

Report of the twenty-eighth session of the

COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

Rome, 2–6 March 2009



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ISBN 978-92-5-106358-3

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PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This is the final version of the report as approved by the twenty-eighth session of the Committee on Fisheries held in Rome from 2 to 6 March 2009.

FAO.

Report of the twenty-eighth session of the Committee on Fisheries. Rome, 2–6 March 2009.

FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Report. No. 902. Rome, FAO. 2009. 64p.

ABSTRACT

The twenty-eighth session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) was held in Rome, Italy, from 2 to 6 March 2009. The Committee reviewed the issues of an international character and the FAO programme in fisheries and aquaculture and their implementation. As part of the further work to facilitate and ensure the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and its International Plans of Action (IPOAs), COFI encouraged the Secretariat to proceed with the publication of the best practices technical guidelines for the IPOA-Seabirds. The Committee supported the development of guidelines on best practices for safety at sea. It agreed on the fundamental importance of capacity building to assist developing countries implement the Code. FAO. The Committee agreed that additional work should be carried out in relation to the Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fish Products from Inland Capture Fisheries. COFI recommended that FAO continue to provide technical advice to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in relation to listing proposals for commercially exploited aquatic species, and technical input to the fisheries subsidies negotiations in the World Trade Organization (WTO). COFI reaffirmed its trust in FAO to play a coordinating role in advancing the global aquaculture agenda and recognized the need for further support to the Special Programme for Aquaculture Development in Africa (SPADA). It was noted that FAO should continue to play a leading role in relation to assistance for the implementation of the International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-sea Fisheries in the High Seas with regard to the management of fisheries resources exploited through deep-sea fishing. COFI reaffirmed that illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing remained one of the principal threats to sustainable fisheries and highlighted the importance of the negotiation of a draft legally-binding instrument on port State measures. The Committee welcomed the outcome of the 2008 Global Conference on Small-scale Fisheries and focused on the various policies, strategies, legal and social measures taken by Members to secure sustainable livelihoods in marine and inland small-scale fisheries. Concerning FAO's programme of work in fisheries and aquaculture, COFI took note of the Immediate Plan of Action (IPA) for FAO Renewal (2009–10) and supported its strengthened role in providing advice on priorities. In considering the draft results framework for the Strategic Objective on "Sustainable Management and Use of Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources", COFI welcomed the shift of the focus of the Organization's work from outputs to outcomes, and supported the process of implementation of the IPA. The Committee reiterated the vital importance of prioritization among the different activities related to these Organizational Results, and agreed to include a specific reference to small-scale fisheries in the six Organizational Results, as appropriate.

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GLOBAL POLICY AND REGULATORY MATTERS FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE CONFERENCE

The Committee:

- i) **Agreed** that more intensive work by Members and regional fisheries management organizations or arrangements (RFMO/As) was required to address and implement the **International Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity** (para. 13).
- ii) **Encouraged** countries and RFMO/As to take further steps to achieve the goals of the **International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks** (para. 13).
- iii) **Encouraged** RFMO/As that had not undertaken **performance reviews** to do so (para. 15).
- iv) **Underscored** the importance of **aquaculture** as a means of enhancing food security and sustainable livelihoods and **stressed the need** to ensure that aquaculture was promoted in an environmentally friendly manner to minimize undesirable external effects (para. 16).
- v) **Supported** the development of guidelines on best practices for **safety at sea** (para. 19).
- vi) **Recognized** the effective **working relations** that FAO enjoyed **with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO)** and **encouraged** such collaboration to continue especially in the areas of safety at sea, work on fishing vessels and health standards (para. 20).
- vii) **Agreed** on the fundamental importance of **capacity building** to assist developing countries implement the Code and **called on** FAO and the international community to promote and sustain national and regional support in a range of activities including the development of **databases**, the mounting of **workshops and skills enhancement** in other areas (para. 21).
- viii) **Endorsed** the report of the eleventh session of the **Sub-Committee on Fish Trade (COFI:FT)** (para. 25).
- ix) **Adopted** the amendments proposed by COFI:FT to the **Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fish Products from Marine Capture Fisheries** (para. 26).
- x) **Agreed** that additional work should be carried out in relation to the **Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fish Products from Inland Capture Fisheries** (para. 28).
- xi) **Recommended** that FAO continue to provide technical advice to the **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)** in relation to listing proposals for commercially exploited aquatic species (para. 32).
- xii) **Agreed** that FAO should continue to provide technical input to the **fisheries subsidies negotiations in the World Trade Organization (WTO)** and that the Secretariat share information with Members on its activities (para. 33).
- xiii) **Agreed** that the Secretariat should develop **best practice guidelines for catch documentation schemes and for traceability** for consideration by the next session of COFI:FT (para. 34).
- xiv) **Underlined** the usefulness of developing **guidelines for the assessment of fisheries in data-poor situations** (para. 35).

- xv) **Endorsed** the report of the **Sub-Committee on Aquaculture** (para. 38).
- xvi) **Recognized** the ever increasing **importance of the aquaculture sector**, and **reaffirmed** its trust in **FAO to play a coordinating role** in advancing the global aquaculture agenda (para. 39).
- xvii) **Recognized** the need for further **support to the Special Programme for Aquaculture Development in Africa (SPADA)** (para. 40).
- xviii) **Considered as a priority** the establishment of a **regional programme** towards improving **aquatic biosecurity in southern Africa** (para. 40).
- xix) **Noted** the importance of the continuing work towards **establishing regional aquaculture networks** in Africa and the Americas and that it was necessary to promote **interregional cooperation** (para. 41).
- xx) **Emphasized** the need for improving **aquaculture data and information** (para. 42).
- xxi) **Reaffirmed** the importance and urgency for developing and finalizing the **Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification** in support of responsible management (para. 45).
- xxii) **Took note** that the **International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-Sea Fisheries in the High Seas** had been developed through a process involving expert consultations, workshops and a technical consultation that finalized and adopted the International Guidelines in August 2008 (para. 50).
- xxiii) **Noted** that FAO should continue to play a leading role in relation to **assistance for the implementation of the International Guidelines** with regard to the management of fisheries resources exploited through **deep-sea fishing** as well as identification and protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems on the basis of the best available scientific data (para. 58).
- xxiv) **Reaffirmed** that **IUU fishing** remained one of the principal threats to sustainable fisheries and emphasized the value of **cooperative efforts** in addressing it (para. 64).
- xxv) **Highlighted** the importance of the ongoing work regarding the negotiation of a draft legally-binding instrument on port State measures to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing (para. 65).
- xxvi) **Supported** the development of a comprehensive **Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels** (para. 71).
- xxvii) **Noted** that **managing bycatch** is an integral component of implementing the ecosystem approach to fisheries and **supported** the development of **International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards** (para. 72).
- xxviii) **Welcomed** the outcome of the **2008 Global Conference on Small-Scale Fisheries** held in Bangkok, Thailand from 13 to 17 October 2008, and **acknowledged** the important contribution made by civil society organizations (CSOs) representing fishworkers organizations and their supporters (para. 75).

