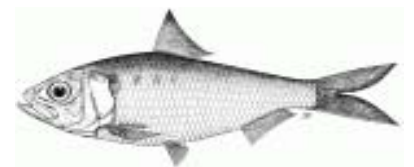


ASIA-PACIFIC FISHERY COMMISSION

Review of the role of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission as a Regional Consultative Forum



ASIA-PACIFIC FISHERY COMMISSION (APFIC)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
PART 1 - INSTITUTIONAL BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS HISTORY AND BACKGROUND OF APFIC .	3
HISTORY AND BACKGROUND OF APFIC	4
DELIBERATIONS ON THE FUTURE OF APFIC	5
THE FAO AND THE ROLE OF REGIONAL FISHERIES BODIES	8
FISHERY INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS	11
TECHNICAL ISSUES THAT MAY BE ADDRESSED BY RFBS, WITH PARTICULAR RELEVANCE TO APFIC	12
OTHER REGIONAL FISHERIES BODIES, ARRANGEMENTS AND FORA CONCERNING FISHERIES IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION.	13
OPPORTUNITIES AND SYNERGIES FOR APFIC'S ACTIVITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	16
PART 2 - REFORMING APFIC TO MEET MEMBER'S EXPECTATIONS	18
VISUALIZING THE "REGIONAL CONSULTATIVE FORUM" CONCEPT	19
RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE FORM OF A CONSULTATIVE REGIONAL FORUM FOR APFIC	20
ISSUES THAT APFIC WILL FACE	25
THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FAO	26
INCLUSIVITY	26
THE AGENDA FOR THE FORUM	27
MEMBER DELEGATIONS	27
CHANGING THE EMPHASIS OF THE AD HOC TECHNICAL WORKING GROUPS	28
DISSEMINATION OF THE OUTCOMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS	28
CAPACITY OF THE APFIC SECRETARIAT	29
COSTS	29
LIST OF ANNEXES TO THIS REPORT:	30

ANNEXES

LETTER OF THE FAO DG TO MEMBERS (INCLUDING ORIGINAL ATTACHMENT OF EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF APFIC	31
SUMMARY OF REPLIES RECEIVED FROM APFIC MEMBER COUNTRIES	35
FISHERY BODIES IN THE INDO-PACIFIC REGION	36
OTHER SELECTED ENTITIES CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES RELATING TO FISHERIES AND OTHER AQUATIC RESOURCES, OR ACTING AS CONSULTATIVE FORA IN THE INDO-PACIFIC REGION .	43
GEF COASTAL AND MARINE ECOSYSTEM PROJECTS IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION AS OF JUNE 2002.....	50
OTHER SELECTED REGIONAL FORA ON FISHERIES	51
PROPOSAL FOR THE FORM AND FUNCTION FOR APFIC TO ACT AS A REGIONAL FORUM.....	52
OPTIONS FOR THE SCHEDULING OF AN APFIC REGIONAL CONSULTATIVE FORUM	54
REVIEW OF THE APFIC AGREEMENT AND RULES OF PROCEDURE IN THE LIGHT OF THE PROPOSED ROLE OF APFIC AS A REGIONAL CONSULTATIVE FORUM	58
PROPOSED OPERATIONAL DETAILS AND RULES OF PROCEDURE THAT ARE REQUIRED FOR APFIC TO PERFORM THE FUNCTION OF A REGIONAL CONSULTATIVE FORUM.	67
LIST OF PERSONS MET OR CONSULTED	72

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADG	Assistant Director General (of Fisheries in the FAO)
AFSSRN	Asian Fisheries Social Science Section (of the Asian Fisheries Society)
AOMM	APEC Ocean-related Ministerial Meeting
APAARI	Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
APFIC	Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BOB-IGO	Bay of Bengal Intergovernmental Organization
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
COFI	Committee on Fisheries (of the FAO)
CPPS	Permanent South Pacific Commission
CWP	Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
ExCo	Executive Committee (of APFIC)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FAO-RAP	FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
FFA	South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency
FIGIS	FAO Fisheries Global Information System
FIRMS	Fishery Resources Monitoring System
GOFAR	The Asia-Pacific Group of Fisheries and Aquatic Research
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIWA	Global International Waters Assessment
GOOS	Global Ocean Observing System
GPA	Global Plan of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities
IATTC	Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission
ICSU	International Council for Science
IGO	Inter-governmental organization
IMO	International Maritime Organisation
INFOFISH	Intergovernmental Organization for Marketing Information and Technical Advisory Services for Fishery Products In the Asia and the Pacific Region
IO-GOOS	Indian Ocean Regional Alliance (of the Global Ocean Observing System)
IPHC	International Pacific Halibut Commission
IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
IOC-SCOR-	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission-Scientific Council on Oceanic
GLOBEC	Research-Global Ocean Ecosystem Dynamics (joint working group)
IOFC	Indian Ocean Fishery Commission (now abolished)
IOTC	Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
IPOA	International Plan of Action
IUU	Illegal, unregulated and unreported (fishing)
LME	Large Marine Ecosystem
MRC	Mekong River Commission
NACA	Network of Aquaculture Centers in Asia-Pacific
NEAR-GOOS	North East Asia Regional Alliance (of the Global Ocean Observing System)
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NPAFC	North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission

Pacific-GOOS	Pacific Regional Alliance (of the Global Ocean Observing System)
PEMSEA	Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia
PICES	North Pacific Marine Science Organization
PSC	Pacific Salmon Commission
RECOFI	Regional Commission for Fisheries
RFB	Regional Fishery Body
SAP	Strategic Action Programme
SEAFDEC	Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center
SEA-GOOS	South East Asia Regional Alliance (of the Global Ocean Observing System)
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SWIOFC	South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WCPFC	Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Pacific Ocean
WIOTO	Western Indian Ocean Tuna Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WSSD	World Summit for Sustainable Development

Executive Summary

This document reviews and analyses the background to the development of APFIC as a Regional Consultative Forum. The consultant's report addresses the question "How can APFIC act as a consultative forum that is responsive to Members needs?" and is provided in the first instance for the deliberations of the APFIC Executive Committee.

Part 1 of the document acknowledges the importance of fisheries and aquaculture in the Asia-Pacific region and globally. In recent years APFIC, the FAO's regional fishery body, has become inactive and needs to renew its role in support of the fisheries issues of the wider region. The report examines the history of APFIC's own deliberations (that have taken place over the last approximately eight years) over the role the Commission should play in the future. The report summarizes Members' responses to a letter of the FAO Director General on this subject, and concludes that there is support for APFIC adopting the role of a Regional Consultative Forum. It is suggested that APFIC's major role is to provide a forum for Member nations to discuss fisheries issues and to formulate recommendations for action - particularly on trans-boundary issues and issues common to groups of Members across the wider Asia-Pacific. The report considers the requirements for APFIC performing this role. The established and emerging position and activities of other bodies and international arrangements directly concerned with fisheries are examined. By reviewing recent FAO literature on Regional fisheries bodies (RFBs) the report identifies specific responsibilities of RFBs and areas (particularly requirements for fisheries information, technical improvements and capacity building) of importance to the Asia-Pacific region which could be considered as subject matter for the Forum's future deliberations.

In Part 2 of the document, the possible structure, schedule of meetings and the implications of the adoption of the Regional Consultative Forum concept are discussed. The major recommendations are that, given the large number of regional bodies and international arrangements active in aspects of fisheries, aquaculture and coastal and marine science across the region, that the Regional Consultative Forum should include other RFBs and relevant organizations with regional activities. This will promote the sharing of information, raise awareness of solutions to common problems, and help avoid overlaps and redundancy in the future. The setting of the agenda for the Regional Consultative Forum should be a widely inclusive process and be managed by the APFIC Secretariat. As well as information exchange and an ability to establish the state of the region's fisheries, the major outcomes of the Forum will be endorsed by APFIC and will be used to guide the work of APFIC, its Secretariat and its Ad Hoc working groups in the subsequent period. As APFIC is the designated FAO-Regional Fishery Body, the outcomes of APFIC's deliberations and its recommendations need to be disseminated widely, principally to FAO's Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and to meetings of other RFBs. Opportunities to use the recommendations to inform policy making for the region's fisheries should also be developed.

The Consultative Regional Forum is proposed as a biennial event and two alternative schedules for the holding of APFIC Meetings are provided. The schedules seek to ensure appropriate development, review and endorsement of regional recommendations on fisheries by Members, and to provide these recommendations to inform FAO's Committee on Fisheries. The Forum concept encourages interaction between Members on issues of common concern as well as the treatment of fisheries interactions with larger scale environmental and inter-sectoral

management. However, the more broadly inclusive Regional Consultative Forum is viewed as a replacement of the traditional APFIC Symposia, so that relatively few, if any, modifications to the APFIC Agreement or Rules of Procedure are foreseen. The Executive Committee, and subsequently the full Session of the Commission, will be required to decide on the form and structure of the Consultative Forum and its scheduling, to advance the implementation of the concept and the new way of working. To aid the decision making, the report provides analyses of the issues associated with the uptake of the Forum concept by APFIC, including the proposition that the Forum be pursued as a major regional event in fisheries with donor support.

Part 1 - Institutional background & analysis

History and background of APFIC

APFIC (The Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission) has a more than 50-year history and is one of the longest established regional fishery bodies¹ (or RFBs). The area of competence, the Asia-Pacific, is the biggest producer of fisheries and aquaculture globally. The FAO has recognized the important role that RFBs play in acting as a bridge between international instruments and agreements and the national level of management. RFBs have particular opportunities in dealing with trans-boundary issues and issues common to groups of nations (e.g. straddling stocks, unification of approaches and capacity building to meet fishery or related trade requirements). In former times, APFIC was active in joint scientific investigations of stocks and in fisheries projects, particularly in the South China Sea.

Both the latter and the Bay of Bengal Programme benefited from almost a decade of support from the UNDP. APFIC has a history of holding effective Symposia on biotechnical and trade issues of relevance to the region, and the publication of these outcomes and the findings of its other technical committees or Working Groups. However, APFIC has not been invested with a fisheries management responsibility by its Member nations, and its activities in recent years have been constrained by financial issues, and the growth of a large number of other sub-regional bodies and agreements concerned with the Asian seas and its fisheries. The FAO, which continues to supply the support for the secretariat of APFIC from the regional office of the FAO for Asia and the Pacific, has sought to make all its RFBs created under article XIV of the FAO Constitution, more self-sufficient in action and financing. However, in the Asia-Pacific region, nations are already contributing to the large number of the other fisheries organizations that have arisen more recently, as well providing Members' contributions directly to the FAO. They have thus found it difficult to provide more funds for the work and potential projects of APFIC.

In addition, the existence of many other bodies, some of them well supported by other international sources of funds, competes with the previous role APFIC played as a RFB. The wider Asia-Pacific region is relatively heterogeneous, and research and management approaches at the level of its individual seas have become more common.

In the Pacific, the FFA (and the regional or species-specific tuna commissions such as CCSBT), and the SPC provide the technical and legal support, as well as a consultative forum for the fisheries issues of the region. The previous FAO-UNDP supported Bay of Bengal Programme has been superseded by the development of an intergovernmental body for that area². The Indian Ocean Fisheries commission has been disbanded by the FAO, and the IOTC has specific management responsibility for tuna in this sub-region. The South China Sea is addressed in part by large marine ecosystem initiatives (PEMSEA/UNDP) and by the activities of ASEAN countries linked to SEAFDEC. The Yellow sea is the subject of a large GEF-supported project. The UNEP regional seas programmes also contribute to seas level approaches in different parts of the region.

¹ Menasveta, D. (1998) APFIC: Its Evolution, Achievements and Future Direction (50th Anniversary of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission). RAP Publication 1998/15

² The relationship between APFIC and the new IGO remains an outstanding issue for APFIC as a Special Session of APFIC in Rome formally endorsed the merger of the Committee for the Development and Management of Fisheries in the Bay of Bengal (BOBC) of the Indian Ocean Fishery Commission (IOFC) into APFIC: Report of the Special Session and the Ad hoc Legal and Financial Working Group of APFIC, RAP Publication 2000/04, 46p.

There are many bilateral arrangements between countries of the region supporting large-scale coastal or fisheries initiatives (e.g. the COREMAP project in Indonesia on coral reefs supported by the World Bank; the marine resources assessment programmes in Indonesia and Philippines supported by the Asian Development Bank etc.). NACA is a well-recognised and supported intergovernmental agency for the development of aquaculture in the region, together with the aquaculture component of SEAFDEC in the Philippines. INFOFISH has become a respected source of trade statistics and analyses for commercial fisheries and aquaculture. WorldFish Center carries out international research projects on aspects of fisheries and aquaculture, including socio-economic analyses and policy support. The MRC has particular intergovernmental responsibility for the Mekong River Basin, although apart from aquaculture the inland waters of the region are not covered regionally except by the FAO-RAP (and see Annex III for distinctions in the establishment and mandate of these different organizations).

Deliberations on the future of APFIC

Despite the earlier history of APFIC³, the Commission has been challenged more recently as to its future direction and the role that it plays in regional fisheries. APFIC therefore commissioned reviews of its potential future makeup and the outcomes of this further study and review⁴ of the options for APFIC are given in box 1.

Box 1: APFIC: Its changing role - Summary outcomes of the report by Menasveta, RAP Publication 2000/5

The report recommends future focus on: Fisheries information and management; marine fisheries management; fisheries policy and planning; a regional consultative forum.

- Suggests that APFIC:
- Considers a sunset clause e.g. that it continue to exist until 2010
- Continues to maintain close liaison with [RFBs in the Asia region], perhaps through a consultative forum.
- Requires advice on a secretariat of the forum, a decision on the frequency of consultations and the appropriate TORs (which might include):
 1. Keep under review the state of fishery resources, the development of aquaculture and the status of the fishing industry of the region;
 2. Identify gaps or possible areas on which all of the bodies and arrangements in the region might focus in order to strengthen efficiency;
 3. Discuss regional fisheries and aquaculture issues of interest to the

³ Menasveta (1998) op cit. It was already suggested that, given the rise of other institutions with different mandates, APFIC should perhaps return to regional agenda setting. A focus on marine fisheries management was favoured based on a sub-regional, individual seas approach (i.e. to the Yellow Sea, South China Sea, and Bay of Bengal).

⁴ Menasveta, D. (2000) APFIC: Its changing role. RAP Publication 2000/5.

- countries in the region and to donor agencies;
4. Provide input and guidance for a regional programming workshop(s) involving all concerned states, partners and donor agencies;
 5. Submit those regional issues that have global implications for the consideration and action by the FAO Committee on Fisheries;
 6. Monitor the progress in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in the region, and
 7. Identify projects which have a high degree of overlapping and seek ways to reduce such overlapping.
- Noted that Integrated Coastal Area Management (ICAM) is an aspect of regional fisheries management – as well as shared stock issues.

At its twenty-seventh Meeting, in September 2001, the Commission considered the future of APFIC in detail based on the Menasveta report (2002) and other documents, including a survey of members⁵. Eleven responding Member countries voted yes to APFIC becoming a Regional Consultative Forum. However 13 Members also agreed to the status quo, and six countries said that they would contribute to collaborative regional projects of interest to those Members. Only one Member country conditionally supported APFIC becoming a Regional Fisheries Management Organization.

Notwithstanding its financial uncertainty, the same session of the Commission agreed that:

1. APFIC should continue to function;
2. APFIC should have a more focussed and well defined programme of action that is responsive to the needs of its Members;
3. APFIC could implement cooperative research and development initiatives;
4. APFIC could assume the role of a consultative forum; and
5. There is a need for continued support for capacity building and transfer of technology in sustainable fisheries management and development for both marine and inland fisheries.

⁵ RAP Publication 2001/18. Report of the Twenty-seventh Session of Asia Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC), Manila, Philippines, 19-21 September 2001, 17p. Appendix D of the Commission's report gives the outcomes of a survey of Members in which four options for the future of APFIC had been described. The meeting also considered, *inter alia*, RAP 2000/5 op cit.; the Report of the Ad Hoc Legal and Financial Working Group (APFIC/CM/01/4); and "Future direction of APFIC" (APFIC/CM/01/6).

