

Report of the

**TWENTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE COORDINATING WORKING
PARTY ON FISHERY STATISTICS**

Copenhagen, Denmark, 1–4 March 2005



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PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document is the report of the twenty-first session of the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP), held in Copenhagen, Denmark, from 1 to 4 March 2005; it includes the Summary minutes of the FIRM Steering Committee: Session 2, Copenhagen, Denmark, 25–26 February 2005, and the Report of the Workshop on the Role of Regional Fishery Bodies and the CWP in the Implementation of the FAO Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries (Strategy–STF), which took place from 28 February to 1 March 2005 in Copenhagen, Denmark.

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Report of the twenty-first session of the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics.
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ABSTRACT

The report of the twenty-first session of the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP), Copenhagen, Denmark, 1–4 March 2005, is presented. Topics discussed were: review of membership; progress since CWP-20 (from each member organization); review of the development of FIGIS and FIRMS (for information); CWP's advocacy role; review of recommendations from CWP-20; FISHSTAT; vessel size measurement for statistical purposes (Vessel length, Loa, Lp-p,); aquaculture statistics; fishery data quality indicators; recommendations relating to CWP from the FAO Expert Consultation on Data Formats and Procedures for Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (Bergen, Norway, 25–27 October 2004); and the 28 February–1 March 2005 Workshop on the Role of Regional Fishery Bodies in the Implementation of the Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries (RFB–STF Workshop).

Distribution:

FAO Fisheries Department
FAO Regional and Subregional Fishery Officers
FAO Member Countries
CWP Members
Participants

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OPENING OF THE SESSION AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

(Agenda items 1 and 2)

1. The twenty-first session of the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP-21) was held at the ICES headquarters in Copenhagen, Denmark, on 1–4 March 2005. 18 representatives of the following organizations participated in the meeting:

- Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)
- International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT)
- International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)
- International Whaling Commission (IWC)
- Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO)
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
- Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC)
- Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat)

2. Mr Hans Lassen, CWP vice-chairperson and representative of the host organization ICES, opened the meeting by welcoming the participants and explaining some of the practical arrangements. The list of participants is given in Appendix 1.

3. The proposed Agenda was reviewed. Eurostat commented that there were likely to be additional issues to be discussed under “Any other business”. With this remark, the Agenda was adopted by the meeting. The Agenda is given in Appendix 2. The List of Documents is given in Appendix 3 and a list of Acronyms and Abbreviations used in this Report is given in Appendix 8.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON

(Agenda item 3)

4. Mr Hans Lassen was unanimously elected chairperson for CWP-21 and Dr Joanne Fischer was unanimously elected vice-chairperson.

5. Ms Lena Westlund, FAO consultant, was appointed main rapporteur with other participants making written contributions on individual agenda items.

REVIEW OF CWP MEMBERSHIP

(Agenda item 4; Document CWP-21/3)

6. The sole change in membership of the CWP during the inter-sessional period was the admission of the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC). An official letter of application (dated 14 May 2004) from the Secretary-General of SEAFDEC was circulated to CWP member agencies for their consideration. After the statutory period of six months during which all responses received had been in favour of the application, the CWP Secretary informed SEAFDEC and the CWP member agencies on 23 September 2004 that SEAFDEC had become a CWP member agency.

REVIEW OF PROGRESS FROM CWP-20

(Agenda item 5)

Progress reports from each member organization

(Agenda item 5a; Documents CWP-21 Reports by Participating Organizations)

7. Member organizations had prepared comprehensive reports on their work programmes and progress since the Twentieth CWP Session (21–24 January 2003). The organizations present in the meeting made brief presentations of their reports and issues emerging from the presentations were discussed. Summaries of the reports and the related discussions are given below (full versions of the reports are available on the CWP Web site). The Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) were not present at the meeting but had submitted progress reports which are summarized below.

Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)

8. CCAMLR has undertaken further developments in fishery statistics and related information since CWP–20 in 2003. This work has included:

- the adoption of a resolution seeking further collaboration with RFMOs to reduce the incidental mortality of seabirds arising from fishing;
- the further development of the Catch Documentation Scheme for *Dissostichus* spp. (CDS);
- the implementation of a centralized Vessel Monitoring System (VMS); and
- a revision of the rules for access and use of CCAMLR data.

9. In 2004, CCAMLR adopted Resolution 22/XXIII seeking further collaboration with RFMOs to reduce the incidental mortality of seabirds arising from fishing. Specific RFMOs are encouraged to implement or develop mechanisms to require the collection, reporting and dissemination of data on incidental mortality of seabirds. For areas where such mechanisms are currently unavailable or where systematic data reporting has not commenced, Flag States fishing outside CCAMLR's Convention Area are encouraged to provide the CCAMLR Secretariat with summary data on the incidental take of seabirds of species breeding in Statistical Areas 48, 58 or 88.

10. The CDS has been extended through the introduction of electronic, Web-based catch and export documentation and the addition of landing and trade statistics derived from the Scheme in the CCAMLR Statistical Bulletin.

11. A centralized VMS was established in the CCAMLR Secretariat in 2004 and Contracting Parties are required to report the six-hourly positions of their flag vessels operating in finfish fisheries inside the Convention Area. Position reports are required to be forwarded to the Secretariat in real-time for those vessels participating in new and exploratory fisheries, and on departure from the Convention Area for other fisheries.

12. In 2003, the rules for the access and use of CCAMLR data were revised. The underlying principles were retained and the conditions under which data may be exchanged within CCAMLR or used outside of CCAMLR were clarified. Access and use of CDS and VMS data were also considered; these data may be released to CCAMLR Members only under restricted circumstances.

Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT)

13. The CCSBT Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBF) Statistical Document Program (SDP) continues to operate. Summaries of the SDP data are now published on the CCSBT web site and are updated on a six monthly basis. The SDP has also been modified to incorporate minimum standards that specify the responsibilities of exporters, importers and the CCSBT Secretariat in relation completion of the documents and the action required in response to missing or inaccurate information.

14. At its annual meeting in October 2003, the CCSBT agreed to a resolution to establish a list of vessels over 24 metres in length which are approved to fish for SBT. The list came into effect on 1 July 2004 and can be accessed from the CCSBT web site. At its annual meeting in October 2004, the CCSBT amended the resolution to remove the 24-metre threshold with effect from 1 July 2005. The purpose of the amendment is to strengthen the vessel list as a fishery management measure by extending coverage to small longliners, which are fishing outside the CCSBT's management and conservation objectives.

15. Standards for CCSBT Scientific Observer programs were finalized in October 2003. These standards include information on the type of data that should be collected by such programs.

16. The CCSBT developed education pamphlets on seabirds and sharks in 4 languages (English, Japanese, Mandarin and Korean) and distributed these to SBF fishers. The seabird pamphlet was designed as a guide to reduce the incidental seabird catch in the SBF longline fisheries, and the shark pamphlet was designed as a handbook on sharks caught in the SBF fishing grounds.

17. Considerable progress was made in populating CCSBT's database of historical SBF catch effort, catch by fleet and catch at size data since CWP-20. This centralized database was used as the baseline stock assessment data for the first time¹ in the stock assessment conducted by CCSBT in 2004.

18. CCSBT has cooperated with FAO in the development of FIRMS. CCSBT signed the FIRMS partnership agreement in December 2003 and as part of this agreement, submitted a global southern bluefin tuna stock fact sheet² and SBF nominal catch data to FIGIS in late 2004. Most of this nominal catch data is now also available from the CCSBT web site. At the time of writing this report, the stock fact sheet submitted by CCSBT had yet to be moved to the public side of FIGIS due to technical issues within FIGIS.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

19. The FAO fishery statistical programme was undertaken by a staff of four statisticians and eight statistical support staff. Although there was less staff turn-over than in previous years, some changes did occur. In February 2003 a new officer was recruited to the post of Aquaculture Statistician, after an extensive vacancy. In 2004 one support post was lost due to the budget cuts and organizational policy on such posts. One new professional post (fleet statistician) was established with relevant professional duties in replacement of a support post vacated in 2002. However the post is not yet encumbered, and given the tight budgetary situation may have to be abolished. Following the retirement of the incumbent in December

¹ Instead of using datasets held by individual members.

² The stock fact sheet is based upon a summary stock status report that CCSBT produced for the first time in 2004 to provide to other RFMO's with an interest in SBF. This will be updated on an annual basis.

2004, the Senior Fishery Statistician post become vacant but it is expected that the replacement process will be completed in the first half of 2005. The current FAO Human Resources policy that includes a gradual decrease in the number of support staff coupled with other personnel policies that do not permit the easy recruitment of junior staff, and continuing budgetary constraints are a source of concern as in the long run they may prejudice the current structure of the programme and its ability to continue to maintain the current work programme. However in 2003–2004 a satisfactory level of output was maintained, due also to some input from temporary staff and consultants.

20. The annual statistical programme, whose output is widely used internally and externally for global analyses and policy and trend studies, included the updating of the major databases:

- Capture fishery production volume (global and regional for the GFCM – Mediterranean, CECAF – Eastern-Central Atlantic, the Southeast Atlantic)
- Aquaculture production (volume and value)
- Production and trade of fishery commodities
- Fishing fleet
- Number of fishers
- Supply/Utilization Accounts

21. In 2004, the statistical group contributed very extensively to the preparation of the 2004 edition of SOFIA (The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture) which is the FAO Fishery Department's flagship publication. SOFIA draws very heavily on FAO fishery statistics.

22. Strengthened support to capacity-building for fishery statistics is expected from the launching in November 2004 of a project (FishCode–STF) under the FishCode Programme in support of implementation of the Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries (Strategy–STF) which was adopted by FAO Members and endorsed by the UN General Assembly in 2003.

23. External statistical and information inquiries (an average in-flow of 4-5 per day) are handled through a specific e-mail account - FIDI-Inquiries@fao.org - on a daily basis.

24. Major achievements in the FAO fishery statistics programme in 2003 and 2004 included:

- consolidation of the historical time series;
- fine-tuning of the system of electronic questionnaires;
- the finalization of a revised *CWP Handbook of Fishery Statistical Standards* (that supersedes the *CWP Handbook of Fishery Statistics*).

25. The thorough revision of the fleet statistics system which was restructured to make full use of national and international vessels registers for estimating missing values.

26. Improvements on aspects of data processing concentrated on the development of the fishing fleet system as an Oracle database, and on the migration of capture fisheries and aquaculture databases to the same environment. Collaboration with the FIGIS project in this respect has continued to require the redefining of priorities.

27. Methodological work on data quality has continued. The CWP Handbook was completed with the inclusion of commodity classifications, indicative conversion factors from product to live weight and improvements to selected chapters (e.g. methodology, fishing fleet) of the former draft edition. Some progress on methodologies was achieved also through discussions at regional workshops, and participation to statistical meetings of Regional Fishery Bodies, and through collaboration with agricultural statisticians. Matters related to the improved identification of fishery and aquaculture within broad economic classifications have been discussed also with the United Nations Statistical Division.

28. Areas in which no satisfactory progress can be reported include: the systematic inclusion of the value of landings in the inquiry and database, the revision of nutritional factors and their more detailed accounting, the improvement of inland fisheries statistics and the integration of structural aquaculture data in the database.

Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)

29. The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) has changed its main data systems to SQL-based operation. This change has resulted in modifications to statistical data processing and trend reporting of interest to CWP.

30. The new system readily integrates data from either scientific observer or logbook data into analyses, and observer data will be the primary source of catch information. Strata of 5° latitude by 5° longitude by month are used for public domain data. In future, catch and effort data at public domain resolution, as well as adjusted estimates of catch by flag by gear will be provided as raised data that have been adjusted to reflect sampled estimates of species composition.

31. The IATTC has entered into a FIRMS partnership agreement and has identified species and stocks on which it initially will report. Cooperative reporting arrangements have been reached with Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) for various species.

32. The IATTC is investigating compilation of a consolidated global vessel list for tuna fishing vessels in collaboration with other regional fisheries bodies concerned with fisheries for tuna and tuna-like species.

33. The IATTC continues to work with the SPC and the Forum Fisheries Agency to pursue harmonization of data collection standards for fisheries which capture tunas in the Pacific. Further harmonization efforts are expected as the new Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission develops its working priorities.

34. The IATTC has modified its document series reporting the status and trends in fisheries. It now includes a synopsis as the Fisheries Status Report (e.g. <http://www.iattc.org/PDFFiles2/FisheryStatusReport2.pdf>) designed to address the needs of the Commission, the general public and those looking for the principal information in synthesized format on which to base discussions of conservation and management requirements. Detailed information and presentation of scientific analyses is now presented separately in Stock Status Reports, which may also be found on line at the IATTC Web site.

International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT)

35. The ICCAT relational database is now fully operational and it contains all Task-I (Nominal catch) Task-II (catch and effort and size sampling) and other specific databases like catch at size, catch distribution in smaller area, trade statistics, etc.

36. With the adoption of a data exchange protocol, various electronic forms were created and a framework was developed for reading, validating and integrating all statistical data received. Within this protocol a very strict rule was established to document the changes of historical catches before examination by species group and incorporating those changes into the database.

37. Following the good results of the work carried out by FAO-FIDI and the ICCAT Secretariat to reduce the discrepancies between FAO and ICCAT on tunas catches in the Mediterranean Sea, the ICCAT scientific Committee asked the authors to conduct the same work for the Atlantic Ocean.

38. According to the statistical documents of bluefin, bigeye and swordfish and other trade data, the Secretariat continues to estimate the unreported catches (N.E.I.) for those three species. Also trade fin data from Hong Kong was used to construct a more accurate catches during the assessment conducted last year (2004) for blue shark and shortfin mako as the information reported to ICCAT and others agencies was very incomplete.

39. Considering that collection and submission of accurate fishery data is essential for the assessment and the management and a fundamental responsibility for the fishing parties, the Commission decided to have a special fund from voluntary basis for capacity-building related to data collection and quality insurance.

40. An ambitious proposal to re-publish the ICCAT field manual to extend to current scope (centred mainly to collection of fishery statistics) to biological sampling is in process.

International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)

41. ICES Fisheries Statistical Programme 2003–2005 includes the following activities:
- Eurostat and ICES signed in 2003 a partnership agreement which allows Eurostat and ICES to supplement each other and to hold a common database – residing with Eurostat – with STATLANT data for area 27. ICES will cease to publish fisheries statistical data on a CD and refer users to the Eurostat and FAO Web sites. ICES maintain contact with those countries that do not through EU membership or EEA arrangements report data to Eurostat. These countries include Faeroe Islands, Greenland, and Russia;
 - Eurostat, IBSFC, NEAFC and ICES have revised the division/subdivision split of Area 27. The system of divisions and subdivisions are shown on three maps attached in Appendix 4-A.
 - ICES initiated in 2004 a project aimed at converting the fisheries statistical data prior to 1973 to electronic form. The data will be included in the Eurostat database year by year starting with the most recent years and working backward. The earliest data that exist in the ICES database are for 1903;
 - ICES has continued its programme on reporting preliminary data for selected species. These data are required for fish stock assessment purposes;

- The ICES secretariat was thoroughly reorganized in 2004 and all data handling including the fisheries statistics is now under a single unit, the Data Centre.

42. ICES together with OSPAR is currently developing ecosystem indicators and the associated objectives, the so-called CWP-21 Quality Objectives (EQOs). ICES has analysed the usefulness of several lists of CWP-21 Quality Objectives that are identified for each area. On this basis ICES has proposed the following ten EQO issues as a basic set, i.e:

| Issue | Ecological quality element |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Commercial fish species | (a) Spawning stock biomass of commercial fish species in the North Sea |
| 2. Threatened and declining species | (b) Presence and extent of threatened and declining species in the North Sea |
| 3. Sea mammals | (c) Seal population trends in the North Sea (d) Utilization of seal breeding sites in the North Sea (e) By-catch of harbour porpoises |
| 4. Seabirds | (f) Proportion of oiled Common Guillemots among those found dead or dying on beaches (g) Mercury concentrations in seabird eggs and feathers (h) Organochlorine concentrations in seabird eggs (i) Plastic particles in stomachs of seabirds (j) Local sand-eel availability to black-legged Kittiwakes (k) Seabird population trends as an index of seabird community health |
| 5. Fish communities | (l) Changes in the proportion of large fish and hence the average weight and average maximum length of the fish community |
| 6. Benthic communities | (m) Changes/kills in zoobenthos in relation to eutrophication (n) Imposex in dogwhelks (<i>Nucella lapillus</i>) (o) Density of sensitive (e.g., fragile) species (p) Density of opportunistic species |
| 7. Plankton communities | (q) Phytoplankton chlorophyll <i>a</i> (r) Phytoplankton indicator species for eutrophication |
| 8. Habitats | (s) Restore and/or maintain habitat quality |
| 9. Nutrient budgets and production | (t) Winter nutrient (DIN and DIP) concentrations |
| 10. Oxygen consumption | (u) Oxygen |

Source: Table 2.1.7.1.1.1 from the 2004 ICES advisory report Volume 1 book 1. The table shows the ten CWP-21 components or "Issues", among the 21 associated Ecological Quality elements agreed by the Fifth North Sea Conference. Those elements for which EcoQOs have been set, and which are included in the North Sea pilot project, are shown in bold font.

43. It has to be recognized that fisheries or, for example, environment issues no longer can be considered in isolation from other sectors. Indicators and data collection systems need to reflect this development and several organizations are increasingly working towards ecosystem based sustainability indicators. It is, however, a complex approach. Difficulties include, for example, how different indicators should be weighed when creating a composite index.

