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# FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE

## Thirty-first Session

**Voronezh, Russian Federation, 16-18 May 2018**

**Report from the Outcome of the Debate of the 5th Session of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish)**

## Executive Summary

This document presents the Final Report<sup>1</sup> of the 5th Session of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish), held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, from 10 to 12 October 2016.

The commission encouraged all countries located in the wider Central Asian and Caucasus region, which are not yet members, to become members or, alternatively, collaborate formally with the commission as observers.

The progress made on implementation of the CACFish Second Five-Year Regional Work Programme (RWP2) (2016-2020) was limited in part due to the vacancy of the CACFish Secretary post and also the limited annual budget (USD 180 000) and Member arrears, as noted by the commission.

The commission considered it important to increase the follow-up on the recommendations of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and the Regional Conference for Europe (ERC) in the CACFish area and to strengthen the position of Central Asia and the Caucasus in these forums.

<sup>1</sup> The full report with annexes is available on the FAO CACFish website ([www.fao.org/3/a-i7415b.pdf](http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7415b.pdf)).

*This document can be accessed using the Quick Response Code on this page;  
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ERC31

The commission noted the importance of assessing the impact of water management measures on the transboundary fisheries resources in the river systems of the Central Asian and Caucasus region in close coordination with the Interstate Commission for Water Coordination of Central Asia (ICWC) and other stakeholders, and identifying ways to improve fish production in these water basins.

### **Guidance sought from the Regional Conference**

The ERC is invited to review the CACFish report and:

- agree that the CACFish reports become an integral part of the ERC in an independent agenda item;
- request the ERC to identify and discuss priorities of work for fisheries and aquaculture development in the CACFish subregion in line with achieving the universal goals of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the FAO regional initiatives, for consideration by the 6th Session of CACFish, October 2018, Turkey;
- encourage relevant Members of the ERC and CACFish observer countries to announce their intention to join the commission.



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**CENTRAL ASIAN AND CAUCASUS REGIONAL FISHERIES AND  
AQUACULTURE COMMISSION**

**Report of the**

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**FIFTH SESSION OF THE CENTRAL ASIAN AND CAUCASUS REGIONAL  
FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE COMMISSION**

**Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 10-12 October 2016**



CENTRAL ASIAN AND CAUCASUS REGIONAL FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE  
COMMISSION

Report of the

FIFTH SESSION OF THE CENTRAL ASIAN AND CAUCASUS REGIONAL FISHERIES AND

AQUACULTURE COMMISSION

Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 10-12 October 2016

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Ankara 2017

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## **PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT**

This is the final and approved report of the Fifth Session of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish), which was held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan in the period 10-12 October 2016. The Session was hosted by the Government of Uzbekistan and was organized by the CACFish Secretariat with support from the FAO Subregional Office for Central Asia (SEC) and the FAO Representation in Uzbekistan.

The FAO Secretariat to the Session consisted of Raymon van Anrooy (Secretary a.i.), Haydar Fersoy (FAO consultant) and Birceyudum Eman (FAO junior technical officer). Further FAO SEC assistance was provided by Kiyal Guzel, Zarema Klicheva, Salim Zahoueh, Aijana Djusupova and Yuriko Shoji. The Alisher Shukurov and Furkat Ibragimov of the FAO Representation in Uzbekistan provided organizational and logistical assistance to the Session.

This report provides a record of the Session proceedings as well as national reports on the status of fisheries and aquaculture of most of the countries in the CACFish area that were presented at the Session. The national fisheries and aquaculture reports presented in appendix D are reproduced as submitted and are therefore only available in their original language.

**FAO 2017.**

*Report of the Fifth Session of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission, Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 10-12 October 2016*

FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Report No. 1176. Ankara

### **ABSTRACT**

The Fifth Session of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission was held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, in the period 10-12 October 2016. The following four countries attended the Session as members of the Commission: Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkey. Georgia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan attended the Session as observers. The Commission agreed to maintain its administrative budget at USD180 000 for the years 2016 and 2017. The Commission, having adopted 11 recommendations, guidelines and better management practices for inland fisheries and aquaculture in its first four sessions (2011-2015), monitored the progress made with implementation of these decisions in the region. The outcome of the monitoring exercise was that the guidelines and recommendations adopted are very relevant and that most are actively being implemented by the countries. The Commission decided to allocate more funds to implementation of its 2nd Regional Work Programme (2016-2020). Priorities for 2017 and 2018 include, amongst others: habitat rehabilitation for inland fisheries, methodologies for inland fisheries stocks assessments, development of best practices for cage aquaculture in reservoirs and lakes, capacity building of small-scale fishers, and training for the establishment of national fisheries and aquaculture data and information management systems.