- xxix) **Noted** the various policies, strategies, legal and social measures taken by Members to **secure sustainable livelihoods in marine and inland small-scale fisheries** and increase their contributions to rural development, national and household food security and poverty reduction (para. 79).
- xxx) **Expressed the need** for an international instrument on **small-scale fisheries** that would guide national and international efforts to secure sustainable small-scale fisheries and create a framework for monitoring and reporting (para. 83).
- xxxii) **Recognized** the importance of **climate change** and its increasing impacts on fisheries and aquaculture (para. 87).
- xxxiii) **Supported the conclusions and recommendations of the April 2008 Expert Workshop and called** on the Secretariat play a more active role in matters relating to **climate change**, especially where FAO had comparative advantages such as gathering information concerning national and regional developments with regular reporting to Members, and **recommended** active **collaboration with other organizations** to avoid duplication of efforts (para. 88).
- xxxiiii) **Recognized and supported** the importance of **implementing the Code**, the **ecosystem approach to fisheries and aquaculture**, and the application of the **precautionary approach**, to increase **resilience and adaptability to climate change** through improvement in the management of fisheries and aquaculture (para. 89).
- xxxv) **Noted the concerns of the most vulnerable countries**, including low-lying SIDS and countries of the Sahel region regarding the adverse effects of climate change and sea level rise on fisheries and aquaculture (para. 93).
- xxxvi) **Underscored** the need for **cross-sectoral approaches** in meeting climate change challenges, particularly in relation to terrestrial environments and inland water fisheries and aquaculture (para. 94).

**PROGRAMME AND BUDGETARY MATTERS
FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL**

The Committee

- i) **Agreed** that **biennial reporting on progress in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries**, related international plans of action and strategies should be maintained (para. 10).
- ii) **Encouraged** the Secretariat to proceed with the **publication of the best practices technical guidelines** for the implementation of the **International Plan of Action for Reducing the Incidental Catch of Seabirds in Longline Fisheries** (para. 13).
- iii) **Expressed** support for the proposal to consider the development by the Secretariat of **electronic options for reporting on the implementation of the Code** (para. 17).
- iv) **Supported** the development of guidelines on best practices for **safety at sea** (para. 19).
- v) **Recognized** the effective **working relations** that FAO enjoyed **with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO)** and **encouraged** such collaboration to continue especially in the areas of safety at sea, work on fishing vessels and health standards (para. 20).
- vi) **Called on** FAO and the international community to promote and sustain national and regional support in a range of activities including the development of **databases**, the mounting of **workshops** and **skills enhancement** in other areas and underlined FishCode's role in supporting the Code's implementation (para. 21).
- vii) **Requested** FAO to support the convening of a **workshop** to consider technical matters relating to the **attached shark-fin rule** (para. 23).
- viii) **Agreed** that additional work should be carried out in relation to the **Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fish Products from Inland Capture Fisheries** (para. 28).
- ix) **Noted** that the Secretariat will present a proposal to the next Sub-Committee on Fish Trade (COFI:FT) under which it could assess **private ecolabelling schemes** and will then seek guidance from COFI:FT on how to proceed on this activity (para. 31).
- x) **Recommended** that FAO continue to provide **technical advice to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)** in relation to listing proposals for commercially exploited aquatic species (para. 32).
- xi) **Agreed** that FAO should continue to provide technical input to the **fisheries subsidies** negotiations in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and that the Secretariat share information with Members on its activities (para. 33).
- xii) **Agreed** that the Secretariat should develop best practice **guidelines for catch documentation schemes and for traceability** for consideration by the next session of COFI:FT (para. 34).
- xiii) **Underlined** the usefulness of developing guidelines for the assessment of fisheries in data-poor situations (para. 35).
- xiv) **Recognized** the need for further support to the **Special Programme for Aquaculture Development in Africa (SPADA)** (para. 40).

- xv) **Considered as a priority** the establishment of a **regional programme** towards improving **aquatic biosecurity in southern Africa** (para. 40).
- xvi) **Noted** the importance of the continuing work towards **establishing regional aquaculture networks** in Africa and the Americas and that it was necessary to promote **interregional cooperation** (para. 41).
- xvii) **Urged** further work, in relation to aquaculture, on **aquatic animal health management, food safety, governance, legislation, organizing farmers, small-scale aquaculture, capacity building, sustainable use of wild resources as seed and feed ingredients, environmental issues, availability of fish feed and offshore aquaculture** (para. 43).
- xviii) **Recommended** that a comprehensive and **strategic programme of work** be developed in support of the future work of the **Sub-Committee on Aquaculture** and to help measure progress and **requested** the Secretariat to form an **Expert Group of Members** to assist the process (para. 44).
- xix) **Reaffirmed** the importance and urgency for developing and finalizing the **Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification** in support of responsible management and **requested** the Secretariat to secure funding, including extrabudgetary funding, to conduct a **Technical Consultation** as soon as possible in 2009, in order to develop revised draft Technical Guidelines **to be submitted to COFI at its next session for approval** (para. 45).
- xx) **Noted** that, in conjunction with the fifth session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, the **Global Conference on Aquaculture 2010** will be held and will be jointly organized by FAO, the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia and the Pacific (NACA) and the Government of Thailand (para. 47).
- xxi) **Referred to** the special requirements of developing countries and the specific challenges that they were likely to face in implementing the **International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-Sea Fisheries in the High Seas** and **noted** that **technical and financial support** would be required (para. 55).
- xxii) **Noted** that FAO should continue to play a leading role in relation to **assistance for the implementation of the International Guidelines** with regard to the management of fisheries resources exploited through **deep-sea fishing** as well as identification and protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems on the basis of the best available scientific data (para. 58).
- xxiii) **Welcomed**, and expressed support for, the proposed FAO programme on the management of deep-sea fisheries in the high seas, as described in document COFI/2009/5 Rev.1 (para. 59).
- xxiv) **Highlighted** the importance of the ongoing work regarding the negotiation of a draft legally-binding instrument on **port State measures** to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing (para. 65).
- xxv) **Stressed** the need that the special requirements of **developing countries** be recognized and to ensure that they received appropriate assistance, particularly **capacity building** across a broad range of monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) issues, and thanked the Secretariat for its **capacity building programme on port State measures** (para. 69).
- xxvi) **Agreed** that the Expert Consultation on Flag State Performance should be followed by a Technical Consultation (para. 70).