International Whaling Commission (IWC)

44. The environment in which the IWC operates continues to be dominated by the moratorium on commercial whaling that has been in place since 1986. Annual data for all known catches worldwide continue to be collected.

45. In addition to the large whale individual catch database, which it has been developing over many years, the IWC has recently created a summary database of all whaling expeditions since 1900, which will be an important tool in stock assessment work. It is intended to make the new database available on the IWC web site shortly.

46. The IWC Scientific Committee has identified the incidental capture of cetaceans in fishing gear as an important threat to the conservation and management of cetacean populations. The IWC has recently begun developing a program for ascertaining levels of incidental catch including a collaboration with FAO to investigate fishery data that may allow better estimates of large whale bycatch. The IWC also intends to hold a methodological workshop in May 2005 to evaluate whether market data can be used to provide reliable estimates of bycatches and in the future to co-ordinate a series of broad-based regional workshops focusing on regions with significant bycatch problems.

47. There is no restriction on access to the basic catch data that is required to be collected and provided to the IWC. A Data Access Protocol was developed last year to cover other data used by the IWC Scientific Committee, and the protocol has worked well in its first year. Details are given in CWP 21/IWC.

48. In the absence of commercial whaling there is currently no monitoring of an observer scheme or of vessels. The IWC has continued its discussions of the Revised Management Scheme that must be in place before the moratorium can be lifted. The discussions include an improved observer scheme, vessel monitoring systems and additional catch verification schemes, to combat IUU whaling and/or unreported bycatches, including diagnostic DNA registers and market sampling of meat products.

Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO)

49. Since 2002, the Scientific Council has hosted 2 symposia ("Elasmobranch Fisheries: Managing for Sustainable Use and Biodiversity Conservation" and "The CWP-21 of the Flemish Cap") that are being published in the NAFO Journal (<http://journal.nafo.int>). In addition, a Workshop on "Mapping and Geostatistical Methods for Fisheries Stock Assessments" took place in 2003 (NAFO SCS Doc. 03/13).

50. In 2004 NAFO Fisheries Commission adopted a Precautionary Approach Framework that had been elaborated by Scientific Council. The NAFO Vessel Monitoring System has been strengthened within NAFO with position reports sent every two hours instead of the previous every 6 hours. Also, a Pilot Project on Observers, Satellite Tracking and Electronic Reporting has been introduced in 2004 that involves real time daily catch reports sent through the VMS (see the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures on the NAFO Web site www.nafo.int).

51. Regarding fisheries statistical data, NAFO does not receive all data in a timely and complete manner and in addition, reliability of statistical data was questioned by Scientific

Council in 2004. The STATLANT data submission underwent some minor modification since 2002.

52. In 2004 NAFO signed the FIRMS Partnership agreement. NAFO has signed an agreement of cooperation with ICES and has two joint NAFO/ICES groups: one on harp and hooded seals, the other on shrimp assessment.

53. All current and recent NAFO publications can be accessed through the NAFO Web site: www.nafo.int. Archives are restricted due to a lack of space on the server but older documents can be requested via email (fperry@nafo.int or bcrawford@nafo.int). The electronic version of the NAFO Journal has its own Web site (journal.nafo.int).

54. Following NAFO's report on the Elasmobranch symposium, the meeting discussed improvements in shark data reporting. The development was encouraging with all concerned RFBS reporting on improved species details.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

55. For the past couple of years statistical work of the OECD Fisheries Committee, supported by the Fisheries Division, has concentrated on two main lines i.e. the continuation and improvements to the statistical series collected as part of the *Review of Fisheries*, and a specialized database on government financial transfers.

56. Work on the *Review of Fisheries* continued to ensure the statistical coverage of all OECD countries on landings (landings abroad and in domestic ports including value of landings), trade, fleet and fishermen (employment), aquaculture and quota/TAC allocations, government financial transfers. The latest publication issued in early 2004 contains a data series for the years 2000 to 2002; a planned update, covering the years 2001 to 2003 is scheduled for release early in 2005. Data cover most OECD countries with fisheries interests and one observer country i.e. Argentina. Over the past year, a major effort has been invested into ensuring that a database was built that could make analytical work easier. The database, built in an ACCESS framework, is still being tested.

57. During 2003 and 2004 the decision was also taken to move the available data to a public on-line web site with easy access via www.oecd.org/agr/fish. In the future, data will automatically be moved to that on line data facility once the published material has been made available. The OECD's analytical work on the economics of fisheries asks for a number of specialized data sets to be created in support of such work. In particular, this has been the case for the work on government financial transfers where the main focus over the past years has been to analyse the transfers for their possible impacts with a sustainable development paradigm. To this end the OECD Secretariat has collected and organized a wide range of transfer information from member countries and in support of this built a specific database on government financial transfers. As the analytical work on government financial transfers is moving towards ending in 2005, work on the database is presently being consolidated and refined with a view to provide maximum analytical value. Once final (towards end 2005) it may be expected that this database also be moved to the publicly accessible Web site.

58. The *Multilingual Dictionary for Fish and Fish Products* is presently undergoing a slight revision as Korean will be included; the Dictionary will then comprise twenty

languages. Work on updating the Dictionary is likely to be finished during the first half of 2005. At that time it will be decided if the Dictionary will be made available on-line.

Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)

59. The Oceanic Fisheries Programme (OFP) of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) is responsible for compiling and disseminating data on tuna fisheries in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO), shown in Figure 1. The data compiled by the OFP Statistics and Monitoring Section are used primarily for monitoring trends in catch and effort, and for research conducted by the OFP Stock Assessment and Modelling Section, the Tuna Ecology and Biology Section, and by external scientists.

60. Some highlights from the intersessional period are the following:

- Compilation of annual catch estimates from Indonesia and the Philippines, which represent about 20 percent of the catch of pelagic tuna in the WCPO, continues to be problematic. However, the situation is expected to improve with the Indonesia and Philippines Data Collection Project, which has been developed by the Preparatory Conference for the Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific, and managed by SPC. Funds are being used for port sampling and commercial and municipal landing surveys in the Philippines during 2005 and 2006. Additional funds may be raised to establish a port sampling programme in eastern Indonesia in 2006.
- The Sixth Meeting of the SPC/FFA Tuna Fishery Data Collection Committee was held from 16 to 20 November 2004 in Brisbane, Australia. The meeting reviewed data collection forms, the status of sampling programmes, and sampling protocols.
- It was reported to at CWP-20 that the WCPO Tuna Bulletin, which presents monthly catch and effort statistics for certain fleets, would be published only on the SPC/OFP Web site and no longer be made available in hardcopy. The same decision has been taken in regard to the SPC Tuna Fishery Yearbook. Both are available via the link below:

<http://www.spc.int/oceanfish/docs/statistics/index.asp>

- The inaugural meeting of the Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific — the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) — was held from 9 to 10 December 2004 in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia. Among other decisions taken at the inaugural meeting, the Commission adopted the recommendation of the Preparatory Conference that the headquarters of the Commission shall be in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia.
- The Standing Committee on Tuna and Billfish ceased to exist at the close of its seventeenth and final meeting in August 2004, and the WCPFC Scientific Committee will hold its inaugural meeting from 8 to 19 August 2005 at SPC headquarters in Noumea, New Caledonia. The working groups of the Scientific Committee will be the same as those for the SCTB, e.g., Statistics, Methods, Fishing Technology, Stock Assessment, Biology, and CWP-21 and Bycatch. The Scientific Committee will address several data-related tasks at its inaugural and subsequent meetings.

- The SPC Oceanic Fisheries Programme will play a key role in the scientific work of the Commission during the transitional period (expected to last some three to five years and representing the period between the Convention coming into force and a fully functioning Commission), including data management. An assessment of the costs and benefits of utilising the capabilities of the OFP for providing the data management functions of the Commission during the transitional period and in the long-term will be conducted. As data manager for the Commission, the OFP will be responsible for compiling tuna fisheries data for the Commission's Convention Area, also shown in Figure 1.

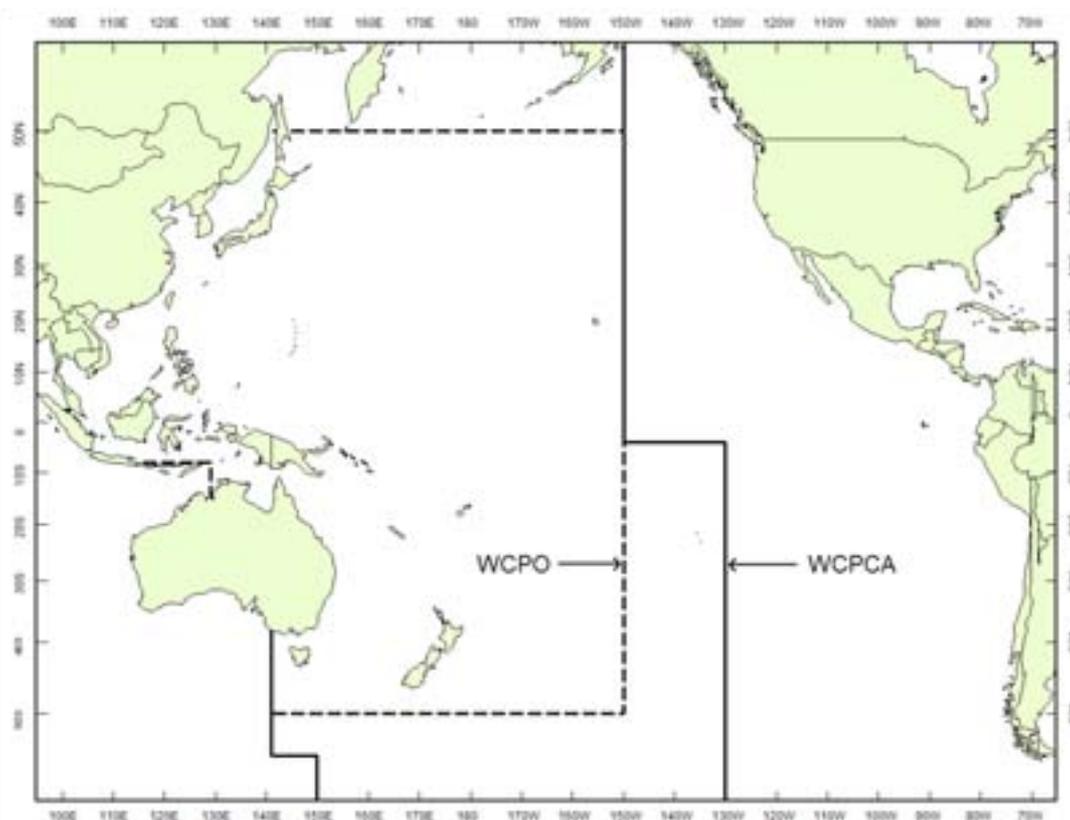


Figure 1. The Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) area established for statistical purposes by the Standing Committee on Tuna and Billfish, and the Convention Area of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPA)

Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC)

61. SEAFDEC has been providing assistance to the ASEAN Member Countries in the implementation of the Resolution and Plan of Action adopted at the Millennium Conference in 2001 on the priority issues on the necessity to improve fishery statistics and information systems as a tool for planning and management of fisheries as an important basis and prerequisite to tackle the various problems toward the sustainable fisheries and food security.

62. During 2003 to February 2005, activities and achievements on fishery statistics and information have been promoted in the Southeast Asian Region by SEAFDEC in collaboration with the Member Countries as follows:

- New Geographical Coverage of “SEAFDEC Fishery Statistical Bulletin for the Southeast Asian Region” to cover all ASEAN Member Countries and revised framework in harmonization with FAO as well as classifications and definitions of fishery statistics to be consistent with international standards.
- Partnership to FIRMS.
- Membership to CWP.
- Establishment of SEAFDEC National Focal Points on Fishery Statistics.
- Implementation of the Project on “Improvement of Fishery Statistical Systems and Mechanisms” - Component 1 “Capacity Building for the Improvement of the Fishery Statistical System in the ASEAN Region”. Several activities were conducted, starting from the First ASEAN-SEAFDEC Regional Technical Consultation (RTC) on Fishery Statistics, the National Workshop on Fishery Statistics and Two On-site Trainings in each CLMV Countries.
- Development of the Standard Training Package on Fishery Statistics.
- Development of the Regional Handbook on Collecting Fishery Statistics for Inland and Coastal Fisheries.
- Implementation of the Project on “Improvement of Fishery Statistical Systems and Mechanisms” – Component 2 “Improvement of Fishery Statistical Systems and Mechanisms in the ASEAN Region”. The Core Expert Meeting on Fishery Statistics was organized with objectives to discuss and develop the draft Minimum Requirements and Framework of the New SEAFDEC Bulletin, the new Draft of the Regional Guidelines on Fishery Statistics in Southeast Asia.
- The FAO-SEAFDEC Regional Workshop on the Improvement of Fishery Data and Information Collection Systems. The joint workshop was co-organized with the view to achieve the ultimate goal for the improvement of national fishery statistical systems as a tool for fishery planning and management, which in line with the Resolution and Plan of Action and the promotion of the implementation of the Strategy–STF. The Workshop made the following conclusions:
 - Recommendations for future implementation of the FAO FishCode–STF Project.
 - Follow-up actions for finalization of the Minimum Requirements and Framework of the Fishery Statistical Bulletin for the Southeast Asian Region.
 - Draft Regional Guidelines on Fishery Statistics in Southeast Asia for further finalization in consultation with the Member Countries.
 - Agreed Proposal on Streamline Reporting of Fishery Statistics of fishery statistics by the Southeast Asian countries to FAO and SEAFDEC and the follow-up actions to be proceeded for further streamline reporting of fishery statistics from the Member Countries to SEAFDEC and FAO.

63. SEAFDEC informed the CWP21 on the new proposed project on “Improvement of Statistics and Information for Planning and Management of Fisheries in the ASEAN Region” that was agreed at the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Regional Planning Meeting organized in February 2005, to be implemented under the Special 5-year Program on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security in the ASEAN Region from 2006–2010. This is to continue providing assistance to the ASEAN Member Countries in the implementation of the Resolution and Plan of Action adopted at the Millennium Conference in 2001 on the necessity to improve fishery statistics and information systems as a tool for planning and management of fisheries. SEAFDEC would like to invite and welcome cooperation from the CWP and the RFBs Members in the implementation of activities under the new project.

64. There is an issue proposed for consideration and seeking advice from the CWP-21 on the process and requirement regarding the proposed adjustment of Geographical Areas for Fishery Statistics Reporting under the new Framework of SEAFDEC Bulletin. This matter will be further formalized after seeking formal confirmation from Indonesia, Malaysia and Viet Nam on the proposed adjustment of the demarcation line in between Areas 71 and 57 for the Malaysian waters in the Malacca Strait by using demarcation of east and west coast Peninsular Malaysia as well as Areas 71 and 61 for the Tonkin Gulf by using the Vietnam-China boundaries.

Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat)

65. The main developments in Eurostat's programme of work since CWP-21 have been:

- the major policy change under which Eurostat's data are disseminated free-of-charge and the subsequent access to its databases by the general public through its Web site;
- the development of the Eurostat/ICES Partnership Agreement under which Eurostat processes all the catch statistics for the NE Atlantic, maintains the single data-base of such data, data are exchanged between the two organizations in the FISHSTAT Plus format, the two organizations collaborate in mutually beneficial projects (e.g. the computerization of ICES's extensive hard-copy archived catch statistics) and the organizations hold joint sessions of their respective statistical working groups;
- in collaboration with ICES, NEAFC and IBSFC, the introduction of new Community legislation improving the statistical breakdown of the fishing areas for the NE Atlantic;
- the introduction of a new trial questionnaire on employment in the fisheries sector;
- a study of the feasibility of establishing supply balance sheets for fishery products using existing data available to Eurostat;
- a relaxation in the rules of confidentiality facilitating the dissemination of the contents of Eurostat's Statistical Register of Fishing Vessels.

66. Eurostat advised the meeting that a new fish species database is under development. The database will contain the official names of all species mentioned in EU fisheries legislation in all official EU languages. The objective of the database is to promote harmonization of the use of species names in legal and other official documents. On this issue, OECD informed the meeting that they also are in the process of updating and computerising the OECD's Multilingual Dictionary for Fish and Fish Products. The OECD's dictionary is designed for commercial purposes and is hence structured in a different way from the one being developed by Eurostat. Many meeting participants are actively using dictionaries in their work and the usefulness of these tools was acknowledged.

Review of recommendations from CWP-20 (Agenda item 5d; Document CWP-21/4)

67. The meeting discussed the progress made with regard to the recommendations of the Twentieth CWP Session by reviewing the document CWP-21/4 in which the relevant paragraphs from the CWP-20 report are replicated together with comments on progress.

68. On the issue of the preparation of more field guides for the identification of elasmobranchs (para. 30), it was noted that FAO has published two guides, one for the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden and one for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. A total of 111 fact sheets on elasmobranch species have also been made available by SIDP on the FAO/FIGIS Web site.

69. The proposal to harmonize FAO and SEAFDEC statistical reporting in the Southeast Asia region (para. 38) was discussed in the FAO-SEAFDEC workshop in Bali in February 2005. The suggestion was welcomed by the ASEAN-SEAFDEC member countries and the aim is to introduce harmonized reporting systems as of 2006.

