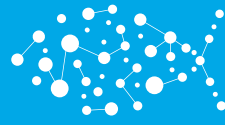




Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



RSN

REGIONAL FISHERY BODY SECRETARIATS' NETWORK

MAGAZINE Nº 18 • FEBRUARY 2019



LOOKING BACK: THE JOURNEY SO FAR





**WORKING TOGETHER
FOR THE SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT OF FISHERIES
AND AQUACULTURE**



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A NETWORK THAT WORKS Celebrating twenty years of shared vision, efforts and achievements



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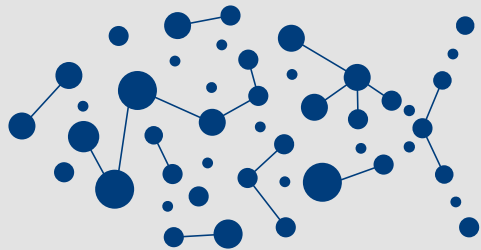
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**RFBs:
the path to positive change**



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A NETWORK THAT WORKS

CELEBRATING TWENTY YEARS OF SHARED VISION, EFFORTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The sustainable management, conservation and development of fisheries and aquaculture across the globe are key to ensuring a fairer future for all. The importance of regional cooperation in this area has been emphasized in relevant international instruments, which provide a solid basis for Member States to work together in achieving this vision. Among them, the United Nations Convention of Law of the Sea, the Fish Stocks Agreement and the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

The first Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs) were established in the 1920s. The earliest RFB created within the context of the FAO Constitution was the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC), in 1948. Since then, their number has steadily increased.

February 1999 saw the First Meeting of FAO and Non-FAO Regional Fishery Bodies or Arrangements. That and subsequent meetings provided RFBs with a unique opportunity to share experiences, knowledge and views about common problems they were facing – from how to promote the implementation of recent international instruments and initiatives, to exploring closer collaboration between RFBs, a lot of ground was covered. They soon reached 53 Bodies, 58 including Arrangements and networks, with eleven being established under the FAO Constitution.

The Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN) brings together the secretaries of these RFBs and Arrangements, embracing a wide range of mandates and coverage areas, including inland and marine waters, capture fisheries and aquaculture, and a rich variety of species. Some of them act on an advisory mandate, and provide non-binding advice, decision-making support or coordination mechanisms; others – the Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) – have a management mandate, and adopt fisheries conservation and management measures that are binding on their members.



Eliana Haberkon
(FAO)



Piero Mannini
(FAO)



THE RSN HAS COME A LONG WAY SINCE ITS EARLY BEGINNINGS, TWENTY YEARS AGO. BUT ITS JOURNEY CONTINUES, TOWARDS THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD, INCLUDING THOSE SET FORTH BY THE 2030 AGENDA.



The importance of RFBs has notably increased in the past half-century, and with the challenges that the global community is set to face, that importance can only grow. Ultimately, the international community has focused on the need to strengthen RFBs, given the relevance of their work to ensure the long-term conservation of fish stocks and their essential role in contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal 14. Fishery-related issues are complex, with an ever-growing number of aspects to be considered, and regional mechanisms are key in supporting countries who strive to meet their international commitments.

The Network has a leading role to play in this process: it facilitates information-sharing and discussion among secretariats on emerging issues or subjects covered by the mandate of their respective organizations; it supports the important role played by RFBs in the management and sustainable use of fish stocks; it contributes to achieving cooperation and coordination among RFBs as one of the most effective ways to strengthen regional fisheries and aquaculture governance; it facilitates RFBs' inclusion in the international agenda on all key discussions, including those on oceans governance, responsible fisheries management, climate change, food security, and more. The RSN also champions the unique role of RFBs, highlighting their constant work with Member States to address fisheries and aquaculture issues through a concrete, results-oriented approach.

The RSN has come a long way since its early beginnings, twenty years ago. But its journey continues, towards the challenges and opportunities ahead, including those set forth by the 2030 Agenda. This journey will be the focus of the two 2019 editions of this Newsletter (issues 18 and 19). The Corner section, in particular, will explore our shared history and common vision for the future. This month, we reflect on the lessons learned, the experiences gained and the goals achieved since that First Meeting of FAO and Non-FAO Regional Fishery Bodies, in 1999, under the theme of **LOOKING BACK: THE JOURNEY SO FAR.**

Eliana Haberkon Piero Mannini

FROM THE MEETINGS TO THE NETWORK: WHAT NEXT?

When I was recruited by FAO in 2002 as a Fishery Liaison Officer, my terms of reference included work on Regional Fishery Bodies. I have therefore been in charge of RFBs' meetings since the third one, held in 2003 under the supervision of Mr Robin Allen, the Chairperson at that time. During the fourth Meeting in 2005, the name of the forum that brought them together was changed to "RFB Secretariats' Network", under the chairpersonship of Mr Denzil Millar, who also chaired the 1st and 2nd Meeting of the RSN, held in 2007 and 2009, respectively. I continued my role until the 3rd Meeting of the RSN in 2011, which was chaired by Mr Kjartan Hoydal.

The 1st Meeting of FAO and Non-FAO RFBs or Arrangements was held in 1999, with the aim to further promote the coordination and cooperation between the various Bodies concerned.¹ In his opening remarks, Mr Moritaka Hayashi, who was Assistant Director-General of the FAO Fisheries Department at that time, underscored the importance for RFBs to "play more and more important and wider roles in the conservation and management of resources" and "their role is now a vital one in the context of global fisheries governance", by referring to the outcome of the High-Level Panel of External Experts convened by the Director-General of FAO in January 1998, which recommended that "FAO should work to encourage and promote more coherent management approaches among regional fishery bodies, where possible". The importance of the role of RFBs has not changed since then. Rather, it has gained further significance, RFBs being essential in the field of global fisheries governance.

During the 33rd Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI 33), held in July 2018, Mr Peter Thompson, UN Special Envoy for the Ocean, also mentioned that "our regional endeavours are crucial to good governance of the Ocean and its resources" and thus "the RFMO system is such an essential element of our stewardship responsibilities"².



Hiromoto Watanabe
Secretary of COFI



**THE 1ST MEETING OF
FAO AND NON-FAO RFBs
OR ARRANGEMENTS
WAS HELD IN 1999,
WITH THE AIM TO
FURTHER PROMOTE THE
COORDINATION AND
COOPERATION BETWEEN
THE VARIOUS BODIES
CONCERNED.**



¹ FAO. Report of the Meeting of FAO and Non-FAO Regional Fishery Bodies or Arrangements. Rome, Italy, 11-12 February 1999. *FAO Fisheries Report*. No. 597. Rome, FAO. 1999. 54p.

² Report of the 33rd Session of the Committee on Fisheries (Rome, 9-12 July 2018) (C 2019/23)



“FAO IS THE RIGHT PLACE, WITH THE RIGHT LEADERSHIP, TO ENABLE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PROPOSED JOINT FINANCIAL MECHANISM AND RATIONALIZATION OF THE RFMO SYSTEM AS A WHOLE”.



Why was the title of the meeting changed, first being referred to as a “Meeting of RFBs” and later as a “Meeting of the RSN”? According to the report of the 4th Meeting of RFBs³, “acknowledging the broad consultations undertaken by the Chairperson in preparing for the current Meeting, and mindful that this constituted a virtual group during intersessional periods rather than a single event every two years, the participants agreed that the title of “RFB Secretariats’ Network” would be more applicable than the current Meeting’s title”. As a “Network”, rather than a single event, the mechanism has become more active and integrated, even during inter-sessional periods. An example among many would be the publication of the RSN Newsletter, in which Members can share information and experiences.

How should the RSN evolve and act, in the future? Does the Network need to be further transformed, increasingly becoming a more structured, solid, mechanism? Or should it rather maintain its current flexible, adaptive form? The answers to such questions must be sought by RSN Members themselves, in consultation with the FAO Secretariat. There was substantial discussion during the 7th Meeting of the RSN (RSN-7), held in July 2018, on this particular point, under Agenda item 5: “Strengthening the RSN: needs and challenges”. I need not repeat here what was discussed in that forum, but suffice it to mention that a more proactive and enhanced role seems to be expected, with the RSN as a platform for coordinating and increasing the visibility of the work of RFBs. At the same time, the Network is not considered to be a decision-making body⁴.

Mr Peter Thomson pointed towards a viable direction in his statement during COFI 33. He expressed his concern that “some RFMOs remain handicapped by limited resources, seriously undermining their effectiveness in important areas” and “this handicap needs to be rectified, perhaps through the establishment of a joint finance mechanism” and “FAO is the right place, with the right leadership, to enable the establishment of a proposed joint financial mechanism and rationalization of the RFMO system as a whole”.

Given my personal experience, I can say that there are differences among RFBs, both in their nature and with regard to their relationship with FAO. However, it is self-evident that FAO has been recognizing and championing the role of RFBs, and is always keen to support and work with them. This must continue in the future as well.

³ FAO. Report of the fourth Meeting of Regional Fishery Bodies. Rome, 14-15 March 2005. *FAO Fisheries Report*. No. 778. Rome, FAO. 2005. 29p.

⁴ FAO. Report of the Seventh Meeting of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats’ Network, Rome, Italy, 7 and 13 July 2018. *FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Report (In press)*.



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LATEST NEWS AND HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights



THE SEVENTH MEETING OF THE REGIONAL FISHERY BODY SECRETARIATS' NETWORK

The Seventh Meeting of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN 7) was held on 7 and 13 July 2018, at the FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy, during the same week another key fisheries and aquaculture event was being held: the 33rd Session of Committee of Fisheries (COFI 33).

Participation at the RSN meeting was unprecedented: attendees included forty-three secretaries of RFBs, representing a wide variety of mandates and geographic regions spanning the globe. Among those in attendance were representatives of FAO and non-FAO regional fisheries bodies, marine and inland fishery advisory and management bodies, and the United Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UNDOALOS), as well as organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO).

For a number of new secretaries, this was the first time attending an RSN meeting. Among them: Mr David Agnew, Secretary of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR); Ms Rebecca Lent, Secretary of the International Whaling Commission (IWC); Mr Chris O'Brien, Secretary of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC); Mr Camille Jean Pierre Manel, Secretary of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT); Ms Emma Hatfield, Secretary of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO); Mr Darius Alec Campbell, Secretary of the Northeast Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC); Ms Yvette Diedi Ouali, Secretary of the Western and Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC); Ms Elizabeth Voges, Secretary of the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO);



©FAO

With key global challenges ahead, the RSN is emerging as a unique tool to foster dialogue deliver and effective solutions

Mr Sebastian Rodriguez Alfaro, Secretary of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO); Mr Jon Lansley, Secretary of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA); Mr Reinaldo Morales Rodriguez, Secretary of the Central America Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization (OSPESCA); Mr Daniel Gilardoni, Secretary of the Joint Technical Commission for the Argentina/Uruguay Maritime Front (CTMFM); Mr Mentor Patricio Villagomez Merino, Secretary of the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS); and Ms Victoria Chomo, Secretary of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC) and Secretary of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish). The increasing number of women covering senior roles within the secretariats role is notable.



The Meeting covered issues and topics of both regional and global concern, including the activities and outcomes of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and UNDOALOS, the ongoing discussion on the issue of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction, matters related to COFI 33, and the implementation of activities aimed at delivering the 2030 Agenda. RFBs shared their experiences and initiatives, discussing opportunities and the increasing need for coordination and cooperation, for example in relation to the Fisheries and Resources Monitoring Systems (FIRMS), and within the wider context of the Network itself. Secretaries and participants also explored current needs and challenges, whilst reflecting on the goal of strengthening the Network. The RSN Chair delivered his Statement at the COFI 33.



**GLOBAL ACHIEVEMENTS
ARE BUILT UPON
REGIONAL EFFORTS**



During both RSN 7 and COFI 33 one fact emerged clearly: the Network has established itself as a valuable forum to foster cooperation, facilitate discussion and the exchange of experiences in support of RFBs and RFMOs. COFI delegations showed keen attention to issues of regional cooperation, while the international agenda is increasingly focusing on the key role of RFBs in translating international and global policies into practice at the regional and local levels.

The meeting included the presence of Mr Árni Mathiesen, FAO Assistant Director-General, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, and the Director of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, Mr Manuel Barange, as well as several of FAO colleagues leading projects in which the collaboration with RFBs and RFMOs is central. Attendees discussed major fisheries and aquaculture issues, and exchanged first-hand information and experiences, further highlighting the opportunity the Network provides for enhancing cooperation and increasing awareness of regional efforts and needs.

During the first session of the Meeting, a corporate video aimed at introducing the work of the RSN and of RFBs to the general public was presented in FAO's Sheikh Zayed Centre. The video also highlights their contribution to multiple SDG14 targets, and right across the 2030 Agenda, moving from the fundamental fact that "global achievements are built upon regional efforts" (the video, titled 'Our Common Blue Heart', FAO 2018, can be found online at: <https://youtu.be/XR8uBMsvVc0>).





Efforts are also being made to develop and disseminate other materials to champion the Network and the work of its members: RSN-7 participants showed their appreciation for the launch of the restyled RSN Newsletter, as well as for the new publication entitled 'Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network – Membership', FAO 2018, ('RSN Membership publication').

Since its inception 20 years ago, in the context of the first Meeting of FAO and non-FAO Regional Fisheries Bodies or Arrangements, the Network has thrived. It has grown, both in terms of importance and members: it currently counts more than 50 RFBs, RFMOs and partners. During RSN-7, participants reflected on the importance of nurturing the opportunity of working together, and how to achieve common goals. Several

initiatives were agreed, such as the development of terms of reference, the amendment of the rules of procedure, the aim of enhancing collaboration with FAO, and facilitating the participation of more RFBs and RFMOs in UN discussions and other relevant international fora on regional issues.

Despite the challenges, the Network is healthy, and the need for it is highlighted by many, including the COFI delegations. After two decades, the RSN's role is more important than ever. It remains committed to bringing parties together and engaging with those who work for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture development worldwide.

Eliana Haberkon Piero Mannini



Mr Meski
 Chairperson

Mr Meski has concluded his mandate

Mr Meski has concluded his mandate as Secretary of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) and informed the Network that he could not, therefore, continue in his role as Chairperson. He expressed words of gratitude and recognition to the Network. As the RSN members did during the session, the editorial team of this Newsletter expresses its gratitude to the Chairperson for his work with the RSN and the enthusiasm and commitment that characterized his role and support to the Network, and wishes Mr Meski all the best in his life and career.



Guillermo Compeán
 New chairperson

Nomination of the New RSN Chairperson

Following the suggestion of secretaries in the meeting, and in view of completing the ongoing term of four years started by the Secretary of the ICCAT, Mr Messki, the meeting agreed in nominating Mr Guillermo Compeán, Director of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), as the new RSN Chairperson.

The RSN Secretariat and all RSN members thanked Mr Compean for accepting the role of Chairperson of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network.



COFI 33

Statement of the Chairperson of RSN-7

AGENDA ITEM 8.3

MR CHAIR,
DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES,

I am taking the floor as Chair of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network, also known as the 'RSN'. This network, established in 1999 as an FAO-led initiative, consists of 54 Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs) Secretariats, of which 11 are FAO statutory bodies. RSN is a coordination mechanism which facilitates sharing experiences, data and information, and provides a forum for discussion on emerging issues of common concern among the RFB Secretariats; it does not engage in policy development, nor take decisions of a binding nature. The Network provides an ever-evolving RFB collaboration framework, and is the focal point between the RSN members and FAO.

It worth recalling that RFBs, which are served by the established respective Secretariats, are intergovernmental organizations constituted by FAO Members, which include both advisory bodies and bodies that adopt legally binding conservation and management measures (also known as Regional Fishery Management Organizations, RFMOs); their focus varies from high seas fisheries to coastal fisheries, inland fisheries and aquaculture.



THE NETWORK PROVIDES AN EVER-EVOLVING RFB COLLABORATION FRAMEWORK, AND IS THE FOCAL POINT BETWEEN THE RSN MEMBERS AND FAO.



CHAIR,

Last Saturday 7 July, prior to COFI, 43 members of the Network participated in the 7th meeting of the RSN (RSN-7), that is more than three quarters of the current RFBs and RFMOs of the world. Crucial topics of the international agenda on fishery and aquaculture governance at both the global and regional scale were discussed. The report of the meeting will be prepared and disseminated by the RSN Secretariat.

At the request of the RSN, I wish to take this opportunity to share some outcomes of the RSN-7 session that are relevant to the Committee of Fisheries (COFI).

First and most importantly, the RSN would like to bring to the attention of COFI Members the key role of the regional dimension, as also strongly emphasized by the UN Special Envoy for the Oceans in his opening statement. Working at the appropriate ecosystem scale requires cooperation at the regional level, as processes related to the exploitation of natural living resources usually involve at least several countries. The regionalization of fisheries and aquaculture governance is a concrete approach and instrumental to address common concerns, create synergies among key stakeholders and to mainstream the UN global objectives into the regional and local agendas, while making them accessible intra-regionally and to the general public.

In an increasingly connected world, RFBs, and particularly RFMOs, are gaining importance in international fora for discussion of issues related to fisheries management and shared living marine and inland resources. Efforts have been made to enhance the visibility of the work of RSN and its members, a newsletter has been circulated since 2011 and a Special edition launched for COFI 33, which shares the RFBs' work on SDGs, and a guidance article of the UN Special Envoy for Oceans. In addition, a video was recently produced together with FAO on the role of RSN and to promote the work of RFBs and RFMOs in achieving SDG and contributing to food security.



The RSN meeting stressed the need for RFBs and RFMOs to consider their participation in the rapidly enhanced UN and other global initiatives, to ensure these fora are fully aware of the work and role of RFBs and RFMOs in coordinating the related global initiative outputs through their members.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development emphasizes the importance of the regional and sub-regional dimensions, regional economic integration and interconnectivity in sustainable development. The regional level is the most appropriate level for establishing a collaborative framework that encompasses the whole ecosystem and their efficient preservation and protection, and respects regional diversity while providing opportunities for participating states to sustainably benefit from the services they provide.

The regional dimension is a central milestone of international fisheries management policy as also proved by the rapid expansion of the family of RFBs and RFMOs. Enabling conditions that render this collaboration successful require strong political will of the parties to these regional instruments. In this regard, FAO is actively engaged in strengthening the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats Network (RSN), which has a key instrumental role in this process. RSN is being required by most of its members to further develop its cooperative and coordinated efforts among them, aiming for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture development. To this end, FAO is invited to consider ways to make additional human and financial resources available, consistently with the suggestion made by the UN Special Envoy for the Oceans '*to enable the establishment of a proposed joint financial mechanism*'.

On behalf of all the p Regional Fishery Body Secretariats participating in the Network, I wish to thank you, COFI, the COFI bureau and FAO for the positive consideration given to the RSN that provides visibility and recognition to the work of the Regional Fishery Bodies.

Thank you.



Seventh Meeting of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network

7 and 13 July 2018









Latest news



UPDATES ON DEVELOPMENTS

United Nations General Assembly and the work of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea

General Assembly resolutions on Oceans and the law of the sea and Sustainable fisheries

On 11 December 2018, the General Assembly adopted the annual resolutions on sustainable fisheries (resolution 73/125) and on Oceans and the law of the sea (resolution 73/124), which contain a number of important provisions relevant to the work of regional fishery bodies (RFBs). General Assembly resolution 73/124 can be found at <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/73/124>, while the full text of resolution 73/125, provisionally available as draft resolution, is available on the website of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS), at: http://www.un.org/depts/los/general_assembly/general_assembly_resolutions.htm.

Informal consultations of States Parties to the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (ICSP)

➤ The report of the 13th round of ICSP (ICSP-13), which discussed the topic of “Science-policy interface” is now available on the website of DOALOS at: www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/fish_stocks_agreement_states_parties.htm.

➤ The 14th round of ICSP (ICSP-14), scheduled to take place on 2 and 3 May 2019, will focus on the topic of “Performance reviews of regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements.” Invitations to make written contributions on the topic of the meeting were sent out in early January 2019. They will be posted on the DOALOS website unedited and in the languages in which they are received, in accordance with past practice. Invitations to participate in ICSP-14, including the draft agenda of the meeting, as well as a call for nominations of potential panellists, will be sent out shortly. The General Assembly, in resolution 73/125, encouraged

greater participation at ICSP-14, including by competent international organizations.

Bottom fishing review

➤ In resolution 73/125, the General Assembly recalled its decision to conduct in 2020 a further review of the actions taken by States and regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements in response to paragraphs 113, 117 and 119 to 124 of resolution 64/72, paragraphs 121, 126, 129, 130 and 132 to 134 of resolution 66/68 and paragraphs 156, 171, 175, 177 to 188 and 219 of resolution 71/123, with a view to ensuring effective implementation of the measures therein and to make further recommendations, where necessary. As per past practice, the review will be informed by a report of the Secretary-General on the impacts of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems and the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks, as well as a two-day multi-stakeholder workshop to be held in 2019. Regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements will be invited to contribute to both the Report and Workshop, in due course.

