

**RAP publication 2004/02**

# **ASIA-PACIFIC FISHERY COMMISSION (APFIC)**

## **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

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**Sixty-ninth session**

**Pattaya, Thailand, 15-16 December 2003**

**APFIC SECRETARIAT  
FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC  
Bangkok, 2004**

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## PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This is the final report adopted at the Sixty-ninth session of the Executive Committee of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission.

### **Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission.**

*Report of the Sixty-ninth session of the APFIC Executive Committee, Pattaya, Thailand, 15 to 16 December 2003. FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, RAP Publication 2004/02, 20 p.*

#### **ABSTRACT**

This document presents the final report of the Sixty-ninth session of the Executive Committee of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC) which was held in Pattaya, Thailand, from 15 to 16 December 2003. Major topics discussed were: progress reports on the inter-sessional activities of APFIC; review of Members' responses to the letter of the Director-General of FAO concerning the future of APFIC; the future of APFIC and progress report on preparations for the Twenty-eighth Session of the Commission. The summary of the main recommendations/decisions is shown in Appendix G.

#### **Distribution:**

Participants of the Session  
Members of the Commission  
FAO Fisheries Department  
FAO Regional Fishery Officers



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## **OPENING OF THE SESSION**

1. The Executive Committee of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC) held its Sixty-ninth Session at the Garden Beach Resort in Pattaya, Thailand from 15 to 16 December 2003 under the Chairpersonship of Mr Jaranthada Karnasuta, Chairperson, and Mr M.K.R. Nair, Vice-Chairperson. The list of the participants is given as Appendix A.

2. At the opening of the Session, the outgoing Chairperson, Mr Malcolm Sarmiento welcomed the Members of the Executive Committee and the Committee heartily welcomed Mr Staples as the new Secretary of APFIC and wished him every success in his professional career with the Commission as its new Secretary. The outgoing Chairperson noted that Mr Veravat Hongskul, the former Secretary and concurrently Senior Regional Fishery Officer of the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, had retired from service in December 2002. Mr Sarmiento acknowledged, on behalf of the Committee, the outstanding contributions and accomplishments of Mr Hongskul during his tenure as Secretary of the Commission. He confirmed Mr Hongskul's belief in the important role of the Commission as a Regional Fishery Body for improving management and sustainable development in the region's fisheries. He stressed that in order to effectively fulfill this role, APFIC would require adequate support, a clear mission and more active interest and participation of the member countries.

3. The Chairperson then addressed the Committee to thank them for the privilege of being appointed Chairperson and reiterated Thailand's strong support to APFIC and the importance for its future role in supporting the fisheries of the region.

4. Mr Ben Satia, on behalf of the Director-General and the Assistant Director-General (Fisheries) of FAO, welcomed the participants and expressed FAO's expectations for a fruitful meeting. He stated that with the changing conditions in world fisheries and the emergence of a number of regional fisheries bodies and management in the region, the Commission must change its role and become more proactive.

5. The new APFIC Secretary, Mr Derek Staples, who took up his position in September 2003, also addressed the Committee. He stated that APFIC was at a turning point in its history as it re-evaluated its future role and the need for constructive dialogue at the Sixty-ninth Session of the Executive Committee. He emphasized his commitment to help lead the Commission in any new direction as chosen by the Executive Committee.

## **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

6. The Executive Committee adopted the Agenda as shown in Appendix B. The documents placed before the Committee are listed in Appendix C.

## **INTER-SESSIONAL ACTIVITIES OF APFIC**

7. The APFIC Secretary briefed the Executive Committee of the salient developments since the Twenty-seventh Session of APFIC (Manila, the Philippines, 19-21 September 2001) as detailed in document APFIC:ExCo/03/2.

8. The Secretary reviewed the conclusions of the Twenty-seventh Session of APFIC and the response to the request of the Commission at its Twenty-seventh Session, that the Director-General of FAO send a letter to all Members of the Commission, soliciting views regarding their continued interest in and commitment to the work of the Commission.

9. To supplement this action, the Secretariat, with the assistance of a consultant, had undertaken a review of the role of the Commission that would be responsive to the needs of its Members as they face the challenges created by recent developments in world fisheries. The Secretary appreciated the work undertaken by the consultant and the interim Secretary of the Commission, Mr Simon Funge-Smith. It was agreed that the Members' responses to the Director-General's letter and the review carried out by the Secretariat would facilitate the deliberations on the future of APFIC.