- xxvii) **Supported** a future programme of work for the development of a **comprehensive Global Record** of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels including **assessing user needs**, including the needs of developing countries, convening a broad-based **Steering Committee**, designing and implementing a **pilot project** and preparing a comprehensive **technical report** which could lead to a **Technical Consultation** on the Global Record (para. 71).
- xxviii) **Supported** the development of **International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards**, and the convening of an **Expert Consultation** followed by a **Technical Consultation** (para. 72).
- xxix) **Called for** the Secretariat to examine various options to carry forward suggestions relating to the need for an international instrument on **small-scale fisheries** and **supported** the need for FAO to establish a **specific global programme dedicated to small-scale fisheries** (para. 83).
- xxx) **Called** on the Secretariat to play a more active role in matters relating to **climate change**, especially where FAO had comparative advantages such as gathering information concerning national and regional developments with regular reporting to Members, and **recommended** active **collaboration with other organizations** to avoid duplication of efforts (para. 88).
- xxxi) **Took note of the Immediate Plan of Action (IPA) for FAO Renewal (2009-10)** adopted by the Thirty-fifth Special Session of the FAO Conference, in particular the new results-based programme framework now under preparation that would cover all sources of funds available to the Organization, and the revised reporting arrangements for the Technical Committees, and **supported** its strengthened role in providing advice on priorities for FAO's work in fisheries, while regretting the absence of a costed programme of work proposal to allow the prioritization requested in the IPA (para. 95).
- xxxii) **Welcomed** the shift of the focus of the Organization's work **from outputs to outcomes**, and **expressed** its support to the process of implementation of the IPA (para. 98).
- xxxiii) **Generally supported the six Organizational Results** of the strategic objective C: "Sustainable Management and Use of Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources" as described in document COFI/2009/9 (para. 99).
- xxxiv) **Reiterated** the vital importance of **prioritization among the different activities related to the six Organizational Results** of the strategic objective C and took note of the concrete suggestions made by its Members on what they considered as high priorities, including the following in no particular order (para. 100):
- small-scale and artisanal fisheries, both marine and inland;
 - capacity building for implementation of the Code and its related instruments;
 - evaluation of the effectiveness of the Code and its related instruments;
 - combating IUU fishing;
 - development of International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards;
 - completion of the legally-binding instrument on port State measures;
 - development of a global record of fishing vessels, refrigerated transport vessels and supply vessels;
 - flag State performance and the elaboration of an appropriate instrument;
 - overcapacity;
 - development of sustainable, environmentally friendly aquaculture and capacity building;
 - finalization of the technical guidelines on certification in aquaculture;
 - establishment and support of regional aquaculture programmes and networks;

- impact of climate change on fisheries and aquaculture;
- inputs and contributions to the up-coming review conference of the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement and the review of action taken with respect to United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 61/105;
- promotion of fair international trade in fisheries and aquaculture;
- collection and utilization of reliable data;
- monitoring the status of stocks;
- CITES ad hoc panel of experts;
- identification of a programme to define management units.

xxxv) **Agreed** to include a specific reference to small-scale fisheries in the six Organizational Results, as appropriate (para. 102).

xxxvi) **Noted** that the first fully revised cycle of preparation and Governing Body decision-making on programming, budgeting and results-based monitoring, would be implemented from 2010, as foreseen in the IPA and that it expected to receive at its next session a fully elaborated results framework and structure analysis of priorities, as well as a more transparent and comprehensive reporting on the activities undertaken, whether supported by regular or extrabudgetary funds (para. 103).

xxxvii) **Expressed** opinions that, to the extent possible, the current **timing for COFI sessions** should be maintained (i.e. February/March in the second year of each biennium). Moving the Session to the third quarter of the first year of each biennium would cause conflicts with the timing of the meetings of some RFMO/As and the annual consultations for UNGA Resolutions (para. 105).

INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee on Fisheries (COFI) held its twenty-eighth session in Rome from 2 to 6 March 2009.
2. The Session was attended by 113 Members of the Committee, observers from two other FAO Member Nations, one Associated Member, the Holy See, by representatives from seven specialized agencies of the United Nations and by observers from 84 intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations. A list of delegates and observers is attached as Appendix B.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSONS AND DESIGNATION OF THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE

3. Mr Zbigniew Karnicki (Poland) was elected unanimously Chairperson of the Committee and Mr Javad Shakhs Tavakolian, Iran (Islamic Republic of) was elected First Vice-Chairperson. Australia, Netherlands, Nicaragua and Russian Federation were elected as other Vice-Chairs.
4. The Committee elected Mr Nilanto Perbowo (Indonesia) as Chairperson of the Drafting Committee with the following membership: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Congo (Republic of), Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Sudan, Sweden, Uganda, United Kingdom and United States of America.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

5. The Session was addressed by Mr Jim Butler, FAO Deputy Director-General, who underlined the importance of this Session that was taking place during this critical period of reform within the Organization. He highlighted the items and issues before the Committee, listing the implementation of the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (the Code) and its related instruments, aquaculture, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, deep-sea fisheries, small-scale fisheries, climate change and international trade, as some of the primary matters to be discussed. The text of his statement is attached as Appendix D.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SESSION

6. The Committee noted the Declaration of Competence and Voting Rights presented by the European Community.
7. The Committee adopted the Agenda and Timetable for the Session. The Agenda is given in Appendix A. The list of documents, which were placed before the Committee, are shown in Appendix C.
8. The Chairperson of the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC), speaking on behalf of that Group, stressed the need to respect fully the competence of the Committee regarding the approval of all relevant instruments produced by Technical Consultations and both Sub-Committees. She noted GRULAC's view that those Technical Consultations and the Sub-Committees had no competence to approve those instruments. She expressed concern about the availability in due time of meeting documents and related reports prior to the

Session. She also stressed their view that the reports should only reflect matters that had been addressed in the Committee.

PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES, RELATED INTERNATIONAL PLANS OF ACTION AND STRATEGY

9. In introducing document COFI/2009/2 and the associated information papers (COFI/2009/Inf.10, Inf.11, Inf.12 and Inf.13), the Secretariat highlighted key issues arising from the national responses to the 2008 questionnaire. The Secretariat also reported on FAO activities undertaken in the intersessional period to support the implementation of the Code. It was noted that the response rate to the 2008 questionnaire (33 percent of FAO Members) was less than the response rate in 2006.

10. Many Members expressed disappointment about the low response rate to the 2008 questionnaire in view of the serious problems facing world fisheries. These Members encouraged countries, intergovernmental organizations and international non-governmental organizations, to respond to future questionnaires so as to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the problems facing fisheries and the progress being made to overcome them. Members agreed that biennial reporting should be maintained.

11. Many Members reported on their respective efforts to implement the Code and related instruments. Some Members indicated that they had reviewed legislation to incorporate the Code's principles and developed policies, strategies and plans consistent with the Code and pointed out that they were implementing, *inter alia*, the precautionary approach, the ecosystem approach to fisheries, measures to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems and participatory management. Several Members noted that the current global economic situation was impairing their efforts to maintain the implementation of responsible and long-term sustainable fisheries. Many Members appreciated the analysis of the extent of the implementation and impact of the Code as referred to in paragraph 4 of COFI/2009/2 and recommended further consideration by the Committee of its conclusions.

12. To assist with the further implementation of the Code, several Members proposed that the Secretariat develop a roster of experts that could be made available to countries to support them in their implementation efforts.

13. In relation to the four international plans of action (IPOAs) concluded within the Code's framework, the Committee agreed that more intensive work by Members and regional fisheries management organizations or arrangements (RFMO/As) was required to address and implement the IPOA-capacity although some of them reported on their national plans and regulations. For the IPOA-sharks it was apparent that despite considerable effort undertaken by many Members in the intersessional period to develop national plans of action (NPOAs) for the conservation and management of sharks, countries and RFMO/As were encouraged to take further steps to achieve its goals. Similar attention was being paid to the IPOA dealing with IUU fishing. In this context several Members referred to the current negotiations for the development of a binding instrument on port State measures to combat IUU fishing and urged that it be concluded as soon as possible. For the IPOA-seabirds the Committee encouraged the Secretariat to proceed with the publication of the best practices technical guidelines.