However, the greater self-reliance urged of regional fisheries bodies by FAO Council Resolution 13/97 (see below) has financial implications for APFIC Members and the question of the provision of support to APFIC was still not clarified. The Commission had been informed that FAO would continue to provide the necessary support to the APFIC secretariat in carrying out its functions, but that there would be no prospect for increasing this level of support in the foreseeable future⁶. Some Members expressed difficulties in providing mandatory contributions. However, as the majority of the Members attending this session had no mandate to discuss the financial question related to the future of APFIC, the Commission requested that the Director General of FAO invite the Members of APFIC to reaffirm their continued interest in, and commitment, to the Commission.

The FAO Director General duly circulated a letter (appended to this report as Annex I) requesting Members to confirm their interest in the continuation of APFIC and to identify the financial or in-kind contributions that could be used to support the Commission. The responses of Members to the letter are summarised in Annex II. Of the 14 responses received, eight specifically supported the concept of APFIC continuing as a consultative forum, and others identified the need for a continuation of a regional coordinating mechanism. In terms of potential contributions, Japan identified the possible use by APFIC of savings from the Japanese Trust fund to the FAO Fisheries Department. One other Member agreed in principle to provide contributions, subject to government approval. The majority of Members thought that contributions should be voluntary rather mandatory, with a continuation of the current practice of Members supporting their respective participation in Meetings. Three Members indicated that they would be prepared to contribute to APFIC project activities according to their interest or actual participation in such projects. Two Members specified that they could provide in-kind contributions to the activities of APFIC. Four Members said that they were unable to provide financial support to APFIC.

In summary, on the two occasions therefore that the Members have been surveyed, the majority of Members has expressed a clear wish for APFIC to take on the role of a “Regional Consultative Forum”. It had been suggested that “in such a role, APFIC could act as a forum to discuss emerging issues relating to fisheries, trade and sustainable management facing the member countries. It was also noted that this option could enhance dialogue and international cooperation and coordination amongst regional fishery bodies and prospective donors, so that the opportunities and challenges in fisheries sustainability in the region could be given due visibility”⁷. The remainder of the current report describes the goals, subject matter, form and arrangements that APFIC may need to consider in the adoption of a role as a Regional Consultative Forum. Key factors in making choices amongst options are the evolution and requirements of Regional Fisheries Bodies more generally, and the activities of the large number of other bodies and arrangements concerned with fisheries or the wider aquatic environmental issues in the Asia-Pacific region.

⁶ para 21, of the Report of the Twenty-seventh Session of the Commission.

⁷ Para. 28, in APFIC, Report of the Executive Committee, Sixty-eighth session, Bangkok, Thailand, 5-7 July 2000, 20p (RAP Publication 2000/12).

The FAO and the role of regional fisheries bodies

The FAO Conference at its Fourth Session in 1948, approved the establishment of the “Indo-Pacific Fisheries Council (IPFC)” (now APFIC) under Article XIV of the FAO Constitution. Conventions and Agreements concluded under Articles XIV and XV of the FAO Constitution give more flexibility to members in the development of the Agreements and for a greater degree of autonomy, compared for instance with Commissions and Committees established under Article VI of the FAO Constitution (Part R of the Basic Texts of FAO, which was revised by Resolutions 8/91 and 13/93 of the FAO Conference in November 1991 and 1993 respectively)⁸. As an Article XIV body, APFIC has a considerable independence from FAO, including the ability of the Commission to have an autonomous budget, an independent Secretariat, as well as the establishment of trust funds for its programmes of work. The Agreement may also be amended by the Members, the only condition being that amendments must be consistent with the purposes of FAO and the provisions of the FAO Constitution⁹. This means that the mechanisms by which regional and sub-regional fishery organisations are established or restructured in order to discharge their conservation and management duties effectively depends entirely on the political will of States which are parties to these bodies¹⁰. However, as the APFIC Secretariat has carefully pointed out¹¹ bodies established under Article XIV are intended to be full international agreements which entail financial and other obligations from the Members going beyond those already assumed under the Regular Programme of the FAO.

It has become increasingly difficult for FAO to fund RFBs with a limited budget whilst, at the same time the demand for effective fisheries management organizations is increasing in all regions^{12, 13} (and see paragraphs 12-14 following). The FAO has considered how best to improve the functioning of statutory bodies under its umbrella. The FAO Conference in 1997, conscious of the continuing need to enhance the efficiency of the Organization and its governance in a time of financial challenge, resolved (Resolution 13/97¹⁴) to eliminate Statutory Bodies that are obsolete, to ensure more flexible task-oriented and time-bound working arrangements for those that remain, and to limit the creation of new Bodies to those that are strictly necessary. It further recommended that Statutory Bodies that have a regional focus, move towards increased self-financing and of enhancing the responsiveness of such bodies to the needs of their members. Indeed FAO Resolution 13/97 invited *inter alia* the regional bodies created under Article XIV “to seek where appropriate, increasingly to provide such bodies with their own financial resources, or through the establishment of autonomous budgets financed from mandatory contributions”. The Commission observed that as FAO would not be able to provide increased financial assistance, that there was an increased requirement for the contributions of members. If these were not forthcoming, it would not be appropriate for the Commission to maintain the status quo. In the context of the current discussion, APFIC Members have the

⁸ Described, with the implications for APFIC, in Menasveta, 1998, op cit.

⁹ Para 66, in Report of the Twenty-fifth Session of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC), Seoul, Republic of Korea, 15-24 October 1996, 45p (RAP Publication 1996/40).

¹⁰ (Mareshi, 1996).

¹¹ Paras 21 –23, of the Report of the Twenty –seventh session of the Commission

¹² FAO 1996 FIPL/C916 FAO, “The role of FAO Regional Fisheries Bodies in the conservation and management of fisheries”.

¹³ FAO 2003 FIPL/C985 “Summary information on the role of international fishery organizations or arrangements and other bodies concerned with the conservation and management of living aquatic resources”, 114p.

¹⁴ FAO, 1997. Text of Resolution 13/97 Review of FAO Statutory Bodies. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/W7475E/W7475e0f.htm>

responsibility for the life, re-orientation, activities, support or closure of APFIC should they collectively so wish.

APFIC complied with Resolution 13/97 and at the Twenty-sixth Session of the Commission¹⁵ abolished its working groups (on fish technology and marketing; aquaculture and inland fisheries; marine fisheries; and on fishery statistics and economics). It also initiated the discussions leading to a re-examination of the role that APFIC should play in the future. An additional impact of the Resolution was that the Indian Ocean Fishery Commission (IOFC) was also abolished by the FAO.

Following on from the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) - agreed in 1982 and ratified in 1994 - and after the UNCED Conference in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, several major international instruments relating specifically to fisheries or to aspects of conservation of aquatic life and environments have been adopted by the international community¹⁶. It has sometimes been difficult, particularly for developing countries, to implement the agreements entered into. This has raised the profile of Regional fishery bodies as key components in the means of implementation of these agreements as RFBs have the opportunity to bridge the gap between international advice and the national responsibilities for fisheries management and decision making¹⁷. RFBs have the opportunity of raising awareness and increasing and unifying the capacity of national governments to undertake their management roles for fisheries envisaged under the Law of the Sea Convention.

For these reasons, the FAO has paid increasing attention to the role of RFBs and has provided summary information on their membership, regions of interest, mandates and activities (FAO, 1996, updated in 2003¹⁸). The role of RFBs has been reviewed by FAO¹⁹, also based on a questionnaire summarized in the box below.

Regional bodies or arrangements fulfil their missions principally through the following activities:

- Collection and provision of scientific information and data in support of management
- Serving as technical and policy forums – which is important for information concerning governance to be exchanged
- By taking action pertaining to the conservation, management and responsible utilization of resources

¹⁵ Report of the Twenty-sixth Session of Asia Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC), Beijing, People's Republic of China, 24-30 September 1998, RAP Publication 1998/23, 41p.

¹⁶ This includes, in summary form: 1993, FAO Compliance Agreement; 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement; 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing; The International Plan of Action (IPOA) on Reducing the Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Longline fisheries; IPOA on the Conservation and Management of Sharks; IPOA on the Management of Fishing Capacity; IPOA on the Prevention, Deterrence and Elimination of IUU Fishing.

¹⁷ Para. 23, in FAO, 1996 - FIPL/C916 op cit.

¹⁸ Ref 12 updated by FAO 2003 - FIPL/C985 (ref 13, op cit).

¹⁹ FAO 2000 - FIPL/C959 "Regional fisheries bodies and governance: issues actions and future directions", 46p.

RFBs can be of several types and functions: they can be management bodies with mandates for specific species (such as tuna e.g. IOTC), for specific seas or areas, and mandated by intergovernmental agreements or conventions (e.g. CCAMLR). Others are scientific bodies designed to provide advice to nations bordering particular seas (e.g. ICES), or they can be advisory bodies focussing on regional issues within which fisheries play a part amongst wider agricultural, cultural and economic issues (e.g. SPC). While APFIC has been developed within the framework of the FAO, other regional fishery bodies have also grown up under different international or regional auspices, and other RFBs with a major role in the Asia-Pacific region are described in Annex III, augmented by other international initiatives on the Oceans.

To further the contributions of RFBs to global fisheries improvement, the FAO has facilitated meetings between FAO and non-FAO regional fishery bodies. The success of the first meeting in 1999²⁰ has prompted two follow up meetings to date ^{21, 22}, now timed to follow the biennial Meetings of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI). Previously there had been no mechanism to reflect the views and experiences of non-FAO RFBs in the deliberations of COFI²³. However, given the large number of RFBs globally it is unlikely that such meetings will remain effective platforms for all possible parties. For this reason, there is a strong incentive for the FAO-RFBs to provide a lead role for such deliberations among RFBs and other international arrangements within a region, and to provide the collected regional inputs into such meetings and to COFI.

The major subjects and outcomes of these reviews and meetings conducted by and on behalf of the FAO have revolved around governance, fisheries management, technical issues and fisheries information. The Asia-Pacific region is large and approaches to fisheries and environmental management are better suited to the component seas or ecosystems. As noted above, the survey of APFIC members showed a distinct preference that APFIC remain an advisory rather than a regional management organization. In this case, the governance issues are relatively less complicated and are referred to in relation to the Regional Consultative Forum concept below (Annex VII). However, many of APFIC's future planning documents and responses to the FAO surveys list the acquisition and provision of fisheries information as a priority for the Commission and its Members across the wider region.

²⁰ FAO 1999 - FIPL/R597 "Report of the Meeting of FAO and non-FAO Regional Fishery Bodies or Arrangements", Rome, Italy, 11-12 February 1999.

²¹ FAO 2001 – FIPL/R645 "Report of the second meeting of FAO and non-FAO regional fishery bodies or arrangements", 26p.

²² FAO 2003 – FIPL/R703 "Report of the Third Meeting of Regional Fishery Bodies", 26p.

²³ See statement by ADG Hiyashi, in reference 20

Fishery information requirements

The roles for RFBs in relation to fisheries information have been identified as follows:

- RFBs have opportunity to establish multi-faceted approach to fishery statistics and trend reporting (ref 19). This includes opportunities to contribute to the requirements of The Coordinated Working Party (CWP) on fisheries statistics (ref 20) and to FIRMS, which could be broadened to include fisheries institutions and management regimes and (later) socio-economic data (ref 22). There are needs for a regional statistical database for the collection/distribution of statistics, implementation of the precautionary approach, strengthening capacity to deal more effectively with conservation and management issues, coastal communities, inland fisheries management, and aquaculture (APFIC response to survey; ref 13). Rules and Procedures are required to be adopted for modern collection and sharing of data with and rules on confidentiality (ref 19).
- The scope of data can be improved to help measure the performance of international instruments (ref 19). Information can be developed to monitor the success of fisheries management regimes and state of implementation of international approaches and agreements (e.g. the precautionary approach and ecosystem management approach). This requires greater information flow between RFBs and other management bodies (ref 20).
- The aim should be to produce information by natural management units and ecosystems. Countries produce national data - not aggregated by water bodies, ecosystems or drainage basins or even shared stocks. So the geographical entities on which fisheries and aquaculture are managed and developed have to be specified, and enhanced by data from trade sources and the processing industry and shared across national boundaries. There is an opportunity here for RFBs to provide guidance linked to FIGIS and the technical work of implementing partners (ref 20).
- There is scope to link fisheries data reporting to accommodate external factors affecting the management of fisheries (ref 20). This calls for wider collaboration between RFBs and other international activities and large marine ecosystem approaches (e.g. PEMSEA, Regional Seas Conventions and the Living Marine Resources element of GOOS) (refs 21, 22).
- RFBs provide a forum and expert filter through which fisheries and environmental information could be distilled, synthesized and disseminated to policy makers (footnote 75 to ref 13).

Technical issues that may be addressed by RFBs, with particular relevance to APFIC

A number of technical issues that are potentially important for APFIC to address have been raised in earlier meetings of the Commission and in reviews^{24, 25}. To these may be added the following drawn from the recent literature of the FAO on the roles of RFBs, and considering the issues of the Asia-Pacific region.

- RFBs, if not themselves scientific bodies, require independent scientific advice (ref 19).
- RFBs should safeguard the ability to propose and seek support for cooperative regional projects (ref 19).
- Technical matters for consideration include the precautionary principle, indicators, the ecosystem approach to fishing (EAF), and conservation and trade issues, e.g. eco-labelling (ref 19).
- The need to integrate fisheries and environmental information into useful advice. The need to understand the larger marine ecosystem supporting the managed species, the ecosystem effects of fishing, and the general need for valuation and understanding of ecological processes (ref 13).
- Inclusion of small scale, multi-species fisheries in [the Asia-Pacific] area creates a different category of issues compared with the regional management of single stocks. There is a need to identify “management units” required for good governance (ref 20).

APFIC’s response to the FAO questionnaire (ref 13) had been to note the need for a statistical database for the collection/distribution of statistics, implementation of the precautionary approach, strengthening capacity to deal more effectively with conservation and management issues, coastal communities, inland fisheries management, and aquaculture. This intent was reflected, in part, in the formulation of the ad hoc working groups of APFIC established in 1998, namely on Capture fishery data collection; Rural aquaculture; and Food safety²⁶.

²⁴ Para 58 of the Report of the Twenty-fifth Session of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission, Seoul, Republic of Korea, 15-24, October 1996. RAP Publication 1996/40, 45pp.

²⁵ Para 30 in APFIC 2001. Future Direction of APFIC. APFIC/CM/01/6; also para 49 Report of the Twenty-sixth Session of Asia Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC), Beijing, People’s Republic of China, 24-30 September 1998, RAP Publication 1998/23, 41p.

²⁶ Para 50 of the Report of the Twenty-sixth Session of the Commission (op cit)

Other regional fisheries bodies, arrangements and fora concerning fisheries in the Asia-Pacific region.

Although historically APFIC has been seen as the most obvious convener of Member states on supra-national issues relating to fisheries, as alluded to in paragraph 2, other bodies and potential fora have emerged in the Asia-Pacific Region. These include other RFBs, e.g. SEAFDEC (in the ASEAN and South China Sea region), but also increasingly specialist organizations concerned with particular aspects of the wider fisheries sector (such as INFOFISH, NACA, WorldFish Center etc.). Also considered are large scale international initiatives concerned with sub-regional seas or the global aspects of fisheries and the marine environment. Annex III A-C lists the roles and establishment of some of these organizations. Many are now well established and some have traditionally had the opportunity to act as observers to the Commission's main sessions. It is assumed that the close liaison between APFIC and, for example, SEAFDEC, NACA, INFOFISH and the WorldFish Center will continue, emphasizing the complementarity and cooperative approaches to the region's fisheries. This liaison can be productively expanded to other RFBs and international organizations, including the development donors to the fisheries of the region, as they are also sources of technical expertise. The following paragraphs therefore look selectively at some of the less often described international initiatives and fora which, however, contribute to the general regional activities within which APFIC must choose its niche and future *modus operandi*.

