

Progress in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, related to international plans of action and strategy.

In relation to the four international plans of action (IPOAs) concluded within the Code's framework, the Committee agreed that more intensive work by Members and regional fisheries management organizations or arrangements (RFMO/As) was required to address and implement the IPOA-capacity. For the IPOA-Sharks it was apparent that countries and RFMO/As were encouraged to take further steps to achieve its goals. Similar attention was being paid to the IPOA dealing with IUU fishing through the negotiations for the development of a binding instrument on port State measures to combat IUU fishing. For the IPOA-seabirds, the Committee encouraged the Secretariat to proceed with the publication of the best practices technical guidelines.

Some Members emphasized the importance of subregional and regional cooperation in fisheries. The Committee recognize the effective working relations that FAO enjoyed with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), and encouraged such collaboration to continue especially in the areas of safety at sea, work on fishing vessels and health standard.

The Committee agreed on the importance of capacity building to assist developing countries implement the Code. It called on FAO and the international community to promote and sustain national and regional support in a range of activities including the development of database, the mounting of workshops and skills enhancement in other areas.

Decisions and recommendations of the Eleventh session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, Bremen, Germany, 3-6 June 2008.

The Committee adopted the amendments proposed by COFI:FT to the Guidelines for Ecolabelling of Fish and Fish Products from Marine Capture Fisheries. Many Member expressed that developing countries requested assistance in relation to the Guidelines, in particular for small-scale and artisanal fisheries. They also expressed concerns that ecolabelling schemes could become barriers to trade. Given that there were contrary views from Members on whether FAO should assess private ecolabelling schemes in relation to the criteria set out in the Guidelines, the FAO Legal Counsel advised the Committee that FAO traditionally had been cautious about assessing private entities' compliance with guidelines.

Decisions and recommendations of the Fourth session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, Puerto Varas, Chile, 6-10 October 2008.

The Committee recognized the ever increasing importance of the aquaculture sector, its contribution to global food production and the need for its sustainable growth in a responsible manner.

The Committee recommended that a comprehensive and strategic programme of work be developed in support of the future work of the Sub-Committee and to help measures progress. The Committee requested the Secretariat to form an Expert Group of Members to assist the process. New areas including the evaluation of alternate feeds, creation of a database on case studies on impacts of aquaculture, improvement in offshore aquaculture production, land and water resources and stock enhancement were identified as necessary to be addressed during the coming years.

The Committee requested the Secretariat to secure funding to conduct a Technical Consultation in order to develop revised draft technical guidelines.

Management of Deep-Sea Fisheries in the High Seas

The Secretariat highlighted the work undertaken by FAO since 2006 to develop International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-Sea Fisheries in the High Seas. Many Members reported on their experiences with the implementation of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Sustainable Fisheries Resolution 61/105 and the International Guidelines, noting that implementation was well underway. Some Members expressed the view that despite progress in many areas, in some cases additional efforts were required to respond fully to Resolution 61/105. Many Members, stressing that RFMO/As were playing a key role in implementing UNGA Resolution 61/105 and the International Guidelines, pointed to the need to establish new RFMO/As in area where they did not exist.

Combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, including through a legally-binding instrument on port State measures and the establishment of a global record of fishing vessels.

The Committee reaffirmed that IUU fishing remained one of the principal threats to sustainable fisheries. Many members highlighted the importance of the ongoing work regarding the negotiation of a draft legally-binding instrument on port State measures to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing.

Some members stressed the importance of jointly working to resolve issues in advance of the next session of the Technical Consultation. Members referred to their commitment to a successful outcome of the

negotiation process and stressed the importance that the resulting instrument be effective and widely accepted.

Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries: towards responsible fisheries and social development

The Committee noted the often precarious conditions of small-scale and indigenous fishing communities. Such conditions are mainly due to insecure access and user right to land and fishery resources, inadequate infrastructures facilities, high vulnerability to natural disasters and adverse impacts to climate change, risky and harsh working living conditions, inadequate access to basic social services as well as weak representation and participation in decisions affecting their lives. The Members expressed the need for an international instrument on small-scale fisheries, which could comprise a new article in the Code that would guide national and international efforts to secure sustainable small-scale fisheries.

Climate change and fisheries and aquaculture

The Committee recognize the importance of climate change and its increasing impacts on fisheries and aquaculture. Many members reported that climate change effects were already observable both in the aquatic and terrestrial environments. The Committee supported the conclusions and recommendations of the April 2008 Expert Workshop. It called on the Secretariat to play a more active role in matters relating to climate change, especially where FAO had comparative advantages such as gathering information concerning national and regional developments with regular reporting to Members.