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Organización  
de las  
Naciones  
Unidas  
para la  
Agricultura  
y la  
Alimentación

## COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

### SUB-COMMITTEE ON FISH TRADE

#### Eleventh Session

Bremen, Germany, 2 – 6 June 2008

### TECHNICAL GUIDELINES FOR RESPONSIBLE FISH TRADE

#### SUMMARY

The Sub-Committee is invited to provide comments on the Technical Guidelines on Responsible Fish Trade. The Sub-Committee is also invited to advise FAO's Fisheries and Aquaculture Department on the suitability of publishing the Technical Guidelines on Responsible Fish Trade. The purpose of these Technical Guidelines is to provide practical guidance and advice for policy makers, the fish industry and fisheries managers on how to implement the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries article 11.2 *Responsible International Trade* and article 11.3 *Laws and Regulations Relating to Fish Trade*.

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## **THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES**

1. The Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) was adopted by the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO Conference in Resolution 4/95 on 31 October 1995. The same Resolution requested FAO *inter alia* to elaborate, as appropriate, technical guidelines in support of the implementation of the Code in collaboration with members and interested relevant organizations.
2. The Code's scope is broad and comprehensive. The Code addresses capture, processing and trade in fish and fishery products, fishing operations, aquaculture, fisheries research and the integration of fisheries into coastal area management. The Code is a voluntary instrument.
3. Article 2 defines the Code's objectives. In relation to international trade, the objectives are to promote trade in fish and fishery products in conformity with relevant international rules and avoid the use of measures that constitute hidden barriers to such trade.

## **PURPOSE OF THE TECHNICAL GUIDELINES ON RESPONSIBLE FISH TRADE**

4. The purpose of the Technical Guidelines on Responsible Fish Trade in Annex 1 is to provide practical guidance and advice for policy makers, the fish industry and fisheries managers on how to implement the CCRF article 11.2 *Responsible International Trade* and article 11.3 *Laws and Regulations Relating to Fish Trade*. These Technical Guidelines are intended to provide general advice in support of the implementation of the CCRF. The Technical Guidelines are prepared and distributed under the responsibility of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department.

## **BACKGROUND TO THE TECHNICAL GUIDELINES ON RESPONSIBLE FISH TRADE**

5. The first draft of the Technical Guidelines on Responsible Fish Trade was considered at the seventh Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade (COFI:FT) in March 2000. A revised draft, taking into account the comments made at the seventh Session of the COFI:FT, was discussed during the 24th Session of COFI in February/March 2001.
6. A revised version of the Technical Guidelines was discussed by the tenth Session of the COFI:FT in May/June 2006. The meeting agreed that the guidelines should be updated to reflect the current environment of international trade in fishery products and the dynamic nature of trade, requiring a more forward-looking and pro-active approach.
7. An Expert Consultation was convened in Washington DC, USA in January 2007 to revise the Technical Guidelines, taking into account the comments made at the tenth Session of the COFI:FT.
8. The 27<sup>th</sup> Session of COFI in March 2007 agreed that FAO should convene a Technical Consultation to consider the Technical Guidelines for Responsible Fish Trade drafted by the Expert Consultation. The Technical Consultation took place in Rome, Italy in November 2007, but due to time constraints, it did not complete its consideration of the draft guidelines in their entirety. The Technical Consultation adjourned its work after adoption of paragraphs 1 through 89 of the Guidelines. The delegates agreed that the Technical Consultation be reopened at a later stage for discussion of the remaining nine paragraphs, provided funding is available.
9. The resumed Technical Consultation will take place in conjunction with the eleventh Session of COFI:FT and will consider the remaining nine paragraphs of the Technical Guidelines.

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The outcome of the Technical Consultation will be submitted separately to the Sub-Committee for its consideration.

## **STATUS OF THE TECHNICAL GUIDELINES ON RESPONSIBLE FISH TRADE**

10. Paragraphs 1-89 of the Technical Guidelines, as adopted by the Technical Consultation, are contained in the Report of the Technical Consultation (document COFI:FT/XI/2008/Inf.8). Paragraphs 90-99 were not discussed by the Technical Consultation in Rome, Italy (5-7 November 2007). They will be discussed by the Technical Consultation that will take place in conjunction with the eleventh session of COFI:FT, to which they will be submitted for consideration.

## **SUGGESTED ACTION**

11. The Sub-Committee is invited to provide comments on the Technical Guidelines on Responsible Fish Trade. The Sub-Committee is also invited to advise FAO's Fisheries and Aquaculture Department on the suitability of publishing the Technical Guidelines on Responsible Fish Trade.