10. The Committee was informed of activities undertaken by the Secretariat on behalf of the Commission during the inter-sessional period, which were considered to be complementary to the envisaged future areas of work of the Commission and the regional priorities in fisheries. These activities included collaboration with other regional and sub-regional organizations such as the Intergovernmental Organization for Marketing Information and Technical Advisory Services for Fishery Products in the Asia-Pacific Region (INFOFISH), the Mekong River Commission (MRC), the Network of Aquaculture Centers in Asia-Pacific (NACA), the South East Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC), and the WorldFish Center. These took the form of an international symposium on inland fisheries and regional consultations covering aquaculture, inland fisheries and accessing aquaculture markets.

11. Complementary, ongoing activities of the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific of relevance to APFIC included a number of national TCP and donor-supported projects on aquaculture development which are ongoing in Indonesia, India, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the People's Democratic Republic of Lao and the Republic of the Philippines. Other activities included the support for the implementation of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, especially environmental and social sustainability aspects that are being addressed by a regional TCP project on Poverty Alleviation through Improved Aquatic Resources Management in Asia. The Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem project is also currently facilitating the development of a larger programme for this sub-region. Assistance is also being provided by FAO in regard to legislative and policy reforms in fisheries, through national and regional TCP projects in Cambodia and the Pacific Island countries.

12. The Committee commended the Secretariat for its initiative in conducting the review of the future role of the Commission and for undertaking activities during the inter-sessional period which would benefit Members of the Commission. It directed that the report on inter-sessional activities be submitted to the Commission at its Twenty-eighth Session.

## **REVIEW OF MEMBERS' RESPONSES TO THE LETTER OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF FAO CONCERNING THE FUTURE OF APFIC**

13. The Executive Committee considered the above agenda item on the basis of document APFIC ExCo/03/3. It was recalled that the Commission, at its Twenty-seventh Session (2001) had discussed the financial implications to APFIC in light of Resolution 13/97 adopted by the Twenty-ninth Session of the FAO Conference in 1997. The Commission had agreed that despite its financial uncertainty, it should continue to function, but with more focused and well-defined programmes of action that were responsive to the needs of its Members.

14. As the majority of the Members present at the Twenty-seventh Session had no mandate to discuss the financial issues relevant to the future of APFIC, the Commission requested the Director-General of FAO to invite the APFIC Members to reaffirm their continued interest in and commitment to the Commission.

15. The Committee noted that the Director-General issued the above invitation to the 20 Members of the Commission on 19 April 2002, requesting a response by 30 June 2002. Of the 15 Members that have responded to the Director-General's letter, ten specifically supported the concept of APFIC assuming the role of a Consultative Fisheries Body, thus supporting the identified need for the continuation of a regional integrating mechanism. One Member suggested that savings from the Japanese Trust Fund provided for the FAO Fisheries Department could be used in support of APFIC and another Member agreed in principle to provide contributions, subject to government approval.

16. The majority of the Members, which responded, were of the opinion that contributions should be voluntary rather than mandatory, with a continuation of the current practice of Members financing their respective participation in the meetings of APFIC and its subsidiary bodies.

17. Two Members indicated that they would be prepared to contribute to APFIC's project activities according to their relevance or complementarity to ongoing national initiatives. A further two Members stated that they could contribute in kind to the activities of the Commission, whilst five Members explicitly stated that they were unable to provide financial support to the Commission.

18. It was agreed that the afore-mentioned responses be taken into account when the Committee discussed the future of APFIC.

## **FUTURE OF APFIC**

### **Background**

19. The Executive Committee discussed this agenda item on the basis of documents APFIC: ExCo/03/3; APFIC: ExCo/03/4A; APFIC: ExCo/03/4B; and APFIC: ExCo/03/4C. It noted that since the adoption of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and

Development (UNCED), the international community had acceded to numerous international instruments and initiatives pertaining to fisheries and environmental sustainability. However, a number of developing countries had experienced difficulties in implementing some of these instruments and initiatives.

20. The Committee concurred with the conclusions of recent sessions of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and the Meetings of Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs) organized by FAO, that the latter had a key role to play in bridging the gap between international advice and national responsibility for fisheries management and decision making. The Committee emphasized that APFIC had a particular role to play in the Asia-Pacific Region in this respect. It was also noted that many RFBs fulfilled their mission through collecting and providing scientific information and data in support of fisheries management and sustainable development; serving as technical and policy fora for the exchange of information for fisheries governance; and taking action pertaining to the conservation, management and responsible utilization of aquatic resources.

21. The Committee further noted that since the early seventies a number of regional fisheries bodies and/or arrangements concerned with fisheries and environment had emerged. There are currently more than 20 organizations and arrangements at the global, regional and sub-regional levels that relate to the Asia-Pacific region. Although a few of these bodies such as the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) were established under conventions for the specific purpose of managing individual fish stocks, the majority, including the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC), have only an advisory role.