The "Asia-Pacific Group of Fisheries and Aquatic Research" (GoFAR) is a group of originally 13 nations and regional and international organizations (see Appendix III B) formed under the auspices of the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI)²⁷. APAARI is the regional apex body representing the national agricultural research systems in the region. The original intention was to increase the voice of fisheries and aquatic science and its representation in the wider agricultural planning and implementation in the Asia-Pacific Region. The WorldFish Center provides the secretariat. Three donor-sponsored meetings have taken place to date (1999, 2001 and 2002) with up to 19 nations attending. Many of the regional fisheries organizations (listed in para. 2 and Annex III) also attend the meetings of GoFAR and provide updates to other participants. Subjects have included regional priority setting in fisheries and aquaculture, and regional collaboration. The focus of the next meeting (in preparation as a proposal to donors) is "research management". A draft constitution for the Group to frame further activities is being drawn up. The expressed need for this group may indicate that fisheries departments and their priority concerns, are not well linked to wider intersectoral issues in the region.

The Asian Fisheries Society²⁸ is a scientific society organized for fishery professionals in Asia to communicate, share information and cooperate with each other. Since its establishment the Society has grown from the 14 charter members who signed the constitution to over 2,800 members from 75 countries and territories. It has three national sub-branches (India, Taiwan and Japan), two subject-specific sections, namely the Fish Health Section, and the Asian Fisheries Social Science Section (AFSSRN), and Asian chapters of global societies (like the World Aquaculture Society) which are all active in scientific exchanges, workshops and publication.

²⁷ Dr. M.V.Gupta, WorldFish Center, personal communication to the consultant and see: <http://www.worldfishcenter.org>

²⁸ See: <http://www.compass.com.ph/~afs/aboutdsociety.html>

However, the major Society event is a triennial conference; the 7th will be held in 2004 on the subject of “New Dimensions and Challenges in Asian Fisheries in the 21st Century”.

As well as sharing information amongst scientists and national managers, there is a need to involve fisheries and fisheries management with a) policy makers and b) intersectoral issues in regional decision-making and management. For this reason the outcomes of the technical discussions carried out, for instance, at the ASEAN-SEAFDEC’s Millenium Meeting in 2001 were provided to a Meeting of ASEAN Ministers and resulted in the formulation of a joint Declaration supporting a plan of action. Similarly, the East Asian Seas Congress which is being organized in December 2003, under the auspices of PEMSEA, has adopted a format which will allow the outcomes of the meeting to be presented to policy makers. As an issue for APFIC in the development of the consultative forum concept is the form that such a forum might take, the PEMSEA Conference will be considered for its value as a model.

The East Asian Seas Congress is part of the regional implementation of the WSSD Commitments for the Seas of East Asia organized by GEF/UNDP/IMO and PEMSEA. It will be organized around two themes: Theme A will be a “Review of international and national efforts towards addressing the main sectoral concerns regarding the seas of East Asia”, and will include sessions on maritime transport; land-based pollution; fisheries and aquaculture; and biodiversity. Theme B will address “Essential cross-sectoral approaches and processes towards achieving sustainable development” and will hold sessions on: local governance and alliances; skills and expertise; finance, investment and corporate responsibility; national coastal policies and regional collaborative arrangements. It is expected to be followed by a Ministerial Forum to pave the way for a new level of Regional collaboration for the Seas of East Asia.

This conference is expressly designed to be wider than the biotechnical issues related to fisheries. Participants are selected for their expertise in the areas for discussion and do not necessarily represent national positions or GEF- related project results. The intention of the sessions²⁹ is, in a relatively short time, to distill the current issues in Asian fisheries through a keynote address, several short papers and panel discussions. It has the apparent advantage of placing fisheries issues in the broader coastal and maritime governance context, and of bringing these issues directly to decision makers.

The Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) is an international framework for the systematic acquisition and dissemination of data relating to the past, present and future states of the marine environment. It consists of two parts or modules: a global ocean module concerned primarily with detecting and predicting changes in the ocean-climate system and improving marine services and, secondly, a coastal module concerned with the effects of large-scale changes in the ocean-climate system and of human activities on coastal ecosystems. The FAO is a joint sponsor of the coastal module which includes the collection of data on living marine resources. Opportunities for collaboration between GOOS, RFBs, the Regional Seas Programmes and the large marine ecosystem initiatives have been highlighted in both FAO Meetings concerning RFBs, and in GOOS documents. Indeed GOOS has requested the FAO to identify the fisheries meta-data which would be useful in assessing change in marine ecosystems. It is to be expected that regional fishery bodies, and their Member nations, would be assisted by closer

²⁹ From a review of the draft programme for the Fisheries and Aquaculture session, provided to the consultant by Dr Johann Bell of the WorldFish Center, appointed conveners of this session by PEMSEA.

integration into ecosystem approaches and data collection for the benefit of fisheries and other aspects of coastal management³⁰. GOOS is extending its capacity to work regionally through liaison with RFBs having a principally scientific advisory role (like ICES for the North East Atlantic) and through the development of regional alliances (such as NEAR-GOOS, IO-GOOS and SEA-GOOS in Asia and Pacific-GOOS in that region, see Annex III B).

The current UNEP Regional Seas Programme (encompassing the gulf of Thailand and the South China Sea) includes fisheries and habitat resource assessments carried out with APFIC Member countries. The SEAS Congress, as we have seen, will also specifically include aspects of fisheries. This and other regional, GEF-funded, large marine ecosystem projects active in the Asia-Pacific are listed in Annex III C.

Thus, as APFIC considers the design of a new regional consultative forum, to avoid unnecessary overlaps it is obliged to consider the types and subject matter of other regional and global fora that have taken place or are planned. The majority of the bodies, organizations and arrangements listed in Annex III conduct periodic conferences and reviews. Some selected examples of recent major events with regard to fisheries and aquaculture are provided in Annex IV.

³⁰ FAO 1999 - FIPL/R597 "Report of the meeting of FAO and non-FAO regional fishery bodies or arrangements", 54p. And, UNESCO (2003). The Integrated Strategic Design Plan for the Coastal Ocean Observations Module of the Global Ocean Observing System. GOOS Report No.125. IOC, UNESCO, Paris, France. 190 pages. (see especially chapter 7 on implementation)

Opportunities and synergies for APFIC's activities and responsibilities

It is suggested that APFIC still has a key, but different role to play in the Asia-Pacific region. There are very few supra-regional mechanisms that can bridge the gap between the sub-regional fisheries bodies that are emerging, the regional fisheries management organizations, marine environmental programmes and all the other diverse actors that relate to fisheries in the region:

For marine fisheries management, other sub-regional groupings of nations are not sufficiently well established to consider fisheries issues –

- For the South China Sea, SEAFDEC plays a role but membership is limited to ASEAN members
- The Bay of Bengal Intergovernmental Organization has a limited membership (4 countries)
- The Yellow Sea is not governed by a management body³¹ (although a large Yellow Sea LME project exists which includes China and Korea).
- The FFA and SPC provide management advice and a forum for Pacific Island nations on tuna and other fisheries in the Pacific.

For inland fisheries and aquaculture –

- There is a near absence of inland fisheries bodies (other than the Mekong River Commission) in Asia.
- Aquaculture is well covered by NACA but NACA is not well positioned within its mandate to deal with inland fisheries regionally.

Members are not seeing rapid improvements in the state of regional marine and coastal fisheries, and biomass declines and open access regimes persist. Socio-economic analyses and approaches to small-scale fishers, who characterize the region, are still not extensive. Member states are simultaneously also asked to address the implementation of international instruments for the improvement of fisheries and the coastal environment. Evidence of impact is low and countries still require mutual support, common learning and capacity building for progress to be made. The socio-economic state of fishers is poorly described and little ameliorated. As noted above, inland fisheries and non-traditional aspects of aquaculture are only recently included in the portfolio of NACA. Inland water fisheries are somewhat neglected at the regional level,

³¹ The three north-eastern Asian countries China, Korea and Japan ratified the UN Law of the Sea Convention in 1996. Separate fisheries agreements have come into effect between China and Japan (1997), Japan and Korea (1999), and between China and Korea (2001) laying the foundation for further cooperation under the UNCLOS framework (see <http://www.momaf.go.kr/eng/intl/cooper.asp>) and <http://test.china.org.cn/e-white/6/6-VI.htm>)

outside the Mekong Basin countries, although their importance is increasingly recognised. The Members are challenged individually and in common to meet the growing requirements for international trade, health and environment issues. There are few other opportunities to filter fisheries information vertically: both “down” to local management, and “up” to provide parts of international ecosystem approaches and new decision-making opportunities in favour of the sector.

APFIC is first and foremost a Member’s organization, and the reduced participation by Members in the recent past may mark the perception that APFIC’s discussions and recommendations have not led to concrete subsequent activities to tackle the issues described above. It is for this reason that this report stresses the need for the recommendations of APFIC (achieved through a synthesized regional approach and knowledge of current trends and activities) to be taken up substantively. This is a responsibility of the Members and not just the APFIC Secretariat. Information exchanges on the state of fisheries, and the issues and solutions to the implementation of international agreements on fisheries management, are of importance to both the nations of the region and to the FAO in relation to its global mandate. An area of particular importance to the region is capacity building. There is a need to develop practical managers versed in a range of skills, direct advisory assistance to support their growth, and advice on how and where to source funding support for countries working in partnership. APFIC has an important role to play through facilitating collaboration amongst Members and other stakeholders in these developments.

There are also opportunities brought about through a conscious change of roles and the timing of change. The FAO recognizes the importance of RFBs, when they are active and of value to their Members. APFIC must change to survive, and its Members and Secretariat through substantial past discussion and the polling of Members are aware of the needs. This includes the requirement to introduce a sunset clause into APFIC’s activities to ensure the validity of its future undertakings and benefit to Members. If the Members wish to use the forum to be a bulletin board for fisheries requirements in the region, and to design new initiatives, it is timely to formulate a Secretariat-led or other *ad hoc* means to do this, and to become more entrepreneurial.

Both the wishes of Members, and the foregoing analysis, suggest that a continuing need exists for regional coordination of fisheries, amongst the Member nations of APFIC, and between them and the international and global projects which affect fisheries and environmental management in the region.

Part 2 - Reforming APFIC to meet Member's expectations

Visualizing the “Regional Consultative Forum” Concept.

APFIC is now at a point where it must try and define what sort of consultative forum it will provide to meet the needs of Members and the mechanisms by which it will operate. There are general considerations arising from the review of RFBs (not including the management function) which can help guide the development of such a forum. Earlier deliberations of APFIC have also received suggestions from Members, or made clear recommendations³².

The Report of the APFIC Special Session in Rome, 1999, noted Members suggestions on this subject:

Australia - *APFIC should play a coordinating role between FAO and the regional bodies on issues concerning fisheries management and international instruments in the region. It should organise annual meetings on the state of aquaculture and fisheries in Asia and the Pacific and present the regional issues to global forums such as the Committee on Fisheries.*

Thailand - *APFIC should serve as a coordinating body in transferring and exchanging technologies and capacity development, as well as assisting Members on emerging issues in world fisheries.*

Australia – *suggested that APFIC should be able to foresee potential activities in a response to fast changing fisheries and to develop strategic plans to assist Members on these issues.*

The Report of Ad hoc Legal and Financial Working Group held in 2000 includes the following recommendations:

Recommendation 3: *the APFIC Secretariat should facilitate (for) Member States in the harmonization of fishery policies, taking into account international instruments and arrangements.*

Recommendation 4: *APFIC should initiate activities to serve as the regional consultative forum on fisheries and aquaculture in the Pacific region in order to discuss emerging issues and to avoid duplication of efforts among international and intergovernmental fishery bodies in the region.*

Recommendation 6: *As the urgent need for accurate and timely fishery data and information is well recognized, APFIC should focus its efforts in the promotion of data and information exchanges in the region.*

³² APFIC 2000. Report of the APFIC Special Session (Rome, Italy, 17 February, 1999) and Report of the Ad Hoc Legal and Financial Working Group (Bangkok, Thailand, 6-8 July). RAP Publication 200/04, 46p.

Recommendation 7: *In order to facilitate effective implementations of provisions given in the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, the FAO Compliance Agreement and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, APFIC should focus its attention to the strengthening of national capacities as well as legal and institutional framework, in cooperation with other relevant international organizations.*

Recommendation 8: *As the role of aquaculture in providing food security for rural population(s) is well recognised, APFIC should focus on providing assistance towards this goal, in cooperation with FAO and other relevant organizations.*

It is suggested that sufficient detail exists in the foregoing historical review, and in the deliberations of APFIC Members over the last eight years, to provide the basis for a potential model for an APFIC Consultative Forum.

Recommendations on the form of a Consultative Regional Forum for APFIC

The potential functions and requirements of the Regional Consultative Forum are provided as an outline for discussion (in Annex V). The major goal of the Forum is to provide the opportunity for countries and international stakeholders to examine the state of the region's fisheries, and to make strategic and practical recommendations on how to address these issues. Without limiting the subject matter of the Forum, the principal areas for consideration are suggested to be; information exchange on fisheries (resulting in a state of the region's fisheries report); assessment of the implementation of international agreements and requirements; evaluation of new approaches and identification of means to obtain new information and to raise regional capacity for any of these functions. The outcomes of the Forum will serve to guide the development of APFIC recommendations on trans-boundary issues or issues common to several Members. A successful Consultative Forum will reduce overlaps and redundancies in regional fisheries programming and provide additional weight for the dissemination of the resulting recommendations to COFI and other international fora, including donor meetings.

The benefits to the Members of such a forum will include open discussion of the regional fisheries issues, and opportunities for technical and policy learning and exchange. There will be the possibility of promoting follow up in international fora, with fellow Member nations of APFIC on common issues including capacity building. There will be the opportunity to raise fisheries issues within the context of neighbouring state and international large-scale projects on the environment and wider inter-sectoral issues of marine, coastal and inland water management.

If it is agreed that the Consultative Forum becomes the main means of APFIC implementing its functions laid out in the Agreement, then the form, timing and outputs of the Forum inevitably impinge on the other aspects of the structure and work of APFIC.

The following discussion therefore places the Consultative Forum concept in the context of the other activities of the Commission, rather than viewing the Forum as a stand-alone event. The following basic premises have been followed:

- That APFIC's major role is to provide a forum for Member nations to discuss fisheries issues and to formulate recommendations for action and amelioration of such issues which affect groups of states across the wider Asia-Pacific.
- That given the large number of regional bodies and international arrangements active in aspects of fisheries, aquaculture and coastal and marine science across the region, that the Consultative Forum should be inclusive rather than exclusive to share information, raise awareness, promote solutions to common problems and to avoid overlaps and redundancy in the future.
- That the setting of the agenda for the Regional Consultative Forum is also best served as a widely inclusive process to be managed by the APFIC Secretariat.
- That the Proceedings of the Forum will be published, and the Recommendations concerning shared or common issues of Members arising from the Forum will be endorsed by APFIC and will be used to guide the work of APFIC, its Secretariat and its Ad Hoc working groups in the subsequent period.
- That as APFIC is the designated FAO-Regional Fishery Body, the outcomes of APFIC's deliberations and its recommendations need to be disseminated widely, principally to FAO's Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and to meetings of other RFBs, but also to donor meetings and in other international fora, to promote awareness and appropriate actions and to inform policy making for the region's fisheries.

Giving due cognizance to the number of regional events on fisheries, the timing and requirements of COFI, and the ability of all stakeholders to meet commitments, the APFIC Regional Consultative Forum is proposed as a biennial event. Two options (or schedules - see Figures 1 and 2) are provided for consideration which are variations on this common theme, but have implications for the number, size and composition of additional APFIC-related meetings over a two year period.

