. The Committee noted a statement delivered by the Islamic Republic of Iran concerning the need to combat piracy and develop guidelines to secure the safety of fishing vessels in open seas and compensation damages should they be attacked. The Islamic Republic of Iran proposed that the Secretariat establish an Ad hoc Intersessional Working Group open to all interested Members to draft anti-piracy guidelines by the end of 2012 and present them to the Secretariat for discussion in a meeting open to all interested parties including IMO. Many Members expressed gratitude to the Islamic Republic of Iran for bringing this issue to the Committee's attention, supported the proposal put forward and urged the Secretariat to take any action within the limits of FAO mandate to address any issue involving fishing including putting human life at risk at sea. Some Members, while supporting the proposal, underscored the importance of a more thorough discussion. A question was raised whether combating piracy fell within FAO's mandate.
75. The Chairperson briefed the Committee on his meeting with the FAO Director-General in which the importance of aquaculture was underlined and the establishment of an "International Year of Aquaculture" for 2014, or subsequent years, was proposed. The Secretariat was requested to seek further clarification on the process and procedures for formal endorsement of such a proposal.

## **DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION**

76. The Committee agreed that the thirty-first session of COFI will be held Rome, in June 2014. The exact dates will be determined by the Director-General in consultation with COFI Bureau, for presentation to the next FAO Council in 2012 and the FAO Conference in 2013.

**ADOPTION OF THE REPORT**

77. It was noted that some Members reiterated that references in the documents of the session to the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea did not prejudice the position of any State with respect to signature, ratification or accession to this instrument and its further role. Furthermore, some Members also reiterated that references in the documents of the session to the 1995 United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement did not imply that this Agreement may apply to States that had not expressed their consent to be bound by it.

78. The report of the thirtieth session of COFI was adopted on 13 July 2012.



**Agenda**

1. Opening of the session
2. Adoption of the Agenda and arrangements for the session
3. Designation of the Drafting Committee
4. Adoption of the revised Rules of Procedure of the Committee and related changes in practice
5. World fisheries and aquaculture: status, issues and needs (including presentation of the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture [SOFIA] 2012)
6. Progress in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related instruments, including international plans of action and strategies, and other matters
7. Decisions and recommendations of the thirteenth session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, Hyderabad, India, 20–24 February 2012
8. Decisions and recommendations of the sixth session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, Cape Town, South Africa, 26–30 March 2012
9. Ocean governance and relevant outcomes from Rio+20
10. Recent major developments and future work in selected fisheries and aquaculture activities of FAO (since the twenty-ninth session of COFI)
  - (a) Update on the development of International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries
  - (b) Combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing
11. FAO's Programme of Work in fisheries and aquaculture
  - (a) Vision of the future
  - (b) Priorities in the Programme of Work and Medium Term Plan (MTP)
12. Multiyear programme of work (MYPOW) of the Committee
13. Election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the thirty-first session of COFI
14. Any other matters
  - (a) Combating piracy
15. Date and place of the next session
16. Adoption of the report

**APPENDIX B****List of delegates and observers****MEMBERS OF THE  
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COMITÉ****AFGHANISTAN/  
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<b>Chairperson:</b>	Mr Mohammed Pourkazemi (Iran [Islamic Republic of])
<b>First Vice-Chairperson:</b>	Mr Johán H. Williams (Norway)
<b>Vice-Chairpersons:</b>	Canada, Chile, India, Spain, Zimbabwe

### DRAFTING COMMITTEE

The Committee elected Mr Dean Swanson (United States of America) as Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, with the following membership: Argentina, Burkina Faso, Canada, Colombia, Cyprus, Japan, Kenya, Nauru, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Spain, Sri Lanka and the United States of America.