22. In recent years, a number of less publicized initiatives, programmes and projects related to fisheries and the environments have also been carried out. These include the Asia-Pacific Group of Fisheries and Aquatic Research (GOFAR) under the auspices of the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research (APAARI); the Asian Fisheries Society; the East Asian Sea Congress; the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS); UNEP Regional Seas Programme and several large marine ecosystem projects. The Committee observed that opportunities for closer collaboration between RFBs, GOOS, Regional Seas Programme and large marine ecosystem initiatives had been highlighted at the most recent session of COFI and the Meeting of Regional Fishery Bodies organized by FAO.

23. Taking into account the numerous fisheries bodies, arrangements and initiatives in the region, the Committee thought that it would be advisable for APFIC to increase its liaison with these bodies and arrangements. In considering the future role of the Commission, it was recommended that the types and subject matter of these bodies, arrangements and initiatives had to be taken into account. It was agreed that the Secretariat should prepare a summary handbook on regional and sub-regional fisheries bodies and arrangements, for the benefit of the APFIC Members.

### **Future role of APFIC**

24. The Committee unanimously agreed that since APFIC is a Members' organization, the lack of interest from the majority of its Members in the Commission's activities would render it ineffective and lead eventually to its demise. Therefore, APFIC must alter its role in order to survive. The Committee was heartened to note that most of the Members of

APFIC still wished to see the Commission continue its functions. The majority had expressed their wish to see APFIC assume a role as a Regional Consultative Body to promote integration of the regional activities relating to fisheries. This was expressed on at least two occasions, *viz.*, at the Twenty-seventh Session of APFIC (Manila, the Philippines, 2001) and in the responses to the letter of the FAO Director-General received in June 2002 as indicated above.

25. The Committee believed that the reasons to support APFIC assuming the role of a Regional Consultative Body included:

- (i) APFIC is the only broad regional mechanisms that can bridge the gap between RFBs that are emerging or in operation; regional seas programmes; and other initiatives dealing with resources and environment conservation and management, for example, large marine ecosystem programmes.
- (ii) Other marine RFBs in the region do not collectively cover all the fisheries management needs for the region. For example, SEAFDEC is limited only to ASEAN and the South China Sea; the Bay of Bengal Inter-governmental Organization has a limited membership; and the Yellow Sea is not governed by a fisheries management body.
- (iii) With the exception of NACA (concerned mainly with aquaculture management and development) and MRC (concerned mainly with sustainable development of the riparian countries of the Mekong River Basin), there is no competent body concerned with inland fisheries development and management.
- (iv) Small-scale fisheries and aquaculture development activities have not yet achieved the long-term goal of poverty alleviation and food security for the large rural populations in the Asia-Pacific region.
- (v) There is a continuing need by a majority of the Members of the Commission for technology transfer and capacity building on the effective management of fisheries, responsible aquaculture and the protection of the aquatic habitat and environment.
- (vi) A gap exists in the flow of appropriate information up to policy makers and down to the grass roots communities.

### **Regional Consultative Forum**

26. To provide an integrating mechanism for APFIC to assume its proposed role, it was agreed that APFIC organize and conduct a Regional Consultative Forum. The Committee then proceeded to consider the Secretariat's proposal regarding the focus, participation, timing, outcomes, finance and resources for the Forum.

27. The Secretariat advised that the inclusion of the Regional Consultative Forum activity in accordance with the concept endorsed by the ExCo, may require only minor

amendments to the APFIC Agreements and its Rules of Procedure, subject to the approval of the Commission. It was agreed that the Forum be recommended to the Commission as a biennial event, taking into account the number of regional events in fisheries, the timing and requirements of COFI as well as the ability of the interested parties to meet their commitments.

### **Focus for the first Regional Consultative Forum**

28. The Committee considered that the theme ('banner programme') of the first Regional Consultative Forum should be on small-scale fisheries and aquaculture (both coastal and inland), since these represent areas of common interest to the Members and also are areas of the sector that have been previously neglected, yet represented some of the greatest challenges in terms of development and sustainability. The Committee emphasized that APFIC should not 'implement projects' but rather act in a role of bringing together the regional actors in the fisheries sector under the broader issue of small-scale fisheries/aquaculture.

29. The term 'small-scale fisheries' was considered by the Committee to encompass not only coastal fisheries but also inland fisheries and should also be extended to include rural aquaculture. All of these parts of the fisheries sector have common issues that are important to the region; such as co-management, devolved management mechanisms and the need for improved information for policy makers and grass root communities.