70. The recommended work on comparing the characteristics of general purpose fishery data systems in use or under development by RFBs has not yet been undertaken due to shortage of funds. CWP believes it would be useful to carry out the activity and it may be possible to hold a workshop on the matter under the FishCode–STF Project.

71. On the issue of submission of trade document information to RFBs (para. 57), it was agreed that the recommendation should be retained by the CWP-21. ICCAT and IATTC informed the meeting that they do receive export/import information in a summarized form and that work is in process to improve trade reporting. In relation to this matter, CCAMLR, ICCAT and IATTC reported that systems are in place requiring catch documentation for producers to obtain permission to trade products. ICCAT also informed the meeting that the organization will hold a workshop in April 2005 in Tokyo, Japan, to review the statistical monitoring programs. All tuna RFBs are invited to participate in the meeting.

72. The clarification of certain statistical terms (para. 63) has been addressed in the CWP Handbook of Statistical Standards by including the term “gross removals” in the Catch Concepts diagram and the term Gross Catch in the relevant text.

73. With regard to the change of boundary lines of statistical areas (para. 78), two changes were discussed (in addition to the modifications in the ICES areas discussed in paragraph 40 above) and the conclusions below were reached. It was noted that the changes would require adjustments of historical data sets.

- The modification of the border between areas 47 and 51 is expected to be discussed in the first meeting of the SEAFO’s Scientific Committee (likely to be held in 2005).
- Following the discussion in the recent FAO-SEAFDEC Workshop, changes are proposed to the boundaries of major fishing areas 61 and 71 and between 57 and 71. The meeting advised SEAFDEC to confirm the acceptance of the proposed change with the concerned member countries and to submit a formal request for modification to the next CWP meeting.

74. Concerning the dissemination of the CWP Handbook (para. 87), the meeting was informed that the document has been revised since CWP-20 and that it is now available on the FAO/FIGIS Web site. Only a limited number of copies have been printed for the CWP-21 meeting and it is not the intention of FAO to distribute hard copies. Also, due to budget constraints, the handbook will initially only be available in English.

75. The meeting decided that the remaining action paragraphs from the CWP-20 report included in the document CWP-21/4 would be discussed in connection with other related agenda items.

CWP's advocacy role

(Agenda item 5c)

76. As a follow-up to discussions in CWP-20, the question of whether CWP should assume a more active advocacy role was considered again. The agreement in CWP-20 was that while CWP should promote improvements in fishery statistics, a more pro-active approach was not felt to be appropriate. This sentiment was reconfirmed and it was agreed CWP should continue to seize opportunities and use them judiciously to exercise influence and give advice as appropriate. It was also agreed that a CWP statement should be prepared for the FAO COFI meeting by the vice-chairperson and that CWP should be represented at COFI and the RFB meetings by the vice-chairperson (see Appendix 5).

FISHSTAT

(Agenda item 5e)

77. A project is underway to develop a new version of the FAO FISHSTAT software. A preliminary version of FISHSTAT 3.0 was presented to CWP-20. However, most CWP member users are satisfied with FISHSTAT 2.3 even though the programme has some weaknesses, i.e. problems of installation on new Windows platforms and difficulties when setting up new datasets. If and when a new version is developed, the meeting recommended that the user interface should not be changed substantially and that the new software should be thoroughly tested before being distributed.

78. The meeting was asked about the usefulness of the different functions available in FISHSTAT 2.3. A group of meeting participants reviewed this question in more detail and arrived at the following conclusions:

- The data extraction handling facilities constitute the most useful feature of FishStat. The standard groups and customized groupings are deemed very useful as is the copy-paste facility into Excel. In addition to the grand total, sub-totals could be added. The averaging function is episodically used. Flag symbols are used together with filtering and sorting functions, both very useful for extraction.
- Regarding usability aspects, the user interface is generally highly rated. The various features such as visual assistance for species group definition and item selection, or for exploration of long time series on the screen, as well as multiple ways to handle commands (menu, short key, right click) are much appreciated noticeably for switching instantaneously from species common names to scientific names.
- The embedded graphing facility appears not be used.
- Some problems were highlighted: the custom settings (groups, views) unfortunately disappear each time data sets are updated. The users should be encouraged to read dataset notes since this is the place where data set peculiarities (such as "there is no overlap of data between Canada/Maritime, Canada/Quebec, and Canada/Maritime and Quebec") are documented.
- Routine dataset updates are handled by a very restricted set of people and do not pose any problem. Adding new datasets with similar structure to those existing or updating the existing structure may require some time (Eurostat recently added the NewCronos database). Adding new datasets may prove to be impossible without the assistance of a skilled developer. Plans for new datasets are: IATTC intends to disseminate its

capture statistics through Fishstat; FIDI would like to add the FAO food balance sheet time series.

Review of the development of FIGIS and FIRMS

(Agenda item 5b; Document Minutes of FIRMS Steering Committee meeting)

79. The Second Session of the FIRMS Steering Committee (FSC2) took place on 25-26 February 2005. The FIRMS Secretariat, five Partner agencies (IATTC, ICES, ICCAT, SEAFDEC, and NAFO), and one observer agency (CCAMLR) were represented. Two new Partners, NAFO and SEAFDEC, signed the agreement during the inter-session thus bringing the current Partnership to 8 members. CCAMLR and Eurostat are in the final stages of signing the FIRMS Partnership Arrangement. IWC informed the meeting that the organization is considering joining FIRMS.

80. The summary minutes of the meeting are included in Appendix 6 herein.

81. Referring to the recommendation in paragraph 75 of the CWP-20 report on the distinction between the roles of the CWP and the FIRMS Steering Committee (FSC), it was noted that the CWP and FSC are trying to ensure that these distinct roles are maintained.

REPORT OF THE RFB–STF WORKSHOP (28 February–1 March 2005)

(Agenda item 7, Document CWP-21/6)

82. The Workshop on the Role of Regional Fishery Bodies in Implementation of the FAO Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries (RFB-STF Workshop) was held prior to the Twenty-first CWP Session on 28 February–1 March 2005. Its objective was to discuss the roles of CWP and RFBs in the implementation of the Strategy–STF and to identify possible partnership activities.

83. The Workshop was attended by ten participants from RFBs and FAO who made the following recommendations with regard to future partnership activities:

- The FishCode–STF Project and FAO should assist RFBs in increasing the awareness of the importance of the implementation of the STF Strategy.
- The FishCode–STF Project and FAO, together with the RFBs, should stress the importance of and promote actions on transparent and complete national data collection of fisheries.
- The FishCode–STF Project should cooperate with RFBs on the carrying out of inventories of data collection systems and status of stocks, in particular in supporting their contribution to FIRMS.
- FishCode–STF Project should seek collaboration with interested RFBs for the development of monitoring systems for small-scale fisheries in developing countries. All RFBs may assist with the identification of expertise for technical assistance.
- The FishCode–STF Project should consider developing guidelines for the establishment of data exchange protocols based on the CWP handbook on fisheries statistical standards.

84. CWP accepted the report and agreed that the recommendations in paragraph 83 above should be taken further. The main text of the Workshop report is included in Appendix 7 herein.

AQUACULTURE STATISTICS

(Agenda item 6)

85. FAO presented key activities and issues concerning statistics for aquaculture. Two meetings held at FAO in 2004 concerning aquaculture were discussed. The Expert Consultation on Improving Reporting on Status and Trends for Aquaculture took place on 20-23 January 2004, and was followed by the Working Group of Experts on the FAO Aquaculture Questionnaire “FISHSTAT AQ” on 26-28 January 2004. These meetings and the adoption of a draft strategy for improving status and trends reporting for aquaculture are seen as the beginning of a process parallel to that done for capture fisheries. The Expert Consultation identified the following six thematic areas as important for reporting on aquaculture status and trends:

1. Production (species, quantities, values, areas)
2. Resource use and environmental management
3. Contribution to poverty alleviation and improving livelihoods
4. Contribution to food security and food demand
5. Contribution to national economies and trade
6. Development of institutions to support responsible development of aquaculture

86. Recognizing that this represented a large expansion in the scope of required data, methods for obtaining these additional data were discussed including FAO questionnaires, special studies, regional organizations, or other means such as national aquaculture sectoral overviews. However, the Working Group acknowledged that the information sought on the FISHSTAT AQ should not be substantially increased. The revised questionnaire will be introduced within three years.

87. Another recommendation from the Expert Consultation was the formation of an advisory body for issues in aquaculture data and statistics, much as the CWP functions for capture fisheries. The CWP session discussed the possibilities for such a committee – in particular, whether this could be assumed within the existing CWP mission, or whether a sub-committee of the CWP, or an entirely new body, should be formed. After an informal polling of the members on their interest and relevance to aquaculture, the CWP agreed that for the present time the best solution was to have an interested subgroup of the CWP perform this function.

88. The meeting was informed of the FAO strategy for including the collection of aquaculture data in the next (2010) program of the World Census of Agriculture (WCA). The WCA will be composed of a core questionnaire with subject area “modules”, including aquaculture. Countries could choose different levels of participation depending on cost and the national priorities. At a minimum, the core questionnaire would establish the presence or absence of aquaculture on the agricultural holding, with the module for aquaculture conducted if there is a positive response. A more comprehensive proposal in terms of coverage of aquaculture would be to include aquaculture – only holdings in the sampling universe for the census – i.e. to expand the concept of an “agriculture holding”. Additionally, the census could be used to create the sampling frame for subject-area surveys.

89. The complexities involved in obtaining accurate statistics for capture-based aquaculture (tuna-farming being the most prominent current example) were discussed. The

CWP reaffirmed the concept of separating the capture and aquaculture components of capture-based aquaculture, while acknowledging the difficulties involved in collecting the data. The CWP was informed of the activities of the GFCM/ICCAT Ad Hoc Working Group on Tuna Farming and the development of guidelines to be completed imminently.

90. Possible use of a “capture-based aquaculture” worksheet to accompany the FISHSTAT AQ was discussed, with the idea that such a worksheet could reinforce the accepted definitions among data providers. It was agreed that activities in this area should be coordinated among the interested organizations. Eurostat informed the CWP meeting concerning of the proposed revision to aquaculture legislation and the attempts to assure compatibility with FAO data collections.

VESSEL SIZE MEASUREMENTS FOR STATISTICAL PURPOSES

(Agenda item 8; Document CWP-21/Inf 2)

91. IATTC introduced the topic of length as a measurement of vessel size. Length, together with tonnage and horsepower, are the common elements of a vessel description. Each of these measurements can be defined in different ways and the definitions vary considerably according to the administrations requesting the information from vessel owners and builders. International conventions are also using different measurements.

92. The meeting discussed the various aspects of the different measurements. It was concluded that length was a commonly used measurement for smaller vessels and also an easier measurement than tonnage for larger vessels. FAO had recently changed its reporting requirements to include length instead of tonnage for vessel data since information on length is generally more readily available. However, the meeting made no recommendation as to which measurement – length, tonnage or horsepower – should be used generally.

93. CWP agreed to accept the proposal made by IATTC that when length is used, the measurement should be “length overall” (LOA) according to the following definition:

Length overall is defined as the distance measured in metres in a straight line on a line parallel to the design waterline between the foremost point of the bow and the aftermost point of the stern. For the purpose of this definition:

- a) the bow is taken to include the watertight hull structure, the forecastle, stem and forward bulwark, if fitted, but not to include bowsprits and safety rail.*
- b) the stern is taken to include the watertight hull structure, transom, poop, trawl ramp and bulwark, but does not include safety rails, bumkins, propulsion machinery, rudders and steering gear, and divers’ ladders and platforms.*

94. On the issue of vessel classifications, FAO presented a new proposal on the outstanding issue of multipurpose vessels based on earlier proposals discussed by the CWP. After discussing several alternatives, CWP agreed to use the following vessel categories:

- Dredgers
- Gillnetters
- Longliners
- Lift netters
- Multipurpose vessels:
 - Multipurpose trawlers (in combination with longline, trap, gillnet, dredge)
 - Purse seine/pelagic trawlers
 - Multipurpose non trawlers (longline, gillnet, trap)

- Purse seiners
- Seiners
- Trap setters
- Trawlers
- Other fishing vessels

This is the final step of the revision initiated at CWP-19 and the meeting agreed that the proposal, together with those already endorsed by CWP-19 and CWP-20, become the new International Standard Statistical Classification of Fishing Vessels (ISSCFV – 2005). This new classification will be updated in the “CWP Handbook of fishery statistical standards”, and a parallel revision and reprint of the FAO Fisheries Technical Paper number 267 "Definition and Classification of fishery vessel types" will be required.

95. It was noted that classification of vessels according to gear used can be difficult. In particular smaller vessels, i.e. under 24 metres, tend to be multipurpose and are reported as such.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FAO EXPERT CONSULTATION ON DATA FORMATS AND PROCEDURES FOR MONITORING, CONTROL AND SURVEILLANCE (MCS)

(Agenda item 9, Document CWP-21/5)

96. FAO explained the background of the Expert Consultation on Data Formats and Procedures for Monitoring, Control and Surveillance, held in Bergen, Norway, 25-27 October 2004, and gave a summary of the conclusions and recommendations.

97. The FAO Expert Consultation was convened on the recommendation made by COFI (FAO Committee on Fisheries) in 2003, and aimed at facilitating the implementation of the IPOA on IUU fishing. With the increased use of electronic logbooks and VMS, it was felt that there is a need to harmonize data formats and procedures for internationally exchanged MCS information. The Consultation concluded that the CWP was the most appropriate body to advise on these issues and a number of recommendations were put forward for the consideration of the CWP. These recommendations are given in the document CWP-21/5³ and summarized below together with the responses by the CWP-21 meeting.

98. The FAO Expert Consultation recommended that, when establishing MCS data formats and procedures, the use of international codes and standards recommended by CWP should be applied when possible (para. 6 of FAO Fisheries Report No. 167). The meeting noted this recommendation, directed mainly to States.

99. Concerning the recommendation by the FAO Expert Consultation that the CWP should establish procedures for the proposal and adoption of internationally accepted MCS data formats and procedures (para. 8), the meeting clarified that there are procedures in place for recommending standards. Proposals submitted are discussed by the CWP in their regular or inter-sessional meetings and recommendations are subsequently communicated by the CWP members to their member states for consideration. The role of CWP does not cover the

³ The full text of the Expert Consultation has been distributed to CWP members and is published in FAO Fisheries Report No. 167.

adoption of recommendations; decisions on adoption are made by the individual RFBs and member states.

100. It was noted by the FAO Expert Consultation that the knowledge of CWP among fisheries experts and officials appears limited and it was recommended that measures should be taken to increase the awareness of CWP (para. 9). The meeting agreed with this conclusion and it was recommended that CWP members should work towards giving CWP more visibility. IATTC also suggested that RFBs that are not yet members should be contacted and invited to join CWP. A comprehensive list of RFBs is provided in Appendix 9.

101. The meeting noted the recommendation by the FAO Expert Consultation that FAO should prepare, and make available, tables indicating the correspondence between codes in different schemes with a view to harmonize such codes (para. 10). It was felt that the recommendation was directed to FAO but that it would be appropriate to disseminate this type of information through the CWP channels, e.g. the CWP Web site. It was noted that the CWP Handbook of Fishery Statistical Standards already contains some code conversion tables.

102. One of the most important recommendations made by the FAO Expert Consultation concerned the adoption of the North Atlantic Format (NAF)⁴ for developing international standards for VMS position and catch reporting (para. 11). CWP received a letter from NEAFC informing the meeting on the establishment of a NEAFC Advisory Group for Data Communications. The group will have its first initial meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland, in April 2005 and will be open for participation by IGOs. CWP encourages its members to participate in the process of developing NAF noting that, in addition to NEAFC, NAFO and CCAMLR are already actively involved.

103. In conclusion, it was agreed that the CWP was not currently in a position to review and possibly recommend NAF as a standard, particularly since the instrument is not yet fully developed. It was also agreed to establish an inter-sessional electronic working group consisting of all CWP members and coordinated by NAFO. The working group was asked to propose possible amendments to the present NAF that would ensure its usefulness for assessment and scientific purposes. The results will be made available to NEAFC Advisory Group and discussed in CWP-22.

104. The recommendation by the FAO Expert Consultation to harmonize fields and codes in vessel databases relates to a similar recommendation made by CWP-20 (para. 69 of document CWP-21/4). Some time ago, FAO circulated a proposal for a common format for vessel records to CWP members but no response has been received so far. The meeting agreed that efforts should continue to achieve a common format and that the recommendation of CWP-20 should be retained.

105. In this context, the difficulty of evaluating compliance was discussed and it was noted that organizations apply varying criteria in this work. The Technical Consultation on the IPOAs on IUU fishing and fishing capacity recommended FAO to establish a so-called "black-list". The meeting concluded that CWP cannot contribute to such a list as RFBs have differing approaches to black-listing of vessels.

⁴ Details of the NAF can be found at <http://www.neafc.org/measurements/docs/Scheme-2005.pdf> and on <http://www.nafo.int> under NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (CEM).

106. The meeting noted the FAO Expert Consultation's recommendation that CWP adopt the UN-LOCODE⁵ as a standard for identification of fishing ports (para. 13). The meeting agreed that RFBs should study the proposed code system and the matter will be included in the agenda of CWP-22 for further discussion in 2007.

107. With regard to the recommendation on CWP's involvement in MCS operational matters, i.e. on standards for international exchange of information on vessel authorizations and on definitions of fisheries violations and related codes, the FAO Expert Consultation noted that addressing the recommendation would require a review of the CWP mandate (para. 14). The meeting felt that this was not desirable at the moment and agreed to support the work of other agencies.

