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COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

Twenty-sixth Session

Rome, Italy, 7 – 11 March 2005

Follow-up to the Recommendations of the Twenty-fifth Session of the Committee on Fisheries Rome, Italy, 24-28 February 2003

1. At its Twenty-fifth Session in February 2003, COFI made a number of recommendations to the Secretariat and Members. This note summarizes actions taken by the FAO Fisheries Department, usually in collaboration with Members, to address the principal recommendations directed to the Secretariat.
2. In the request/recommendations (R) section below, reference to the relevant paragraphs of the Report of the Twenty-fifth Session is given in brackets; in the action (A) section reference is made, wherever appropriate, to the Agenda Item under which the issue is to be addressed, as well as to the appropriate document (between brackets).

1. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES AND RELATED INTERNATIONAL PLANS OF ACTION

R. Broaden and deepen efforts to promote the implementation of the Code of Conduct and its IPOAs, building on positive past experience (para. 18)

A. A number of regional workshops and seminars on different aspects of the Code and instruments elaborated in its framework were organized. Similarly, simple language versions of guidelines were developed. A list of meetings, workshops and seminars organized in the framework of the Code of Conduct is given in Annex I.

R. Monitor fleet capacity of large scale fishing vessels on a global basis (para. 20)

A. The analysis of the fleet of fishing vessels over 100 tons has been carried out and the salient points have been included in SOFIA 2004. FAO also assisted the International Maritime Organization in the analysis of fishing vessels over 24 m in respect of the lack of the entry

into force of the Torremolinos Protocol on Fishing Vessel Safety. Consideration will be given to publishing a revision to FAO Fisheries Circular No. 949 "Analysis of vessels over 100 tons in the global fishing fleet" which was published in 1999.

R. *Convene a technical consultation at FAO Headquarters in Rome in early 2004 to review progress and promote the full implementation of the IPOA-IUU and the IPOA-Capacity. (para. 23)*

A. The Technical Consultation was held in Rome from 24 to 29 June 2004. The Technical Consultation made major recommendations on how to strengthen international cooperation on managing fishing capacity and combating IUU fishing. It also asked FAO to undertake a series of actions to facilitate effective and full implementation of these two IPOAs. Noting in particular an ongoing build-up of capacity in tuna fisheries in the western and central Pacific Ocean, the Technical Consultation suggested that governments in the region should lend priority attention to addressing the situation, including halting introductions of additional large-scale fishing vessels.

R. *Convene a technical consultation to address substantive issues relating to the role of the port State to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing (para. 24)*

A. The Technical Consultation was held from 30 August to 2 September 2004 in Rome, Italy and, among other things, agreed on a model scheme on port State measures to combat IUU Fishing. There was also strong support in principle for the general aims of the proposed Programme of Assistance. The Consultation recommended that a refined draft of the proposed programme, should be presented for consideration by COFI at its Twenty-sixth Session. The Consultation also supported the establishment of a database containing relevant port State measures.

R. *Convene a Technical Consultation on Sea Turtle Interactions and Conservation (para. 25)*

A. An Expert Consultation on Interactions between Sea Turtles and Fisheries within an Ecosystem Context was held in Rome, (9-12 March 2004) followed by a Technical Consultation held from 30 November to 3 December 2004 in Bangkok, Thailand (see COFI/2005/7 and COFI/2005/Inf.15 agenda item 9).

R. *Study or convene an Expert Consultation on Standardization of Data Formats and Procedures for MCS (para. 29)*

A. The Expert Consultation on Data Formats and Procedures used in Monitoring Control and Surveillance was held in Bergen, Norway from 25 to 27 October 2004. There were nine experts and six resource persons participating in the meeting, which was hosted by the Government of Norway and supported by the FishCode Programme. The Report of the Expert Consultation is available as FAO Fisheries Report No. 761.

2. DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EIGHTH SESSION OF THE COFI SUB-COMMITTEE ON FISH TRADE, BREMEN, GERMANY (12-16 FEBRUARY 2002)

R. *Organize the Ninth Session of Sub-Committee on Fish Trade (para. 45)*

A. The Ninth Session of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) was held in Bremen, Germany, from 10 to 14 February 2004 at the kind invitation of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany. The Session made a number of important recommendations in respect to CITES, fish safety and quality, traceability and

labelling in of fish and fishery products as well as on human capacity building (see COFI/2005/3, COFI/2005/Inf.12, agenda item 5).

