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Food and
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Organización
de las
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para la
Alimentación y la
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FAO Regional Conference for Africa

TWENTY-EIGHTH SESSION

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SUMMARY REPORT OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF FAO REGIONAL BODIES

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Executive summary

FAO has a number of sectoral or thematic statutory Committees that each provide a platform for countries in the Africa region to agree on a common course of action and to suggest priorities for, and make recommendations on, the support that FAO could provide. They advise on the formulation of policies and review and coordinate their implementation on the regional plane. The sessions of the Commissions serve to exchange information and, generally through special subsidiary bodies, advise on suitable practices and action in relation to technical problems, and make appropriate recommendations to members and FAO regional and global bodies in relation to the foregoing.

The document provides an overview of the issues that were raised and the recommendations that were made, during the 2012-2013 biennium, by these sectoral/thematic Committees/Commissions. Participants to the Africa Regional Conference may wish to keep these issues in mind in considering their common course of action and in making recommendations to FAO's Conference and Council.

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Other documents can be consulted at www.fao.org*



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Matters brought to the attention of the Conference

Given the fact that agriculture is broadly defined by FAO to include other natural resources sectors such as aquaculture, fisheries and forestry and that the ARC is the regional policy body of FAO on agriculture, and in recognition of the contribution of natural resources and reliable statistics to food and nutrition security in Africa, the Conference is requested to include, in its session in the future, at least one discussion item dealing with natural resources issues and one item on statistics.

Given the fact that FAO aims at strengthening its statistics governance including a strong aspect of external statistical governance, the Conference is requested to endorse the recommendation of the 23rd Session of AFCAS to establish a Global Commission on Agricultural Statistics in order to : (i) ensure better coordination and standardization of the activities and recommendations emanating from regional commissions and bodies; (ii) provide a global forum for country representatives to review and endorse methodological and other normative work; and (iii) create a peer-review process for data published and methodologies used by FAO.

SUMMARY REPORT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FAO TECHNICAL BODIES

I. The 19TH SESSION OF THE AFRICAN FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION

1. The African Forestry and Wildlife Commission (AFWC) held its Nineteenth Session in Windhoek, Namibia, from 30 September to 4 October 2013. The session was attended by 163 representatives from 23 Member countries, and 3 representatives of the United Nations system. Observers from 25 intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations also attended. The session was held in conjunction with the Third African Forestry and Wildlife Week.
2. The Commission elected Namibia (Chair), Cote d'Ivoire, United Republic of Tanzania, Algeria (Vice Chairs) and Gabon (Rapporteur) to its Bureau.
3. The Commission deliberated on many important issues on forest and wildlife in Africa and made several observations as depicted in the paragraphs that follow.
4. The Commission recognized the important contribution that the forestry sector is making to food security in Africa and appreciated FAO's efforts in enhancing this contribution. It particularly expressed the need to build on the sub-regional programme on forests for food security being developed through the auspices of the Forestry Commission of Central Africa (COMIFAC) as well as the recently adopted Forest Convergence Plan for West Africa which is an initiative of the Economic Community of West African States' (ECOWAS) ministerial committee in charge of forestry and wildlife.
5. The issues of poaching and bushmeat trade in Africa, their ecological, economic and social impacts, key drivers and possible solutions were raised and discussed. The Commission acknowledged the importance of the issues, especially their link to human-wildlife conflict. It stressed the need to find solutions for the challenges posed.
6. On the challenges to appropriately value the contribution of forests and wildlife sectors to economic development, and the implications for the mobilization of adequate finances for sustainable management of the two sectors, the Commission expressed the need for capacity development of Member countries on the evaluation of ecosystem services and its systematic application in national planning and financial decision making.
7. The Commission recognized that the FAO "Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security" are a valuable tool in improving governance of tenure and strengthening land-use planning in African countries.
8. FAO's strategic framework, which guided the formulation of its Medium Term Plan 2014-17 and Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15, was discussed. Taking note of the five new Strategic Objectives, the Commission proposed that the development of action plans at all levels include all critical forestry and wildlife issues.
9. On the issue of the member countries reporting on the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission (only 13 out of the 47 Members provided reports on the

measures taken to implement the recommendations of the 18th Session, and of the 13, only 3 implemented all the recommendations), the Commission requested Members to continue to submit their country reports for a more comprehensive regional report to be prepared.

10. For increasing the visibility of the forest and wildlife sectors' contribution to food security and economic development in Africa, the Commission expressed the need to sensitize communities on the potential for value adding of forest products and their contribution to GDP; focus on community-based forest management and building partnerships to ensure food security; make the ecological services provided by forests more visible; and pursue political commitment to reinvest revenues from the sector into sustainable management.

11. The Commission expressed its concern about the decline of support to forestry and wildlife education in Africa. It called for measures to strengthen it in order to build necessary capacities to manage the sector.

12. In consideration of the on-going discussion on the post 2015 development goals, the Commission made a recommendation to the UN process for a specific sustainable development goal (SDG) on forests, which would include forest related issues like wildlife, other forest land, trees outside forests and mountains; and invited other forestry and related bodies on the African continent and other regions of the world to support the implementation of the recommendation.

13. The World Forestry Congress will be held for the first time in Africa, in Durban, South Africa, from 7 to 11 September, 2015. The Commission requested all member states to support South Africa to successfully implement this commitment.

14. Finally, the Commission directed specific recommendations to the Africa Regional Conference as given below.

15. The Commission:

- i. Requested the Regional Conference for Africa to work closely with FAO to strengthen partnerships with sub-regional economic integration organizations in Africa and Member Countries, to promote an appropriate balance between forest conservation and expansion of agricultural lands, taking into consideration the vital contribution that forests and wildlife make to food security in the region.
- ii. Requested the Regional Conference for Africa to support FAO to share more knowledge on the role of forestry in rural development, food security and poverty reduction through the promotion of sustainable forest and wildlife management at national levels, control of illegal logging and other illegal practices including cross border trafficking, as well as public-private collaboration that would not allow for any land-grabbing activities.
- iii. Requested the Regional Conference for Africa to support FAO's effort to secure a forest-related Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) to ensure continued and strengthened presence of forests in broader development goals.
- iv. Urged regional organizations, initiatives and programmes to provide assistance to the region to allow for wide participation in the XIV World Forestry Congress.
- v. Recommended that forestry and wildlife issues should be part of the substantive discussion items at the Africa Regional conferences.

16. Tanzania offered to host the 20th Session of the commission in 2015.

17. Member Countries

Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

18. The documents of the 19th Session of AFWC are available at the Commission's webpage at : www.fao.org/forestry/afwc

II. THE 6th SESSION OF THE SOUTH WEST INDIAN OCEAN FISHERIES COMMISSION AND A SPECIAL AD HOC MEETING HELD TO CONSIDER THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE BODY

19. The Sixth Session of the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC) was held in Flic-en-Flac, Mauritius from 8 to 11 October 2012. It was attended by representatives from nine member countries and observers from seven intergovernmental, international non-governmental organizations and projects.

20. The Commission noted with satisfaction the work that had been undertaken since the Fifth Session. It noted the Scientific Committee's report of fully-exploited and overexploited stocks that needed to be better managed as well as stocks that could be better utilized and requested delegates to inform their authorities of the trends. The Commission examined proposals from a performance review and requested further information to be presented at a subsequent special ad hoc meeting to decide whether SWIOFC should be transformed into an Article XIV body, and review the rules of procedure of the existing Article VI body.

21. The Commission noted the extent of implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) and committed to EAF as the overarching framework for fisheries management in the SWIOFC region. It approved the establishment of a working party on cooperation in tuna fisheries endorsed projects to strengthen governance, share growth and support rights-based fisheries management, and approved a programme of work until its next session. Finally Tanzania (Chair), Madagascar and Mauritius (Vice-Chairs) were elected to steer the Commission between sessions and at the seventh session in Tanzania, in 2014.

22. A Special ad hoc Meeting of the SWIOFC was held in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania 27-28 February 2013. It was attended by representatives from 11 member countries and observers from 12 intergovernmental, international non-governmental organizations and projects.

23. The Commission, unanimously approved an offer of the Republic of Mozambique to host the existing SWIOFC Secretariat and expressed general agreement for a process of negotiation to start towards the establishment of an FAO Article XIV body to replace the current Commission. Furthermore, the Commission emphasised the need to have a management mandate, taking into account, *inter alia*, biodiversity, an ecosystem approach

and climate change. It postponed some proposed changes to the existing rules of procedure for a subsequent review.

24. Finally, the Commission agreed that the Kenya Marine Fisheries Research Institute be entrusted with the stewardship of the data and information produced by the SWIOFP project and agreed on the establishment of a steering committee for a World Bank grant in support of rights-based fisheries management.

25. Member Countries

Comoros, France, Kenya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Tanzania, Yemen

26. Documents on the various fisheries Commissions can be accessed at:

www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/swiofc/en ; and www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/cifaa

III. THE MEETING OF PERMANENT SECRETARIES, SECRETARIES GENERAL AND DIRECTORS OF CABINET OF MINISTERS IN-CHARGE OF FISHERIES IN AFRICA ON “CONSIDERATIONS TO IMPROVE THE RELEVANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COMMITTEE FOR INLAND FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE OF AFRICA (CIFAA)”

27. The meeting was held in Cape Town, South Africa from 26 to 27 of March 2012, in the margins of the Sixth session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries’ (COFI) Sub-Committee on Aquaculture. Thirty participants including Permanent Secretaries, Secretary Generals, or Directors of Cabinet or their representatives, of Ministries in-charge of Fisheries from sixteen Member Countries of CIFAA and observers from two FAO Member countries and five Intergovernmental Organizations participated in this meeting.

28. The achievements of CIFAA during the past forty years have been important, but attendances at recent sessions have been disappointing and sporadic in nature; representation low and inconsistent. In an effort to address these issues, the Sixteenth Session of CIFAA suggested that its role and performance as a Regional Fishery Body be re-examined. FAO conducted a review for this purpose which examined background information on CIFAA and describes the changing role of RFBs and arrangements both in the international context and within FAO, particularly over the past two decades.

29. The purpose of the meeting was to examine the above review with a view to solicit further proposals, suggestions and recommendations that would contribute to an optimum decision on the future role and improved performance of CIFAA as well as any other necessary guidance from the participants.

30. The meeting noted again that attendance at CIFAA sessions, particularly at recent meetings, had been decreasing and sporadic in nature, with low-level representations; thus quorum for taking decisions has not been obtained in recent sessions. In addition, CIFAA faced financial resources constraints to operate effectively.

31. The meeting made the following recommendations relevant to Africa Regional Conference (ARC):

- i. CIFAA had been useful in the development of inland fisheries and aquaculture in its Member Countries; it should not be abolished;

- ii. The body should be reformed to address its institutional deficiencies and weakness, increase its visibility and make it more relevant to the new and evolving needs and conditions of Africa;
- iii. Requested that the present on-going efforts of reforming CIFAA be raised during the ARC by the Chairperson of CIFAA and at the next meeting of the Conference of African Ministers of Fisheries & Aquaculture (CAMFA), to obtain further guidance from the Ministers in-charge of fisheries and aquaculture.
- iv. Members of CIFAA should strengthen political commitment to ensure the viability of the Committee.

IV. ACTIVITIES OF THE FISHERY COMMITTEE FOR THE EASTERN CENTRAL ATLANTIC (CECAF) FOR THE PERIOD 2012-2013

32. The twentieth session of the Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF) was held in Rabat, Morocco 14-16 March 2012 whereas the last session of its Scientific Sub-committee (SSC) met in Accra, Ghana 7-9 September 2011 (6th session).

33. The session was attended by representatives of 9 members of the Committee and observers from various intergovernmental organizations and regional projects.

34. The Commission reviewed and endorsed the report of the Scientific Committee and provided recommendations on how to strengthen its work including on strengthening uptake of the recommendations by decision makers. The Committee also recognized the importance of ensuring participation of all countries in the SSC and its associated Working Groups.

35. The Committee also examined the outcomes of the CECAF technical performance review which provided several recommendations with regards to how CECAF's work could be strengthened and become more efficient, many of which were endorsed by the committee. Recommendations addressed a wide range of issues, including amongst others: convention area, low participation of members in some CECAF meetings and possible review of membership- many members being distant water states who were probably only members for historical reasons, the need for continued technical and financial support from FAO as well from countries including collective efforts for ensuring extra budgetary funding should also be actively pursued, improved coordination with the different regional and sub-regional fisheries bodies, and projects active in the area, including Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the need to update the CECAF statutes in order to incorporate modern concepts of fisheries management, the need to improve the provision of data including biological information on the species caught.

36. The Committee noted that the report should be considered as the beginning and not the end of the process, since it was meant to initiate a debate that should be followed by concrete actions from the Committee, aiming at improving its performance. In this context, it was agreed that an action plan to address the different recommendations should be prepared by the Secretariat for further review by CECAF members.

37. From 2012-2014, several of CECAF's technical working groups have met, as per the recommendations of the 20th session, providing information on the status of stocks and fisheries on the CECAF area. Advances in reporting have also been made through making available FIRMS fisheries fact sheets for countries in the CECAF region. The CECAF catch

statistics database continues to be updated on an annual basis and advances have been made on the FIRMS fisheries fact sheets for countries in the CECAF region. However no scientific sub-committee has met since 2011, and thus the technical results achieved has not been discussed and agreed to through the formal mechanism. This situation is due among others to the absence of an acting Secretary of the Committee since October 2012, resulting in slow progress in implementing the work of CECAF including the recommendations of CECAF's twentieth session in general as well as the recommendation of the performance review.

38. Member Countries: *Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Dem. Rep. of the Congo, Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Equatorial Guinea, European Union, France, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Liberia, Mauritania, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Poland, Romania, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Spain, Togo, United States of America.*

39. Documents on CECAF can be accessed at: www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/cecaf/en

V. THE 23rd SESSION OF THE AFRICAN COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS (AFCAS)

40. The 23rd Session of the African Commission on Agricultural Statistics (AFCAS) took place in Rabat, Morocco, from 4th to 7rd December 2013. Thirty-One (31) Delegates from AFCAS member countries as well as Ten (10) national, regional and international institutions participated as observers. 91 participants have been registered and participated to the session. The Session elected a bureau composed by Morocco (Chair), Rwanda (Vice-Chair), Cameroon and Uganda (Rapporteurs).

41. The Commission discussed many important issues related to agricultural statistics in Africa and FAO's work in the area and made some observations as indicated below.

42. The Commission has been informed about the recent decision to strengthen the FAO's statistical governance, notably the creation of the post of Chief Statistician and the Inter-Departmental Working Group (IDWG) for the coordination of Statistical activities within the FAO and the International Advisory Group on FAO Statistics (IAGFS) to act as a forum to provide guidance, peer review and recommendations on statistical priorities, best practices in data compilation, analysis and dissemination, and on the design and implementation of major FAO statistical projects and capacity development programmes. In considering the new strategic and result based planning and management frameworks of FAO, the Commission noted the important role of statistic for evidence-based priority setting and in providing objective indicators to measure progress towards achieving objectives and highly appreciate the role of the new statistical governance bodies in supporting the achievement of this mission.

43. Based on the report of FAO regarding its work in the area of statistics since the 22nd session, including its field programme in statistics, capacity building, publications, data collection from countries, the Commission adopted recommendations to improve agricultural and food security data collection and dissemination in FAO.

44. After considering the conclusions and recommendations of the pre-session CountrySTAT Consultative meeting held 1st to 3rd December 2013 in Casablanca, which discussed the main achievements, innovations adopted, best practices and the vision for the future of

CountrySTAT, many Members expressed interest in establishing a CountrySTAT platform. The Commission adopted many of the meeting's recommendations to be implemented during the next two years.

45. The conclusions and recommendations of a pre-session workshop on greenhouse gas emissions and mitigation (1st to 3rd December 2013) were also considered. The workshop focused on ways to help member countries in Africa to address data gaps and institutional barriers to improve the collection of agricultural statistics related to National Greenhouse Gas Inventories and Climate Change planning. The Commission adopted many recommendations relevant to strengthening work in the area.

46. The Session agreed that agricultural censuses must continue to be placed in the context of an integrated census and survey program, using the modular approach and theme-based surveys between censuses. It recommended the increased use of new IT tools like Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI), Global Positioning System (GPS) and remote sensing.

47. Based on FAO's update on trends in undernourishment around the world and the results of global monitoring of food insecurity and the remaining challenge for reaching the Millennium Development Goal 1c and the World Food Summit goal, the Commission, after deliberating on the issues, made many relevant recommendations for Members and FAO to implement.

48. While many recommendations were made, the following are deemed as warranting the attention of the Conference:

49. The 23rd session:

- i. Recommends that FAO establish a Global Commission on Agricultural Statistics in order to: (a) ensure better coordination and standardization of the activities and recommendations emanating from Regional Commissions and bodies; (b) provide a global forum for Country Representatives to review and endorse methodological and other normative work; *and* (c) create a peer-review process for data published and methodologies used by FAO.
- ii. Recognizes that low response rates by countries to FAO questionnaires could be improved through the following measures: (i) identifying and designating focal points at national level; (ii) improving coordination mechanisms with the National Statistical Strategy; (iii) organizing specific training and workshops addressing data related issues; *and* (iv) developing and using new data sharing technologies, such as web based questionnaires, Application Programming Interfaces (APIs), and Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange formats (SDMX).
- iii. Suggests countries to consider CountrySTAT as the recommended platform for the integration, management and dissemination of official statistics for food and agriculture. Encourages countries, where CountrySTAT is not yet available, to establish it as a standard platform.
- iv. Appreciates the efforts made to mobilize funds and to implement the three components of the Global strategy action plan for Africa. Recommends to accelerate its implementation and encourages making greater use of relevant sub-regional institutions in the implementation of the Global Strategy regional action plan for Africa, in accordance with respective capacities and availability of funding.

50. Member Countries

Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

51. The documents of the 23rd AFCAS Session are available at: <http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-events/afcas/afcas23/en/>; <http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-events/afcas/afcas23/fr/>