Figure 1. Option 1 - An APFIC biennial Regional Consultative Forum

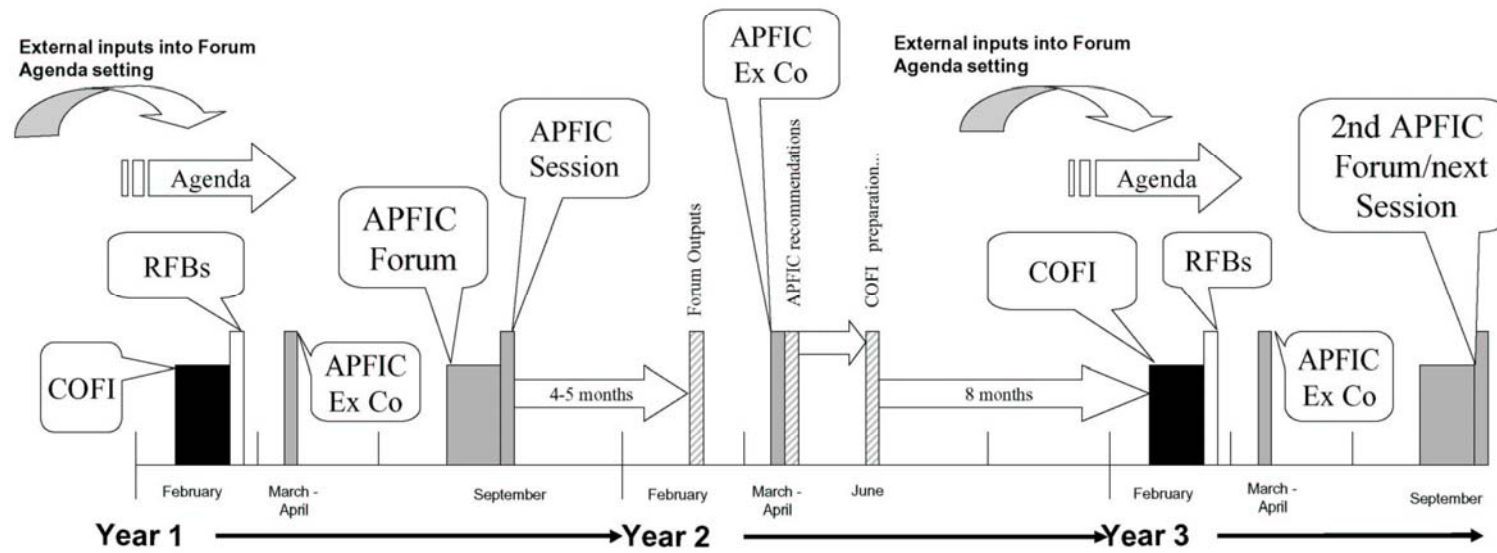
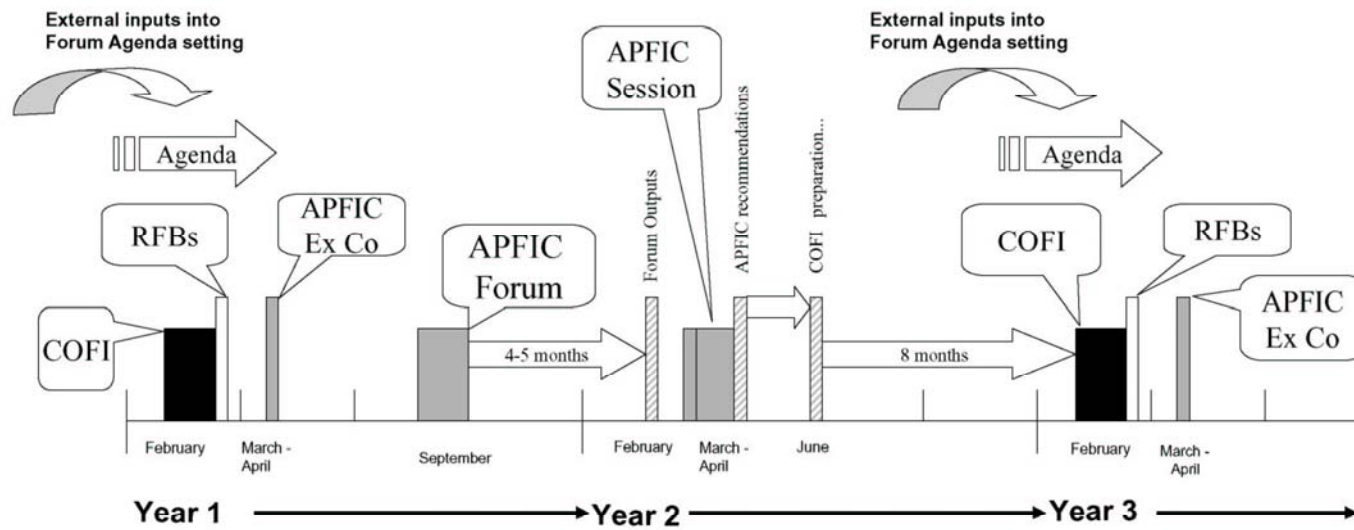


Figure 2. Option 2 - An APFIC biennial Regional Consultative Forum (separating the Consultative Forum and the APFIC Session)



Option 1 is depicted in Figure 1: The schedule takes note of the Biennial Meetings of COFI (currently in February of alternate years) and the associated RFB Meeting. The timing is based on being able to provide the outcomes and recommendations of the APFIC Forum as inputs into the preparatory stages for the next COFI Meeting. This option is based on the current rhythm of APFIC Meetings in which an Executive Committee precedes the major event of the Commission. In this case the Consultative Forum takes the place of earlier APFIC Symposia and is placed in conjunction with the Sessional Meeting of the Commission so that Members can attend both. A second Executive Committee Meeting is proposed around March or April of year 2 (of this abstract schedule) to formally endorse the recommendations and activities to be taken forward³³.

Option 2 is depicted in Figure 2: This schedule responds to the same issues of timing, representation and presentation of outputs as Option 1, but is based on the additional premise that an annual interaction of APFIC Members as a whole would be valuable for the continuity and vitality of APFIC. The proposal under Option 2 therefore separates the Consultative Forum in year 1, from the “regular” APFIC Commission Session which now occurs in year 2 (see Figure 2). It would thus serve to bring together fisheries decision-makers from the region in a year when there is no COFI or RFB Meeting. The Meeting of the Executive Committee might then revert to a biennial event (unless otherwise required). The APFIC Secretariat now has a greater role in the first synthesis of the outcomes and draft recommendations of the Consultative Forum. However, the regular session of the Commission (here March or April of year 2) is able to consider and endorse the outputs and recommendations of the Forum. This would allow greater scope for detailed face to face discussion in the finalization of the APFIC recommendations to COFI, and work plan for the Ad Hoc committees.

It could additionally provide the opportunity for direct interactions with donors/or senior decision-makers invited to the last day of such a meeting. This would be at the Commission’s discretion, to publicize requirements relating to the recommendations, or to raise fisheries issues at the level of inter-sectoral policy making. Current funding for support of APFIC and its Secretariat is insufficient to cover both Forum and Sessional Meetings of the APFIC Commission when held separately within the biennium, it is suggested that, under this Option, donor support will be required to be sought to meet the costs of the biennial Regional Consultative Forum as earlier suggested³⁴.

Under either option, assuming that the first Forum is held in 2005, three Regional Consultative Fora would be held in the period to the end of the decade. Decisions can then (2010) be made

³³ An additional premise regarding the timing of APFIC meetings arises from consideration of the SEAS Congress discussed in paragraph 22. Outcomes of scientific meetings can be developed into recommendations and discussion points to inform other fora directly. However, the development of recommendations, outputs and thoughtful work plans that reflect Member’s needs across the region are only likely to be developed following further development. Their endorsement by Members or other decision-makers requires to be made at a follow up Meeting. A potential criticism of formats in which a meeting of decision-makers’ is held directly following an international scientific conference is that the decision-makers’ meeting receives refined recommendations for endorsement which have been developed through fairly thorough prior preparation and consensus building. To develop truly participatory outcomes from the international conference, and in order to distil recommendations of utility to the Membership and the region, the meeting of the decision-makers who will endorse recommendations and plans of action, is required to be held at a suitable interval following the conference.

³⁴ This follows a suggestion made earlier. See para 35 of the Report of the Executive Committee, Sixty-eighth session, Bangkok, Thailand. RAP Publication 2000/12.

about its effectiveness and the continuity of the format, or indeed of the Commission, in line with the sunset clause.

It will be necessary for APFIC to examine and decide on one of these two schedules (given in greater detail in Annex VI), or a version thereof, to start the implementation of the Regional Consultative Forum concept. The rationale for the Regional Consultative Forum places more emphasis on regional exchanges between fisheries bodies and other players in assessment of trends and needs, and in agenda setting, and provides more explicit treatment of the outputs. However, it can be viewed as replacing the traditional APFIC Symposia. As such it requires relatively few alterations, if any, in the APFIC Agreement and Rules of Procedure (and an analysis is provided in Annex VII). Some operational aspects of the conduct of the Forum are also considered (Annex VIII) under the assumptions given in Annex VII and discussed in paragraph 31 above. The following section discusses some of the constraints that APFIC may face in reformulating its activities as a Regional Consultative Forum.

Issues that APFIC will face

An earlier critique³⁵ of the operation of APFIC listed several reasons for the contraction of its role and influence.

Chief amongst these were:

- Lack of funding
- A complacent attitude towards, and the lack of commitment to APFIC of some members
- Low participation and attendance at the sessions of the Commission and meetings of its subsidiary bodies
- Lack of implementation of recommendations
- Proliferation of regional and sub-regional bodies

It should be stressed that a similar lack of interest by Members in the Regional Consultative Forum proposed will lead inevitably to the demise of the organization. There will be some issues moving from a purely technical forum to one more attuned to providing policy outputs for the consideration of COFI and other players in regional marine management. Formulating open collaborative relations and interchange with the other players in the region will be key to making the forum advantageous for Members and other contributors - including the development of clear attitudes to the handling and use of regional information³⁶. Members have guarded the national prerogative for management of fisheries and so the responsibility for the demonstration of compliance with international instruments will also rest with participating

³⁵ Menasveta, D. RAP 1998/15 op cit.

³⁶ Despite the earlier APFIC recommendation (para 16 and ref 13), this report does not envisage that APFIC will itself be responsible for databases; rather it should identify data requirements and data management resources in the region (e.g. START acting on behalf of the UNEP-Regional Seas Programme), and encourage the development of data sharing protocols.

nations at the individual fishery level. However, it is anticipated that the adoption of the Regional Consultative Forum approach by the nations of APFIC will result in collaborative outputs, and improved knowledge and capacity to deal with fisheries as a component of large scale area management.

The relationship with the FAO

APFIC is a Member's organization representing the region of the world that has the highest capture fisheries and aquaculture production. It is an important voice that should be heard and which should inform global fisheries policy.

The Secretary of APFIC, an FAO regional fishery body, holds dual responsibility: to the FAO (as an FAO officer through the activities of the Regional office) and to the Member nations. In contrast, the direction of RFBs having management responsibilities (for species or areas) tends to be more independent. It is necessary that the priorities to which the different global and regional mechanisms of the FAO respond are clear but mutually reinforcing.

As far as APFIC is concerned therefore, a mechanism (here vested in the Forum) must be pursued for the development of independent recommendations to address the needs of regional fisheries issues. The Secretary is then very well placed to represent these issues to the global FAO forum, the Committee on Fisheries (COFI).

International responsiveness will result if the APFIC Forum is fully participatory and transparent in its workings, and the recommendations reflect the common requirements of Member states. It will then provide a blueprint on which the Members, and their international research and development partners, including the global programs of the FAO, can work with assurance.

Inclusivity

A question for the APFIC Consultative Forum is how broad it should be. In the first instance it might include: Member nations, the APFIC Secretary and FAO representatives, Observer nations, Regional Fisheries Bodies and international organizations (selected from those listed in Annexes II A and B), including Representatives of Regional Seas initiatives and of GOOS, and invited international experts to speak on specific topics (detailed in Annex VII). An attendance of up to sixty participants is anticipated.

It has been noted that the inclusion of fisheries management-related NGOs in RFB meetings has been useful, in general, to management outcomes³⁷. However, it has sometimes been difficult to determine representation, and for an organization of national Members like APFIC, the possible inclusion of such NGOs will require rule changes³⁸.

Alternatives are to encourage and invite their participation in the setting of the Forum's agenda (supported by this report), and/or to invite their participation in meetings with observer status. For the wider implementation of APFIC recommendations it will be necessary to consider

³⁷ See Swan (2003) op cit.

³⁸ Ibid.

opportunities to either present findings to fora which include (non-fisheries, inter-sectoral) decision makers, fisheries management NGOs and donors in the future.

A suggestion is made that under Option 2, one day of the APFIC regular session could be set aside for this purpose. In summary, the report recommends that APFIC implement the Forum concept initially by limiting participation to the range of players identified above, before considering wider participation from other agencies or regional fisheries-management NGOs in the future³⁹.

The agenda for the Forum

The agenda should be developed by the Secretariat taking note of the outcomes of the immediately preceding COFI and RFB Meetings, the requests of Members, and by soliciting suggestions from a wide group of stakeholders (listed above). The draft Agenda should be reviewed and endorsed by the APFIC Executive Committee. The Forum should be a mixture of position papers affecting regional fisheries (perhaps commissioned for this purpose in the first instance – or developed through the submissions of specific Ad Hoc Working Groups in later instances), national status reports (perhaps by seas-level groupings of nations and against guidelines issued by the secretariat) and reports on international regional seas or ecosystem projects as they affect the management of fisheries and cross-sectoral issues. Discussion sessions on a sub-regional seas basis will be appropriate in the first instance, followed by more detailed discussion on particular issues that may augment the status report and lead to recommendations. The tendency, with the inclusion of a large number of RFBs and Regional Seas projects will be to incline the agenda towards marine fisheries and (coastal) environmental issues. Appropriate time should be given to ensure coverage of inland fisheries and aquaculture issues.

Member delegations

A constraint on APFIC's efficiency in the past has been the level and appropriateness of Member's delegations to Meetings. APFIC has, and will continue, to perform at least two specific roles; as a forum for the development of recommendations and advice to the region requiring Member's decisions, and as a technical forum on specific issues relating to fisheries. Meetings required to take decisions on behalf of nations and the region must be attended by staff from the national fisheries directorate of the appropriate seniority.

Technical sessions of the Commission (and this will extend to the conduct of the Forum) should be attended by active managers with a broad grasp of current technical and operational processes. Ideally delegations will comprise persons with both types of responsibility, but this is not always possible. However, national representatives without either decision making or relevant technical, (socio-economic or policy) knowledge relating to fisheries and the aquatic environment are unlikely to profit the outcomes of meetings or report APFIC discussions effectively. It is suggested therefore that as part of the adoption of the Consultative Forum concept that Members consider identifying both senior representatives who will attend the

³⁹ The WorldFish Center has been mentioned previously and does not fall in the category discussed above because, although officially an international NGO with a global mandate, both it and the larger system to which it belongs (the CGIAR) are formally recognized by the FAO.

regular sessions of the Commission as well as technical focal points. The recommendation for the Forum to be supported as a donor-funded event will encourage the external support for one of these delegates.

Changing the emphasis of the Ad Hoc Technical Working Groups

It is the intention of the Regional Consultative Forum concept that the outcomes and recommendations are not only presented in different fora as policy advice, but that APFIC play an important role in the fulfilment of the recommendations. Members can pursue activities through bi-lateral means or adoption of group approaches and projects. Developed country Members of APFIC can assist by the provision of expert technical advice.

APFIC's technical expression may also be through the *ad hoc* working groups. It is suggested that rather than these groups being formulated on general thematic areas, that they are charged in the future with specific tasks arising from the Forum recommendations, are composed of both Members and additional experts where needed, and are abolished on completion of their tasks.

Dissemination of the outcomes and recommendations

The importance of APFIC is to the solution and management of trans-boundary and other common issues of affecting the fisheries of the Member countries. The primary target audience therefore for the outputs and recommendations of APFIC events are the Member countries themselves. To reach other national agencies that could assist in aspects of action plans (such as universities in capacity building as an example) the national delegate(s) must act as a conduit for the wider dissemination of outcomes within their respective countries. However, as we have seen there are many bodies and organizations addressing the same or similar issues and they too are a target audience. They will in part be served through the participation in the Forum. The Meetings of the FAO and other RFBs globally will form another target for dissemination of the messages and recommendations prepared by APFIC.

At the overall development level of the sector, and in intersectoral and environmental planning there are Ministries of Environment, Planning, Marine Affairs etc, and donors, and implementing agencies and NGOs working internationally and nationally. An outward looking APFIC will plan to use the outcomes and recommendations of the Forum and the deliberations of APFIC widely.

