

Support to Sustainable Aquaculture Development by Regional Fishery Bodies¹

There are at present six Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs) established under the FAO Constitution which have mandates *inter alia* to promote the sustainable development of aquaculture. The essential purpose of an RFB is to provide an effective forum for international cooperation in order to enable States to promote conservation and management measures for living aquatic resources. RFBs offer an opportunity for government-nominated experts or delegates to exchange data and experience on fisheries and aquaculture issues, and to develop scientific, technical, policy and strategic advice to their Members:

- for decision, where RFBs have regulatory powers, or
- for consideration, but eventually for action by individual Members, where RFBs have advisory roles with no regulatory powers.

The following briefs present aquaculture activities of each RFB. Additional information on RFBs and RFB fact sheets are available at: <http://www.fao.org/fishery/rfb>.

Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC)

<http://www.apfic.org/>

APFIC was established as the Indo-Pacific Fisheries Council in 1948; the name was changed to APFIC². APFIC, whose mandate is to facilitate the development of bilateral, trilateral and regional agreements, provides advice, coordinates activities and acts as an information broker to increase knowledge on fisheries and aquaculture to support decision-making. More, recently, APFIC Members have agreed to act more as a regional consultative forum in close partnership with other regional organizations. While APFIC's main area of responsibilities lies within fisheries, since there are many areas where fisheries and aquaculture interact, a joint approach is needed. Thus, APFIC also work with its Members on aquaculture and has been involved in the following aquaculture-related issues:

- development of a regional TCP *Reducing the dependence on the utilization of trash fish/low value fish as feed for aquaculture of marine finfish in the Asian region* (2007-2009);
- provision of regional input to the FAO Guidelines for Aquaculture Certification (2007/2008);
- review of the introduction and movement of *P. vannamei* into the region (2006); and
- addressing low-value and trash fish issues related to fisheries and aquaculture (2006).

The 2nd APFIC Regional Consultative Forum (6–9 August 2008) and the 30th APFIC Session (11–13 August 2008) will be held in Manado, Indonesia.

Committee for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture of Africa (CIFAA)

<http://www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/cifaa>

Established in 1971, CIFA³, formally changed its name to CIFAA to accommodate its new co-thrust of aquaculture, and is in the process of reviewing its mandate. The original Terms of Reference (TOR) has strong emphasis on fisheries science (fisheries and limnological research) and fisheries technology. The 14th session (Accra, Ghana, November 2006), reviewed the regional dimensions of inland fisheries and aquaculture development in Africa *vis-à-vis* the roles and responsibilities of the Committee. CIFAA aims to: (i) be a source of high quality information on inland fisheries and aquaculture development, particularly with regard to social and economic dimensions of inland fisheries and aquaculture development, particularly with regard to social and economic dimensions; (ii) improve regional and sub-regional cooperation among Members; (iii) hold regular consultations among stakeholders; and (iv) respond more efficiently to the needs of countries and the region. CIFAA recognised the need to change and evolve into a structure that can better link the public and private sectors along with development partners as well as regional economic organisations and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)

¹Authorship for this article (arranged alphabetically): U. Barg, J. Clausen, S. Funge-Smith, J. Gonzales de la Rocha, A. Lovatelli, F. Massa, A. Mena Millar, J. Moehl and F. Poulain, with contributions by J. AguilarManjarrez, D. Soto, V. Crespi and P. Mannini gratefully acknowledged.

as well as to have a higher degree of self-reliance. The 15th session, scheduled for December 2008, will review revised TOR to make the Committee more responsive and relevant to the needs of the Region.

Commission for Inland Fisheries of Latin America (COPESCAL)

<http://www.fao.org/regional/lamerica/organos/copescal/default.htm>

COPESCAL⁴ was established in 1976 in order to: (i) promote research and development programmes for the rational utilization of inland fisheries resources; (ii) assist Member Governments in establishing the scientific basis of regulatory measures for the conservation of inland fishery resources; (iii) support the development of aquaculture; and (iv) encourage education and training. Areas covered include rural aquaculture development, health management, aquaculture nutrition, processing and quality assurance of aquaculture and inland capture fishery products, legislation and aquaculture planning and management.

In 2005, the Organization for Fisheries and Aquaculture in the Central American Isthmus (OSPESCA) in cooperation with FAO's Aquaculture Management and Conservation Service (FIMA), conducted a regional study on the status and trends of aquaculture. Concerning the possibility of establishing a regional networking in the Americas, two separate studies were conducted by FAO (2004) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC, 2005) (see page 29). During the 10th session (Panama, 2005); COPESCAL approved the recommendations of the above FAO-OSPESCA regional study emphasizing the need to further analyse the socio-economic impact of aquaculture, strengthen sanitary and environmental measures and reinforce government institutions mandated to manage aquaculture; and supported the recommendations of the two networking proposals. COPESCAL is now embarking to revise its statutes and rules of procedure in order to be more responsive to the challenges facing aquaculture development.