14. Some Members emphasized the fundamental importance of subregional and regional cooperation in fisheries, particularly in areas such as IUU fishing, port State measures and monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS). They stressed that subregional and regional arrangements should incorporate geographic specificities to ensure that there was a close match between regional challenges and proposed solutions.

15. Many Members referred to the performance reviews being undertaken by RFMO/As and urged those organizations that had already undertaken such reviews to implement the recommendations, if they had not done so already, so as to strengthen regional governance, modernize mandates and adopt improved approaches to management. Many Members encouraged RFMO/As that had not undertaken reviews to do so. Some Members referred to the lack of implementation of agreed RFMO/A management measures. The failure of some RFMO/A Members to implement these measures eroded the effectiveness and credibility of these organizations.

16. Many Members underscored the importance of aquaculture as a means of enhancing food security and sustainable livelihoods. They stressed the need to ensure that aquaculture was promoted in an environmentally friendly manner to minimize undesirable external effects.

17. The Committee expressed support for the proposal referred to in COFI/2009/Inf.11 to consider the development by the Secretariat of electronic options for reporting on the implementation of the Code. Members requested that FAO take into consideration the different capacity levels in countries to ensure that developing countries were not disadvantaged.

18. Some Members welcomed the elaboration of the technical guidelines relating to information and knowledge sharing to support the implementation of the Code, noting that the availability of information was critical for achieving responsible fisheries.

19. Many Members noted the importance of safety at sea and the outcome of the FAO Expert Consultation on Best Practices for Safety at Sea in the Fisheries Sector held in Rome, Italy, from 10 to 13 November 2008. There was widespread support for the development of guidelines on best practices for safety at sea as recommended by the Expert Consultation. Some Members also supported the development of an IPOA on safety in the fisheries sector.

20. The Committee recognized the effective working relations that FAO enjoyed with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) and encouraged such collaboration to continue especially in the areas of safety at sea, work on fishing vessels and health standards. In addition, the ILO representative suggested that FAO might consider addressing issues relating to child labour in the fisheries sector.

21. The Committee agreed on the fundamental importance of capacity building to assist developing countries implement the Code. It called on FAO and the international community to promote and sustain national and regional support in a range of activities including the development of databases, the mounting of workshops and skills enhancement in other areas. Members underlined FishCode's role in supporting the Code's implementation.

22. Some Members warned that a failure to implement the Code might undermine its objective and the role of FAO and RFMO/As.

23. Many Members requested FAO to support the convening of a workshop to consider technical matters relating to the attached shark-fin rule.

DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE COFI SUB-COMMITTEE ON FISH TRADE, BREMEN, GERMANY, 3–6 JUNE 2008

24. The Item was introduced by the Secretariat and discussed based on documents COFI/2009/3 and COFI/2009/Inf.8.

25. The Committee endorsed the report of the Eleventh Session of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade (COFI:FT) held in Bremen, Germany, from 2 to 6 June 2008.

26. The Committee adopted the amendments proposed by COFI:FT to the Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fish Products from Marine Capture Fisheries (the Guidelines). In so doing, it noted the reservation of Mauritania to the guidelines referred to in paragraphs 26, 28 and 29 of this report.

27. Many Members stressed that developing countries requested assistance in relation to the Guidelines, in particular for small-scale and artisanal fisheries. They expressed concerns that ecolabelling schemes could become barriers to trade, especially when taking into account the importance of fish trade for developing countries.

28. The Committee agreed that additional work should be carried out in relation to the Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fish Products from Inland Capture Fisheries.

29. Some Members underscored the need to ensure consistency between the Guidelines and the draft Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification.

30. The Committee noted that there will be a roundtable organized by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the FAO Secretariat on ecolabelling and certification in the fisheries sector.¹

31. Given that there were contrary views from Members on whether FAO should assess private ecolabelling schemes in relation to the criteria set out in the Guidelines, the FAO Legal Counsel advised the Committee that FAO, as an international organization, traditionally had been cautious about assessing private entities' compliance with guidelines. The Secretariat will present a proposal to the next COFI:FT under which it could assess private ecolabelling schemes. The Secretariat will then seek guidance from COFI:FT on how to proceed on this activity.

32. The Committee recommended that FAO continue to provide technical advice to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in relation to listing proposals for commercially exploited aquatic species. Japan expressed its intention to provide financial support for the organization of a third ad hoc expert advisory panel for assessment of listing proposals to CITES in advance of the Fifteenth Conference of the Parties of CITES. While the Committee appreciated Japan's offer, several Members

¹ To be held in the Hague, Netherlands, 22–23 April 2009.

recommended that the activities being undertaken by the Ad Hoc Expert Advisory Panel for assessment of listing proposals to CITES become a regular activity, to be funded by the Regular Programme.

33. The Committee agreed that FAO should continue to provide technical input to the fisheries subsidies negotiations in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and that the Secretariat share information with Members on its activities. Many Members noted that FAO's work should be complementary to WTO activities and should avoid duplication. They proposed that the FAO/CITES Memorandum of Understanding could be used as a model for a cooperative framework with WTO.

34. The Committee agreed that the Secretariat should develop best practice guidelines for catch documentation schemes and for traceability for consideration by the next Session of COFI:FT.

35. The Committee underlined the usefulness of developing guidelines for the assessment of fisheries in data-poor situations.

36. Many Members expressed their concern with the emergence of unilateral trade measures and requested that trade-related measures be implemented in a consultative, transparent, predictable and non-discriminatory manner and in accordance with WTO obligations.

37. The Committee thanked Argentina for offering to host the twelfth session of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade in 2010.

DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE COFI SUB-COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE, PUERTO VARAS, CHILE, 6–10 OCTOBER 2008

38. The Agenda Item was introduced by the Secretariat and was discussed on the basis of documents COFI/2009/4 and COFI/2009/Inf. 9. The Committee endorsed the report of the Sub-Committee and thanked the Government of Chile for hosting the Session.

39. The Committee recognized the ever increasing importance of the aquaculture sector, its contribution to global food production, and the need for its sustainable growth in a responsible manner. The Committee reaffirmed its trust in FAO to play a coordinating role in advancing the global aquaculture agenda. Some Members called for increased funding support for FAO's work on aquaculture.

40. The Committee was grateful for the financial assistance provided by the Government of Japan for FAO's work on sustainable aquaculture and called for continued assistance. The Committee also recognized the need for further support to the Special Programme for Aquaculture Development in Africa (SPADA). Considering the recent outbreak of disease epidemic in the Zambezi River, the establishment of a regional programme towards improving aquatic biosecurity in southern Africa was considered a priority.

41. The Committee noted the importance of the continuing work towards establishing regional aquaculture networks in Africa and in the Americas and that it was necessary to promote interregional cooperation.

42. Members emphasized the need for improving aquaculture data and information. Some Members stressed that reporting on the implementation of the Code's provisions on aquaculture should be continued on a biennial basis.

43. The Committee urged further work on aquatic animal health management, food safety, governance, legislation, organizing farmers, small-scale aquaculture, capacity building, sustainable use of wild resources as seed and feed ingredients, environmental issues, availability of fish feed and offshore aquaculture.