30. The Committee agreed that this theme of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture would encompass many of the regional issues of interest to the Members. The Forum should have an opportunity to discuss various sub-themes, including policy, management and trade-related issues as well as food security and food safety. This is represented diagrammatically in Appendix D.

31. The Committee agreed that the objectives of the Regional Consultative Forum should be:

- (i) To provide the opportunity for countries and relevant international organizations and/or arrangements to examine the state of fisheries of the Asia-Pacific region;
- (ii) To make strategic and practical recommendations on how to address relevant issues including information exchange on fisheries; assessment of the implementation of international agreements and requirements; evaluation of new approaches and identification of means to obtain new information and to improve regional capacity for any of these functions.
- (iii) To guide, through the work of the Forum, the development of APFIC's recommendations on trans-boundary issues or issues common to groups of countries;
- (iv) To reduce duplication of effort, overlap and redundancy in regional fisheries programming in the Asia-Pacific region; and

- (v) To raise awareness of regional problems by communicating the Forum's recommendations endorsed by the Commission to the FAO Regional Conference and global fora including COFI and other international fora, as well as to aid donors.

32. The Committee envisaged that benefits which could be derived from this Forum included the open discussion of regional fisheries issues and opportunities for technical and policy learning and exchange, thereby increasing the awareness of issues of common interest to the Members of APFIC. Importantly, this Forum would provide the opportunity to raise fisheries issues of groups of States, especially neighboring States and international large-scale projects on environment and wider inter-sectoral issues of marine, coastal and inland water management. The output of the Forum would provide a voice for the region that could then be followed up in international fora such as the FAO Regional Conference and COFI and also contribute to other regional mechanisms such as the Regional Seas program.

### **Participation**

33. It was agreed that the first session of the Forum should be attended by APFIC Members, observer nations, representatives of FAO, relevant RFBs and selected international organizations, including those from regional seas programmes and GOOS as well as international experts invited to speak on specific topics. Wider participation of organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), especially those concerned with fisheries management, should also be considered.

34. The Committee recommended that APFIC invite its Member Governments to consider appointing senior persons with appropriate background to ensure that the sessions of the Regional Consultative Forum and of the Commission provide successful outcomes.

35. The Committee agreed to the proposal that the Secretariat be responsible for the development of an appropriate agenda for the Forum that would take into account the outcome of the immediately preceding COFI session and RFB meetings, as well as the requests of the Members. Furthermore, the Secretariat should solicit suggestions from the concerned regional and sub-regional fisheries bodies and regional seas programmes as well as large marine ecosystem projects.

### **Outcomes**

36. The Committee agreed that the first session of the Regional Consultative Forum be held in conjunction with the Twenty-ninth Session of APFIC and replace the APFIC Symposia, as these arrangements would incur minimal additional expenses over the current budget of APFIC.

37. The Committee agreed that the outcome and recommendations arising from the Forum, which have been endorsed by the Commission, should be communicated widely by the Secretariat to relevant Ministries and universities in the member countries. They should also be disseminated to FAO, in particular to the Regional Conference for Asia and the

Pacific and to COFI for consideration and appropriate action, in order to raise the awareness of regional issues. Other international fora and relevant RFBs, international programmes and projects as well as NGOs, especially those that are concerned with fisheries management and conservation of living aquatic resources, should be other target audiences. The Committee also agreed that these recommendations would help change the focus of the *ad hoc* working groups to be set up by the Commission, from general thematic areas as in the past, to specific tasks as required in the future, thus strengthening the role of the Commission in response to the needs of its Members.

### **Finance and resources**

38. The Committee expressed its concern over the expected increase of effort on the part of the Secretariat in organizing the biennial Regional Consultative Forum and in providing a synthesis and development report for presentation to more than one international forum, as well as searching for funding support and organizing further meetings of regional decision-makers and/or aid donors. The Secretariat would also probably be involved in the work of the *ad hoc* working groups and other work plans as agreed upon by the Commission. The Committee noted that FAO currently provided US\$165 000 per biennium in support of the activities of APFIC and the Secretariat. An estimated amount of about US\$100 000 might be required for the holding of the Forum independent of the session of APFIC (*i.e.* in alternate years). The Forum, therefore, will also have to be donor-supported.

39. The Executive Committee agreed to recommend to the Commission the adoption of the Regional Consultative Forum as its main event amongst the activities of APFIC with the objectives, timetable and requirements as summarized in Appendix E.

40. The Committee recommended that the outcomes of the Executive Committee and its recommendations as to the future role of APFIC should be submitted for consideration by the Twenty-seventh Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (APRC) to be held in Beijing in May 2004.