108. Referring to the overall outcome of the FAO Expert Consultation on data formats and procedures for MCS, the meeting was informed that CCAMLR believes that the CWP's expertise would be helpful in developing standardized/harmonized formats for MCS-type data. However, much of the CWP's contribution will need to wait until further work is undertaken by RFBs, other fishery agencies and technical consultations to:

- establish common objectives for MCS;
- complete the overall framework on catch certification harmonization;
- establish methods to assess compliance (e.g. compliance with conservation measures).

109. The meeting discussed various positions that CWP could take with regard to the recommendations. It was felt that CWP should not be directly involved in MCS or legal matters as such but that there are elements of MCS that are of relevance to the work of CWP. Moreover, it was pointed out that, although VMS is currently mainly used for MCS purposes, the system could also be used for generating data for assessment of stocks and fisheries as well as for other scientific purposes. The meeting recognized that, in addition to not falling strictly under the CWP mandate, CWP does not have the technical expertise required for dealing with many of the technical MCS matters. The possibility of cooperating with other organizations on aspects of MCS that do not fall within the current mandate of CWP was discussed. The International Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Network for Fisheries Related Activities (MCS Network)⁶ was identified as a possible partner. The meeting agreed that CWP should take the initiative to contact the MCS Network with the aim to conduct a joint workshop during the intersessional period in which the recommendations of the FAO Expert Consultation be reviewed in order to establish if there are recommendations that MCS Network would like to follow up.

FISHERY DATA QUALITY INDICATORS

(Agenda item 10; Document CWP-21/7)

110. FAO introduced the agenda item on fishery data quality indicators by explaining that the document CWP-21/7, Fisheries Data Quality: Review of progress and possible approaches to addressing data quality and cost-effectiveness, had been further revised since it was last discussed in the CWP intersessional meeting.

⁵ More information on the UN-LOCODES is available on <http://www.unece.org/etrades/download/downloadmain.htm#edifact>.

⁶ The Web site is <http://www.imcsnet.org>.

111. The document consists of two parts, a review of current issues and programmes, and a section proposing actions for FAO's continued work. FAO suggested that the review part of the document be published as a FAO Fisheries Circular or similar document. It was pointed out that some time had passed since the draft was prepared and that it may need further revision. It was agreed that OECD and Eurostat would review relevant sections of the document and provide comments to FAO by 1 July 2005 after which the report will be published. FAO was requested to ensure that the date of the preparation of the text clearly appears on the document.

112. With reference to descriptions of data quality indicators given in the review of the report, the CWP noted that independence is an important principle of data quality. Eurostat informed the meeting of work carried out on quality assessments, including, among other things, timeliness, and offered to circulate relevant documents to the CWP members.

113. With regard to the continuation of FAO's work on fishery data quality, the report gives suggestions for "Next steps" covering three phases. These three phases covered the establishment of a working group, the organization of an Expert Consultation and a process of ACFR review.

114. The activities are suggested within the framework of the Strategy STF. Paragraphs 39 and 40 of the Strategy STF state that FAO should develop practical guidelines for quality assurance, transparency and confidentiality.

115. The meeting discussed the difficulty of defining quality and how this should be dealt with in the process of developing practical guidelines. ICES explained that the organization has several working groups working on issues related to data quality. The experience is that data quality is context dependent and that the quality requirements depend on the end use of the data, including the objectives of the users. Recognising this, the meeting recommended that FAO reverse the order of the first two phases of the proposed activities:

- Phase 1: Organization of an Expert Consultation to further develop objectives and outcomes, and assist in capacity building.
- Phase 2: Establishment of a working group for addressing data quality indicators, metadata and data systems; methodologies for an evaluation and assessment approach; and assessment of cost-effectiveness.
- Phase 3: ACFR review of progress.

It was felt that the overall framework and specifications of relevant data quality situations should be discussed in an Expert Consultation before more detailed work was proposed to a working group.

116. FAO aims at having the draft guidelines ready for review by the Twenty-second Session of the CWP in 2007.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR CWP-22

117. The next Intersessional CWP meeting will be hosted by ICCAT and held in Madrid in February or March 2006. The meeting thanked ICCAT for the invitation. In connection with the CWP intersessional meeting, a FIGIS-FIRMS meeting will also be organized. The combined duration of the two meetings is expected not to exceed three days.

118. FAO offered to host the Twenty-second CWP Session and the meeting gratefully accepted the invitation. It was agreed that the meeting should be held in the week before COFI, at the end of February or early March 2007.

119. Referring to a letter received from Eurostat, the meeting discussed the possibility of reducing the duration of the CWP sessions. It was agreed that the Secretariat should aim at holding the CWP Session, the FIRMS Steering Committee meeting and any related workshop during the same week, i.e. in a maximum of five working days. It was also noted that the agenda should include detailed annotations clearly indicating the matters to be discussed. Such annotations will facilitate a better understanding by external parties of the duration of the meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Concept of protocols for data exchange

120. With reference to the Strategy–STF framework, and seeking to ensure that CWP members have a common understanding of the concept of Protocols for data exchange, FAO gave a presentation on what this concept would embrace. Data exchange protocols should cover the three following issues: consistency of definitions between data provider and data integrator, transmission channels, and ownership including integration and access rules. The presentation stressed that the “CWP Handbook of fishery statistical standards” covers rather well the definitions including glossary of terms, classifications, and reference metadata. The issue of transmission channels are only partially covered in the CWP Handbook with presentation of formats used to report statistics. With increasing use of internet technology and considering the various options offered (emails, data download, on-line editing, file upload, dynamic data extraction), the Handbook should be expanded to better cover transmission mechanisms.

121. The CWP Handbook at present does not really cover the issues related to ownership and the related property rights, including agreement between the provider and recipient parties on the integration process (e.g. degree of modification authorized on the source data and conditions under which such modification can arise) on the application of quality indicators (e.g. to qualify the quality of the integrator system and of its source components according to integrator data quality requirements), relevant usage to be made of integrated data (e.g. aggregation rules or levels authorized, search options, indicators which can be calculated), and dissemination formats made available to clients. Reference was made to FIRMS Information Management Policy which essentially aims at covering these data ownership aspects. In conclusion, the handbook could be further developed to cover these missing points, and organized in such a way to provide modular access to those various components (or building blocks) of a data exchange protocol. Such facility would constitute an appreciable web-service to fisheries information networks such as FIRMS which should ensure consistent presentation of their protocols.

122. The CWP members confirmed that they shared the understanding of the concept of data exchange protocol given in paragraphs 120-121 above. It was recommended that this concept as presented here be included in the Fisheries Data Quality indicator development framework (see paragraphs 110-116 above).

Other issues

123. Eurostat mentioned the usefulness of the FAO Fishery Country Profiles which, however, in many cases are out of date. Eurostat and OECD offered to assist FAO in updating the profiles using information from their databases and acting contact points for relevant national authorities.

124. Eurostat pointed out that when modifications are made by RFBs or other agencies to data received from member states on the FISHSTAT or STATLANT questionnaires, it is important to inform the relevant authorities in the member state of the change. An incident with data reported to and modified by FAO was mentioned as an example and Eurostat urged the CWP members to ensure that proper procedures are followed. ICES reported to have similar experiences, also involving problems of data inconsistencies when databases are not updated simultaneously. CWP agreed that such procedures should be followed.

ADOPTION OF REPORT OF CWP-21 AND CLOSURE OF MEETING

125. This report was adopted on 4 March 2005. Items requiring action are collated in Appendix 10. The meeting participants expressed their appreciation to ICES for the organization of the meeting and the hospitality shown. The chairperson thanked the CWP members for their participation and the meeting was closed.

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AGENDA

1. Opening and welcome, practical arrangements
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair
4. Review of membership
5. Progress since CWP-20
 - a. Progress report from each member organization
 - b. Review of the development of FIGIS and FIRMS [for information]
 - c. CWP's advocacy role
 - d. Review of progress with recommendations from CWP-20
 - e. FISHSTAT
6. Vessel size measurement for statistical purposes (Vessel length, Loa, Lp-p,)
7. Aquaculture statistics
8. Fishery Data Quality Indicators
9. Recommendations relating to CWP from the FAO Expert Consultation on Data Formats and Procedures for Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (Bergen, Norway, 25–27 October 2004).
10. Report of the Workshop 28 February–1 March on: Implementation of the Strategy–STF
11. Arrangements for CWP-22 (Time and Venue)
12. Any other business
13. Adoption of Report of CWP-21
14. Closing of the meeting

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

| | | |
|----------|-------------|--|
| CWP-21/A | Secretariat | General Announcement |
| B | Secretariat | Provisional Agenda |
| C | Secretariat | Provisional Annotated Agenda and Timetable |
| D | Secretariat | Provisional List of Documents |
| E | Secretariat | Provisional List of Participants |
| F | Secretariat | CWP Sessions: Dates, venues, etc. |
| G | Secretariat | List of Acronyms |

Documents from the Secretariat addressing agenda items 3-5

| | | |
|----------|-------------|--|
| CWP-21/1 | Secretariat | Report of the Twentieth Session of the CWP. Victoria, Seychelles. 21–24 January 2003 |
| 2 | Secretariat | Report of the CWP-ISM. Rome, Italy. 3 and 5 February 2004 |
| 3 | Secretariat | Changes in Membership of the CWP |
| 4 | Secretariat | Review of Recommendations from CWP-20 |
| 5 | Secretariat | Recommendations relating to CWP from the FAO |
| 6 | Secretariat | Report of the Workshop 28 February–1 March 2005 on: Implementation of the Strategy – STF |
| 7 | Secretariat | Fisheries Data Quality Indicators: Review of progress |

Documents from Participating Organizations addressing agenda items 6-18

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| CWP-21/CCAMLR | Paper from CCAMLR |
| CWP-21/CCSBT | Paper from CCSBT |
| CWP-21/Eurostat | Paper from Eurostat |
| CWP-21/FAO | Paper from FAO |
| CWP-21/IATTC | Paper from IATTC |
| CWP-21/ICCAT | Paper from ICCAT |
| CWP-21/ICES | Paper from ICES |
| CWP-21/IWC | Paper from IWC |
| CWP-21/NAFO | Paper from NAFO |
| CWP-21/OECD | Paper from OECD |
| CWP-21/SEAFDEC | Paper from SEAFDEC |
| CWP-21/SPC | Paper from SPC |

CWP-21 Information Documents

| | |
|--------------|--|
| CWP-21/Inf.1 | Bergen Report: Expert Consultation on Data Formats and Procedures for Monitoring, Control and Surveillance. Bergen, 25–27 October 2004 |
| CWP-21/Inf.2 | Definition of Vessel Length Overall |

NEW DIVISIONS OF AREA 27

Figure A. Overview of the revised divisions and subdivisions. The changes concern the introduction of the NEAFC convention areas I, II and III as separate divisions and a split of the Baltic Sea Subdivision 28 in an open part and in the Gulf of Riga. Details of the boundaries around the Azores are disputed and may be revised.

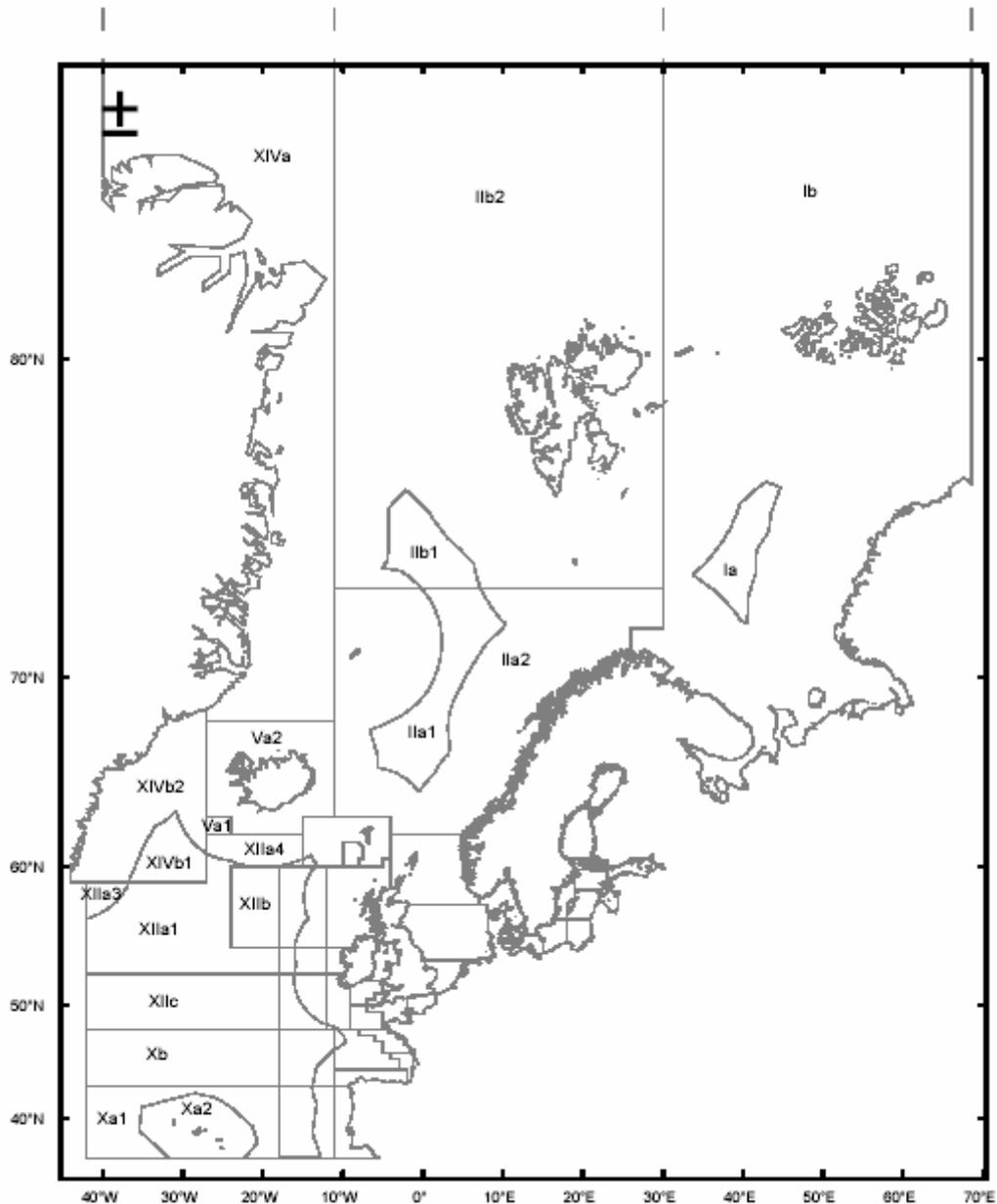


Figure B. Subdivisions in the Baltic Sea. Note that the former Division IIIId is now defunct.

