



منظمة الأغذية  
والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

联合国  
粮食及  
农业组织

Food  
and  
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Organisation  
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pour  
l'alimentation  
et  
l'agriculture

Organización  
de las  
Naciones  
Unidas  
para la  
Agricultura  
y la  
Alimentación

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES RESEARCH

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## WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 2002 AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR FISHERIES RESEARCH AND THE WORK OF THE FAO FISHERIES DEPARTMENT

### SUMMARY

The aim of this paper is to share the main fisheries and aquaculture-related outcomes of the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development 2002, examine their implications on the Programme of Work of the Fisheries Department and to stimulate discussions on the potential and appropriate follow-up actions. The World Summit on Sustainable Development 2002 committed itself to the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The Plan treated issues related to fisheries extensively. More emphasis was implicitly placed on marine fisheries but the Plan also stressed the importance of aquaculture development and small-scale fisheries. The role of FAO was expressly recognized and reference made to the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and its related international plans of actions and guidelines. The Plan ratified and built on commitments defined in Agenda 21 as well as the decisions adopted by the FAO Committee on Fisheries taking into account achievements already reached in their implementation. Specific deadlines were agreed on four issues: Development and Implementation of National and Regional Plans of Action to put into effect the IPOA-IUU Fishing (2004) and IPOA-Capacity (2005), Application of Ecosystem Approach (2010), Restoration of Depleted Stocks (2015) and Establishment of "representative networks" of Marine Protected Areas (2012). The Plan identified a number of actions in the area of institutional policies that will undoubtedly bolster its implementation, and highlighted as required action, the strengthening of national and regional capacity in marine science and management. There were no references to financial resources to facilitate implementation of the Plan nor were trade issues mentioned.

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## INTRODUCTION

1. The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD, South Africa, August 2002) was held to conduct a review ten years on from the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). In so doing the WSSD evaluated achievements and progress since the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development*. It identified areas of Agenda 21 where further efforts are required to implement it and where new challenges and opportunities have arisen.
2. The *Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development* offered a Political Declaration, which included a renewed political commitment to the twenty-seven Rio Principles and Agenda 21. Among other things, it welcomed stronger regional groupings and alliances that have or would promote regional cooperation, improved international co-operation and sustainable development. It committed to pay special attention to the development needs of Small Island Developing States and the Least Developed Countries, and reaffirmed the vital role of indigenous peoples in sustainable development. It recognized that sustainable development requires a long-term perspective and broad-based participation in policy formulation, decision-making and implementation at all levels. And it agreed that there is a need for private sector corporations to enforce corporate accountability within a transparent and stable regulatory environment.
3. The WSSD committed itself to the *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation* ('the Plan'), which addressed 5 priority areas: Water, Energy, Health, Agriculture and Biodiversity (WEHAB). This plan specifies 'Type 1 Outcomes' to which all participants at the Summit agreed. In addition, the WSSD addressed 'Type 2 Outcomes'<sup>1</sup> which are initiatives between two or more partners (governments, academia, industry, civil society) aimed at addressing particular sustainable development issues, often with cross-cutting links to several areas in Agenda 21.

## GENERAL CONTENTS OF THE PLAN

4. The structure of the Plan makes general reference to poverty eradication<sup>2</sup> (Chapter II); changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production (Chapter III); protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development (Chapter IV). It then sets these within the framework of sustainable development, making particular mention of this core issue in relation to a globalizing world (Chapter V) and health (Chapter VI). The Plan then goes on to frame identifiable plans for Small Island Developing States (Chapter VII), and Africa and other regional initiatives (Chapter VIII). It concludes with frameworks for the means of implementation (Chapter IX) and institutional frameworks (Chapter X), including the roles of UN bodies, regional organisations and national institutions that will be required to put the Plan into effect.

