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Report of the

**FIFTH MEETING OF THE REGIONAL FISHERY BODY
SECRETARIATS NETWORK (RSN-5)**

Rome, 7 and 13 June 2014

Report of the
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PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This is the final version of the report of the Fifth Meeting of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats Network, held in Rome on 7 and 13 June 2014.

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ABSTRACT

The Fifth Meeting of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats Network (RSN-5) was held in Rome, Italy, over two sessions, on 7 and 13 June 2014. Prior to the meeting, all regional fishery bodies (RFBs) were asked to contribute data on how the Blue Growth Initiative (BGI) was being applied within their organizations. This material was compiled into a summary report and used to launch discussion at RSN-5. The summary report and subsequent RSN-5 discussion covered a wide range of subjects that reflected the three pillars of the BGI: integrated, sustainable and socio-economically sensitive fisheries management. In addition to this discussion, presentations were given by two guests, one from the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora, and one from the Oslo and Paris Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic. Presentations were also given by several RFB Executive Secretaries on: lost and abandoned fishing gear, inland fisheries, and science-based fisheries management. A final presentation was given by the representative of the United Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, who spoke about its forthcoming initiatives and meetings. Thirty-one Secretaries representing a diverse range of RFBs from all geographic regions were represented at RSN-5. They included FAO and non-FAO bodies, marine capture and inland capture bodies, science advisory bodies and four of the five tuna regional fishery management organizations. The meeting fostered collaboration and cooperation among the participating RFBs, and gave consideration to a number of matters that merit the attention of all RFBs, governments and FAO. The session on 7 June also examined the agenda of the Thirty-first Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI 31) and matters of importance to RFBs. The session on 13 June conducted a post-COFI 31 debrief regarding matters of concern to RFBs. The meeting concluded with a discussion on future directions for the RSN.

CONTENTS

Preparation of this document	iii
Abstract	iii
Abbreviations and acronyms.....	vi
OPENING OF THE MEETING.....	1
MEETING ARRANGEMENTS.....	1
Introduction	1
Meeting arrangements	1
REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON.....	1
ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA.....	2
RSN – 7 JUNE – SESSION ONE.....	2
Review of forthcoming COFI 31 agenda items relating to RFBs/RFMOs	2
Conclusion.....	5
RFB responses to the application of Blue Growth	5
PRESENTATION OF ISSUES RELEVANT TO RFBs	5
International trade in commercially-exploited aquatic species	5
Large whale entanglement in debris and fishing gear: understanding and responding nationally, regionally and globally	6
Cooperation between regional fishery bodies and regional seas bodies.....	6
Science in support of sustainable resource management.....	7
Inland fisheries	8
Update on the activities of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea.....	9
ANY OTHER MATTERS.....	9
ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSONS.....	10
RSN – 13 JUNE – SESSION TWO.....	10
Analysis of post-COFI 31 discussion	10
Future RSN directions	10
ADOPTION OF THE REPORT	10
CLOSURE OF THE MEETING.....	10
 APPENDIXES	
Appendix 1: Agenda.....	11
Appendix 2: List of participants	12
Appendix 3: Relevance and Application of the FAO Blue Growth Initiative to the Mandates and Activities of Regional Fishery Bodies	16
Appendix 4: COFI 31 – Intervention, Chairperson of RSN5, Agenda Item 4	29
Appendix 5: Letter from the Chairperson of RSN-5 to the ADG FIAQ relaying the collective view of RFB Secretariats.....	31
Appendix 6: Letter from the Chairperson of RSN-5 to the incoming Chair of COFI to relay the views of the RSN on the engagement of RFBs in COFI	33