The involvement of different bodies and international organizations in the Forum almost immediately presents the opportunity of using their web-sites (e.g. UNEP/UNDP/GEF/GOOS/CGIAR etc.) to help raise the regional issues in varying contexts. Face to face meetings with other stakeholders to promote the outcomes of the regional fisheries issues on an agreed basis should be considered and planned.

Capacity of the APFIC Secretariat

The recommendations make calls on the capacity (time, manpower, skills) of the APFIC secretariat to organize a major Forum every other year and to provide the synthesis and report development for presentation to more than one international forum. There will be a role in the search for funds for the Forum (if Option 2 is taken up) and the synthesis and publication of outcomes. It may also be accompanied by guidance required of Ad Hoc bodies and the implementation of any other work plan that is agreed by APFIC.

In alternate years (if Option 2 is followed) there will be the (suggested) requirement to manage with and on behalf of APFIC a further meeting of regional decision-makers (or donors or possibly fisheries management NGOs). Support to the implementation of gap-filling projects collaboratively with Members, donors and other bodies will depend upon opportunity.

Costs

The FAO currently supports the activities of the APFIC Secretariat at a rate of US\$ 165,600 check for a two-year period. Assuming that Option 1 is chosen, the Forum is held in FAO facilities in Bangkok, and Members and other participants pay the costs of their own delegates, there will be relatively little increase in costs over current expenditures.

If, under Option 2, the main session of the APFIC Commission is considered as the event for Secretariat support, then the Forum is to be funded additionally from extra-budgetary resources. Rough estimates for the costs of a Forum are between US\$ 45-70,000 (see Annex VIII). It is suggested that a stakeholder meeting, which provided an authoritative report on the state of fisheries and aquaculture for the Asia-Pacific region, and identified issues and recommendations for the region and international projects, would be an attractive vehicle for support.

List of Annexes to this report:

- Annex 1** : Letter of the FAO DG to Members (including original attachment of extract from the report of the twenty-seventh session of APFIC, Manila, Philippines, 19-21 September 2001.) [Note that this is a photocopy of four pages]
- Annex II** : Summary of replies received from APFIC Member Countries.
- Annex III** : Other regional bodies and initiatives concerning fisheries or living aquatic resources management in the Asian region.
- Annex IV** : Other selected regional fora on fisheries.
- Annex V** : Proposal of a mandate for APFIC to act as a regional forum.
- Annex VI** : Options for the scheduling of an APFIC Regional Consultative Forum
- Annex VII** : Review of the APFIC Agreement and Rules of Procedure in the light of the proposed role of APFIC as a Regional Consultative Forum.
- Annex VIII** : Proposed operational details and rules of procedure that are required for APFIC to perform the function of a Regional Consultative Forum.
- Annex IX** : List of persons met or consulted in the development of this report
- Annex X:** : List of acronyms

Letter of the FAO DG to Members (including original attachment of extract from the report of the Twenty-seventh session of APFIC)



联合国
粮食及
农业组织

FOOD AND
AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE
UNITED NATIONS

ORGANISATION
DES NATIONS
UNIES POUR
L'ALIMENTATION
ET L'AGRICULTURE

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DE LAS NACIONES
UNIDAS PARA
LA AGRICULTURA
Y LA ALIMENTACION

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19 April 2002

Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC)

Reply requested by 30 June 2002

The Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has the honour to refer to the report of the Twenty-seventh Session of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC) held in Manila, Philippines, from 19 to 21 September 2001. An extract of this report is appended hereto as Annex I.

The Commission reviewed in great detail its status in light of several considerations, including Conference Resolution 13/97 adopted by the FAO Conference at its Twenty-ninth Session (Rome, November 1997) and, in particular, noted the severe financial constraints faced by the Organization, which do not allow FAO to increase its current level of support to the Commission. The Commission requested that the Director-General of FAO invite the Members of APFIC to reaffirm their continued interest in the Commission and, indicate, in light of the provisions of the above resolution, whether they would be prepared to effect contributions financially or in-kind to the Commission.

In line with the above, the Director-General hereby requests the Members of APFIC to indicate whether they are prepared to effect contributions, in cash or in-kind, to the activities of the Commission. The Director-General would appreciate receiving this reply by 30 June 2002. The replies would be considered at a subsequent session of the Commission.

H.E. The Minister for Agriculture
and Cooperatives
Bangkok

H.E. The Minister for Foreign Affairs
Bangkok

The Permanent Representative to FAO
Rome

EXTRACT from the Report of the 27th Session of APFIC, Twenty-seventh session of APFIC (Manila, Philippines, 19-21 September 2001) attached to the DG's letter to member countries

FUTURE DIRECTION OF APFIC

19. The Commission discussed the above agenda item on the basis of documents APFIC/CM/01/3-6. It concurred with the view of the Executive Committee that there was a need to strengthen regional cooperation in the implementation of global fisheries instruments and initiatives, including the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries as agreed upon by the FAO Ministerial Meeting on Fisheries (Rome, March 1999). It also concurred that there was a need for regular consultation and coordination amongst the key organizations in the region to avoid the duplication of effort and to contribute to the rational use of the limited funds available to the fisheries sector.

20. The Commission agreed that APFIC had contributed during its 52 years of existence to the conservation and rational utilization of fishery resources in the Asia-Pacific region. However, its future remains uncertain due to a number of factors, including financial implications and issues relating to Resolution 13/97 adopted by the FAO Conference at its Twenty-ninth Session (Rome, November 1997).

21. The Secretariat advised the Commission that FAO would continue to provide necessary support to the APFIC Secretariat in carrying out its functions, but there would be no prospect for increasing this level of support in the foreseeable future. It was stressed that APFIC belongs to its Members and that FAO serves only as a facilitator and coordinator. It was further emphasized that, being an Article XIV body, APFIC has a considerable degree of independence from FAO, including the ability of the Commission to have an autonomous budget and an independent Secretariat, as well as the establishment of trust funds for its programmes of work. The Secretariat cautioned, however, that in its current form, the limitations on the Commission's activities might raise the issue of the adequacy of its status as a body set up under Article XIV of the FAO Constitution.

22. The Secretariat elaborated on the international character of Article XIV Agreements and referred to in Part R of the FAO Basic Texts, which states that agreements entered into under the aegis of Article XIV are intended to be full international agreements. This entailed financial or other obligations from the Members, going beyond those already assumed under the Regular Programme of FAO. Should this not be the case, there would be "*no grounds for such an agreement, at least not in the legal form prescribed under Article XIV of the FAO Constitution*". In this context, it would be assumed that the Members of APFIC should take up specific obligations, going beyond mere participation in the work of the body thus established. As to the financial obligations to enable the effective implementation of the Commission's mandate, contributions by Members are required in cash or in kind. Contributions in kind could include expenses such as hosting or participating in a session of the Commission and/or conducting research or development activities as recommended by the Commission.

23. It was further explained that Resolution 13/97 invited *inter alia* the regional bodies created under Article XIV "*to seek where appropriate, increasingly to provide such bodies with their own financial resources, whether through co-operative programmes or voluntary contributions, or through the establishment of autonomous budgets financed from mandatory*

contributions". As FAO would not be able to provide increased financial support for the Commission, there was a need for increased contributions by its Members either under the form of mandatory annual contributions or otherwise. In this respect, it would not be appropriate to maintain the status quo of the Commission.

24. In the light of the above, the Commission proceeded to consider four possible options for the future direction of APFIC, presented in document APFIC/CM/01/6, based on the report of the ad hoc Legal and Financial Working Group, viz., (i) maintaining the status quo; (ii) implementing collaborative research and/or development initiatives; (iii) assuming the role of a regional consultative body as the Commission's main activity; and (iv) assuming the role of a regional fisheries management organization.

Option 1. Maintaining the status quo

25. It was noted that this option might have legal implications for the Commission which was established under Article XIV of the FAO Constitution as stated earlier. Furthermore, the Commission would be limited in its ability to provide assistance to its Members in enhancing fisheries sustainability, through the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. Out of the 18 Members represented at this Session, 13 Members expressed preference for this option, but with the proviso that there would be no mandatory financial contributions from the Members.

26. Some Members questioned whether under this option, APFIC continue to exist as an Article XIV body. It was clarified that, in the light of Resolution 13/97 of the FAO Conference in 1997 and Part R of the Basic Text of FAO and because APFIC belongs to its Members, the Member States of APFIC are required to seriously consider the possibility of providing contributions to the Commission, either in cash or in kind, whether in the form of mandatory annual contribution or contributions to Trust Fund for specific activities.

Option 2. Implementing collaborative research and/or development initiatives

27. The Commission noted that many of the high priority programmes of activities it endorsed at its 1998 session could be implemented through collaborative efforts. These included the collection, collation and dissemination of fishery information and statistical data; a fisheries management framework in the Bay of Bengal, and assessment of fish stocks and trends in production. It also noted that this option would enhance APFIC's ability to help strengthen national capacity building and transfer of technology in sustainable fisheries management and development. This option, however, would require financial and human resource contribution from participating Members and was supported by six Member States.

Option 3. APFIC assuming the role of a regional consultative forum

28. In such a role, APFIC could act as a forum to discuss emerging issues relating to fisheries, trade and sustainable management facing the member countries. It was also noted that this option could enhance dialogue and international cooperation and coordination amongst regional fishery bodies and prospective donors, so that the opportunities and challenges in fisheries sustainability in the region could be given due visibility. Eleven Members were in favour of this option as a future role of the Commission.

Option 4. APFIC as a regional fisheries management organization (RFMO)

29. The Commission considered the option for APFIC to become a truly regional fisheries management organization and concluded that it would create a number of difficulties as extensive amendments to the present agreement would be required. These would include the area of competence, specific unit stocks to be managed and funding mechanism for the organization's activities. In such a case, mandatory contributions would be required from the participating Member States as in the cases of a number of regional fishery bodies recently established or soon-to-be established within or outside the FAO umbrella. Six Members were explicitly not in favour of this option; one Member, however, considered this as a possible long-term transformation of the Commission.

30. The summary of the Members' positions on the above options with regards to the future direction of APFIC is given in Appendix D.

31. One Member mentioned that APFIC has already implemented the first three options to some degree. Some Members suggested that these options could be developed further with support from external funding, together with in-kind support from host countries and urged the Commission to pursue this matter further.

32. The Commission agreed that notwithstanding its financial uncertainty:

1. APFIC should continue to function;
2. APFIC should have more focussed and well defined programmes of action that are responsive to the needs of its Members;
3. APFIC could implement cooperative research and development initiatives;
4. APFIC could assume the role of a consultative forum; and
5. There is a need for continued support for capacity building and transfer of technology in sustainable fisheries management and development for both marine and inland fisheries.

Some Members expressed difficulties in providing mandatory contribution. However, the majority of the Members attending this session had no mandate to discuss the financial question related to the future of APFIC, the Commission requested that the Director-General of FAO invite the Members of APFIC to reaffirm their continued interest in and commitment to the Commission.

34. The Commission agreed that the provisions as stipulated in the APFIC Agreement remained valid, therefore, no amendments to the Agreement were required at this stage.

Summary of replies received from APFIC member countries

MEMBER COUNTRY	RESPONSE (As of 16 July 2003)
Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Future support to APFIC would be limited to potential involvement on a project by project basis.
Cambodia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Highlighted the need for regional solutions and coordinated approaches. ○ Not in a position to pay contributions.
India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ APFIC may assume the role of a Regional Consultative Forum. ○ Supports the existing practice of supporting delegates to meetings etc.
Japan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ APFIC to continue by assuming the role of a regional consultative forum. ○ Willing to provide financial support from savings of trust funds to the FAO Fisheries Department.
Korea, Republic of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Financial contribution to APFIC should be voluntary, in cash or in kind. ○ Choose to help cover the costs needed to conduct cooperative research or projects initiated by APFIC in which Korea takes part.
Malaysia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ APFIC should continue its existence and could act as a Consultative Forum. ○ Participation to be borne by respective Member countries.
Myanmar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Commission should continue taking the role of a consultative forum. ○ Willing to provide contribution in kind for activities of the Commission in Myanmar.
Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In favour of the continuation of APFIC assuming the role of a regional consultative forum.
New Zealand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Not in a position to provide a contribution to assist the activities of the Commission.
Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ APFIC should continue to function as Consultative Forum. ○ Not in a position to provide a contribution to APFIC activities.
Philippines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reiterated support to APFIC. ○ Not in a position to provide financial contribution at the moment.
Sri Lanka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Agreed in principle to effect contributions, subject to approval of the Government.
Thailand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ APFIC may act as regional forum, implement collaborative activities or continue as at present. ○ Willing to support contributions in kind.
VietNam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supports the continuation of APFIC as a Regional Consultative Forum. ○ Unable to pay contribution to APFIC.
Bangladesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No response
China, PR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No response
France	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No response
Indonesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No response
United Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No response
United States of America	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No response

Fishery Bodies in the Indo-Pacific Region

(Based on Swan, 2003 with additions)

Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC)		
Establishment	1948 International Agreement under aegis of FAO (Article XIV of FAO Constitution)	Main functions: "To promote the full and proper utilization of living aquatic resources by the development and management of fishing and culture operations and by the development of related processing and marketing activities in conformity with the objectives of its members"
Headquarters	FAO Regional Office Asia and the Pacific Bangkok, Thailand	
Area of competence	Indo-Pacific area (including inland waters)	
Membership	Australia, Bangladesh, China (People's Republic of), Cambodia, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea (Rep. of), Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, UK, USA, VietNam.	
Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Pacific Ocean (WCPFC)		
Establishment	Convention open for signature at Honolulu in September 2000. Prep Con V (for the establishment of a Commission) will take place in Cook Islands, 29 September to 3 October 2003)	Main functions: "To ensure, through effective management, the long term conservation and sustainable use of highly migratory fish stocks in the western and central Pacific Ocean in accordance with the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the 1995 UN Fish stocks Agreement."
Headquarters	Depository for the Convention is New Zealand	
Area of competence	West and Central Pacific	
Membership	19 states have signed the Convention and four states, namely Fiji Islands, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea and Samoa, had ratified the Convention (March 2002)	

Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC)		
Establishment	1993 International Agreement under aegis of FAO (Article XIV of FAO Constitution)	Main functions: "To promote cooperation in the conservation of tuna and tuna-like species and also promote their optimum utilization, and the sustainable development of fisheries"
Headquarters	Victoria, Seychelles.	
Area of competence	Indian Ocean and adjacent seas north of the Antarctic Convergence	
Membership	Australia, People's Republic of China, Comoros, Eritrea, EC, France, India, Iran, Japan, Korea, Republic of Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Oman, Pakistan, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, UK.	

Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)		
Establishment	1979 International Convention	Main functions: "To gather and interpret information on tuna; to conduct scientific investigation; to recommend proposals for joint action for conservation."
Headquarters	La Jolla, California, USA	
Area of competence	Eastern Pacific Ocean	
Membership	Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Guatemala, Japan, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, USA, Vanuatu, and Venezuela.	

International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC)		
Establishment	1953 International Convention	Main functions: “To coordinate scientific studies relating to the biology, population dynamics and fishery of Pacific halibut; to formulate regulations designed to develop the stocks of Pacific halibut to those levels which will permit optimum yield.”
Headquarters	Seattle, Washington, USA.	
Area of competence	North Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea	
Membership	Canada, USA.	

North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC)		
Establishment	1993 International Convention	Main functions: “To recommend to the Parties measures for the conservation of anadromous stocks and ecologically related species in the Convention area; to promote the exchange of information on any activities contrary to the provisions of the Convention; to review and evaluate enforcement actions taken by the Parties; and to promote the exchange of catch and effort information and provide a forum for cooperation among the Parties with respect to anadromous stocks and ecologically related species”
Headquarters	Vancouver, BC, Canada.	
Area of competence	North Pacific Ocean and its adjacent seas north of 33 degrees north.	
Membership	Canada, Japan, Russian Federation, USA.	

Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC)		
Establishment	1985	Main functions: "To prevent overfishing and provide for optimum production and to provide for each country to receive benefits equivalent to the production of salmon originating in its waters."
Headquarters	International Convention Vancouver, BC, Canada.	
Area of competence	Northwest Pacific	
Membership	Canada, USA.	