European Inland Fisheries Advisory Commission (EIFAC)

<http://www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/eifac>

A major function of EIFAC⁵ (established in 1957) is to advise on development of inland fisheries and aquaculture. Presently, EIFAC's aquaculture activities cover:

- relationship between fish transfer and fish health, with emphasis on implications arising from EC Directive 2006/88/EC;
- aquatic resources management in aquaculture (review of use of water and integration into water resources management);

- market perspectives of European freshwater aquaculture;
- collaboration with the Network of Aquaculture Centers in Central and Eastern Europe (NACEE);
- eels, sturgeons, crayfish introductions and stocking;
- handling of fishes in fisheries and aquaculture;
- prevention and control of bird predation;
- recreational fisheries, socio-economic aspects of inland fisheries, ecosystem approach, climate change.

Aquaculture issues were discussed during the 2008 EIFAC symposium on interactions between socio-economic and ecological objectives of inland capture fisheries, recreational fisheries and aquaculture. EIFAC's next Session will be held in 2010, and its associated symposium will focus on "multi-functional inland aquaculture". In view of the growing importance of aquaculture, EIFAC recently agreed to initiate the process of changing its name to European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission. Recent EIFAC publications related to aquaculture include the EIFAC Code of Practice for Recreational Fisheries and expert meeting reports on a cormorant management plan and on handling of fishes in fisheries and aquaculture.

General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)

<http://www.gfcm.org/gfcm>

GFCM⁶ has a specific Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ) established to promote the sustainable development and responsible management of marine and brackishwater aquaculture in the region, and to provide independent advice at technical, socio-economic, legal and environmental level for common standards, norms, guidelines and decisions. In particular, CAQ assesses information or programmes provided by Members and relevant stakeholders on production statistics, market data, culture systems, technologies, farmed species and maintains related databases. CAQ operates through three *ad hoc* Working Groups on:

- Siting and carrying capacity (aquaculture integration with other coastal management issues; carrying capacity assessment, environmental monitoring programme, harmonised regional guidelines for aquaculture site allocation and management).
- Sustainability (selection of indicators, standards and reference points for aquaculture sustainable development, guidelines for their use); and
- Marketing (data collection on aquaculture products market; market synergies with capture fisheries; strategy development for aquaculture marketing and promotion);

Through the Information System for the Promotion of Aquaculture in the Mediterranean (SIPAM), CAQ aims

at improving the flow of information on aquaculture in the region particularly on production statistics. Recent GFCM publications on aquaculture deal with: interaction between aquaculture and capture fisheries; sustainable bluefin tuna farming practices; marketing of farmed seabass and seabream. The next session of CAQ will take place in December 2008 in Tirana, Albania.

Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI)

<http://www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/recofi>

The main objective of RECOFI⁷ is to promote the development, conservation, rational management and best utilization of living marine resources, as well as the sustainable development of aquaculture within its area of agreement. RECOFI provides guidance to its Member countries on sustainable exploitation of capture fisheries and aquaculture development. The RECOFI Working Group on Aquaculture (WGA), formally established in 2004, provides advice to the Commission on technical and policy matters related to aquaculture. Furthermore, the WGA identifies and discusses regional issues related to aquaculture, and monitors and reports its development. The work programme and recommendations of the WGA are submitted for consideration and endorsement by the Commission during its regular biannual session. During the fourth session of RECOFI (May 2007, Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) the Commission endorsed two major activities aimed at the development of a regional strategy on aquatic animal health and marine cage culture. The latter activity will look into issues such as licensing procedures, site selection and environmental impact assessment protocols. The WGA recently launched the RECOFI Aquaculture Information System (RAIS).

²**APFIC Members** include Australia, People's Republic of Bangladesh, Cambodia, People's Republic of China, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Kingdom of Thailand, United Kingdom, United States of America, and Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

³**CIFAA Members** include Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

⁴**COPESCAL Members** include Argentina, Bolivia, Brasil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Republica Dominicana, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela.

⁵**EIFAC Members** include Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, European Community, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United Kingdom.

⁶**GFCM Members** include Albania, Algeria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, European Community, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Turkey

⁷**RECOFI Members** include Bahrain, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates.

E-mail contacts of Secretariats of above RFB

APFIC	S. Funge-Smith, Secretary, FAO, Bangkok	Simon.Fungesmith@fao.org
CIFAA	J. Moehl, Secretary, FAO, Accra	John.Moehl@fao.org
COPESCAL	J. Gonzales de la Rocha, Secretary, FAO, Santiago	Jorge.delaRocha@fao.org
EIFAC, Sub-Commission on Aquaculture	U. Barg, Technical Secretary, FAO, Rome	Uwe.Barg@fao.org
GFCM, Committee on Aquaculture	F. Massa, Technical Secretary, GFCM, Rome	Fabio.Massa@fao.org
RECOFI, Working Group on Aquaculture	A. Lovatelli, Technical Secretary, FAO, Rome	Alessandro.Lovatelli@fao.org
FAO Fisheries & Aquaculture Department	F. Poulain, FI Focal Point for RFBs, FAO, Rome	Florence.Poulain@fao.org