Intergovernmental Conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, to consider the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee on the elements and to elaborate the text of an international legally-binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (General Assembly resolution 72/249)

➤ The first session of the Conference was convened from 4 to 17 September 2018. The statement by the President of the Conference at the closing of the first session is available on the Conference website (<https://www.un.org/bbnj/>) as document A/CONF.232/2018/7. Annexed to the statement are the oral reports of the facilitators of the four informal working groups established during the first session, respectively on: marine genetic resources, including questions on the sharing of benefits; measures such as area-based management tools, including marine protected areas; environmental impact assessments; and an informal working group on capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology.

➤ The second and third sessions of the Conference will be convened from 25 March to 5 April 2019 and from 19 to 30 August 2019.

The President was requested to prepare, as part of the preparations for the second session of the Conference, a document with the aim of facilitating focused discussions and text-based negotiations, containing treaty language and reflecting options concerning the four elements of the package. When issued, this document will also be available on the Conference website.

United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (Informal Consultative Process)

➤ Among other issues, the potential impacts of anthropogenic ocean noise on fish stocks was discussed in the context of the nineteenth meeting of the Informal Consultative Process, held in June 2018, which focused on the topic “Anthropogenic underwater noise”. The report of the Informal Consultative Process, as well as the presentations made by panelists and the report of the Secretary-General on the topic of focus of the meeting, are available on the website of DOALOS at: www.un.org/Depts/los/consultative_process/consultative_process.htm.

The twentieth meeting of the Informal Consultative Process will be held from 10 to 14 June 2019 in New York and will focus on the topic “Ocean Science and the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development”. A letter requesting contributions to the report of the Secretary-General on this topic has been sent to all relevant intergovernmental organizations.



Plenary.



UN/UNDOLOS

Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects

The Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole:

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/73, the eleventh meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects (the Regular Process), was held from 23 to 24 August 2018, and adopted recommendations to the seventy-third session of the General Assembly, which were adopted and incorporated in General Assembly resolution 73/124, which can be found at <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/73/124>.

Second round of regional workshops in support of the Regular Process:

In accordance with the programme of work for the period 2017-2020 for the second cycle of the Regular Process, the second round of regional workshops was held in 2018 to support the development of the second world ocean assessment, and to, inter alia, inform the collection of regional-level information and data for the preparation of that assessment. The regional workshops were held as follows: Koror, Palau (8 to 9 August 2018) for the North Pacific; Valletta, Malta, (27 to 28 August 2018) and Odessa, Ukraine, (17 to 18 October 2018) for the North Atlantic, the Baltic Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea region; Bali, Indonesia, (8 to 9 November 2018) and Doha, State of Qatar, (28 to 29 November 2018) for the Indian Ocean (including the Arabian Sea and the

Bay of Bengal), the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden and the ROPME/RECOFI area; Accra, Ghana, (3 to 4 December 2018) for the South Atlantic (between the African and American coasts) and the wider Caribbean, and Guayaquil, Ecuador (17 to 18 December 2018) for the South Pacific. All the relevant documents for these workshops can be found at: <https://www.un.org/regularprocess/content/second-round-regional-workshops>.

Nominations to the Pool of Experts of the second cycle of the Regular Process:

The preparation of the second world ocean assessment during the second cycle of the Regular Process will require a large Pool of Experts with expertise in a wide range of subjects who can be appointed in accordance with the mechanism for the establishment of the Pool of Experts for the second cycle of the Regular Process. Accordingly, States are encouraged to appoint additional experts, including through their designated National Focal Points. Moreover, relevant intergovernmental organizations can also provide recommendations to the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process, through the secretariat, on experts with the required professional expertise.

The Personal History Form for the nomination of experts to the Pool of Experts (to be sent to the Division at doalos@un.org), as well as other relevant information, can be found at <https://www.un.org/regularprocess/>.

Capacity-building event:

A two-day multi-stakeholder dialogue and capacity-building partnership event will be held in New York from 24 to 25 January 2019 in order to provide an opportunity to build awareness and collaboration with respect to capacity-building in support of the Regular Process, including with respect to building capacity to participate in, and make use of, assessments.

MORE INFORMATION

on this event can be found at: <https://www.un.org/regularprocess/content/multi-stakeholders>.



THE GLOBAL RECORD OF STOCKS AND FISHERIES

A comprehensive and transparent inventory of stocks and fisheries records across multiple data providers.

The Global Record of Stocks and Fisheries (GRSF) is an inventory of stocks and fisheries, combining data from renowned institutes across the globe. The information is harmonized according to international standards and published with unique identifiers for stocks and fisheries records to improve usability.

The GRSF stems from an initiative funded by the European Union Horizon 2020 BlueBRIDGE project (2016-2018). It has been developed in collaboration with the FIRMS Partnership (Fisheries and Resource Monitoring System), the University of Washington (RAM Legacy Stock Assessment Database) and FishSource, a programme of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership.

The GRSF is designed around stock monitoring data that are shared by countries or through the Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs). The GRSF enhances the global monitoring by i) collating stocks and fisheries records from national and regional sources, ii) storing information according to specific standards/protocols, and iii) assigning and disseminating unique identifiers for stock and fishery identification.

Many stakeholders from industry, NGOs, technology companies, etc., believe the success of seafood traceability is based on standardized fishery identifiers, and the GRSF provides exactly that base information which can be used to develop a global standard in support of traceability.

Potential users: RFBs and their Member States, the seafood industry, seafood certifiers, governmental agencies responsible for stocks and fisheries reporting, researchers and officers working on global analyses on the state of fishery resources, NGOs promoting sustainable fisheries, and the general public.

Benefits:

- 1) A global standard to identify stocks and fisheries based on a Universally Unique Identifier (UUID) and a Semantic Identifier is expected to foster stakeholders use;
- 2) Contribute to transparency in supporting dissemination of Sustainable Development Goal Indicator 14.4.1 "Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels";
- 3) Support to seafood traceability and catch documentation, ecolabelling schemes, food safety, sustainable fisheries; and
- 4) Boost stocks and fisheries status and trend dissemination and monitoring, and stimulate responsible consumer practices.



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FAO GLOBAL ATLAS OF TUNA AND TUNA-LIKE SPECIES

An introduction to the revamped FAO Tuna Atlas

Background

Historically, FAO collates data on nominal catches of all fish species, including tuna, as a part of a capture production database on all fish species. Since 1996, FAO collated statistics on tuna and billfishes upon agreement established with Tuna RFMOs. Since 2012, the atlas has not hitherto been updated.

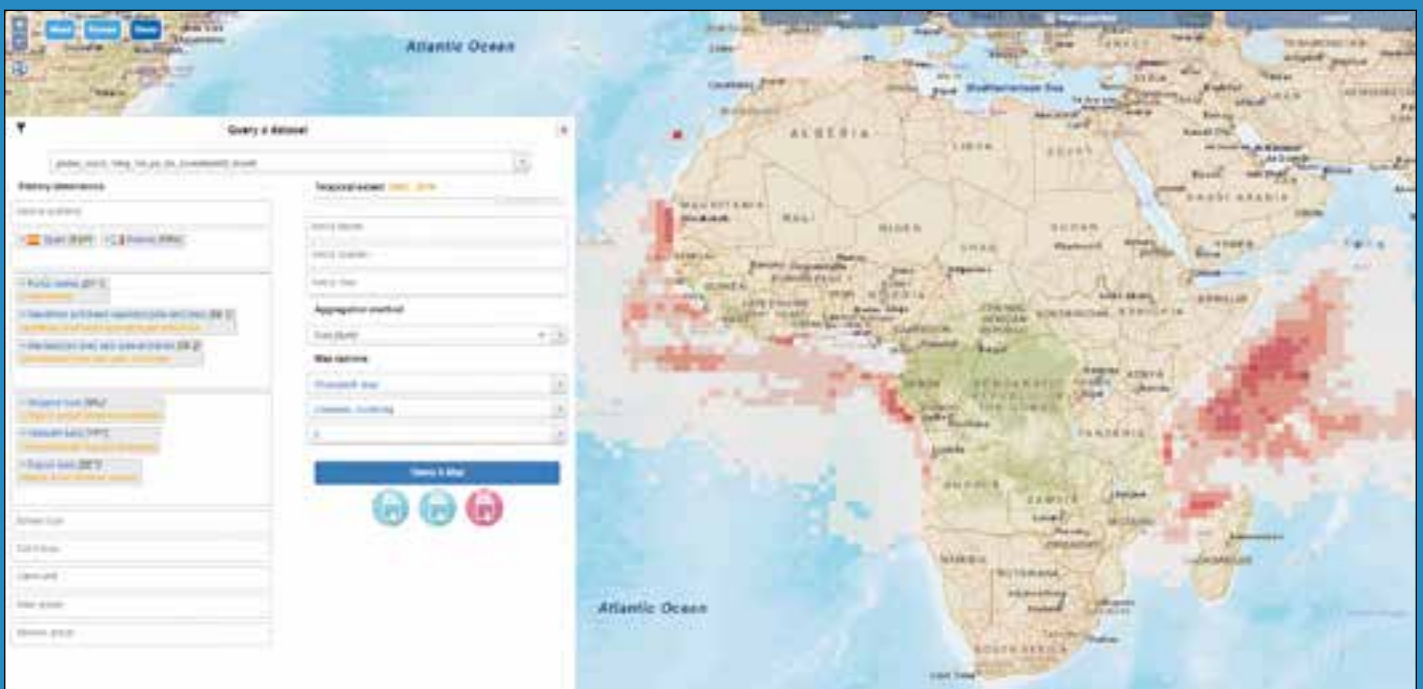
Objectives

In collaboration with French Institute for Research and Sustainable Development (IRD), with the Italian Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR) and with the support of the EU-funded BlueBRIDGE project, efforts were made in recent years to revamp the FAO Tuna Atlas by automating the collation, harmonization and dissemination process of t-RFMOs statistics, and to launch the new FAO Global Atlas of Tuna and Tuna-like species. The main purposes are: (i) respond to an increasing demand of a widening

user audience, in particular the scientific community, to elucidate patterns in global tuna fisheries. (ii) Build a collaborative platform with t-RFMOs to provide user-friendly tools to facilitate data exploitation based on geographic information standards and FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Re-usable) data principles. (iii) Use, by FAO, of t-RFMOs statistics, as authoritative sources of tuna nominal catches in the global fisheries statistics database.

Services and workflow maintenance

The atlas consists of a metadata catalogue of Tuna fisheries data series from 1950 to 2016. A Map viewer displays nominal catches and fishing effort by 1° by 1° degrees resolution for most gears, and 5° by 5° degree resolutions for longlines. The use of the catalogue is expected to increase the visibility of the fisheries data sets while the online data viewer provides a powerful



©Courtesy of D4Science.org Gateway, Tuna Atlas VRE

tool to explore spatial tuna data at global scale, through query, extraction, visualization and overlay modules (figure on the previous page).

The atlas is hosted on a Virtual Research Environment platform, which allows scientific collaboration on spatial tuna datasets. Users can access the platform upon request. https://i-marine.d4science.org/group/fao_tunaatlas/global-tuna-atlas

With the goal to set-up the atlas operations under a governing mechanism with established data sharing agreement, FAO prepares to receive public data under the Fisheries and Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS) multilateral partnership, alongside four out of five t-RFMOs members of FIRMS. Effective operation of the atlas will be based on harmonized statistical data structures being finalized by the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP). The adoption of this CWP Reference Harmonization standard is expected to be a major key for minimizing maintenance costs of the atlas.

Acknowledgment by the community

The FAO global tuna atlas was reviewed by the five t-RFMOs, namely: CCSBT, IATTC, ICCAT, IOTC and WCPFC during the Technical Workshop on Global Harmonization of Tuna Fisheries Statistics, organized in collaboration with the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) programme at FAO Headquarters in Rome, from 19th to 22nd March 2018.

Representatives of t-RFMOs recognized the usefulness of the atlas to the scientific and global user community and expect to collaboratively contribute under FIRMS to further developments of data content.

The atlas can be used with other datasets (e.g. showing statistics and stock status) for global advocacy on tuna-related issues. The global unified vision of tuna catch and effort data can also be of interest for quantifying the economic value of tuna fisheries, and exploring global scenarios of management, such as the closure of the high seas.



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USER RIGHTS

Fisheries Tenure and User Rights (FiTUR)

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030

The topics of tenure and user rights in fisheries have been addressed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) through a number of meetings and publications over the last 20 years and, most recently, in the **Tenure and User Rights in Fisheries conference (UserRights 2018)** held in Yeosu, Republic of Korea, in September 2018.

UserRights 2018 was a milestone in the mobilization and strengthening of a global framework around the topic of both inland and marine allocation of rights in the fisheries sector. The 164 participants presented case studies on fisheries in 42 countries, focusing on history and experiences with: (1) customary and indigenous peoples'

tenure rights in fisheries, (2) open access fisheries, (3) input controls, (4) output controls, (5) the post-harvest sector, (6) competing fisheries stakeholders, (7) multiple use in coastal zone management and rights, and (8) social aspects of tenure and user rights in fisheries. The outcome of the conference was that participants supported two streams for our future work:

- 1 the request for local work on the ground to develop rights-based fisheries management systems, and
- 2 the development of Voluntary Guidelines on Fisheries Tenure and User Rights.

Keynote and session presentations are now available at: <http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/user-rights/programme/keynote-speakers/en/>.



Group photo of the Tenure and User Rights in Fisheries 2018 Conference, held in September 2018 in Yeosu, South Korea.



Visit at the Ahnpo fishing village, during the field trip of the Tenure and User Rights in Fisheries 2018 Conference, Yeosu, South Korea.

FAO's work on fisheries tenure and user rights: the way forward

Both the 32nd and 33rd Committee on Fisheries (COFI) (2016 and 2018, respectively) made a call for FAO to work on the subject of tenure and user rights and to facilitate the formalization of appropriate access and resource rights in fisheries. More specifically, COFI noted that these are key factors for food security and reduced conflicts in small-scale fisheries (SSF). Yet the VGGT, as the main framework on responsible governance of tenure of fisheries, generally does not address the specificities of the fisheries sector, including:

- the lack of definition and global agreement on what is tenure in fisheries,
- the identification and recognition of different tenure systems, guidance on how to allocate, or
- guidance on how to efficiently improve governance systems, so fisheries can be managed in an economically, socially and environmentally-sustainable way.

Thus, to compliment the VGGT and SSF Guidelines, while expanding their scope and making their normative framework more operational, these specific issues could be elaborated in Voluntary Guidelines on Fisheries Tenure and User Rights (FiTUR). These Guidelines would also provide a platform to clearly articulate the relevance of fisheries tenure and user rights for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Hence, in 2019, FAO will host a series of regional workshops to compile the existing legislative frameworks that regulate the allocation process of fishing rights, as well as summarize the related shortcomings and lessons learned from existing fisheries tenure and user rights systems. The next scheduled meeting is Friends of User Rights 2019 (FoUR19), that will be held in Borgo di Tragliata, Fiumicino, Italy, from 11-14 February 2019. The main task of the FoUR19 will be to comment and advise on the process and targets of FAO work on fisheries tenure and user rights, focusing on the merits of developing the FiTUR.

FAO's open and participatory process is a key part of supporting countries in their path towards more secure and equitable access to fishing resources.







LOOKING BACK: THE JOURNEY SO FAR

RFBs




FOSTERING LOCAL ACTION FOR GLOBAL IMPACT

The first Meeting of FAO and non-FAO Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs) or Arrangements was organized by FAO, in February 1999. The meeting, which included representatives from 18 different bodies, was held just prior to the Twenty-third Session of Committee on Fisheries, and following the COFI 22 recommendations.

During that first meeting, discussions focussed on three main topics: the key issues affecting the performance of RFBs; a multifaceted approach to fishery status and trends reporting; and RFBs as vehicles for effective fishery governance. The conclusions reached were

of great relevance for RFBs, governments and FAO. In particular, they stressed the importance of the precautionary approach for fisheries management and governance, and of involving all stakeholders in developing management measures, while urging them to continue to adapt their mandates, structures and policies in order to better respond to the challenges they faced, as well as those to come. Concerns over the problems arising from over-capacity in fisheries and the lack of sufficient progress in improving the monitoring and enforcement of management measures were also raised.



The 1999 Meeting referred to important institutional governance aspects to improve the work of RFBs and the functioning of the Network. Among them, the following considerations were noted:

- Further meetings of regional fishery bodies should be held, preferably prior to the regular sessions of COFI;
- FAO should serve as the focal point for such meetings and act as a channel for the exchange and synthesis of information and experiences among regional fishery bodies;
- Regional fishery bodies should continue to review and adapt, where appropriate, their mandates, structures and strategies in order to better play their increasingly important roles in the process of achieving sustainable fisheries development and to discharge their responsibilities in implementing the recent series of international instruments concerned with fisheries;
- Attention should be drawn to the need for States to more widely participate in these instruments;
- There was a clear difference between the issues and problems faced by some RFBs consisting mainly of developed countries and those of developing countries, particularly in terms of levels of financial support and of the complex issues involved in small-scale, multispecies fisheries;
- Further improvements were needed, despite advances achieved by some RFBs, in the monitoring and enforcement of fisheries management measures;

➤ There was a need to address at subsequent meetings of RFBs several extrinsic factors, outside the control of fisheries management agencies, such as pollution and environmental degradation, the introduction of foreign and transgenic species, etc.

Participants expressed their appreciation for the opportunity afforded by the meeting to share experiences and views on common problems, and recommended that further such meetings should be held regularly, with FAO as focal point, preferably prior to future sessions of the FAO Committee on Fisheries.

The idea of establishing a forum to foster dialogue, enhance RFBs' performance and share information on relevant concerns related to fisheries and aquaculture at a regional level inspired and attracted a growing number of parties. RFBs and other organisations invited to work alongside them contributed new topics and areas of discussion, and came together to boost cooperation in support of the implementation of FAO policies. Invaluable data was shared and collected, and technical expertise provided, for the benefit of all. Over the past two decades, this collaboration has expanded to other levels, embracing non-state actors, governmental organisations, regional seas programmes and the private sector.

The forum's importance and recognition grew, and a new name for this loose organisation was required. In 2005, the group of FAO and non-FAO RFBs became the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network: the RSN was to maintain its fluid, adaptive nature, but shift towards a more solid and dynamic structure, in a process that is still ongoing.

The agendas of the RSN meetings, including RSN-7 (the most recent one, at time of writing) paint a clear picture of the issues affecting regions, highlighting the policy and technical responses needed, and their evolution over time. The role of the Network itself is often discussed, with parties contributing their vision for the RSN going forwards, in an attempt to strengthen it and equip it with the tools required to face the global challenges confronting fisheries and aquaculture. COFI-related outcomes; Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing; ecosystem approaches and the precautionary principle; effective monitoring systems; environmental issues: all these topics were, and are, at the core of the RSN's efforts. But other venues of inquiry and issues are being explored, including aquaculture development, marine protected areas (MPAs), blue growth, UNGA resolutions and the role of RFBs within the international agenda, as well as the opportunities provided by the latest technological developments, among others.

More and more voices are taking part in this crucial dialogue. The Network now counts more than 50 members, and the latest meeting of the RSN hosted

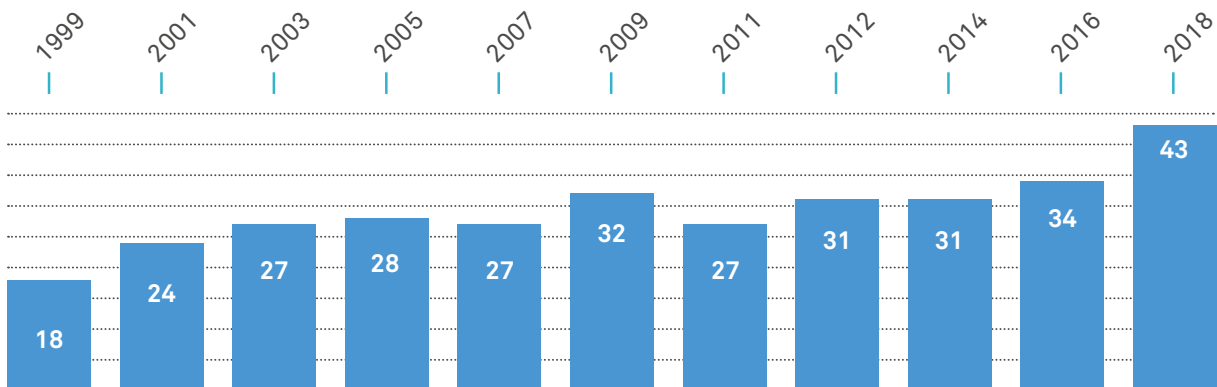
an unprecedented number of attendants: if they were 18 in 1999, that number has now far more than doubled, with members and partners fruitfully engaging with each other and with external parties, such as guest non-member organisations, which have been invited to attend RSN meetings since the very beginning.