Permanent South Pacific Commission (CPPS)		
Establishment	1952	Main functions: (i) To determine protected species; open and closed seasons and areas of sea-fishing and hunting times, methods and equipment; prohibited gear and methods; and to lay down general regulations for hunting and fishing, (ii) To study and propose to the Parties such measures as it considers suitable for the protection, defence, conservation and use of marine resources, (iii) To encourage scientific and technical study of and research into biological phenomena in the South Pacific, and (iv) To prepare general statistics of the industrial use of marine resources by the Parties, and to suggest protective measures based on the study thereof.
Headquarters	International Convention Guayaquil, Ecuador	
Area of competence	South-Pacific (East)	
Membership	Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru.	

Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI)		
Establishment	1999	Main functions: “To promote the development, conservation, rational management and best utilization of living marine resources as well as the sustainable development of aquaculture in the Area of the Commission.”
	under aegis of FAO Council	
Headquarters	Cairo, Egypt	
Area of competence	The Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman	
Membership	Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates	

Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)		
Establishment	1948	Main functions: “To provide a regional service which provides information, advice and direct assistance to the Pacific Community through SPC member governments, either individually or collectively, in using living marine resources in the most productive and responsible manner possible, in particular through fisheries stock assessment, marine ecosystem research, small-scale tuna fisheries development support, coastal fisheries management support and fisheries information and databases throughout the area of competence.”
	International Agreement	
Headquarters	Noumea, New Caledonia	
Area of competence	South Pacific, south of the Equator	
Membership	American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, France, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, UK, USA, Vanuatu, Wallis and Futuna.	

South East Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC)		
Establishment	1967 Agreement establishing the South Eastern Fisheries Development Center	Main functions: “Promote sustainable development of fisheries in the Southeast Asian region through research, training and information dissemination.”
Headquarters	Bangkok, Thailand	
Area of competence	Southeast Asian Region	
Membership	Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.	

South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)		
Establishment	1979 International Convention	Main functions: “To harmonize fishery management policies; to facilitate cooperation in surveillance and enforcement, processing, marketing and relations with third countries; to arrange for reciprocal access by member countries to their 200-mile zones.”
Headquarters	Honiara, Solomon Islands	
Area of competence	South Pacific (Central and West)	
Membership	Australia, Cook Islands, Fed. States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Narau, New Zealand, Niue, Pulau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Western Samoa.	

South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC)		
Establishment	Not yet established (Second intergovernmental consultation on the establishment of a South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission, held Antananarivo, Madagascar, 25-28 September 2001)	Main functions: "To harmonize policies with respect to fisheries; to determine relations with distant water fishing nations; to establish mechanism for fisheries surveillance and enforcement; to cooperate for fisheries development; to coordinate access to EEZs of the members."
Headquarters		
Area of competence	South West Indian Ocean	
Membership		
Western Indian Ocean Tuna Organization (WIOTO)		
Establishment	1991 International Convention	Main functions: "To harmonize policies with respect to fisheries; to determine relations with distant water fishing nations; to establish mechanism for fisheries surveillance and enforcement; to cooperate for fisheries development; to coordinate access to EEZs of the members."
Headquarters	Mahe, Seychelles	
Area of competence	Western Indian Ocean	
Membership	Seychelles, Mauritius, Comoros, India	

Other selected entities carrying out activities relating to fisheries and other aquatic resources, or acting as consultative fora in the Indo-Pacific region

(Compiled from different internet sources and personal communications to the consultant).

APEC Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation		
Establishment	1989 (Fisheries Working Group created in 1991)	Main functions: General: to give trade liberalization and economic cooperation further impetus and high-level commitment, to develop a spirit of community in the region and to promote sustainable growth and equitable development. The Fisheries Working Group focuses on: (i) The conservation and sustainable use of fisheries resources, (ii) Sustainable development of aquaculture and habitat preservation, (iii) Development of solutions to common resource management problems, (iv) The enhancement of food safety and quality of fish and fisheries products, (v) Sector-specific work relating to trade and investment liberalization and facilitation.
Headquarters	Secretariat, Singapore.	
Area of competence	The Pacific and Pacific rim countries.	
Membership	Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, China (People's Republic of), Hong Kong SAR, Indonesia, Japan, Korea (Republic of), Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Chinese Taipei (Taiwan), Thailand, USA, Vietnam.	

ASEAN - Association of South East Asian Nations		
Establishment	1967 (ASEAN-SEAFDEC Fisheries Consultative Group Mechanism, established 1998)	Main functions: “General: To accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development and to promote peace in the region. The ASEAN-SEAFDEC Fisheries Consultative Group currently undertakes efforts (i) To regionalize the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (ii) Fish-trade and environment, (iii) Information collection for sustainable pelagic fisheries for food security in the ASEAN region, and (iv) 5-year programme on Sustainable Fisheries for food security – with a current emphasis on fisheries management projects.”
Headquarters	Secretariat, Jakarta, Indonesia	
Area of competence	The ASEAN region	
Membership	Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam	

AFS - Asian Fisheries Society		
Establishment	1984	Main functions: “To act as a fisheries society for the wider Asia-Pacific region. Holding of a regular tri-ennial forum, holding of symposia, workshops and publication of outcomes.”
Headquarters	Quezon City, Philippines	
Area of competence	The wider Asian region	
Membership	(Scientific Society – not a national members organization)	

BOB-IGO - Bay of Bengal Intergovernmental Organisation		
Establishment	2003	Main functions: “Provide enduring regional cooperation among the Member countries of the Bay of Bengal region for fisheries development that aims at the socio-economic [improvement] of its fisheries and fish farmers.”
Headquarters	Chennai, India	
Area of competence	Bay of Bengal	
Membership	Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Maldives (to date)	

CWP - Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics		
Establishment	1959	Main functions: “To keep under continuous review requirements for fishery statistics for purposes of research, policy making, management, aqua standard concepts, definitions, classifications /methodologies for collection/ collation of fishery statistics”
Headquarters	Resolution of FAO Conference (Under Article VI-2 of FAO Constitution)	
Area of competence	FAO, Rome, Italy	
Membership	All oceans	
	Consists of International Organizations: CCAMLR, FAO, ICCAT, ICES, NASCO, NAFO, OECD, EC (EUROSTAT).	

GoFAR - The Asia-Pacific Group of Fisheries and Aquatic Research.		
Establishment	(First Meeting 1998, constitution currently being developed)	Main functions: “To promote the fisheries sector within APAARI and provide a network to strengthen regional collaboration on subjects of interest to all participants”
Headquarters	GoFAR is a member organization of APAARI; the secretariat of GoFAR is hosted by WorldFish Center, Penang, Malaysia.	
Area of competence	Asia-Pacific	
Membership	Membership is open to the member nations of APAARI – participants have included: Australia, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran, Korea (Rep.of), Lao PDR, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam and invited organizations, namely, APAARI, FAO, NACA, SEAFDEC, WorldFish Center.	

GEF - Global Environment Facility		
Establishment	1991	Main functions: “Major focus is on : (i) Climate change, (ii) Biological diversity, (iii) International waters, (iv) Ozone-layer depletion. Four Regional, Large Marine Ecosystem projects are currently being undertaken in the Asia-Pacific region: see Annex III C”
Headquarters	Global (82 projects), with approximately 29 national, area-specific or regional projects in the wider Indo-Pacific in mid-2002.	
Area of competence	Asia-Pacific	
Membership	The GEF is multilateral mechanism and with a membership of 168 states is the major international instrument for environmental funding.	

INFOFISH - The intergovernmental organization for marketing information and technical advisory services for fishery products in the Asia-Pacific Region

Establishment	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	Main functions: “ ????? ”
Headquarters		
Area of competence		
Membership		

MRC - Mekong River Commission

Establishment	1995	Main functions: “To promote and coordinate sustainable management and development of water and related resources for the countries’ mutual benefit and the people’s well-being by implementing strategic programmes and activities and providing scientific information and policy advice ”
Headquarters	Secretariat, Phnom Penh, Cambodia	
Area of competence	Mekong River Basin	
Membership	Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam.	

NACA - Network of Aquaculture Centers in Asia-Pacific		
Establishment	1980 (as FAO-UNDP project); 1990 as intergovernmental organization)	Main functions: “To promote rural development through sustainable aquaculture. Core activities are : (i) Capacity building through evaluation and training, (ii) Collaborative research and development through networking, (iii) Development of information and communication networks, (iv) Policy guidelines and support to policies and institutional capacities, and (v) Aquatic animal health and disease management”
Headquarters	Secretariat, Bangkok, Thailand	
Area of competence	Asia-Pacific region.	
Membership	Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China (People’s Republic of), Hong Kong SAR, India, DPR Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam. Other participating (non-member governments include) Indonesia, Iran, Korea (Rep. of), Lao PDR and Singapore.	

PICES - North Pacific Marine Science Organization		
Establishment	1992	Main functions: “To promote and coordinate marine scientific research in order to advance scientific knowledge of the area concerned and of its living resources and to promote the collection and exchange of information and data related to marine scientific research in its area of competence”
Headquarters	Sydney, B.C. Canada	
Area of competence	North Pacific and adjacent seas	
Membership	Canada, Japan, China (People’s Republic of), Korea (Rep. of), Russian Federation, USA.	

UNEP Regional Seas Programme		
Establishment	1974 (following the UN Conference, Stockholm). Revitalised in 1995 by the Adoption of the Global Plan of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA).	Main functions: “The regional seas programme collaborates with the GPA and the Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA), the latter being GEF-financed (see Annex iiiC).”
Headquarters	UNEP (HQ) Nairobi, Kenya; GPA Coordinating Office, the Hague, Netherlands, and Asia Regional Coordination Office, Bangkok, Thailand.	
Area of competence	13 regions of the world are covered by the RSP, including, South Asian Seas; East Asian Seas; North-West Pacific; South Pacific; and South East Pacific.	
Membership	A UN mechanism	
WorldFish Center		
Establishment	1977 (as ICLARM) (incorporated into the CGIAR in 1992)	Main functions: “Is committed to contributing to food security and poverty eradication in developing countries through research, partnership, capacity building and policy support on living aquatic resources management.”
Headquarters	Penang, Malaysia	
Area of competence	Global, with substantial research activities in Asia and the Pacific.	
Membership	A donor funded Center of the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR).	

GEF Coastal and Marine Ecosystem Projects in the Asia-Pacific Region as of June 2002.

Project Title	Country/region	Implementing Agency	GEF Allocation (US\$ m)	Total cost (US\$ m)
Building Partnerships for the Environmental Protection and Management of the East Asian Seas	Regional (Cambodia, China, Korea DPR, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Thailand, Vietnam)	UNDP	16.22	28.55
Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) of the Pacific Small Island Developing States.	Regional (Cook Islands, Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu)	UNDP	12.29	20.35
Reducing Environmental Stress in the Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem	Regional (China, Republic of Korea)	UNDP	14.74	25.05
Reversing Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and the Gulf of Thailand	Regional (Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam)	UNEP	16.75	33.15

(Source: http://www.un.org/Depts/los/general_assembly/contributions_texts/GEFannex.pdf)

Other selected regional fora on fisheries

(compiled from various InterNet sources and personal communications to the consultant).

Completed:

- Aquaculture in the third Millenium. Conference and Technical Proceedings under the auspices of NACA/FAO (held February, 2002)
- First APEC Ocean-related Ministerial Meeting (AOMM) held in Seoul, Korea, April 2002.
- ASEAN-SEAFDEC Conference on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security in the New Millennium "Fish for the People" - leading to a Ministerial declaration by ASEAN Ministers and a plan of action (held November 2001).

Planned:

- Asian Aquaculture Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, September 2003.
- Twelfth PICES (North Pacific Marine Science Organization) Symposium, Seoul, Korea, October, 2003.
- The East Asian Seas Congress, Penang, Malaysia, December, 2003.
- IOC-SCOR-GLOBEC Symposium on "Qualitative Ecosystem Indicators for Fisheries Management", Paris, France, March/April, 2004*.
- Fourth World Fisheries Congress, Vancouver, B.C., Canada, May, 2004.
- 7th Asian Fisheries Society triennial meeting ("New Dimensions and Challenges in Asian Fisheries in the 21st Century") to be held in 2004.
- Fourth Meeting of GoFAR (on research management), planned 2004.
- World Aquaculture Society, next triennial meeting will be held in Hawaii, in 2004.
- Fourth Meeting of Regional Fishery Bodies or arrangements (anticipated) FAO, Rome, February, 2005.

*This meeting is of a global rather than regional nature, but is included as an example of a relevant international event whose outcomes should be monitored and of use to APFIC Members.

Proposal for the form and function for APFIC to act as a regional forum.

Preamble: Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs) play a key role in the assessment of regional fisheries situations, assisting in transboundary issues and the implementation of global plans of action and other instruments for the improvement of fisheries, aquaculture and environmental management. After due consideration and a survey of APFIC Members, the majority agree that the best way for APFIC to fulfil its function for the Asia-Pacific region under its Agreement is to initiate activities to serve as a Consultative Regional Forum on fisheries.

Roles and participation: It is agreed that APFIC should play a coordinating role between FAO and other regional bodies and international instruments in the region on issues concerning fisheries management. APFIC, through its secretariat, will convene and organize the Regional Consultative Forum. By taking steps to include Members, other regional fisheries bodies and arrangements, and international initiatives in environmental and coastal management in the agenda setting and conduct of the Forum, it can seek to avoid duplication of effort in the region. It will through this means maintain its role as a coordinating body in transferring and exchanging technologies and capacity development, as well as assisting Members on emerging policy issues in world fisheries.

The Forum: The Forum will take the form of a biennial meeting on the state of fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific.

Aims of the Forum: The intention is to identify trends, methods, capacity building opportunities, research gaps and overlaps amongst players to improve the state of fisheries and aquaculture, and to enhance the integration of fisheries into national and regional management and decision-making.

Major subject matter (to include): Identification of the state of fisheries, fisheries management, aquaculture and aquatic environments in Asia and the Pacific region

- The promotion of data and information exchanges in the region amongst nations, international organizations and their projects.
- Facilitation of effective implementations of provisions given in the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, the FAO Compliance Agreement and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and other international initiatives.
- Review and assistance to aquaculture in the provision of food security for rural and coastal populations in cooperation with FAO and other relevant organizations.
- The strengthening of national capacities as well as legal and institutional frameworks, in cooperation with other relevant international organizations.

The identification of the subject matter will be developed in a participatory manner, but should in the first instance pay attention to the considerable detail available in APFIC literature and the

observations of FAO (RFB) documents relating to information and technical issues (as recorded in the text of this report).

Outcomes: The outcomes of the Forum will serve to guide the development of subsequent APFIC recommendations on trans-boundary issues or issues common to several Members. Recommendations arising from the Forum will be endorsed by APFIC and will be used to guide the work of APFIC, its Secretariat and its Ad Hoc working groups in the subsequent period. APFIC will present the regional issues to global forums such as the Committee on Fisheries. The papers contributed to the Forum, particularly detailing the state and trends of the region's fisheries, should be published as rapidly as possible by APFIC. Attention should be given to the development of additional policy briefs on agreed subject matter and how these will be disseminated.

Options for the scheduling of an APFIC Regional Consultative Forum

A diagrammatic representation of the schedule of Meetings under Option 1 is given in Figure 1.

Option 1: Takes note of the Biennial Meetings of COFI (currently in February of alternate years) and the associated RFB Meeting. The timing is based on being able to provide the outcomes and recommendations of the APFIC Forum as inputs into the preparatory stages for the next COFI Meeting. This option is based on the current rhythm of APFIC Meetings in which an Executive Committee precedes the major event of the Commission. In this case the Consultative Forum takes the place of earlier APFIC Symposia and is placed in conjunction with the Sessional Meeting of the Commission so that Members can attend both. A second Executive Committee Meeting is proposed around March or April of year 2 (of this abstract schedule) to formally endorse the recommendations and activities to be taken forward.