## SUMMARY OF FISHERIES ISSUES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

5. The Plan treats issues related to fisheries extensively, mainly in the Section (Chapter IV, Paragraphs 29-34) dealing with "Oceans, seas, islands and coastal areas" but also, in other sections concerning poverty eradication, small island developing States, development of national policies and plans in Africa, and promotion of programmes to enhance efficient use of water resources. Although more emphasis is placed on marine fisheries and no specific reference is made to inland fisheries, the Plan stresses the importance of aquaculture development and small-scale fisheries.
6. The Fisheries text (Chapter IV, Paragraphs 29-34) makes a mixture of statements concerning the general requirement to strengthen coordination and cooperation, in particular:

- to strengthen donor coordination and the capacities of developing countries;

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/html/sustainable\\_dev/partnership\\_initiatives.html](http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/html/sustainable_dev/partnership_initiatives.html) . There are currently 21 initiatives attached to the 'Ocean, Seas, Islands and Coastal Areas' section.

<sup>2</sup> The placing of this issue early in the implementation plan is an indication of the continued importance given to this matter by the international community. Poverty eradication has become a priority in small-scale fishing communities.

- to improve scientific understanding and address critical uncertainties; and
- to promote multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral management at all levels.

Most of these statements were made in both the Rio Principles and the Rio Declaration: they continue to inform and guide the entire mandate and work programme of the Fisheries Department.

7. The significant differences between the Rio Plan and the Johannesburg Plan is that it specifically recognises and takes into account international developments in the intervening years. Although, of course, there had been numerous developments before the Rio summit the fact that this was the first follow-up summit offered an opportunity to assess progress against the targets set by Rio. While the Plan calls generally for implementation of Agenda 21, it highlights and calls for action by States on three general fisheries themes: on international instruments, on consultation and coordination, and on specified goals developed in paragraphs 10 through 25 below.

8. In general, the Plan builds on the invocations and principles of Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration, and on the progress the international community has made in addressing them since 1992. FAO has been involved (both instrumentally and programmatically) in all three areas and the implications are that the Plan requires it to continue to address Rio Principle 7:

*“States shall cooperate in a spirit of global partnership to conserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystem. In view of the different contributions to global environmental degradation, States have common but differentiated responsibilities. The developed countries acknowledge the responsibility that they bear in the international pursuit of sustainable development in view of the pressures their societies place on the global environment and of the technologies and financial resources they command.”*

9. The three general themes outlined in the Plan are (i) the implementation of international instruments; (ii) the implementation of timelined specified goals; and (iii) institutional policies, in particular the promotion of consultation and coordination that will undoubtedly bolster its implementation.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS**

10. This issue is addressed at two levels, namely the law of the Sea, and Agreements and Plans.

11. On the Law of the Sea, the Plan calls on:

*“States to ratify or accede to and implement the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which provides the overall legal framework for ocean activities.”*  
(Para. 29 (a))

This ratification call opens the Plan's fisheries text and reaffirms the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) as the key international instrument regarding marine fisheries.

12. With regard to Agreements and Plans, the WSSD Plan of Implementation exhorts States to:

- (i) *“Ratify or accede to and effectively implement the relevant United Nations and, where appropriate, associated regional fisheries agreements or arrangements, noting in particular:*
  - *the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the*

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*Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks*<sup>3</sup>; and

- *the Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas, 1993.*<sup>4</sup> (Para. 30 (b))

This ratification call makes particular reference to the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement and the 1993 FAO Compliance Agreement, both of which were anticipated in Agenda 21. It also notes these in relation to associated regional agreements, several of which contracting parties are reviewing and strengthening the constitutions and working arrangements within the frameworks of these agreements. Some of these arrangements are under the auspices of FAO.

- (ii) *“Implement the 1995 Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, taking note of the special requirements of developing countries as noted in its article 5, and the relevant Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) international plans of action and technical guidelines.”* (Para 30 (c))

This call for implementation of the FAO Code of Conduct recognises in particular developing country needs, but also acknowledges the subsidiary progress made, since the acceptance of the Code, in defining international plans of action on specific issues and the series of Technical Guidelines that have been prepared by FAO.

- (iii) *“Implement the RAMSAR Convention, including its joint work programme with the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the programme of action called for by the International Coral Reef Initiative to strengthen joint management plans and international networking for wetland ecosystems in coastal zones, including coral reefs, mangroves, seaweed beds and tidal mud flats.”* (Para 31 (e))

This calls for implementation of two key environmental conventions established since Rio and makes particular note of the programmes for action on the coastal ecosystems becoming increasingly recognised as highly vulnerable.

