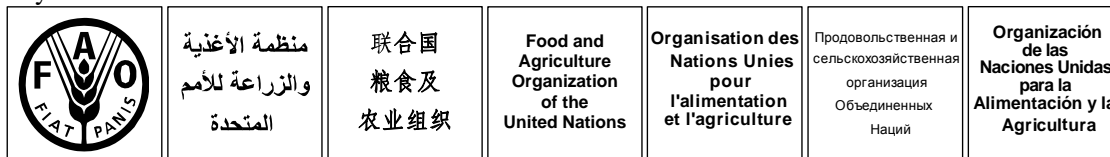


July 2013



COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

SUB-COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

Seventh Session

St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, 7-11 October 2013

DRAFT STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF THE COFI SUB-COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE IN ADVANCING AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT

Executive Summary

As requested by the 6th Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture (SCA), this document has been developed by the Secretariat, to present the draft strategic framework for strengthening the role of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture in advancing aquaculture development.

The Sub-Committee is invited to:

- 1) Review the document and provide further advice to the Secretariat on the way forward;
- 2) Endorse the approach towards developing a Global Aquaculture Advancement Partnership (GAAP) Programme

Background

1. In accordance with its Terms of Reference (Annex), the Committee on Fisheries Sub-Committee on Aquaculture (SCA), which was established in 2001 based on the recommendations of an earlier Expert Consultation¹, provides a forum for consultation and discussion on aquaculture and advises COFI on technical and policy matters related to aquaculture and also on the work to be performed by the Organization in the field of aquaculture.

¹ FAO 2000. Report of the Expert Consultation on the Proposed Sub-Committee on Aquaculture of the Committee on Fisheries. Bangkok, Thailand, 28-29 February 2000. *FAO Fish. Rep.* 623. Rome, FAO. 36p.

2. Since its establishment, the SCA has convened on six separate occasions in P.R. China, Norway, India, Chile, Thailand and South Africa, respectively. Interest among Members has generally been high, and the number of delegations and observers attending the sessions has been good with overall attendance levels ranging from 48 to 66 delegations. The deliberations of the Committee on Fisheries over the past several years have revealed the attribution of increased importance by COFI to the subject of aquaculture.

3. At the sixth session of the SCA, the Secretariat introduced an agenda item and working document which provided a short overview and analysis of the main subject areas discussed at the past five sessions of the SCA and proposed options for developing a Plan of Action for the SCA².

4. In light of FAO's limited human and financial resources, the SCA agreed to the utmost importance of this agenda item and re-emphasized the need for a strategic prioritization of its work. Many Members highlighted the importance of greater Member involvement in planning and priority setting of the SCA work in the future.

5. The SCA recognized that, while focusing on key global issues, the strategic prioritization of its work should take into account regional differences in terms of assistance needed, aspects related to nutrition and food security as well as development options.

6. The SCA also emphasized the need to be responsive to the Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development to ensure greater recognition of aquaculture's vast contribution to food security.

7. Several Members encouraged the Secretariat to prepare a draft strategy paper taking into account various documents such as a) working document COFI:AQ/VI/2012/8 entitled "Toward a Plan of Action for the COFI Sub-Committee" presented at the 6th session of the SCA; b) the draft concept note prepared by the Friend's of the Chair and discussed at plenary during the 6th session of the SCA; c) relevant outputs of FAO regional conferences; d) results of previous sessions of the SCA that are considered priority areas; and e) any other relevant documents.

8. It was agreed that the aforementioned draft strategy paper should include a long-term strategic plan for further discussion at the 7th session of the SCA, which should take account of regional needs and be distributed to all Members of the SCA for comments and inputs prior to the final preparation of the working document to be presented at the seventh session of the SCA.

9. In this regard, the draft document was circulated amongst the participants who attended the last session of the SCA and was made available to countries through their representations in Rome as well as through the FAO website. The final version of the draft document, which has taken into consideration the comments received by the member countries, is presented hereby for discussion and endorsement at the seventh Session of the SCA.

Planning and priority setting of the work of FAO

10. Currently, planning and priority setting of the work in FAO is guided by the Organization's reviewed Strategic Framework 2010-19 and outline of Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2014-17 which have been considered by the 145th session of Council in December 2012. Action Plans relating to Strategic Objectives have been further refined within the MTP 2014-17 and the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2014-15, and have been approved by the Programme and Finance Committee in March 2013, by the 146th session of Council in April 2013 and by the 38th session of the Conference in June 2013³.