R. *Convene an Expert Consultation on Ecolabelling with a view to elaborating guidelines on the subject (para. 39)*

- A. The Expert Consultation was held from 14 to 17 October 2003 and produced draft International Guidelines for Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries. The Ninth Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade reviewed the draft guidelines. It recommended that FAO organize a Technical Consultation to further elaborate the work of the Expert Consultation and finalize the draft guidelines for consideration by the Twenty-sixth Session of COFI in March 2005. The Technical Consultation took place from 19 to 22 October 2004 in Rome, Italy (see COFI/2005/Inf.13, agenda item 5).

R. *Continue studies on alleged link of fishmeal for animal feed and BSE (para. 41)*

- A. At the Ninth Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade delegates strongly endorsed the main conclusions presented by the Secretariat, that is, there is no epidemiological evidence of BSE being transmitted to ruminants or other animals by fishmeal and that there is likewise no evidence for the transmission to humans of the Creutzfeld Jacob Disease (vCJD) caused by prions using fish and fish products as vectors.

R. *Work on harmonization of catch certification schemes (para. 43)*

- A. The Ninth Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade noted that catch documentation was another layer of traceability and as such had to be considered with other catch reporting schemes. The Sub-Committee agreed that FAO had an important role to play in ensuring that catch documentation schemes did not become too dispersed and recommended that FAO should keep a watch brief on the matter. It however advised that FAO should not organize an expert consultation on the subject. The Sub-Committee stressed the need for the matter to be clarified by Contracting Parties of regional fisheries organizations and agreed that it would be raised at the Fourth Meeting of the Regional Fishery Bodies to be held on 14 and 15 March 2005 just after the Twenty-sixth Session of COFI.

R. *Expert Consultation on CITES related issues to commercially exploited aquatic species (para. 50)*

- A. The Expert Consultation on Implementation Issues was held from 25 to 28 May 2004, Italy, and that on Legal Issues from 22 to 25 June 2004 both in Rome, Italy. In addition, FAO is establishing a Roster of Experts to serve as required on the *ad hoc* Expert Advisory Panel for the Assessment of Proposals to CITES for Listing Commercially-exploited Aquatic Species as required.

R. *Continue work on FAO-CITES Secretariat MoU (para. 48)*

- A. A draft MoU was endorsed at the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade (10-14 February 2004), and was submitted to CITES. In accordance with the decisions of that meeting, the Assistant Director-General, Fisheries Department negotiated a compromise text with the Chair of the CITES Standing Committee, based on the FAO draft MoU. The negotiated text was presented to the Fifty-first Meeting of the CITES Standing Committee on 1 October 2004 but no agreement was reached there or at the Fifty-second Meeting of the Standing Committee two weeks later. The matter was referred to the Fifty-third Meeting, scheduled for June 2005, for further discussion.

R. Improvements in customs classification codes or fish and fishery products (para. 42)

- A. At the Ninth Session of COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade the delegations undertook a historical review on tariff codes and fishery products and issues related to fish and fishery products. Two alternative proposals for improvements were considered namely the traditional and radical revisions of the Harmonized System Code. The Sub-Committee opted for the traditional system. It recommended that the Secretariat should continue collaboration with the World Customs Organization (WCO) on this matter and that Members that have suggestions to the Harmonized System Code for products and species should provide them to the Secretariat for WCO consideration.

R. Close involvement with work of the international MCS Network (para. 31)

- A. The Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) Network actively participated in the FAO organized Expert Consultation on Fishing Vessels Operating under Open Registries and their Impact on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing held in Miami, Florida, USA, from 23 to 25 September 2003. Meetings and consultations have been held between FAO and the Network Executive Committee to promote closer cooperation in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the activities of organizations responsible for fisheries-related MCS. The FAO FishCode Programme is facilitating a Global Fisheries MCS and Enforcement meeting that will be held in early 2005.

R. Collaboration with ILO on the Convention on Labour Conditions on Fishing Vessels (para. 32)

- A. FAO maintained contacts with the International Labour Organization (ILO) on the above subject and participated in the ILO Tripartite Meeting that was held in Geneva from 2 to 4 September 2003 to update the ILO Conventions and Recommendations on Labour Standards for the Fishing Sector. A new Convention on Labour Conditions including those in fishing vessels is likely to be adopted in 2005.

3. DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE COFI SUB-COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE, BEIJING, CHINA (18-22 APRIL 2002)

R. Organize the Second Session of Sub-Committee on Aquaculture (para. 58)

- A. The Second Session of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) was held in Trondheim, Norway, from 7 to 11 August 2003, with the financial support of the Government of Norway. The Sub-Committee made a number of important recommendations and identified specific activities to be addressed to promote the responsible development of aquaculture in both developed and developing countries. (see COFI/2005/4 and COFI/2005/Inf.14)

R. Implementation of recommendations of the First Session of COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture (para. 53)

- A. Recommendations made at the First Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture were incorporated, to the extent possible, within the existing programmes and some 15 new activities recommended by the Sub-Committee were added to PWB 2003 and 2004-2005 and a number of them implemented in 2003. Examples include: (i) Review of national aquaculture forecasts; (ii) Organization of meetings at government level on commercial aquaculture in Africa; and (iii) encouraging the participation of stakeholders in aquaculture risk assessments.