### **TIMELINES FOR SPECIFIED GOALS**

13. The Plan notes the following specified goals that should be undertaken by specific dates. Many of these are being addressed in the FAO Fisheries Department’s work programme. They have been reproduced here sequentially, although they are variously placed in the Plan’s text.

- (i) *“Establish by 2004 a regular process under the United Nations for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects, both current and foreseeable, building on existing regional assessments.”* (Para 34 (b))

A global report and assessment of the marine environment that includes socio-economic aspects will have significant input on the use of the environment by fisheries. FAO produces such information in the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA), including reporting on regional assessments. This exercise would be greatly facilitated and enhanced by the adoption of the Draft Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries, as well as through FIGIS, FIRMS and the UN Atlas.

- (ii) *“Urgently develop and implement national and, where appropriate, regional plans of action, to put into effect the FAO international plans of action, in particular:*

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<sup>3</sup> Entered into force on 11 December 2001.

<sup>4</sup> So far, 22 signatories have been received of the 25 required for the instrument to enter into force.

- *The International Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity by 2005; and*
- *The International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing by 2004.*” (Para 30 (d))

This refers to all International Plans of Action (IPOAs) - the two above, plus the IPOA Seabirds and the IPOA Sharks. The Plan requires nations and regions to develop and implement the plans of action as specified in the IPOAs, and reiterates the deadlines for the IPOA Fishing Capacity and the IPOA IUU Fishing, as agreed by COFI at its Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Sessions, respectively, when these IPOAs were adopted.

- (iii) *“Encourage the application by 2010 of the ecosystem approach, noting the Reykjavik Declaration on Responsible Fisheries in the Marine Ecosystem and decision 5/6 of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.”* (Para 29 (d))

The somewhat longer deadline for the general application of the ecosystem approach (to responsible fisheries) reflects three issues that need to be addressed in the intervening period: 1) further development of the nature and implications of the approach, including the scientific, data and analytical requirements; 2) the development of conservation and management measures appropriate to the approach; and 3) the introduction of regulatory mechanisms that will be new to fishers and will have socio-economic consequences<sup>5</sup>.

- (iv) *“Develop and facilitate the use of diverse approaches and tools, including the ecosystem approach, the elimination of destructive fishing practices, the establishment of marine protected areas consistent with international law and based on scientific information, including representative networks by 2012 and time/area closures for the protection of nursery grounds and periods, proper coastal land use; and watershed planning and the integration of marine and coastal areas management into key sectors.”* (Para 31 (c))

The Plan calls for development of the scientific basis for the use of marine protected areas (MPAs) as an approach to fisheries management. It proposes a ten-year timeframe for the establishment of representative networks, which is interpreted to mean a group of MPAs that reflects ecosystem and stock types that can be used to assess this approach as an additional tool available for conservation and management.

- (v) *“Maintain or restore stocks to levels that can produce the maximum sustainable yield with the aim of achieving these goals for depleted stocks on an urgent basis and where possible not later than 2015.”* (Para 30 (a))

The timeframe for this call for all stocks to be restored to MSY by 2015 reflects the understanding that this reference point may take considerable (and variable) time to achieve, depending on the degree of depletion and the stocks involved.

## CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

14. In addressing “Consultation and Coordination”, the Implementation Plan emphasizes the need to:

- (a) *“Establish an effective, transparent and regular inter-agency coordination mechanism on ocean and coastal issues within the United Nations system.”* (Para 29 (c))

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<sup>5</sup> Draft Guidelines on Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries elaborated at the FAO organized Expert Consultation at Reykjavik, in September 2002, are available at this Session. See also COFI/2003/Inf.14.

This call for action within the UN system is placed high in the list of actions. It recognises that no single UN organization covers all ocean and coastal issues and that a mechanism for coordination between agencies should be established. Although no timeframe is attached to this establishment, it might be anticipated that this mechanism may need to be in place in order to contribute to the next report by the Commission on Sustainable Development to the Secretary-General, or to the next Global Programme of Action conference in 2006. It is likely that all UN agencies will have some contribution to make to this mechanism.