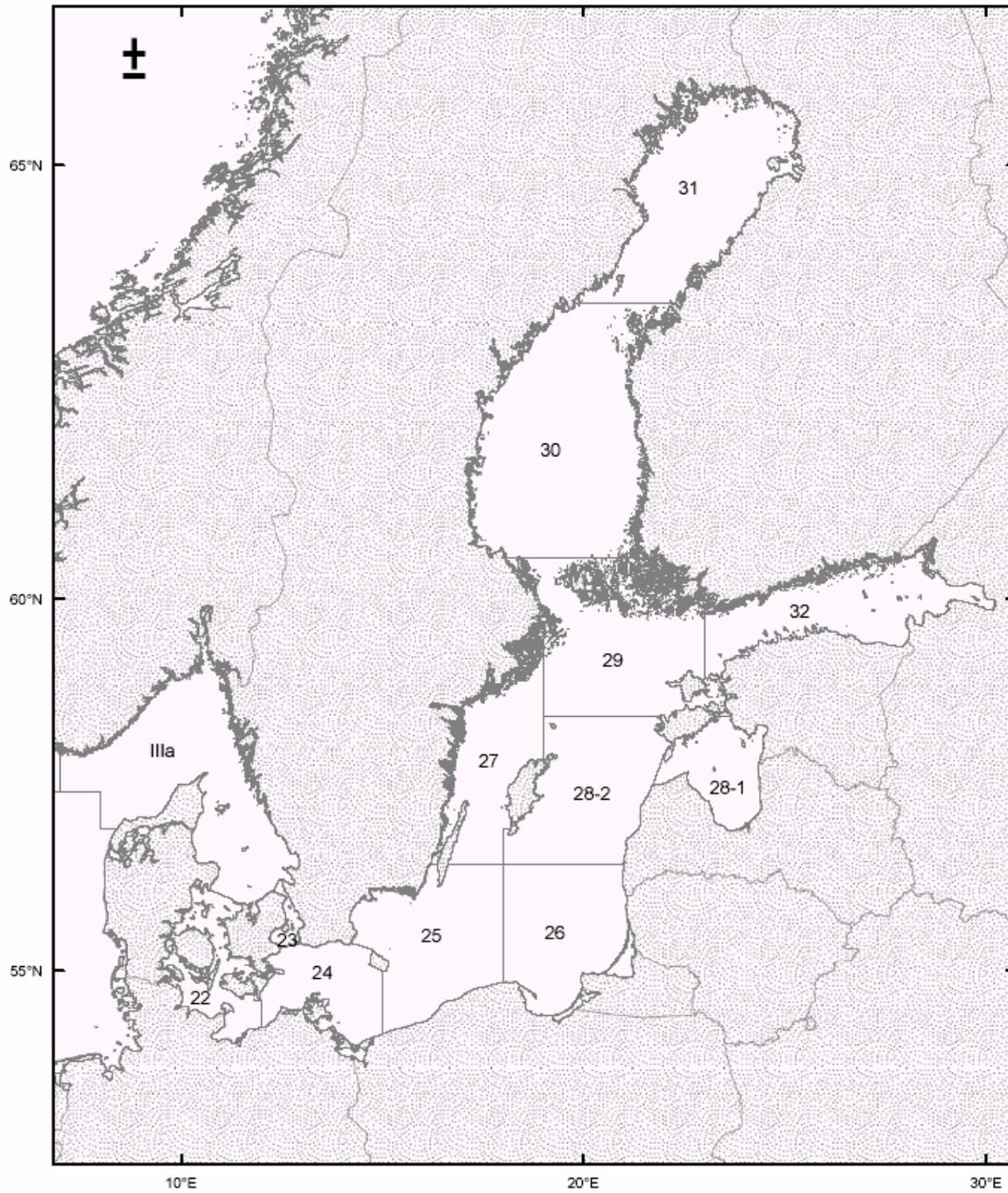
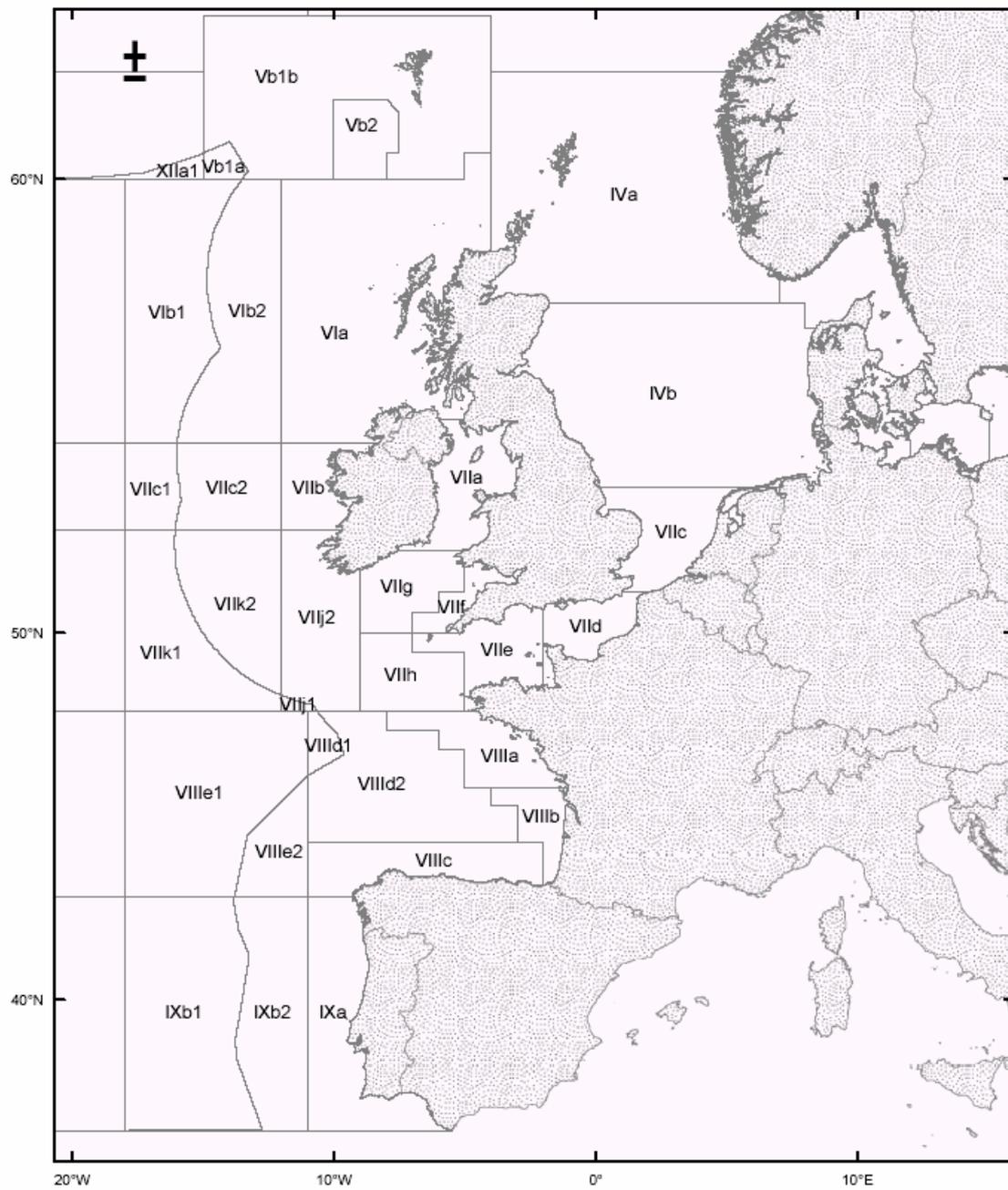


Figure C. Details of divisions and subdivisions of the eastern parts of the Northeast Atlantic.



CWP STATEMENT TO COFI 2005

Statement to Agenda item 4. Code of Conduct discussion.

Mr Chairman, distinguished Delegates, ladies and gentlemen.

I am Johanne Fischer, Executive Secretary of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization. I speak to you as vice-chair of and on behalf of the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics, CWP, that is composed of 15 intergovernmental organizations with FAO providing the Secretariat. At CWP's Twenty-first session held last week in Copenhagen participants asked that two matters related to the implementation of the Code of Conduct be conveyed to COFI.

First, CWP considered the Role of Regional Fishery Bodies, in the implementation of the FAO Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries in cooperation with the FishCode–STF Project. The following recommendations resulted from this discussion:

1. The FishCode–STF Project and FAO should assist RFBs in increasing the awareness of the importance of the implementation of the STF Strategy.
2. The FishCode–STF Project and FAO, together with the RFBs, should stress the importance of and promote actions on transparent and complete national data collection of fisheries.
3. The FishCode–STF Project should cooperate with RFBs on the carrying out of inventories of data collection systems and status of stocks, in particular in supporting their contribution to FIRMS.
4. The FishCode–STF Project should seek collaboration with interested RFBs for the development of monitoring systems for small-scale fisheries in developing countries. All RFBs may assist with the identification of expertise for technical assistance.
5. The FishCode–STF Project should consider developing guidelines for the establishment of data exchange protocols based on the CWP handbook on fisheries statistical standards.

Secondly, the FAO Expert Consultation on MCS Data Formats and Procedures in 2004, also mentioned by Norway yesterday, made a number of recommendations to CWP. These were carefully considered and addressed, and we refer to the last CWP report for details. Here, we wish to point out that the Experts' recommendation on data formats and procedures for MCS was partly outside the CWP mandate and therefore it was decided to invite the inter-agency IMCS Network to cooperate with CWP on this matter.

The FAO Expert Consultation also suggested that CWP enter into a dialogue with the developers of the North Atlantic Format for electronic fishing vessel communications. In response, CWP has set up a Working Group to draft a discussion paper.

Thank you for your attention.

SUMMARY MINUTES
of
FIRMS Steering Committee – Session 2
Copenhagen, 25–26 February 2005

The Second Session of the FIRMS Steering Committee (FSC2) took place on 25 and 26 February 2005 in the ICES building, Copenhagen. The FIRMS Secretariat, five Partner agencies (IATTC, ICES, ICCAT, SEAFDEC, and NAFO), and one observer agency (CCAMLR) were represented.

Two new Partners, NAFO and SEAFDEC, signed the agreement during the inter-session thus bringing the current FIRMS Partnership to eight members. CCAMLR and Eurostat are in the final stages of signing the FIRMS Partnership Arrangement.

It was noticed that these new Partners intend to provide more information on fisheries and their management than the initial set of FIRMS signatories.

On the subject of new possible Partners, it was decided that WCPFC, NEAFC, NASCO and IWC will be invited to become members of FIRMS. The nature of FIRMS, its progress status and its openness to any RFB requesting to become a FIRMS Partner will be items which will be presented during the next RFB meeting in Rome.

FIRMS Steering Committee – Session 2 (FSC2) has adopted the first version of its Information Management Policy. This policy provides for rules and principles governing the sharing of information within the FIRMS system. It is understood to be a living document which FSC will regularly revise. The item “Mechanisms for effective development and validation of Metadata standards” was added, and will probably be extended at the next FSC meeting. Among the mechanisms it is expected to delegate responsibility to interested FIRMS groups to propose standards for specific FIRMS subjects.

The FIRMS Partners and Secretariat progress reports have been considered. The inventory of Marine resources and Stocks of existing FIRMS Partners are nearly complete and are currently loaded in the FIGIS database. The inventory of fisheries is close to completion. Table 1 presents summary statistics of these inventories. Three training sessions were delivered during the inter-session, and others are planned in the forthcoming session. The requirements for the FIRMS web-based module were discussed and the software is currently under design with an objective to have an operational version by the end of 2005. This software will build on the new version of FIGIS released in February 2005, which has improved performance and is easier to maintain. Prototype tools were tested for streamlining information flow from Partners word source documents to FIRMS xml formats. A draft FIRMS home page is now available to Partners for review before publication. FSC2 validated some of the standards proposed by the Secretariat, such as stocks and fisheries naming conventions and primary attributes, or standards for bibliographic citations for FIRMS fact sheets.

The Steering Committee discussed a strategy for promoting the development of a global network for reporting on fisheries and stocks status and trends. The agreed road map includes the invitation to other RFBs to join, the development of a proofed product, the promotion of

FIRMS as one implementing mechanism of the Strategy–STF, and once FIRMS is operational, an invitation to national agencies to contribute.

FSC 3 will be held in conjunction with the CWP’s 2006 intersessional meeting. During the intersession, the technical group will pursue the review of the successive mock-ups and draft web-pages proposed by the Secretariat, extend the inventory of fisheries where applicable, and will probably hold a training and feedback meeting in Rome at the end of 2005. The FSC members will review and try to validate high level definitions required for FIRMS.

Hans Lassen and Victor Restrepo were elected Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively for the coming intersession.

Table 1a: Progress status of the stocks of fisheries inventory of FIRMS partners

| Institution acronym | Target of the inventory | Marine resources | | Fisheries | |
|---------------------|---|------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|
| | | Number | Progress status | Number | Progress status |
| CCSBT | Global southern Bluefin tuna fishery | 1 | OK | 3 | OK |
| FAO - GLOBAL | High level resources | 42 | OK | | |
| FAO - CEEAF | Eastern Central Atlantic marine resources and fisheries | 228 | OK | 343 | OK |
| FAO - GFCM | Shared stocks of interest in the Mediterranean Sea | 50 | OK | - | to be done |
| FAO - RECOFI | Red Sea and Gulf of Aden marine resources and fisheries | 341 | OK | 165 | OK |
| FAO - WECAF | Western and Central Atlantic marine resources and fisheries | 243 | In progress | 289 | in progress |
| IATTC | Tunas and tuna-like species in the eastern Pacific | 15 | OK | - | to be done |
| IATTC/SPC | Tunas and tuna-like species in the Pacific | 8 | OK | - | to be done |
| ICCAT | Tunas and tuna-like species in the Atlantic | 22 | OK | - | not planned |
| ICES | Main marine fish resources in the North Atlantic | 141 | OK | - | to be done |
| IOTC | Tunas and tuna-like species in the Indian Ocean | 16 | OK | - | not planned |
| NAFO | Marine fish resources in the Northwest Atlantic (NAFO) | 14 | OK | - | to be done |
| SEAFDEC | South East Asia shark fisheries | - | Not planned | 42 | in progress |

Table 1b: Progress status of the stocks of fisheries inventory of FIRMS observers

| Institution acronym | Target of the inventory | Marine resources | | Fisheries | |
|---------------------|--|------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|
| | | Number | Progress status | Number | Progress status |
| CCAMLR | Main marine resources and fisheries in the Antarctic Ocean | 36 | In progress | 41 | in progress |
| Eurostat | EU fisheries (socio-economic data on national fleets) | - | - | - | ? |
| SPC | Tunas and tuna-like species in the South Pacific | 14 | OK | 15 | OK |

REPORT OF THE RFB–STF WORKSHOP**The Role of Regional Fishery Bodies in Implementation of the FAO Strategy for
Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries
(RFB–STF Workshop)****Copenhagen, Denmark, 28 February–1 March 2005****Introduction**

1. In 2003 the Twentieth Session of the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP) discussed the possible role of CWP and Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs) in the implementation of the Strategy–STF. The CWP had participated in the Technical Consultation on Improving Information on the Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries in March 2002 and RFBs were involved in the development of the Strategy–STF. The meeting agreed that CWP should support the implementation of the Strategy–STF within the framework of its mandate. At the Intersessional Meeting of CWP Agencies in February 2004, it was agreed to organize the RFB–STF Workshop to discuss in more detail the roles of CWP and RFBs in the implementation of the Strategy–STF.

2. In order to assist the implementation of the Strategy–STF, a multilateral project was formulated under the FAO FishCode Programme, the *FishCode–STF Project*. The Project became operational in November 2004. A major objective of the project is to support the implementation of the Strategy–STF.

3. The FAO/CWP workshop on the role of Regional Fishery Bodies and the CWP in Implementation of the FAO Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries (Strategy–STF) was hosted by ICES on 28 February–1 March 2005 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The objective of the workshop was to identify the roles that RFBs and CWP could play in the implementation of the Strategy–STF. It was expected that a general framework for the participation and cooperation of RFBs would be outlined and that specific areas for partnership activities undertaken by the RFBs would be identified.

4. The workshop was attended by ten participants from RFBs and FAO. The list of participants is included in Annex A and the Workshop working paper in Annex B to this Report.

5. The agenda of the workshop as adopted is given in Annex C and included a short presentation on the Strategy–STF and the FAO FishCode–STF Project by the Project Technical Manager followed by discussions on the activities of the participating RFBs on their work programmes and areas of common interest with the Strategy–STF. Other agenda items were the identification of possible partnership activities and requirements with regard to their implementation arrangements and a discussion on the needs for capacity building in RFBs

The Workshop

Discussions

6. In his presentation, the FishCode–STF Technical Manager summarized the current priority activities of the Project, i.e. inventories of data collection systems and of the status of fish stocks, the development of monitoring systems for small-scale fisheries, and capacity building focusing on developing countries and regions. It was explained, however, that although the FishCode–STF Project focuses on developing countries, the STF Strategy is global in scope.

7. The RFB representatives made brief statements advising the workshop of their activities relevant to the STF-Strategy and the work of the FishCode–STF Project. It was noted that all organizations were involved in various aspects of improving data and information but that reference was rarely formally made to the STF-Strategy.

8. The workshop discussed the importance of how data are collected and how the use of different sources often gives different sets of data. Most RFBs rely on official national data collected by their member states and other scientific sources. These national data are compiled and sometimes, based on assessments and the results from complementary surveys, corrected for scientific purposes by RFBs. This results in the existence of different data sets that are not always comparable or compatible. The need for transparency in data handling was noted but the workshop did not discuss further how to resolve the issue. However, it was suggested that FAO and the FishCode–STF Project could assist in increasing the awareness in RFB member states about the STF-Strategy and the importance of good quality data and information.

9. The importance of developing monitoring systems for small-scale fisheries and the current lack of reliable data on the activities of the sector was highlighted by the workshop. Among those RFBs present at the workshop, IATTC, ICCAT and SEAFDEC expressed interest in cooperation with the FishCode–STF Project on the implementation of this important issue of the Strategy–STF. It was also expected that other RFBs not present would be interested in the subject matter.

10. The workshop noted that there are different concerns and issues in data-rich and data-poor organizations. It was also recognized that different methodologies for data collection and handling need to be used in different situations and in different environments. Hence, with regard to the development of monitoring systems for small-scale fisheries, particularly in a developing country context, it was felt that it would not always be advisable to transfer technology directly from existing data collection systems. Nevertheless, also RFBs not directly concerned with these aspects of small-scale fisheries felt that expertise may be available within their science networks and offered to assist in identifying such expertise.

11. The meeting discussed the three proposals for partnership activities presented in the working paper prepared for the workshop (see Annex B). With regard to the first proposal – *Inventory of existing fishery data collection systems, fishery resources and fisheries and incorporation of results into FIGIS* – the workshop welcomed the cooperation. The meeting noted that all RFBs present already contribute to this work by their participation in FIRMS.

12. On the proposal *Development of criteria, methods and processes for ensuring the quality and security of information on status and trends*, it was agreed that the FishCode STF Project should look into the possibility of developing guidelines for the establishment of data exchange protocols based on the “CWP Handbook on fishery statistical standards”. It was felt that CWP would welcome such an initiative and that the establishment of working groups of experts could be considered once a more specific proposal for the activity has been elaborated.

13. With regard to *expanding the scope of information on status and trends of fisheries to include economic, social and environmental aspects and allow for the incorporation of CWP-21 considerations into fisheries management*, it was found that many RFBs work towards implementing an eco-system approach without considering all aspects as defined in the FAO guidelines. Only certain CWP member agencies collect socio-economic data, e.g. Eurostat, GFCM, OECD and SEAFDEC. It was also noted that the focus of the FishCode–STF Project is on data-poor situations where an CWP-21 approach may be difficult to implement.