### FAO FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE DEPARTMENT

Assistant Director-General:	Árni M. Mathiesen
Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy and Economics Division:	Lahsen Ababouch
Director, o.i.c, Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources Use and Conservation Division:	Árni M. Mathiesen

### SECRETARIAT

Secretary:	H. Watanabe
Secretary, Drafting Committee:	D.J. Doulman
Liaison and Meetings Officer:	R. Al-Khafaji

**APPENDIX C****List of documents**

COFI/2012/1	Agenda and Timetable
COFI/2012/2	World fisheries and aquaculture: status, issues and needs
COFI/2012/3	Progress in the Implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related instruments, including International Plans of Action and Strategies, and other matters
COFI/2012/3/Add.1/Rev.1	Summary of the Review of the Implementation of the International Plan of Action (IPOA) for Conservation and Management of Sharks
COFI/2012/4	Decisions and recommendations of the thirteenth session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, Hyderabad, India, 20–24 February 2012
COFI/2012/5	Decisions and recommendations of the sixth session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, Cape Town, South Africa, 26–30 March 2012
COFI/2012/6/Rev.1	Ocean governance and relevant outcomes from Rio+20
COFI/2012/7	Update on the development of International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries
COFI/2012/8	Recent major developments with regard to combating Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing
COFI/2012/9	Proposed Amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Committee on Fisheries
COFI/2012/10	Multiyear programme of work (MYPOW) of the Committee on Fisheries 2012–2015
COFI/2012/11	Vision for the future
COFI/2012/12.1	Outline of the Reviewed Strategic Framework
COFI/2012/12.2	Fisheries and aquaculture priorities in the Programme of Work and Medium Term Plan (MTP)
COFI/2012/Inf.1/Rev.3	List of documents
COFI/2012/Inf.2	List of participants
COFI/2012/Inf.3	Statement by the Director-General
COFI/2012/Inf.4/Rev.2	Annotations/Guide Notes on Agenda Items

- COFI/2012/Inf.5 Follow-up to the Recommendations of the twenty-ninth session of the Committee on Fisheries, Rome, Italy, 31 January–4 February 2011
- COFI/2012/Inf.6 Report of the twenty-ninth session of the Committee on Fisheries, Rome, Italy, 31 January–4 February 2011
- COFI/2012/Inf.7 Report of the thirteenth session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, Hyderabad, India, 20–24 February 2012
- COFI/2012/Inf.8 Report of the sixth session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, Cape Town, South Africa, 26–30 March 2012
- COFI/2012/Inf.9 Achievements of Fisheries and Aquaculture Programmes 2010–2011, as specified in the Programme Implementation Report 2010–2011
- COFI/2012/Inf.10 Statement of Competence and Voting Rights submitted by the European Union and its Member States

**Opening statement by Mr José Graziano da Silva  
Director-General of FAO**

Mr Chairperson, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor to welcome you to the thirtieth session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries.

COFI provides a necessary high-level forum for country representatives and fisheries authorities to discuss fisheries and aquaculture related matters at the highest level.

Fisheries and aquaculture play a vital role in the global, national and rural economy. The livelihoods of 12 percent of the world's population depend directly or indirectly on them.

Fisheries and aquaculture give an important contribution to food security and nutrition. They are the primary source of protein for 17 percent of the world's population and nearly a quarter in low-income food deficit countries.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In a world with sufficient food production, but with over nine hundred (900) million hungry people and over 70 percent of the world's extremely poor and hungry living in the rural areas of developing countries, we cannot think that producing more is the answer to food security.

In this context, the business as usual approach has shown its limitations.

That is why FAO embarked on a strategic thinking process when I took up office in January 2012.

Based on broad and participative consultation across the Organization, with inputs from an external Strategy Experts Panel, FAO Members and partners, we are reviewing and redefining our strategic direction.

In this process, we have identified eleven global trends that affect our work, and seven global challenges in the areas of food security and agriculture. Based on this, and on our core functions and comparative advantages and strengths, we have proposed five strategic objectives on which our work should focus. They are:

- first, to eradicate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition;
- second, to increase production in agriculture, fisheries and forestry in an economic, social and environmentally sustainable manner;
- third, to improve the livelihood of rural populations, in particular women and youth, through enhanced employment opportunities and increased access to production resources;

- fourth, to enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems at local, national, regional and international levels;
- fifth, to increase the resilience of rural livelihoods to threats and crises.

