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联合国
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Food
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des
Nations
Unies
pour
l'alimentation
et
l'agriculture

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

Twenty-seventh Session

Rome, Italy, 5 - 9 March 2007

ANNOTATIONS/GUIDE NOTES ON AGENDA ITEMS

This paper provides background information on the Provisional Agenda for the Twenty-seventh Session of the Committee on Fisheries¹. Leaving aside purely procedural matters, items 4 through 12 permit the Committee to fulfil its two principal constitutional tasks: (a) to consider and further strengthen international cooperation in fisheries, and b) to review the FAO Programme in fisheries and aquaculture and their implementation.

Several emerging and/or persistent issues pose major challenges, which need to be addressed for world fisheries to be managed in a responsible manner and for the rational development of environmentally-sound aquaculture. The Committee will be requested to reflect on some of these issues.

¹ As for previous sessions of COFI, the Twenty-seventh Session will begin with a brief presentation on the contents of the document on the State of Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) which summarizes the results of the review and analysis undertaken by the Fisheries Department.

1. OPENING OF THE SESSION

The outgoing Chairperson will call the Session to order. He will inform delegates of the voting rights of the European Community and its Member States on each agenda item.

After opening remarks by the outgoing Chairperson, the Deputy Director-General of FAO or his representative will inaugurate the Session.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SESSION

Procedural.

3. ELECTION OF THE CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSONS AND DESIGNATION OF DRAFTING COMMITTEE

The Committee is required to elect the office bearers in accordance with Rule I (1) of its Rules of Procedure.

4. PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES, RELATED INTERNATIONAL PLANS OF ACTION AND STRATEGY

At its Twenty-second Session, in March 1997, the Committee on Fisheries agreed that a progress report on the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries be presented every two years. When the Committee, at its Twenty-third Session, adopted the International Plans of Action (IPOAs) on Capacity, Seabirds and Sharks (and eventually IUU Fishing at the Twenty fourth Session), it directed that future reporting on the Code should particularly updated information on the development of national plans and other actions called for in the IPOAs.

At this Session, the Committee will receive the Fifth Periodic Report on the Progress Achieved in Implementing the Code and its related IPOAs. The Document *COFI/2007/2* submitted to the Committee summarizes activities undertaken by FAO to facilitate the implementation of the CCRF, the four International Plans of Action and the Strategy that have been concluded within its framework. Moreover, the document reports on progress by FAO Members, regional fishery bodies and non-government organizations to implement the Code. Recent activities within the framework of the FishCode Programme are also reviewed. Information relating to the Part VII Fund established under the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement is also addressed.

The Committee is invited to: (i) review the progress achieved in implementing the Code of Conduct, the four IPOAs, the Strategy-STF and the FishCode Programme and to provide comments and guidance to enhance their implementation, (ii) take note of the discussion made at the Twenty-sixth COFI session concerning the frequency of Code reporting, and (iii) take note of the discussion made at the Twenty-sixth COFI session in relation to reporting to the Sub-Committees on Aquaculture and Fish Trade for the monitoring Articles 9 and 11.

Furthermore, the Review Conference on the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, held at UN Headquarters, New York, from 22 to 26 May 2006, reviewed current efforts for the conservation and management of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory stocks. It recommended to FAO that its role be enhanced with respect to the establishment of a global capture fishery statistics database to provide information on relevant stocks. From 27 February to

2 March 2007, the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP), which is an inter-agency coordinating mechanism for fishery statistics and involving most RFBs, will discuss how to address this issue, including possible review and modification of the existing reporting guidelines for statistics and the development of mechanisms for global data sharing and harmonization among RFBs. The **outcome of the CWP's deliberations** will be conveyed to the Twenty-seventh session of COFI.

Additionally, the Committee, at its Twenty-sixth Session, agreed that subsidies that supported the expansion of fleets which, when conducted in an unsustainable manner, contributed to stock degradation, fleet overcapacity and IUU fishing, should be phased out. Many Members referred to FAO's work on fisheries subsidies and requested that it be strengthened while ensuring that it respected the relevant mandates of FAO and the World Trade Organization (WTO) and that it complement, and not duplicate, the work of WTO. It is envisaged to include under this Agenda item discussion on the **work of FAO in relation to the impact of subsidies** on fisheries resource sustainability and sustainable development.

5. REHABILITATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF LIVELIHOODS IN THE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE SECTOR IN COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY THE TSUNAMI IN 2004

In line with the Rome Declaration (Ministerial Meeting on Fisheries, 12 March 2005) the Committee will review the situation of the sector in countries affected by the Tsunami of December 2004 and activities carried out by FAO for medium and long-term fisheries/aquaculture rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Document *COFI/2007/3* discusses how ongoing reconstruction efforts can provide an opportunity to revisit and review fisheries policy frameworks in the countries concerned. The Committee is invited to comment on the information provided and to contribute additional experience. It is requested to provide guidance for future work of FAO, in particular the Fisheries Department, in the area of tsunami rehabilitation and reconstruction in fisheries and aquaculture.

6. DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TENTH SESSION OF THE COFI SUB-COMMITTEE ON FISH TRADE

At its Sixteenth Session in 1985, the Committee on Fisheries decided to establish a Sub-Committee on Fish Trade to serve as a multilateral framework for consultations on international trade in fishery products.

The Sub-Committee, at its Tenth Session held in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, from 30 May – 2 June 2006, took note of important recent events and issues concerning international trade, environment and sustainable fisheries development, as follows:

- Status and important recent events concerning international trade in fishery;
- CITES issues with respect to international fish trade and status of FAO-CITES MOU;
- Technical guidelines for responsible fish trade;
- Safety and quality requirements in international fish trade;
- Traceability and labelling in fish trade;
- Harmonization of catch documentation;
- COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade as international commodity body – commodity strategy;
- COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade as international commodity body and its relationship with the common fund for commodities;
- Fish trade and food security;
- Fish trade and small-scale fisheries, and

- Rehabilitation and reconstruction of fisheries in tsunami affected countries.

The Committee is invited to consider and, as appropriate, to endorse the report of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade and provide guidance with regard to the above mentioned issues.

The Committee, at its Twenty-sixth Session, requested the Secretariat to prepare international guidelines on the ecolabelling of fish and fishery products from inland fisheries. To this end, an Expert Consultation convened by FAO in May 2006 produced the draft guidelines for the ecolabelling of fish and fishery products from inland capture fisheries. The draft guidelines are made available to COFI in the document COFI/2007/Inf.13. If required by the Committee, the draft will be reviewed by a Technical Consultation for subsequent submission to and approval by the Eleventh session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade in 2008 or the Twenty-eighth Session of COFI in 2009.

7. DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE COFI SUB-COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

The Committee on Fisheries, at its Twenty-fourth Session, decided to establish a Sub-Committee on Aquaculture to provide a forum for consultation and discussion on aquaculture and to advise COFI on technical and policy matters related to aquaculture, and on the work performed by FAO in the field of aquaculture.

The Third Session of the Sub-Committee was held in New Delhi, from 4 to 8 September 2006.

Document *COFI/2007/5* contains an overview of the topics discussed at the Third Session and makes reference to its main recommendations, including the Strategy for improving information on aquaculture status and trends similar to that developed for capture fisheries.

The Committee is invited to consider and, as appropriate, to endorse the report of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture and the Strategy.

8. SOCIAL ISSUES IN SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES

The Committee on Fisheries, at its Twenty-sixth Session, recognized the special importance of small-scale fisheries, and expressed its appreciation to FAO and donor countries for giving greater attention to this sub-sector.

The Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research which held its Sixth Session in Rome, Italy, 17-20 October 2006, appreciated the decision to keep small-scale fisheries as a stand-alone agenda item during COFI. It recognized that there was a need for better assessment tools and methodology for small-scale fisheries. (COFI/2007Inf.10)

Document *COFI/2007/6* argues that social development through fostering human rights would complement the ability of government fishery departments and other fishery organisations to support fishing communities in securing their own development by strengthening their fishing rights and thus sustaining the contribution of fisheries to the wider economy. Progress with social development will facilitate the adoption of responsible fisheries for the benefit of poverty reduction and food security. Elements of a rights-based approach to development in small-scale fisheries are suggested for consideration by the Committee.

The Committee is invited to review this paper and provide guidance to FAO on appropriate approaches, strategies and measures to foster social development in small-scale fisheries through, inter alia, the strengthening of human rights. Further, the Committee may wish to recommend specific rights-based social development measures.

9. COMBATING IUU FISHING THROUGH MONITOR CONTROL AND SURVEILLANCE, PORT STATES MEASURES AND OTHER MEANS

IUU fishing is found in small-scale and industrial fisheries, in marine and inland fisheries, as well as in zones of national jurisdiction and on the high seas. It causes severe economic, social, biological and environmental impacts. It has been propelled to international prominence because it undermines fisheries management and reduces the social and economic contribution of fisheries to food security and livelihoods.