Under option 1 the suggested train of events is that:

- (i) The APFIC Secretariat informs all regional stakeholders of the proposed dates of its Regional Consultative Regional Forum and invites suggestions from all players for the agenda for that Forum, which should include an assessment of the state of the region's fisheries and international projects.
- (ii) The APFIC Executive Committee receives a report on these inputs from the Secretariat, including the deliberations of COFI and the RFB meeting (held in February/March of year 1) and endorses or modifies the format and subject matter of the meeting. The Executive Committee Meeting also develops the agenda for the next (one to two day) Meeting of the Commission.
- (iii) The APFIC Consultative Forum (suggested as a three-four day meeting) is proposed to be held in September (of year 1). Both national contributions on fisheries themes of common interest or trans-boundary issues, and updates from other regional bodies and arrangements are received and discussed. The presented paper contributions are collected.
- (iv) Immediately following the Consultative Forum, the Sessional Meeting of the Commission is held which considers additional matters contributed by Members, and their reactions to the subject matter of the Forum which may make the basis for concrete recommendations.
- (v) Between September of year 1 and February of year 2, the APFIC Secretariat develops the draft outcomes of the Forum and draft Recommendations (which may include suggestions for high priority activities for ad hoc working groups). The full Proceedings of the Forum should be published as quickly as feasible but do not otherwise alter this schedule of meetings.
- (vi) The draft outputs from the Forum and recommendations are circulated to all

	Members for information and comment.
(vii)	The APFIC Executive Committee meets in March or April of year 2 to endorse the final recommendations, the plan of work for Ad Hoc working groups as required and the means of promoting requirements to COFI and other international fora.
(viii)	The APFIC Secretariat seeks to ensure that regional recommendations are reflected in COFI position papers and other documents and fora. Ad hoc working groups are convened, begin work and can subsequently provide outputs to the Executive Committee ⁴⁰ .
(ix)	Solicitation of the subject matter and agenda for the 2 nd Regional Consultative Forum begins at the end of year 2.

Assuming year 1 equates to 2005, then a provisional schedule of meetings would be:

- APFIC Ex Co. March/April 2005
- First APFIC Regional Consultative Forum, September 2005
- Session of the Commission, September 2005
- APFIC Ex Co. March/April 2006
- APFIC Ex Co. March/April 2007
- Second APFIC Regional Consultative Forum, September 2007
- Session of the Commission, September 2007
- APFIC Ex Co. March/April 2008
- APFIC Ex Co. March/April 2009
- Third APFIC Regional Consultative Forum, September 2009
- Session of the Commission, September 2009
- APFIC Ex Co. March/April 2010

Three Regional Consultative Fora would be held in the period to the end of the decade. The Executive Committee of 2010 should therefore expect to consider the success, or otherwise, of the APFIC Regional Consultative Forum and to make recommendations on continuity in the light of the sunset clause.

A diagrammatic representation of the schedule of Meetings under Option 2 is given in Figure 2.

Option 2: This responds to the same issues of timing, representation and presentation of outputs as Option 1, but is based on the additional premise that an annual interaction of APFIC Members as a whole would be valuable for the continuity and vitality of APFIC. The proposal under Option 2 therefore separates the Consultative Forum in year 1, from the “regular” APFIC Commission Session which now occurs in year 2 (see Figure 2). It would bring together fisheries decision-makers from the region in a year when there is no COFI or RFB Meeting. The Meeting of the Executive Committee reverts to a biennial event. The APFIC Secretariat now has a greater role in the first synthesis of the outcomes and draft recommendations of the Consultative

⁴⁰ As required under APFIC Rules and Procedures, Rule IX 2c; and see Annex VI of this report.

Forum. However, the regular session of the Commission (here March or April of year 2) is able to consider and endorse the outputs and recommendations of the Forum. This would allow greater scope for detailed face to face discussion in the finalization of the APFIC recommendations to COFI, and work plan for the Ad Hoc committees. It could additionally provide the opportunity for direct interactions with donors/or senior decision-makers invited to the last day of such a meeting. This would be at the Commission's discretion, to publicize requirements relating to the recommendations, or to raise fisheries issues at the level of inter-sectoral policy making. As current funding for support of APFIC and its Secretariat is insufficient to cover both Forum and Sessional Meetings of the APFIC Commission when held separately within the biennium, it is suggested that, under this Option, donor support will be required to be sought to meet the costs of the biennial Regional Consultative Forum.

Thus, under option 2, the suggested train of events is that:

- (i) The APFIC Secretariat informs all regional stakeholders of the proposed dates of its Regional Consultative Forum and invites suggestions from all players for the agenda for that Forum, which should include an assessment of the state of the region's fisheries and international projects.
- (ii) The APFIC Executive Committee receives a report on these inputs from the Secretariat, including the deliberations of COFI and the RFB meeting (held in February/March of year 1) and endorses or modifies the format and subject matter of the meeting. The Executive Committee Meeting also develops the draft agenda for the next (three day) Meeting of the Commission.
- (iii) The APFIC Consultative Forum (suggested as a three-day meeting) is held in September (of year 1). Both national contributions on fisheries themes of common interest or trans-boundary issues, and updates from other regional bodies and arrangements are received and discussed. The presented paper contributions are collected.
- (iv) Immediately following the Consultative Forum, between September of year 1 and February of year 2, the APFIC Secretariat develops the draft outcomes of the Forum and draft Recommendations (which may include suggestions for high priority activities for ad hoc working groups). The full Proceedings of the Forum should be published as quickly as feasible but do not otherwise alter this schedule of meetings.
- (v) The draft outputs of the Forum and recommendations are circulated by the Secretariat to all Members for information and comment. The agenda for the Commission Meeting is finalized on the basis of the earlier draft in consultation with the Executive Committee (by e-mail or other communication).
- (vi) APFIC Commission meets in March/April of year 2 to discuss and endorse the final recommendations, the plan of work for *ad hoc* working groups, and any other business as required. An optional day is suggested (not included in the figure) for meeting either donors and/or senior decision-makers to promote requirements and

the substance of requirements for support or for policy development.

- (vii) APFIC Secretariat seeks to ensure that regional recommendations are reflected in COFI position papers and other documents and fora. Ad Hoc technical committees are convened, begin work and can subsequently provide outputs to the Executive Committee Meeting.
- (viii) Solicitation of the subject matter and agenda for the 2nd Regional Consultative Forum begins end of year 2.

Assuming year 1 equates to 2005, then a provisional schedule of actual meetings under Option 2 would be:

- APFIC Ex Co. March/April 2005
- First APFIC Regional Consultative Forum, September 2005
- Session of the Commission, March/April 2006
- APFIC Ex Co. March/April 2007
- Second APFIC Regional Consultative Forum, September 2007
- Session of the Commission, March/April 2008
- APFIC Ex Co. March/April 2009
- Third APFIC Regional Consultative Forum, September 2009
- Session of the Commission, March/April 2010

Three Regional Consultative Fora would be held in the period to the end of the decade, and decisions can then similarly be made about its effectiveness and continuity.

Review of the APFIC Agreement and Rules of Procedure⁴¹ in the light of the proposed role of APFIC as a Regional Consultative Forum

Part 1 - The APFIC agreement

- **Article I: The Commission**

Para 2 governs Membership

Comment: The Consultative Forum concept does not require changes in Membership or eligibility⁴².

- **Article II: Organization**

Para 1 reads: *“Each Member shall be represented at sessions of the Commission by a single delegate, who may be accompanied by an alternate and by experts and advisers. Participation in sessions of the Commission by alternates, experts and advisers shall not entail the right to vote, except in the place of a delegate during his absence.”*

Comment: No change is recommended. However, earlier observations on the efficacy of APFIC’s decision making, suggest that Members must be represented by delegates of sufficient seniority and awareness of the subject matter of the Commission to take the decisions required at Commission meetings. Further, to cover intersessional matters, particularly when Members are active in the ad hoc committees and working groups, requires that Members identify “focal points” in their national administrations who can promptly respond to the Secretariat on APFIC business and technical matters (see text of this report, para 42).

Para 4 reads in part: *“The Chairman of the Commission....shall convene a regular session of the Commission at least once in every two years unless otherwise directed by a majority of the Members.”*

Comment: No change is required. This report has adopted the biennial meeting as a principle in developing the schedule for Forum meetings and the consideration of the latter’s outputs and recommendations.

⁴¹ Agreement as last amended at the Twenty-fifth Session of the Commission and published as RAP Publication 1997/28 (op cit).

⁴² Article IV specifies that the area of competence is the Asia-Pacific area. It should be noted that the current APFIC membership includes Australia and New Zealand but no developing island states from the Pacific. There may therefore be a tendency for an “Asia-centric” development of APFIC’s deliberations in the future. If no new Members from the Pacific region make application to join, it will be necessary for APFIC to foster links with other RFBs with Pacific mandates e.g. FFA , SPC and the emerging WCPFC, and include invitations for these bodies to participate in the APFIC Forum..

Para 7 reads: *“The Commission may, by a two thirds majority of its membership, adopt and amend its own Rules of Procedure provided that such Rules of Procedure or the amendments thereto are not inconsistent with this Agreement or with the Constitution of the Organization.”*

Comment: This freedom arises from APFIC’s creation as a body under Article XIV of the FAO Constitution⁴³. As the recommendation of this report is that the Consultative Forum is entirely in line with the Functions described for APFIC (Article IV of the Agreement, below), any modifications arising from the choice of either of the two options for the Consultative Forum schedule and other APFIC Meetings should be a) minor and b) able to be accommodated under this stipulation of the Agreement.

- **Article III: Committees and working parties**

Comment: It should be noted that this part of the Agreement was adopted prior to the abolition of the all of the standing subsidiary bodies of APFIC with the exception of the Executive Committee. However it describes the makeup of the Executive Committee and the ability of the Commission to establish (now Ad hoc) committees and working groups.

Para 1 reads: *“There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of a Chairman, the Vice Chairman, the immediately retired Chairman and two members elected by the Commission. In the unavoidable absence of one or two members of the Executive Committee from a Committee session, the Chairman shall have the power to co-opt the chairman of one or two of the committees which may from time to time be established in accordance with the Rules governing the procedure of the Commission, at his discretion, to substitute the absent Committee member or members for that Committee session only, provided that two permanent members of the Executive Committee shall always be present and that the number of voting members attending the Committee session shall in no case exceed five.”*

Comment: There appears to be no reason to change the definition of the make up of the Executive Committee as the key decision-making instrument on behalf of APFIC under the Consultative Forum Concept. The intention is to widen the inputs to APFIC through the Forum, from Members and other sources, and the Secretary/secretariat will have a primary responsible for bringing important issues to the attention of the Executive Committee. It is understood that, in the event that substitute Executive Committee Members are required, they will be the co-opted chairmen from APFIC Ad Hoc Working Groups.

Para 2 reads: *“The Commission may in addition establish temporary, (or) special [or standing] committees to study and report on matters pertaining to the purpose of the Commission.”*

Comment: With the exception of the words in square brackets (as standing committees have been discontinued following FAO Council Resolution 13/97 and the decisions taken by APFIC at its Twenty-sixth Session⁴⁴), no change is suggested to this rule. The report suggests that there is greater scope for these temporary (Ad Hoc) committees to be task oriented in relation to the APFIC regional recommendations rather than remaining in thematic areas.

⁴³ see para 8 of the main text of this report

⁴⁴ see para 10 of the text of this report.

Para 3 reads: *“The Commission may establish working parties to study and recommend on specific technical problems. These Working Parties shall be convened by the Director General of the Organization at such times and places as are in accordance with the objectives for which they were established.”*

Comment: No change is required. However, such a rule brings with it formal requirements for reporting of the Ad Hoc Working Parties whether task-oriented or thematic in character (see Article V).

Para 4 reads: *“The establishment of committees and working parties referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 above shall be subject to the availability of the necessary funds in the relevant chapter of the approved budget of the Organization; the determination of such availability shall be made by the Director-General. Before taking any decision involving expenditures in connection with the establishment of committees and working parties, the Commission shall have before it a report from the Director-General on the administrative and financial implications thereof.”*

Comment: It is suggested that the Consultative Forum itself is not to be viewed as a committee or working party of the APFIC Commission (although an ad hoc working party required by the Commission, for example for its development and organization may or may not be so viewed). However, should the Consultative Forum become the major component of the work of APFIC it will require advanced budgeting in two year time frames and appropriate reporting of outcomes.

- **Article IV: Functions**

Reads: *“The purpose of the Commission shall be to promote the full and proper utilization of living aquatic resources by the development and management of fishing and culture operations and by the development of related processing and marketing activities in conformity with the objectives of its Members, and to these ends it shall have the following functions and responsibilities:*

- (a) *To keep under review the state of these resources and of the industries based upon them;*
- (b) *To formulate and recommend measures and to initiate and carry out programs or projects to:*
 - (i) *Increase the efficiency and sustainable productivity of fisheries and aquaculture;*
 - (ii) *Conserve and manage resources;*
 - (iii) *Protect resources from pollution;*
- (c) *to keep under review the economic and social aspects of fishing and aquaculture industries and recommend measures aimed at improving the living and working conditions of fishermen and other workers in these industries and otherwise at improving the contribution of each fishery to social and economic goals;*
- (d) *to promote programs for mariculture and coastal fisheries enhancement;*

- (e) *to encourage, recommend, coordinate and undertake, as appropriate, training and extension activities in all respects of fisheries;*
- (f) *to encourage, recommend, coordinate and undertake, as appropriate, research and development activities in all respects of fisheries;*
- (g) *to assemble, publish or otherwise disseminate information regarding the living aquatic resources and fisheries based on these resources;*
- (h) *to carry out such other activities as may be necessary for the Commission to achieve its purpose as defined above."*

Comment: No change is required. However the Regional Consultative Forum Concept seems an excellent means of responding to the review, recommendation and publication functions directly and for paving the way to the additional activities described.

- **Article V: Reports**

Reads: *"The Commission shall transmit after each session to the Director General of the Organization a report embodying its views, recommendations and decisions, and make such other reports to the Director-General of the Organization as may seem to it necessary or desirable. Reports of the Committees and working parties of the Commission provided for in Article III of this Agreement shall be transmitted to the Director General through the Commission."*

Comment: This principally refers to the outcome of the main APFIC Session, its recommendations and those reports and recommendations of the working groups. There is no requirement to change this rule although it is assumed that the Consultative Forum and its outcomes will in large part shape and inform the views and recommendations of APFIC in the future.

- **Article VI: Area**

Reads: *"The Commission shall carry out the functions and responsibilities set forth in Article IV in the Asia-Pacific Area."*

No change required.

- **Article VII: Cooperation with international bodies**

Reads: *"The Commission shall cooperate closely with other international bodies in matters of mutual interest."*

Comment: The Regional Consultative Forum enlarges the scope for APFIC to meet this intention of the Agreement. Definitions of international bodies, participation and observers are dealt with under the APFIC Rules of Procedure (Part B, following).

- **Article VIII: Expenses**

Para 5 reads: *“The expenses of experts invited, with the concurrence of the Director-General, to attend meetings of the Commission, committees or working parties in their individual capacity shall be borne by the budget of the Organization.”*

Comment: The other paragraphs of this article confirm APFIC practice of Members meeting the costs of their own delegations and participation in projects in which they are engaged, whilst the Organization (i.e. FAO) meets the requirements of the APFIC Secretariat. Paragraph 5 refers to invited experts in specific capacities. However, in the development of the Consultative Forum, in which the majority of presenters are assumed to be supported by their own bodies or institutes, thought will also have to be given as to whether additional experts invited to address the Forum would be considered for support under paragraph 5. Alternatively, their participation could be viewed in the context of seeking the overall extra-budgetary support recommended to fund the Forum. The stance of APFIC on such experts should be clarified.

- **Article IX: Amendments**

Comment: No change is suggested to this Article. Indeed, if the Regional Consultative Forum is viewed in the same light as the Symposium formerly held in conjunction with APFIC Meetings, few if any changes are required to the Agreement.

- Article X: Acceptance
- Article XI: Entry into Force
- Article XII: Territorial Application
- Article XIII: Withdrawal
- Article XIV: Interpretation and settlement of disputes
- Article XV: Termination
- Article XVI: Certification and Registration

Comment: No changes are required in Articles X – XVI to accommodate the adoption of a Regional Consultative Forum.

Part 2 - Rules of procedure

It should be noted that the majority of these rules apply to the regular session of the APFIC Commission and are unaffected by the adoption of a Regional Consultative Forum as the regular APFIC Meetings are recommended to continue, not least to provide inputs into Agenda setting and endorsements of recommendations of the Commission and its plan of work.