This process has received inputs from every FAO governing body that has met this year, including technical committees and the Regional Conferences.

The FAO Council held in June endorsed the strategic objectives proposed.

We will continue to consult with FAO committees and governing bodies during the second semester.

We are now in the process of developing these strategic objectives into plans of action.

The fisheries and aquaculture vision for the future paper you will discuss this week is already integrated to the ongoing strategic thinking process and the emerging strategic objectives.

We count on your inputs and guidance.

Let me highlight that all five regional conferences of FAO asked to improve our work on fisheries. And at least three of them – Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean – set aquaculture among the priorities for the current and next biennium. I am sure that, together, we will find ways to improve our work in fisheries and aquaculture in the field and Headquarters.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Committee has a full and demanding agenda. I would like to briefly refer to some other issues that you will be discussing this week.

The Committee is invited to review the status, issues and needs of world fisheries and aquaculture and provide guidance to FAO's work. A presentation of the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2012 will be made to help set the scene for these deliberations.

You will take stock of progress made in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, adopted 17 years ago. The Committee is invited to provide guidance on how to continue to broaden and deepen the implementation of the Code and related instruments.

This week, COFI is also expected to give further guidance on the development of a new international instrument on small-scale fisheries in the form of international guidelines.

Combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing remains a high priority. We will report on new developments and discuss the next steps.

The Committee will also address ocean governance the outcomes of The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio+20). As such, it will be one of the first international bodies discussing the meeting.



Let me point out that, in our view, the oceans chapter of the outcome document of Rio+20 is one of its strongest.

FAO believes that we left Rio closer to the future we want. With most of the world's attention focused on the economy and finances, we were still able to reaffirm our commitment to sustainable development.

And we linked, definitively, the three dimensions of sustainability: economic, social and environmental. There is no turning back now.

Agreement was also reached to have Sustainable Development Goals in the post-2015 period.

FAO is particularly pleased because the main messages we took to Rio together with IFAD, WFP and Bioversity International are reflected in the outcome document of Rio+20.

The most important one is the clear recognition that we cannot have sustainable development while hundreds of millions of children, women and men are condemned to a life of hunger and extreme poverty.

The right to food, the importance of small-scale production, and the need to shift towards more sustainable models of production and consumption and to improve global governance systems are also underlined in the document.

The role of the Committee on World Food Security in food governance and its inclusive nature is also valued.

And the governments participating in Rio+20 also called for the national implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests in the Context of National Food Security, a task that FAO is ready to assist governments to do.

Ladies and gentlemen,

You have a very busy and active programme over the next five days. I wish you every success in your deliberations and encourage you to actively participate in the main session as well as the side events.

Thank you.

**Proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure  
of the FAO Committee on Fisheries**

**Rule I  
Officers**

1. At the first session in each biennium, the Committee shall elect a Chairperson, a first Vice-Chairperson and ~~four~~ *five* other Vice-Chairpersons from among the representatives of its Members, who shall remain in office until the election of a new Chairperson and new Vice-Chairpersons and who will act as a Bureau Steering Committee *between sessions and* during sessions.

2. Between sessions, in relation to agendas, formats and other matters, and to perform other actions relevant for ensuring preparations for the sessions, the representatives of the regional groups in the Bureau shall consult with Members in a timely way.

~~2~~ 3. The Chairperson, or in his absence the first Vice-Chairperson, shall preside at meetings of the Committee and exercise such other functions as may be required to facilitate its work. In the event of the Chairperson and the first Vice-Chairperson not being able to preside at a meeting, the Committee shall appoint one of the other Vice-Chairpersons or, failing these, a representative of its Members to take the chair.

~~3~~ 4. The Director-General of the Organization shall appoint a Secretary, who shall perform such duties as the work of the Committee may require and prepare the records of the proceedings of the Committee.

**Rule II  
Sessions**

1. The Committee shall hold sessions as provided in Rule XXX, paragraphs 4 and 5 of the General Rules of the Organization with timing that enables the Programme and Finance Committees to take into consideration the report of the Committee in formulating advice to the Council.