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABNJ	areas beyond national jurisdiction
ACAP	Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels
APFIC	Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATLAFCO	Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States
	Bordering the Atlantic Ocean
BGI	Blue Growth Initiative
BMP	best management practice
BOBP-IGO	Bay of Bengal Programme – Intergovernmental Organization
CACFish	Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Convention
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCAMLR	Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources
CCSBT	Convention for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna
CFMC	Caribbean Fisheries Management Council
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora
CLME	Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem
COFI	Committee on Fisheries (FAO)
COPESCAALC	Commission for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture of Latin America and the Caribbean
COREP	Regional Fisheries Committee for the Gulf of Guinea
CPPS	Permanent Commission for the South Pacific
CRFM	Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism
CTMFM	Joint Technical Commission for the Argentina/Uruguay Maritime Front
CWP	Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics
EAA	ecosystem approach to aquaculture
EAF	ecosystem approach to fisheries
EEA	European Environment Agency
EEZ	exclusive economic zone
EIFAAC	European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission
EMODNET	European Marine Observation and Data Network
FAD	fish aggregating device
FCWC	Fishery Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea
FFA	Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency
FIAQ	FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
FIRMS	Fisheries Resources Monitoring System
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GFCM	General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean
HCR	harvest control rules
IATTC	Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission
ICCAT	International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
IGO	intergovernmental organization
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IOTC	Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
IPHC	International Pacific Halibut Commission
IPOA	international plan of action
IQ	individual quota
ITQ	individual transferable quota
IUU	illegal, unreported and unregulated (fishing)
IWC	International Whaling Commission
LDRAC	Long Distance Fleet Regional Advisory Council
LTA	Lake Tanganyika Authority
MAC	Convention on Minimum Access Conditions
MCS	monitoring, control and surveillance
MOU	memorandum of understanding
MPA	marine protected area
MSE	management strategy evaluation

NAFO	Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization
NAMMCO	North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission
NEAFC	Northeast Atlantic Fisheries Commission
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	non-governmental organization
NPAFC	North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission
NPFC	North Pacific Fisheries Commission
NPOA	national plan of action
OSPAR	Oslo Paris Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic
OSPESCA	Central America Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization
PICES	North Pacific Marine Science Organization
PICTS	Pacific Island Countries and Territories
PIROP	Pacific Islands Regional Oceans Policy
PSMA	FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing
RAFEP	African Network of Women in Fisheries Sector
RBM	rights-based management
RECOFI	Regional Commission for Fisheries
RFB	regional fishery body
RFMO	regional fisheries management organization
RPOA	regional plan of action
RSN	Regional Fisheries Body Secretariats Network
SBT	southern bluefin tuna
SEAFDEC	Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center
SEAFO	South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation
SIDS	small island developing States
SOFIA	<i>The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture</i> (biennial FAO publication)
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SRFC	Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission
SRFMO	South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation
SPAW	Specially Protected Area and Wildlife Protocol
SSF	small-scale fishery
SWIOFC	South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission
TAC	total allowable catch
TOR	terms of reference
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNDOALOS	United Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea
UNFSA	United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UVI	unique vessel identifier
VME	vulnerable marine ecosystem
VMS	vessel monitoring system
WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
WECAFC	Western and Central Atlantic Fishery Commission
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. The Chairperson, Mr Andrew Wright of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), opened the meeting at 09:15 on 7 June 2014.
2. The Chairperson recalled discussion at the Fourth Meeting of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats Network (RSN-4) on the possibility of holding a meeting prior to the Thirty-first Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI 31). A departure from previous practice, this pre-COFI meeting would enable the RSN to consider relevant agenda items in advance of COFI. The Chairperson stated his appreciation to the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) for offering their premises to facilitate a Saturday meeting.

MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

Introduction

3. The Chairperson invited participants to introduce themselves, noting that 31 regional fishery bodies (RFBs) were represented at RSN-5.¹ Apologies were received from the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC), the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC), the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO), the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC).
4. Three organizations attended RSN for the first time. These included the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) and the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC). Having observed RSN-4 in 2012, the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS) sent three delegates to RSN-5.
5. A list of participants to the first and second sessions of RSN-5 is given in Appendix 2.