- **Rule I: Definitions**

Which include inter alia:

Observer Nation, Associate Member or organization: *“A non-member of the Organization [i.e. the FAO] or international organization invited to attend a session of the Commission or a Member Nation or Associate Member of the Organization attending a session of the Commission while not a Member of the Commission.”*

Comment: Words in square brackets added.

Observer: *“The representative of an Observer Nation, Associate Member or organization.”*

Comment: APFIC has in the past invited observer organizations to attend regular sessions of the Commission. The Rule for such invitations to organizations has been that the organizations are established internationally, active in regional fisheries or a relevant, related field and have official recognition by the FAO (Rule XI, paras 2 and 3). No change is recommended (see Rule V)

- **Rule II: Sessions of the Commission**

Comment: The essence of this rule is that Sessions of the Commission are called at the discretion of Commission (in Consultation with the Director General of the FAO) approximately biennially. Invitations to regular sessions should be issued not less than sixty days in advance, and to special sessions not less than forty days in advance. These considerations should be borne in mind as APFIC considers and decides between the two schedules suggested for APFIC Meetings with an emphasis on the Regional Consultative Forum. The latter is considered as a development of the earlier APFIC Symposium (i.e. a scientific meeting) and not as a special session of the APFIC Commission (which are called on single purpose issues).

- **Rule III: Agenda**

Para 2 reads: *“The agenda shall also include, upon approval by the Commission:*

- (a) Items approved at the previous session;*
- (b) Items proposed by the Executive Committee;*
- (c) Items proposed by a Member.”*

Para 3 reads in part: *“A provisional agenda...shall be sent by the Secretary to Members and observer nations, Associate Members and organizations not less than sixty days before the date fixed for the opening of the session, together with reports and documents available in connection therewith.”*

Comment: No change is suggested since together these rules allow the Secretary and the Executive Committee to provide inputs based on the Outcomes of the Consultative Forum for the Agenda of the regular session of the Commission and the consideration of Members. No change would be made in the eligibility of Members to contribute to the Agenda. It also allows for distribution of Forum outputs to other players and their possible contributions to the Agenda of the regular session of the APFIC Commission. These requirements are most easily accommodated by Option 2 for the Consultative Forum, where the Forum and regular APFIC Session are held in alternate years. However, with Option 1, a summary report of the outcomes of the Forum can no doubt be presented to the APFIC regular session, but the sixty day agenda circulation requirement means that the APFIC Commission Agenda under Option 1 cannot formally consider details and documents of the immediately preceding Forum. Endorsement of the recommendations of the Forum would await another meeting, suggested to be an Executive Committee Meeting the following year, to which the authority had been delegated for this purpose.

- **Rule IV: The Secretariat**

No comment.

- **Rule V: Plenary Meetings of the Commission**

Reads: *“Plenary meetings of the Commission shall be held in public unless otherwise decided by the Commission. When the Commission decides to hold a private meeting, it shall determine the scope of such a decision with respect to observers.”*

Comment: No change is suggested to this rule. As the intention of the Consultative Forum concept is to hold open, ‘state of the region’ discussions with a number of organizations, it is likely that there will be growing interest in the subsequent discussions of the APFIC meetings and requests to attend as observer nations or organizations. It is suggested that observers be allowed to enter fully into the discussions of the Commission (see Rule XI), whilst the current Rule respects the right of Commission Members to consider matters amongst Members for some meetings in a session, if necessary.

- **Rule VI: Election of Chairman and Vice- Chairman and of other members of the Executive Committee**

No changes are suggested.

- **Rule VII: Functions of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman**

No changes are suggested.

- **Rule VIII: Voting Arrangements**

No changes are suggested.

- **Rule IX: Committees**

Para 1 reads in part: *“The Executive Committee ...shall:*

- (a) Meet at least once a year between regular sessions;*
- (b) In addition to the duties prescribed elsewhere under these Rules, direct the conduct of the business and affairs of the Commission Between its sessions, except the issues of policy, unless previously decided by the Commission shall be formulated by the Executive Committee as a motion and referred to the Members. Upon receipt by the Secretary of affirmative replies from a majority of the Members, the motion shall be considered adopted;*
- (c) Prepare estimates of expenses for the next two years for presentation to the Commission for submission to the Organization ...;*

(d) Co-ordinate the work of the committees and working parties;

(e) Function as an editorial and publications committee.”

Comment: No change is suggested to this Rule. The Rule has been adopted in the development of the schedule options for the Consultative Forum. The Rule accommodates the requirement, under Option 1, of the Executive Committee to authorize the recommendations arising from the Consultative Forum following a motion and referral to Members. The Executive Committee should make due allowance for the costs of the Consultative Forum within the preparation of expenses on a two yearly basis. The development of the Forum outputs (as a publication, policy briefs etc.) and recommendations arising from the Forum and other aspects of the work of APFIC also fall to the Executive Committee.

Paras 2-4 of this rule deal with the establishment of committees and apply equally to task oriented Ad hoc Working Groups that APFIC may wish to form in the light of Forum outputs and recommendations. The reporting of such Ad Hoc Working Groups is allowed covered by the rule.

- **Rule X: Budget and finance**

Comment: No change is suggested to this Rule, although it should be noted that, under Option 2, as a no growth budget is anticipated for Secretariat services and the support of APFIC from the FAO, that extra-budgetary sources be specified for the support of the Consultative Forum’s costs and that efforts to identify sources of such funding be actively undertaken.

- **Rule XI: Participation by observers**

Para 3 reads: *“ Participation of international organizations in the work of the Commission and the relations between the Commission and such organizations shall be governed by the relevant provisions of the Constitution and the General Rules of the Organization as well as by the rules and relations with international organizations adopted by the Conference or Council of the Organization.”*

Para 4 reads in part: *“...the Commission and its subsidiary bodies may elect to hold meetings in private, without the attendance of observers. Except in these circumstances, observers may participate fully in the discussions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies.”*

Comment: Alluded to above - see also comments re Rules I and V.

- **Rule XII: Reports and recommendations**

Comment: No change. This Rule details the transmission of recommendations. It is the intention of the Consultative Forum concept, that the recommendations and work plan arising from the regional consultation will be presented (perhaps in different forms) to appropriate international fora, donor groups etc. to enhance responses and subsequent activities within Member states and international organizations.

- **Rule XIII: Recommendations to Members**

Para 1 reads: *“The Commission may make recommendations for action by Members on any matters pertaining to the functions described in Article IV of the Agreement.”*

Para 2 reads: *“The Secretary shall receive on behalf of the Commission the replies of the Members in respect of such recommendations and shall prepare a summary and an analysis of such communication for presentation at the next session.”*

Comment: No change. Para 2 provides for the actions of the Secretary foreseen in the conveyance of reports and recommendations in the Options provided for the Consultative Forum concept.

- **Rule XIV: Amendments to the Agreement**

No changes are suggested

- **Rule XV: Suspension and Amendment of Rules**

Comment: These Rules together describe the provisions under which amendments may be made. The Executive Committee can propose amendments. Option 1 suggests that the Executive Committee will require powers to endorse the outcomes and recommendations arising from the Forum in the previous year. The interpretation of Rule IX (above) suggests that this is appropriate within the current rules. If Option 1 were selected as the preferred schedule for the Regional Consultative Forum, confirmation of this endorsement mechanism should be sought with the Commission and rule changes submitted under Rule XV if the need arose. The schedule under Option 2 does not have the same requirement as the endorsement of recommendations is undertaken by the regular APFIC Commission Session.

- **Rule XVI: Official languages**

No changes are suggested

Proposed operational details and rules of procedure that are required for APFIC to perform the function of a regional consultative forum.

See also Figures 1 and 2 which provide alternative schedules of meetings in relation to the Regional Consultative Forum and paragraphs 29-36 of the text of this report.

Required adjustments for APFIC to act as a Consultative Regional Forum

If The Consultative Forum is viewed as a successor to the previous tradition of APFIC Symposia, the changes required are largely in emphasis and the potential scheduling of APFIC meetings over the biennium, rather than changes in the Agreement or make-up of committees. A review of the Agreement, and the Rules of Procedure are given in Annex VII.

Other changes required include:

- An inclusive and collaborative attitude to other RFBs and international organizations in fisheries in the region
- The development of a biennial budgeting and activity process which includes the Consultative Forum as a biennial event

A means for establishing an agenda for the Forum by a consultative process

The agenda should be developed by the Secretariat taking note of the outcomes of the immediately preceding COFI and RFB Meetings, the requests of Members, and by soliciting suggestions from a wide group of stakeholders (listed in the text and Annex III). The draft Agenda should be reviewed and endorsed by the APFIC Executive Committee.

- Observer institutions thus are accorded the right to suggest agenda item and themes for the Forum and to present and participate actively in the Forum itself.

A suggested make-up of an APFIC Forum

Augmenting the assertions made in the text (paras. 31, 37-44):

In the first instance the Forum might include:

- Member nations (20)
- APFIC Secretary (1)
- FAO-RAP (1)

And invitations to:

- Observer nations (e.g. two nations from the Pacific, others with particular interest in inland water fisheries e.g. Lao PDR) (3)

- Regional Fisheries Bodies and international organizations (24 listed in Annexes II A and B)
- Representatives of four Regional Seas initiatives and a representative of a regional GOOS activity (5).
- Invited international experts to speak on specific topics (not likely to exceed 3)

Giving an attendance of approximately 55-60 people

The Forum should include:

- Position papers on issues affecting regional fisheries (perhaps commissioned for this purpose in the first instance – or developed through the submissions of specific Ad Hoc Working Groups in later instances)
- National status reports (perhaps against guidelines issued by the secretariat)
- Reports on international regional seas or ecosystem projects as they affect the management of fisheries and cross-sectoral issues.
- Discussion sessions on a sub-regional seas basis will be appropriate in the first instance, followed by more detailed discussion on particular issues that may augment the status report and lead to recommendations.
- A summary session to indicate agreement and outstanding issues for the APFIC secretariat to pursue

The tendency, with the inclusion of a large number of RFBs and regional seas projects will be to incline the agenda towards marine fisheries and (coastal) environmental issues. Appropriate time should be given to ensure coverage of inland fisheries and aquaculture issues.

The Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is still considered to be the key instrument for intersessional decision-making and working on behalf of members in the development of events, activities, draft policy etc. Adjustments required will include:

- A meeting of the Executive Committee in the first quarter of the year following COFI to distil inputs (provided to it by the Secretary) and agree on the Forum outline (as usual it would also serve to develop the agenda for the regular Session of the Commission).
- There is no need to change the make-up and functions of the Executive Committee (constituted as per Rule IX of the APFIC Rules and Procedures)
- Administrative and logistical arrangements for the holding of the Forum and recording of contributions (the Executive Committee may consider whether an Ad Hoc Working group should be formed expressly for this task)

The APFIC Commission Meeting

Under Option 1, the APFIC Meeting is held immediately following the Forum. The conduct of the APFIC meeting is likely to be a one-day discussion/consultation on Member's business followed by one-day meeting of members for development of resolutions, adoption of the report and guidance to the Secretariat in the development of full recommendations.

Under Option 2, the APFIC Commission Meeting is held in the following year, should not be longer than two days and will endorse the recommendations and work plan of APFIC, but may consider a third day for a donor's or decision makers consultation.

Formulating the outputs and recommendations

The APFIC Secretariat has the immediate responsibility for drafting the recommendations based on the guidance and outcome of the Forum.

Requirements include:

- A period for the synthesis of outcomes and the formulation of draft recommendations (see Figures 1 and 2)
- Circulation of the outcomes and draft recommendations to Members
- Endorsement by APFIC of the recommendations (and work plan for Ad Hoc working groups etc) – either carried out by an Executive Committee Meeting authorized for this purpose (Option 1) or by the regular Session of the Commission (Option 2).

The presence of other regional stakeholders at APFIC Meetings is encouraged. The opportunity for using one day of regular Commission sessions to invite donors or other senior regional decision-makers to hear the distilled outcomes and recommendations should be considered.

Changing the emphasis of the Ad Hoc Technical Working Groups

It is the intention of the Consultative Forum concept that the outcomes and recommendations are not only presented in different fora as policy advice but that APFIC play an important role in the fulfillment of the recommendations. Members can pursue activities through bi-lateral means or adoption of group approaches and projects. APFIC's technical expression may also be through the *ad hoc* working groups. Current use of this mechanism tends to develop ad hoc working groups along thematic lines. It is suggested that:

- The ad hoc working groups are charged with specific tasks arising from the Forum recommendations, are composed of both Members and additional experts where needed, and are abolished on completion of their tasks.

Dissemination of the outcomes and recommendations

The importance of APFIC is to the solution and management of trans-boundary and other common issues of affecting the fisheries of the Member countries. There are however several audiences and targets for the Forum outputs and recommendations:

- The primary target audience is the Fisheries agencies and administrations in the Member countries themselves
- Other national agencies that could assist in aspects of action plans (Ministries of Environment, Planning, Marine Affairs etc; universities to assist in capacity building as an example)
- FAO, other RFBs globally and their meetings
- The several organizations and international initiatives (which attended the Regional Forum and in other regions)
- Donors and implementing agencies
- NGOs working internationally and nationally.

Requires that the Secretariat plans:

- Submission of the outputs and recommendations by the APFIC Secretariat in good time for their inclusion in the preparations for COFI.
- Presentation by the APFIC Secretary of the regional outcomes and recommendations to COFI, the RFB meeting and other for.

Capacity of the secretariat

The recommendations make calls on the capacity (time, manpower, skills) of the APFIC secretariat to organize a major Forum every other year and to provide the synthesis and report development relevant for more than one international forum. There will be a role in the search for funds for the Forum (if Option 2 is taken up) and the synthesis and publication of outcomes. It may also be accompanied by guidance required of Ad Hoc bodies and the implementation of any other work plan that is agreed by APFIC. In alternate years (if Option 2 is followed) there will be the (suggested) requirement to host a meeting of regional decision-makers. Support to the implementation of gap-filling projects collaboratively with Members, donors and other bodies will depend upon opportunity.

Costs

The FAO currently support the activities of the APFIC Secretariat at a rate of US\$ 165,600 for a two-year period. Assuming that Option 1 is chosen, the Forum is held in FAO facilities in Bangkok, and Members and other participants pay the costs of their own delegates, there will be relatively little increase in costs over current expenditures.

If, under Option 2, the main session of the APFIC Commission is considered as the event for Secretariat support, then this requires that:

- The Forum is to be funded additionally from extra-budgetary resources.

Rough estimates for the costs of a Forum are between US\$ 45-70,000 (Includes allowance for one supported person of a Member's delegation, costs for preparing position papers, or additional experts to attend the meeting, local costs for a Meeting hosted by FAO-RAP in Bangkok. Does not include the travel and accommodation costs of other agency participants, or the costs of Publication of the Proceedings).

- Procedures for seeking additional or non-FAO, donor support.

List of persons met or consulted

In person:

Dr Simon Funge-Smith, Aquaculture Officer, Fisheries Department Group, FAO-RAP

Ms Pornsuda David, Technical Assistant, FAO-RAP

Ms Kesara Aotarayakul, Secretary, FAO-RAP

Mr Michael Riggs, Information Management Specialist, FAO-RAP

Dr Heiko Seilert, Former APO Marine Fisheries, FAO-RAP

Dr Veravat Hongskul, retired. Former Senior Fishery Officer and Secretary of APFIC, FAO-RAP

Dr John Pernetta, Project Director, UNEP/GEF Project Co-ordinating Unit, Bangkok

Dr Kelvin Passfield, Fisheries Expert, UNEP/GEF Project Co-ordinating Unit, Bangkok

Dr M.V. Gupta, Director of International Relations, WorldFish Center, Penang, Malaysia (and convener of GOFAR)

Dr Johann Bell, Leader, Coastal and Marine Resources Research Program, (and organiser of the fisheries theme in the forthcoming SEAS Congress) WorldFish Center, Penang, Malaysia

By e-mail:

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Dr Chua Thia-Eng, Regional Programme Director, PEMSEA, Philippines

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Mr. Gerry Silvestre, Former Project Leader of the ADB- ICLARM "Trawlbase" project, Fisheries Consultant, Philippines

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