2. Any number of separate meetings may be held during each session of the Committee.

3. The sessions of the Committee shall in the years immediately following a regular session of the Conference be held at the seat of the Organization; in other years they may be held in another place in pursuance of a decision taken by the Committee in consultation with the Director-General.

4. Notice of the date and place of each session shall normally be communicated at least two months in advance of the session to all Member Nations and Associate Members of the Organization, and to such non-member States and international organizations as may have been invited to attend the session.

5. Each Member of the Committee may appoint alternates and advisers to its representative on the Committee.

6. Presence of representatives of a majority of the Members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for any formal action by the Committee.

### **Rule III Attendance**

1. Participation of international organizations in an observer capacity in the work of the Committee shall be governed by the relevant provisions of the Constitution and the General Rules of the Organization,<sup>1</sup> as well as by the general rules of the Organization on relations with international organizations.

2. Attendance by non-member States of the Organization at sessions of the Committee shall be governed by the principles relating to the granting of observer status to nations adopted by the Conference.

3.

a) Meetings of the Committee shall be held in public, unless the Committee decides to meet in private for discussion of any items on its agenda.

b) Subject to the provisions of subparagraph (c) below, any Member Nation not represented on the Committee, any Associate Member or any non-member State invited to attend in an observer capacity a session of the Committee may submit memoranda and participate without vote in any discussion at a public or private meeting of the Committee.

c) In exceptional circumstances, the Committee may decide to restrict attendance at private meetings to the representative or observer of each Member Nation of the Organization.

### **Rule IV Agenda and Documents**

1. The Director-General, in consultation with *the Bureau through* the Chairperson of the Committee, shall prepare a provisional agenda and shall normally circulate it at least two months in advance of the session to all Member Nations and Associate Members of the Organization and to all non-member States and international organizations invited to attend the session.

2. All Member Nations of the Organization and Associate Members acting within the limits of their status may request the Director-General normally not less than 30 days before the proposed date of the session to insert an item in the provisional agenda. The Director-General shall thereupon circulate the proposed item to all Members of the Committee, together with any necessary papers.

3. The first item on the provisional agenda shall be the adoption of the agenda. The Committee in session may by general consent amend the agenda by the deletion, addition or

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<sup>1</sup> It is understood that in this context the terms "Constitution" and "the General Rules of the Organization" are to be taken to include all general rules and policy statements formally adopted by the Conference and intended to supplement the Constitution and the Rules, such as the "Statement of principles relating to the granting of observer status to nations", and the general rules regarding relationships between the Organization and governmental and non-governmental organizations.

modification of any item, provided that no matter referred to it by the Council or on the request of the Conference be omitted from the agenda.

4. Documents not already circulated shall be dispatched with the provisional agenda, or as soon as possible thereafter.

## **Rule V**

### **Voting**

1. Each Member of the Committee shall have one vote.

2. The decisions of the Committee shall be ascertained by the Chairperson, who shall resort, upon the request of one or more Members, to a vote, in which case the pertinent provisions of Rule XII of the General Rules of the Organization shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

## **Rule VI**

### **Records and Reports**

1. At each session, the Committee shall approve a report ~~to the Council~~ embodying its views, recommendations and decisions, including when requested a statement of minority views. *The Committee shall make every effort to ensure that recommendations are precise and can be implemented. Policy and regulatory matters shall be referred to the Conference whereas programme and budget matters shall be referred to the Council.* Any recommendations adopted by the Committee which affect the programme or finances of the Organization shall be reported to the Council with the comments of the appropriate subsidiary committees of the Council.

2. Reports of sessions shall be circulated to all Member Nations and Associate Members of the Organization and to non-member States invited to attend the session, as well as to interested international organizations entitled to be represented at the session.

3. The comments of the Committee on the report of any of its subsidiary bodies and, if one or more Members of the Committee so request, the views of those Members shall be incorporated into the Committee's report. If any Member so requests, this part of the Committee's report shall be circulated as soon as possible by the Director-General to the States or international organizations which normally receive the reports of the subsidiary body in question. The Committee may also request the Director-General, in transmitting the report and records of its proceedings to Members, to call particular attention to its views and comments on the report of any of its subsidiary bodies.