One of the issues which is most often raised is the need for effective communication and enhanced visibility for the work of RFBs and the Network as a whole. This is something the RSN is actively working towards. In applying the COFI delegation comments and recommendations, the FAO RSN Secretariat has developed a new format for the Newsletter, and is in the process of redesigned the Network's website. It has also created an RSN Membership publication, providing a clear, succinct introduction to the work of members, designed to be accessible for any audience. Other materials have been developed, including an infographic featuring RFBs related facts and figures, highlighting a variety of governance and management issues and policies; a communication product exploring RFBs' contributions to the 2030 Agenda; a corporate video championing the efforts



©Wikimedia Commons/Anna Varona

RFBs participation at the RSN



of members and of the Network itself, which was unveiled in the FAO Atrium during COFI 33, alongside other RSN communication materials, and featured on the United Nations Ocean Conference website.

These efforts earned the support and recognition of the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean, Mr Peter Thomson, who contributed to the July 2018 edition of the RSN newsletter. In his statement at COFI 33, Mr Thomson stressed the fundamental importance of the collaboration between FAO, RFBs and RFMOs in achieving fair and effective governance of the Ocean and its resources. Mr Thomson also outlined the possibility of establishing a joint financial mechanism to aid Bodies and Organizations whose efforts are hindered by limited resources.

The Committee itself expressed appreciation for the work of RFBs and RFMOs, and commended FAO for the support provided to the RSN, noting its important role in facilitating the coordination, exchange of experiences and lessons learned by RFBs.

The increasing recognition of the RSN is reflected in references made in publications, meetings' outcomes, technical reports, communication channels and social media. The RSN communication network and information flow are instrumental means through which the information is made available to all RFBs, partners, stakeholders and the general public.

As noted in the first 1999 Meeting, the Network has relied on the continued collaboration and support of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department of FAO, which hosts and provides the RSN Secretariat services, the venue for regular meetings, and engages in day-to-day collaboration with the Network on technical and operational issues, as well as maintaining its dedicated website.

The vision of a fairer future for all is one that requires RFBs and RFMOs to lead in their areas of expertise, contributing to global efforts with their unique knowledge of local issues. Ongoing UN processes, discussions taking place in other international organisations, such as the WTO, and the implementation of key FAO policies (PSMA, SSF, etc) are all examples of a global dialogue to which RFBs and RFMOs can and must contribute.

Global achievements are built upon regional efforts: that is why the RSN focusses on enhancing regional cooperation as an essential mechanism through which members can work together towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. The importance of RFBs and the RSN as a unique forum has notably increased, and with the challenges that the global community is set to face, that importance can only grow.

Eliana Haberkon Piero Mannini

RFBs: THE PATH TO POSITIVE CHANGE



COPPESAALC

Incorporation of marine SSF into the scope of COPPESAALC: Progresses made

The Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters, the Commission of Small-scale, Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture of Latin America and the Caribbean (COPPESAALC, its acronym in Spanish) was established in 1976 by the FAO Council, under article VI of the FAO Constitution, and acts as advisory body. The Rules of Procedure were adopted by the Commission at its First Session in 1979; the Statutes were approved by the FAO Council in November 2010. The original mandate of the Commission referred to the development and sustainable use of inland fishery resources in Latin America; based on new challenges in the region and recognizing the importance of aquaculture to its Members, as well as the need to include “Caribbean” to embrace the whole region, the Commission’s terms of references (and Statute) were amended accordingly.

COPPESAALC includes 21 members: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, Venezuela.

COPPESAALC is working in cooperation with regional and sub-regional actors present in the same geographical area (OSPESCA, OLDEPESCA, RAA, CSOs, IPs, etc), towards the effective implementation of policies, good practices and related activities and ensure sustainable fisheries governance in the region. South-South Cooperation, as well as triangular cooperation among members has been, and continue to be, key in achieving the objectives of the Commission.

As an article VI body, COPPESAALC is entrusted with drawing-up recommendations and advice for FAO Governing Bodies and individual members and, in general, operates with funding from the FAO Regular Programme to support core activities.

Following a request by Member Countries, as well as a series of consultations with other RFBs and the approval of FAO’s Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters, COPPESAALC incorporated marine small-scale fisheries (SSF) into the scope of the Commission.

A number of regional baselines and studies have been carried out, which for the first time include marine SSF, namely: the role of women and youth in fisheries chains in LAC countries; self-aid microfinance systems in SSF and aquaculture organizations and migratory processes in SSF and aquaculture in LAC countries.

The Commission participated in the IV Forum of Parliamentarians of Fisheries and Aquaculture of LAC, held in Panama City, in 2018, where its members proposed working towards the improvement of national and regional legal frameworks, in terms of social protection schemes and decent employment in SSF both inland and marine.

The Commission has also been instrumental in consolidating the newly-formed Regional Information and Experiences Exchange Network to Prevent IUU fishing, which includes a growing number of members both from the region and Europe.

Soon, and for the first time, the Western Atlantic Fisheries Commission (WECAFC) and COPPESAALC will meet to exchange their work plans in order to explore synergies and potential joint work and projects.

FCWC

FCWC for Sustainable Fisheries Management

The Convention for the Establishment of the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) gave the organization the mandate to promote cooperation for sustainable fisheries management by: harmonizing fisheries legislation and regulations among the Member States; strengthening monitoring, control and surveillance; and promoting the development of standards for the collection, exchange and reporting of fisheries data.

The West Central Gulf of Guinea is a significant importer, exporter and processor of fish. However, the absence of reliable fisheries data and information, hinders effective and sustainable management and exploitation of fisheries resources, and has been an obstacle to effective decision making on marketing and investment in the sector.

In response to this, the FCWC, working in partnership with WorldFish, African Union, NEPAD Agency, fisheries departments, national universities, and civil society actors, undertook research under the FishTrade Program. The program showed the value of informal fish trade in the region and deepened the understanding of the challenges that fish processors and traders experience during cross-border trading. A policy brief was produced illustrating fish trade flows in West Africa, including estimates of volumes, values, key traded fish species, the main value chain actors and challenges being experienced by these actors. A manual was also developed to support the process of data collection, providing the first cross-border fish trade data collection in the region.

The FCWC as part of an FAO TCP project dubbed "Routine Fisheries Data Collection", developed fisheries data collection that enabled the estimation of the commercial value of the catch data and fisheries industry contribution to GDP. Harmonized fishing



©FCWC

units' data collected - irrespective of local names - was used to fill a regional data system created to pool all the data from Member Countries. Mobile data collection was initiated, and is improving the speed of national data collection, transmission and reception, which aids its analysis, accuracy and verification.

FCWC formed the West Africa Task Force (WATF), to tackle illegal fishing, stop the trade of illegally caught fish and combat fisheries crime. Established in 2015 with funding from the Norwegian Development Agency (NORAD), the WATF has brought together the six Member Countries of the FCWC to share information and intelligence, to cooperate and collaborate on common issues and to take action against vessel operators involved in illegal fishing. With the WATF, FCWC is promoting the uptake and implementation of the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) within the region as an essential framework to reduce the incentive to operate illegally and to block fishery products derived from IUU fishing from reaching national and international markets.

This activity is supported by the European Union-funded Improved Regional Fisheries Governance Project (PESCAO/Result 2), aimed at setting up a regional fishing vessel monitoring system (VMS) to track vessels operating in the region and build capacity of fisheries inspectors and agencies to improve governance in fisheries.

ICCAT

Twenty years of challenges and achievements

How ICCAT has overcome its many challenges over the past 20 years

The journey of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) has been longer than that of the Regional Fisheries Bodies Secretariats Network (RSN), but it is also true that since the establishment of the RSN in 1999, the challenges facing ICCAT and all Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs), have been steadily increasing. We are pleased to note that, despite the difficulties, ICCAT has managed to meet these challenges and can be proud of several major successes.

Fighting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IUU)

In 1999, for example, the IUU list put forward to the Commission contained 345 vessels; by 2004, this number had been reduced to just seven. Recent changes to the way in which the IUU list is developed and the inclusion of vessels from other tuna RFMOs has meant that this number has gradually crept back up to 111, proof that continued vigilance in this fight is a must.

The Bluefin Tuna turnaround

Bluefin tuna, the flagship species of ICCAT, was on the verge of being included in CITES lists, having been so heavily overfished in the 1990s that the stock was on the verge of collapse. Today, this trend has been totally reversed. At the 2018 ICCAT Commission meeting the Recovery Plan for eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin was changed to a management plan, as scientific advice has pointed to a full recovery. Linked to the stringent management measures which led to the recovery of this stock is



Tropical tuna tagging cruise, Canary Islands.

a multi-million euro Atlantic-wide research project: the Grand Bluefin Year Programme (GBYP). Similar efforts are being made into the research of tropical tunas, another current challenge, through the Atlantic Ocean Tropical Tagging Programme (AOTTP). ICCAT also leads research on other species such as billfish, albacore and small tunas, as well as on pelagic shark species.

A new Convention

Also in 2018, ICCAT achieved its goal, after six years of negotiations, of updating the original 1966 Convention. This achievement will better enable ICCAT to face future challenges in the exploitation of commercial fish stocks, in a world where RFMOs struggle to keep pace with new technologies and new environmental and sociological pressures.

New Secretariat leadership

The challenges of the future will be met by the Commission and by the Secretariat, led by the new Executive Secretary, Mr. Camille Jean Pierre Manel, who took over from Mr. Driss Meski in July 2018. The Commission bid a formal farewell to Mr. Meski, after 14 years of service, at its 21st Special Meeting, held in Dubrovnik, Croatia. Mr. Meski is also a former Chair of RSN.



©ICCAT

GBYP Aerial survey on spawning stock biomass in Balearic Sea.

ICES

Implementing the ecosystem approach to fisheries advice

ICES expands its advice to mixed fisheries, allowing decision-makers to compare the consequences of choices on quotas across fish stocks.

Established in 1902, the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) is one of the oldest intergovernmental organizations in the world. We have long recognized that international collaboration is key if we are to sustainably manage our seas' resources.

Traditionally, ICES has focused on single-species fish stock assessments. Annually, we provide international commissions with catch advice for about 200 fish stocks in European waters. However, fishing activities are only one of several drivers of change in the marine ecosystem and so over the past 20 years, we have increasingly moved towards an ecosystem approach to providing advice.

The development has been positive and encourages our advice clients to broaden their requests to address wider environmental issues. The ecosystem approach also requires a greater focus on human drivers of change and the socio-economic aspects, and we are moving in this direction.



ICES fisheries overviews

An example of this work is our fisheries overviews (available in the relevant section in: www.ices.dk), which provide a summary of fishing activity and impacts in different ICES ecoregions. So far, ICES has produced fisheries overviews for three areas: the Celtic Seas, the Greater North Sea, and the Baltic Sea.

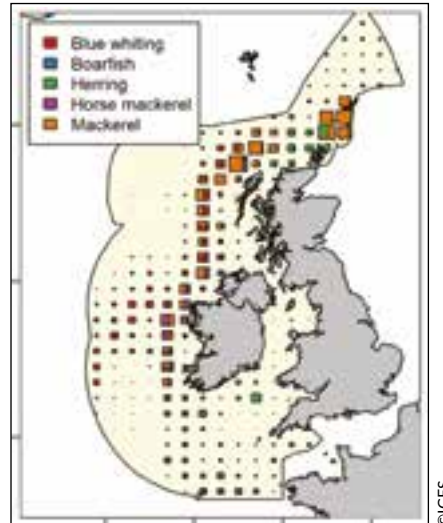
Each overview presents landings since the 1950s, as well as contemporary information on national fleets, recent fishing effort trends, the composition of their catches, and the gears and methods used. The status of resources and long-term trends are highlighted, including information on stocks relative to maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and the precautionary approach.

All ICES ecoregions have experienced a general improvement in stock status over the last decade with mean trends in most cases showing a decline in fishing mortality towards more sustainable levels.

The wider effects of fishing activity on the ecosystem are also described – such as trawling’s impact on the seabed and bycatch of non-targeted fish species, protected seabirds, and marine mammals. This marks a move by ICES to align its fisheries advice to conform to both the European Union’s Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), which is the umbrella legislation for the EU marine environmental standards.

Mixed fisheries challenge

Mixed fisheries present a challenge for the sustainable management of individual fish stocks. Fisheries managers and stakeholders need to understand the various interactions: Which species are being caught, by whom, in which areas, and using which type of gear?



In the Celtic Seas fisheries overview show the spatial distribution of landings for certain species in the ecoregion.

The Celtic Seas fisheries overview, which was published in December 2018, includes maps showing the spatial distribution of catches for some of the main species of commercial interest within the region. The “technical interactions” are also shown in more detail with catch composition by country, gear, target, and species. Trade-offs of moving from single stock management to mixed fisheries management are also explored through various scenarios.

The bigger picture

The three fisheries overviews follow the development of ICES ecosystem overviews that have been released for six ecoregions.

“ICES single stock advice addresses how much you can take from a certain stock in the following year in accordance with the agreed management objectives, but it doesn’t say anything about how they are being taken, by whom, and how this impacts upon the ecosystem. Our fisheries overviews address this by ecoregion while the ecosystem overviews put the fishing activities into the context of the trends and status of the marine ecosystem as a whole,” explains the Chair of ICES Advisory Committee (ACOM) Mark Dickey-Collas. “The overviews are for anyone with an interest in fisheries or management in the three respective sea regions.”

IWC

Subsistence Whaling in Perpetuity: the IWC endorses a new, long-term approach

Regulation of subsistence whaling undertaken by indigenous communities is one of the most important responsibilities of the International Whaling Commission (IWC). Categorised as Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling (ASW), this type of whaling does not seek to maximise either catch or profit, but to meet the nutritional and cultural needs of communities, often in the most remote parts of the world.

The decisions taken at IWC meetings can have a major impact on these communities. For this reason, the decision-making process has not always been easy. In 1994, the IWC began a work programme to underpin this process with a comprehensive, scientific management regime to ensure long-term sustainability of hunts, whilst meeting subsistence

needs. The work conducted since then by both the Scientific Committee and the Commission culminated at the 2018 IWC meeting in the adoption of new catch limits as well as a new process which maximises transparency and dialogue, and provides consistency and a level of certainty for the ASW communities.

Nearly three decades of international collaboration and commitment have enabled the Scientific Committee to finalise a method for evaluating the catch numbers sought by the hunting communities for each of the eight hunted whale populations. These methods assess catch scenarios in the face of hunting and other human impacts over a 100-year period, taking into account plausible levels of uncertainty on population structure, historic and future catch levels, reproduction rates and environmental conditions.

The Scientific Committee also developed processes for associated technical issues including the



carry-over of unused quotas from one year to the next (if bad weather prevents hunting, for example), guidelines for obtaining abundance estimates and for regular review of new scientific information, and interim allowances, to be used in limited circumstances if it has not proved possible to obtain new abundance estimates within the required timeframe.

As this work progressed, the Commission also established a group to consider a number of long-standing, non-scientific issues related to ASW. These included minimising political discussion around ASW catches, and questions related to local consumption v commercialism.

This Commission group was also able to conclude its demanding task-list ahead of the 2018 meeting with a range of recommendations, all of which were endorsed at the meeting.

These included a new timetable for sharing information from the hunts with member governments and receiving their feedback - in order to maximise transparency and dialogue. A commitment to establish closer ties with international and other inter-governmental organisations focusing on indigenous rights was also endorsed. Most crucially, the Commission agreed that status quo catch limits would be renewed automatically, provided that a series of agreed steps are completed by the hunting communities and their governments, as well as by the Scientific Committee.

The decisions taken on ASW were amongst the most significant developments at the 2018 meeting. Twenty-eight years of complex scientific and policy work resulted in a framework that should provide the IWC with the information and processes needed to regulate ASW in a way that is consistent and clear to both the hunting communities and the decision-makers on whom they depend.

The whole community helps to land the catch, Alaska.



LVFO

Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO) Silver Jubilee

The LVFO was formed through a Convention signed on 30 June 1994, in Kisumu, Kenya by the Contracting Parties, namely the three States sharing the lake (Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania) for the management of Lake Victoria fisheries. It became an institution of East African Community (EAC) on 7 July 2000, when the EAC came into force. The mandate of the Organization is to promote sustainable management and development of fisheries and aquaculture in the EAC for food security and wealth creation.

The LVFO has established a vibrant Secretariat in Jinja, which has coordinated efforts towards the sustainable management of the fisheries of Lake Victoria. The LVFO has facilitated harmonization of policies, regulations, standards and guidelines; provided a forum for coordination, interaction and experience sharing among Partner States;

coordinated formation of community-based structures to enhance ownership and sustainability. This has been achieved through the formation of 1069 Beach Management Units (BMUs), 3 national Fish Processors and Exporters Associations and thematic working groups which play a vital role in decision making processes. The Organization has also established a repository for scientific knowledge; has developed an effective mechanism for quality assurance for export of fish and fishery products with uninterrupted access to international markets in the last 18 years and coordinates fisheries census and surveys to provide information on amount of the fish in the lake, total catch, and fishing efforts.

The LVFO has harmonized national measures through a number of regional-developed documents to address the challenges of increased Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. These include: the Regional Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity in Lake Victoria; LVFO Regional Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter



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Lake Victoria.

and Eliminate IUU Fishing on Lake Victoria and its Basin; Fisheries Management Plan for Lake Victoria; Nile Perch Fishery Management Plan for Lake Victoria; and Regional Guidelines for Species Specific Licensing for Lake Victoria. Furthermore, the LVFO has developed a number of Standard Operating Procedures to guide systematic collection and analyses of scientific data and information to guide the sustainable management of the fisheries resources of Lake Victoria.

The LVFO Convention was amended in March 2016 to widen the scope and mandate of the Organization, and no longer restricts itself to Lake Victoria. The revised Convention provides for all EAC Partner States, all East African Community water bodies, for fisheries, aquaculture, fish trade and marketing, and it also facilitates cooperation with other intergovernmental organizations and institutions such as the Lake Tanganyika Authority

(LTA), the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) for the coastal and Island States in Indian Ocean; The Nairobi Convention for the Western Indian Ocean, and the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC) for South West Indian Ocean.

As part of the process to spearhead development of fisheries and aquaculture, the LVFO has developed the Fisheries and Aquaculture and Policy for EAC, which aims to unlock the full potential of fisheries and aquaculture for food security, livelihoods and wealth creation in the EAC region.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION CONTACT:

The Executive Secretary, Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization

Email: lvfo-sec@lvfo.org, URL: www.lvfo.org



Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland and Norway, all adhered to the principle of sustainable utilisation of living marine resources, including marine mammals. Advocating peoples' right to their own means of subsistence, they wanted to continue using the abundant and logical resources represented by marine mammals in the region, but to do so on strong sustainable grounds in order to also secure these resources for future generations. Sound science was to be the foundation for all management advice. Considering the wide geographical distribution and migrating nature of marine mammal resources, this could only be achieved through broad international cooperation. The importance of employing a whole-ecosystem approach and understanding the impact of various anthropogenic activities was also emphasised. NAMMCO countries decided therefore to cooperate on the study, conservation and management of whales, seals and walrus in the North Atlantic, thus also filling a gap in the conservation and management of smaller whales,

seals and walrus, which were not overseen by any international organisations.

A prerequisite for the success of NAMMCO has been its recognition of the importance of involving external expertise in support of its own, as well as enhancing the transparency and credibility of its work. From the outset, financial means were allocated to accommodate external participation in the work of the organisation, making it possible to have leading scientists and international experts address specific issues at any given time. NAMMCO formulation of advice on issues such as stock assessments and the improvement of hunting methods have all involved input from external experts. This ensured, and continues to ensure that the advice given is based on the best data, science and technology available. Future research/ data collection may indicate that circumstances may have changed since the advice was originally submitted, given the continuous advances in science

and technology (we do not, for example, conduct abundance surveys in the same way we did twenty years ago). However, by involving external expertise, NAMMCO works hard to ensure that its advice is based on the latest scientific information and technological developments.

The importance of NAMMCO as a management organisation for marine mammals in the North Atlantic has been confirmed by the progress accomplished over the past 26 years. The sustainable and responsible use of marine mammals has benefitted from international collaboration to develop the best available scientific knowledge on population dynamics. The management advice

developed by NAMMCO has contributed to increases in several marine mammal populations, significant improvements in hunting methods, and the establishment of an effective observation scheme for hunting activities in Member Countries.