Document *COFI/2007/7* describes current actions to combat IUU by States, RFMOs and others through the use of various mechanisms such as Port State Measures, Vessel Monitoring System, and other technology.

The Committee is invited to consider the social, economic and biological damage IUU fishing has had on achieving sustainable fisheries and the challenges that exist to effectively addressing IUU activities. It is invited to reflect and offer comments on the proposed measures, in particular, further development of the Model Scheme on Port State Measures, including the possible development of a binding instrument, as well as whether a new binding international instrument on VMS should be sought. Alternative strategies to guide and facilitate the global implementation of VMS could also be evaluated, including activities to be undertaken by FAO as discussed in this document.

The Committee is also asked to provide guidance on desired next steps in development of a comprehensive global record of fishing vessels and in particular, its funding and associated developmental steps.

10. IMPLEMENTING THE ECOSYSTEM APPROACH TO FISHERIES, INCLUDING DEEP-SEA FISHERIES, BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION, MARINE DEBRIS AND ABANDONED GEAR

Recognition has been achieved at high level that a more holistic and integrated approach to fisheries management are needed, incorporating to the conventional approaches, considerations about the ecosystem, its contribution to human well-being, and its natural variability or degradation.

The Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) is becoming the main reference framework for managing fisheries and implementing the principles of sustainable development. EAF was more explicitly addressed in the Reykjavik Declaration, adopted at the Reykjavik Conference on Responsible Fisheries in the Marine Ecosystem, Reykjavik, 1-4 October 2001. The Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), Johannesburg, 2002, encourages nations to apply an EAF by 2010 with specific reference to the Reykjavik Declaration. The Twenty-fifth Session of COFI supported the role of FAO in facilitating the process of adoption of the ecosystem approach as agreed during WSSD.

During the Twenty-sixth Session of the Committee, many Members proposed that an agenda item on EAF be included in the next session of COFI.

Document *COFI/2007/8* provides information on FAO's activities to promote the EAF. It also highlights selected issues within the EAF, taking into account their high current visibility or the international attention that they have attracted in the past or could attract in the future. These include deep-sea fisheries, marine debris and abandoned fishing gear, marine protected areas, biodiversity mapping, etc.

The Committee is requested to note the activities undertaken so far, consider in what areas FAO should take or reinforce action as regards promoting awareness and wider implementation of EAF, and identify the necessary financial resources to support those actions.

11. STRENGTHENING RFMOs AND THEIR PERFORMANCES INCLUDING THE OUTCOMES OF THE 2007 TUNA RFMOs MEETING

The expectations placed on RFMOs have grown in the past decade. During the Twenty-sixth session, many Members strongly supported the establishment of principles to review the performance of RFMOs in meeting their objectives and the obligations and principles set forth in relevant international instruments.

The Fourth Meeting of Regional Fisheries Bodies, held immediately after the Twenty-sixth session of COFI, also discussed the matter and saw a need for “clarification of the nature, process and uses of the outcome” of COFI on the subject and noted that FAO could initiate such a performance review (only for RFMOs established under the FAO).

Document *COFI/2007/9* provides background information relating to strengthening RFMOs and their performances. Developments of this issue at international level are described, including through international fisheries instruments, in the United Nations system and in reviews of the implementation of the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement, as well as by independent organizations. The document reviews ongoing consideration of the issue by COFI, and reports continuing actions taken by FAO to strengthen its RFBs. Moreover, approaches to the issue in the biennial meetings of RFBs are reported, and examples of recent initiatives by some RFMOs to undertake performance reviews are outlined.

The Committee is invited to:

- consider the unique role of RFMOs in fisheries governance, and the actions and measures that have been recommended and taken to promote their strengthening and review their performance and accountability;
- reflect and offer comments on actions and measures that may be taken to promote or facilitate further strengthening of RFMOs;
- offer guidance and, as appropriate, strategies for RFMO performance reviews, and
- identify steps that may be taken by FAO to facilitate and promote the strengthening of RFMOs.

12. FAO’s PROGRAMME OF WORK IN FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

Information on the implementation of the Major Programme 2.3 will be provided.

Document *COFI/2007/10* will, in the ambit of the Strategic Framework 2000-2015 adopted at the Thirtieth Session of the Conference, review the preliminary Programme of Work proposal 2008-2009. The Committee may give such guidance as it may deem appropriate.

13. ANY OTHER MATTERS

14. DATE AND PLACE OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

Procedural.

15. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT