

**Report of the**

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**NINETEENTH SESSION OF THE COORDINATING  
WORKING PARTY ON FISHERY STATISTICS**

**Nouméa, New Caledonia, 10-13 July 2001**



Report of the  
Nineteenth Session  
of the  
Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics  
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## PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document is the report of the Nineteenth Session of the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP), held in Nouméa, New Caledonia, from 10 to 13 July 2001.

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### ABSTRACT

The report of the nineteenth session of the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP), Nouméa, New Caledonia, 10-13 July 2001, is presented. Topics discussed were: changes in membership of CWP; review of recommendations from CWP-18; reports of intersessional meetings; Meeting of Agencies Participating in FIGIS/FIRMS (9 July 2001); reports on intersessional developments in Agency programmes in fishery statistics; STATLANT issues; elasmobranch statistics; data implications of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and Agency catch certification schemes; discard data availability and dissemination; integration of fishery statistics and joint dissemination; charging and dissemination policies for supply of data; record of vessels fishing on the high sea (Compliance Agreement); statistical classifications, i.e. fishing-related activities (e.g. ISIC), vessels (e.g. ISSCFV), species (e.g. ISSCAAP and ASFIS); coordination of descriptions of national statistical methodologies; role of the CWP in relation to statistical development; and Handbook of Fishery Statistics – completion and revisions.

### Distribution:

FAO Fisheries Department  
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Participants

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## **OPENING OF THE SESSION AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

(Agenda item 1)

1. The Nineteenth Session of the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP) was held at the office of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Nouméa, New Caledonia from 10 to 13 July 2001. Nineteen experts representing the following member organizations participated in CWP-19:

- Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT);
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO);
- Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC);
- Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC);
- International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT);
- International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES);
- Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO);
- Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC); and
- Statistical Office of the European Communities (EU/Eurostat).

An expert from the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) and a national expert from New Caledonia participated at the invitation of SPC. National experts from Indonesia and the Philippines participated as nominees of FAO. The list of Participants is given in Appendix 1.

2. The Chairperson of the Eighteenth Session, Mr David Cross of Eurostat, opened the Nineteenth Session and invited Mr Yves Corbel, Deputy Director of SPC, to address the meeting. Mr Corbel welcomed participants to Nouméa and SPC. He noted the long history of the CWP with its origin in the Atlantic and its recent extension to other oceans. He pointed out that SPC was the first non-Atlantic agency to join the CWP and the first to host a CWP session. Mr Corbel outlined the current role of the Oceanic Fisheries Programme of SPC and how this was likely to remain important under the new Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) when the Commission becomes operational in the next few years. He said that there are major issues facing the new Commission including by-catches, IUU fishing, flag-of-convenience vessels and VMS and noted that these had also become issues for CWP. He said that with its geographic and subject areas expanding, CWP had a challenging future. He wished the meeting well and declared the Nineteenth Session of CWP open. Mr Corbel's Opening Statement is given Appendix 2.

3. Following some modifications, the Agenda was adopted and the revised agenda is shown in Appendix 3. The documents provided to the Session are listed in Appendix 4 and the acronyms used in the Report are listed in Appendix 5.

## **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON**

(Agenda item 2)

4. Mr Tim Lawson (SPC) was unanimously elected Chairperson and Mr David Cross (Eurostat) was unanimously elected Vice-Chairperson for the Nineteenth Session of CWP and the following intersessional period. NAFO expressed appreciation to Mr Cross's active role since the Eighteenth Session and this was endorsed by the participants.

5. Various participants were appointed rapporteurs for different agenda items.

## **CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP OF THE CWP**

(Agenda item 3; Document CWP/18/3)

6. The Secretary reported that IATTC had been admitted to CWP in 2000, bringing the number of participating organizations to twelve, or an increase of four since the CWP was reconstituted in 1995. He also noted that the South-East Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) had expressed interest in becoming a participating organization of CWP. The Chairperson expressed the view that SEAFDEC participation in CWP would be very welcome.

## **REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CWP-18**

(Agenda item 4; Document CWP/18/4)

7. Follow-up to recommendations and other items requiring action from CWP-18 was reviewed, and the main actions are described in Appendix 6. Progress had been made in following up on most CWP-18 recommendations. However, no progress had been made on recommendations in paragraphs 162 and 163 of the CWP-18 Report and it was agreed by CWP-19 to reiterate these, as follows:

8. Despite trends in the opposite direction, CWP recommended that efforts should be pursued with classification maintenance agencies to make trade classifications for fishery commodities more detailed, especially for species of little volume of trade, but for which there are conservation concerns.

9. Although some of the possible reasons for discrepancies among fishery trade data of CWP agencies were identified, CWP recommended that Eurostat, FAO and OECD should investigate the causes of discrepancies in published data and should attempt to eliminate these discrepancies or, where the differences were due to the use of differing concepts in the compilation of the data, provide adequate documentation in the publications explaining the concepts used.

## **REPORTS OF INTERSESSIONAL MEETINGS**

(Agenda item 5; Documents CWP/19/2(A-D))

### CWP WG on Publication of Integrated Catch Statistics for the Atlantic

10. As recommended at CWP-18 an intersessional meeting of the Working Group on Publication of Integrated Catch Statistics for the Atlantic was held at ICES Headquarters in February 2000 and the report was published (see CWP-19/2(A)). That meeting endorsed the proposal for the compilation and publication of an integrated data-file for the Atlantic using FISHSTAT Plus software and established the principles to be used in the production of the file (see paragraphs 140 to 144).

### CWP WG on Precautionary Approach Terminology

11. The Atlantic RFBs (ICCAT, ICES, NAFO) and FAO met at ICES Headquarters in Copenhagen, Denmark, in February 2000 to explore possibilities for agreement on the concepts and terminology to be used in application of the Precautionary Approach. The report of the Working Group on Precautionary Approach Terminology was published (see CWP-19/2(B)). The WG identified and reviewed differences in the approaches anticipated by the participants, particularly ICES, NAFO and ICCAT.

12. ICES, as documented at the Copenhagen meeting, has adopted a process to apply the Precautionary Approach in the advice given to its clients. In addition, significant work on reliability analysis and on the development of reference points was undertaken with funding support supplied by the European Union. Discussions on how the Precautionary Approach could be applied at the management level is ongoing.

13. The NAFO Scientific Council, in response to the report, has reviewed the Precautionary Approach framework developed in 1997. The NAFO Scientific Council and ICES frameworks are similar in concept but differ primarily with respect to the  $B_{lim}$  reference point and the associated course of action. The NAFO Fisheries Commission and Scientific Council are continuing discussions on the final formulation of the Precautionary Approach framework. The Scientific Council has applied the existing framework to three candidate stocks in 2000 and 2001.

14. It may be anticipated that at some point it will be of use to reconvene a meeting between the RFBs in the area for continued discussions on concepts and terminology.

#### Meetings of Tuna Agencies

15. An intersessional meeting of tuna agencies took place in Nouméa, New Caledonia, on 11 July 2000 in conjunction with the thirteenth session of the Standing Committee on Tuna and Billfish (SCTB13). The meeting was informal as ICCAT was not able to attend. Substantive discussions dealt with the exchange of vessel records as a means of combating IUU fishing. SPC undertook to circulate to the other tuna agencies a copy of the vessel listing compiled from a variety of sources, including the FFA Regional Register of Foreign Fishing Vessels, the FFA Violations and Prosecutions database, and logsheet, landings and observer data held by SPC. ICCAT has already circulated a list, but this only covers identified IUU vessels. IATTC publishes its fleet list.

16. The Second Meeting of Secretariats of Tuna Agencies and Programmes was held at FAO, Rome on 23 February 2001. Representatives from CCSBT, IATTC, ICCAT, IOTC and SPC attended the meeting. The meeting noted that it had been agreed that each agency would circulate a list of vessels operating within their area of competence to other tuna agencies and programs, and that SPC had circulated a list in response to that agreement. The representative from IOTC distributed a diskette containing data on vessels operating in its area of competence. The list was basic data and did not include restricted information such as vessel owner names. IATTC continues to publish its fleet list (see paragraphs 17 and 43 below).

17. The IATTC representative advised that a list of known purse seine vessels licensed by members and those not licensed but known to be operating in the area of competence had been compiled. The full list would be circulated to other agencies when arrangements within IATTC permitted. A list of longline vessels would be compiled next. The ICCAT representative advised that lists had been prepared for IUU, northern albacore and bigeye fishing vessels, and vessels which had been identified for scrapping by some countries. Mr Richard Grainger, FAO, attended the meeting briefly and advised that the development of a record of fishing vessels authorized to fish on the high seas by FAO was progressing slowly and so far only four countries have provided data. Only basic data, as set out in the Compliance Agreement, would be collected initially, but additional fields can be added if countries agree so as to make the data more useful.

18. According to the Compliance Agreement, data diffusion would be restricted to Governments of Parties to the Agreements and Regional Fishery Bodies. FAO would, however, be interested

in receiving listings of vessels from regional fishery bodies which could be included in a parallel database (accessible to whoever the data providers decide), both to verify the Record data, and to attempt to estimate global fishing capacity. CWP recommended that Vessel Name, National registration number, Flag, Fishing gear, Size, including LOA and capacity of hold, Party providing authorization to fish and Provider organization, where available, be exchanged among tuna agencies and programs.

19. The meeting considered that current practices for the release in the public domain of catch and effort data should continue, noting that there would be merit in data being published on the basis of aggregation to monthly levels rather than, say, quarterly, as is the current situation in some cases.

#### Meeting of Agencies Participating in FIGIS/FIRMS

20. CWP reviewed the Report of the Meeting of Agencies Participating in FIGIS/FIRMS which was held on 9 July 2001 in Nouméa (Appendix 7) and agreed that FIGIS/FIRMS offers a good opportunity to facilitate improved reporting on fishery status and trends through cooperation amongst CWP agencies. It was agreed that progress on the development of FIGIS/FIRMS should be reviewed at CWP-20.

#### **INTERSESSIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN AGENCY PROGRAMMES IN FISHERY STATISTICS (includes observer and national reports)**

(Agenda item 6; Documents CWP/19 Agency Reports)

#### CCAMLR

21. The main development since CWP-18 has been the implementation of a catch documentation scheme for toothfish (*Dissostichus* spp.) in 2000 as part of a set of Conservation Measures introduced to combat the problem of IUU fishing on toothfish stocks. This scheme monitors the international trade in toothfish; identifies the origins of toothfish imported into or exported from the territories of Contracting Parties; determines whether toothfish imported into or exported from the territories of Contracting Parties, if caught in the Convention Area, was caught in a manner consistent with CCAMLR conservation measures; and gathers catch data for the scientific evaluation of stocks.

#### CCSBT

22. A Trade Information Scheme (TIS) was implemented for southern bluefin tuna in June 2000. The TIS provides export information on the nation undertaking fishing together with the quantity, location, time and method of capture of southern bluefin tuna. The scheme operates by requiring all exports of southern bluefin tuna to a CCSBT member to be accompanied by TIS documentation. The dominance of Japan in the southern bluefin tuna market ensures good compliance with the TIS.

23. A database manager was appointed and will commence work during September 2001. At this time, it is intended that an interim database be developed as soon as possible to hold aggregated data (including catch and effort, annual adjusted catch by fleet and size structured data) provided by members and relevant non-members.

24. During June 2001, the CCSBT Secretariat circulated a questionnaire in order to document the existing catch (and effort) data collection systems of members and non-members. The results

of the questionnaire will be compared with requirements proposed in the CCSBT Scientific Research Program and recommendations will be made for any necessary implementation or improvement of data collection systems.

### Eurostat

25. Since CWP-18 Eurostat has increased the coverage in the NewCronos domain FISH database, largely by reformatting the data available from other CWP agencies.

26. The routine collection of catch landings and aquaculture production statistics under the terms of European Economic Area (EEA) legislation has continued. Modifications to the legislation on catch statistics have been proposed in order to meet the requirement for the improved availability of catch statistics for Elasmobranch species.

27. Development of socio-economic data for fisheries has been restricted by lack of staff resources.

28. The publication programme of a Yearbook of Fishery Statistics, an annual CD-ROM on the contents of the NewCronos database and short reports in the Eurostat series "Statistics in Focus" has been maintained.

29. Eurostat made a major contribution to the compilation of an integrated data-file for Atlantic catch statistics and has aided the ICES and NAFO secretariats in installing FISHSTAT Plus software on their computer systems.

30. Close contact with EEA national authorities is maintained through the annual meetings of the Working Group "Fishery Statistics", through bilateral contacts and by means of a twice-yearly Newsletter. The development of contacts with the EU Candidate Countries is proceeding well and the NewCronos database includes much data for these countries.

31. Reviews of data quality are playing an important role in the development and implementation of the programme of fishery statistics.

32. The developments and implementation of the statistical programme depends heavily of the good relationship and collaboration developed with the Commission's Directorate-General for Fisheries (DG FISH), the main customer for Eurostat's data. At the same time a central point in the programme is the collaboration with the CWP and its member agencies.

### FAO

33. FAO continued its annual global statistical programme (catch, aquaculture, fleet, fishers, production and trade of fishery commodities) and the regional catch data for the statistical areas 34 and 37 without any significant change. CWP was informed that work was again in progress to update the calculation of Supply/Utilization Accounts.

34. FAO fishery data are used internally in policy and trend studies, and are also widely used for global analyses. The array of data collected by FAO on a geographical basis responds to the needs of describing essentially an economic activity contributing to the achievements of national social, economic and nutritional goals. Renewed impact to the FAO programme came from the work of the Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research (ACFR) Working Party on Status and Trend Reporting in Fisheries and by the increasing interest of users in Internet disseminated

fishery data, where most of the fishery statistics held by FAO are accessible without restrictions as downloadable databases.

35. Major projects completed in the intersessional period included:

- rationalization and expansion of the ASFIS species list;
- the extension back to 1970 of the separation between aquaculture and capture production, including the regional datasets of the Mediterranean and Black Sea and the Eastern Central Atlantic and data allocation to sub-areas or division;
- the systematization of STATLANT A data in preparation for electronic dissemination of catches from the Red Sea and Gulf, for 1986-1999 and the Southeast Atlantic (former ICSEAF area), for 1975-1999;
- preparatory work for the re-organization of catch statistics on a large ecosystems approach;
- the inclusion of the Las Palmas Survey in the FISHSTAT PLUS dissemination package;
- the publication of the revised Conversion Factors from landed to nominal catch weight; and
- the finalization of the draft of a revised CWP Handbook of Fishery Statistics.

36. Collaboration with CWP agencies resulted in intensified data exchange with tuna agencies and CCAMLR, and in a revised publication of conversion factors with Eurostat.

37. Improvements on aspects of data processing concentrated on the development of the fishing fleet system as an Oracle database, and on the migration of capture fisheries and aquaculture databases to the same environment. Two issues of the FAO Yearbook of Fishery Statistics - Aquaculture Production (formerly published as a Fishery Circular) were produced, from the Oracle platform database. Work was in progress for achieving the same output for the Capture Production Yearbook. Collaboration with the FIGIS project in this respect had required shifting some resources and redefining internal priorities.

38. The delivery system to accompany forms despatch and the design of electronic forms to report the STATLANT inquiry had been further developed. Priority was given to the development of electronic forms to report aquaculture production by species and some structural characteristics, and fishery commodity production and trade.

39. Despite continued efforts to facilitate data submission, no significant progress could be reported in improvements to the timeliness of the dissemination of world data sets, largely due to the poor respect of deadlines by national reporters in returning data to FAO. Further efforts had been made recently to facilitate reporting by countries such as posting in FTP the FISHSTAT NS-1 questionnaires and intensifying e-mail communication with national reporting offices, but it is too early to conclude whether any positive result is likely to occur in disseminating the 2000 data set.

40. Methodological work on concepts and data collection was achieved through regional workshops and seminars (e.g. on structural aquaculture statistics at a Workshop on World Census of Agriculture 2000 for selected Asian countries, on inland fisheries at the Eighteenth Session Asia-Pacific Commission on Agriculture Statistics, on the development of a Glossary of aquaculture terms) and on sample survey data collection (ARTFISH and associated packages). At national level the field programme of fishery statistical development concentrated on Africa (e.g. Angola, Burundi, Mozambique, Congo PDR, Madagascar); two seminars were held in China to identify methodological shortcomings and possibly rectify the likely overestimation of fishery production. There is increasing concern for the loss of reliability of statistics of some

major Asian fish producers, which requires shifting attention to statistical development work in that region.

### IATTC

41. The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), with headquarters in La Jolla, California, USA, was established in 1950. It has obtained and compiled statistics on fisheries in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) that can harvest tunas and tuna-like species, and the various species taken by these fisheries, as required to meet mandates for monitoring and management of fisheries. These statistics include data on vessels and gear configuration, skipper and navigator identification and performance, catches, landings, imports/exports, biological data, and various other statistics for ad hoc studies as required. Sources of information include fishing vessels, canners and fish processors, transshipping agencies, import/export companies, customs agencies, and various other government and fisheries agencies. The IATTC obtains data from its scientific observer program, and it has assisted in the design and implementation of national logbook and observer programs of various countries participating in fisheries under the purview of the IATTC, from which it also obtains data.

42. Since CWP-18 the IATTC has undertaken a complete restructuring of its major database and information systems. This has involved moving from a mainframe data processing system to a PC-based system using Microsoft SQL as the principal database engine. The principal intent of this major undertaking was to integrate the information from the various scientific and information systems used to monitor and develop recommendations for management action into a single system in such a way as to simplify identification and use of the best available data and analysis techniques. Data are maintained in original resolution detail (e.g. individual set data), but information is published only in summary form that prevents identification of individual company or vessel operations.

43. The IATTC has established a vessel registry that includes, for each vessel authorized to fish in the Convention Area, vessel name (previous name if known), registration number, port of registry, photograph showing registration number, flag (previous if any), international radio call sign, name and address of registered owner(s), when and where built, overall length, depth, beam, fish hold capacity in cubic metres, and carrying capacity in metric tons, name and address of operator(s)/manager(s), type of fishing method or methods, gross tonnage, and power of main engines. In addition to the registry, the IATTC maintains a list of vessels found to be operating in the Convention Area but which are not authorized to fish therein (i.e. are not on the registry). Flag nations for vessels not authorized to fish will be contacted by the IATTC for further information and action.

44. The IATTC promulgates management actions restricting fishing activities in the EPO for conservation of fisheries resources. Real-time statistics are used to monitor the fishery, initiate restrictions and monitor compliance.

45. The IATTC recognizes the need for reliable market and trade data to track catches from origin (convention areas of the regional bodies, and ocean) to location of final processing (e.g. canning, or gilled and gutted for fresh fish market) for entry into the retail market. Developments in transportation and market systems have provided increased access to catches of artisanal fisheries, which may make significant catches of some species, to the global fresh fish market. This has led to an increased need for detailed trade statistics for use in estimation of total catch by species. This is particularly true for billfishes and other species which are generally marketed through these fresh-frozen fish markets.

46. The IATTC has established a Tuna Tracking System, the sole purpose of which is to enable “dolphin safe” tuna to be distinguished from non-dolphin safe tuna from the time it is caught to the time it is ready for retail sale. This system is based on the premise that dolphin safe tuna shall, from the time of capture, during unloading, storage, transfer, and processing, be kept separate from non-dolphin safe tuna. Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP) Dolphin Safe Certificates may be issued in accordance with the guidelines in the Resolution to Establish Procedures for AIDCP Dolphin Safe Tuna Certification.

47. The IATTC has made major modifications to its biological data collections systems in response to changes in the nature of fisheries operating in the EPO. This has required significant increases in the monitoring of vessel activities and unloadings.

48. The IATTC has taken steps to increase monitoring and to reduce the catch and mortality of non-target and protected species, including a requirement to retain all catches on board and to monitor their disposition on return to port and to take steps to release non-target species. Data on discards are regularly published in various reports and scientific publications.

49. The IATTC Permanent Working Group on Compliance has proposed consideration of a requirement for vessels fishing in the Convention Area for species under the purview of the IATTC to operate under a VMS system. A plan for evaluation of various types of available systems and an implementation plan have been developed.

50. The IATTC considers public domain data to be that data from which the operations of individual companies and/or vessels may not be identified. Catch and effort data considered in the public domain is at the resolution of 5° latitude by 5° longitude by quarter. Access to confidential data for scientific purposes may be considered on application to the Director.

51. The IATTC has established a website (<http://www.iattc.org>) with English and Spanish versions. The site provides direct access to such as the annual background reports for Commission meetings, reports on the fishery and statistics, stock assessments, and the resolutions of the IATTC and the AIDCP.

## ICCAT

52. Since the last CWP meeting in 1999, ICCAT has been working to improve both the databases and the quality of the data which they contain. A biostatistician has been hired, and work is now well advanced on the new relational database (MS-SQL). When this is operational, the methods of submission of data will be streamlined to include an automatic verification process. Submission of data will be requested, where possible, in electronic format, which will reduce possible errors in data entry. The new database will greatly facilitate the extraction of data at any level of aggregation requested by ICCAT scientists and Working Groups. Separate bases will also be designed for shark data and tuna trade statistics. In order to ensure that data are not lost in case of system failure, backup of the current flat file data bases have been made and deposited in a bank strong box, rented for this purpose.

53. Studies are currently being carried out by the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics to assess the effects of bluefin tuna farming on the collection of catch statistics.

54. In 2000, a questionnaire was sent to all parties, entities and fishing entities believed to be fishing for Atlantic tuna and tuna like species, in order to obtain more complete information on observer programmes in operation.

55. ICCAT has adopted a recommendation to establish statistical document programs for bigeye tuna and swordfish. It is expected that this will become operational in 2002, and will greatly improve the reliability of statistics for these species.

56. Statistics from both targeted and by-catch fisheries of blue shark, mako shark and porbeagle shark in the Atlantic have been requested. A data preparatory meeting will be held in September 2001 to assess the level of data available and study the possibility of carrying out future stock assessments of these species.

### ICES

57. ICES fisheries statistics programme has continued without major changes compared to the report delivered at CWP-18. ICES has implemented the relevant recommendations from CWP-18, notably on the collection of elasmobranch catch statistics. ICES previously used an internal 4-digit species code and translated this code to the 3-alpha species for communication of catch statistics. Use of the 4-digit code has now been abandoned and the 3-alpha species code is also used in the internal database.

58. ICES has published its statistics for the period 1973-1999 on a CD-ROM using the FISHSTAT Plus system for presenting these data. This CD will be updated and re-issued annually. The data are also available on the ICES website for free downloading. The CD also includes the integrated database on Atlantic catch statistics (see paragraphs 140 to 144).

### IOTC

59. The statistical data available to IOTC come mainly from flag State reporting. IOTC is mandated to use best scientific estimates and all data submissions are verified for consistency and compared with any reliable alternative data sources available.

60. Sampling schemes initiated by IOTC in Indian Ocean transshipment ports cover landings of some of the estimated 1 600 small fresh tuna longliners not covered by statistical reporting, providing data on catches, size-composition by species, retained bycatch and effort. Some location information is obtained from skipper interviews. Some 140 large freezer longliners that provide no statistical data have been identified in the Indian Ocean. Their catches are estimated, based on vessel and fleet statistics and some transshipment data. The proportion of tuna transhipped at sea is increasing rapidly and makes the estimation of non-reported catch difficult.

61. In purse seine fisheries, a substantial proportion of the European-owned vessels are flagged in countries that do not report their catch to IOTC. All the mandatory data reporting for these vessels is provided by authorities of the country of ownership. Data from some nationally operated observer programmes are supplied to the Commission.

62. Databases currently held include: Nominal Catch; Discards; Catch and effort; Length-frequency; Tuna transshipment; Fishing fleet; Fishing craft and Predation of longline-caught fish. IOTC is also the repository for all tagging data concerning tuna in the Indian Ocean.

63. Data are stored in an integrated MS-SQL Server database that permits the storage and retrieval of data having heterogeneous spatial and temporal stratification. This avoids having to "force" data into a pre-determined stratification, which involves a degree of analysis with a loss of information and is generally non-reversible.

64. IOTC does not currently have access to VMS data.

65. IOTC is involved in a major development of modular, multilingual software for recording logbook, observer and shore sampling data for tuna fisheries, providing facilities for data aggregation from multiple sites. The software will have routines for correcting logbook estimates from sample data.

#### NAFO

66. Timely submission of STATLANT data have improved, with the exception of individual instances (such as due to a major reorganization of the USA database) which have resulted in significant delays. The Secretariat continued to publish the Statistical Bulletin and to publish and maintain the updated STATLANT 21 data on the NAFO website (<http://www.nafo.ca>). Data for the years 1960 to 2000 are available on the web as text files, while the Secretariat also continues to attend to individual requests.

67. The NAFO Secretariat compiled a comparison of the STATLANT 21 reported catches against other sources catch statistics used for stock assessments. This comparison was found very useful, and it was noted that divergences were not too serious.

68. The NAFO Pilot Observer Programme introduced in 1994 has evolved to where Contracting Parties now provide 100 percent coverage of their fisheries. The data collection with respect to format and information, however, has been the responsibility of each Contracting Party. The information type and format were therefore developed by Contracting Parties, and these data were usually submitted to the Secretariat as hard copies and remain uncomputerized.

69. NAFO managers and scientists have recognized the importance of these data. Over the last two years the Fisheries Commission and the Scientific Council have worked closely to develop the NAFO Observer Protocol, and in September 2000 the Scientific Council Proposal specifying a harmonized data system was adopted. The Scientific Council is currently addressing the need to formally incorporate the protocols (as specified in the NAFO SCS Doc. 00/23) in the Conservation and Enforcement Measures for the NAFO management guidelines, and to be able to access the extensive trawl-by-trawl database. An observer manual for standardized data is also being considered.

70. Regarding other NAFO documents relevant to statistics, CWP was informed NAFO scientific publications are now published electronically on the NAFO website.

71. Regarding interagency data harmonization and dissemination, CWP was informed that although in the last two years there had been no formal exercise to detect discrepancies between NAFO and FAO databases, the close collaboration between the Secretariats of the two organizations and the exchange of data between them has contributed significantly to the harmonisation of the data.

72. Regarding VMS, CWP was informed that the NAFO programme is fast evolving with the latest computer designs to capture valuable fisheries data on a real time basis and it was targeted to be operational by July 2001. This system is intended to provide uninterrupted reports 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from vessels themselves or from Contracting Parties conducting fishing activities in the NAFO area. Types of reports on this system include, entry reports, departure reports, movement reports, zonal reports, transshipment reports and position reports. This

information will be relayed to Contracting Parties with an inspection presence in the Regulatory Area on a real time basis.

73. The NAFO Scientific Council recognized the problem with respect to the change in the method of measuring tonnage of vessels from GRT to GT. This has brought into doubt the comparability of catch and effort data for individual vessel tonnage classes over time. The Scientific Council proposed that other agencies be consulted during the CWP session to see if or how they had resolved it. In the meantime the Scientific Council agreed it was important that the potential risks of interpreting catch/effort data should be brought to the attention of users of the current database.

#### OECD

74. The major development in the programme involving fishery statistics was the 1998 decision of the Committee for Fisheries to separate the publication of the country statistics from the text part of the OECD Annual Review of Fisheries. The former will be published annually: the latter on a biennial basis.

75. A joint FAO/Eurostat/OECD meeting of fishery statisticians in March 2000 agreed a number of changes to the Guidelines used in requesting data from member countries and identified data elements that could be obtained from Eurostat or FAO rather than duplicating the request to the national authorities.

76. It was further agreed that the statistical returns would be placed on the Fisheries Division's dedicated web-site, with access limited to delegates, for checking prior to publication.

77. The workload on the member countries has been further reduced by the Secretariat obtaining the trade data from OECD's Foreign Trade Statistics database.

78. Other changes to the statistics are the inclusion of a table of recreational fisheries, for the submission of data, where available, by the member countries, and the reporting of fleet statistics by length classes rather than tonnage classes. The fleet data will be obtained from Eurostat.

79. The Committee for Fisheries has decided that statistics on Government Financial Transfers will be included in the Statistics volumes of the OECD Review of Fisheries.

#### SPC

80. The Oceanic Fisheries Programme (OFP) of SPC is concerned with statistics and research on tuna fisheries in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO). The data compiled by the OFP are used primarily for monitoring trends in catch and effort, and for stock assessment and other research conducted by the OFP and by external scientists.

81. *Compilation of annual catch estimates:* Annual catch estimates were previously compiled for the target species only, i.e. bigeye, skipjack, yellowfin and South Pacific albacore. The compilation of annual catch estimates for billfish commenced in 2000 and the compilation of information on catches of species of special interest, such as sharks, marine reptiles, marine mammals and birds, commenced in 2001. Catches in recreational and subsistence fisheries in the WCPO area are small and annual catch estimates have not previously been compiled. Compilation of annual catch estimates for small-scale fisheries commenced in 2001. It is hoped that the FAO Pacific Islands Fisheries Statistics Workshop, which may be held from

16 to 18 July 2001 in Nouméa, will facilitate the compilation of catch data for small-scale fisheries. Compilation of annual catch estimates from Indonesia and the Philippines, which represent about 20 percent of the catch of major species in the WCPO, had been problematic. Indonesia provided estimates of missing data at the CWP meeting.

82. *Compilation and processing of operational-level catch and effort data from SPC members:* The catch and effort logsheet database currently covers 2.16 million fishing operations by over 11 thousand fishing vessels, dating from 1970 to 2001. The logsheet data cover primarily tuna and billfish.

83. *Compilation of catch and effort data grouped by time-area strata from non-SPC members:* Catch and effort data stratified by time-area continue to be provided for the Japanese longline, pole-and-line and purse-seine fleets; the Korean longline fleet; and the Taiwanese distant-water longline fleet.

84. *Collection of tagging and associated data:* A project to test the feasibility of tagging albacore from small longliners operating in Samoa was conducted in September 2000. The results, however, were not encouraging. Only 59 albacore, 3 yellowfin and 9 bigeye were tagged from six sets.

85. *Port sampling programmes:* The OFP continues to compile port sampling data collected by national programmes. Port sampling forms were modified by the SPC/FFA Tuna Fishery Data Collection Committee at its December 2000 meeting.

86. *Observer programmes:* The OFP continues to compile observer data, including data on bycatch and discards and length data, collected by national observer programmes. The activities of four SPC observers ceased in 1999, when the European Commission-funded SPRTRAMP project terminated. Observer data collection forms were modified by the SPC/FFA Tuna Fishery Data Collection Committee at its December 2000 meeting. Coverage by observer programmes in the WCPO continues to be extremely low. Coverage of longliners was 0.15 percent in 1999, while the coverage of purse seiners was 4.15 percent.

87. *SPC Regional Tuna Bulletin and SPC Tuna Fishery Yearbook:* The Regional Tuna Bulletin and Tuna Fishery Yearbook are available on the SPC website at <http://www.spc.int/oceanfish/docs/index.htm>. The annual catch estimates that are published in the Yearbook are now available on the SPC website in FISHSTAT Plus format.

88. *National fishery database systems:* The OFP continues to provide technical support for fishery database systems in SPC member countries and territories. During 2000, a new fishery database was established in Vanuatu.

#### FFA

89. Several inter-linking databases have been developed at the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) Secretariat under the Corporate Data Resources model to support the conservation and management of tuna resources in the western and central Pacific. These are the databases for the Regional Register of Foreign Fishing Vessels, People and Organisations, Observer Reports, Vessel Activity and Catch for the U.S. Multilateral Treaty, Violations and Prosecutions, Fisheries Agreements and Licences, and the FFA member countries' Vessel Monitoring System (FFA VMS). The Regional Register database holds information on vessel owners, operators, masters and physical characteristics of the vessels and their fishing gear. The Observer Reports

database contains details of all trip reports provided by observers on US Multilateral Treaty purse seine vessels. The Vessel Activity and Catch database contains data on fish catches by US Multilateral Treaty purse seiners. The FFA VMS database contains information on the position, speed and direction of fishing vessels that are in good standing on the FFA member countries' VMS Register. While the FFA VMS is not currently capable of transmitting fish catch data, it has been designed with the flexibility to handle catch data transmission as an enhancement to the baseline system.

### Indonesia

90. Indonesia informed that since 1999 the Directorate General of Fisheries has undergone a reorganization. The fishery statistics section that was previously under the Secretary General of Directorate General of Fisheries in the Department of Marine Affairs and Fisheries is now under the Directorate of Fishery Resources. The statistics section was also divided into two, one under the Directorate General of Capture Fisheries and the other under the Directorate General of Aquaculture.

91. During the process of reorganization there were three major information systems under development or in the process of implementation under the Department of Marine Affairs and Fisheries. One is aimed at integrating all major database management systems onto one system.

92. A second system, which has just started, is aimed at computerizing port data for purposes of port management and development. It will provide provincial offices with fisheries data (catch, effort, harvest, post-harvest facilities, fishing ground and resources) related to activities of major port as well as information related to port conditions and its facilities. However, it will be insufficient to meet the requirements in reporting Indonesian capture fishery statistics.

93. A third system is aimed at computerizing all data requirements in reporting fisheries statistics of the country. This system was designed and developed specially for reporting national fishery statistics. It is based on the methodology as approved and applied in the collection of fishery statistical data. However, the deployment strategies, information, equipment and installation are not in place.

94. Regarding the proposed revision to the boundary between FAO major fishing areas 57 and 71, the statistical marine frame survey should be conducted in order to update the previous statistical survey in the area and take account of the boundaries change. Activities would include an inventory on the district/town (fishing villages and fish landing places), collection on fishery households, selection of the fishing households at the sampled villages, increasing the sampled village and the fish landing places, analyzing data on production, vessels, processing units, and fishing households throughout Indonesia.

95. Although the statistical methodology used is sound, there are aspects of data collection and quality control which need improvement. To this effect, Indonesia is seeking international assistance through donor agencies. Indonesia noted that active participation in the activities of relevant regional fishery bodies might also result in improvements in fishery statistics.

### New Caledonia

96. In New Caledonia collection of statistics on fishing activity is under the responsibility of the three Provinces. However, the Fisheries Department of New Caledonia is able to collect data on

fishing in the EEZ due to its competence in the management of the living resources of that zone. So far these statistics have mainly consisted of tuna fishing data.

97. The major concern of the Fisheries Department with regard to data collection is that of confidentiality which is essential in order to ensure the accuracy of the information provided by the fishermen, mainly on logsheets. These data are cross-checked and completed with landing as well as customs statistics.

98. The figures resulting from this analysis are then considered as official and passed on to SPC, together with copies of the logsheets collected.

99. For coastal fisheries, data are provided to the Fisheries Department by each of the provinces for the fleets they monitor. Statistics on aquaculture are obtained from the local representative of IFREMER.

### Philippines

100. The Agriculture and Fishery Modernization Act of 1997 and the Fishery Code of the Philippines enacted by Congress are two significant initiatives that laid the legal basis for pushing forward long and short range statistical development thrust in Agriculture and Fishery. These laws reconfirmed the primary responsibility of the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics to collect, compile and analyse data on agriculture and fishery; to release official statistics on agriculture and fisheries; to serve as central server of information for the Department's National Information Network; and, to extend technical advisory assistance to farmers and fisher folk.

101. To date, the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics had updated its list frame for aquaculture (1997), commercial marine and municipal fisheries (2000). Fishery surveys for Calendar Year 2001 (CY 2001) are on-going. The Bureau of Agricultural Statistics and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources are jointly undertaking the Inventory of Fishery Resources for CY 2001. Fishery statistics are sourced primarily from sample surveys conducted by the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics and administrative data of regulatory agencies, under the Department of Agriculture.

### **STATLANT ISSUES**

(Agenda item 7; Documents CWP/19/Eurostat, FAO, NAFO)

102. FAO reported on the implementation of a few modifications to the STATLANT questionnaires for FAO areas 21, 27, 34 and 37 during the intersessional period. Additionally FAO had undertaken computerization of STATLANT 47A data held in archives.

103. During the intersessional period STATLANT 34B, 37B and 47B were discontinued due to scarcity of reports. Therefore, only NAFO with STATLANT 21 and CCAMLR with STATLANT 48, 58 and 88, will continue to use the "B" questionnaires, which include fishing effort. NAFO reiterated the importance of "B" questionnaire data for its work in the Northwest Atlantic.

104. It was noted that many countries now prefer to submit their fishery statistics in computerized formats, and CWP accordingly reinforced the value of continuing to reduce the paper versions of questionnaires and enhancing the electronic methods of communication.

105. CWP considered the implications of various aquaculture practices on catch statistics. There was particular concern with respect to live captured organisms which are kept in holding facilities for on-growing, a practice commonly undertaken with tuna.

106. CWP noted that the problem was to ensure that the weight of the captured organisms is recorded as capture fishery production and that subsequent incremental growth in captivity is recorded as aquaculture, so as to avoid partial or total double counting. It was not clear what practice had been employed by Australia which had reported aquaculture production of tuna to FAO.

107. It was suggested that FAO consider whether the FISHSTAT AQ questionnaire could be modified to record what sizes of organisms are taken from the capture fishery and what sizes are taken out after grow-out and advice included in the Notes for Completion as to how national authorities should treat this issue.

108. CWP agreed that the agenda for the next CWP should include an item on agency data collection standards, with STATLANT as one sub-item.

109. CWP agreed that the CWP Newsletter (formerly the STATLANT Newsletter) should be continued and gratefully accepted Eurostat's offer to continue the editing of the Newsletter. It was further agreed that:

- the Newsletter should be placed on the CWP website ([http://www.fao.org/fi/body/rfb/CWP/cwp\\_home.htm](http://www.fao.org/fi/body/rfb/CWP/cwp_home.htm));
- the Newsletter should have links to the agency websites in order to reduce the risk of inclusion of outdated information;
- a list of meetings relevant to fishery statisticians should be maintained in the Newsletter on the website;
- the CWP member agencies are encouraged to submit contributions to the Newsletter editor.

## **ELASMOBRANCH STATISTICS**

(Agenda item 8; Documents CWP/19/Eurostat, FAO, ICCAT, NAFO, SPC).

110. Eurostat informed that it was in the process of modifying regulations to include reporting on the expanded elasmobranch species list. So far, EU member countries were requested (but not as a mandatory requirement) to provide relevant statistics; at national level there were a number of problems in the correct identification of species and in collecting data for all species of the extended list.

111. FAO reported its on-going work, mainly in response to the IPOA for the Conservation and Management of Sharks, and the inclusion of addenda in the STATLANT forms for statistical areas 21, 27, 34 and 37, with lists tailored to the species occurring in each area. However, very few addenda were returned by national reporters. The improvement in the breakdown of elasmobranchs statistics obtained in recent years was due to the utilization of additional data sources and to the improved availability of species codes through the ASFIS list.

112. ICES informed that some activities were on-going to improve reporting but it did not expect any improvement in shark data for the Northeast Atlantic before 2-3 years. The situation in NAFO was similar in that the proposed expansion of the STATLANT list had been accomplished, but no new data had been reported.

113. ICCAT maintains a database of shark catches from 1982 onwards. Up to 1999 data cover only shark by-catches, but from 2000 they may also include targeted catches. A data preparatory meeting to be held in Canada in 2001 to examine the available data and consider the feasibility of future stock assessments for porbeagle, blue shark and mako. The data, reported by 20 fishing entities, are obtained mainly through observer schemes and logbooks.

114. SPC has commenced compiling annual catch estimates of species of special interest, such as sharks, marine reptiles, marine mammals and sea birds. Due to the small percentage of the fisheries covered by observer programmes (0.2 percent of the longline catch and 3.9 percent of the purse-seine catch in the western and central Pacific Ocean) it is unlikely that reliable estimates will become available in the short term. The SPC/FFA Data Collection Committee has agreed to develop logbooks for tuna fisheries in the region to resolve problems of space limitations on the logsheets currently in use, such that more information on bycatches can be collected.

115. IATTC holds data on retained catches and discards of sharks obtained through observer programmes. A significant list of shark species was identified, but data for those species rarely caught have not been computerized. Good quality data are available from national and state sources for the IATTC region.

116. IOTC has no mandate to manage shark fisheries but it has a mandate to collect statistics. In reports, sharks are grouped together without any identification of species. Some shark species information is based on fin sampling programs. Since sharkfins sales provide good returns (fetching about US\$ 400 per kg), some IOTC long line fisheries are moving from tuna to targeting sharks and there is scope for improved monitoring of these fisheries.

117. NAFO added four new species of skates to the list of species to be reported on STATLANT questionnaires. In addition, following the recent publication of a revision to the genera of several species of skates, NAFO amended the list of names to reflect these taxonomic revisions.

118. CWP noted that further efforts are required to improve and facilitate the species identification at national level. CWP was informed that NAFO had funded the publication of an identification chart which had been developed in Germany. The original chart published in English, has now been translated into French, Portuguese and Spanish. NAFO is presently developing its observer protocol and an identification guide developed in Canada has proved quite practical. A manual was developed by Japan for identifying the species for shark fins and processed fin products.

119. CWP considered that some aspects of the discussions on elasmobranchs could equally relate to catch statistics of protected or endangered species, or to species which are caught but not retained or landed. There are aspects of conservation which have already been discussed by some agencies with CITES with the intent of improving reporting. ICES informed that fishery statistics are only a part of its programme, which includes an ecosystem approach considering a wide range of species groups including seabirds and mammals, for which data collection is carried out by observer programmes of research institutes. There are issues of confidentiality that have to be considered. IATTC concurred that collection of data on species which are not retained or landed is viable only through observer programmes. NAFO noted difficulties in obtaining a species breakdown in reported landings when market conditions do not support a differential price structure. This problem was also noted for other species in other areas.

120. CWP recommended that the efforts made by regional fishery bodies and FAO to improve elasmobranch reporting and statistics should be intensified.

121. CWP agreed that collection of species-specific statistics should be included in the agenda of future meetings, taking in aspects including species of special interest such as aquatic reptiles, marine mammals and seabirds as well as observer programmes and methods for estimating catches of non-target species.

### **DATA IMPLICATIONS OF ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED AND UNREGULATED (IUU) FISHING AND AGENCY CATCH CERTIFICATION SCHEMES**

(Agenda item 9; Documents CWP/19/CCAMLR, IATTC, ICCAT, SPC, Inf 5)

122. FAO introduced CWP/19/Inf 5 noting that while the paper provides an overview of the implications of IUU fishing for data, it does not attempt to quantify the problem.

123. SPC advised that very little is known about the level of IUU fishing in the western and central Pacific Ocean since IUU catches, if they exist, could be transhipped in ports outside of SPC member countries and territories, such as in southeast Asian ports. It is considered that catch certification schemes may be the only means of evaluating the extent of IUU fishing in the region.

124. ICCAT described its action plan for the identification of flag-of-convenience vessels fishing in the ICCAT area and the sanctions taken by ICCAT against fishing entities. In the case of bluefin tuna, a trade certification scheme is in place to determine the annual amount of exported products. It is believed that this scheme improved the reliability of data available to ICCAT. ICCAT has put in the public domain a list of approximately 100 IUU vessels operating in the ICCAT Convention Area. In 2002, the certification scheme may be extended to include bigeye tuna and swordfish.

125. The Philippines advised that its data exclude IUU catches since the quantities of seized catches are confidential due to ongoing court proceedings.

126. IOTC estimated that between 120 000 and 140 000 tonnes of tuna are taken in the IOTC area by IUU fishing by approximately 140 large freezer longliners, a larger number of small wetfish longliners and about ten purse seiners. Port sampling in some ports and reports from port authorities provide some information on landings, while catch information is available from European flag of convenience vessels through fisheries research institutes in their home countries.

127. IATTC advised that it has adopted tuna tracking and catch certification programmes to track fish from catch to canning that will improve the ability to determine the origin of catches. It has in place a vessel registry for purse seine and pole-and-line vessels that has proved useful in identifying vessels that are fishing illegally in the IATTC area and various other ocean regions and Convention Areas. IATTC advocated the use of close tracking of catches up to the point of landing and processing to determine where in the Convention Area catches are taken.

128. The CCAMLR scheme of catch certification for Patagonian toothfish was described which requires an authorized representative of the port State to be present at the point of unloading to certify the landing. This representative may seek clarification from the flag State of the vessel to assist in this process.

129. FAO advised that there is to be an Expert Consultation on catch certification schemes later in 2001. It was noted that such harmonisation might be difficult if all fishery products are included.

130. There was discussion concerning the desirability of generalizing trade documentation for all fresh and frozen primary fishery commodities so as to record, for example, the convention area from which the fish was caught and the vessel which took the catch. Such extension of generalized trade documentation could facilitate estimation of total catch and routine comparisons for catch data validation and would be extremely useful. The feasibility of such an extension needs to be investigated in consultation with appropriate trade agencies.

131. CWP recognized that catch certification schemes have proved effective in detecting unreported catches for certain species. Implementation of such schemes has so far been very limited and CWP agreed that there is considerable potential for estimation of further unreported catches by extending them to additional selected species. CWP further agreed that there could be merit in harmonizing catch certification used by different regional fishery management bodies, but the full implications of this need to be investigated.

#### **DISCARD DATA AVAILABILITY AND DISSEMINATION** (Agenda item 10; Documents CWP/19/CCAMLR, IATTC, ICCAT)

132. Several recommendations to improve the collection of discard data were adopted by ICCAT, but only two countries are regularly reporting discard data from national observer programmes. These data are included in the ICCAT database and are used in stock assessments.

133. The estimation of discards by IATTC includes catch in number of fish, catch of sharks and biological and scientific data. All the large purse seine vessels have on board observers. In the future, small vessels may also carry observers. IATTC has detailed resolution discard data for United States longliners. In 2000 IATTC adopted a resolution for purse seine vessels to retain all the catch during 2001. The results will be reviewed to determine if it should continue.

134. SPC has requested countries to include discards in estimates of annual catches of tuna and billfish; however, the only fleet for which discards are known to be covered is the United States purse-seine fleet. Information on discards are available from observers, although observer coverage of tuna fleets in the western and central Pacific Ocean in recent years has been low, 0.2 percent for longliners and 3.9 percent for purse seiners.

135. IOTC has requested discard data but very few have been received. Some estimation was made in one study of purse seine fisheries and some data are available for longline fisheries from samples where the whole catch was retained.

136. ICES member countries have started an observer programme to collect discard data. An ICES working group compiles these data and discusses work plans for discard data collection. The prime objective of this work is to provide data for stock assessment, and those fisheries for which discard data are essential for stock assessment purposes have been identified.

137. The EU is in the process of adopting a regulation which *inter alia*, includes the collection of discard data. Each member country will be required to submit a research programme which should include a prescribed level of discard sampling.

138. NAFO now has 100 percent observer coverage of vessels fishing in the Regulatory Area. Discard data are available from this programme and a database is under development. Consultant

data collection protocols have been adopted, an Observer Training Manual is under development and a programme and database development is under consideration.

139. The problem of inconsistent usage of terms of catch, discards, landings and bycatch among different bodies was noted and CWP agreed that this problem should be on the agenda for discussion at its next session.

### **INTEGRATION OF FISHERY STATISTICS AND JOINT DISSEMINATION** (Agenda item 11; Documents CWP/19/EUROSTAT, FAO, ICCAT, NAFO)

140. Eurostat reported that, following the meeting of the CWP Intersessional Working Group on the Publication of Integrated Catch Statistics for the Atlantic (see paragraph 10), a data-file in a FISHSTAT Plus compatible format was compiled for the period 1950-98 using:

- ICCAT data for tuna and tuna-like species;
- data from regional agencies (CCAMLR, CECAF, GFCM, ICES and NAFO) for non tuna species; and
- data provided by FAO where the data are not available from other sources.

141. Each record on the file includes the source agency for the data. The work was completed at the end of September 2000 and, after checking by the agencies, was made available for downloading from the FAO web-site together with the FISHSTAT Plus software. The data-file has also been included on the ICES Fishery Statistics CD-ROM. It was recognized that this data-file was a trial issue and that certain data elements needed to be checked.

142. CWP congratulated Eurostat for the work in compiling the file, recognizing that, while the principles were clear, the integration of the data from the various sources was not straightforward. CWP agreed that the file should be up-dated, though ICCAT pointed out that, while it would collaborate to the limit of its resources, the essential restructuring of its data-base was the secretariat's first priority. It was agreed that, while the maximum of data from ICCAT would be included in the up-dated file, where these were not available tuna data from the regional agencies or FAO would be used, with the mention of the appropriate source.

143. CWP accepted Eurostat's offer to compile the up-dated file. While in principle the annual publication of the datafile in September (including data up to the end of the year 21 months before) should be the target, it was accepted that this schedule might not be practicable in 2001.

144. With regard to the extension of the coverage of the file to catches for the Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean, it was recognized that the extent of the problem with multiple data sets was not as great as for the Atlantic Ocean and that current efforts by FAO and the other agencies concerned to resolve discrepancies would be sufficient.

### **CHARGING AND DISSEMINATION POLICIES FOR SUPPLY OF DATA** (Agenda item 12; Documents CWP/19/EUROSTAT, ICCAT, IOTC)

145. Eurostat reported that there have been developments in its policies since CWP-18. Its Management Committee has agreed that Eurostat's web-site should permit improved access to databases and that certain publications (for example, the "Statistics in Focus" analytical reports and methodological publications) should be made available for downloading free-of-charge from the web-site in PDF format. However, it was further decided that Eurostat should not undercut the pricing policies of its Member States. While, in Member States there was a pronounced trend towards the free-of-charge access to databases through web-sites, certain national authorities

maintained a stricter pricing policy. Another consideration for Eurostat was continued existence of its network of Data-shops that provided a valuable service but could not be financed purely from central sources. CWP noted that the cost of the Eurostat's CD-ROM on fishery statistics, containing a high proportion of data compiled with the collaboration of CWP agencies, has decreased from € 500 at the time of CWP-18 to € 50 currently (from approximately US\$ 450 to US\$ 45).

146. FAO, IATTC, ICCAT, ICES, IOTC, NAFO and SPC reported that their general policies of free-of-charge access to fisheries data had not changed since CWP-18. In certain cases cost recovery was applied in meeting requests for processing of large volumes of data and for the supply of hard-copy publications.

### **RECORD OF VESSELS FISHING ON THE HIGH SEAS (COMPLIANCE AGREEMENT)**

(Agenda item 13; Documents CWP/19/FAO, ICCAT)

147. The Compliance Agreement establishes minimum requirements to be applied by flag states to register and authorize fishing vessels to fish on the high seas and requires that no Party shall allow fishing vessels flying its flag to fish on the high seas without its authorization. The Compliance Agreement also provides for the exchange of information on fishing vessels authorized to fish on the high seas and stipulates that FAO should be a repository for this information, which would be shared amongst Parties to the Agreement. In October 1995 and again in September 2000, Circular State Letters were sent to all States urging them to submit data. To date, data have been received from the USA (1 155 vessels), Canada (6), Japan (1 908) and Norway (134) and the European Commission has requested information on record formats for the purpose of providing data on European Union vessels.

148. A database called the High Seas Vessel Authorisation Record (HSVAR) was developed by FAO for this purpose in 1994 and data for two countries were entered for test purposes pending the coming into force of the Agreement. The technology used for the database is now outdated and the database is being developed in a new environment, and this provides an opportunity to expand the technical content to meet other information needs such as those relating to implementation of the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, the FAO International Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity and fishery status and trends reporting in general.

149. The Compliance Agreement is specific about what data must be reported to FAO for dissemination to Parties to the Agreement and Regional Fishery Bodies, and what data should be reported to the extent practicable. All these fields have been incorporated into HSVAR.

150. CWP considered the addition of further fields in the HSVAR database could be useful. CWP agreed that for the purpose of inter-agency exchanges of vessel records, a unique vessel identifier should be assigned to each vessel, since current vessel identifiers (such as vessel name, flag state and registration number in the flag state, radio call sign, etc.) are unstable. CWP also agreed that a field indicating whether the vessel is actively fishing should be added, where possible, recognizing that it may be difficult for national governments to provide this information. It was recognized that because the purpose of HSVAR is to identify vessels, only those fields which can be used for that purpose should be included and that the inclusion of other fields might overly burden the providers of the data.

151. It was recognized that Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs) may often be better suited than FAO to identify individual vessels and eliminate duplicate records since they may have access to more information. FAO was therefore encouraged to liaise with the RFBs for the allocation of unique identifiers.

152. CWP recommended that FAO draft a list of essential and desirable vessel identifiers for vessel registries (keeping them to a minimum) for the consideration of CWP agencies and that FAO consult with them regarding the use of unique vessel identifiers in HSVAR and CWP agency vessel registries.

## **STATISTICAL CLASSIFICATIONS**

(Agenda item 14; Documents CWP/19/EUROSTAT, FAO, NAFO, SPC)

### Fishing-Related Activities (ISIC)

153. CWP noted that developments in international statistical and economic classifications can affect and benefit national fishery statistics and improve harmonization at international level. Statistical and economic classifications are modified from time to time to take into account economic and technical developments and to respond to emerging public policy issues. However, due to their broad scope, they often do not well serve the information requirements of some sectors of the economy.

154. The SPC and FAO working papers proposed changes to class 0500 (Fishing, Fish farming and related activities) of the United Nations International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC). Since agriculture and fishing are dominant sectors of many Pacific Islands Countries and Territories, the SPC paper advocated a distinction between fishing and aquaculture, and identified within each major branch sub-classes for operations and activities of prevailing regional importance. It proposed to break ISIC class 0500 into five classes (one of which is Aquaculture) and regionally harmonized sub-classes. The FAO paper advocated a separation of ISIC class 0500 into two classes, one for capture fisheries, one for aquaculture, as separate economic activities, and proposed an expansion into four sub-classes for fisheries and two sub-classes for aquaculture.

155. CWP noted that, since the time both proposals were drafted, the UN Statistical Commission had endorsed changes to ISIC Rev. 3, one of which was the splitting of Class 0500 into two new classes, that is 0501 (Fishing) and 0502 (Fish farming). Both the FAO and SPC proposals, if pursued, will have to reflect such coding. Eurostat noted that parallel modifications to NACE<sup>1</sup>, the equivalent EU classification, were also in progress. This development was welcomed by CWP members.

156. Since the current cycle of changes to ISIC (and to the Central Product Classification) will be completed by 2007, there may still be time for further agency proposals to flow to the Technical Sub-group reviewing the proposals for changes to ISIC Rev. 3. CWP recommended that relevant agencies keep track of these developments and see to it that any sub-classes for fishing and fish farming agreed upon at regional level are in harmony with ISIC Rev. 3.

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<sup>1</sup> Nomenclature des Activités dans la Communauté européenne

### Vessels (ISSCFV)

157. FAO introduced the subject recalling the history of the vessel type classification and the changes introduced at various CWP sessions during the last 30 years. A proposal was presented to this meeting aimed at simplifying the present classification, in an attempt to increase the reporting rate from countries, which had declined to only 50 percent recently, and improve the quality of data compiled.

158. Most agencies reported that they did not use the International Standard Statistical Classification for Fishing Vessels (ISSCFV) and so the change proposed would have no impact on their work. The actual use made of this classification was discussed, as was the question of whether the classification should remain an international one endorsed by CWP, or become a purely FAO one.

159. Eurostat reported that its fleet statistics are derived from European Commission's administrative file of fishing vessels. EU member countries' contributions to this file were submitted using national classifications of vessel type. At the EU level, these were processed into a simplified classification of three items. Thus Eurostat would be unable to supply statistics using the proposed ISSCFV classification and it is unlikely that the European Commission would have the resources to reprocess the data. Eurostat would initiate a discussion of the proposed classification at the next meeting of its Working Group "Fishery Statistics" in February 2002 and FAO would be invited to present the proposal to the national representatives.

160. ICCAT is in the process of revising its data structure and as far as this classification is concerned, has the need for referencing its categories against both vessel types and gear types.

161. FAO has a mandate given by its Committee on Fisheries to improve its fleet statistics, including the vessel type detail. In the context of FIGIS, it was further added that the integration of data sets relevant to disciplines as diverse as statistics, fishing technology, stock assessment or management made it also necessary to simplify this vessel classification and limit it strictly to vessel structural characteristics. The compound concept of "fishing techniques" would compensate for this simplification by allowing the reference of "local" vessel categories to both vessel type and gear type classifications, thus introducing a lot of flexibility.

162. CWP recommended that the proposal for revision be accepted as a revision to ISSCFV. Discussions are still required on certain details of the proposal, particularly on the Longliner breakdown. Both Eurostat and IOTC proposed promoting the freezer and wetfish longliner classification above that of midwater and bottom longliners. FAO will follow up on this aspect by sending fact sheets to the CWP participants of the proposed categories to trigger further discussion.

### Species (ISSCAAP and ASFIS)

163. FAO presented to CWP a proposal for a revision of the International Standard Statistical Classification of Aquatic Animals and Plants (ISSCAAP) groups of the Marine Fishes division, in particular of the group 33 (redfishes, basses, congers) as this group contains about one quarter of the total species items included in the FAO Yearbook of Fishery Statistics.

164. To explore the feasibility of a revision, FAO classified the species items presently in the group 33 as coastal fishes or demersal fishes. The creation of a new group including only coastal

fishes and a better identification of demersal species is expected to provide additional information to the users of the FAO capture database.

165. Two possible options were presented to CWP to redistribute these newly classified species items to ISSCAAP groups. CWP expressed its preference for the following option and recommended that FAO should follow it for the revision of the ISSCAAP groups.

Code	Present ISSCAAP group	Proposed revision	Demersal /Pelagic	Species items to be added	Species items to be removed
31	Flounders, halibuts, soles	Flounders, halibuts, soles	D		
32	Cods, hakes, haddocks	Cods, hakes, haddocks	D		
33	Redfishes, basses, congers	<b><u>Miscellaneous coastal fishes</u></b>	D	Mulletts & threadfins	Demersal species from group 33
34	Jacks, mullets, sauries	<b><u>Miscellaneous demersal fishes</u></b>	D	Demersal species from group 33; snoeks & cutlassfishes	All species from group 34 except lanternfishes
35	Herrings, sardines, anchovies	Herrings, sardines, anchovies	P		
36	Tunas, bonitos, billfishes	Tunas, bonitos, billfishes	P		
37	Mackerels, snoeks, cutlassfishes	<b><u>Miscellaneous pelagic fishes</u></b>	P	All species from group 34 except mulletts & threadfins	Snoeks & cutlassfishes
38	Sharks, rays, chimaeras	Sharks, rays, chimaeras			
39	Miscellaneous marine fishes	<b><u>Marine fishes not identified</u></b>			

166. CWP noted that some agencies had on previous occasions expressed the need to address this issue, and expressed its appreciation to FAO for bringing about these changes. CWP particularly noted that these changes to the ISSCAAP groups will result in some nominal changes in the STATLANT questionnaires.

167. FAO presented to CWP a part of the Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Information System (ASFIS) used for fishery statistics. It was created in its present form as a basis for fishery production statistics. FAO Fishery Information, Data and Statistics Unit (FIDI) uses it to assign codes in the statistical databases. When FIDI receives requests from national institutions and regional fishery bodies to provide 3-alpha codes to species items of local interest, FIDI assigns three types of code to each species item: a) the ISSCAAP code; b) an internal FAO hierarchical taxonomic code; and c) the 3-alpha code,

168. The present version of the ASFIS list (released in March 2001) includes 10 301 species items, of which about 1 300 are represented in the FAO statistics. Thus a majority of the 17 500 possible valid combinations of the 26 characters of the English alphabet forming the 3-alpha code have been assigned. FAO-FIDI is responsible for creation and modification of the codes.

169. Usually a pragmatic and conservative approach has been applied for uncertain cases. Changes of scientific names and the addition of new species proposed in the scientific literature by taxonomists have been included in the ASFIS list only when such changes have been generally accepted and known to people dealing with fishery matters and, in particular, fishery statistics. For the most controversial cases, the ASFIS database has been consulted to verify if a newly proposed scientific name has become of current use.

170. CWP noted the creation of the ASFIS list of species has allowed FAO to: a) revise and update the taxonomic classification of the species items represented in the FAO statistics; b)

streamline the inclusion of new species, for which statistics were reported, in the FAO databases; and c) provide regional fishery bodies and national institutions with a common coding system for species which are used in a variety of fishery-related activities.

171. As a result of requests of CWP members and other institutions, between June 2000 and March 2001, 26 new species items were added. Since March 2001 to date, 18 new species items have been included on the master version of the database hosting the list. The next release is expected in March 2002, after the closure of the FAO capture fishery production database.

172. It was noted that in certain instances, particularly for highly migratory species, it is desirable to look at specific criteria (e.g. aggregation of species) for issuing code groupings. CWP recommended that FAO look into such possibilities as new codes are being issued.

173. For the year 2002, a printed version of the ASFIS list of species has been planned in collaboration with ASFAs. This printed version, at request of CWP, will also contain explanations on the methodologies adopted and on criteria followed in the compilation and continuous updating of the list, and on the treatment of particular cases.

#### Statistical Area Boundaries

174. FAO reported on the status of four proposed modifications to FAO statistical areas which had been recommended by CWP-17.

175. *Between areas 47 and 51:* No action has been taken pending the establishment of SEAFO. The SEAFO establishment process opposed the proposal (on the basis of an objection from Spain). It was reported that SEAFO is also debating the location of its northern boundary (on the basis of proposals from Angola) and had consulted FAO for its opinion on this.

176. *Between 51 and 57:* The recommended change has been effected with the agreement of Sri Lanka and India and catches of Sri Lanka in the FAO database have been attributed to area 57 (formerly they were allocated to Area 51). There was no need to act on India data, because the catches of the Tamil Nadu State had not been correctly attributed to major area 51 before the change.

177. *Between area 57 and 71:* Discussions have been undertaken with Indonesia, but a firm approval of the proposal has been delayed by important changes in the Fishery Department structure.

178. *Between areas 57 and 81:* CWP-17 and CWP-18 recommended that FAO should implement the moving of the southern boundary between 57 and 81 from the present 150°E to 140°E. Australia is the only country affected by the change and the Chairman of BRS Fisheries Statistics Working Group, present at the CWP-17 meeting in Hobart, supported the proposal in principle. Although Australia agreed in principle, their preference was for 141°E, this being the border between South Australia and Victoria States. FAO consulted with IOTC and SPC on the proposal to adopt for convenience the 140°E meridian, rather than 141°E. A compromise could be reached by striking the border at 140°E all the way North to parallel 40°S and then cutting a rhumb line to meet the border between the South Australia and Victoria States at 141°E. There are no legal implications in changing such borders, which have been established for statistical purposes. The change will only be reflected in the FAO database, since catches of Victoria State will be re-assigned to area 81. Australia has been approached to provide fishery production

statistics for Victoria State by species, before the modification can actually be implemented in the database.

179. IOTC reported that since the IOTC Convention Area had been defined on the basis of a map of the old FAO area 57 (for which the eastern boundary is 150°E), the IOTC Convention Area would not be in alignment with the new FAO area 57 (for which the eastern boundary is 140°E). It was noted that there is overlap between the IOTC and WCPO Convention Areas, with regard to the area between 141° meridian of east longitude and 150° meridian of east longitude.

180. SPC and IATTC suggested that FAO may wish to consider modifying the statistical areas for the Pacific Ocean once the Commission to be established under the WCPO becomes operational, so that the statistical areas reflect the areas used for statistical purposes by IATTC, the new WCPO Commission and other RFBs in the region.

### **COORDINATION OF DESCRIPTIONS OF NATIONAL STATISTICAL METHODOLOGIES**

(Agenda item 15; Documents CWP/19/Eurostat, FAO)

181. Eurostat introduced this item by stating that it had previously sent questionnaires to member States in order to collect information concerning the methods that those States used for collecting fisheries statistical data. As a consequence, Eurostat now has highly useful information on the statistical methodologies of EU members and candidate countries. Reports of this information are available to CWP members on request. Eurostat believed that it would be valuable for other agencies to collect similar information and that it is important for this information to be kept up to date.

182. IOTC reported that it also tries to obtain information concerning statistical methods used by contributing countries and endorsed the importance of collecting this type of information. IOTC mentioned that some regional fishery bodies have common dealings with certain countries and that there would be value in having a common source for information on statistical methodologies used by countries to reduce the duplication of effort by regional agencies.

183. IATTC indicated that some countries had difficulties in describing the methods that they have used to provide statistical data. IATTC would endorse any efforts by FAO to obtain information on statistical methods used by countries in obtaining and providing statistical information to FAO and was keen to obtain any information that FAO obtained.

184. FAO has some information of this type in the “grey” literature that has been obtained through workshops and projects. However, this type of information had not been obtained in a systematic manner. While of little help for past information, future “grey” literature such as project documents will be indexed and placed in the document repository so that improved access via Internet will be available in the future.

185. FAO also noted that collection of information concerning data quality was made quite complex due to a wide variety of data collection methods used within different countries for the various fisheries under a country’s control. For example, a single country may use a range of techniques from census to surveys to logbooks depending on the fishery. Data quality also varied through time due to the availability of funds. It was noted that there appeared to be a current trend of reducing quality that was related to declining funding for data collection.

186. FAO described the role that FIGIS could have in presenting information concerning the quality of various data sets. As part of the FIGIS implementation, it is proposed that each data set be documented so that its ownership, scope and quality characteristics are accessible to anyone. This includes information concerning the type of data source, methods of processing and validation, and the option of one or more accuracy indicators.

187. CWP agreed that details concerning statistical methodologies used in the provision of information by countries are very useful and recommended that regional agencies should distribute this information amongst CWP agencies and make this information available to FIGIS.

## **ROLE OF THE CWP IN RELATION TO STATISTICAL DEVELOPMENT**

(Agenda item 16; Document CWP/19/FAO)

188. The CWP has in the past been very effective in dealing with technical issues relating to norms, standards, classifications and definitions concerning fishery statistics and in coordinating statistical activities amongst participating agencies. It has not often played an advocacy role, although when it did so in relation to Annex 1 of the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, for example, it was very influential.

189. It is clear that CWP supports useful initiatives to improve statistical data collection. However, the means by which CWP can most effectively convey its concerns and offer solutions is less clear. The meeting recognized that for CWP to support a particular position, it is essential that the case must be based on sound technical considerations. Several courses of action may be possible.

190. As a basis for possible future advocacy by CWP for improving the quality of fishery statistics, CWP recommended that the following areas should be investigated by the Secretariat during the intersessional period and presented to CWP-20 as a proposal:

- collate, summarize and prioritize reports from recent technical and management meetings where specific statistical data needs were identified and calls made in support of data collection activities;
- identify examples and reasons for success of successful projects and programmes where an improvement in the quality of statistical data has led to improved science and better fishery management. Demonstrate the cost effectiveness of collecting higher quality data. Identify examples of unsuccessful projects and programmes and the reasons for failure and demonstrate the cost of not collecting data; and
- identify specific problems which require immediate attention and action needed to improve these situations.

## **HANDBOOK ON FISHERY STATISTICS - COMPLETION AND REVISIONS**

(Agenda item 17; CWP/19/FAO)

191. FAO reported on an advanced draft of the new version of the "Handbook of Fishery Statistics". Compared to the first version published a decade ago, the new version of the Handbook will expand its coverage, both geographically and topic-wise, and will include digitized maps of fishing areas. The new title agreed among CWP members for this second edition is "CWP Handbook of Statistical Standards for Fisheries". It is planned to release it only as an electronic publication through the Internet and on CD-ROM. This initiative was highly appreciated by the CWP.

192. SPC offered their availability to continue collaborating and providing information to the Handbook with regard to its area of competence. Eurostat expressed its support to the work undertaken by FAO so far and its availability to collaborate to the revision of the draft, before it is circulated for comments to other CWP members.

#### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

193. Tables summarizing the statistical programmes of CWP agencies prepared according to the format recommended by CWP-18 are presented in Appendix 8. Tables as presented to the Expert Consultation on Implications of the Precautionary Approach for Tuna Biological and Technological Research (Phuket, Thailand, 7-15 March 2000) detailing the statistical and data programmes of tuna agencies are presented in Appendix 9.

194. CWP participants were requested to provide comments by 31 August 2001 to FAO on document CWP/19/Inf.4 *Status and trends reporting in Fisheries: a review of progress and approaches to reporting the state of world fisheries* prior to its publication.

195. CWP expressed its gratitude to Dr Peter Miyake who had retired as Assistant Executive Secretary of ICCAT for his long and distinguished service to the CWP as participant and as Chairperson at the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Sessions.

196. CWP also expressed its gratitude for services to the CWP of Mr Ola Flaaten and Mr Campbell McGregor who are departing their positions at OECD and CCSBT respectively.

#### **ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 20TH SESSION OF THE CWP**

197. CWP gratefully accepted an invitation from IOTC to host the Twentieth Session of the CWP in the Seychelles for four days in late January/early February 2003. There may be an opportunity for an intersessional meeting in association with the Technical Consultation on Improving Reporting on Fishery Status and Trends which is planned for 2002.

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

198. This report was adopted on 13 July 2001.