R. *Support to NACA-type arrangement in the Americas and Pacific islands (para. 56)*

- A. Two studies on options for the potential networkings of the NACA-type arrangements in the Americas and Africa were conducted respectively. The Thirteenth Session of CIFA that was held in Entebbe, Uganda, from 27 to 30 October 2004, endorsed the proposal for Africa. An expert meeting was held in Panama City from 6 to 8 December 2004 to analyse the results of the Latin America study and to further examine the feasibility of NACA-type arrangements in the region. COPESCAL will review the proposal for Latin America and the Caribbean at its next session in 2005, and a study on national aquaculture sector overviews in 12 Pacific islands has also been conducted to facilitate future cooperation among the states in the region.

R. *Increased support to promoting aquaculture in Africa (para. 57)*

- A. In response to the COFI:AQ recommendations, a number of activities have been conducted in 2003 and 2004 in support of aquaculture development in the African continent, including the study on promotion of commercial aquaculture development and its contribution to food security and poverty alleviation, the FAO-WARDA Regional Workshop on Integrated Irrigation and Aquaculture held in November 2003 in Mali, the Workshop of National Aquaculture Development Strategy in Dec 2003 in Cameroon, and the FAO Workshop on Small-scale Aquaculture in Africa in March 2004.

R. *Increased collaboration between COFI Committees on Fish Trade and Aquaculture (para.53)*

- A. Collaboration has been strengthened between the two Sub-Committees. The Second Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture reviewed strategies to improve the safety and quality of aquaculture products. The recommendations of the Session on issues related to safety and quality standard of aquaculture products, and products traceability and labelling were brought to the attention of the Ninth Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade.

R. *Capacity building and institutional strengthening for WTO multilateral trade negotiations, etc. (para. 40)*

- A. Undertook studies, produced training material, organized training courses and provided support to FAO Members on WTO relevant issues such as market access (tariffs, SPS/TBT agreements), anti-dumping, subsidies, dispute settlement and labelling.

4. *OUTCOME OF THE TECHNICAL CONSULTATION ON IMPROVING INFORMATION ON THE STATUS AND TRENDS OF CAPTURE FISHERIES, ROME (25-28 MARCH 2002)*

R. *Printing and dissemination of a Strategy for Improving Information and Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries (para. 65)*

- A. The document was published in Arabic, Chinese, English, French and Spanish and widely disseminated.

R. *Seek extrabudgetary funds to implement strategy on status and trends reporting under FishCode Programme (para. 66)*

- A. The Strategy was discussed at Sessions of FAO RFB's and promoted within countries, with other regional fishery bodies and donors. Project start-up funding has been secured through contributions to the FishCode Trust by Japan, Norway and the United States of America.

Additional donor support is being solicited. Strategy STF Project operations commenced in November 2004.

R. *Monitoring implementation of the Strategy on Status and Trends Reporting (para. 67)*

- A. A question was included in the “Questionnaire for monitoring progress on implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related instruments”.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FAO EXPERT CONSULTATION ON IDENTIFYING, ASSESSING AND REPORTING ON SUBSIDIES IN THE FISHING INDUSTRY (ROME 3-6 DECEMBER 2002)

R. *Accelerate work in relation to the impact of subsidies on fisheries resource sustainability and sustainable development (para. 71)*

- A. FAO is preparing for studies of the impact of subsidies in developing countries taking into account the views expressed by a large number of developing countries for such studies to include the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development. A Technical Consultation on Subsidies in the Fisheries Sector was held in Rome, Italy, from 30 June to 2 July 2004.

R. *Promote cooperation and coordination with relevant Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) on subsidies issues in the field of fisheries (para. 71)*

- A. The Third Meeting of the *ad hoc* Group of Intergovernmental Organizations (IGO's) on work programmes related to subsidies in fisheries was held at FAO Headquarters from 23 to 25 July 2003. Eight IGOs participated at the meeting which, *inter alia*, discussed the current work programme on subsidies and the methodologies used by the participating organizations to establish the effects and impacts of subsidies. There was general agreement that the FAO proposed work programme constituted a very important first step in the analysis of historical impacts of fisheries subsidies in individual fisheries. The *ad hoc* Group of Intergovernmental Organizations (IGO's) on work programmes related to subsidies in fisheries did not meet in 2004. This was considered unnecessary given that staff of IGO involved in subsidies issues met on a number of occasions in the first half of the year at meetings organized by OECD, UNEP and FAO.