### **PREPARATIONS FOR THE TWENTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF APFIC**

41. The Executive Committee was informed of the arrangements for the Twenty-eighth Session of APFIC to be hosted by the Government of Thailand to be held during August 2004 as outlined in document APFIC:ExCo/03/5. It was unanimously agreed that this session of the Commission would be crucial, as it would open a new era with APFIC playing a prominent role as a Regional Consultative Body. The Committee endorsed the suggestions by the Secretariat regarding the tentative schedule of the APFIC Session covering a period of three days. The substantive issues to be discussed include analysis of the state of small-scale fisheries of the Asia-Pacific region, its potential and issues implicating its sustainability; the future role of APFIC; the format, content and conduct of the Regional Consultative Forum; the format of a report containing the recommendations arising out of the Forum for submission to COFI; and global activities of interest to APFIC. It accordingly directed the Secretariat to consult with the host government as to the exact dates, venue and the arrangements for the meeting and to report to the Committee accordingly.

42. The Committee concurred with the proposal set forth by the Secretariat regarding the tentative schedule of activities including the preparation of the Twenty-eighth Session of APFIC from the present to 2010 as outlined in Appendix F.

43. The Committee noted that three regional consultative fora would be held before the end of the year 2011. It believed that the Commission should have ample opportunity to make a self-evaluation of its performance and to decide on its future in light of the sunset clause as agreed at the Twenty-seventh Session of APFIC.

#### **ANY OTHER MATTERS**

44. The Committee wished to put on record its gratitude for the excellent facilities and generous hospitality accorded by the Government of Thailand which rendered success in the conduct of its meeting.

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

45. It was agreed that the Seventieth Session of the Executive Committee should be held tentatively in June/July 2005. The Secretariat was requested to consult with the Chairperson and Members of the Committee on the exact date and venue of the session.

#### **ADOPTION OF THE REPORT**

46. The report of the Sixty-ninth Session of the Executive Committee was adopted by the Committee on 16 December 2003.

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**Agenda**

1. Opening of the Session
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Inter-sessional activities of APFIC
4. Review of Members' responses to the letter of the Director-General of FAO concerning the future of APFIC
5. Future of APFIC
6. Preparations for the Twenty-eighth Session of APFIC
7. Any other matters
8. Date and place of the Seventieth Session
9. Adoption of the Report