44. The Committee recommended that a comprehensive and strategic programme of work be developed in support of the future work of the Sub-Committee and to help measure progress. The Committee requested the Secretariat to form an Expert Group of Members to assist the process. New areas including the evaluation of alternate feeds, creation of a database on case studies on impacts of aquaculture, improvement in offshore aquaculture production, land and water resources and stock enhancement were identified as necessary to be addressed during the coming years.

45. The Committee reaffirmed the importance and urgency for developing and finalizing the Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification in support of responsible management. While appreciating FAO's work on developing the draft guidelines, many Members emphasized the need for a substantial revision based on the comments provided, in order to finalize the document. The Committee requested the Secretariat to secure funding, including extrabudgetary funding, to conduct a Technical Consultation as soon as possible in 2009, in order to develop revised draft technical guidelines. It was stressed that due consideration should be given to facilitating participation from developing countries in the process. COFI at its next Session will be requested to approve the guidelines.

46. Some Members also requested that the guidelines not include criteria for which there were no standards or criteria which related to issues that were not under the control of aquaculturists. These Members specifically identified social responsibility, animal welfare and sanitary measures as criteria not to be included.

47. The Secretariat informed the Committee that, in conjunction with the fifth session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, the Global Conference on Aquaculture 2010 will be held. This activity is jointly organized by FAO, the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia and the Pacific (NACA) and the Government of Thailand.

48. The Committee thanked Thailand and South Africa for offering to host the fifth and sixth sessions of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, respectively.

MANAGEMENT OF DEEP-SEA FISHERIES IN THE HIGH SEAS

49. The Secretariat announced amendments to document COFI/2009/5. It will be reissued as document COFI/2009/5 Rev.1 in which all references to FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Technical Paper No. 522 would be deleted. In introducing the amended version of document COFI/2009/5, the Secretariat highlighted the work undertaken by FAO since 2006 in relation to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Sustainable Fisheries Resolution 61/105 and the subsequent request of COFI at its twenty-seventh session for FAO to develop International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-sea Fisheries in the High Seas. The

Secretariat also announced that FAO Technical Paper No. 522 would be corrected on the basis of consultations with Members and that an amended version of that report would be published.

50. The Secretariat explained that the International Guidelines had been developed through a process involving expert consultations, workshops and a technical consultation that finalized and adopted the International Guidelines in August 2008.

51. Many Members commended the Secretariat for its effective and timely efforts in supporting the development of the International Guidelines and considered they were an important step forward in addressing the management of these fisheries and the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems. Members congratulated Ms Jane Willing (New Zealand) for her excellent work in chairing the Technical Consultation.

52. Many Members reported on their experience with the implementation of UNGA Resolution 61/105 and the International Guidelines, both at the national and regional levels, noting that implementation was well underway, including within Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO), North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) and South East Atlantic Fisheries Organization (SEAFO) and as voluntary interim measures in the Northwest Pacific and South Pacific. Some Members expressed the view that despite progress in many areas, in some cases additional efforts were required to respond fully to Resolution 61/105 and that countries and RFMO/As should continue their efforts in this regard, noting that the UNGA will review the implementation of Resolution 61/105 in 2009, in accordance with paragraph 91 of the Resolution.

53. Many Members stressed that RFMO/As were playing a key role in implementing UNGA Resolution 61/105 and the International Guidelines in a manner appropriate to the circumstances of the fisheries that they manage. They pointed to the need to establish new RFMO/As in areas where they did not exist and to strengthen the capabilities of RFMO/As to achieve effective implementation of UNGA Resolution 61/105 and the International Guidelines, and for flag States to ensure such implementation, particularly in areas where no competent RFMO exists.

54. In considering the International Guidelines, some Members made observations with respect to their application to species of medium productivity. With regard to the relationship between paragraphs 8 and 9 of the International Guidelines, some of these Members expressed their understanding that paragraph 9 applied only to those species with the characteristics in paragraph 8(i) and (ii). Other Members noted that, in accordance with the remaining section of paragraph 8, application of the guidelines to species of medium productivity was to be considered by countries and RFMO/As, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis. Some Members were of the view that, in developing the programme for the implementation of the International Guidelines, the Secretariat should consider the views expressed and provide them with additional guidance in this regard.

55. Many Members referred to the special requirements of developing countries and the specific challenges that they were likely to face in implementing the International Guidelines and noted that technical and financial support would be required.

56. Some Members noted that their capacity to implement the International Guidelines was still developing and that their implementation of certain highly technical aspects of the International Guidelines would proceed on a progressive basis, reflecting best efforts in accordance with their respective capabilities.

57. A few Members expressed the view that the International Guidelines should be considered as minimum requirements for the management of deep-sea fisheries and the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems.

58. Many Members noted that FAO should continue to play a leading role in relation to assistance for the implementation of the International Guidelines with regard to the management of fisheries resources exploited through deep-sea fishing as well as identification and protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems on the basis of the best available scientific data.

59. Many Members welcomed, and expressed support for, the proposed FAO programme on the management of deep-sea fisheries in the high seas, as described in document COFI/2009/5 Rev.1. They noted the relevance of the activities proposed, including the development of support tools and a database on vulnerable marine ecosystems in light of the tasks that the Secretariat had been requested to carry out in the relevant paragraphs of the International Guidelines.

60. A few Members noted the important role of deep-sea vessel operations in the collection of data and development of gear and other technologies to ensure effective management of deep-sea fisheries on the high seas.

61. Some Members pointed out the necessity to strengthen high-seas governance in general, not limited to deep-sea fisheries management, in order to combat effectively IUU fishing.

62. Some Members reiterated that the references in the International Guidelines to the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) did not prejudice the position of any State with respect to signature, ratification or accession to this instrument. Some Members also reiterated that references in the Guidelines to the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement did not imply that this Agreement may apply to States that had not expressed their consent to be bound by it.

COMBATING ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED AND UNREGULATED (IUU) FISHING, INCLUDING THROUGH A LEGALLY-BINDING INSTRUMENT ON PORT STATE MEASURES AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A GLOBAL RECORD OF FISHING VESSELS

63. The Secretariat introduced document COFI/2009/6 and a progress report on the Technical Consultation to draft a legally-binding instrument on port State measures, held in Rome, Italy, from 23 to 27 June 2008 and 26 to 30 January 2009, was given by its Chair, Mr Fabio Hazin (Brazil). Many Members thanked the Secretariat for the numerous efforts undertaken to assist Members prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing.

64. The Committee reaffirmed that IUU fishing remained one of the principal threats to sustainable fisheries and many Members described a variety of steps that had been taken at national, subregional and regional levels to deal with IUU fishing and related problems. The value of cooperative efforts in addressing IUU fishing was emphasized. Initiatives agreed on a bilateral and multilateral basis and measures targeting IUU fishing adopted by RFMO/As were cited as examples where some success had been achieved in combating IUU fishing.

65. Many Members highlighted the importance of the ongoing work regarding the negotiation of a draft legally-binding instrument on port State measures to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing. Since the twenty-seventh session of COFI, an Expert Consultation to Draft a Legally-binding Instrument on Port State Measures was held in Washington DC, United States of America, from 3 to 7 September 2007 and two Sessions of the Technical Consultation had been held. Progress on the discussion and understanding of the issues was achieved, but a number of significant, outstanding issues remained to be resolved. Some Members expressed their concern in relation to issues that they considered pending.