## CONTENTS

	Page
Preparation of this document.....	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Opening of the session.....	1
Adoption of the agenda.....	1
Election of chairperson and vice chairpersons for the commission.....	1
Report by the secretary on the financial and administrative affairs of the Commission.....	1
Progress review of CACFish five-year regional work programme (2016-2020).....	1
Monitoring the implementation of cacfish decisions and the code of conduct for responsible fisheries in the region.....	2
Main Decisions and Recommendations From COFI 32, FAO's 30th Regional Conference for Europe and Central Asia and CACFish 4.....	2
Regional overview of inland fisheries and aquaculture: initiatives, challenges and trends	3
Commission budget and member contributions for 2016 and 2017.....	3
Programme of work for the 2016-2018 inter-sessional period.....	3
Identification of priorities for fisheries and aquaculture capacity building in CACFish member countries.....	5
Any other matters.....	5
Date and place of the next session.....	6
Adoption of the report.....	6

### Appendixes<sup>2</sup>

- A Agenda
- B List of participants
- C List of documents
- D National fisheries and aquaculture reports
- E Terms of reference-CACFish ad hoc expert working group on small-scale fisheries
- F Approved budget (2016 -2017)

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<sup>2</sup> The full English/Russian bilingual Report of the 5th Session of the CACFish including all Annexes (<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7415b.pdf>) can be found on the CACFish Web site: <http://www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/cacfish/en>



## **OPENING OF THE SESSION**

1. The Fifth Session of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission was held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, from 10 to 12 October 2016. The Session was kindly hosted by the Government of Uzbekistan. The Session was officially opened and welcomed by H.E. Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources of Uzbekistan, Mr Botirjon Sulaymonov. The Chairperson, Dr Nihat Pakdil, and the Secretary Ad Interim, Dr Raymon Van Anrooy joined in welcoming participants to the Session.

2. The following four countries attended the Session as members of the Commission: Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkey. Georgia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan attended the Session as observers. Apologies were received from Armenia. The Commission granted observer status to the Interstate Commission for Water Coordination (ICWC). The list of participants is provided in Appendix B.

## **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

3. The Commission adopted the agenda without changes as shown in Appendix A.

## **ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSONS FOR THE COMMISSION**

4. Dr Rauf Hadjiev (Azerbaijan) was elected Chairperson of the Commission. Dr Mustafa Altug Atalay (Turkey) and Ms Svetlana Balkhova (Tajikistan) were elected respectively as first and second Vice-Chairpersons. The documents presented to the Commission before the Session are listed in Appendix C.

5. Dr Nihat Pakdil, outgoing chairperson, was thanked by the Session for having served the Commission since its Inaugural Session and for having guided the Commission smoothly through its first four sessions.

## **REPORT BY THE SECRETARY ON THE FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS OF THE COMMISSION**

6. The Commission thanked the Secretariat for the preparation of the financial and administrative affairs report, presented as CACFish/V/2016/2. The Commission endorsed the report as presented.

7. The Commission noted the limited number of activities undertaken since the last Session. There was however a common view that despite some arrears there was an accumulated budget amount large enough to enable the Commission to deliver many activities.

8. The Session expressed appreciation to Turkey for the voluntary contribution in 2016 of US\$ 100 000 to the operations budget of the Commission.

9. The Commission encouraged all countries located in the wider Central Asian and Caucasus region, which aren't yet member, to become member or, alternatively, collaborate formally with the Commission as observer. Participating observers provided information on the status of the acceptance process in their respective countries.

## **PROGRESS REVIEW OF CACFISH FIVE-YEAR REGIONAL WORK PROGRAMME (2016-2020)**

10. The Commission considered the progress made with implementation of the CACFish Second Five-Year Regional Work Programme (RWP2) (2016-2020) as reported in CACFish/V/2016/3, and noted that progress was limited. It was recognized that the retirement of CACFish Secretary Mr. Thomas Moth-Poulsen and the limited budget availability under the CACFish autonomous budget, due to arrears in some member contributions, had their effect on the implementation of the RWP2.

11. The Commission further noted the internal and external dependencies of the RWP2. The effective implementation of the RWP2 depends on: (i) allocation of adequate budget for the RWP2 under the autonomous budget of the Commission; (ii) voluntary contributions to the operations budget of the Commission; and (iii) approval of the FAO-Turkey Partnership Programme (FTPP) project titled “Capacity Building for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Management in Central Asia” (FishCap).

#### **MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CACFISH DECISIONS AND THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES IN THE REGION**

12. The Secretariat introduced the document CACFish/V/2016/4.

13. The Commission thanked the members and non-members that participated in the 2015 questionnaire on implementation of Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of 2015 and the 2016 questionnaire on the implementation of CACFish Recommendations and Guidelines for their assistance.

14. The Commission noted the progress made on the implementation of the Code in the CACFish area and was pleased to see the significant progress by CACFish members and other countries in the CACFish area towards national level implementation of recommendations, Better Management Practices and guidelines prepared and endorsed by CACFish at its past four sessions.

