

REGIONAL FISHERY BODY SECRETARIATS' NETWORK

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NEWS FROM FAO HQ

A FAO workshop for the development of a global database for vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) was conducted from 7-9 December 2011. The workshop was attended by participants from the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR); the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES); the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO); the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC); the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) and two emerging RFMO's which are both expected to come into force in 2012: the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFIC) and the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO). The meeting examined subjects such as differences in identification of VME areas; how VME areas can be registered; what type of information on VMEs should be public; what are the expectations of such a database; how will global data gaps (such as regions with no RFMO) be included in the database; who should establish and who should maintain the database. A pilot exercise was proposed which would compare a region with no current RFMO to manage demersal fisheries (such as the Indian Ocean), and regions with an existing multilateral conservation and management arrangement that has a comparatively high level of deep sea data, such as CCAMLR or NAFO.

NEWS FROM INTERIM GUINEA CURRENT COMMISSION

In IGCC/GCLME's quest to combat the depletion of marine resources and coastal area degradation in the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem region, a two day training workshop was organized in collaboration with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on Compliance, Monitoring and Enforcement (CME) of the Ballast Water Management (BWM) Convention for Flag and Port State Control officers involved in Flag and Port State Control inspections. The Workshop was held on 13-14 September 2011 in Lome, Togo. In enforcing ballast water management requirements, participants were



Participants at the regional training workshop on compliance, monitoring and enforcement (CME) of the ballast water management (BWM) convention

trained in flag and port state control inspection of national and foreign ships; how to review ballast water certificates and record books, boarding selected ships to review documents and inspect equipment, and when necessary using sanctioning powers to quarantine or fine vessels for failure to meet their legal obligations.

NEWS FROM THE EUROPEAN INLAND FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE ADVISORY COMMISSION

The Commission has undergone a restructuring process. The Twenty-sixth session of EIFAC (held in May 2010) agreed to restructure EIFAC to be a project-based organization and to abolish the Executive Committee, Sub-Commissions, Working Parties and Liaison Groups with the aim of making the Commission more efficient. The Management Committee, which replaces the Executive Committee, and the Technical and Scientific Committee are established and will operate together intersessionally to review, recommend and monitor progress on the projects. The Management Committee will have strengthened competencies and decision-making powers to administer the Commission's work between sessions. In addition, the Commission has also undergone a change of name to European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission.

NEWS FROM THE RED SEA AND GULF OF ADEN



attended by representatives from Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen.

PERSGA and FAO introduced to the meeting several options for the establishment of a regional fisheries management mechanism. The meeting reached consensus on the need to establish a regional fisheries mechanism. It was also agreed that the fisheries mechanism should have a management mandate capable of adopting measures for the sustainable management of marine fisheries and the development of aquaculture in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

The meeting agreed on the establishment of a Task Force technically supported by a joint PERSGA/FAO secretariat and coordinated by PERSGA. The meeting further agreed on the Terms of Reference for the Task Force including a work plan to be implemented during the biennium 2012-2013.

NEWS ON SUBSIDIES

A group of countries, international media and international NGOs has launched an appeal at the WTO's Eighth Ministerial Conference in Geneva for urgent action to protect global fish stocks and to reiterate the group's commitment to ambitious action concerning fisheries subsidies. "We need action on a variety of fronts, but reduction of harmful subsidies which contribute to over-fishing, is a central part of any solution," New Zealand's Minister for Fisheries, Mr Tim Groser said. The Group cited the scale of subsidization as being huge - around USD 20 billion per annum, or USD 200 billion since the Doha round began. "The countries which have signed this statement represent a diverse group of developing and developed countries. We have come together to call for urgent corrective action at all levels - national, regional and international to address harmful subsidization of the fisheries sector." Source: www.fis.com/worldnews

NEWS FROM THE PACIFIC

On 19 December 2011 the world's largest tuna fishery received certification from the Marine Stewardship Council for the free swimming skipjack purse seine caught component of the fishery. The Western and Central Pacific Ocean accounts for more than 50% of the annual global tuna catch – approximately 2.4 million tonnes annually. More than 50% of this catch is taken within the exclusive economic zones of eight Pacific Island countries which together are known as the Parties to the Nauru Agreement. The purse seine fishery accounts for 1.7 million tonnes annually – between 400,000 and 500,000 tonnes of which is skipjack taken in free swimming sets. Source: www.atuna.com

NEWS FOR THE HIGH SEAS

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) has approved a new programme to promote efficient and sustainable management of fisheries resources and biodiversity conservation in marine Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ). ABNJ make up 40 percent of the earth's surface, 64 percent of the surface of the ocean and 95 percent of its volume, and their marine resources are valued at well over US\$10 billion annually. As no one nation has sole responsibility for their management, these areas are suffering from the tragedy of the commons, resulting in the near collapse of some species of tuna, loss of marine biodiversity, and threatening marine ecosystem health and services. The new initiative, which will be coordinated by FAO, comprises four projects bringing together governments, regional fisheries management bodies, the private sector and non-governmental organizations to work together towards the sustainable use and conservation of these complex ecosystems. The four projects will cover: (1) Sustainable management of tuna fisheries; (2) Sustainable use of deep-sea living resources; (3) The Oceans Partnership Fund; and (4) Strengthening global capacity to effectively manage ABNJ. FAO will lead the tuna and capacity development projects and work with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on the deep-sea management component, while the World Bank will manage the Oceans Partnership Fund to promote public and private investment to enhance the economic and biological performance of these globally important seascapes. The GEF is providing \$50 million in grants, which is leveraging \$270 million in co-financing from public and private partners, including FAO, the World Bank, UNEP, the Tuna and Deep Sea Regional Fisheries Management Organizations, the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the International Coalition of Fisheries Associations, the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation, the South Indian Ocean Fisheries Association, Birdlife International, Conservation International, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, the World Wildlife Fund, and the Global Oceans Forum.