² COFI:AQ/VI/2012/8, also available at <http://www.fao.org/cofi/30796-08da649794279ee829b7a38ae769d263f.pdf>

³ Para 17, CL 145/4 "Reviewed Strategic Framework and outline of the Medium Term Plan 2014-17" also available at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/026/me999e.pdf>

11. Major trends have been identified which are especially relevant for agriculture⁴ and rural life. These trends define and identify major development problems that Members, FAO and the international development community will face in the immediate future. Some of the most evident and important conclusions of the trend analysis include that an increased food demand over time will have to be met, food insecurity is going to remain a major global problem, malnutrition is a growing concern, rural poverty persists, agricultural and food systems are becoming more complex, more concentrated and integrated into global value chains and agricultural trade is increasing. Also, climate change will negatively affect agriculture and rural communities which are especially vulnerable, and better governance is needed to deal with the growing complexity of development activities⁵.

12. On the basis of these conclusions, development challenges have been identified and selected as having particular significance and urgency for the Organization's Members and other development sectors. These have then been translated into five Strategic Objectives representing the main areas of work in which FAO will focus its efforts:

- 1) Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition;
- 2) Increase and improve provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner;
- 3) Reduce rural poverty;
- 4) Enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems at local, national and international levels;
- 5) Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises.

13. A sixth Objective covers the provision of technical knowledge, quality and services for the work of the Organization, encompassing core normative work.

14. In addition, two cross-cutting themes, on gender and governance will also be developed.

15. A new FAO strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations and the Private Sector is also being developed.

16. The Medium Term Plan then includes FAO's vision and three global goals as approved by the governing bodies. Further, in line with the results-based framework established in 2009, the MTP applies the principles and major elements of this framework comprising Strategic Objectives, Functional Objectives, Core Functions and Organizational Outcomes. Under the Strategic Objectives, more specific Organizational Outcomes are to be measured by indicators with targets expected to be achieved over a four-year period through the use by Members and partners of FAO's products and services.

17. It is at the level of Organizational Outcomes that the priorities expressed by the Technical Committees and the Regional Conferences⁶ are taken directly into account in formulating areas of emphasis and outputs to be produced. The latter mechanism is newly placed under FAO's Governing Bodies as a result of the International Plan of Action (IPA).

18. According to the Rules of Procedure, the five Regional Conferences for Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Near East, shall meet once every biennium in non-Conference years. They provide a forum for consultation on all matters pertaining to the mandate of the Organization within the region, including any special issues of interest to the Members in the concerned region, provide a forum for the formulation of regional positions on global policy and regulatory issues within the mandate of the Organization or having implications in respect of the

⁴ The term "agriculture" as used here covers crops, livestock, forestry, capture fisheries and aquaculture.

⁵ Para 26, CL 145/4 "Reviewed Strategic Framework and outline of the Medium Term Plan 2014-17" also available at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/026/me999e.pdf>

⁶ Note that Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs) which are developed together with the concerned governments to focus FAO's efforts on well-identified national priorities also inform the development of sub-regional and regional areas of priority action, including via the Regional Conferences and specialized Regional Commissions.

mandate and activities of the Organization, including with a view to promoting regional coherence on global policy and regulatory matters.

19. Also, they advise on and identify the special problems of their respective regions and priority areas of work which should be taken into account in the preparation of the planning, programme and budgetary documents of the Organization and suggest adjustments to these documents. They review and advise on the plans, programmes or projects carried out by the Organization which impact upon the region, and review and advise on the performance of the Organization in the region in contributing to the achievement of results against relevant performance indicators, including any pertinent evaluations⁷.

20. It is clear from these terms of reference that the importance of the Regional Conferences for the work of the Organization as a whole and for its work on aquaculture specifically cannot be overestimated. Members who wish to emphasize the development of aquaculture in their region, as has happened in three out of five regions in the last round of Regional Conferences in 2012, should therefore ensure that aquaculture becomes part of the discussion at their Regional Conference. This will raise the profile of aquaculture and will ensure that planning and prioritization within the Organization is harmonized by both Technical Committees and Regional Conferences side.

21. Another important element is that the regional fishery bodies recommendations feed directly into the Regional Conferences and therefore this is another way to promote global aquaculture and priority for the sector at the regional level.

22. Finally, the planning process outlined above translates into a biennial programme work and budget (PWB), taking into due consideration conclusions and recommendations from planning and processes such as COFI, its Sub-Committees, relevant expert consultations, the regional aquaculture networks, regional fishery bodies but also from international processes and fora including the United Nations General Assembly, the Convention on Biological Diversity, or RIO+20.