- (b) *“Take note of the work of the open-ended informal consultative process established by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 54/33 in order to facilitate the annual review by the Assembly of developments in ocean affairs and the upcoming review of its effectiveness and utility to be held at its fifty-seventh session under the terms of the above-mentioned resolution.”* (Para 29 (h))

This refers to the highest level of consultation resulting in a review of ocean affairs by the UNGA to which the FAO Fisheries Department effectively contributes. It may be that the intention of the above inter-agency coordination mechanism is to provide input both to future ocean and coastal issues, and to provide a framework against which the effectiveness and utility of the open-ended informal consultative process can be reviewed.

- (c) *“Strengthen regional cooperation and coordination between the relevant regional organizations and programmes, the UNEP regional seas programmes, regional fisheries management organizations and other regional science, health and development organizations.”* (Para 29 (f))

This recognises that progress has been made in regional cooperation and coordination (noting the regional fisheries management organisations, which FAO is closely involved with) but that this needs to be strengthened. It notes by name the UNEP regional seas programmes but also that other organisations and programmes ought to be involved in regional cooperation and coordination<sup>6</sup>.

## **OTHER IDENTIFIED ISSUES**

15. The Fisheries text of the Plan also makes reference to many other issues that have direct relevance to the Fisheries Department’s work programme, including work towards:

- the elimination of subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and to over-capacity;
- support for the sustainable development of aquaculture, including small-scale aquaculture;
- protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities;
- building capacity in marine science, information and management; and
- improving livelihoods and reducing poverty in coastal and inland communities, as appropriate, using the core tools of the sustainable livelihoods approach and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

16. In addition to these calls for action, Chapter IV makes some reference to freshwater resources in paragraph 38 (c) and (d) calling on the one hand for:

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<sup>6</sup> On the recommendation of the Ninth Session (July 2000) of the UN Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) Sub-Committee on Oceans and Coastal Areas (SOCA), UNEP and FAO jointly developed the publication “Ecosystem-Based Management of Fisheries: Opportunities and Challenges for Coordination between Marine Regional Fishery Bodies and Regional Seas Conventions”, UNEP Regional Seas Reports and Studies No. 175, 2001, 52 pp.

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*“Increase understanding of the sustainable use, protection and management of water resources to advance long-term sustainability of freshwater, coastal and marine environments.” (Para 38 (c))*

and on the other hand, exhorting the international community to:

*“Promote programmes to enhance in a sustainable manner the productivity of land and the efficient use of water resources in agriculture, forestry, wetlands, artisanal fisheries and aquaculture, especially through indigenous and local community-based approaches.” (Para 38 (d))*

17. Chapter VII, Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States makes particular note of the importance of fisheries to these States, as follows:

*“Further implement sustainable fisheries management and improve financial returns from fisheries by supporting and strengthening relevant regional fisheries management organizations, as appropriate, such as the recently established Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism and such agreements as the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.” (Para 52 (b))*

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL FISHERIES COMMUNITY**

### ***General***

18. In reaffirming Chapter 17 of Agenda 21 the *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation* subsumes all the detail contained in that Chapter. Some of the elements of Chapter 17 have, of course, been successfully implemented or are on going, such as, *inter alia*:

- the UN Fish Stocks Agreement<sup>7</sup>;
- the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF);
- amending the constitutions and mandates of FAO regional fishery bodies and seeking coordination with non-FAO bodies<sup>8</sup>;
- improving statistical and information system, including geographical information systems (FIGIS and the Atlas of the Oceans);
- re-establishment of the Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research<sup>9</sup>.

19. What remains are the evident extensions to these achievements, such as:

- Further development of IPOAs (or other instruments, such as the proposed Strategy for Status and Trends Reporting) that stem from the CCRF;
- Further developing the technical guidelines for the CCRF;
- Continuing work on all aspects of information and decision-support systems, developing national capacity in that area;

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<sup>7</sup> The South East Atlantic Fisheries Organizations (SEAFO) and the Western and Central Pacific Tuna Commission were recently established to give effect to the 1995 UN Fish Stock Agreement and to put in place regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) where none existed. Many regional fishery bodies are reviewing their mandates to take into account the provisions of this and other recently adopted instruments.

<sup>8</sup> Starting in 1999, a meeting of all regional fishery bodies and arrangements is held in the margins of the FAO Committee on Fisheries. The Third Meeting is planned for 3 and 4 March 2003. Meetings of tuna management regional fishery bodies are also a common feature since 2000.