66. On the question of status of the agreement, many Members supported that it be adopted within the framework of FAO under Article 14 of the Constitution of the Organization, while some Members expressed their preference for the agreement to be adopted outside FAO. Some Members pointed out that if the agreement was adopted under Article 14, an important fishing entity and a major port would be excluded from it and that this would cause a serious problem in terms of the agreement's effective implementation.

67. Many Members were of the view that the agreement should cover all types of vessels involved in fishing and fishing related activities. Some Members were of the opinion that further consideration and clarification on the coverage were necessary, taking appropriately into account legitimate vessel activities such as transportation of products other than those derived from IUU fishing.

68. Some Members stressed the importance of jointly working to resolve issues in advance of the next session of the Technical Consultation. Members referred to their commitment to a successful outcome of the negotiation process and stressed the importance that the resulting instrument be effective and widely accepted. Some Members advised against establishing deadlines that might jeopardize the outcome of the negotiations.

69. Many Members stressed the need that the special requirements of developing countries be recognized and to ensure that they received appropriate assistance, particularly capacity building across a broad range of MCS issues. The Secretariat was thanked for its capacity building programme on port State measures. Many Members expressed their gratitude for the capacity building activities implemented with the support of the International MCS Network. Members were encouraged to participate in the Third Global Fisheries Enforcement Training Workshop (Maputo, Mozambique, September 2010).

70. Some Members noted, with appreciation, the preliminary work on the development of Flag State Performance Criteria, through a workshop held in Canada in March 2008, which also encompassed assessing flag State performance and taking action if criteria were not met. As agreed in paragraph 71 of the Report of the twenty-seventh session of COFI, an Expert Consultation will be held (June 2009). The Committee agreed that this meeting should be followed by a Technical Consultation on "flag State performance".

71. The Committee was informed about the outcome of the Expert Consultation on the Development of a Comprehensive Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels held in Rome, Italy, from 25 to 28 February 2008 and the subsequent activities undertaken as recommended by the Expert Consultation. Many Members supported the development of a global record. Some Members highlighted the importance of cost effectiveness and considered further study was necessary on the necessity and practicability of this issue and other related issues. They stressed the value of building on existing vessel data bases and particularly the work of RFMO/As, some of which were developing unique vessel identifier systems. A future programme of work was supported that should include assessing user needs, including the needs of developing countries, convening a broad-based Steering Committee, designing and implementing a pilot project and preparing a comprehensive technical report which could lead to a Technical Consultation on the global record.

72. The Committee noted that managing bycatch is an integral component of implementing the ecosystem approach to fisheries. There was broad support for a Norwegian proposal to develop International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards, and to convene an Expert Consultation followed by a Technical Consultation. Norway informed the meeting that it would make available funds for these activities.

73. A few Members expressed concern about high seas fisheries governance in the Indian Ocean and suggested consideration be given to harmonizing governance arrangements.

SECURING SUSTAINABLE SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES: TOWARDS RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

74. In introducing document COFI/2009/7 on the outcome of the 2008 Global Conference on Small-scale Fisheries held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 13 to 17 October 2008, the Secretariat thanked all those who contributed, in particular the Kingdom of Thailand for coorganizing and hosting the Conference.

75. The Committee expressed appreciation to the Secretariat, coorganizers, sponsors and participants of the Conference, welcomed its outcome, and acknowledged the important contribution made by civil society organizations (CSOs) representing fishworkers organizations and their supporters.

76. The CSOs informed the Committee about the economic, social and cultural contributions of small-scale fisheries and their great potential to contribute significantly to sustainable development and the attainment of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

77. While recognizing the great variety of small-scale fisheries that are found in virtually all countries and defy a universal definition, the Committee noted the often precarious conditions of small-scale and indigenous fishing communities. The Committee noted that such precarious conditions are mainly due to insecure access and user rights to land and fishery resources, inadequate infrastructure facilities such as rural roads and landing sites, high vulnerability to natural disasters and adverse impacts of climate change, risky and harsh working living conditions, inadequate access to basic social services, as well as weak representation and participation in decisions affecting their lives.

78. The Committee observed that data and statistics on small-scale fisheries, especially in inland waters, were not always comprehensive, resulting in underestimating their economic, social and nutritional benefits and contribution to livelihoods and food security.

79. The Committee noted the various policies, strategies, legal and social measures taken by Members to secure sustainable livelihoods in marine and inland small-scale fisheries and increase their contributions to rural development, national and household food security and poverty reduction.

80. Measures noted by the Committee included: dedicated policies, strategies and programmes in support of small-scale fisheries; introduction and strengthening of community-based and co-management arrangements; restoration of fish stocks and their habitats in nearshore areas; legal empowerment and organizational strengthening of fishworkers associations and cooperatives; inclusion of fishing communities into social security, medical care and HIV/AIDS prevention schemes; support for improved post-harvest handling, distribution and marketing; infrastructure facilities; safety at sea and capacity-building.

81. In discussion, several Members noted the special difficulties faced by small-scale fisheries to participate in ecolabelling schemes. They reiterated that such schemes could represent possible barriers to international trade. They stressed that such schemes should be transparent, non discriminatory and consistent with WTO obligations. Some Members also expressed their concern that such schemes could impose additional disproportionate burden on them.

82. Some Members called for the establishment of a regional fisheries body to bring together the coastal States of the Red Sea. The body would promote cooperation and management for sustainable fisheries similar to other regions.

83. Many Members expressed the need for an international instrument on small-scale fisheries, which could comprise a new article in the Code, an IPOA and/or the development of guidelines, that would guide national and international efforts to secure sustainable small-scale fisheries and create a framework for monitoring and reporting. In addition, many Members called for the establishment of a new COFI Sub-Committee on small-scale fisheries. The Secretariat should examine various options to carry these suggestions forward. Many Members supported the need for FAO to establish a specific global programme dedicated to small-scale fisheries.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

84. In introducing this Agenda Item, the Secretariat referred to document COFI/2009/8 and recommendations made by the twenty-seventh session of the Committee, that FAO devote more emphasis on climate change-related work and, in particular, that “FAO should undertake a scoping study to identify the key issues on climate change and fisheries, initiate a discussion on how the fishing industry can adapt to climate change, and for FAO to take a lead in informing fishers and policy-makers about the likely consequences of climate change for fisheries”.

85. The Secretariat referred particularly to the results and recommendations of the FAO Expert Workshop on Climate Change Implications for Fisheries and Aquaculture held in Rome, Italy, from 7 to 9 April 2008. It reviewed the impacts of climate change at the ecosystem level, throughout the aquaculture and fisheries value chains, on the communities dependent on these sectors. The Workshop agreed on a list of far-reaching recommendations for national, regional and international action.

86. The Secretariat also referred to two important events, the High-Level Conference on World Food Security: the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy held in Rome, Italy, from 3 to 5 June 2008, and the international Scientific Symposium on Coping with Global Change in Marine Social-Ecological Systems, held in Rome, Italy, from 8 to 11 July 2008.