**Appendix C**

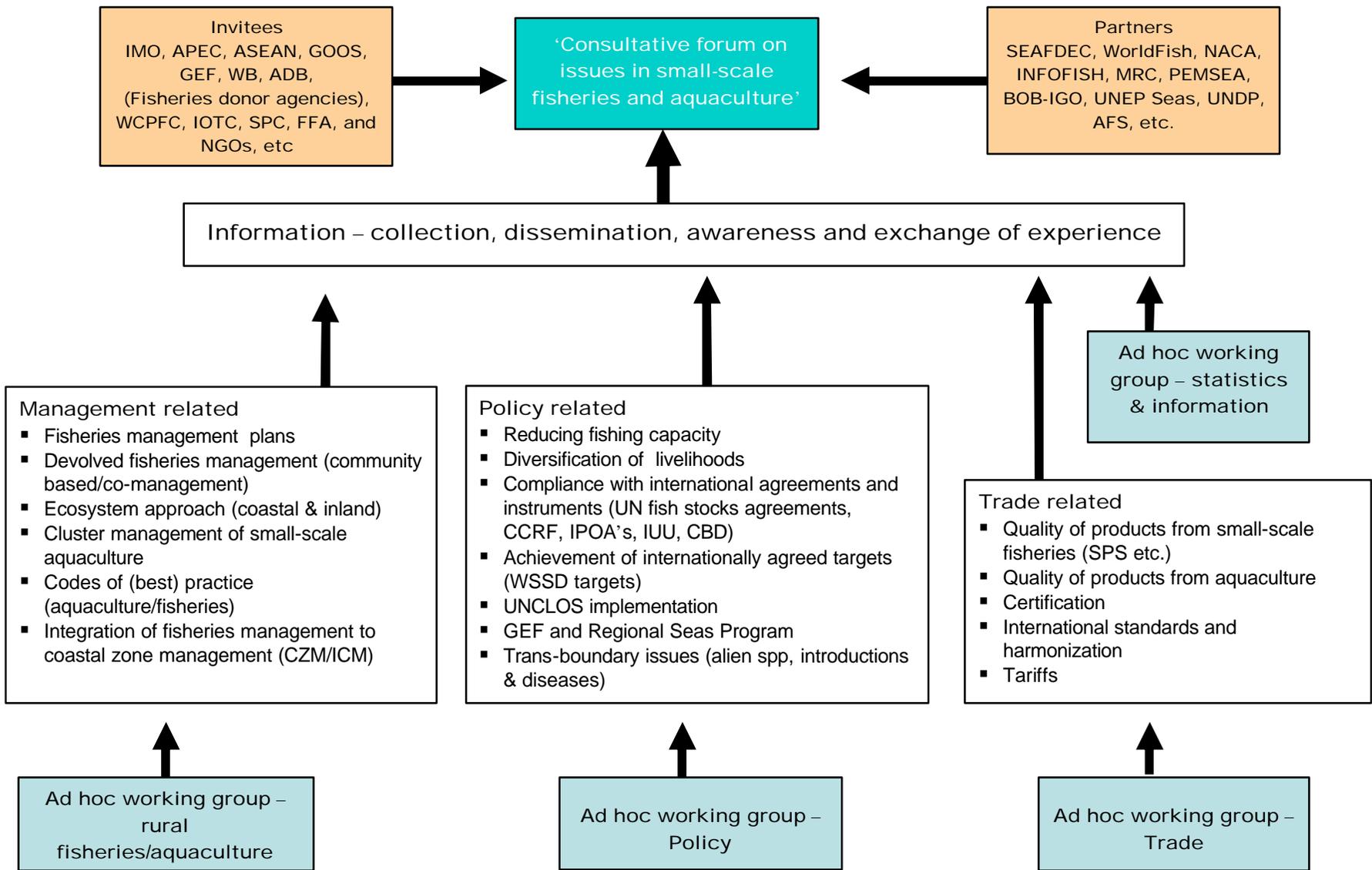
**List of documents**

APFIC:ExCo/03/1	Provisional Agenda
APFIC:ExCo/03/2	Inter-sessional Activities of APFIC
APFIC:ExCo/03/3	Review of Members Responses Concerning the Future of APFIC
APFIC:ExCo/03/4A	Other Regional Fisheries Bodies, Arrangements and Fora Concerning Fisheries in the Asia-Pacific Region
APFIC:ExCo/03/4B	Future Role of APFIC
APFIC:ExCo/03/4C	Regional Consultative Forum Concept
APFIC:ExCo/03/5	Arrangements for the Twenty-eighth Session of APFIC

***Information Documents***

APFIC:ExCo/03/Inf. 1	Provisional List of Documents
APFIC:ExCo/03/Inf. 2	Provisional List of Participants
APFIC:ExCo/03/Inf. 3	Report of the Twenty-seventh Session of APFIC Manila, Philippines, 19-21 September 2001

## Draft themes and issues for the first APFIC Regional Consultative Forum (2006)



## **Form and function of the APFIC Regional Consultative Forum**

### ***Roles and participation:***

APFIC should play a facilitating role between FAO and other regional bodies and international arrangements in the region to promote sustainable development of fisheries and responsible aquaculture in the APFIC region. APFIC, through its secretariat, will convene and organize the Regional Consultative Forum to encourage the transfer and exchange of technology, promote capacity development and afford Members the opportunity to address emerging policy issues in Asian-Pacific and World fisheries. APFIC would take steps to include FAO Members, non-member nations, other Regional Fishery Bodies and arrangements, and international initiatives in environmental and coastal management, in the agenda setting and conduct of the Forum. In this way APFIC can seek to avoid duplication of effort in the region and promote its role as a fishery integrative and consultative body.

### ***Objectives of the Forum:***

The major goal of the Forum is to provide the opportunity for countries and international stakeholders to examine issues relating to the region's fisheries and aquaculture, and to make strategic and practical recommendations on how to address these issues. In particular,

- identify regional trends, emerging methods and capacity building opportunities to improve the state of fisheries and aquaculture that is underpinned by research and information sharing; and
- enhance integration of fisheries into national and regional policies and management decision-making.

### ***Timing:***

The Forum will take the form of a biennial meeting that will be held in conjunction with the regular session of APFIC.

### ***Major subject matter to include:***

- Facilitation of effective implementation of international agreements including the Agenda 21 of United Nations Convention on Environment and Development, the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002), the FAO Compliance Agreement and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and other international initiatives in particular the ecosystem approach to fisheries;
- The promotion of data and information exchanges in the region amongst nations, international organizations and their projects;
- Role and importance of responsible fisheries and aquaculture in ensuring and providing food security, poverty alleviation and securing the livelihoods of rural and coastal populations.
- The strengthening of national capacities as well as legal and institutional frameworks; and
- Other matters that may be suggested by other regional bodies and arrangements, as endorsed by the Executive Committee.