Sound, science-based management yields results: NAMMCO has provided advice to its Member Countries for most targeted stocks. Hunting methods have been improved to increase animal welfare, efficiency and hunters' safety. For example, instantaneous death rates in the harpoon gun hunt for Norwegian minke whales have increased from 17% in 1981 to 82% in 2012 and is as high as 84% in the Icelandic fin whale hunt.

Bowhead in Greenland.

NEAFC

Innovation in high seas fisheries management

Looking back over 20 years of cooperation in fisheries management the North East Atlantic.

The North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) was founded in 1982, the same year the Convention on Future Multilateral Cooperation in North-East Atlantic Fisheries came into force, building on an earlier 1959 Convention.

The past 20 years have been characterized by constant policy and technical evolution, in particular following the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement and further resolutions and guidelines from the UN General Assembly and FAO. NEAFC has often pioneered positive change, by providing sustainable economic, environmental and social benefits. A key improvement, following on from the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, was the introduction of regular independent performance reviews, two of which have now been conducted (in 2006 and 2014), with NEAFC carefully considering and acting on the outputs.

NEAFC has continued to develop its Scheme of Control and Enforcement and its Monitoring, Control and Surveillance capacity over the last 20 years. NEAFC now operates hourly VMS reporting and is on the cusp of a transition to an Electronic Reporting System for other vessel-generated data; it also operates a joint international inspection capacity in its Regulatory Area.

These developments have effectively eradicated Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing activities in the Regulatory Area, with no new vessels being IUU-listed in the last 10 years. Alongside this focus on IUU, NEAFC has also improved its assessment of compliance by its own Contracting Parties, including now publicly reporting on compliance. NEAFC also introduced its own electronic fisheries Port States Control system in 2007, which is now aligned with the subsequent FAO Port States Measures Agreement.

In addition to the policy and technical developments aimed at the long-term conservation and optimum utilisation of fishery resources, the NEAFC Convention itself has evolved, with amendments to establish objectives that also take into account the impact of fisheries on other species and marine ecosystems. Under these objectives, NEAFC has adopted conservation and management measures aimed at minimising harmful impacts on living marine resources and marine ecosystems.

NEAFC relies solely on the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) for its scientific advice, strictly separated from the policy and management role of NEAFC. Nevertheless, NEAFC has stepped up its cooperation with ICES in recent years and has requested the inclusion of multispecies, climate change and other ecosystem considerations in the advice.

After early efforts to prevent significant adverse impacts on vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) on the seafloor of the North-East Atlantic high seas, with closures of three areas in 2004 and four areas in 2006, NEAFC adopted a comprehensive regulation on bottom fishing in 2008, which was updated and consolidated in 2014, incorporating elements from the relevant UN General Assembly resolutions. Regulations included a rule that bottom fisheries could only take place in “existing bottom fishing areas”, based on data from a reference period. Outside these areas, only exploratory bottom fisheries can be authorised, but subject to severe restrictions. The regulations also include vessel move-on protocols for encounters with a VME. These developments mean that all but a small section of the Regulatory Area is de facto closed to bottom fishing and VME closures continue, based on new advice from ICES.

In considering the impacts on biodiversity of fisheries in the Regulatory Area, NEAFC also has been active in the protection of certain sensitive fish species. NEAFC’s current regulations prohibit directed fisheries and minimise bycatches of basking shark, porbeagle, spurdog, and deep sea sharks, rays and

chimaeras. The NEAFC approach to conservation and management of deep-sea species and their categorisation, agreed in 2016, further aims to prevent unregulated expansion of new deep-water fisheries before sufficient information has been gathered to facilitate ICES assessment and advice.

While NEAFC has broadened its consideration of ecosystems and biodiversity, its legal competence remains limited to managing fisheries. An ecosystem approach to ocean management implies that all relevant high seas organisations are coordinating actions under their different legal mandates. A good example of progress over the last 20 years is NEAFC’s work with OSPAR, the Regional Seas Convention for the North East Atlantic. Following an MOU in 2004, efforts to pursue cooperation on issues related to biodiversity we made, for instance working towards the identification of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs). In 2014 NEAFC and OSPAR finalised the “collective arrangement” on area-based management in areas beyond national jurisdiction. This arrangement was aimed at facilitating complementary actions between differing organisations active in areas beyond national jurisdiction, each working within its mandate. The most recent output was a joint NEAFC-OSPAR request to ICES for scientific advice on deep sea sharks, rays and chimaeras. Regional cooperation initiatives such as these have also improved coordination at the national level.

Challenges and evolution continue for NEAFC – this will be covered in the next newsletter!



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Fishing boat, Flatey, Iceland.

NPAFC AND NASCO

**Rising to the challenge:
the International Year of the Salmon.**
NPAFC and NASCO join forces in a
collaborative multi-year initiative to
outline salmon-related issues throughout
the Northern Hemisphere

Current and Historic Trends in Salmon Abundance

Environmental change and human impacts in recent decades have led to a rise in uncertainty for the future of salmon in the Atlantic and Pacific sectors of the Northern Hemisphere, with many populations at historic low levels.

Despite increasingly restrictive fisheries management measures for Atlantic salmon, all stock complexes have declined, and all those found within the United States and the Scotia-Fundy region of Canada have been, or are being considered for, listing under country-specific species at risk



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legislation. Changing physical conditions have been documented in a variety of forms, and indicate a warming trend since the 1990s, which is expected continue. The summer months in 2012 saw exceptional warmth with sea-surface temperatures rising 1-3 °C above the 1982-2011 average. Phytoplankton and zooplankton composition within the Atlantic has also changed, a phenomenon hypothesized to be a result of lowered salinity.



©Suam Kim

The Presidents of NASCO and NPAFC, the NASCO Secretary and Assistant Secretary and NPAFC IYS Director with representatives of the Dee Rivers Trust and Board, exploring a habitat restoration initiative in northeast Scotland

While Pacific salmon are collectively more abundant today than they have been over the past century, many populations of sockeye, Chinook, coho, cherry, and steelhead trout have seen dramatic declines since the late 1980s. Salmon abundance and productivity are linked to two leading patterns of interannual and interdecadal variability in the North Pacific, the Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) and North Pacific Gyre Oscillation (NPGO). It is believed that the effects of anthropogenic climate warming will either mask or amplify these natural trends, but the combined effects of these climate-related changes on salmon productivity cannot be reliably forecasted, based on the current knowledge of salmon in the ocean.

The resilience of salmon over the past millennia is demonstrable, and has been critical to human well-being throughout the Northern Hemisphere. In the past three decades, the species' role in providing food security, socio-economic benefits, and as an ecological keystone species, has been challenged, demanding a greater understanding of the factors driving salmon abundance, and a stronger collaboration of research between the Pacific and Atlantic regions.

International Year of the Salmon

The International Year of the Salmon (IYS) is a multi-year outreach and research initiative of the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) and the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO). It was created in response to increasing uncertainty surrounding the productivity of Atlantic and Pacific salmon. The goal of the initiative is to inspire and motivate a new hemispheric-wide partnership of government, academia, NGOs, Indigenous Peoples and industry that will drive an intense burst of outreach and research, to create a well-informed community of decision-makers who can establish the conditions necessary for the resilience of salmon and people in an uncertain future.



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The IYS consists of a focal year in 2019, with outreach and research continuing through to the end of 2022. Governance arrangements have been instituted to connect organizations across the Pacific and Atlantic basins to collaborate on the implementation of the IYS. Several planned and proposed workshops will highlight the focal year, creating the foundation for future projects that can have a high impact with respect to IYS research themes and outcomes (see RSN Newsletter No. 12).

In May, the NPAFC will hold its second annual IYS workshop, outlining the current knowledge of salmon survival and anticipating production of Pacific salmon in an uncertain future. Preceding its Annual Meeting in June, NASCO will hold a symposium highlighting possible management responses to address the challenges that Atlantic salmon face in a changing environment. Both symposiums will bring in experts in salmon management and climate science, with the goal of sharing and developing more knowledge for different stakeholders. A complete list and description of planned workshops and events can be found at <https://yearofthesalmon.org/events/>.

SPRFMO

A tale of successful fisheries management Enhancing fisheries management in the South Pacific Ocean

SPRFMO in a nutshell

The South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation, SPRFMO, held its inaugural meeting in January 2013. In the six years following its establishment in 2012, SPRFMO has steadily grown in membership and as an organisation, having now 15 Members and four Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CNCPs). Its major success has been the progressive recovery of the Jack mackerel stock in the eastern Pacific Ocean, based on the precautionary approach.

The Contracting Parties of SPRFMO, through its interim measures, were amongst the first to adopt multilateral measures consistent with the provisions of United Nations resolution 61/105 relating to an assessment framework for bottom fishing in the Convention Area.

SPRFMO's Scientific Committee has undertaken reliable stock assessments, and has consistently provided good quality scientific advice, even in the absence of adequate data. SPRFMO has adopted a suite of conservation and management measures concerning monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS), drawing on the best practices of other Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs).



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Key achievements

After the recent completion of its first Performance Review, much of its success as an organisation is due to the Commission heeding the advice of the SPRFMO Scientific Committee. The recovery of the Jack mackerel stock required hard decisions to be taken by Members. This was facilitated by a decision-making process which enables decisions to be taken by consensus and, if that fails, to take decisions by vote.

Of note is SPRFMO's objection procedure, which has been used twice to date and allows Members to object to a decision of the Commission and have a fair and impartial hearing of their concerns. This is a point of difference between SPRFMO and other RFMOs, which has been recognised and highlighted by several research studies addressing the practices and decision-making in most RFMOs, concluding that "SPRFMO has developed the most

innovative decision-making mechanism by setting up a conciliation mechanism in case of a dispute."

Today, after only six years, SPRFMO has a robust suite of Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) and is working diligently to implement its monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) measures. In short, SPRFMO has a strong legal foundation and, to date, the implementation of the Convention has been fundamentally sound.

During the seventh annual meeting of SPRFMO that took place in The Hague, The Netherlands, 19-27 January 2019, all the Recommendations from the Performance Review Panel were addressed, including those particularly referring to the Compliance and Technical Committee (CTC), the SPRFMO Commission and the Finance and Administration Committee (FAC). The results of the exercise can be found on the SPRFMO website at www.sprfmo.int



SWIOFC

SWIOFC urged to effectively respond to the aspirations of coastal states

The South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC) should effectively respond to the aspirations and needs of the coastal States of the region, delegates attending the 9th SWIOFC session in South Africa late last year agreed. These coastal states appreciate the work done by SWIOFC but have increased expectations of what it should do and how it should be structured in the future.

About 65 million people live within the coastline across the entire Western Indian Ocean Region. Cultures in this fascinating and diverse region have in common that their people are dependent on fishing and other uses of marine resources.

The Acting Head of Fisheries of South Africa, Motseki Hlatshwayo, officially opened the 9th session on behalf of the Minister of Marine Resources and Fisheries of South Africa, Hon. Mr Senzeni Zokwana.

Motseki Hlatshwayo reiterated that the Government of South Africa is engaged in strengthening ties of regional collaboration in the fisheries sector in the South West Indian Ocean region. "We need to improve regional efforts in dealing with fisheries scientific research, resource management and compliance with advanced national and international instruments so as conserve fish resources for future generations," said Hlatshwayo.

The Scientific Committee report presented during the session by SWIOFC Technical Secretary, Pedro Barros, drew the attention of the Commission to the relatively high proportion of fish stocks classified as overexploited (40%) in the SWIOFC region, while cautioning against interpreting these results as the overall proportions of overexploited stocks in the countries or in the region. The initiatives already taken by the Scientific Committee to

develop the capacity of scientists and managers on fish stock assessment and fisheries management and standardise procedures, organise data and information, are valuable and important to the SWIOFC region.

The event was attended by delegates from France (French Territories), Kenya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania. Representatives of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), European Union (EU), Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA), Stop Illegal Fishing (SIF), Indian Ocean Commission (COI-IOC) and the Nairobi Convention (NC), also attended the session as observers.

In comparative terms, the SWIOFC region is in an unfavourable situation relative to the rest of the world, which means that there is still a significant part of the fish populations that need to be better managed. In this context, the report of the Scientific Committee recommended that SWIOFC members should make an effort to improve the systems and procedures for management of data from port and at-sea sampling, to facilitate quality control and availability of data for analyses.

Mozambique chairs the Technical Group that coordinates the development of Guidelines on the Minimum Terms and Conditions for foreign fishing access to the SWIOFC region. During the Ninth Session of the SWIOFC, 9 out of 10 members in attendance approved the guidelines for adoption. It is expected that the guidelines will be adopted, with a minor amendment, in 2019. This would be an important milestone to empower the coastal states to engage effectively with Distant Water Fishing Nations to secure effective, coherent and coordinated management of shared fish stocks, reduce the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance costs, and increase equity in benefit sharing.



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It should also be noted that 10 out of 12 SWIOFC members have accessed the FAO Port-State Measures Agreement, making the SWIO region one with the highest accession of the PSMA. The PSMA is the first binding international agreement to specifically target illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. The effective implementation of the PSMA in the SWIO region would ultimately contribute to the long-term conservation and sustainable use of living marine resources and marine ecosystems

About SWIOFC

The South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC) is a statutory body established by the FAO Council to promote the sustainable development, conservation and management of shared resources in its region, without prejudice to the sovereign rights of coastal countries. The SWIOFC also acts as the most important platform in its region for fisheries management issues.

WECAFC

Towards improved regional fisheries governance Inception of the active phase of the transformation of WECAFC into a regional fisheries management organization

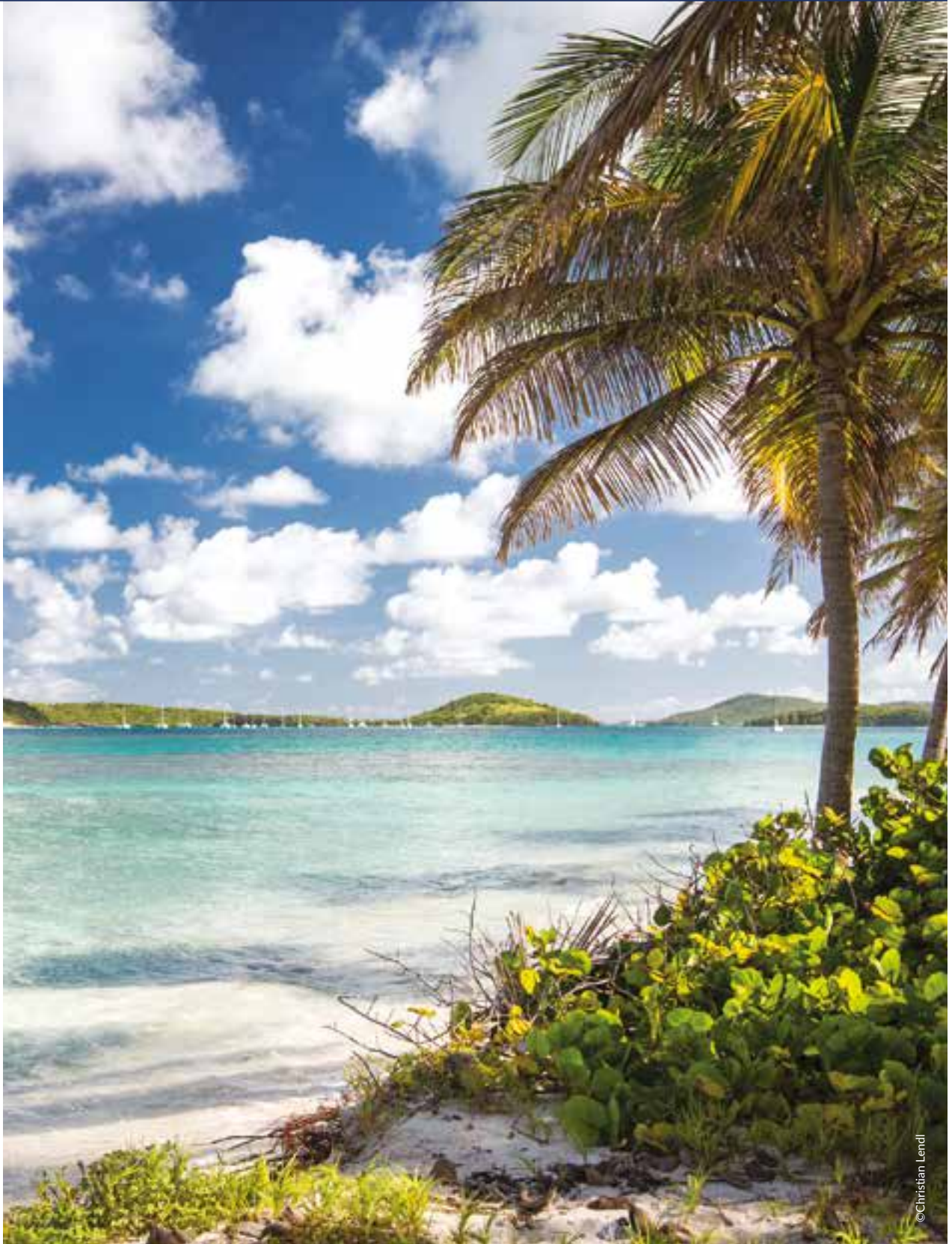
As agreed at the 16th WECAFC session in 2016, the process to establish an RFMO in the WECAFC area entered its active phase, as illustrated by the preparation for the upcoming 1st preparatory meeting of the Members, scheduled for 25-26 March 2019, in Bridgetown, Barbados.

As a reminder, following a process which started at the 15th session of WECAFC in 2014, various strategic reorientation meetings were held, of which the outcomes were presented and discussed at the 16th WECAFC session in 2016, where it was agreed to launch the process to establish an RFMO in the WECAFC area. For Members to make an informed decision, a study was commissioned with the aim of clarifying issues in relation to “competency area, stocks coverage, budgetary implications for Members, institutional structure, membership, decision making processes, national sovereignty

aspects, its objectives and any other relevant matters that the Members may wish to consider”. The document was widely disseminated in the early months of 2019, in the three official languages of the Commission, and will serve as the background paper for the discussions to be held at this 1st Preparatory Meeting which should gather all the WECAFC Member Countries, the sub-regional fisheries advisory/management bodies and relevant partners.

The meeting will be centred around the decision regarding the legal status of the RFMO (a statutory body under Article XIV of the FAO Constitution or as an independent IGO), stocks coverage and area of competence. The outcome will be presented to the 17th Session of WECAFC, to be held in Miami/ Fort Lauderdale, tentatively scheduled in the first half of 2019. A second preparatory meeting to be held in September/October 2019 will address, among other issues: the Rules of Procedure, Financial Regulations, including the scheme and scale of contributions to the administrative/autonomous budget of the RFMO, the 1st Programme of Work of the RFMO; and proposals for the establishment of sub-commissions or other subsidiary bodies.





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Palm Island, Grenadines, Saint Vincent e Grenadine.





NEWS FROM MEMBERS



Latest news

NEW ZEALANDER CHRISTINE BOGLE IS ACAP'S NEW EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

On 1 December Christine Bogle became the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels' (ACAP) third Executive Secretary, taking over from Marco Favero. Christine previously worked for over 30 years as a diplomat with the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, serving in overseas posts in Peru, Italy, Spain, Tonga and Mexico, the last three as Head of Mission.

More recently, she has been a PhD candidate in political science at Victoria University of Wellington, with her



Christine Bogle
ACAP's
third Executive Secretary

thesis currently under examination. She is proficient in French and Spanish and thus will be able to converse with the 13 Parties to ACAP and to meet delegates in all three of the Agreement's official languages.



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Meetings & events

THE ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ACAP holds the Eleventh Meeting of its Advisory Committee in Florianópolis, Brazil in May 2019, affording the new Executive Secretary the opportunity to meet and work with delegates for the first time.

The Albatross and Petrel Agreement will discuss its engagement with RFMOs at its upcoming meetings in Brazil in May this year. The Eleventh Meeting of the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) Advisory Committee (AC11) will be held in Florianópolis, Brazil, on 5-17 May.

Meetings of the committee's Seabird Bycatch Working Group and Population and Conservation Status Working Group will precede AC11. Prior to the working group

meetings, a one-day workshop will be held to discuss and review ACAP's engagement strategy with Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs).

ACAP has signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with eight Regional Fishery Management Organizations, including all five tuna RFMOs. Most recently, MoUs have been negotiated and signed with the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO) and the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA).