R. *Convene Technical Consultation on Subsidies (para. 73)*

- A. The Technical Consultation was held in Rome, Italy, from 30 June to 2 July 2004. Members requested the Secretariat to prepare a detailed outline of both a short-term and a long-term work programme for presentation to the Twenty-sixth Session of COFI in March 2005.

6. STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING THE SUSTAINABLE CONTRIBUTION OF SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES TO FOOD SECURITY AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION

R. *Elaborate technical guidelines on increasing the contribution of small-scale fisheries to food security and poverty alleviation (para. 84)*

- A. An Expert consultation was held from 5 to 8 July 2004 in Rome and elaborated preliminary draft guidelines are being finalized by the Secretariat.

7. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ECOSYSTEM APPROACH TO FISHERIES MANAGEMENT TO ACHIEVE RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES RESOURCES AND TO RESTORE FISHERIES RESOURCES AND THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

R. *Develop an adapted ecosystem approach to fisheries toolbox on small-scale fisheries (para.90)*

- A. Extra budgetary resources are being sought for this activity. Some work on this topic is being undertaken through a cooperative project between FAO and the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem Programme (BCLME). The 3-year project, Ecosystem Approaches for Fisheries (EAF) Management in the BCLME, started in January 2004. It involves Angola, Namibia and South Africa and will be addressing both large and small-scale fisheries.

R. *Undertake a range of additional activities to better encapsulate and facilitate the process of adoption of EAF (para. 93)*

- A. The guidelines are now available in three official languages (English, French and Spanish) and work is being done to identify and develop proper indicators and reference points in cooperation with SCOR and others (see also paragraph 27).

R. *Intensify collaboration with regional fishery bodies on EAF (para. 93)*

- A. The issue has been discussed at meetings of Regional Fishery Bodies (CECAF, WECAFC, GFCM).

8. REVIEW OF MAJOR PROGRAMME 2.3 FISHERIES

R. *Dissemination of information on measures adopted by regional fishery bodies relating to deep seas fisheries (para. 26) and inclusion of deep seas fisheries in the agenda of COFI-26 (para. 106)*

- A. The Deep Sea 2003 Conference was held in Queenstown, New Zealand, from 1 to 4 December 2003 with FAO's technical collaboration. Proceedings from the Conference are being published. The subject has also been discussed at Sessions of FAO regional fishery bodies and the agenda of this session (see agenda item 8, COFI/2005/6).

R. *Maintaining the fisheries library (ensure its functionality as a unit) (para. 104)*

- A. The Fisheries Branch Library is receiving reduced funding from GILB for journal subscriptions and main library services have been markedly reduced. The Fisheries Department is providing some support to the extent that a reduced budget allows.

R. *Attribution of the Margarita Lizárraga Medal (para. 105)*

- A. The Margarita Lizárraga Medal for 2002-2003 was presented to the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF), an international non-governmental organization based in Chennai, India, for its comprehensive, sustainable and catalytic initiatives that have mobilized grassroots support and enhanced human capacity building for implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

9. OTHER MATTERS

R. *Include IUU fishing in the agenda of the Thirty-second Session of the FAO Conference with a view to calling the attention of Members to this issue (para. 110)*

- A. The Conference adopted Resolution 3/2003 which, *inter alia* calls upon States, regional fisheries management organizations and other interested parties to take action to prevent, combat and eliminate all aspects of IUU-Fishing.

Annex I

List of Meetings, Workshops and Seminars organized in the framework of the Code of Conduct

- Expert Consultation on Fishing Vessels Operating Under Open Registries and their Impact on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (Miami, USA, 23-25 September 2003)
- Workshop on the Implementation of the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in the Pacific Islands: A Call to Action (Nadi, Fiji, 27-31 October 2003)
- FAO Regional Workshop on the Elaboration of National Plans of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing – Southern and East Africa Subregion (Harare, Zimbabwe, 24-28 November 2003)
- Technical Consultation to Review Progress and Promote the Full Implementation of the IPOA to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing and the IPOA for the Management of Fishing Capacity (Rome, Italy, 24-29 June 2004)
- Technical Consultation to Review Port State Measures to Combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (Rome, Italy, 31 August – 2 September 2004)
- FAO Regional Workshop on the Elaboration of National Plans of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (Penang, Malaysia, 10-14 October 2004)
- FAO Regional Workshop on the Elaboration of National Plans of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (Port of Spain, Trinidad, 22-26 November 2004)