

**FIRMS Steering Committee Meeting**

**Eleventh Session**

**Rome, Italy 13-14 and 18 May 2019**

**Expression of Intent for Continued Collaboration between The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (“FAO”) and Hilborn Lab, School of Aquatic and Fisheries Sciences, University of Washington**

**Author: Ray Hilborn, Michael Melnychuk**

**Document Summary**

This document is to express the intent to continue informal collaborations between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (“FAO”) and Hilborn Lab, School of Aquatic and Fisheries Sciences, University of Washington, surrounding the Global Record of Stocks and Fisheries (GRSF), as part of the FIRMS framework, and related studies.

Expression of Intent for Continued Collaboration  
between  
The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (“FAO”)  
and  
Hilborn Lab, School of Aquatic and Fisheries Sciences, University of Washington

19 December, 2018

To our colleagues at FAO,

This letter is to express our intent to continue informal collaborations surrounding the Global Record of Stocks and Fisheries (GRSF), its part of the FIRMS framework, and related studies.

The RAM Legacy Stock Assessment Database (RLSAD) is the product of a large network of contributing scientists and researchers from around the world. This database brings together stock assessment outputs, most of which are already publicly available, and merges them with external data, applying a consistent structure and formatting. The RLSAD is provided publicly, free of charge, and without liability for the accuracy of information contained within. Since 2012, members of the Hilborn Lab have been the primary people involved with the management, administration, and development of the database. Throughout this time, upkeep and development of the RLSAD had been funded by grants to Dr. Hilborn. There is no permanent funding in place for the RLSAD, but this is a high priority project and we do not anticipate any interruptions to its continued upkeep and development for the next several years.

We initiated collaborations with FAO regarding the GRSF in 2015. Since that time we have contributed to plans for developing the GRSF, provided the RLSAD to FAO, assisted with its integration into the GRSF, and remained involved in discussions related to the GRSF. As the RLSAD is one of the three component databases of the GRSF, we realize the importance of the RLSAD to the GRSF and to the scientific studies that will ultimately stem from the GRSF. At the same time, the GRSF is beneficial to the RLSAD and our research group for several reasons: harmonizing records with FishSource and FIMRS leads to greater coverage of stocks globally, which is of value for meta-analyses; harmonizing records may also identify data entry errors or discrepancies; the GRSF will surely reach a wider audience of users; and the GRSF will provide linkages between fish stocks and fishing fleets which will be useful for evaluating impacts of fisheries on marine populations.

In addition to collaborations directly involving the GRSF, we intend to pursue other collaborations with FAO. We are currently working with FAO to develop assessment methodologies for data-limited stocks as part of the SOFIA process. We are also working on a report for FAO summarizing stock status for assessed stocks around the world. The GRSF will support these other collaborations.

While funding for upkeep and development of the RLSAD continues to be in place, we intend to continue this collaboration with FAO by providing updates of the RLSAD, assisting with its integration into the GRSF, advising on further developments of the GRSF, and promoting the GRSF. At the same time, through our own website and distribution network, we will continue to

provide the RLSAD by itself publicly, free of charge, and without liability for the accuracy of information contained within.

We look forward to continued collaborations with FAO.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ray Hilborn, Professor

Dr. Michael Melnychuk, Research Scientist