14. On the issue of how RFBs and FishCode–STF Project partnership activities should be organized, the workshop concluded that a flexible approach should be followed and that arrangements should be made on a case-by-case basis. While RFBs have to follow internal decision structures and protocols, no particular requirements were identified with regard to institutional arrangements. It was also noted that cooperation between the FishCode STF Project and RFBs could take place through the already existing institutional arrangement that the CWP provides.

15. The workshop agreed with the priorities established by the FishCode–STF Project that project activities should focus on areas where the needs are the most urgent, i.e. data-poor situations in developing countries.

Conclusions and recommendations

16. The following recommendations were given with regard to future partnership activities:

- The FishCode–STF Project and FAO should assist RFBs in increasing the awareness of the importance of the implementation of the STF Strategy.
- The FishCode–STF Project and FAO, together with the RFBs, should stress the importance of and promote actions on transparent and complete national data collection of fisheries.
- The FishCode–STF Project should cooperate with RFBs on the carrying out of inventories of data collection systems and status of stocks, in particular in supporting their contribution to FIRMS.
- FishCode–STF Project should seek collaboration with interested RFBs for the development of monitoring systems for small-scale fisheries in developing countries. All RFBs may assist with the identification of expertise for technical assistance.
- The FishCode–STF Project should consider developing guidelines for the establishment of data exchange protocols based on the CWP handbook on fisheries statistical standards.

17. The participants of the Workshop expressed gratitude and appreciation to ICES for hosting this Workshop.

Annex A**Workshop
on****The Role of Regional Fishery Bodies in Implementation of the FAO Strategy for
Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries****ICES Secretariat, Copenhagen
28 February–1 March 2005****List of Participants**

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Annex B**Workshop
on****The Role of Regional Fishery Bodies and the CWP in Implementation of
the FAO Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture
Fisheries (Strategy–STF)****ICES Secretariat, Copenhagen
28 February–1 March 2005****FishCode–STF Project Working Document 2005/1****INTRODUCTION*****Background***

Responsible fisheries management has become a main concern to policy and decision makers recognising the increasing threats to CWP-21 diversity and productivity and to the sustainable contribution of aquatic resources to the nutritional, economic and social well-being of the world's growing population. To give guidance to policy-makers, the “Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries” (CCRF) was developed by FAO and adopted by its Member States in 1995. Together with its Technical Guidelines and related International Plans of Action (IPOAs), the CCRF has become a widely accepted global standard defining principles and methods for developing and managing fisheries and aquaculture in a sustainable manner. In order to facilitate the implementation of the CCRF, FAO Fisheries Department set up a special programme for global partnerships promoting responsible fisheries: FishCode. The programme serves as a means through which partnership initiatives supporting the CCRF can be implemented drawing on the know-how and experience of FAO.

Guiding principles, however, are not enough for achieving responsible fisheries management. Sound decisions have to be based on accurate and relevant information and knowledge of fisheries and fishery resources. Based on recommendations by the Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research (ACFR), a proposal was developed to improve the way fishery status and trends information is assembled and disseminated. The proposal was discussed in an FAO Technical Consultation in 2002 and the “Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries” (Strategy–STF) was adopted by the Twenty-fifth Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2003.

The Strategy–STF is a voluntary instrument that applies to all States and entities. Its overall objective is to provide a framework for the improvement of knowledge and understanding of fishery status and trends as a basis for fisheries policy-making and sustainable management. The Strategy–STF will be implemented through agreements between States, directly or through Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs) and arrangements, and FAO.

COFI at its Twenty-fifth Session recognized the need for extra-budgetary support for implementation of the Strategy–STF and accordingly endorsed a proposal to develop a multilateral project under the FAO FishCode Programme as a means to accomplish this.

Three Members have so far committed funds in support of the FishCode–STF Project and its first component – “Development of Inventories, Methodologies and Operational Guidelines” – became operational in November 2004.

The Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP) and RFBs participated in the Technical Consultation in 2002. RFBs also contributed to the development of the Strategy–STF. At the Twentieth CWP Session in 2003, it was agreed that CWP would be prepared to facilitate the implementation of the Strategy–STF within the areas of its mandate. This agreement was confirmed at the Intersessional Meeting of CWP Agencies in February 2004. It was also agreed that a workshop should be held in conjunction with the next CWP Session in the beginning of March 2005 to discuss the role of RFBs in the implementation of the Strategy. Accordingly, a Workshop on “The Role of Regional Fishery Bodies in Implementation of the FAO Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries” (RFB-STF Workshop) is being held in Copenhagen on 28 February–1 March 2005.

Context and outline of the present report

The present report has been prepared for the *RFB-STF Workshop*, hosted by ICES in Copenhagen on 28 February–1 March 2005. The purpose of the report is to serve as a background and reference document, giving a general overview of the role of RFBs in the implementation of the Strategy–STF, and as a discussion document with regard to possible collaboration between the FishCode–STF Project and the RFBs.

After this introductory chapter, the context and contents of the Strategy–STF are presented in chapter 2. Chapter 3 presents an overview of the RFBs and their role in fisheries management and conservation. Chapter 4 discusses possible roles for the RFBs in implementing the Strategy–STF and suggests issues for discussion in the RFB-STF Workshop. Concluding remarks are found in Chapter 5 and a bibliography in Chapter 6.

A list of RFBs is included as an appendix to the Report of the 21 Session of the CWP.

Expected outcome of the RFB-STF Workshop

The objective of the RFB-STF Workshop is to identify the roles that RFBs and CWP could play in the implementation of the Strategy–STF. It is expected that a general framework for the participation and cooperation of RFBs will be outlined and that specific areas for partnership activities undertaken by the RFBs will be identified.

The outcome of the Workshop will be presented to the Twenty-first CWP Session held immediately after the Workshop on 1–4 March 2005.

IMPROVING INFORMATION ON STATUS AND TRENDS

The Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and FishCode

The CCRF is a voluntary instrument setting out principles and standards for responsible practices with regard to effective conservation, management and development of living aquatic resources within the context of a sustainable CWP-21 and biodiversity. It covers fishing operations, processing and trade of fish and fishery products as well as aquaculture,

fisheries research and fisheries under coastal area management. The CCRF is global in scope and is directed to all those concerned with the aquatic environment in relation to fisheries and aquaculture.

Within the framework of the CCRF, four IPOAs have been agreed upon⁷. The Strategy–STF is another voluntary instrument within the CCRF framework. Moreover, the “Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas” (Compliance Agreement), adopted by the twenty-seventh session of the FAO Conference, forms an integral part of the CCRF.

The implementation of the CCRF is a complex and demanding task that takes place at several levels: global, regional, subregional and national. The FAO Fisheries Department promotes implementation and acts as a catalyst. A number of Technical Guidelines have been developed by the Department to support the implementation. Already when adopting the CCRF, the FAO Conference recommended that provisions should be made for “providing advice to developing countries in implementing the CCRF and for the elaboration of an Interregional Assistance Programme for external assistance aimed at supporting implementation of the CCRF”⁸. Accordingly, the FAO FishCode Programme was established as a special programme of global partnerships for responsible fisheries. The overall objective is to “to raise the economic, social and nutritional benefits obtained from the fisheries and aquaculture, especially in developing countries, through the adoption of responsible development, management and conservation practices, including improved institutional and legal arrangements.”⁹

The FishCode Programme is mainly funded through contributions from partner governments and organizations in combination with FAO Regular Programme resources. Its coordination unit is situated in FAO headquarters. FishCode components cover a wide range of activities related to the CCRF implementation, including the Strategy–STF Project.

The Strategy–STF

The need for good information on status and trends of fisheries is stated in the CCRF and in other international instruments concerning fisheries. Accurate and appropriate knowledge of fisheries and fishery resources, including socio-economic aspects, is a prerequisite for sound policy-making and responsible fisheries management and governance.

The Strategy–STF applies to the assembly and dissemination of information on fishery status and trends at the national, regional and global levels while data collection for research needs are established by other international fisheries instruments. Nevertheless, the Strategy–STF is expected to strengthen research indirectly through capacity building in developing countries.

The main focus of the Strategy–STF is fishery resources and the primary fisheries sector. It covers all capture fisheries in inland and marine waters and all types of fishing operations. However, it does not apply to aquaculture because of the different requirements of the sector.

⁷ IPOA for Reducing Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries; IPOA for the Conservation and Management of Sharks; IPOA for the Management of Fishing Capacity; IPOA to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing.

⁸ Twenty-eighth Conference of FAO, Resolution 4/95.

⁹ FishCode webpage www.fao.org/fi/projects/fishcode

The Strategy–STF was developed within the context of the CCRF and its main objective is “to provide a framework for the improvement of knowledge and understanding of fishery status and trends as a basis for fisheries policy making and management”¹⁰. Within the Strategy–STF, high priority is given to capacity building and the provision of technical assistance to developing countries. Furthermore, the particular requirements of the small-scale fisheries sector are emphasized because of its importance to food security and poverty reduction. The Strategy–STF supports the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation agreed on at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) by contributing better information for monitoring the time-bound goals set for fisheries, i.e. regarding the implementation of the IPOAs on IUU fishing and capacity, restoration of depleted stocks, application of an CWP-21 approach, and the establishment of “representative networks” of marine protected areas¹¹.

The Strategy–STF will be implemented by working cooperatively through agreements between States, RFBs and FAO. These arrangements will be established at different geographical levels and coordinated with the assistance of FAO. Whenever possible, use should be made of existing organizations for cooperation.

The Strategy–STF provides a list of required actions for the achievement of its objective. These actions cover different issues and considerations and can be summarized as follows:

- Developing countries needs for financial and technical assistance should be addressed and *capacity building* is necessary, both at national level and with regard to RFBs, to ensure their participation in the Strategy–STF.
- *Small-scale and multispecies* fisheries are often poorly monitored and appropriate methods should be developed for improving the information on these fisheries.
- The scope of the information collected should be expanded to include the effects of climatic, environment and socio-economic factors on fishery conservation and management in order to allow for the *incorporation of CWP-21 considerations into fisheries management*. Indicators of sustainable development should also be developed.
- The Strategy–STF will be instrumental in the preparation of a complete *inventory of the world’s fisheries and fish stocks*. Definitions, forms, methods and other tools have to be developed for carrying out such an inventory in the FAO Fisheries Global Information System (FIGIS). A process for scientific oversight of the status and trends information should also be established.
- The *FAO Fisheries Global Information System (FIGIS)* aims at providing policy-makers with reliable and timely information. It is based on collaboration with States contributing and accessing information. FIGIS will be an important support to the implementation of the Strategy–STF and States and RFBs are recommended to support its development.
- Criteria and methods should be developed to ensure the *quality and security of status and trends information*. These criteria and methods should comply with already agreed international standards and practices for data verification.
- Provision of data should be facilitated and *exchange of information on status and trends* should be promoted.
- *Working groups* of fisheries experts should be set up to assess the status and trends of fish stocks and fisheries and to promote quality and transparency of scientific information, including through the Fishery Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS).

¹⁰ Strategy–STF paragraph 12.

¹¹ FishCode webpage “Component Briefs” and FAO, 2003.

- The *sustainability* of data collection, analysis and reporting should be ensured and States should monitor their systems accordingly.

The FishCode–STF Project

In order to assist the implementation of the Strategy–STF, a multilateral project was formulated under the FAO FishCode Programme, the *FishCode–STF Project*. The Project became operational in November 2004. The development objective of the Project is the same as for the FishCode Programme, i.e. increased economic, social and nutritional benefits obtained from fisheries, through the adoption of responsible fisheries management and resource conservation policies and practices.

The Project will support the implementation of the Strategy–STF globally but places special emphasis on capacity-building in developing countries and regions. The direct beneficiaries will be national fisheries statistical units, research institutes and fishery administrations who will have their capacities strengthened and enhanced in addition to having access to better information on status and trends. It is also expected that national and international actors at regional and global levels will benefit from improved information and, in some cases, capacity building.

The Project will implement the Strategy–STF through agreements between States, directly or through RFBs, and FAO. While the Project will work primarily with national administrations, it will also seek cooperation with other actors and bodies, e.g.:

- *Other components under the FishCode Programme umbrella and other projects involved in the implementation of the CCRF*

The FishCode–STF Project training activities will, for example, be carried out in cooperation with the FishCode SIDS Project¹² or with the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme¹³ as appropriate.

- *FIGIS-FIRMS*

The work of FIGIS-FIRMS includes stocks, resources and fisheries inventories and the development of standards¹⁴. The inventories to be carried out by the FishCode–STF Project will be based on methodologies developed by FIGIS-FIRMS.

- *RFBs and CWP*

The Project will seek partnerships with RFBs for facilitating the implementation of the Strategy–STF. RFBs could also support the implementation by giving support to their members, participating in relevant programmes, by adopting agreed standards and guidelines and by becoming partners of FIGIS. The CWP is concerned with international cooperation in the field of fishery statistics and interlinks the work of various RFBs.

- *Other international fishery-related organizations, advisory bodies and programmes*

As and when appropriate, cooperation will be sought with other organizations and programmes concerned with fisheries governance, for example, the ACFR, Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP) and UNEP Regional Seas Programme.

Six guiding principles have been defined for the implementation arrangements:

¹² Responsible Fisheries for Small Island Developing States, GCP/INT/823/JPN.

¹³ GCP/INT/735/UK.

¹⁴ FAO/FIGIS-FIRMS, 2002.

- *Sustainability*
The arrangements for information assembly and dissemination should be viable in the long term.
- *Best scientific advice*
The quality of scientific information should be assured to the extent possible and the arrangements should contribute to best scientific advice.
- *Participation and cooperation*
The arrangements should allow all relevant participants to be included in the preparation, analysis and presentation of information.
- *Objectivity and transparency*
The arrangements should contribute to transparency and information uncertainties should be disclosed.
- *Timeliness*
Arrangements should result in the provision of information in a timely manner.
- *Flexibility*
Arrangements should be flexible and permit adjustments when needed to support fishery policy-making and management.

The Project will address the “Required actions” described in the Strategy–STF document, i.e.:

- Capacity-building in developing countries.
- Setting up a global inventory of fish stocks and fisheries.
- Development of data collection systems for small-scale and multispecies fisheries.
- Development of criteria and methods for ensuring information quality and security.
- Development of arrangements for the provision and exchange of information.
- Support to and participation in the Fisheries Global Information System (FIGIS).
- Sustaining data collection and information systems.
- Expanding the scope of information on status and trends of fisheries, including the need to incorporate CWP-21 considerations into fisheries management.
- Participation in working groups in assessing the status and trends of fisheries.

The FishCode–STF Project is designed to be implemented in two overlapping phases. The first component, “Development of inventories, methodologies and operational guidelines”, focuses on the normative framework. The second component, “Field training and implementation”, will use the first phase outputs, e.g. inventories and methodologies, and will include capacity building in developing countries.

The first component has a duration of four years and became operational in November 2004. In addition to the workshop for which this document has been prepared, the activities planned for the first two years include¹⁵:

- *Inventories of fisheries monitoring systems, fishery resources and fisheries: Questionnaire surveys and regional workshops*
The first inventory of data collection systems is carried out in the South East Asia region in cooperation with the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC). A regional workshop will be held in February 2005. Similar activities are planned for the

¹⁵ If full funding can be guaranteed.

Mediterranean and the Caribbean, also in 2005, and in West Africa and the Bay of Bengal region in 2006.

- *Development of standards for ensuring information quality and security*
- *Initial studies and workshops for the development of new approaches with regard to monitoring of small-scale fisheries, inclusion of socio-economic information, monitoring of inland fisheries and implementation of the CWP-21 approach.*

Activities foreseen for the second half of Component 1 include pilot studies and support to research initiatives for the testing of new approaches, development of indicators for sustainable development, establishment of protocols for the inputs to FIGIS and for exchange of information.

Box 1: FishCode STF Project Components

Component 1: Development of inventories, methodologies and operational guidelines

This component covers the creation of methodological descriptions of fishery statistical and data collection systems used by all countries and regional fisheries bodies. At the same time it will provide an overview of fish stocks and/or fisheries management units, whether monitored or not, by country and/or region. The aim of this exercise, to be executed mainly by correspondence and through questionnaires and regional workshops, is to obtain a complete picture of all systems in use and all stocks or management units monitored, so as to identify gaps in monitoring and above all to assess the quality of the systems used. The main inventory will cover data systems on all aspects of fisheries, including data on fleets, employment, processing, consumption, trade and sociological and economic aspects. This will also facilitate an evaluation of data collection and handling practices by country, the flows of data from national to regional and global levels and hence of the data as published by regional fisheries bodies and FAO. Finally, it will form the basis for improvements and identification of training needs in developing countries to be addressed under Component 2.

The implementation of this component will take the following considerations into account.

- There is a need to develop data collection systems that are better suited to cover small-scale fisheries and multispecies fisheries and for the development of criteria and methods for ensuring information quality and security.
- Routine data collection on economic and social aspects of fisheries is often neglected and consequently managers find themselves deprived of the data necessary to take decisions in cases of conflicts between different types of fisheries, the protection of labour forces engaged in existing fisheries against new arrivals, etc. The Project will investigate requirements and develop systems for the collection of such data.
- Computerized systems facilitate the exchange of data and information and thus the setting up of large data banks such as the Fisheries Global Information System (FIGIS). The Project will develop arrangements for the provision and exchange of information and assist in making improvements to the inputs to FIGIS, including the expansion of the scope of information on status and trends of fisheries.
- Ideally fisheries should be managed based on CWP-21 considerations. However, CWP-21 management requires huge amounts of data. The Project will investigate the data requirements and practical solutions for such management systems.