15. Members provided information on the national-level implementation status of adopted guidelines, best management practices and recommendations and their relevance to national fisheries management and planning.

16. The Commission discussed and agreed on improvement of the format and structure of the CACFish monitoring questionnaire, through a review of the format by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and recommended that the monitoring of implementation of CACFish recommendations becomes a returning item on the CACFish session agenda. Members requested the Secretariat to facilitate the completion of the on-line bi-annual Code of Conduct monitoring questionnaire with a hand-out/guidance sheet.

#### **MAIN DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COFI 32, FAO’S 30TH REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA AND CACFISH 4**

17. The Commission took note of the decisions and recommendations of the Thirty-second Session of COFI, the Thirtieth Session of the Regional Conference for Europe and Central Asia (ERC) and the Fourth Session of CACFish, set out in CACFish/V/2016/5.

18. The Commission considered it important to increase the follow-up on the recommendations of COFI and ERC in the CACFish area and to strengthen the position of Central Asia and the Caucasus in these forums. The main recommendations from the two forums will be discussed at the CACFish Session and at the TAC meeting to increase awareness and follow-up at national and regional level.

19. It was also agreed that the CACFish chairperson (or vice-chairpersons) and the TAC chairpersons be supported by the Secretariat to effectively participate in these forums and ensure that CACFish member viewpoints and interests are brought to the attention of these forums. Moreover, the Secretariat would aim at coordinating the interventions from CACFish members, regarding fisheries and aquaculture matters, to increase harmonization and maximize impact of the interventions made.

20. The Session was briefed on the duties of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe and Central Asia (ERC) and key fisheries-related outcomes of the 30th Session of the ERC. The Session was informed that the Conference identifies the priorities for the European and Central Asian Region every biennium in all technical areas of the FAO mandate, including fisheries and aquaculture. The Commission was further informed that the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC) established a specific reporting line to the ERC and requested that CACFish reports should be considered similarly as EIFAAC and other Regional Technical Commissions.

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## **REGIONAL OVERVIEW OF INLAND FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE: INITIATIVES, CHALLENGES AND TRENDS**

21. The Commission thanked the members and observers for preparing and presenting their national reports on the status of fisheries and aquaculture. The national reports received are made available in Appendix D to this report.

22. The Commission discussed the format of the national reports and agreed to use the structure endorsed by the first meeting of the TAC for the preparation of future national reports, which should be made by each country attending the future TAC meetings and CACFish Sessions.

### **COMMISSION BUDGET AND MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2016 AND 2017**

23. The Commission reviewed the proposed first two-year (2016-17) autonomous budget with estimated budgetary expenditures, as presented in CACFish/V/2016/6 and agreed with the member contributions and maintaining the autonomous budget for 2016 and 2017 at USD 180 000 per year. The approved budget is made available in Appendix F.

24. The Commission decided that the Secretariat make the calculation of the contributions for 2016 and 2017 based on the membership and production and GDP figures respectively for 2014 and 2015.

25. It was considered to increase the overall autonomous budget of CACFish with USD 20 000 for each additional CACFish member. However, given the economic situation in some of the Member states, it was agreed to postpone a decision on this matter to the sixth Session in 2018.

26. The Commission noted the interest of various countries that are not named specifically under Article IV [Area] of the Agreement on the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission to become member.

27. In view of this increased interest and to give clarity to the potential members on the contributions expected from them, the Commission agreed to establish an ad hoc Working Group on Administrative and Financial matters, to determine the contributions to the administrative budget of the potential Commission Members that are not names under Article IV [Area] of the Agreement. The Working Group would also prepare (as necessary) amendments to the Financial Regulations in accordance with Article II paragraph 8 of the Agreement, for adoption by the sixth Session.

28. The Commission agreed to continue providing financial support for attendance of both Member States and invited States at the events of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies. In this regard the Commission decided to support financially the participations of two delegates/representatives and one representative respectively from members and invited states.