4. The Committee shall determine the procedures in regard to press communiqués concerning its activities.

## **Rule VII**

### **Subsidiary Bodies**

1. In accordance with the provisions of Rule XXX, paragraph 10 of the General Rules of the Organization, the Committee may, when necessary, establish subcommittees, subsidiary working parties or study groups, subject to the necessary funds being available in the relevant chapter of the approved budget of the Organization, and may include in the membership of

such subcommittees, subsidiary working parties or study groups Member Nations that are not Members of the Committee and Associate Members. The membership of such subcommittees, subsidiary working parties and study groups established by the Committee may include States which, while not Member Nations or Associate Members of the Organization, are members of the United Nations, any of its specialized agencies or the International Atomic Energy Agency.

2. Before taking any decision involving expenditure in connection with the establishment of subsidiary bodies, the Committee shall have before it a report from the Director-General on the administrative and financial implications thereof.

3. The Committee shall determine the terms of reference of its subsidiary bodies, who shall report to the Committee. The reports of the subsidiary bodies shall be made available for information to all members of the subsidiary bodies concerned, all Member Nations and Associate Members of the Organization, non-member States invited to the sessions of the subsidiary bodies, and to interested international organizations entitled to attend such sessions.

### **Rule VIII**

#### **Suspension of Rules**

The Committee may decide to suspend any of the foregoing Rules of Procedure, provided that 24 hours' notice of the proposal for the suspension has been given and that the action contemplated is consistent with the Constitution and the General Rules of the Organization.<sup>2</sup> Such notice may be waived if no Member objects.

### **Rule IX**

#### **Amendment of Rules**

The Committee may, by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast, amend its Rules of Procedure, provided that such amendment is consistent with the Constitution and the General Rules of the Organization. No proposal for the amendment of these Rules shall be included in the agenda of any session of the Committee unless notice thereof has been dispatched by the Director-General to Members of the Committee at least 30 days before the opening of the session.

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<sup>2</sup> See footnote to Rule III, paragraph 1.

The thirtieth session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) was held in Rome, Italy, from 9 to 13 July 2012. The Committee reviewed the issues of an international character and the FAO programme in fisheries and aquaculture and their implementation. The Committee, while stressing the high value of the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture as a flagship publication, recommended that FAO should provide more support to countries in data collection and quality control as well as consider a simpler classification of stock status. The Committee expressed strong support for the standards and norms of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and its related instruments and agreed on further effort to facilitate their accessibility and more effective implementation. The Committee agreed on the development of best practice guidelines for traceability. The Committee reiterated its support for the FAO's collaboration with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and the World Trade Organization. The Committee reiterated the request for additional assistance for aquaculture development in Africa and Small Island Developing States. The Committee requested FAO to develop a conformity assessment framework for aquaculture certification guidelines as well as a draft strategy paper including a long-term strategic plan for the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture and emphasized the specific needs for future work. The Committee urged FAO to reinforce its emphasis on fish as food, ensure that these aspects were not lost in the global and regional frameworks for ocean conservation and management and assert its leading role in fisheries and aquaculture in ocean governance. The Committee requested FAO to address the issue of hydrocarbon deposits in the oceans and assess possible threats arising from their development. The Committee called for continuous consultation with all stakeholders in the development of the International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries and agreed on the need to develop implementation strategies for the Guidelines. The Committee agreed that illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing continues to be a persistent and pressing problem adversely impacting on sustainable fisheries and food security. The Committee endorsed the terms of reference for the Ad hoc Working Group for the 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures. The Committee requested to convene the second resumed session of the technical consultation on the draft Criteria for Flag State Performance. The Committee reiterated its support for the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels. The Committee agreed that FAO should focus on challenges relevant to its core mandate and must join efforts with partners in better coordination and urged FAO to ensure that fisheries and aquaculture priorities were reflected under the Strategic Objectives. The Committee adopted the revised Rules of Procedure and endorsed the related changes in current practice. The Committee also approved the Multiyear Programme of Work (MYPow) 2012–2015.

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