Component 2: Field training and implementation at national and regional levels

The aim of Component 2 is to improve substantially the quality of collection and processing of fisheries statistics and other data and information on capture fisheries in selected developing countries with important inland or marine fisheries. This would lead to better data for fisheries management at national level and, in cases of stocks shared between neighbouring countries, at regional level as well. Improvements in reporting to FAO and other agencies would be an important additional benefit.

Component 2 covers capacity building at all levels, and implementation of improved or new statistical and other data collection and processing systems in selected countries. There is also a need for improved interaction between fishery statisticians, fisheries analysts, socio-economists and fish stock assessment experts. The Project should facilitate this interaction.

Activities under Component 2 will be field-oriented and distributed over Africa, the Americas and Asia. The beneficiary States will be selected from developing countries with substantial capture fisheries, either inland or marine, that have a potential of becoming an example for other countries in similar situations.

Source: Text from Project Document (FAO, undated).

REGIONAL FISHERY BODIES (RFBs) AND THE STRATEGY–STF

Overview of RFBs and their role in conservation and fisheries management

Almost 40 Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs)¹⁶ and arrangements are at present in existence in different parts of the world. Their combined area of competence covers parts of all oceans and a large part of the world's inland waters. Some are specific for a group of species or a fishery and others for a geographical area, or a combination thereof. FAO has assisted in the establishment of about a quarter of the total number of RFBs while others are the result of independent initiatives. A list of RFBs is included in Appendix I.

The RFBs vary in scope with regard to species, fisheries and geographic areas. They also vary considerably when it comes to mandate, functions, decision-making powers and procedures. However, a general shift in the roles of RFBs has been noted during the last few decades. In the early days, the mandates and functions of RFBs were based on the concept of abundant resources and free access to fishing grounds. RFBs served as fora for discussion and the main functions included cooperative research and database development and analysis. In the second half of the twentieth century, when more intensive management measures were prompted by the realization that some fish stocks were fished at or beyond their sustainable yields, RFBs became involved in the setting of catch quotas and joint inspection schemes. These functions were, however, limited by the mandates usually given to RFBs by their members; RFBs had advisory and research roles rather than decision-making and enforcement powers with regard to fisheries management. The importance of the measures in a global context was also limited due to the still relatively low number of RFBs¹⁷.

The situation started to change when the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea was agreed on and adopted in 1982. The Convention envisaged several new functions and activities to be undertaken by RFBs regarding high sea stocks and fishing, advice to coastal states, dispute settlement and marine mammal protection. This prompted RFBs to review their mandates and a number of new RFBs were established. However, RFBs still generally remained without fisheries management authority.

Since the mid-1990s, several important international fisheries instruments containing key provisions relevant to the participation of RFBs in their implementation have been introduced, i.e. the 1993 FAO Compliance Agreement¹⁸, the 1995 United Nations Fish Stock Agreement¹⁹ and in 1995 the CCRF. The CCRF has later been supplemented with a number of IPOAs. The IPOA to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IPOA-IUU) in 2001 refers particularly to RFBs.²⁰ There are also other international

¹⁶ The following definition is used in FAO (1999): “A regional fishery body refers to a mechanism through which three or more States or international organizations that are parties to an international fishery agreement or arrangement collaboratively engage each other in multilateral management of fishery affairs related to transboundary, straddling, highly or high seas migratory stocks, through the collection and provision of scientific information and data, serving as technical and policy forum, or taking decisions pertaining to the development and conservation, management and responsible utilization of the resources”.

¹⁷ Swan, 2004.

¹⁸ Agreement to promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas 1993.

¹⁹ Agreement for the Implementation of the Provision of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 Relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, 1995.

²⁰ Swan, 2004.

conventions calling for increased regional cooperation such as the WSSD Plan of Implementation.²¹

The provisions relating to the role of RFBs in these more recent fisheries instruments indicate recognition by the international community that cooperation among states is essential for ensuring a sustainable utilization of aquatic resources and that RFBs should be given increased decision making power and authority. Recognising that, in most cases, the present fisheries management systems have failed to be effective, the concept of “fisheries governance” has emerged. Fisheries governance is a broader concept than conservation and management, or sustainable development. It represents a participative, inclusive and flexible approach and recognizes the global network in which governments, institutions and stakeholders interact. In this system, RFBs serve as a gateway between the global and national levels of fisheries governance.²²

Sound regional governance depends on effective inputs from member states and organizations. There has to be a political willingness of member states to participate openly and to delegate authority to the regional bodies. The RFBs, and their members, also have to have the capacity to meet financial and technical obligations²³. While constraints exist – in varying degrees – many RFBs contribute to governance in a number of areas. In a questionnaire survey, RFBs were asked about activities and priorities of their organizations. The answers showed that some of the most important issues were those surrounding responsible fisheries management, the CWP-21 approach, bycatch and IUU fishing.²⁴

FAO has hosted three meetings of RFBs; in 1999, 2001 and 2003. These meetings have given an opportunity to discuss and coordinate issues of concern to RFBs. For example, the need to improve information on status and trends was discussed in the early meetings and the RFBs participated in the development of the Strategy–STF. Constraints with regard to availability of relevant information and accurate data and statistics constitute major concerns in many RFBs. In addition to the generally increased demand on the RFBs related to their evolving role in fisheries governance – increasing their need for capacity building and access to information and data – several of the issues covered by the Strategy–STF are directly relevant to the activities of many RFBs, e.g. the application of the CWP-21 approach to fisheries management and collaboration with FIGIS-FIRMS.

The Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP)

The Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP) was initially established in 1959 to improve the collection and reporting on fishery statistics in the North Atlantic area. However, in 1995 it was modified and reconstituted due to increasing demands for reliable fishery statistics and its scope was widened to include all parts of the world. The terms of reference of the CWP include to review requirements for fishery statistics, to agree standards concepts, definitions, classifications and methodologies, and to make recommendations and coordinate activities with regard to collection and dissemination of fishery statistics²⁵.

²¹ FAO, 2003b.

²² Swan, 2004.

²³ FAO, 1999.

²⁴ Swan, 2003.

²⁵ FAO, 1995.

The CWP consists of experts nominated by intergovernmental organizations having competence in fishery statistics. FAO, several RFBs and other organizations concerned with fishery statistics, e.g Eurostat and OECD, are members of the CWP. The CWP participates in the FAO-RFBs meetings mentioned above.

In the Twentieth CWP Session in 2003²⁶, the possible role of CWP and RFBs in the implementation of the Strategy–STF was discussed. The CWP had participated in Technical Consultation on Improving Information on the Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries in March 2002 and RFBs were involved in the development of the Strategy–STF. The meeting agreed that CWP should support the implementation of the Strategy–STF within the framework of its mandate. At the Intersessional Meeting of CWP Agencies in February 2004, it was agreed to organize the RFB-STF Workshop to discuss in more detail the roles of CWP and RFBs in the implementation of the Strategy–STF.

The objectives of the Strategy are similar to those of the CWP and several elements of the Strategy–STF are of direct concern to the CWP, e.g:

- Development of standards and quality criteria for data and information.
- Collaboration with FIGIS-FIRMS.
- Development of socio-economic and environmental sustainability indicators (work carried out by Eurostat and SEAFDEC).

POSSIBLE ROLES OF RFBs AND THE CWP IN IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

Summary of the context and framework for cooperation

As noted in the discussion above, there are several elements of the Strategy–STF that are of direct interest to RFBs and the CWP. Some RFBs and the CWP are already carrying out activities related to actions proposed by the Strategy–STF, e.g.:

- Implementation of an CWP-21 approach and the development of socio-economic and environmental sustainability indicators.
- Collaboration with FIGIS-FIRMS.
- Development of standards and quality criteria for data and information.

In the Strategy–STF, the possibility for States to participate in the implementation of the Strategy–STF through their membership in RFBs is directly mentioned in several of the proposals for required actions, i.e.:

- Development of standards and systems for data collection for small-scale fisheries and multispecies fisheries.
- Expansion of the scope and collection of information to support the incorporation of CWP-21 considerations into fisheries management and development of indicators of sustainable development.
- Establishment of a process for scientific oversight of status and trends information in relation to the global inventory of stocks and fisheries.
- Support and participation for the development of FIGIS.
- Development of mechanisms for information exchange.

²⁶ See FAO, 2003c.

- Establishment of working groups for enhancing the quality and transparency of scientific information.

However, the participation of RFBs is not limited to the above areas of activities. The overall approach of the Strategy–STF and the FishCode–STF Project is participatory and its guidelines indicate that RFBs and the CWP should contribute, within the limits of their mandates, to the implementation of the Strategy–STF. Moreover, RFBs – particularly in regions of developing countries – are mentioned as potential beneficiaries of the envisaged capacity building exercises. This approach is consistent with the overall development of fisheries governance and the recognition of the importance of increased regional and global cooperation by policy-makers in national, regional and international institutions and organizations.

In Southeast Asia, where activities regarding the statistical system inventory have been started, the FishCode–STF Project is working in partnership with SEAFDEC. For the forthcoming inventories in other regions, partner organizations have not yet been identified but it is the intention of the Project to seek similar arrangements with regional organizations. The mutual advantages of this implementation approach are evident. The Project gains in effectiveness by benefiting from the regional knowledge of the RFB and from the increased efficiency in contacts and communications. The RFB is given an opportunity to enhance its own capacity with regard to assembly and dissemination of status and trends information and also to provide views and inputs into an international process of improving information at national, regional and global levels.

The FishCode–STF Project has only recently become operational and is at the beginning of its first four-year phase for Component 1. Plans and arrangements for its implementation are in the process of being elaborated and established. As seen from the discussion in this document, the arguments for cooperation and a wide participation in the implementation of the Strategy–STF are many and the RFB community is called upon for its support. The RFB-STF Workshop gives an opportunity for potential RFB partners to reflect on their possible roles, to provide inputs and suggest contributions for incorporation into the Project activities and implementation arrangements.

Suggested topics for discussion in RFB-STF Workshop

In order to identify collaboration opportunities and to define possible partnership arrangements for the effective implementation of the Strategy–STF through the FishCode–STF Project, this document suggests a number of issues to be discussed in the RFB-STF Workshop. These issues concern common areas of interest and suggestions for partnership activities, modalities of cooperation and institutional arrangements and needs for capacity building.

1. What are the areas of common interests of the FishCode–STF Project, the RFBs and CWP?
 - a. What activities and interests does the CWP have that are relevant to the implementation of the Strategy–STF?
 - b. What activities and interests do individual RFBs have that are relevant to the implementation of the Strategy–STF?
 - c. Are there areas of interest common to the RFB community as a whole that are of relevance to the implementation of the Strategy–STF?

Workshop participants are invited to report on the work programmes of their organizations.

2. What activities would be suitable for partnership implementation? Suggestions from FishCode–STF Project management include:
 - a. *Inventory of existing fishery data collection systems, fishery resources and fisheries and incorporation of results into FIGIS.*
The inventory will build on work already carried out by FIGIS-FIRMS. Collaboration with RFBs could be envisaged for the operational aspects of the inventory, including questionnaire surveys and regional workshops, development of protocols and validation of results.
 - b. *Development of criteria, methods and processes for ensuring the quality and security of information on status and trends.*
The principle of best scientific evidence should apply to information on status and trends in accordance with internationally agreed standards and practices. RFBs, possibly through the CWP, could participate in defining criteria and methods and establishing a process and arrangements for scientific oversight of status and trends information. A working group of appointed experts could be established for this purpose.
 - c. *Expanding the scope of information on status and trends of fisheries to include economic, social and environmental aspects and allow for the incorporation of CWP-21 considerations into fisheries management.*
Several RFBs are already working on introducing the CWP-21 approach in relation to fisheries management. The Project could work with RFBs on issues related to status and trends information needed for the CWP-21 approach and indicators for sustainable development.

The Workshop is asked to review these proposals and recommend additions, elaborations and amendments.

3. What implementation arrangements should be established for the partnership activities and what institutional aspects need to be considered?
For each proposed partnership activity, it is proposed that the following issues are discussed:
 - a. Which RFBs – and other organizations – should participate?
 - b. How should the partnership activity be organized, e.g. by the establishment of a working group, bilateral agreements between the participating RFB(s) and the Project for the provision of certain services, organization of workshops, expert consultations, etc.?
 - c. Are there formalities and issues with regard to the mandate of the RFB(s) and their relation with Member States that need to be considered in a partnership agreement between the RFB(s) and the Project?
 - d. Are there other issues relating to institutional arrangements that need to be taken into consideration?

4. What are the needs for capacity building in RFBs with regard to implementing the Strategy–STF and improving information on status and trends of capture fisheries in general and with regard to the proposed activities for collaboration in particular?

The Workshop is requested to prepare a report on their findings and recommendations to be presented to the Twenty-first CWP Session, starting on 1 March 2005.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Appropriate and accurate information is essential for all policy development and decision-making and the fisheries sector is no exception. While fishery data collection and research have been the subject of various international instruments and initiatives, the assembly and dissemination of status and trends information have received less attention. The preparation and adoption of the *Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries* is a crucial framework for improving this situation and its implementation will create important benefits to fisheries management and conservation. However, the Strategy–STF will only be effective if widely implemented and all national, regional and global organizations and institutions concerned with the management and use of aquatic resources are urged to support and participate in this work.

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Annex C**Workshop
on****The Role of Regional Fishery Bodies in Implementation of the FAO Strategy for
Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries****ICES Secretariat, Copenhagen
28 February – 1 March 2005****Agenda and Timetable****Monday 28 February 2005****9.30** *Opening and welcome**Adoption of Agenda and election of Chair and Rapporteurs***10.00***Presentation of “The Role of Regional Fishery Bodies in Implementation of
the FAO Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture
Fisheries” by FishCode–STF Project**Questions and clarifications***10.45***Coffee break***11.15***Interventions by participating representatives of RFBs on their work
programmes and areas of common interest with the Strategy–STF***12.30***Lunch***13.30***Discussion and identification of possible partnership activities***14.30***Discussion on implementation arrangements for partnership activities***15.30***Discussion on needs for capacity building in RFBs***16.30***Chair’s summary***Tuesday 1 March 2005****9.30** *Presentation of draft Workshop report**Comments and clarifications***10.30***Adoption of Workshop report and closing of meeting*

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|----------|--|
| ACFR | Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research (FAO) |
| AIDCP | Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (IATTC) |
| APFIC | Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission |
| ASEAN | Association of Southeast-Asian Nations |
| ASFA | Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts |
| ASFIS | Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Information System |
| CCAMLR | Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources |
| CCRF | Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries |
| CCSBT | Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna |
| CDS | Catch Documentation Scheme |
| CECAF | Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (FAO Regional Body) |
| CITES | Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora |
| COFI | Committee on Fisheries (FAO) |
| CWP | Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics |
| EEA | European Environmental Agency |
| EEA | European Economic Area |
| EEZ | Exclusive Economic Zone |
| EPO | Eastern Pacific Ocean (IATTC) |
| EU | European Union |
| Eurostat | Statistical Office of the European Communities |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations |
| FFA | South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency |
| FIDI | Fishery Information, Data and Statistics Unit (FAO Fisheries Department) |
| FIGIS | Fisheries Global Information System |
| FishCode | Programme of Global Partnerships for Responsible Fisheries (FAO) |
| FISHDAB | Fishery Statistical Database (FAO Fisheries Department) |
| FIRMS | Fishery Resources Monitoring System |
| GESAMP | Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection |
| GFCM | General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (FAO Regional Body) |
| GRT | Gross Registered Tonnage |
| GT | Gross Tonnage |
| HSVAR | High Seas Vessel Authorization Record |
| IATTC | Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission |
| ICCAT | International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas |
| ICES | International Council for the Exploration of the Sea |
| ICSEAF | International Commission for the Southeast Atlantic Fisheries (ceased: 1990) |
| IOTC | Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (FAO Regional Body) |
| IPOA | International Plan of Action |
| ISIC | International Standard Classification of All Economic Activities (UN) |
| ISSCAAP | International Standard Statistical Classification of Aquatic Animals and Plants |
| ISSCFV | International Standard Statistical Classification of Fishing Vessels |
| IUU | Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing |
| IWC | International Whaling Commission |

| | |
|--------------|--|
| NAF | North Atlantic Format for position and catch reporting by VMS |
| NAFO | Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (previously ICNAF – International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries) |
| NASCO | North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization |
| NewCronos | Eurostat Database (previously known as CRONOS) |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| OFF | Oceanic Fisheries Programme (SPC) |
| RFB | Regional Fishery Body |
| RFMO | Regional Fisheries Management Organization |
| SEAFDEC | South-East Asian Fisheries Development Center |
| SEAFO | South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (currently being formed) |
| SPC | Secretariat of the Pacific Community |
| STACREC | Standing Committee on Research Coordination (of Scientific Council of NAFO) |
| STATLANT | STATistical Programme for the ATLANTic Fisheries (previously STANA) |
| Strategy–STF | Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries |
| TAC | Total Allowable Catch |
| TIS | Trade Information System (CCSBT) |
| UNEP | United Nations Environment Programme |
| UNGA | United Nations General Assembly |
| VMS | Vessel Monitoring System |
| WCPO | Western and Central Pacific Ocean (SPC) |
| WSSD | World Summit on Sustainable Development |

LIST OF REGIONAL FISHERY BODIES

ATLANTIC OCEAN AND ADJACENT SEAS

| <i>ACRONYM</i> | <i>NAME</i> | <i>AREA OF COMPETENCE</i> |
|----------------|---|---|
| AAFC | Atlantic Africa Fisheries Conference | Eastern Atlantic (Namibia-Morocco) |
| CECAF | Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic | Eastern Central Atlantic between Cape Spartel and the Congo River |
| COREP | Comité régional des pêches du Golfe de Guinée | Central and southern Gulf of Guinea |
| COFREMAR | Joint Technical Commission for the Argentina/Uruguay Maritime Front | South Atlantic |
| GFCM | General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean | Mediterranean, adjacent waters, the Black sea and the Azov Sea |
| IBSFC | International Baltic Sea Fishery Commission | Baltic Sea and the Belts |
| ICCAT | International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas | Atlantic Ocean including the adjacent seas |
| ICES | International Council for the Exploration of the Sea | Atlantic Ocean |
| NAFO | Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization | Northwest Atlantic Ocean |
| NAMMCO | North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission | North Atlantic |
| NASCO | North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization | Atlantic Ocean north of 36°N latitude |
| NEAFC | North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission | Northeast Atlantic Ocean |
| SEAFO | South East Atlantic Fisheries Organization | South East Atlantic Ocean |
| SRCF (CSRP) | Commission sous-régionale des pêches | N.W. Africa (Mauritania to Guinea including Cape Verde) |
| WECAFC | Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission | Western Central Atlantic Ocean |

INDIAN OCEAN REGION

| <i>ACRONYM</i> | <i>NAME</i> | <i>AREA OF COMPETENCE</i> |
|----------------|---|---|
| BOBP-IGO | Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organization | Bay of Bengal |
| IOTC | Indian Ocean Tuna Commission | Indian Ocean and adjacent seas north of the Antarctic Convergence |
| RECOFI | Regional Commission for Fisheries | The Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman |
| SWIOFC *) | South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission | South West Indian Ocean |
| WIOTO | Western Indian Ocean Tuna Organization | Western Indian Ocean |

*) Not yet established/operational.