The primary objective of these MoUs is to facilitate cooperation between the fishery bodies and ACAP, to minimise the incidental by-catch of the 31 species of albatrosses, petrels and shearwater listed in Annex 1 of the Agreement. ACAP also has a MoU with the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR). The texts of these MoUs may be found on the ACAP website, at www.acap.aq.

ATLAFCO



Meetings & events

THE AFRICAN NETWORK OF WOMEN IN FISHERIES

RAFEP: A sustainable initiative, championing the role of women in Africa's fisheries sector

A meeting of reflection and exchange on ways and means to strengthen the RAFEP, as an organ of representation and support to women in the fisheries sector in Africa, was held on 11-12 June 2018 in Rabat, Morocco.

The meeting was attended by representatives from the following countries and organizations: Benin, Cameroun, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Morocco, Mauritania, REPAO, FCWC, SRFC, COREP, INFOSAMAK, FAO/Morocco and JICA/Morocco.

This meeting, requested by members of RAFEP, focused on the search for solutions and actions to be undertaken for the consolidation of RAFEP, after 8 years of existence and a balance sheet which remains limited, despite enormous capacity building efforts to improve the status of women in the fisheries sector and related activities.

The meeting was also a part of the consolidation of ATLAFCO's efforts for the social promotion of women living directly or indirectly in the region.

A prior questionnaire aimed at assessing the place and living conditions of women in fishing communities and the prospects of RAFEP was forwarded to all participants.

Two working groups, supervised by qualified resource persons, were formed during the meeting

> **WG 1: Perspectives and strategies for the sustainability of RAFEP activities**

This workgroup focused on the identification of major constraints and proposing realistic and sustainable solutions.

> **WG 2: Support mechanisms for RAFEP, to increase performance in the service of women in the fisheries sector.**

These workshops allowed participants to formulate recommendations aimed at strengthening the network's action in support of women in the sector, for increased autonomy, defense of their interests and recognition of their role by the authorities.

Recommendations to RAFEP members

- > Develop a strategy and plan to contribute to gender equality, the defense of women's rights, their empowerment and the inclusion of women in decision-making processes, as set out in relevant international instruments;
- > Support, through professional capacity-building actions, the operationalization of established national networks, the establishment of new ones in ATLAFCO Member States which are still lacking them and encourage new memberships;
- > Strengthen the recognition of RAFEP as a regional professional organization for women by regional and international specialized bodies;
- > Endorse a commitment to seek long-term funding for the implementation of the actions agreed as part of the strategic plan.

Recommendations at the national networks level

- > Become involved, as women's professional organizations, in the decision-making processes (from the definition of needs to project completion) of everything related to the fishing sector;
- > Strengthen the managerial, advocacy and communication capacities of women's professional organizations in the fisheries sector;



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Participants in the RAFEP reflection Meeting.

- Campaign to sensitize stakeholders (including public administrations, etc.) to the gender dimension and its close relationship with sustainable development, and the importance of the role of women in the sector;
- Promote national inter-network exchanges of experts, information, technology and know-how;

- Open national networks memberships to female university researchers, fisheries experts and scientists, allowing them to contribute their talents and skills to these networks.

In the sidelines of this reflection meeting, a new RAFEP Bureau was elected.



SUSTAINABLE EXPLOITATION OF MARINE
 RESOURCES IN THE ATLAFCO ZONE

**10th Ordinary Session of the Conference of Ministers
 on Fisheries Cooperation among the African States
 bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO)**

The 10th Ordinary Session of the Conference of Ministers on Fisheries Cooperation among the African States bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO) held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on August 28, 2018.

The session was preceded by a meeting of experts held on August 26 and 27, 2018 under the theme of "Sustainable exploitation of marine resources in the ATLAFCO zone".

Delegates from 21 Member Countries took part in the session: **Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Morocco, Mauritania, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.**



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Representatives of the African Union / Inter African Bureau for Animal Resources (**AU-IBAR**), the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (**SRFC**), the Fisheries Committee for the West-Central Gulf of Guinea (**FCWC**), the Regional Fisheries Commission of the Gulf of Guinea (**COREP**), the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (**ICCAT**), the Intergovernmental Organization for Information and Cooperation for the Marketing of Fishery Products in Africa (**INFOPECHE**), African Confederation of Artisanal Fisheries Professional Organizations

(REPAO), the Confederation of African Artisanal Fisheries Organizations (CAOPA), the West African Association for the Development of Artisanal Fisheries (WADAF), the Grouping of African Maritime Training Institutes (REFMA), the African Network of Women in Fisheries (RAFEP), the Japan Fisheries Agency, the Advisory Committee on Long Distance.

Fisheries (LDAC), the European Commission and International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF) attended the meeting as observers.

Following exchanges and discussions, the participants adopted a set of recommendations on the fight against IUU fishing, the principle of sustainable use of living marine resources, strengthening ATLAFCO, and consolidation of the African Voice.

In accordance with these recommendations, the meeting of ministers of the 10th ordinary session of ATLAFCO held on 28 August 2018 adopted the following declaration entitled “**Declaration of Abidjan**”, which reflects the common will of the Member States, to make the fisheries sector a lever capable of boosting the economies of the countries of the Region, on the basis of rational and sustainable exploitation of marine resources:

1. The fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU)

> We renew our commitment to the coordinated fight against IUU fishing by strengthening the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) mechanisms, by

adopting the conclusions and recommendations of studies on the implementation of regional programmes: i) **On-board observers**, and ii) the **Harmonized Port State Inspection** in the ATLAFCO region; in accordance with the national legal provisions.

2. The principle of sustainable use of marine living resources

> We reaffirm that the sustainable use of marine living resources based on the best scientific evidence available is essential to food security, livelihood and harmonious development of all our countries and we commit to adopt this principle in our fisheries management policies;

3. Strengthening ATLAFCO

We commit ourselves to strengthen the ATLAFCO Institution, and for this purpose, we decide to:

- a) Finalize the ratification/accession process to the ATLAFCO Convention;
- b) Ensure regular payment of annual contributions and arrears;
- c) Study the mechanisms for institutional anchoring of our Conference to the African Union institutions;
- d) Continue expanding the network of partners working for sustainable fisheries
- e) Support the operationalization of coordination mechanisms established between ATLAFCO and relevant regional and international institutions;





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f) Examine the possibilities to hoist ATLAFCO to the status of a Regional Fisheries Management Organization (RFMO).

4. The consolidation of the African Voice

- We will strive to better defend the interests of the Member States by consolidating the "African Voice" in international and regional forums dealing with fisheries and aquaculture issues.
- To this end, we commit ourselves to:
 - a) Ensure, among the various institutions concerned, national coordination on fisheries issues, in order to consolidate regional interests among the Member States, particularly at CITES meetings;
 - b) Ensure active participation and pay dues to international organizations to which Member States are Parties, such as the IWC; and,
 - c) Take concerted actions at every international organization in order to better reflect our interests and concerns of "African Voice".

WORKSHOP: TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF MARINE AQUACULTURE IN THE ATLAFCO ZONE

The organization of this workshop responds to the need to develop sustainable marine aquaculture in the countries of the Atlantic coast of Africa which remains underdeveloped despite strong potential.

From 10 to 12 December 2018, a workshop was held in M'Diq, Morocco, under the theme: "Towards sustainable development of marine aquaculture in the ATLAFCO zone".

This workshop was part of the ATLAFCO Action Plan and in line with the relevant international recommendations for the development of marine aquaculture, and the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa, which has identified aquaculture as one of its priority areas for action.

The aim was to provide a diagnosis of the marine aquaculture sector in the ATLAFCO region, exchange experiences and good practices, propose actions to be undertaken and develop recommendations for the development of sustainable marine aquaculture, respectful of the environment in the countries of the Region.

The meeting was attended by representatives of

- Member States: Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Morocco, Mauritania, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Togo.

- > Institutions: **PESCAO**, the Economic Community of West African States (**ECOWAS**), the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (**JICA**), the National Aquaculture Development Agency (**ANDA**), National Institute of Fisheries Research (**INRH**), the Higher Institute of Maritime Studies (**ISEM**) and the National Agency of Aquaculture (**ANA**) of Senegal.
- > A number of professionals, experts and resource persons involved in the field of marine aquaculture also contributed to the meeting.

The event included four sessions, each featuring presentations followed by a debate:

- > **First session:** Aquaculture and sustainable development in Africa.
- > **Second session:** State of play of marine aquaculture in the ATLAFCO Member Countries and prospects for its development.

- > **Third session:** Accompaniment and partnership, Public-Private Partnership (PPP)
- > **Fourth session:** Guidelines and recommendations for the development of marine aquaculture.

At a closing plenary session, participants formulated the following recommendations:

I- Political and institutional level

- > Strengthen the position and the institutional capacity of marine aquaculture in the ATLAFCO Member States;
- > Adopt the ecosystem approach to aquaculture for inclusion in integrated coastal zone management plans and as a component of the blue economy;
- > Develop regional strategic cooperation and partnerships in the different fields of sustainable



Workshop participants.

marine aquaculture, both between Member States and between public and private actors;

- > Support the development and implementation of sustainable marine aquaculture guidelines in the ATLAFCO region;
- > Support the creation by ATLAFCO and ECOWAS of a Network of National Public Agencies and Units in charge of the development of marine aquaculture of Member States;

II- Legal technical and economic level

- > Develop market-oriented commercial marine aquaculture for better contribution to fish supply, rural employment, income and food and nutrition security;
- > Promote private sector investments and public-private partnerships in sustainable marine aquaculture;
- > Develop a regional master plan to identify potential areas suitable for sustainable marine aquaculture;
- > Establish incentives at the national and regional levels to increase availability and facilitate access to inputs, including food and seeds;
- > Develop research and scientific and technical skills in sustainable marine aquaculture through exchange of expertise, technology transfer and practical technical training;

III- Respect for the environment

- > Guarantee an environmentally-friendly marine aquaculture through the adoption and implementation of measures to prevent, control, reduce and mitigate the negative impacts of aquaculture on the environment;

- > Provide frameworks for environmental management of biodiversity and biosecurity, allowing evaluation of marine aquaculture projects;
- > Require the use of environmental impact studies and/or strategic environmental assessment studies for marine aquaculture projects in accordance with the Ecosystem Approach to Aquaculture;
- > Establish a comprehensive system of standards and controls to ensure the health and commercial quality assurance of aquaculture products in accordance with relevant international standards.

RESCUING HUMAN LIVES AT SEA: ADVANCED TRAINING SESSION

The training session aimed to reinforce the capacity of the rescue services of the African region for improving rescue of life at sea efforts in the African maritime waters.

Organised by **ATLAFCO** with the collaboration of the **International Maritime Organization (IMO)** and the **International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF)**, this advanced training session took place on 1-3 October 2018 in Rabat, Morocco.

Key themes included:

- > The establishment of rescue services at sea;
- > The development and improvement of the services provided;
- > The techniques and actions to be undertaken for better management of the Maritime Rescue Mission conducted and coordinated by the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centers.

The session was an opportunity to present and discuss the main functional components of search and rescue (SAR) including:

- 1) Communication networks throughout the SAR region (SRR) and connecting with external SAR services;
- 2) A rescue coordination centre (RCC) for the co-ordination of SAR services, and one or more rescue sub-centres (RSCs) to support an RCC within its SRR, if necessary;



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Election of the new Bureau of RAFEP.

- 3) SAR facilities, including SAR units (**SRUs**) with specialized equipment and trained personnel, as well as other potential resources to conduct SAR operations;
- 4) On-scene coordinators (**OSCs**) assigned, as necessary, for co-ordinating the on-scene activities of all participating facilities; and
- 5) Support facilities that provide services in support of SAR operations.

Prior to the training, presentations were given to participants. They focused on:

- > Fisheries and the safety of fishermen in the ATLAFCO zone;
- > Elements of the rescue device, the development of the SAR service and improvement strategies.

To highlight the practical, rather than theoretical, nature of the topics explored, a visit to the sub-regional Maritime

Rescue Coordination Center (MRCC) in Bouznika, Morocco, was also organized, and required to complete the training. The Regional Center covers the maritime SAR areas of Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal, The Gambia, Cabo Verde and Guinea-Bissau.

Trainees had to opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge of the operational organization of a MRCC, and the necessary coordination between all parties concerned in the management of disasters at sea.

The representatives of the following Member States of ATLAFCO participated in this session: **Benin, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry, Liberia, Morocco, Mauritania, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra and Togo.**

The following East African countries: **Tanzania, Somalia, Seychelles, Uganda** also took part in this training session.



Latest news



Seraphin Dedi
Secretary-General
of the FCWC

**FCWC SECRETARY GENERAL RE-APPOINTED FOR
NEW TERM**

**Seraphin Dedi appointed for a further five years as
Fisheries Committee of the West Central Gulf of Guinea
(FCWC) Secretary General.**

The Eleventh Ordinary Session of the FCWC Conference of Ministers held in Lomé, Togo, in November 2018 renewed the mandate of Mr. Seraphin Dedi, the FCWC's inaugural Secretary-General for a period of five years.

The FCWC was formed in 2007, to address a number of critical fishery management and development issues facing FCWC Member States. During the eleven years of its existence and under Mr. Dedi's leadership, FCWC has successfully implemented several projects and initiatives to address these challenges.

Senator Heineken Lokpobiri, Minister of State for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, commented, "I congratulate the Secretary-General for his hard work and dedication that

has enabled the building of a strong regional institution. The renewal of his mandate illustrates the confidence that donors, stakeholders, partners, and beneficiaries repose in his leadership of the organization."

Mr. Dedi commented, "I am delighted to be able to continue the work of the FCWC. Partnerships have been at the heart of the success of the FCWC, and I look forward to working with partners old and new over the coming five years."

With a background in Environment and Natural Resource Management, Mr. Dedi has over twenty years working experience in the field of fisheries and aquaculture development. He occupied the position of National Director of Fisheries in Côte d'Ivoire, before moving to the regional level as the first Secretary-General of the Committee.



FCWC WELCOMES NEW CHAIRPERSON

Honorable Ouro-Koura Agadazi, Togo's Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, will be FCWC Chairperson for 2019, succeeding Senator Lokpobiri.

The Minister of State for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Senator Heineken Lokpobiri has exited his post as the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) Chairperson for 2018. During his tenure as Chairperson and FCWC Ambassador, he championed the necessity of regional cooperation to address issues that hinder the development of the fisheries in the sub-region.

In 2018, he oversaw the procurement of two fishing patrol vessels to further collaborate with the Nigerian Navy to patrol its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). He has also made it mandatory for flagged or licensed fishing vessels in Nigeria to have IMO numbers ascribed to them and clearly marked to restrict their ability to operate outside the law.

In his speech at the Eleventh Ordinary Session of the FCWC Conference of Ministers in November 2018, Senator Lokpobiri said, "It is important to learn from the past, identify challenges and propose concrete measures for tackling insecurity in our territorial waters. Without doubt this can only be achieved by further strengthening of partnership and collaboration between Member States."

Minister Agadazi congratulated the results of his excellent work and firm commitment of the FCWC. He stated, "I am honoured to take the role as Chair of the FCWC for 2019. The FCWC is very important for our countries, and it is key for us to work together to make our organisation stronger so that it is a force to be reckoned with in the world at large! I would like to extend the thanks of our region to the European Union and Norway, who have believed in our sub-regional organisation and who continue to support our activities."



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Ouro-Koura Agadazi, Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Togo.



©FCWC

Senator Heineken Lokpobiri, Minister of State for Agriculture and Rural Development, Nigeria.



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Stop Illegal Fishing.

THE FCWC FOCUS ON MARITIME SECURITY

Maritime security in the FCWC is a necessity for sustainable fisheries development and blue growth.

The maritime domain of West Africa is endowed with key resources, including fish threatened by multiple illicit activities. They include, among others: the taking of hostages, contraband, drug trafficking, the trade of the human beings, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, illegal migration, piracy, armed robbery and dumping of illegal toxic products. The UN Security Council Resolution 2018 (2011) / 2039 (2012) was issued at the height of piracy attacks on shipping routes in the Gulf of Guinea region, threatening international peace and security.

To meet these challenges, the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) Heads of State and Government, at their 40th Ordinary Session, held in Abuja in February 2012, mandated the ECOWAS Commission to develop a holistic maritime policy framework to guide action and cooperation in the West African region and strengthen collaboration with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC) and other relevant stakeholders.

In accordance with this mandate, the ECOWAS Integrated Maritime Strategy (EIMS) was developed in 2014. It has led to the establishment of Multinational Maritime

Coordination Centers (MMCCs) in Benin, Ghana, and Cape Verde. It also established the Regional Center for Maritime Safety in West Africa (CRESMAO) for the strategic coordination of the three zones, to serve as an information collection, classification, and dissemination point, and to liaise with the Interregional Maritime Coordination Center in Cameroon.

In addressing the FCWC's focus on Maritime Security for 2019, FCWC Secretary-General Mr. Seraphin Dedi said, "It is time to fully support the issue of maritime security to secure our fishing zones for the sustainable development our fishing industry. Using the existing framework and structures at national and regional level, such as the EIMS, and ensuring enforcement of laws and regulations, I am confident that, with the ongoing support from Partners through initiatives such as the EU/PESCAO and NORAD/WATF-funded projects, we can make measurable improvements over the course of the next year to improve fisheries governance in our region."

Fisheries agencies play a critical role in delivering maritime security in West Africa. Fisheries compliance will increase by supporting good ocean governance, effective enforcement, and coordinated monitoring, control and surveillance activities.



FIRMS & CWP



Meetings & events

ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE FIRMS STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING, ROME, 13-14 MAY 2019

The eleventh session of the Fisheries and Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS) Steering Committee (FSC11) will take place in Rome, FAO Headquarters on the 13-14 May 2019. The meeting will be held back-to-back with the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP) meeting.

FSC11 will examine and take decisions on the expansion of the FIRMS partnership, to support a stronger

dissemination and monitoring of world fishery resources. This expansion encompasses new IGO members and resource partners to support enhanced dissemination capacities: the Global Record of Stocks and Fisheries (GRSF) and the Tuna Atlas.

Both these initiatives were developed under the BlueBRIDGE project and, thanks to the involvement of a number of IGO members of FIRMS and CWP, they are to be presented to FSC11 for decision on ownership by FIRMS and to draw plans for their future use.

About BlueBRIDGE

This Virtual Research Environment has been created as part of the BlueBRIDGE project. BlueBRIDGE supports capacity building in interdisciplinary research communities actively involved in increasing scientific knowledge about resource overexploitation, degraded environment and ecosystems, with the aim of providing a more solid ground for informed advice to competent authorities and to enlarge the spectrum of growth opportunities as addressed by the Blue Growth Societal Challenge.

BlueBRIDGE capitalizes on past investments and uses the proven D4Science infrastructure. D4Science counts over 2 000 users, integrates more than 50 repositories, executes around 20 000 models and algorithms per month, and provides access to over a billion records in repositories worldwide, with 99,7 percent service availability.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

about the project please visit us at <http://www.bluebridge-vres.eu>

GFCM



Latest news

TAKING ACTION TO SECURE A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR BLACK SEA FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

The impact of the Black Sea Conference and the Sofia Declaration

On 7 June 2018, almost two years after the Bucharest Declaration, six Black Sea riparian countries and the European Union signed the Sofia Declaration, renewing their commitment to achieve sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in the region. After successful discussions under the umbrella of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the ministers and high-level representatives of Black Sea riparian countries have pledged to take concrete action in order to ensure a brighter future for the region and its coastal communities.

This momentous declaration was signed just after the High-level Conference on Black Sea Fisheries and Aquaculture, held in Sofia, Bulgaria, on 6-7 June 2018. This event, organized by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) in close collaboration with the Bulgarian Government and in partnership with the European Commission, as well as other international organizations, offered a unique opportunity to discuss key challenges and to further dialogue and cooperation among all the riparian states.

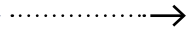
The Sofia Declaration sets concrete objectives and actions that should help develop a comprehensive regional governance in the Black Sea. This should be achieved thanks to greater solidarity and coordination among all riparian countries in order to fight illegal unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, enhance data collection and science, improve fisheries management, and support sustainable small-scale fisheries and



aquaculture. The many threats to this peculiar marine basin posed by environmental conditions and human activities need indeed to be properly addressed if we are to secure the region's ecological and economic wealth and viable livelihoods for coastal communities.

"Today is a historic date for the Black Sea. All countries present have recognized that they have a shared responsibility to address these challenges and that they need to collaborate in each other's interest," said Abdellah Srour, Executive Secretary of the GFCM. "In this context, the GFCM is called to play a central role to promote and support dialogue and cooperation throughout the region."

Through the BlackSea4Fish project and thanks to the establishment of Aquaculture Demonstrative Centres in the Black Sea, the GFCM has been successful in



enhancing regional cooperation in both fisheries and aquaculture, and has provided technical assistance to facilitate knowledge-sharing and improve the provision of advice. Much work remains to be done, but there is strong hope that efforts will be continued thanks to the momentum created.

