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Organización
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para la
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y la
Alimentación

COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

Twenty-ninth Session

Rome, Italy 31 January – 4 February 2011

**DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TWELFTH
SESSION OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON FISH TRADE,
Buenos Aires, Argentina, 26-30 April 2010**

SUMMARY

This document contains highlights of the topics discussed at the Twelfth Session of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade and summarizes its main recommendations. The full report is available as document COFI/2011/Inf.8. The Committee is invited to consider the recommendations of the Sub-Committee.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Twelfth Session of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina from 26-30 April 2010 at the invitation of the Government of Argentina. The report of this Session is available as document COFI/2011/Inf.8.

MAIN OUTCOMES OF THE SESSION

Report on trade-related activities in FAO

2. The Sub-Committee commended FAO for the broad range of trade-related activities carried out by the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department. (Para. 10)

3. Delegates congratulated FAO for its role in obtaining improved fisheries classifications in the World Customs Organization. Delegates encouraged FAO to continue this work and underscored the need to include additional species such as sharks and rays in the classification. (Para. 10)

4. Members underlined the importance of FAO's work in capacity-building for developing countries, in particular in relation to market access and value-addition for small-scale producers in developing countries. (Para. 11)

5. The Sub-Committee encouraged FAO to continue the integration of FAO's fisheries related work with that of other FAO technical departments and with other international organizations such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the World Trade Organization and the World Bank. The Sub-Committee further encouraged FAO to engage actively in important global issues, such as climate change and food security. (Para. 15)

Recent developments in Fish Trade

6. Members highlighted the importance of fish consumption and its many nutritional and health related benefits referring to a number of national policies and initiatives in this respect. (Para. 18)

7. Members underlined the growing role of aquaculture in production, trade and consumption and the need to adequately reflect this in future work, including the interactions between farmed and wild products in international trade and marketing. (Para. 19)

8. The Sub-Committee stressed the need to create a conducive environment for a more equitable participation of developing countries in world trade. It supported FAO's role in providing technical capacity-building on trade and marketing related issues, including market access and on increasing the benefits and values deriving from a country's fisheries resources. (Para. 19)

9. The Sub-Committee welcomed FAO's work on fish price indices and noted the need to continue and expand this work with regular information provided to Members. (Para. 20)

Report on FAO activities related to Ecolabels

10. The Sub-Committee agreed that the FAO Secretariat should develop an 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. (Para. 24)

11. The Sub-Committee agreed that as a first step in this process the Secretariat should convene an Expert Consultation to initiate work on the evaluation framework, noting the need for extra-budgetary resources for the Expert Consultation and related activities. A number of Members indicated a willingness to explore the possibility of financial support. (Para. 25)

12. The Sub-Committee agreed that the outcome of the scheduled 25-27 May 2010 Expert Consultation on the draft Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Inland Capture Fisheries should be forwarded to the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) for its consideration. (Para. 28)

Review of market access requirements

13. The Sub-Committee expressed its support to the work of FAO in support of the Codex Alimentarius standard setting activities for fish and seafood safety, quality and traceability and for the technical advice, training and capacity building in developing countries to enable these countries to meet international market requirements by implementing good practices in fisheries and aquaculture to ensure the safety and quality of fish products. (Para. 30)

14. The Sub-Committee reiterated the importance of Codex Alimentarius work to promote harmonization and the use of the best available scientific information for standard setting and certification. (Para. 33)

Best practice guidelines for integrated traceability

15. The Sub-Committee agreed that traceability initiatives were useful tools to verify the integrity of the supply chain and noted that in the fisheries sector they are mainly used to help meet both food safety and sustainability objectives. Members agreed on the benefits of integrating traceability requirements but also recognized that the traceability requirements for food safety were somewhat different from those linked to sustainability. (Para. 36)

16. The Sub-Committee agreed that FAO should have an ongoing role in providing technical assistance to countries implementing traceability systems or seeking to integrate their traceability systems. The FAO should also monitor technical developments and assess their applicability in traceability systems. (Para. 40)

Update of activities related to CITES

17. Members commended FAO for its work addressing diverse matters in the context of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and agreed that the cooperation should continue in the future. The Sub-Committee highlighted the key role of FAO in the management of commercially-exploited aquatic species. (Para. 41)

18. The Sub-Committee highlighted the important role of Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) in the management of fisheries under their mandates. (Para. 41)

19. The Sub-Committee recognized the role of CITES as a global instrument for the regulation of international trade of species listed in its appendices. (Para. 41)

20. The Sub-Committee expressed its appreciation for the excellent work done by the FAO Expert Advisory Panel (the Panel) in relation to the biological assessment of CITES listing proposals for commercially-exploited aquatic species, and remarked that the review and conclusions of the Panel had provided valuable input in the decision-making process of CITES Parties. (Para. 42)

21. The Sub-Committee supported that the FAO Secretariat give active input to the inter-sessional process set up by CITES for the purpose of clarifying the interpretation of the Appendix II listing criteria, as applied to commercially exploited aquatic species, stressing that a harmonized interpretation of these criteria is of key importance for the ongoing work of the FAO Expert Advisory Panel. (Para. 44)

22. The Sub-Committee requested that FAO compile current regulations and activities by States and RFMOs related to the conservation of sharks independently of whether they have been formalized in a National Plan of Action. (Para. 46)

23. The Secretariat was requested to continue providing assistance to developing countries in implementing CITES regulations and improving the conservation of species listed by CITES. (Para. 47)

Fish Trade and Food Security

24. The Sub-Committee underlined the importance of enhancing food security and the role of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in contributing towards that goal through fish consumption, employment and trade. (Para. 49)

25. The Sub-Committee stressed that in order to achieve national food security, institutional capacity building is often necessary, in addition to assistance of a more technical nature. (Para. 54)

Monitoring implementation of Article 11 of the CCRF

26. The Sub-Committee agreed that the trade-specific questionnaire should be biennial and alternate with the questionnaire monitoring overall implementation of the Code. (Para. 56)

COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade as international Commodity body and its relationship with the Common Fund for Commodities

27. The Sub-Committee endorsed the four project proposals submitted for funding by the Common Fund for Commodities. Members highlighted the importance of women in the value chain, and appreciated the fast track project which is expected to improve the income of women involved in fisheries and aquaculture. (Para. 61)

ANY OTHER MATTERS

28. The Sub-Committee expressed its gratitude to Mr. Nomura for his able leadership of FAO's Fisheries and Aquaculture Department and his dedication and support to COFI and its two Sub-Committees. (Para. 64)

DATE AND PLACE OF THE THIRTEENTH SESSION

29. The date and venue of the Thirteenth Session would be determined by the Director-General in consultation with the Chairperson and in light of the international calendar of meetings. (Para. 65)

SUGGESTED ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE

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