29. The Commission kindly reminded the FAO Secretariat to implement the Financial Regulations of the Commission.

### **PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE 2016-2018 INTER-SESSIONAL PERIOD**

30. The Commission considered the Draft Programme of Work of CACFish (2016–2018) set out in CACFish/V/2016/inf.5.

31. The Programme of Work approved for the intersessional period is provided below.

<b>RWP2 Ref.</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Estimated budget (USD)</b>	<b>Advice generated for TAC review and CACFish endorsement</b>
5.1	Regional expert meeting on conservation of genetic resources of fish	May 2017	Trabzon, Turkey	30 000	Recommendations on the conservation of genetic resources
1.2.4	Meeting of the regional expert group work on small- scale fisheries	TBD	TBD	30 000	Report on the status of Small-scale fisheries in Central Asia and the Caucasus
1.3	Regional training on the establishment of national fisheries and aquaculture data and information management systems	May -June 2017	Kyrgyzstan	60 000	Demonstration of a Fisheries and aquaculture management information system
3.3	Regional workshop on habitat rehabilitation for inland fisheries	April 2017	Tajikistan	40 000	Guidelines for inland fisheries habitat rehabilitation
3.1	Inland fisheries stock assessment pilot study in Tajikistan and regional training	February – August 2017	Tajikistan	50 000	Methodology for fish stock assessment in Central Asia
2.1	Regional training on best practices for cage culture in reservoirs and lakes	September/ October 2017	Turkey	50 000	Better Management Practices for cage culture in reservoirs
1.3	Analysis of available fisheries and aquaculture data and information in Central Asia and the Caucasus	January – April 2018	Regional	20 000	Report on the status of inland fisheries and aquaculture in Central Asia and the Caucasus
4.1	Harmonization of catch certification documentation in Central Asia and the Caucasus for export/import	July – November 2017	Regional	20 000	Harmonized catch certification documentation scheme
	Fourth meeting of TAC Georgia	November 2017	Georgia	50 000	
	Sixth Session of CACFish	May - June 2018	Turkey	60 000	
			<b>Total</b>	<b>410 000*</b>	

\*This budget would be financed by contributions to the autonomous budget in 2016 and 2017 and remaining budget from previous years.

32. The Commission urged FAO to complete the selection process for the Secretary to the Commission to ensure that the Programme of Work can be implemented as approved.

33. The Commission established an Expert Working Group on Small-Scale Fisheries under the TAC and reviewed and endorsed the Terms of Reference, which is provided in Appendix E.

34. The Commission noted the importance to assess the impact of water management measures on the transboundary fisheries resources in the river systems of the region in close coordination with ICWC and other stakeholders, and identify ways to improve fish production in these water basins. The Commission decided that for research projects in this field external resources should be mobilized.

### **IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITIES FOR FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE CAPACITY BUILDING IN CACFISH MEMBER COUNTRIES**

35. The Secretariat gave an update on the status of the Capacity Building for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Management in Central Asia (FishCap) project development. The Commission expressed appreciation for the work of the CACFish Secretariat, with support from FAO, for the preparation of the FishCap project, which will be proposed for funding under the second phase of the FAO-Turkey Partnership Programme (FTPP).

36. The Commission considered the FishCap project an essential contribution to the work of CACFish for the period 2017-2020 and endorsed its objectives, outcomes, outputs and activities. It was recognized that the FishCap project would enable the Commission to carry out at least one-third of its second Regional Programme of Work (2016–2020). The Commission requested the CACFish Secretariat, FAO and the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock of the Government of Turkey to propose a project with an appropriate budget for FTPP Steering Committee endorsement, to ensure implementation can start in 2017.

### **ANY OTHER MATTERS**

37. The members expressed warm appreciation to the Government of Uzbekistan and the FAO Representation in Uzbekistan for their excellent organization and hospitality that contributed to the success of the Session.

38. The Commission thanked Mr Haydar Fersoy for his commitment to the establishment of CACFish and technical support to the CACFish sessions and activities under the FishDev Central Asia project and wished him well in his new assignment for FAO at the Regional Office for the Near East.

39. The Commission requested the Secretariat to initiate collaboration with a range of regional and international organizations of relevance to the mandate of CACFish and agreed to invite the following organizations as observers to future sessions and explore the possibility to enter into partnerships through Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs):

- Commission on aquatic bioresources of the Caspian Sea
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC)
- General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)
- Interstate Commission for Water Coordination of Central Asia (ICWC)
- Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea (Tehran Convention)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

**DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION**

40. The Commission welcomed the offer made by Turkey to host the 6th session of CACFish in Izmir in May or June 2018.

41. The Commission also welcomed the offer by Georgia to host the 4th meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) in November 2017 in Tbilisi.

**ADOPTION OF THE REPORT**

42. The report was adopted on Wednesday 12 October 2016 at 11 AM.

**The Fifth Session of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission was held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, in the period 10-12 October 2016. The following four countries attended the Session as**

**members of the Commission: Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkey. Georgia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan attended the Session as observers. The Commission agreed to maintain its administrative budget at USD180 000 for the years 2016 and 2017. The Commission monitored the progress made with implementation of the 11 recommendations, guidelines and better management practices for inland fisheries and aquaculture it had adopted in its first four sessions (2011-2015). CACFish priorities for 2017 and 2018 include, amongst others: habitat rehabilitation for inland fisheries, methodologies for inland fisheries stocks assessments, development of best practices for cage aquaculture in reservoirs and lakes, capacity building of small-scale fishers, and training for the establishment of national fisheries and aquaculture data and information management systems.**



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