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REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR FISHERIES (RECOFI)

Seventh Session

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, 14–16 May 2013

Bycatch Management and Low Impact Fishing in the RECOFI region

Executive Summary

In December 2012, a regional workshop was held to bring together experts from the RECOFI countries to identify adverse impacts of fishing on the environment and to recommend / advise on the priority actions to be taken giving due regard to the regional similarity of fishing operations and nature of the problems in the region. The Regional workshop recommended that mitigating adverse impacts of fishing would best be addressed through further development and implementation of the draft regional plan of action contained in the workshop report.

The Commission is invited to:

- consider the recommendations in FAO Report FIRO/R1041 to minimize the impacts of fishing on the environment through development and implementation of a regional plan of action.
- provide guidance on the next steps that should be taken by FAO and RECOFI Member States to finalize a regional plan of action to mitigate adverse impacts of fishing; and
- consider, in particular, how best to address constraints associated with human capacity building and funding that would be essential to fully develop and effectively implement a regional plan of action.

Guidance notes for RECOFI/VII/2013 Inf. 11 FIRO/R1041**REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON BYCATCH MANAGEMENT AND LOW IMPACT FISHING**

1. At the Twenty-eighth session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) in 2009, it was agreed by the Committee that FAO should develop International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards through the process of an Expert Consultation followed by a Technical Consultation.
2. At the Twenty-ninth session of COFI in 2011, The Committee adopted the Report of the Technical Consultation to Develop International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards¹ and endorsed the International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards contained therein. The Committee further recommended that FAO provides support in capacity building and implementation of these guidelines.
3. As part of the capacity building towards implementation of the guidelines FAO has provided technical assistance to support development and implementation of global and regional projects related to bycatch management and reduction of discards through use of regular program and extra budgetary funding.
4. In December 2012, with financial and technical support from the Government of Kuwait and FAO, a regional workshop¹ was held to bring together experts from the RECOFI countries to identify adverse impacts of fishing on the environment and to recommend / advise on the priority actions to be taken giving due regard to the regional similarity of fishing operations and nature of the problems in the region.
5. The Regional workshop recommended that mitigating adverse impacts of fishing would best be addressed through further development and implementation of the draft regional plan of action contained in the workshop report.

¹ FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Report No. 1041 FIRO/R1041. Report of the *Workshop on Bycatch management and Low Impact Fishing*. Kuwait 9-12 December 2012.