Meeting arrangements

6. The Chairperson briefly described the biennial meeting of the RSN as an informal conference of RFB Secretaries in the margins of COFI, convened for the purpose of discussing issues of common interest. He noted that a meeting prior to COFI would allow the diverse network of RSN members to share ideas and views on the upcoming agenda items of COFI 31, as well as on the operations and efficiency of RFB Secretariats in general.
7. The Secretary for the RSN, Ms Gail Lugten (FAO), briefed participants on meeting arrangements for both sessions of RSN-5.

REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON

8. The Chairperson provided a brief update of activities supported by FAO within the RSN since RSN-4 in 2012:

Communications: The Chairperson noted that the RSN had expanded to include 51 RFBs and Arrangements, and that an invitation to join the Network would soon be extended to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC) and the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC). Communication within the Network was enhanced in the interim by RFB contributions to the RSN newsletter, seven editions of which had been distributed since the conclusion of RSN-4.

Publications: The Chairperson recalled that the RSN-4 meeting report had been concluded within two weeks of the meeting and published online for public access.² He noted the

¹ The RFBs were represented by Secretariat staff. The views expressed during the meeting may not represent the views of the organization concerned and are without prejudice to the views of the members or contracting parties of the RFBs represented.

² The RSN-4 report can be found at: www.fao.org/docrep/017/i3171e/i3171e00.htm

completion of work to restructure, edit and update the RSN webpage of the FAO website.³ The Chairperson further indicated that collaboration between FAO and the RSN had resulted in the RFB fact sheets being restructured and updated.⁴ The Chairperson mentioned several RFB publications that had been produced through contributions from the Network, including:

- a COFI information paper on the performance of the eleven FAO RFBs;⁵
- *The State of Fisheries World Fisheries and Aquaculture* (SOFIA) entry on RFBs (including the RSN);⁶
- a SOFIA theme paper on RFBs “Snapshot of the activities of regional fishery bodies as a basis for enhancing collaboration”;⁷
- a new Fisheries and Aquaculture circular entitled, “Regional Fishery Bodies and Arrangements: Their Collaborative Mechanisms for Effective Management Of Living Aquatic Resources”;⁸
- a discussion paper on RFBs and the Blue Growth Initiative (BGI) prepared for RSN-5 and which is intended to contribute to the FAO resource materials on the BGI.

Rules of Procedure: The Chairperson reported the drafting of Rules of Procedure for the RSN as a collaborative effort between himself, Gail Lugten and Nicola Ferri. The draft document was intended to bring more structure to RSN arrangements and meeting processes, such as the selection of chairpersons and the rotation of chairpersons. The Chairperson nonetheless noted that decisions made by the RSN were non-binding and that meetings remained an informal gathering of RFB Secretariat staff.

Organizational support: The Chairperson made a formal statement thanking the GFCM for furnishing the RSN with a location for the Saturday meeting. The Chairperson also made note of his appreciation to the CCAMLR for the time to work on RSN matters and in particular to contribute a modest amount to a budget to assist with support to the RSN meeting. As a final matter, he thanked Ms Lugten for her enthusiasm, passion and dedication to the work of RFBs and for keeping the RSN in contact over themes of common interest. He announced her forthcoming retirement from FAO and expressed great appreciation personally and on behalf of the RSN for her work over the last three years.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

9. The agenda at Appendix 1 was adopted.

10. However, the timing of the meeting varied from the structure outlined in the adopted agenda. At the first session held on Saturday 7 June, the meeting decided to cover all agenda items of substance during the first RSN session, which did not conclude until after 18:00. The second RSN session on Friday,

13 June, commenced at 09:30 and followed an informal breakfast discussion. At the second session, the meeting discussed post-COFI matters of concern to the RSN, and future directions for the RSN.