<sup>9</sup> Formerly Advisory Committee on Marine Resources Research (ACMRR).

- Continuing developing national, subregional and regional policies, and strategies to identify and seek ways of addressing pressing issues in aquaculture;
- Effective promotion of small-scale fisheries and community-based management;
- Increased involvement in promoting strategies for improved international cooperation. In this regard, FAO's contribution may be required to develop and/or update improved strategies to address capacity building in fisheries management in developing countries.

20. The Plan identifies issues with which the Fisheries Department should be and is concerned, and which already form key elements of its work programme. However, FAO can expect an increased demand, particularly to address the needs of developing countries, in such fields as policy advice, support to small-scale fisheries, strengthening of regional fishery bodies and implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries. A greater level of activity may also be required to address the special emphasis placed by the Plan on the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and its related IPOAs, the development of regional and national plans of action as specified in IPOAs, as well as the establishment of representative networks of marine protected areas which direct usefulness for fisheries management, *stricto sensu*, will need to be analysed and enhanced. These are further developed in paragraphs 21 to 24 below. The general implication of the Plan is for:

- more participation in inter-agency consultation and coordination;
- increased contributions to reports and reviews, particularly in relation to a new UN system mechanism for reporting the state of the marine environment; and
- further assistance to regions and nations, particularly in relation to further development of regional fishery bodies, where they do not exist, and the strengthening of collaboration with the Regional Seas Programme.

### ***Time-bound goals***

21. **Representative network of Marine Protected Areas**: MPAs may or may not include fishing activities. While their usefulness for conservation of habitat and biodiversity seems well established, their specific role (and effectiveness) in relation to fisheries management needs to be specifically established, on a case-by-case basis. In no case, however, should their use detract from the fundamental priority need to address, control and in most cases reduce fishing capacity. FAO should be involved in testing them, in the field, in the context of implementing the ecosystem approach to fisheries at national or regional levels. Objective information about MPAs will be collected and distributed both through the UN Atlas of the Oceans (being developed by FAO in coordination with other UN agencies) and the FAO Fisheries Global Information System (FIGIS).

22. **Implementation of IPOAs**: Given the time frame for the two IPOAs (Fishing Capacity and IUU Fishing), FAO would intensify work on this issue, including the development of technical guidelines or checklist for the development of national and regional plans of actions, and where necessary provide detailed programmatic and project advice to individual countries and organisations. Contributing to this effort is the biannual FAO-sponsored meetings of all regional fishery bodies.

23. **Application of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF)**: Recognition has been achieved at high level that a more holistic and integrated approach to fisheries management was needed, incorporating to the conventional stock-by-stock and multispecies approaches fundamental considerations about the ecosystem, its contribution to human well-being, its natural variability or degradation. Following the Conference on Responsible Fisheries in the Marine Ecosystem (Reykjavik, Iceland, september-october 2001) FAO has developed guidelines and will closely follow the implementation of the approach, revising them as needed. FAO will also apply the approach directly through field projects, in west Africa and the Caribbean (where projects do exist) as well as in other areas or countries, on request and as funding is made available.

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24. **Restoration of depleted stocks:** FAO's contribution to maintaining or restoring stocks to a level able to produce MSY will necessarily remain at the level of monitoring, capacity-building, provision of advice and information including:

- Continued promotion of the analysis, control, and reduction of fishing capacity where appropriate;
- promotion of, and support to, fisheries and stock assessment, including in the development of decision-support information systems, assessment methodology, models and software and systems of indicators and reference points.
- training and capacity-building in the fisheries analysis (including establishment of reference points) and the ecosystem approach to fisheries management and stock-rebuilding strategies,
- global and regional monitoring and reporting on the state of fish stocks in relation to agreed reference points,,
- elaboration and dissemination of related information through FAO publications as well as the Fisheries Global Information System (FIGIS) and the UN Atlas of the Oceans.

25. The achievement of the WSSD Plan urgently requires the scheduling of financial resources, especially those needed to address the time-bound goals. Sound management and sustainable development of fisheries would require more concerted and long-term investments and could not be achieved solely through external financial assistance in the form of grants.