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.

***Outcomes:***

The outcomes of the Regional Forum will be:

- (i) Identification of major regional issues and recommendations to be forwarded to the FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (APRC) and other relevant Bodies including the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI); and
- (ii) Identification of priority actions to be implemented by APFIC member countries with bilateral and regional support.

APFIC Secretariat will take into account the outcomes of the Forum in the development of the work plan for APFIC and the work of its Secretariat and Ad Hoc working groups, for the subsequent period.

The report of the Forum and the contributions to the Forum should be published as rapidly as possible by APFIC in addition to policy briefs on agreed subject matter that are subsequently developed and disseminated.

***Funding and resources:***

The APFIC Secretariat will play a major role in coordinating the Forum and actively pursue donor support for the Forum and subsequent follow up activities, including publications of papers and reports, to ensure the effective organization of the event.

***Coordination of the Forum with other activities:***

Meetings of the forum should be organized to facilitate reporting to COFI and APRC. The following tentative schedule is proposed:

- 69<sup>th</sup> APFIC Executive Committee Meeting - December 2003 (Pattaya, Thailand)
- APRC Session - May 2004 (Beijing, PR China)
- 28<sup>th</sup> Session of APFIC - August 2004 (Chiangmai, Thailand)
- COFI Session - February 2005 (Rome, Italy)
- 70<sup>th</sup> APFIC Executive Committee Meeting - June/July 2005
- APRC Session - May 2006 (?)
- First APFIC Regional Consultative Forum - August 2006  
and 29<sup>th</sup> Session of APFIC, August 2006
- COFI Session - February 2007 (Rome, Italy)
- 71<sup>st</sup> APFIC Executive Committee Meeting - June/July 2007 (.....)
- APRC Session - May 2008 (?)
- Second APFIC Regional Consultative Forum, August 2008  
and 30<sup>th</sup> Session of APFIC, August 2008 (?)
- COFI Session – February 2008 (Rome, Italy)

## Appendix F

### **Work schedule for APFIC Secretariat leading up to the Regional Forum in 2006 and evaluation at the end of Year 2010**

- (i) The APFIC Secretariat informs Members, all regional and sub-regional organizations and arrangements with relevance to fisheries in the Asia-Pacific region of the proposal for the Regional Consultative Forum and invites their participation and suggestions for the agenda of the forum. Where practical, the Secretariat should meet with other parties and gain support.
- (ii) The APFIC Secretariat contributes to the collection and dissemination of quality fishery data and information, particular as they relate to 'small-scale fisheries' and build awareness of the importance of sharing information and experiences among member countries. If necessary, it would convene an ad-hoc working group on statistics and information for small-scale fisheries and rural aquaculture. A web site will be developed to provide a platform for the dissemination and exchange of information
- (iii) The APFIC Secretariat prepares several presentations on the status of capture fisheries and aquaculture in the region, its potential future contribution to the region, and issues of concern, as background for the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of APFIC and the Regional Consultative Forum. The APFIC Secretariat will also publish a handbook on regional fishery bodies and arrangements that are relevant to the work of APFIC.
- (iv) APFIC Secretariat reports the intended future role APFIC and the Regional Consultative Forum to the FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (APRC) in May 2004.
- (v) The future role of APFIC and the Regional consultative Forum (form, content and draft agenda) is presented to the 28th Session of the Commission in August 2004 to gain Member's endorsement. The appropriate means of channeling APFIC's requirements to the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and other international fora, will be determined.
- (vi) Following the APFIC session, the Secretariat reports the outcome to COFI and with the support of appropriate Working Groups prepare for the First Regional Consultative Forum in August 2006.
- (vii) The 70th Session of the Executive Committee of APFIC meets in June/July 2005 to review the report of the 28<sup>th</sup> Session, plans of work of the ad hoc working groups as required, the *modus operandi* for the First Regional Consultative Forum and the agenda for the 29<sup>th</sup> Session.
- (viii) Report progress to the APRC session in May 2006.
- (ix) Conduct the First Regional Consultative Forum in August 2006, and the back-to-back 29th Session of APFIC to consider additional matters raised by the Members and their reaction to the recommendations from the forum which may serve as a basis for the development of APFIC recommendations and future work plans of APFIC.
- (x) The Secretariat develops the draft report and recommendations of the forum (which may include high priority activities for the Commission's ad hoc working groups). The proceedings of the forum should be published as quickly as feasible. The draft report and recommendations of the forum are circulated to all Members for comments.
- (xi) The cycle of preparation for the Regional Consultative Forum and reporting is repeated until 2010.