23. The expressed goal for aquaculture is for Members, civil society, and other stakeholders to benefit from an increased production of fish (aquatic animal and plants) and fish products based on sustainable and responsible expansion and intensification. This is done in the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department through (i) promoting and enhancing sustainable aquaculture practices and technologies in Member countries, (ii) developing key international norms and technical guidelines for sustainable aquaculture, available for Members to adopt and implement, (iii) promoting national aquaculture policy frameworks and strategies in Member countries, (iv) regularly analyzing and reporting on global aquaculture development status and trends, and (v) improving knowledge and information sharing amongst Members in aquaculture management and governance.

Planning and priority setting within the framework of the Sub-Committee

24. The agenda for each session of the SCA is set by the Secretariat in consultation with the Chair, taking into account established procedures and the terms of reference of the SCA with a particular view to addressing major trends and issues in global aquaculture development that require action.

25. There are several procedural items and several standing items on the agenda of the SCA. The procedural items are fixed and follow the format of the parent body of the SCA. Two standing items are included in the agenda of each session of the SCA since they require regular reporting back to the SCA. They are (i) The efforts of FAO's Fisheries and Aquaculture Department in implementing the recommendations of the past session of the COFI SCA and (ii) Progress made on the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) provisions relevant to aquaculture and culture-based fisheries.

26. Other agenda items covered in the past sessions include (i) General aquaculture status and development, (ii) Status and trends reporting, (iii) Regional aquaculture organizations, (iv) Aquaculture practices, management and resources, (v) Policy, planning, governance and

⁷ FAO 2011. Basic texts of the FAO, Vol. 1 and 2. Also available at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/022/K8024E.pdf>

socioeconomic impacts, (vi) Technical guidelines on aquaculture certification, (vii) Safety and quality of aquaculture products, and (viii) Climate change. Agenda items are usually general enough to allow for focus and more detailed discussion for more specific issues under these headings which may have particular relevance during a given period.

27. Working and information documents are prepared by the Secretariat and published on the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department's website before the Session. The working documents are then discussed during the relevant agenda item of the Session, and the SCA provides its recommendations for each item. The consolidated decisions and recommendations from the SCA are subsequently presented by the Secretariat to COFI in a report for adoption. COFI synthesizes global policy and regulatory matters for the attention of the FAO Conference, and programme and budgetary matters for the attention of the FAO Council. Recommendations are taken up, to the extent possible and feasible, and integrated into the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department's Programme of Work and Budget (PWB). In the subsequent Session of the SCA, the Department's efforts in implementing the recommendations of the past session of the COFI SCA are reported back.

28. Although this process has worked well in the past, there may be short-, medium- and long-term planning inputs by Members which could facilitate not only the selection of agenda items but also assist in identifying priority areas of action for intersessional work if resources permit. If deemed necessary, a discussion of these short-, medium- and long-term planning inputs could be facilitated during the intersessional period by the Chair of the SCA, in consultation with the FAO Secretariat. The FAO Secretariat, upon request by the SCA, could then compile and consolidate received contributions, and prepare an information document for consideration at the next session of the SCA.

29. Furthermore, as of the fourth Session in 2008 the FAO Secretariat has included a Special Event in the agenda of the SCA in order to highlight particular issues and give regional networks and selected Members the opportunity to present issues of particular global or regional significance to the SCA. Special events to date have focused on the FAO's Special Programme for Aquaculture Development in Africa (SPADA) in 2008, the Global Conference on Aquaculture: Farming the Waters for People and Food in 2010 and on Genetic Resources and Technologies in Aquaculture Development in 2012. Special Events are considered an integral part of the agenda, with preparation of a working document and full interpretation during the session, but are special in the sense that the Secretariat facilitates more active Member involvement and arranges for a limited number of regionally balanced presentations, in addition to the Members' interventions.

30. These Special Events have been well received by the SCA. At the same time, the SCA has recommended to the Secretariat that future sessions take into account regional differences in terms of assistance required, food security and nutrition aspects as well as development options in light of such differences. It may be worth considering for the SCA to use the Special Events to focus on and highlight strengths, needs and priorities for regional aquaculture development.

31. Another option for giving more opportunity to individual Members of the SCA to address issues of particular importance is the holding of Side Events at the margins of the SCA. The FAO Secretariat could facilitate the necessary logistics. The organization of the Side Event including selection of speakers and presentations would be done by the proponents with the assistance of the Secretariat. Although FAO would not be in a position to provide interpretation for Side Events, the results of such Side Events could be reported back to the plenary under an appropriate agenda item.

32. The FAO Secretariat will ensure that the agenda is aligned with the PWB and the MTP, the planning tools of the Organization. As of 2014, for aquaculture, the outcomes and activities within these planning tools will reflect the Organization's focus on the five overall strategic objectives mentioned above as well as the relevant conclusions and recommendations from COFI, its Sub-Committees, Regional Conferences and major international aquaculture events.