87. The Committee recognized the importance of climate change and its increasing impacts on fisheries and aquaculture. Many Members reported that climate change effects were already observable both in the aquatic and terrestrial environments, including through species displacements, decreases in fishery yields of demersal and pelagic species and extreme weather events. Several small island developing States (SIDS) underscored their vulnerability to climate change and thanked the Government of Japan for the support to the work of FAO in their regions.

88. The Committee supported the conclusions and recommendations of the April 2008 Expert Workshop. It called on the Secretariat to play a more active role in matters relating to climate change, especially where FAO had comparative advantages such as gathering information concerning national and regional developments with regular reporting to Members. Active collaboration with other organizations was advocated to avoid duplication of efforts.

89. Many Members agreed that improvement in the management of fisheries and aquaculture would increase their resilience and adaptability to climate change. In this respect, the importance of implementing the Code, the ecosystem approach to fisheries and aquaculture, and the application of the precautionary approach were generally recognized and supported by the Committee.

90. Several Members shared information on their concerns, experiences and action taken regarding the effects of climate change and indicated the need for capacity building to meet the challenges. Mention was also made by some Members of the need to consider the reduction of energy consumption and carbon emissions in fisheries and aquaculture. Some Members noted the need for better knowledge to develop adaptation strategies for fisheries and aquaculture management to be more resilient in the face of climate change.

91. Several Members stressed the need for additional funding for developing countries, and for FAO to address properly recognized climate change concerns already affecting or foreseen to affect fisheries and aquaculture, particularly in more vulnerable countries.

92. A few Members referred to climate change impacts in the Arctic region underscoring their view of the need for increased research and on the basis of the results of the research to develop a management mechanism for resources in this region on the basis of precautionary and ecosystem approaches, prior to the beginning of any new fisheries in that region.

93. The Committee noted the concerns of the most vulnerable countries, including low-lying SIDS and countries of the Sahel region regarding the adverse effects of climate change and sea level rise on fisheries and aquaculture.

94. The Secretariat referred to an informal meeting that the World Bank, the WorldFish Center and FAO were convening shortly after COFI to discuss their respective workplans and improved collaboration in respect of climate change. The Committee underscored the need for cross-sectoral approaches in meeting climate change challenges, particularly in relation to terrestrial environments and inland water fisheries and aquaculture.

FAO'S PROGRAMME OF WORK IN FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

95. The Committee took note of the Immediate Plan of Action (IPA) for FAO Renewal (2009–10) adopted by the Thirty-fifth Special Session of the FAO Conference held in Rome, Italy, from 18 to 21 November 2008, in particular the new results-based programme framework now under preparation that would cover all sources of funds available to the Organization, and the revised reporting arrangements for the Technical Committees. In this regard, the Committee supported its strengthened role in providing advice on priorities for FAO's work in fisheries and aquaculture and regretted the absence of a costed programme of work proposal to allow the prioritization requested in the IPA. The Committee considered the draft results framework for the Strategic Objective on "Sustainable Management and Use of Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources" including six proposed Organizational Results, proposed areas of work contributing to the Results, examples of indicators, as contained in document COFI/2009/9.

96. The Committee was informed that the results framework as presented was a work in progress. It expressed concern that the document did not provide a structured analysis of the application of the Organization's strengths as called for by the IPA and the Programme Committee. Some Members were also concerned that advice on priorities would have been enhanced by having indicative information on resource levels, allocations and the cost of individual programme elements.

97. The Committee was informed that this information would be provided in accordance with the calendar of preparation elements of the Strategic Framework, Medium Term Plan 2010–13 and Programme of Work and Budget 2010–11 during 2009, as agreed by the Conference. A more elaborated version of the document including a proposed allocation of funds would be presented to the Conference Committee for Independent External Evaluation (IEE) follow-up and the Programme and Finance Committees in July 2009, for finalization and submission to the Council and Conference Committee in September and the Conference in November.

98. The Committee welcomed the shift of the focus of the Organization's work from outputs to outcomes, and expressed its support to the process of implementation of the IPA.

99. Many Members generally supported the six Organizational Results as described in document COFI/2009/9. Some Members added the need to take into account the other Strategic Objectives of the Organization which are relevant to fisheries and aquaculture and to establish the necessary links to these Objectives and the respective Organizational Results.

100. The Committee reiterated the vital importance of prioritization among the different activities related to these Organizational Results. Many Members stressed that, because of the limited contents of the document, it was not possible at this stage to complete this prioritization process. However, many Members offered concrete suggestions and enumerated what they considered as high priorities, including the following in no particular order:

- small-scale and artisanal fisheries, both marine and inland;
- capacity building for implementation of the Code and its related instruments;
- evaluation of the effectiveness of the Code and its related instruments;
- combating IUU fishing;
- development of International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards;
- completion of the legally-binding instrument on port State measures;
- development of a global record of fishing vessels, refrigerated transport vessels and supply vessels;
- flag State performance and the elaboration of an appropriate instrument;
- overcapacity;
- development of sustainable, environmentally friendly aquaculture and capacity building;
- finalization of the technical guidelines on certification in aquaculture;
- establishment and support of regional aquaculture programmes and networks;
- impact of climate change on fisheries and aquaculture;
- inputs and contributions to the up-coming review conference of the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement and the review of action taken with respect to UNGA Resolution 61/105;
- promotion of fair international trade in fisheries and aquaculture;
- collection and utilization of reliable data;
- monitoring the status of stocks;
- CITES ad hoc panel of experts;
- identification of a programme to define management units.

101. Some Members stressed the need to adapt the identified priorities to specific circumstances and situations of the different regions, in accordance with the ongoing decentralized process which is expected to be completed during the coming years.

102. There was widespread support for the inclusion of small-scale fisheries as an additional Organizational Result. The Committee agreed to include a specific reference to small-scale fisheries in the six Organizational Results, as appropriate.

103. The Committee noted that the first fully revised cycle of preparation and Governing Body decision-making on programming, budgeting and results-based monitoring, would be implemented from 2010, as foreseen in the IPA. It expected to receive at its next session a fully elaborated results framework and structure analysis of priorities, as well as a more transparent and comprehensive reporting on the activities undertaken, whether supported by regular or extrabudgetary funds.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

104. There were no other matters.

DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION

105. Regarding the timing of future meetings, many Members expressed opinions that, to the extent possible, the current timing for COFI sessions should be maintained (i.e. February/March in the second year of each biennium). Moving the Session to the third quarter of the first year of each biennium would cause conflicts with the timing of the meetings of some RFMO/As and the annual consultations for UNGA Resolutions.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

106. The report was adopted on 6 March 2009.

Agenda

1. Opening of the Session
2. Election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons and designation of Drafting Committee
3. Adoption of the Agenda and arrangements for the Session
4. Progress in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, related International Plans of Action and Strategy
5. Decisions and recommendations of the eleventh session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, Bremen, Germany, 3–6 June 2008
6. Decisions and recommendations of the fourth session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, Puerto Varas, Chile, 6–10 October 2008
7. Management of deep-sea fisheries in the high seas
8. Combating IUU fishing, including through a legally-binding instrument on port State measures and the establishment of a global record of fishing vessels
9. Securing sustainable small-scale fisheries – towards responsible fisheries and social development
10. Climate change and fisheries and aquaculture
11. FAO's Programme of Work in Fisheries and Aquaculture
12. Any other matters
13. Date and place of the next session
14. Adoption of the report