### Summary of main recommendations/decisions

#### Future Role of APFIC

- (1) The Committee noted that most of the Members of APFIC wished to see the Commission continue its functions and to assume a new role as a “Regional Consultative Body” to promote integration of the regional activities relating to fisheries. (paragraph 15 of the Report)
- (2) The Committee further noted that the majority of the Members were of the opinion that contributions should be voluntary rather than mandatory, with a continuation of the current practice of Members financing their respective participation in the meetings of APFIC and its subsidiary bodies. (paragraph 16 of the Report)
- (3) Taking into account the numerous fisheries bodies, arrangements and initiatives in the region, the Committee thought that it would be advisable for APFIC to increase its liaison with these bodies and arrangements. In considering the future role of the Commission, it was recommended that the types and subject matter of these bodies, arrangements and initiatives had to be taken into account. (paragraph 23 of the Report)
- (4) The Committee unanimously agreed that APFIC must alter its role in order to survive. Since APFIC is a Members’ organization, Ex Co expressed concern that the lack of interest from the majority of its Members in the Commission would render it ineffective and lead eventually to its demise. (paragraph 24 of the Report)

#### Regional Consultative Forum

- (5) To provide an integrating mechanism for APFIC to assume its proposed role, it was recommended that APFIC organize and conduct a Regional Consultative Forum as a biennial event. (paragraph 26 and 27 of the Report)
- (6) The Committee considered that the theme (‘banner programme’) of the first Regional Consultative Forum should be on small-scale fisheries and aquaculture, since these represent areas of common interest to the Members and also are areas of the sector that have been previously neglected. The Forum should also have an opportunity to discuss various sub-themes including policy, management and trade-related issues as well as food security and food safety. (paragraph 28 and 30 of the Report)
- (7) The Committee emphasized that APFIC should not ‘implement projects’ but rather act in a role of bringing together the regional actors in the fisheries sector under the broader issue of small-scale fisheries/aquaculture. (paragraph 28 of the Report)
- (8) The Committee envisaged that benefits, which could be derived from this Forum included the open discussion of regional fisheries issues and opportunities for technical and policy learning and exchange, thereby increasing the awareness of issues of common interest to the Members of APFIC. The output of the Forum would

provide a voice for the region that could then be followed up in international fora such as the FAO Regional Conference and COFI and also contribute to other regional mechanisms such as the Regional Seas program. (paragraph 32 of the Report)

- (9) The Committee agreed that the first session of the Forum should be attended by APFIC Members, observer nations, representatives of FAO, relevant RFBs and selected international organizations as well as international experts invited to speak on specific topics. (paragraph 33 of the Report)
- (10) The Committee agreed that the first session of the Regional Consultative Forum be held in conjunction with the Twenty-ninth Session of APFIC and replace the APFIC Symposia as these arrangements would incur minimal additional expenses over the current budget of APFIC. (paragraph 36 of the Report)
- (11) The Committee agreed that the outcome and recommendations arising from the Forum, which have been endorsed by the Commission, should be communicated widely by the Secretariat to relevant Ministries and universities in the member countries. They should also be disseminated to FAO, in particular to the Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific and to COFI for consideration and appropriate action, in order to raise the awareness of regional issues. (paragraph 37 of the Report)
- (12) The Committee expressed its concern over the expected increase of effort on the part of the Secretariat in organizing the biennial Regional Consultative Forum and in providing a synthesis and development report for presentation to more than one international forum, as well as searching for funding support and organizing further meetings of regional decision-makers and/or aid donors. The Committee noted that FAO currently provided US\$ 165 000 per biennium in support of the activities of APFIC and the Secretariat. An estimated amount of about US\$100 000 might be required for the holding of the Forum independent of the session of APFIC (i.e. in alternate years). The Forum, therefore, will also have to be donor-supported.
- (13) The Committee agreed to recommend to the Commission the adoption of the Regional Consultative Forum as its main event amongst the activities of APFIC. (paragraph 39 of the Report)

#### Preparations for the Twenty-eighth Session of APFIC

- (14) The APFIC Secretariat should prepare a summary handbook on regional and sub-regional fisheries bodies and arrangements for the benefit of the APFIC Members. (paragraph 23 of the Report)
- (15) The Committee recommended that the outcomes of the Executive Committee and its recommendations as to the future role of APFIC should be submitted for consideration by the Twenty-seventh Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (APRC) to be held in Beijing in May 2004. (paragraph 40 of the Report)
- (16) The Executive Committee was informed of the arrangements for the Twenty-eighth Session of APFIC to be hosted by the Government of Thailand in August 2004. (paragraph 41 of the Report).