The high-level conference was attended by 11 countries (Albania, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine) as well as by representatives of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the European Commission, the European Fisheries Control Agency,

ACCOBAMS, the Black Sea Advisory Council, the Black Sea Commission, Black Sea Economic Cooperation, Eurofish, the Black Sea Sunrise Fisheries Association, the Danube Sturgeon Task Force, the European Association of Fishermen in the Black Sea and WWF.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

on the event please visit the website:

www.fao.org/gfcm/meetings/blackseaconference2018/en/



Meetings & events

REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND THE BLACK SEA: A COMMON COMMITMENT FOR THE FUTURE

High-level representatives from 18 Mediterranean and Black Sea countries as well as the European Union met in Valletta, Malta on 26 September 2018, where they signed a Ministerial Declaration aimed at implementing a Regional Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea (RPOA-SSF). This declaration represents the culmination of a long process involving all stakeholders. It is a key step for the region and a concrete commitment to ensure the long-term environmental, economic and social sustainability for small-scale fisheries within the next decade.

Approximately 240 participants from 30 countries gathered at the conference to discuss progress made in recent years and solutions to support the small-scale fisheries sector. Lively stakeholder discussions took place, and fishers and fisher organization actively participated in the debate on key topics.



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Select cases of best practices received awards during an official ceremony, during which the “Friends of SSF” regional platform was also officially launched. This regional network of actors sharing common interests and objectives in the sector is aimed at promoting transnational cooperation and building synergies among ongoing work.



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Small-scale fisheries represent an important share of the fisheries sector in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea and their considerable role in the region has long been recognized. They account for 84% of the region's fishing fleet and they employ nearly 62% of the total workforce onboard fishing vessels. This typically family-based activity has a considerable economic impact on Mediterranean and Black Sea coastal communities. However, the sector still faces significant challenges.

The regional plan of action is therefore a concrete instrument that aims to reinforce the capacities of the sector in several domains including scientific research and data collection, fisheries management measures, value chain and market access, participation in decision-making processes, decent work, role of women, climate and the environment.

"This ten-year commitment is the fruit of a long participatory work. I truly hope that it will pave the way to similar action plans in other regions of the world, in order to give a decisive contribution to food security and to the health of our oceans for a better future," said Abdellah Srour, Executive Secretary of the GFCM.

The declaration was signed by Albania, Algeria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey and the European Union.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

on the event please visit the website:

<http://www.fao.org/gfcm/meetings/ssf2018>





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THE STATE OF MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEA FISHERIES REPORT

Championing the reduction of bycatch and discards and bolstering support for small-scale fishers

Although the main commercial fish species in the Mediterranean and Black Sea are still over-fished, pressure has reduced over the past years, raising hopes – for the first time – for the recovery of fish stocks, according to new GFCM report launched today. The percentage of overexploited fish stocks decreased by 10 percent – from 88 percent in 2014 to 78 percent in 2016. More efforts are needed, however, to ensure long-term fish stock sustainability, warns *The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries*. This means more support for the small-scale fishing sector, which employs most fishers and causes least environmental damage; reducing bycatch and discards; and introducing more drastic measures such as significantly reducing fishing or establishing fisheries restricted areas (areas where fishing activities are regulated). The latter is particularly needed

to safeguard the most heavily fished species, such as European hake, which is fished nearly six times beyond its sustainable level.

“Fisheries provide the region with an important socio-economic balance and are essential to ending hunger and poverty,” said Abdellah Srour, GFCM Executive Secretary.

“Sustainability may be expensive in the short term, but there is nothing more expensive than running out of fish,” said Miguel Bernal, FAO Fishery Officer and one of the report’s coordinators.

Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries are under threat in the long run because of the effects of increased pollution from human activities, habitat degradation, the introduction of non-indigenous species, overfishing and the impacts of climate-driven changes.

Most over-fished fish species

The European hake remains the species subject to the highest fishing pressure in the whole Mediterranean, followed by turbot in the Black Sea and horse mackerel in the Mediterranean. Stocks fished within biologically sustainable limits mostly include small pelagic species (sardine or anchovy), and some stocks of red mullet and deep-water rose shrimp.

Catch levels – latest trends

Overall, fish catch levels have been stable for the last few years, but are significantly down from the record years of the 1980s – 1.2 million tonnes in 2016 versus 2 million tonnes in 1982. These 1.2 million tonnes comprise of 830,000 tonnes of fish caught in the Mediterranean and 390,000 tonnes of fish from the Black Sea. The bulk of catches consists of small pelagics (sardines, anchovies accounting for a third of all catches), although the catch is composed of a high number of species compared to other areas of the world.

Across the region, the ranking of capture fisheries production in 2014–2016 continued to be dominated by Turkey (321,800 tonnes and 26% of total landings compared to 31% in 2013), followed by Italy (185,300 tonnes and 16%, similar to the 2013 percentage). Algeria

(96,300 tonnes and 8%) and Greece (65,700 tonnes and 5%) also maintain the same 2013 percentages in landing contribution. Both Tunisia (185,300 tonnes) and Croatia (74,400 tonnes) show an increase compared to 2013 (from 7 to 9% for Tunisia and from 3 to 6% for Croatia). Total landings for Spain (78,200 tonnes) decreased from 8.5 to 7% of the total).

Among subregions, the Black Sea continues to provide the largest contribution to capture fisheries production, with 32% of the total, followed by the western Mediterranean (22%), the Adriatic Sea (16%), and the central and eastern Mediterranean (15% each).

Discards and incidental catches of vulnerable species are still of concern – 275,000 tonnes of fish discarded every year

Some 230,000 tonnes of Mediterranean fish are discarded every year – about 18% of total catches. In the Black Sea, discards are estimated at around 45,000 tonnes, or around 10–15% of total catches. Some sectors generate more discards than others – trawling, for example, accounts for over 40% in some areas, whilst small-scale fisheries tend to be below 10%.

According to the report, incidental catches of vulnerable species are relatively rare events but are important because the species caught are of conservation concern.



Among the vulnerable species most affected by incidental catches are sea turtles (which appear in 8 out of 10 of reports on incidental catches) followed by sharks, rays, and skates (each appearing in 2 out of 10 reports on incidental catches). Seabirds and marine mammals represent the lowest number of incidental catches.

The report was launched during the first GFCM Forum on Fisheries Science (Fish Forum 2018) organized at the FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy, from 10 to 14 December 2018, as a recognition of the instrumental role of science in improving knowledge towards sustainable fisheries management.

**Other key facts and figures from
*The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries report:***

- > Marine capture fisheries in the Mediterranean and Black Sea produce an estimated annual revenue of \$2.8 billion and directly employ just under a quarter of a million people;
- > Unlike other major fishing areas, Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries lack large mono-specific stocks, and instead exploit a variety of benthic and pelagic stocks of fish, as well as molluscs and crustaceans;
- > The officially reported fishing fleet operating in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea in 2017 comprised approximately 86,500 vessels, 6,200 units less than in 2014;
- > Small-scale vessels make up the lion's share of the region's fleet (83% in the Mediterranean and 91% in the Black Sea);
- > Small-scale fishing vessels generate most employment (59%) in the sector, but generate only 26% of total revenue. Workers on small-scale vessels only earn about 50% of what workers on trawlers/purse seiners earn;
- > The Mediterranean and the Black Sea are among of the most carefully-monitored regions in the world - the main commercial species, about 50% of the total catches, are scientifically assessed.



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FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SOMFI 2018, REFER TO THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES:

SoMFi 2018 publication (PDF):
www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/CA2702EN

The launching event of SoMFi 2018 was webcasted and can be viewed here:
<http://www.fao.org/webcast/home/en/item/4921/icode/>

SOMFI 2018 PODCAST LINKS:

TZH 37 – Securing a future for fisheries. Interview with Miguel Bernal, GFCM Fisheries Resources Officer. Available at:
<https://soundcloud.com/unfao/a-future-for-fisheries>

Interview with Abdellah Srour, GFCM Executive Secretary, on SoMFi 2018, available at:
<https://soundcloud.com/unfao/peche-mediterranee-et-en-mer-noire>

SOMFI 2018 UN RADIO INTERVIEWS:

Interview in French available at:
<https://news.un.org/fr/audio/2018/12/1031621>

Interview in Russian available at:
<https://news.un.org/ru/audio/2018/12/1345021>

Interviews in Arabic available at:
<https://news.un.org/ar/story/2018/12/1023341>
<https://news.un.org/ar/audio/2018/12/1023451>



Meetings & events

FISH FORUM 2018: IDENTIFYING RESEARCH PRIORITIES FOR THE COMING DECADE

The results of the first Forum on Fisheries Science in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea

More than 450 experts and scientists from 45 countries and from several international organizations, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders gathered at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy, from 10 to 14 December 2018, to discuss the state of the art of fisheries science in the region and identify research priorities for the coming decade. The event, organized by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean, was the first of this kind for the region, encompassing oceanographic, social science and economic perspectives on fisheries research.

“We are particularly satisfied as the Fish Forum 2018 created a unique opportunity for scientists from all over the world to share their research,” said Abdellah Srour, GFCM Executive Secretary. “The success of this event

proves that we crucially need to move towards more collaboration for better science, especially in light of the specificities of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. This is particularly true in a context where climate change, non-indigenous species and plastic pollution are growing issues for the region.”

The discussions held at plenary and parallel sessions and workshops highlighted the need for more integrative and transparent data covering all aspects related to fisheries, marine ecosystems, environment and socio-economics. Moreover, new spatial models and methodologies were presented and the need to allow for better comparisons between countries emerged. To this end, a proposal was made to build a network of research institutes across the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

Fish Forum 2018 was also a timely opportunity in view of the upcoming United Nations Decade for Oceans Science, as it will hopefully provide support in making science a priority for fisheries management.



“The Fish Forum 2018 is the starting point of an important digital use of available data. More than ever, we need to build on cooperation in order to increase our ability to share data”, concluded Stefano Cataudella, outgoing GFCM Chairperson.

Fish Forum 2018 highlighted a number of key issues in its main conclusions, including:

- Simultaneously managing a variety of environmental and anthropogenic issues (such as climate change, pollution, eutrophication, mining, non-indigenous species, etc.) requires creative solutions to ensure biodiversity conservation and fisheries sustainability;
- The role of the GFCM in promoting cooperation in the Black Sea basin between contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties proves to be essential for improved governance in the region and should continue in the same direction;
- The increase in non-indigenous and invasive species across the Mediterranean and the Black Sea was underlined, and their impacts on native species, the environment and fisheries alike were widely discussed. There is a need to take stock of their presence and adapt actions to best manage them;
- Incipient efforts are being made towards mitigating the effects of marine litter, from incentivizing the use of recyclable and compostable packaging in fisheries, to supporting the participation of fishers in ocean cleaning initiatives. The creation of a strong legal framework for the management of marine litter would allow for more effective management in the future;
- Beside fisheries impacts, other interactions of vulnerable species with human activities, including pollution and depredation effects, were identified as emerging issues that need to be further studied;
- Healthy small-scale fisheries are key for economic development and for the achievement of the UN sustainable development goals; however, their activity is

strongly challenged by the decline of stocks, poor working conditions, lack of market power and reduced inclusion in decision-making processes, especially in southern and eastern Mediterranean countries;

- Novel methods for assessing catch, effort and biomass are increasingly being adopted and standardized. Tools such as geographic information system (GIS) databases and automated workflows are making collection and processing of fisheries data a routine;
- Involving fishers in the sustainable management of resources requires awareness of the time dimension: there is a need to ensure that their opinions and approaches are taken into account, so that they can be integrated in the entire management process in order to foster consensus;
- Using available technology such as vessel monitoring system, logbooks, etc., is not sufficient, unless efforts are appropriately planned and targeted in order to have valid data for fisheries management;
- New technologies such as artificial intelligence and big data management should be made available and affordable for countries and institutions with limited resources.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

about the Fish Forum 2018, please visit:
www.fao.org/gfcm/fishforum2018/en/

Fish Forum 2018 photo gallery:
www.flickr.com/photos/faonews/sets/72157698476723030/

Fish Forum 2018 Book of Abstracts:
www.fao.org/3/CA2619EN/ca2619en.pdf



Latest news

2019 AND BEYOND: A WIDE-RANGING WORKPLAN AND GOVERNANCE REVIEW ON THE IWC AGENDA

The last few months have seen wide-ranging developments at the International Whaling Commission (IWC). Last September's biennial meeting adopted new, multi-year catch limits for Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling (see article in the Corner section) and endorsed five formal Resolutions. These covered ghost gear entanglements, anthropogenic noise, ecosystem functioning, the future governance of the organisation and the role of the IWC in the future.

The Commission also welcomed progress and endorsed the proposed way forward for two recent IWC initiatives - on cetacean bycatch and stranding. Both were launched at the last Commission meeting in 2016. Since then, each has recruited a co-ordinator to lead the programme, established an Expert Panel, and begun to build links and share information with other organisations working in their respective areas. The Bycatch Mitigation Initiative (BMI) has also developed a 10-year strategic plan and a short-term work plan which were both endorsed at the September meeting. The BMI will hold a workshop at the start of the annual IWC Scientific Committee meeting in Kenya in May (see Meetings & Events below).

Also welcomed by the Commission were new or updated workplans for Ship Strikes, Whale Watching and Conservation Management Plans (CMPs). CMPs are a flexible tool developed by the IWC to consolidate scientific and management advice and support organisations working at all levels, from local to international, to protect some of the most vulnerable cetacean species.



©International Whaling Commission

Home page of the Whale Watching Handbook.

A new, online Whale Watching Handbook was also endorsed at the meeting and subsequently launched at the end of October. The Handbook is a major initiative for the IWC - a living, evolving tool to connect regulators, the whale watching industry and the public with the advice to ensure this fast-growing and economically important activity has minimal impact on individual animals and population health. The Handbook is available at: www.wwhandbook.iwc.int.

Two proposals to amend the legal framework of the IWC (known as the Schedule) were not adopted at the September meeting. The first sought to create a whale sanctuary in the South Atlantic. The second was part of a package of proposals from the Government of Japan, seeking catch limits for certain whale species.

As has been widely reported in the media, the Government of Japan has since given notification of its withdrawal from the IWC which will take effect on June 30. The Government of Japan has played an active and integral role in both the Commission and its Scientific Committee and this contribution will be missed.

In 2016, the IWC began a Governance Review, looking at structures, processes and effective management of the fast-expanding work programme. Within this context, the Commission will consider the departure of Japan and future relationship.



©IWC

Peru 2006 – team approaching with a pole. Since 2012 the IWC has delivered entanglement response in 30+ countries.

INAUGURAL WORKSHOP: IWC BYCATCH MITIGATION INITIATIVE

The International Whaling Commission will hold the first workshop of its Bycatch Mitigation Initiative (BMI) in Kenya this May 2019. This will enable the BMI Expert Panel to meet and consolidate their work plans, and provide an opportunity to engage with local and regional stakeholders. The Western and Northern Indian Ocean is one of the priority areas for bycatch mitigation work, and the involvement of local experts will help to map out data gaps and identify potential bycatch hot spots.

The workshop also aims to identify potential locations for pilot projects to test experimental approaches to reducing bycatch, such as setting nets lower in the water column, as well as existing measures such as pinger trials and time-area closures.

The Bycatch Workshop is deliberately scheduled to maximise synergies with two other IWC meetings in Kenya this May: the annual Scientific Committee meeting of the IWC, and a practical training workshop by the IWC's Global Whale Entanglement Response Network (GWERN).

The Entanglement Response Network was established in 2011. The success of its operating model (a Technical Co-ordinator supported by a global panel of experts) is the blueprint for both the BMI and the IWC's Strandings



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Bycatch DDE – pair trawl, Galicia. Over 300,000 cetaceans are believed to be killed in bycatch every year.

Initiative. The first entanglement response workshop was held in 2012. Since then, training has been delivered on five continents, reaching over 1000 people.

NAFO



Latest news

NAFO AGREES TO SECOND PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND CONTINUES ITS COMMITMENT TO CONSERVING MARINE BIODIVERSITY

The Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) held its 40th Annual Meeting in Tallinn, Estonia, from 17 to 21 September 2018. At this Meeting, NAFO accepted the Performance Review Panel Report and its 36 recommendations. This second Performance Review of NAFO was comprehensive, addressing issues related to conservation and management; compliance and enforcement; governance; science; international cooperation; and financial and administrative matters.

In her presentation to the Meeting, the Chair of the Performance Review Panel, Ms. Jane Willing (New Zealand), noted many of NAFO's recent positive



Annual Meeting Opening in Tallinn, Estonia. Pictured from left to right, the Honourable Siim Kiisler, Minister of the Environment of the Republic of Estonia, NAFO President, Stéphane Artano, and NAFO Executive Secretary, Fred Kingston.

achievements, including increased transparency, the protection of Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VME), improvements in data collection, compliance based on control measures and greater internal and external co-operation. External challenges to NAFO include the effects of ecosystem change, including the impact of climate change, on NAFO's fish stocks, and the



NAFO Heads of Delegation, Annual Meeting 2018.



Tallinn, Estonia.

cumulative impact of various human activities outside of NAFO's mandate on the long-term conservation and sustainable use of fisheries resources.

The recommendations included: further improving the availability and reliability of NAFO's catch data; ensuring enough resources to address the increasing science workload; improving the decision-making framework for the provision of scientific advice; addressing repeat non-compliance; and ensuring the practical application of NAFO's ecosystem approach. The full text of this Performance Review and its recommendations can be found on the NAFO website: www.nafo.int.

To follow up to the Performance Review Panel's 36 recommendations, Contracting Parties agreed to form a Working Group to develop an Action Plan to address each recommendation individually. This Working Group will designate those recommendations that should be addressed immediately, as well as establishing individual plans of action to address the remaining recommendations in the short, medium and long term.

In addition to the Performance Review, other major decisions made at the 2018 NAFO Annual Meeting included:

- Adoption of an 'exceptional circumstances' protocol for NAFO's Greenland halibut management strategy evaluation;

- Continuing NAFO's commitment to the conservation of marine biodiversity in NAFO waters by implementing measures to prohibit the directed fishing of Greenland shark and for Contracting Parties to report on efforts to minimize incidental catches and mortalities of this species;

- Adoption of a comprehensive revision to the NAFO Observer Program to enhance the quality of data being collected by NAFO observers; and

- Agreement on a schedule for a management strategy evaluation (MSE) for cod in the Flemish Cap (Division 3M), including setting a Harvest Control Rule (HCR) for the stock, to be ready for decision at the next NAFO Annual Meeting.

NAFO also continued to make ecosystems of the Northwest Atlantic a priority. In November 2018, members of the Working Group on Ecosystem Science and Assessment (WG-ESA) met to discuss NAFO's continued development of its ecosystem approach framework to fisheries management, including the further development of NAFO's ecosystem Roadmap. The report of that meeting will be available on the NAFO website.

NAFO's 2019 Annual Meeting will be hosted by France in Bordeaux from 23 to 27 September 2019.



Latest news

NEAFC APPOINTS A NEW MCS OFFICER

Retirement of João Neves and appointment of Hrannar Ásgeirsson

NEAFC is sad to say goodbye to Joao as he leaves his role as MCS officer after almost 20 years' service. João has overseen a major evolution in NEAFC's MCS capacity. Along with demonstrating vast experience and knowledge in this role, one in which he always demonstrated great humour, João has developed an extensive network across the MCS world, including many

training workshops. João will be putting his experience to good use, so expect to see him in the MCS 'circuit' soon!

NEAFC is welcoming Hrannar Ásgeirsson to take on the MCS role in the Secretariat in Joao's stead. Hrannar's experience in the Icelandic administration, in particular on new forms of data analysis and detection of non-compliance, will be an essential part of NEAFC taking on the MCS challenges of the future.





Latest news

INTRODUCING THE NEW REGIONAL MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE CARIBBEAN SPINY LOBSTER

The Ministers of the Organization of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector of the Central American Isthmus (OSPECSA), approved the Caribbean Spiny Lobster (*Panulirus argus*) Fishery Regional Management Plan (MARPLESCA Plan), which aims to establish a systematic process for the management of this species of lobster in countries where it is distributed, following a framework of sustainable use, and promoting the ecological balance and social and economic benefits for stakeholders.

The Organization requested the SICA/OSPECSA Regional Directorate to manage, together with the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) and the Western Central Atlantic Fisheries Commission (WECAFC), its approval, to ensure a harmonized plan within the Greater Caribbean region.