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List of documents

COFI/2009/1	Agenda and Timetable
COFI/2009/2	Progress in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, related International Plans of Action and Strategy
COFI/2009/3	Decisions and recommendations of the eleventh session of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, 2–6 June 2008, Bremen, Germany
COFI/2009/4	Decisions and recommendations of the fourth session of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, 6–10 October 2008, Puerto Varas, Chile
COFI/2009/5	Management of deep-sea fisheries in the high seas
COFI/2009/6	Combating IUU fishing, including through a legally binding instrument on port State measures and the establishment of a global record of fishing vessels
COFI/2009/7	Securing sustainable small-scale fisheries: bringing together responsible fisheries and social development
COFI/2009/8	Climate change and fisheries and aquaculture
COFI/2009/9	FAO's Programme of Work in Fisheries and Aquaculture
COFI/2009/Inf.1	List of documents
COFI/2009/Inf.2	List of participants
COFI/2009/Inf.3	Statement by the Director-General
COFI/2009/Inf.4	Annotations/Guide Notes on Agenda Items
COFI/2009/Inf.5	Report of the twenty-seventh session of the Committee on Fisheries, Rome, Italy, 5-9 March 2007
COFI/2009/Inf.6	Achievements of Major Programme 2.3 Fisheries 2006-2007
COFI/2009/Inf.7	Follow-up to the Recommendations of the twenty-seventh session of the Committee on Fisheries, Rome, Italy, 5–9 March 2007
COFI/2009/Inf.8	Report of the eleventh session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, Bremen, Germany, 2–6 June 2008
COFI/2009/Inf.9	Report of the fourth session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, Puerto Varas, Chile, 6–10 October 2008
COFI/2009/Inf.10	Analysis of the implementation and impact of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries since 1995
COFI/2009/Inf.11	Electronic options for monitoring the implementation of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries
COFI/2009/Inf.12	Information and knowledge sharing in support of the implementation of the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries
COFI/2009/Inf.13	Safety at sea in the fisheries sector
COFI/2009/Inf.14	Statement of competence and voting rights submitted by the European Community and its Member States

APPENDIX D**Opening remarks by Mr Jim Butler
FAO Deputy Director-General**

Mr Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure and an honour for me to welcome you, on behalf of the Director-General of FAO, to the twenty-eighth session of the Committee on Fisheries.

The circumstances in which we are meeting this year are somewhat different from those of previous sessions. We are in the midst of a profound reform of the Organization, its culture, structure and methods of work. A new FAO is being shaped and COFI has a very important role to play in this process. Some of the main decisions which the Governing Bodies of FAO have already endorsed, or which they are considering within the framework of the Immediate Plan of Action, will impact the work of the Fisheries and Aquaculture sector.

Your guidance is sought as to what must be done to achieve FAO's strategic objective of ensuring the "Sustainable management and use of fisheries and aquaculture resources". Your discussions on the FAO Programme of Work in Fisheries and Aquaculture will significantly contribute to the definition of the strategic framework of the Organization, its Medium-Term Plan as well as its Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium.

The Committee has a full and demanding agenda. Without taking too much of your time, I would just like to touch upon some of the issues that you will be discussing this week:

- The implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries: fourteen years after its adoption, the overall level of effective implementation of the Code is still not satisfactory. I expect your Committee to provide guidance and set priorities in relation to the actions that FAO, its Members and all stakeholders should undertake in order to overcome the remaining constraints and obstacles.
- Aquaculture: we all know the role it is expected to play in the response to the increasing demand for fish and fish products that cannot be satisfied on the long run by capture fisheries. In addition, a responsible and sustainable development of aquaculture means for many countries increased employment, increased incomes, increased food security and improvement of the standard of living.
- Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing remains a high priority. Time has come for the international community to take stronger actions to eradicate IUU fishing. The outcomes of the recent resumed session of the FAO Technical Consultation to Draft a Legally-Binding Instrument on Port States Measures are very promising. Your deliberations under this item will hopefully lead to the finalization of the ongoing negotiations and the adoption at the earliest of the Agreement that is being drafted.
- Small-scale fisheries has become a recurrent item on the agenda of COFI. Small-scale fisheries are essential for the livelihoods of many communities especially in developing countries. They generate employment and income to millions of people. In recognition of this role, FAO and the government of Thailand have co-organized a Global Conference on small-scale fisheries, which was held in Bangkok in October 2008. Its main objective was made clear in the title of the Conference: Securing sustainable small-scale fisheries:

Bringing together responsible fisheries and social development. Your Committee has the opportunity to build upon the conclusions of that Conference and to provide guidance on future actions.

- Climate change poses serious threats to the future of mankind. Last year, in June, a High-Level Conference on World Food Security was held in FAO, to consider the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy. COFI already addressed this issue in relation to fisheries and aquaculture at its last session. The present session provides an opportunity for further discussions and the formulation of recommendations.
- The international trade of fish and fishery products and the management of deep-sea fisheries in the high seas are also on your agenda.

Mr Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

You have a very busy and active programme ahead of you over the next five days.

I wish you every success in your deliberations and encourage you to actively participate in the various side events that have been organized as well as to visit the exhibitions in the Atrium.

Thank you.

The twenty-eighth session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) was held in Rome, Italy, from 2 to 6 March 2009. The Committee reviewed the issues of an international character and the FAO programme in fisheries and aquaculture and their implementation. As part of the further work to facilitate and ensure the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and its International Plans of Action, COFI encouraged the Secretariat to proceed with the publication of the best practices technical guidelines for the IPOA-Seabirds. The Committee supported the development of guidelines on best practices for safety at sea. The Committee agreed that additional work should be carried out in relation to the Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fish Products from Inland Capture Fisheries. COFI recommended that FAO continue to provide technical advice to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora in relation to listing proposals for commercially exploited aquatic species, and technical input to the fisheries subsidies negotiations in the World Trade Organization. COFI reaffirmed its trust in FAO to play a coordinating role in advancing the global aquaculture agenda and recognized the need for further support to the Special Programme for Aquaculture Development in Africa. It was noted that FAO should continue to play a leading role in relation to assistance for the implementation of the International Guidelines for the Management of Deep-Sea Fisheries in the High Seas with regard to the management of fisheries resources exploited through deep-sea fishing. COFI reaffirmed that illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing remained one of the principal threats to sustainable fisheries and highlighted the importance of the negotiation of a draft legally-binding instrument on port State measures. The Committee welcomed the outcome of the 2008 Global Conference on Small-Scale Fisheries and focused on the various policies, strategies, legal and social measures taken by Members to secure sustainable livelihoods in marine and inland small-scale fisheries. Concerning FAO's programme of work in fisheries and aquaculture, COFI took note of the Immediate Plan of Action for FAO Renewal (2009–10) and supported its strengthened role in providing advice on priorities.

ISBN 978-92-5-106358-3 ISSN 2070-6987



I1017E/1/09.09/1100