PACIFIC OCEAN REGION

| <i>ACRONYM</i> | <i>NAME</i> | <i>AREA OF COMPETENCE</i> |
|----------------|---|---|
| APFIC | Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission | Indo-Pacific area (including inland waters) |
| CEPTFA *) | Council of the Eastern Pacific Tuna Fishing Agreement | Eastern Pacific Ocean |
| CPPS | Permanent South Pacific Commission | South Pacific (East) |
| FFA | South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency | South Pacific (Central and West) |
| IATTC | Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission | Eastern Pacific Ocean |
| IPHC | International Pacific Halibut Commission | North Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea |
| NPAFC | North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission | North Pacific Ocean and its adjacent seas north of 33°N |
| PICES | North Pacific Marine Science Organization | North Pacific and adjacent Seas |
| PSC | Pacific Salmon Commission | Northwest Pacific |
| SPC | Secretariat of the Pacific Community | South Pacific South of the Equator |
| SEAFDEC | Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center | Southeast Asian region |

| <i>ACRONYM</i> | <i>NAME</i> | <i>AREA OF COMPETENCE</i> |
|-----------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| WCPFC *) | Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific/Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Convention | Western and Central Pacific Ocean |

*) Not yet established/operational.

INLAND

| <i>ACRONYM</i> | <i>NAME</i> | <i>AREA OF COMPETENCE</i> |
|-----------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| CIFA | Committee for Inland Fisheries of Africa | Inland waters of member countries |
| COPESCAL | Commission for Inland Fisheries of Latin America | Inland waters of member countries |
| EIFAC | European Inland Advisory Fisheries Commission | European inland waters |
| LVFO | Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization | Lake Victoria |
| MRC | Mekong River Commission | Mekong River Basin |

NB. APFIC in the Pacific also covers inland waters.

GLOBAL AND TRANS-OCEAN

| <i>ACRONYM</i> | <i>NAME</i> | <i>AREA OF COMPETENCE</i> |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| CCAMLR | Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources | Antarctic Ocean |
| CCSBT | Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna | Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans where SBT are found |
| CWP | Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics | All oceans |
| IWC | International Whaling Commission | All waters in which whaling is carried out and land stations |
| OLDEPESCA | Latin American Organization for the Development of Fisheries | Oceans bordering Latin America |

Source: Swan (2003) and FAO Web site database for RFBs.

ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION FROM CWP-21

The following are extracts (by paragraph) from the body of the Report of the Twenty-first Session of CWP, citing all recommendations and other items requiring action:

71. On the issue of submission of trade document information to RFBs (para. 57), it was agreed that the recommendation should be retained by the CWP-21. ICCAT and IATTC informed the meeting that they do receive export/import information in a summarized form and that work is in process to improve trade reporting. In relation to this matter, CCAMLR, ICCAT and IATTC reported that systems are in place requiring catch documentation for producers to obtain permission to trade products. ICCAT also informed the meeting that the organization will hold a workshop in April 2005 in Tokyo, Japan, to review the statistical monitoring programs. All tuna RFBs are invited to participate in the meeting.

76. As a follow-up to discussions in CWP-20, the question of whether CWP should assume a more active advocacy role was considered again. The agreement in CWP-20 was that while CWP should promote improvements in fishery statistics, a more pro-active approach was not felt to be appropriate. This sentiment was reconfirmed and it was agreed CWP should continue to seize opportunities and use them judiciously to exercise influence and give advice as appropriate. It was also agreed that a CWP statement should be prepared for the FAO COFI meeting by the vice-chairperson and that CWP should be represented at COFI and the RFB meetings by the vice-chairperson (see Appendix 5).

77. A project is underway to develop a new version of the FAO FISHSTAT software. A preliminary version of FISHSTAT 3.0 was presented to CWP-20. However, most CWP member users are satisfied with FISHSTAT 2.3 even though the programme has some weaknesses, i.e. problems of installation on new Windows platforms and difficulties when setting up new datasets. If and when a new version is developed, the meeting recommended that the user interface should not be changed substantially and that the new software should be thoroughly tested before being distributed.

78. The meeting was asked about the usefulness of the different functions available in FISHSTAT 2.3. A group of meeting participants reviewed this question in more detail and arrived at the following conclusions:

- The data extraction handling facilities constitute the most useful feature of FishStat. The standard groups and customized groupings are deemed very useful as is the copy-paste facility into Excel. In addition to the grand total, sub-totals could be added. The averaging function is episodically used. Flag symbols are used together with filtering and sorting functions, both very useful for extraction.
- Regarding usability aspects, the user interface is generally highly rated. The various features such as visual assistance for species group definition and item selection, or for exploration of long time series on the screen, as well as multiple ways to handle commands (menu, short key, right click) are much appreciated noticeably for switching instantaneously from species common names to scientific names.
- The embedded graphing facility appears not be used.
- Some problems were highlighted: the custom settings (groups, views) unfortunately disappear each time data sets are updated. The users should be encouraged to read dataset notes since this is the place where data set peculiarities (such as "there is no

overlap of data between Canada/Maritime, Canada/Quebec, and Canada/Maritime and Quebec") are documented.

- Routine dataset updates are handled by a very restricted set of people and do not pose any problem. Adding new datasets with similar structure to those existing or updating the existing structure may require some time (Eurostat recently added the New Chronos database). Adding new datasets may prove to be impossible without the assistance of a skilled developer. Plans for new datasets are: IATTC intends to disseminate its capture statistics through Fishstat; FIDI would like to add the FAO food balance sheet time series.

83. The Workshop was attended by ten participants from RFBs and FAO who made the following recommendations with regard to future partnership activities:

- The FishCode–STF Project and FAO should assist RFBs in increasing the awareness of the importance of the implementation of the STF Strategy.
- The FishCode–STF Project and FAO, together with the RFBs, should stress the importance of and promote actions on transparent and complete national data collection of fisheries.
- The FishCode–STF Project should cooperate with RFBs on the carrying out of inventories of data collection systems and status of stocks, in particular in supporting their contribution to FIRMS.
- FishCode–STF Project should seek collaboration with interested RFBs for the development of monitoring systems for small-scale fisheries in developing countries. All RFBs may assist with the identification of expertise for technical assistance.
- The FishCode–STF Project should consider developing guidelines for the establishment of data exchange protocols based on the CWP handbook on fisheries statistical standards.

84. CWP accepted the report and agreed that the recommendations in paragraph 83 above should be taken further. The main text of the Workshop report is included in Appendix 7 herein.

87. Another recommendation from the Expert Consultation was the formation of an advisory body for issues in aquaculture data and statistics, much as the CWP functions for capture fisheries. The CWP session discussed the possibilities for such a committee – in particular, whether this could be assumed within the existing CWP mission, or whether a sub-committee of the CWP, or an entirely new body, should be formed. After an informal polling of the members on their interest and relevance to aquaculture, the CWP agreed that for the present time the best solution was to have an interested subgroup of the CWP perform this function.

89. The complexities involved in obtaining accurate statistics for capture-based aquaculture (tuna-farming being the most prominent current example) were discussed. The CWP reaffirmed the concept of separating the capture and aquaculture components of capture-based aquaculture, while acknowledging the difficulties involved in collecting the data. The CWP was informed of the activities of the GFCM/ICCAT Ad Hoc Working Group on Tuna Farming and the development of guidelines to be completed imminently.

90. Possible use of a “capture-based aquaculture” worksheet to accompany the FISHSTAT AQ was discussed, with the idea that such a worksheet could reinforce the accepted definitions among data providers. It was agreed that activities in this area should be

coordinated among the interested organizations. Eurostat informed the CWP meeting concerning of the proposed revision to aquaculture legislation and the attempts to assure compatibility with FAO data collections.

93. CWP agreed to accept the proposal made by IATTC that when length is used, the measurement should be “length overall” (LOA) according to the following definition:

Length overall is defined as the distance measured in metres in a straight line on a line parallel to the design waterline between the foremost point of the bow and the aftermost point of the stern. For the purpose of this definition:

- c) the bow is taken to include the watertight hull structure, the forecastle, stem and forward bulkhead, if fitted, but not to include bowsprits and safety rail.*
- d) the stern is taken to include the watertight hull structure, transom, poop, trawl ramp and bulwark, but does not include safety rails, bumkins, propulsion machinery, rudders and steering gear, and divers’ ladders and platforms.*

94. On the issue of vessel classifications, FAO presented a new proposal on the outstanding issue of multipurpose vessels based on earlier proposals discussed by the CWP. After discussing several alternatives, CWP agreed to use the following vessel categories:

- Dredgers
- Gillnetters
- Longliners
- Lift netters
- Multipurpose vessels:
 - Multipurpose trawlers (in combination with longline, trap, gillnet, dredge)
 - Purse seine/pelagic trawlers
 - Multipurpose non trawlers (longline, gillnet, trap)
- Purse seiners
- Seiners
- Trap setters
- Trawlers
- Other fishing vessels

This is the final step of the revision initiated at CWP-19 and the meeting agreed that the proposal, together with those already endorsed by CWP-19 and CWP-20, become the new International Standard Statistical Classification of Fishing Vessels (ISSCFV - 2005). This new classification will be updated in the “CWP Handbook of fishery statistical standards”, and a parallel revision and reprint of the FAO Fisheries Technical Paper number 267 "Definition and Classification of fishery vessel types" will be required.

100. It was noted by the FAO Expert Consultation that the knowledge of CWP among fisheries experts and officials appears limited and it was recommended that measures should be taken to increase the awareness of CWP (para. 9). The meeting agreed with this conclusion and it was recommended that CWP members should work towards giving CWP more visibility. IATTC also suggested that RBFs that are not yet members should be contacted and invited to join CWP. A comprehensive list of RBFs is provided in Appendix 9.

103. In conclusion, it was agreed that the CWP was not currently in a position to review and possibly recommend NAF as a standard, particularly since the instrument is not yet fully developed. It was also agreed to establish an inter-sessional electronic working group consisting of all CWP members and coordinated by NAFO. The working group was asked to

propose possible amendments to the present NAF that would ensure its usefulness for assessment and scientific purposes. The results will be made available to NEAFC Advisory Group and discussed in CWP-22.

104. The recommendation by the FAO Expert Consultation to harmonize fields and codes in vessel databases relates to a similar recommendation made by CWP-20 (para. 69 of document CWP-21/4). Some time ago, FAO circulated a proposal for a common format for vessel records to CWP members but no response has been received so far. The meeting agreed that efforts should continue to achieve a common format and that the recommendation of CWP-20 should be retained.

106. The meeting noted the FAO Expert Consultation's recommendation that CWP adopt the UN-LOCODE²⁷ as a standard for identification of fishing ports (para. 13). The meeting agreed that RFBs should study the proposed code system and the matter will be included in the agenda of CWP-22 for further discussion in 2007.

107. With regard to the recommendation on CWP's involvement in MCS operational matters, i.e. on standards for international exchange of information on vessel authorizations and on definitions of fisheries violations and related codes, the FAO Expert Consultation noted that addressing the recommendation would require a review of the CWP mandate (para. 14). The meeting felt that this was not desirable at the moment and agreed to support the work of other agencies.

109. The meeting discussed various positions that CWP could take with regard to the recommendations. It was felt that CWP should not be directly involved in MCS or legal matters as such but that there are elements of MCS that are of relevance to the work of CWP. Moreover, it was pointed out that, although VMS is currently mainly used for MCS purposes, the system could also be used for generating data for assessment of stocks and fisheries as well as for other scientific purposes. The meeting recognized that, in addition to not falling strictly under the CWP mandate, CWP does not have the technical expertise required for dealing with many of the technical MCS matters. The possibility of cooperating with other organizations on aspects of MCS that do not fall within the current mandate of CWP was discussed. The International Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Network for Fisheries Related Activities (MCS Network)²⁸ was identified as a possible partner. The meeting agreed that CWP should take the initiative to contact the MCS Network with the aim to conduct a joint workshop during the intersessional period in which the recommendations of the FAO Expert Consultation be reviewed in order to establish if there are recommendations that MCS Network would like to follow up.

111. The document consists of two parts, a review of current issues and programmes, and a section proposing actions for FAO's continued work. FAO suggested that the review part of the document be published as a FAO Fisheries Circular or similar document. It was pointed out that some time had passed since the draft was prepared and that it may need further revision. It was agreed that OECD and Eurostat would review relevant sections of the document and provide comments to FAO by 1 July 2005 after which the report will be

²⁷ More information on the UN-LOCODES is available on <http://www.unece.org/etrades/download/downloadmain.htm#edifact>.

²⁸ The Web site is <http://www.imcsnet.org>.

published. FAO was requested to ensure that the date of the preparation of the text clearly appears on the document.

115. The meeting discussed the difficulty of defining quality and how this should be dealt with in the process of developing practical guidelines. ICES explained that the organization has several working groups working on issues related to data quality. The experience is that data quality is context dependent and that the quality requirements depend on the end use of the data, including the objectives of the users. Recognising this, the meeting recommended that FAO reverse the order of the first two phases of the proposed activities:

- Phase 1: Organization of an Expert Consultation to further develop objectives and outcomes, and assist in capacity building.
- Phase 2: Establishment of a working group for addressing data quality indicators, metadata and data systems; methodologies for an evaluation and assessment approach; and assessment of cost-effectiveness.
- Phase 3: ACFR review of progress.

It was felt that the overall framework and specifications of relevant data quality situations should be discussed in an Expert Consultation before more detailed work was proposed to a working group.

116. FAO aims at having the draft guidelines ready for review by the Twenty-second Session of the CWP in 2007.

119. Referring to a letter received from Eurostat, the meeting discussed the possibility of reducing the duration of the CWP sessions. It was agreed that the Secretariat should aim at holding the CWP Session, the FIRMS Steering Committee meeting and any related workshop during the same week, i.e. in a maximum of five working days. It was also noted that the agenda should include detailed annotations clearly indicating the matters to be discussed. Such annotations will facilitate a better understanding by external parties of the duration of the meeting.

122. The CWP members confirmed that they shared the understanding of the concept of data exchange protocol given in paragraphs 120–121 above. It was recommended that this concept as presented here be included in the Fisheries Data Quality indicator development framework (see paragraphs 110–116 above).

124. Eurostat pointed out that when modifications are made by RFBs or other agencies to data received from member states on the FISHSTAT or STATLANT questionnaires, it is important to inform the relevant authorities in the member state of the change. An incident with data reported to and modified by FAO was mentioned as an example and Eurostat urged the CWP members to ensure that proper procedures are followed. ICES reported to have similar experiences, also involving problems of data inconsistencies when databases are not updated simultaneously. CWP agreed that such procedures should be followed.

The report of the twenty-first session of the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP), Copenhagen, Denmark, 1–4 March 2005, is presented. Topics discussed were: review of membership; progress since CWP-20 (from each member organization); review of the development of FIGIS and FIRMS (for information); CWP's advocacy role; review of recommendations from CWP-20; FISHSTAT; vessel size measurement for statistical purposes (Vessel length, Loa, Lp-p.); aquaculture statistics; fishery data quality indicators; recommendations relating to CWP from the FAO Expert Consultation on Data Formats and Procedures for Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (Bergen, Norway, 25–27 October 2004); and the 28 February–1 March 2005 Workshop on the Role of Regional Fishery Bodies in the Implementation of the Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries (RFB–STF Workshop).