The MARPLESCA Plan update was developed within the framework of the Ecosystem Approach for the Caribbean Spiny Lobster Fisheries Subproject (Ecolangosta+), and of the Catalyzing Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Sustainable Management of Shared Living Marine Resources in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Ecosystems Project (CLME +), with the participation of regional organizations such as the CRFM and WECAFC.

REGIONAL STRATEGY TO PREVENT, DETER AND ELIMINATE IUU FISHING

In accordance with the guidelines of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Integration Policy 2015-2025 of OSPECSA countries, the Technical Commission of OSPECSA, including the Fisheries and Aquaculture Directors of its



eight Member Countries (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and the Dominican Republic), approved the “Regional Strategy to Prevent, Deter and Eradicate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, with an Emphasis on Jurisdictional Waters and Fishing Communities”.

The strategy establishes a harmonious framework for action that affects the application of regional provisions to reduce and eradicate IUU fishing in jurisdictional waters and in fishing communities of the countries of the Central American Integration System (SICA).

The strategy was elaborated with the participation of technicians from fisheries and aquaculture institutions, within the framework of the Agreement Letter between the FAO Subregional Office for Mesoamerica and OSPECSA.



SPRFMO



Meetings & events

7TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

The Seventh SPRFMO Annual Meeting took place between 19 and 27 January 2019, at the NH Hotel, The Hague, The Netherlands.

The Annual Meeting comprises the meetings of the Compliance and Technical Committee (CTC), the Finance and Administration Committee (FAC), and the SPRFMO Commission (COMM).

The 6th CTC meeting (CTC6) was held on 19-21 January, and were chaired by Mr Andrew Wright (NZ); the 7th Commission Meeting (COMM7), chaired by Mr Osvaldo Urrutia (CL), and the 6th FAC meeting (FAC6), chaired by Ms Kerrie Robertson (AU), were held between 23 and 27 January. Mr. Johan Osinga, Director General for Nature, Fisheries and Rural Areas of the

PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, opened COMM7 and extended a warm welcome to the over 160 participants from 15 Member Countries, 4 Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (CNCP), and several IGOs and NGOs.

This year, the meeting focused mainly on addressing the recommendations of the first SPRFMO Performance Review, conducted in 2018, as well on the proposals to create or amend Conservation and Management Measures (CMM), on the SPRMFO Observer Programme, Boarding and Inspection, Exploratory Fisheries, and Fishing Gear and Marine Plastic Pollution, among others.

Vanuatu has offered to host the Eighth SPRFMO Commission Meeting, in January 2020. The upcoming seventh meeting of the SPRFMO Scientific Committee will be held in Havana, Cuba, in October 2019.



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SWIOFC



Latest news

MR. LUCA GARIBALDI HAS BEEN APPOINTED AS THE NEW SECRETARY OF THE SOUTHWEST INDIAN OCEAN FISHERIES COMMISSION (SWIOFC)

Mr. Garibaldi, a biologist, started working with the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department in 1990. Before moving to Maputo, Mozambique, where the SWIOFC Secretariat is based, he was in charge of the FAO Global Capture database for almost 20 years.

With the purpose of improving collection and reporting of catch statistics, Mr. Garibaldi collaborated and participated in meetings of many Regional Fisheries Bodies around the world. He supervised and coordinated the technical and administrative work for several FAO projects, including the NEPAD-FAO Fish Programme (NFFP) that covered the whole of Africa, and capacity building projects on the



©Luca Garibaldi

Luca Garibaldi
Secretary of SWIOFC

improvement of data collection at the regional level in West Africa, and at national level in Eritrea and Myanmar.

He authored several studies related to trends in global and regional fisheries, such as the socio-economic study "The Value of African Fisheries", and for nine times the chapter on global capture production in "The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA)", the flagship publication of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture



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The SWIOFC Secretariat: Azevedo Timoteo, José Cansano and Luca Garibaldi from left to right, and World Bank's SWIOFish1 Coordinator Daroomalingum Mauree, front.



DEPARTMENT. THE 9TH SWIOFC SESSION FOLLOWING UP

Following recommendations by the 9th SWIOFC Session, held in Cape Town, South Africa, 09-12 October 2018, the major activities by the Commission during 2019 will be: i) the finalization of the Minimum Terms and Conditions (MTC) Guidelines; ii) the coordination of inputs from Member Countries and the preparation of documents regarding a possible SWIO Fisheries Framework Agreement (FFA) to be discussed at a high level meeting, tentatively scheduled to be held in Madagascar prior to the end of August 2019; iii) the gathering of information about possible financing mechanisms for the SWIOFC and present options at the 10th SWIOFC Session to be held in early October in the Maldives; iv) improving collaboration with the adjacent Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA).

The SWIOFC Scientific Committee will hold its annual meeting to assess the status of stocks in July at La Réunion, France. The first meeting of the Working Group on Small Pelagics is scheduled for 9-12 April in Mauritius.

This year will also see the launch of a new project titled “A partnership for marine and coastal governance and fisheries management for sustainable blue growth”. The project aims at improving collaboration among coastal countries between a Regional Fisheries Body (i.e. SWIOFC) and an UN Environment’s Regional Seas Programme (i.e. Nairobi Convention), in an effort to reconcile the need of local populations to harvest sea products with the need to ensure the protection and conservation of the marine environment. The project is funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and will last for five years (2019-2023).



Latest news

SCALING UP WECAFC'S COMMITMENT TO IMPROVE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF FISHERIES UNDER THE SDGs

Boosted by the positive deliberations in COFI33rd, requesting FAO to continue supporting the reorientation from advisory bodies to management bodies to strengthen fisheries management and conservation, and as at the 16th Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC) session in 2016, the process to establish a RFMO in the WECAFC has entered in its active phase.

The process is already underway: the first preparatory meeting is scheduled for 25-26 March 2019, in Barbados, which shall gather all WECAFC Member Countries, the sub-regional fisheries advisory/management bodies and relevant partners to discuss and decide *inter alia* on: the legal status of the RFMO; stocks coverage; area of competence; organisational structure; funding. The outcomes of this meeting will be reported to the 17th session of the Commission. Feedback gathered from the invitations so far convey a high interest by Member Countries.

1. New projects inception

> *Developing Organizational Capacity for Ecosystem Stewardship and Livelihoods in Caribbean Small-Scale Fisheries (StewardFish)*, 1.77 Million USD. This project aims at implementing the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem plus Strategic Action Programme (CLME+ SAP) within seven Caribbean countries by empowering fisherfolk throughout fisheries value chains to engage in resource management, decision-making processes and sustainable livelihoods, with strengthened institutional support at all levels. It had its inception workshop on 13-14 September 2018.

> The shrimp and groundfish component of CLME+ project, *"Catalysing Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Sustainable Management of Shared Living Marine Resources in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystems"*, 1.3 million USD. Sub-regional and national EAF Management Plans are under development for the target fisheries resources, and to initiate the assessment of shrimp and groundfish stocks status.

> 2 EU DG Mare-funded projects: "Support the Establishment of a regional fisheries management" and "Support to implementation of the Regional Plan of Action to deter and eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing in the Western Central Atlantic."

2. Partnership and information sharing for improved regional governance in fisheries

> An introductory meeting between OSPESCA and CRFM Executive Directors and the new WECAFC Secretary was held in the margins of the 33rd COFI. This was followed by two formal meetings of the Fisheries Interim Coordination Mechanism (FICM), the latest (the 8th session) was held back-to-back with the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) Interim Coordination Mechanism Meeting, on 18 August 2018, in Miami, Florida, USA.

> Contribution to the process of the establishment of a Permanent Policy Coordination Mechanism (PPCM) and a Sustainable Financing Plan (SFP) for Ocean Governance in the CLME+ region. WECAFC attended the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) Interim Coordination Mechanism Meeting and the PPCM and SFP Regional Consultation, respectively held on 15-17 Aug 2018, Miami, Florida and 25-26 September in Cartagena, Colombia. Inputs are also being provided through electronic consultations for review of relevant documents.

Recent meetings and events

2018 was marked by an important number of regional-level meetings and workshops, be it within the framework of the WECAFC's role consolidation or in-field projects and programmes in which WECAFC is an executing partner. These events were organized by the FAO WECAFC Secretariat and, in most instances, jointly with regional partners, including CRFM, OSPESCA, and the Caribbean Fisheries Management Council (CFMC) of the United States of America:



Meetings & events

1. With seven Working Groups' meetings held, out of the eleven established, 2018 experienced a record in these important discussion fora which provide fishery management advice and recommendations to countries, based on the best available scientific information:

- Second meeting of the OSPESCA/WECAFC/CRFM/CFMC working group on Caribbean Spiny Lobster, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, 21-23 March 2018
- Second meeting of the CFMC/WECAFC/OSPESCA/CRFM Working Group on Spawning Aggregations, Miami, USA, 27-29 March 2018
- First meeting of the regional Fisheries Data and Statistics, held in Bridgetown, Barbados, 14-16 May 2018. <http://www.fao.org/fishery/nems/41066/en>
- Second Meeting of the WECAFC/CRFM/IFREMER Working Group on Shrimp and Groundfish in the Guianas-Brazil Shelf, Bridgetown, Barbados, 17-18 May 2018
- Third Meeting of the Regional Working Group on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing, Bridgetown, Barbados, 26-28 September 2018. To find out more, please visit: <http://www.fao.org/fishery/nems/41094/en>.



- Special meeting of the Joint CRFM/WECAFC Working Group on Flyingfish in the Eastern Caribbean, Bridgetown, Barbados, 1-2 October 2018.
- Third Meeting of the CFMC/OSPESCA/WECAFC/CRFM/CITES Working Group on Queen Conch, Panama City, Panama, 30 October- 1 November 2018. <http://www.fao.org/fishery/nems/41093/en>

The recommendations from the above events have been reviewed by the 9th Session of WECAFC's Scientific Advisory Committee (SAG) held in November 2018. For more information, please visit: <http://www.fao.org/fishery/nems/41097/en>

A major standalone regional event, the Effective Fish Trade and Sustainable Development for Small Island Developing States workshop was held on 3–5 October 2018 in Barbados, organized by WECAFC in collaboration with the Centre for Marketing Information and Advisory Services for Fishery Products in Latin America (INFOPECSA), WECAFC and the Barbados Government. About 40 participants from 12 Caribbean SIDS countries attended, namely Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago. The workshop aimed to help bridge



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the knowledge gap, for greater value addition and trade in fish and fisheries products, which can often be of great benefit to these countries.

2. Key implemented project meetings held in 2018

- Second Meeting of the CLME+ Project Steering Committee, held in Panama City, Panama, 18-20 June 2018.
- Fourth Meeting of the CLME+ Strategic Action Program Interim Coordination Mechanism, Miami, Florida, USA, 15-17 August 2018.
- Eighth Meeting of the CLME+ Interim Coordination Mechanism for Sustainable Fisheries, Miami, Florida, USA, 18 August, 2018.
- First Major Consultation Meeting on “Options for a Permanent Policy Coordination Mechanism and a Sustainable Financing Plan for Ocean Governance in the CLME+ region”, Cartagena, Colombia, 25-26 September 2018.
- Data Preparatory Workshop for the Shrimp and Groundfish Fisheries of the North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystem, Bridgetown, Barbados, 23-25 October 2018.
- Inception Workshop for Developing Organizational Capacity for Ecosystem Stewardship and Livelihoods in Caribbean Small-scale Fisheries (StewardFish) Project, Bridgetown, Barbados, 13-14 September 2018

Under the GCP/SLC/202/SCF “Climate Change Adaptation of the Eastern Caribbean Fisheries Sector Project (CC4FISH)”:

1. Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Emergency Response Training and Trainers of Trainers Workshop, held on 16-23 September 2018 in Grenada.
2. The second major event was the 2nd Regional Sargassum Symposium, held on 21-22 November 2018 in Barbados.
3. Capacity training of over 1000 people in project countries, including Basic Fishermen Training, safety at sea training, food safety and handling training, aquaponics and seamoss farming training.
4. The “Protocol on Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management in Fisheries and Aquaculture under the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy” has been finalized and approved at the Ministerial Council meeting of the CARICOM on October 11 2018.





PUBLICATIONS AND PAPERS



➔ RSN

RSN Publication

REGIONAL FISHERY BODY SECRETARIATS' NETWORK – MEMBERSHIP, FAO 2018

This publication introduces the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN), its foundation by FAO, its role and developments, as well as its members and partners from around the world.

It provides a concise, accessible overview of established Regional Fishery Bodies (both FAO and non-FAO) and Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs). Entries feature brief but detailed summaries of each Body or Organisation, including key information on mandates, Member Countries, species and stock coverage, areas of competence and more. While the publication is designed to facilitate the understanding of RSN members and enhance visibility of their work, following the advice of COFI 32, it is not intended as a comprehensive account of each Body's work, nor of the Network itself.

Members of the RSN are mainly regional fishery bodies (RFBs) and fisheries management organizations (RFMOs), as well as fisheries and aquaculture networks and scientific research centres.

RFBs and RFMOs refer to a broad set of organizations through which States cooperate to achieve common objectives related to fisheries management and/or aquaculture development. Regional fishery bodies differ in terms of their overarching mandate. Some RFBs have a mandate to provide advice, decisions or coordinating mechanisms that are not binding for their Member States, while RFMOs have a management mandate, and can adopt binding fisheries conservation and management measures.

The publication is available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/CA0183EN/ca0183en.pdf>

An abstract and further information can be found at: <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/CA0183EN>

RSN Video

REGIONAL FISHERY BODY SECRETARIAT'S NETWORK (RSN) – OUR COMMON BLUE HEART (FAO, 2019)

This corporate video introduces the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network to the general public, highlighting its role and contribution to the achievement of SDG 14, and right across the 2030 Agenda. It explores the vital importance of a common commitment and shared vision towards the safeguarding and mindful, effective management of oceans, seas and inland waters. Global efforts towards a fairer, more sustainable future must acknowledge and embrace the key role of fisheries and aquaculture development.

The video is available at: <https://youtu.be/XR8uBMsVcO>



→ SOFIA

THE STATE OF WORLD FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE 2018. MEETING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The 2018 edition of The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture emphasizes the sector's role in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, and measurement of progress towards these goals. It notes the particular contributions of inland and small-scale fisheries, and highlights the importance of rights-based governance for equitable and inclusive development.

As in past editions, the publication begins with a global analysis of trends in fisheries and aquaculture production, stocks, processing and use, trade and consumption, based on the latest official statistics, along with a review of the status of the world's fishing fleets and human engagement and governance in the sector. Topics explored in Parts 2 to 4 include aquatic biodiversity; the ecosystem approach to fisheries and to aquaculture; climate change impacts and responses; the sector's contribution to food security and human nutrition; and issues related to international trade, consumer protection and sustainable value chains. Global developments in combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, selected ocean pollution concerns and FAO's efforts to improve capture fishery data are also discussed. The issue concludes with the outlook for the sector, including projections to 2030.

The publication is available online at: <http://www.fao.org/3/I9540EN/I9540en.pdf>.

For the digital, web-based report, e-book formats and other materials, visit: <http://www.fao.org/publications/sofia/en/>.



→ FCWC

REGIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PLAN

The FCWC Regional Fisheries Management Plan provides an overarching, coordinated and regional response to the challenges and constraints faced by marine fisheries in the sub-region. The Plan will be implemented during the four-year period from 2019 to 2022 and aims to create the conditions for the sustainable management of the FCWC's marine fisheries and to contribute to the improvement of food security and the economic and social welfare of FCWC Member Countries.

With challenges of overexploitation and overcapacity as well as limited monitoring, control and surveillance capacity at the national level, regional cooperation between FCWC Member States is vital.

The document can be viewed at: <https://www.fcwc-fish.org/publications/documents/meeting-reports/all.html>



RECORD OF THE 6TH WEST AFRICA TASK FORCE MEETING

This report is from the sixth West Africa Task Force (WATF) meeting that took place in Lomé, Togo, from the 5 to 7 June 2018. It was attended by representatives of the six FCWC Member Countries, the FCWC Secretariat, and the Technical Team, together with observers representing the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the EU-funded Improved Regional Fisheries Governance in Western Africa (PESCAO) Project, the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) and the Maritime Security Regional Coordination Centre for Western Africa (CRESMAO).

The Record provides an overview of national activities and progress, cases of illegal fishing throughout the region and lesson learning both from the FCWC region and beyond. A regional VMS centre and regional transshipment strategy are discussed and the WATF request and recommendations are documented.

The WATF celebrated the first International Day for the Fight Against IUU Fishing with the signing of a commitment board.

The document can be viewed at: <https://www.fcwc-fish.org/publications/documents/meeting-reports/all.html>



WEST AFRICA TASK FORCE: INTERAGENCY COOPERATION IN THE FCWC REGION

Interagency cooperation has been a core element of the West Africa Task Force (WATF) since its formation in 2015. This new report examines the support that has been offered to the six Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) members, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Togo, through the development of National Working Groups.

The report provides an overview of the reasons why interagency cooperation is needed and highlights international agreements such as the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA), and national measures including flag and license applications, that can be used to stop illegal fishing. This is needed to both support compliance to fisheries law and regulations and to enforce and sanction against the associated crimes that are taking place in the fishing industry. The processes involved and the experiences to date of the six FCWC countries are also detailed.

The document can be viewed at: <https://www.fcwc-fish.org/publications/documents/meeting-reports/all.html>



THE FCWC STRATEGY TO COMBAT ILLEGAL TRANSHIPMENT AT SEA

Unauthorized at-sea transshipment enables illegal operators to maximize profits by reducing time and fuel spent carrying fish to port; avoiding taxes, and costs such as buying a license; avoiding fishing vessel and catch inspection; enabling other fisheries crimes, and by creating an environment conducive to labour abuse of the crew and human trafficking.

The Strategy identifies ten Strategic Approaches to address illegal transshipment at sea. They will be implemented through:

- The establishment and implementation of legal and operational standards for fisheries transshipments within the FCWC area of competence;
- Validating and sharing information on fishing vessels and reefers that engage in transshipment within the FCWC area of competence;
- Monitoring and inspection of transshipments taking place within the FCWC area of competence; and
- Conducting evidence-based research and reporting to increase transshipment knowledge and awareness.

Current FCWC Member States' regulations ban all transshipment at sea without prior authorization.

The publication can be viewed at: <https://www.fcwc-fish.org/publications/documents/meeting-reports/all.html>



➔ GFCM

For an in-depth summary of the GFCM's *The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries* report, refer to the News from Members section.

FISH FORUM 2018 BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

FAO. 2018. *Fish Forum Book of abstracts*. Rome. 338 pp. (also available at <http://www.fao.org/3/CA2619EN/ca2619en.pdf>)

SOMFI 2018

FAO. 2018. *The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries*. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Rome. 172 pp. (also available at <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/CA2702EN>)

GFCM AQUACULTURE STRATEGY

GFCM. 2018. *Strategy for the Sustainable Development of Mediterranean and Black Sea Aquaculture*. Rome, FAO. 16 pp. (also available at <http://www.fao.org/3/I9766EN/i9766en.pdf>)

GFCM. 2018. *Stratégie pour le développement durable de l'aquaculture en Méditerranée et en mer Noire*. Rome, FAO. 16 pp. (also available at <http://www.fao.org/3/I9766FR/i9766fr.pdf>)

Studies and Reviews series

Carbonara, P., Follesa, M.C., eds. 2019. *Handbook on fish age determination: a Mediterranean experience*. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Studies and Reviews no. 98. Rome, FAO. 180 pp.

Follesa, M.C., Carbonara, P., eds. 2019. *Atlas of the maturity stages of Mediterranean fishery resources*. Studies and Reviews no. 99. Rome, FAO. 268 pp.

Proceedings series

FAO. 2018. *Regional Conference on building a future for sustainable small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. 7-9 March 2016, Algiers, Algeria*. Edited by Abdellah Srouf, Anna Carlson, Aurora Nastasi, Coline Carmignac, Dominique Bourdenet, Julia Pierraccini, Margherita Sessa and Nicola Ferri. Fisheries and Aquaculture Proceedings No. 58. Rome. Italy. (also available at <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/I9526EN>)

Videos

Not closed, not black but a living sea

This video provides a general profile of the Black Sea under a fisheries and aquaculture perspective. It gives an overview of the characteristics of this peculiar marine basin and of the main challenges for successful examples of sustainable aquaculture in the Black Sea and highlights the potentialities of the sector, not only for food security but for social and economic aspects. The video is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEh9Almv1U>

Promoting sustainable aquaculture in the Black Sea

This video explores successful examples of sustainable aquaculture in the Black Sea and highlights the potentialities of the sector, in terms of food security as well as under social and economic aspects. The video is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKyh-Du47u0>

Together to eradicate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the Black Sea

Black Sea countries are working to reduce cases of IUU fishing in the waters under their jurisdiction providing the examples of Bulgaria and Romania. The video is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EruoVl8lozw>

SoMFI 2018

This short video provides a visual summary of the main contents of the 2018 report on the State of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries (SoMFI 2018).