Towards a Global Aquaculture Advancement Partnership (GAAP) Programme

33. Since the SCA emits recommendations which have national, regional or global importance and value, it would be useful to develop mechanisms to involve the SCA and its Members in the implementation of recommendations, considering potential sharing of financial and other resources. With FAO's Regular Programme (RP) resources in the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department almost exclusively exhausted to cover human resources costs, there is an urgent need to identify extra budgetary resources in order to promote the global agenda on sustainable aquaculture development.

34. Extra budgetary resources are much needed for FAO to perform its role in accelerating the growth of aquaculture. It is evident from the recent forecasts by the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department that, by 2030, the world will need nearly an additional 50 million tonnes of supply to meet the demand for aquatic food to feed the globe. This additional supply will have to come from aquaculture. Although this is certainly a daunting task, we think this is achievable. We need a strategic framework and a platform that facilitates greater engagement by both COFI and COFI SCA as well as reinforce partnerships amongst the parties concerned aimed at strengthening the level of assistance to Members. The framework should be robust and the partnership should be innovative and effective.

35. Generating extra budgetary resources from the donor community to increase the benefit of aquaculture has been a challenging task, perhaps due to the largely private-sector driven nature of the sector and the often inadequate public-private-partnership and dialogue about its perceived risks and benefits. The critical need for a concerted effort to develop a platform for innovative and effective partnership has now become evident, and, taking relevant recommendations and advice into account that FAO received from Members and the civil society, the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department has recently conceptualized the Global Aquaculture Advancement Partnership (GAAP) Programme.

36. The objective of the GAAP programme is to promote and enhance strategic partnerships by making use of partners' technical knowledge, institutional and social development capacities and financial resources for implementing several prioritized global, regional and national-level projects that would lead to increased and sustainable global aquaculture production to match the future demand for aquatic products and contribute to the elimination of poverty and food insecurity. The GAAP programme will specifically support the FAO's five Strategic Objectives and will be in line with Objective Six and the cross cutting themes on gender and governance. The GAAP programme has a long-term perspective (10–15 years), and is prepared to follow a phased approach with the first five-year phase implementing the first batch of prioritized global and regional projects.

37. The GAAP programme is expected to bring mutual benefits to platform partners based on their comparative advantages and shared goals. For FAO, partnerships will: offer opportunities to increase the delivery of its Strategic Objectives; be an important factor in enabling prioritization of its technical work, including resource allocations, leading to cost savings and economies of scale; enable FAO to capitalize on the capacities, knowledge, skills and financial resources of partners, thereby ensuring that any assistance it provides to Member States is delivered in a coordinated and accountable way.

38. Importantly, the core funded regular programme activities of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department will continue as planned and the GAAP programme funds will be used to support additional activities within the programme itself, in a manner to foment complementary synergies. The GAAP partners, collaboration with FAO is expected to provide: increased opportunity to be heard in international policy development and standard setting processes for aquaculture, given FAO's mandate to provide access to a neutral forum for discussions with the private sector, civil society, Member States and other stakeholders; enhanced dialogue with governments and opportunity to contribute to the development of national aquaculture sector planning frameworks; participation in processes to establish aquaculture-related codes of conduct, such as for responsible fisheries and aquaculture; and access to information, capacity building, technical knowledge and expertise on key aquaculture issues.

39. An outline of the GAAP programme is provided as a Session Background Document at <http://www.fao.org/cofi/aq/en/>.

Annex. Terms of reference of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture

The Terms of Reference of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture is as follows:

The Sub-Committee shall provide a forum for consultation and discussion on aquaculture and advise COFI on technical and policy matters related to aquaculture and on the work to be performed by the Organization in the subject matter field of aquaculture. In particular the Sub-Committee shall:

- (a) identify and discuss major issues and trends in global aquaculture development;
- (b) determine those issues and trends of international importance requiring action to increase the sustainable contribution of aquaculture to food security, economic development and poverty alleviation;
- (c) recommend international action to address aquaculture development needs and, in this regard:
 - (i) to advise on mechanisms to prepare, facilitate and implement action programmes identified, as well as on the expected contribution of partners;
 - (ii) to advise on the liaison with other relevant groups and organizations with a view to promoting harmonization and endorsing policies and actions, as appropriate;
 - (iii) to advise on the strengthening of international collaboration to assist developing countries in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCCRF).
- (d) advise on the preparation of technical reviews and of issues and trends of international significance;
- (e) address any specific matters relating to aquaculture referred to it by its Members, the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) or the Director-General of FAO.