The video is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLt4ZA3Z9eM&feature=youtu.be>

Fish Forum 2018 welcome video

A message of welcome and support from the members of the GFCM to the wider community of fisheries science. Filmed during the Forum on Fisheries Science (Fish Forum 2018) held at FAO headquarters in Rome on 10-14 December 2018. The video is available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CqFMr_aQkQU

Small-scale fisheries: the future for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea

This video is a call to action to support sustainable small-scale fisheries and promote best practices in order to ensure a sustainable future for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. It gives a general overview of the current status of small-scale fisheries in the region and of the potential they offer.

The video is available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJ26_xSqAAo



➔ NAMMCO
AGE ESTIMATION OF MARINE MAMMALS WITH A FOCUS ON MONODONTIDS
(NAMMCO SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS VOLUME 10)

Scientific Editors: Christina Lockyer, Aleta Hohn, Robert EA Stewart, Rod Hobbs, and Mario Acquarone.

Age estimation is important from a management perspective, as it helps determine catch composition and stock demography. Different techniques are used for this, with the counting of growth layer groups in hard structures; teeth, ear plugs and baleen being the most widely used for marine mammals. In 2009, the Joint Scientific Working Group of the Canada and Greenland Joint Commission on Narwhal and Beluga and the NAMMCO Scientific Committee recommended that one or more workshops with the subject of obtaining standardized and accurate age estimates be convened by NAMMCO. This volume is the product of the review and two workshops resulting from this recommendation.

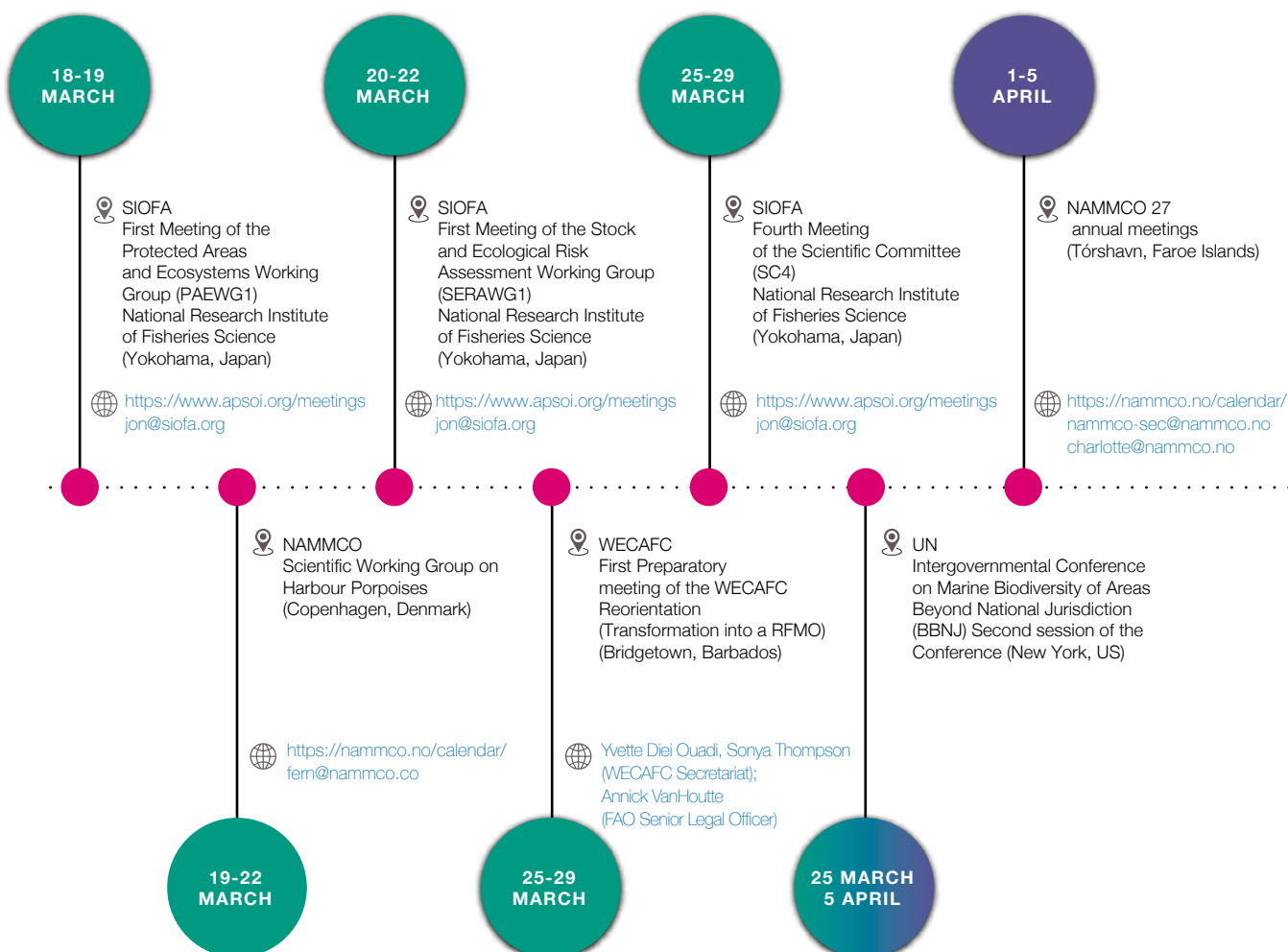
The publication is available at: <https://nammco.no/topics/volume-10-age-estimation/>

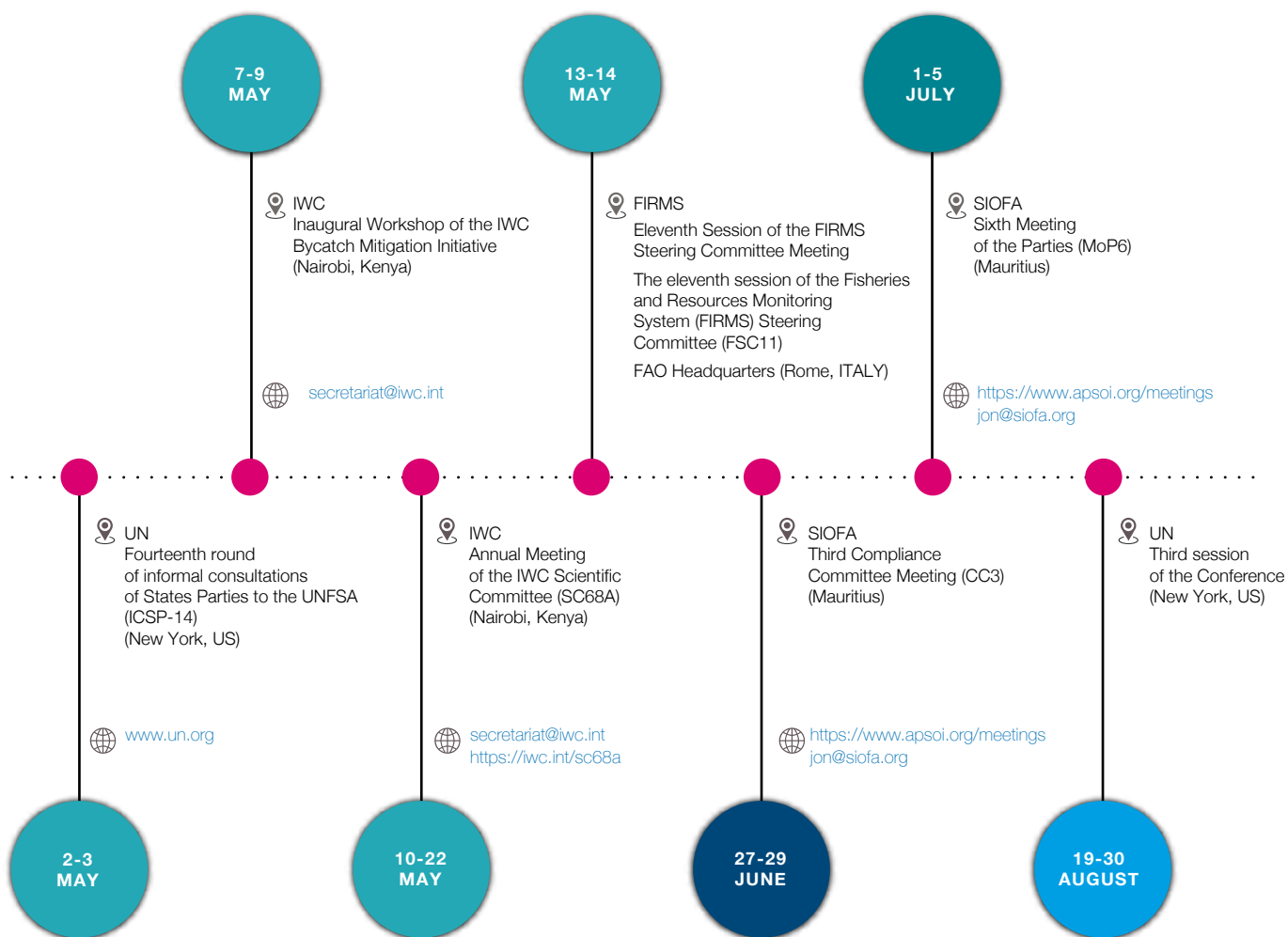






UPCOMING EVENTS 2019


































NORTH AMERICA

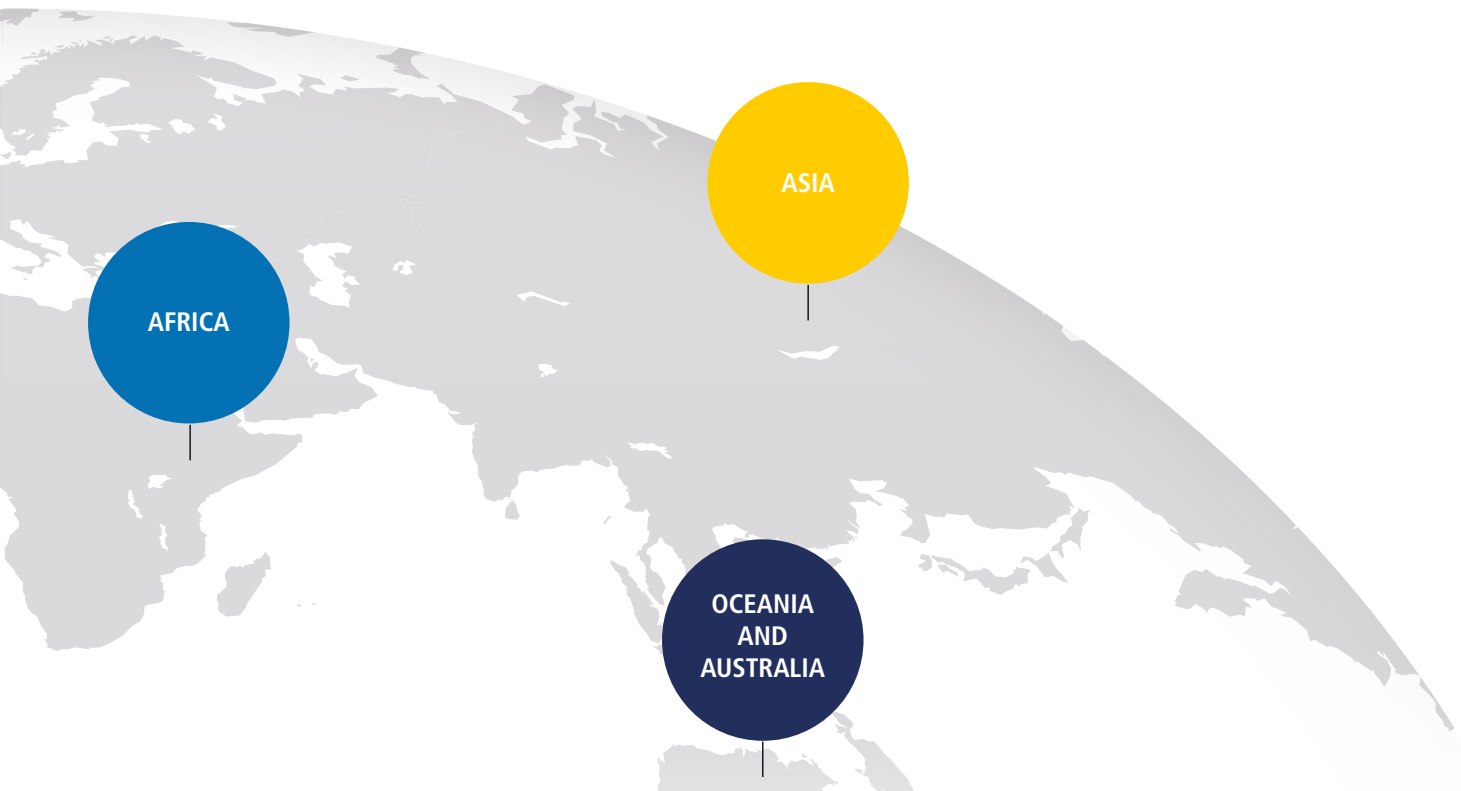
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

EUROPE

REGIONAL FISHERY BODIES AND NETWORKS

MEMBERS

	ACAP	Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels
	ACFR	Advisory Committee on Fishery Research
	APFIC	Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission
	ATLAFCO	Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic
	BCC	Benguela Current Commission
	BOBP-IGO	Bay of Bengal Programme, Intergovernmental Organization
	CACFISH	Central Asia and Caucasus Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission
	CBLT	Lake Chad Basin Commission
	CCAMLR	Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources
	CCBST	Convention on the Conservation and Management of Pollock Resources in the Central Bering Sea
	CCSBT	Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna
	CECAF	Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic
	CIFA	Committee on Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture of Africa
	COPESAALC	Commission for small-scale and artisanal fisheries and aquaculture of Latin America and the Caribbean
	COREP	Regional Fisheries Committee for the Gulf of Guinea
	CCPS	Permanent Commission for the South Pacific
	CRFM	Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism
	CTMFM	Joint Technical Commission for the Argentina/Uruguay Maritime Front
	CWP	Coordinated Working Party on Fishery Statistics
	EIFAC	European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission
	FCWC	Fishery Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea
	FFA	Forum Fisheries Agency
	FIRMS	Fisheries and Resources Monitoring System
	GESAMP	Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection
	GFCM	General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean
	GLFC	Great Lakes Fishery Commission
	IATTC	Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission
	ICCAT	International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
	ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea



AFRICA

ASIA

OCEANIA
AND
AUSTRALIA

MEMBERS

	IOTC	Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
	IPHC	International Pacific Halibut Commission
	IWC	International Whaling Commission
	JOINTFISH	Joint Norwegian-Russian Fisheries Commission
	LTA	Lake Tanganyika Authority
	LVFO	Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization
	MRC	Mekong River Commission
	NACA	Network of Aquaculture Centers in Asia-Pacific
	NAFO	Northwest Atlantic Fisheries
	NAMMCO	North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission
	NASCO	North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization
	NEAFC	North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission
	NPAFC	North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission
	NPFC	North Pacific Fisheries Commission
	OLDEPESCA	Latin American Organization for Fisheries Development
	OSPESCA	Central America Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization
	PICES	The North Pacific Marine Science Organization
	PSC	Pacific Salmon Commission
	RAA	Red de Acuicultura de las Americas
	RECOFI	Regional Commission for Fisheries
	SEAFDEC	Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center
	SEAFO	South East Atlantic Fisheries Organization
	SIOFA	Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement
	SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
	SPRFMO	South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation
	SRFC	Subregional Fisheries Commission (SRFC)
	SWIOFC	Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission
	WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
	WECAFC	Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission

REGIONAL FISHERY BODY SECRETARIATS' NETWORK

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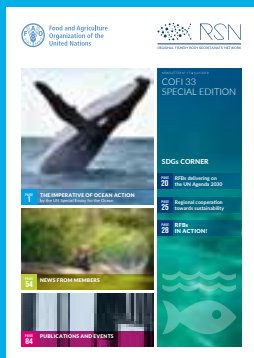


This newsletter is developed by the RSN Secretariat, with the precious and voluntary contributions from secretariats of regional fishery bodies and regional fisheries management organizations, as well as colleagues from FAO and other agencies working on matters relevant to these bodies.

The Fisheries and Aquaculture Department of FAO hosts and provides the RSN Secretariat services, the venue for biennial meetings, and has a day-to-day collaboration with the network on technical and operational issues. In this context, the Secretariat will continue working with its members, partners and colleagues, to ensure, as much as possible, that voices and experiences from different regions are being considered.

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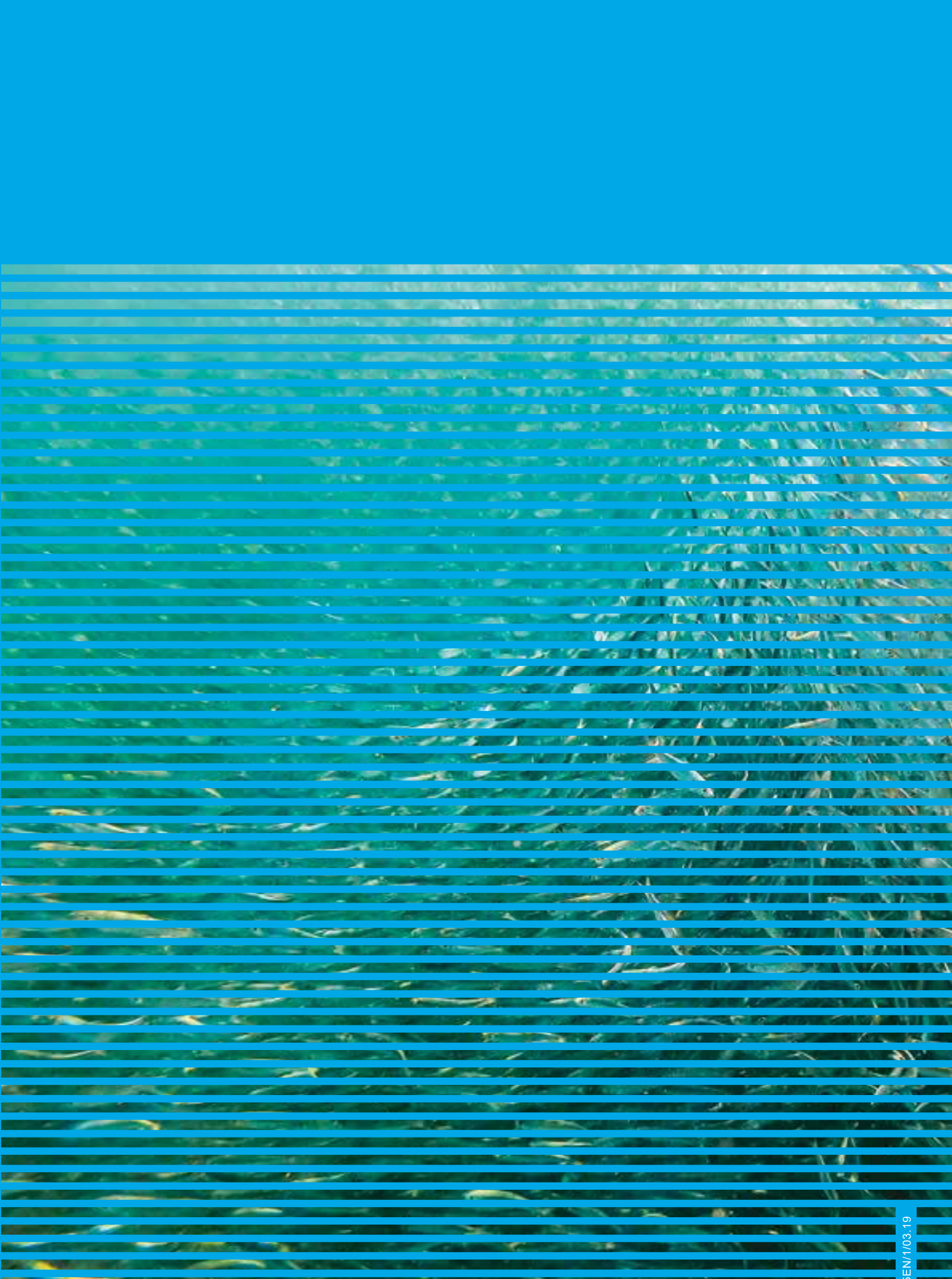
In the previous issue:

- THE IMPERATIVE OF OCEAN ACTION
- RFBs delivering on the UN Agenda 2030
- Regional cooperation towards sustainability
- RFBs IN ACTION!



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