RSN – 7 JUNE – SESSION ONE

Review of forthcoming COFI 31 agenda items relating to RFBs/RFMOs

11. The Chairperson invited discussion on the agenda for the forthcoming COFI 31. Agenda items selected for discussion by the meeting included: the SOFIA 2014 report,⁹ securing sustainable small-scale fisheries (SSFs), global and regional processes and instruments, instruments combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, and guidelines on traceability and catch documentations.¹⁰

³ Refer to: www.fao.org/fishery/rsn/en

⁴ Updated fact sheets are available at: www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/search/en

⁵ COFI/2014/Inf.11

⁶ FAO. 2014. *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2014*, pp. 81–84. Rome. 223 pp.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 173–180.

⁸ Forthcoming.

⁹ An electronic version of the SOFIA 2014 report is available online: www.fao.org/3/a-i3720e.pdf

¹⁰ Topics represented items 4, 5, 6, 6.2 and 8.2 of the COFI 31 agenda, respectively.

There was also substantive discussion concerning the need for a more robust and consistent interface between FAO and RFBs/regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) both at COFI and more broadly in the intersessional period.

12. The Chairperson welcomed statements on sections of the SOFIA 2014 report with particular relevance to RFBs/RFMOs. The meeting noted that categorizations for the status of stocks in SOFIA had shifted from the use of “fully exploited” or “overexploited” language to “fished at biologically-sustainable levels” or “fished at biologically unsustainable levels.”¹¹ Discussion ensued on the origins of this change in the discussions at COFI 30¹² and the need for clarification on the implications for fishery management processes. The FAO Secretariat explained that the purpose of the change was primarily to address the need for a clear connection between the categorization of full exploitation of a fish stock and sustainable levels of fishing.

13. The Chairperson raised the issue of RFB contributions to the Code of Conduct material used in SOFIA, noting that there had been a 60 percent increase in the response rate of RFBs to requests for information from FAO.¹³ The meeting was invited to make suggestions on what could be done to improve the response rate among all RFBs. Ms Lugten noted that many RFBs may only be responding to matters perceived as being of direct concern to their RFB and observed that she had received 100 percent feedback to many requests for information made through the RSN. Responses to this issue were weaved throughout subsequent discussions at the meeting and connected to a general concern of the RSN that there needed to be an increase in the engagement between FAO and RFBs/RFMOs.

14. Discussion followed on issues of data management, assimilation and sharing. The Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) highlighted the difficulty of balancing data harmonization and confidentiality with data sharing, which it noted is vital worldwide to the management of fisheries on an ecosystem basis. The Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP) and the FAO Secretariat shared their experiences assimilating data received from communications with RFBs and RFMOs. The CWP noted that the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department Statistics and Information (FIPS) branch is in the process of promoting a global data sharing framework through the Blue Growth Initiative (BGI). The FAO Secretariat provided a profile of its annual points of contact with RFBs and RFMOs for the compilation of fishery statistics, including a tuna statistics database for which FAO collects aggregated statistics from the five tuna RFMOs.¹⁴

15. The meeting was invited to share feedback on the “Securing sustainable small-scale fisheries” COFI 31 agenda item. Discussion highlighted the socio-economic significance of small-scale fisheries throughout the world and the need for concrete action to secure sustainable development of the sector.

16. The GFCM described its extensive and ongoing engagement on the issue, noting the organization of the First Regional Symposium on Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Mediterranean and Black Sea. The GFCM reported that at this symposium, key issues of management were identified, case studies were presented, thematic sessions were held, and an agreement between fishers of the north and south Mediterranean was signed, marking the first regional association between fishers from both sides of the Mediterranean. The GFCM also used the symposium to launch a regional cooperation programme on SSFs, which will be supported by extra-budgetary funds and operate at the regional level to involve all stakeholders. The second symposium is planned to take place in Algeria.

17. The Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC) reported on activities it had undertaken in the sector as a result of a 2012 request to increase its attention on SSFs. It noted that SSFs catch 45 percent of the landings reported in the SRFC subregion. The SRFC described undertaking a long-term study of SSF projects developed within its region in the past decade. It also reported on a meeting it held in 2013 that involved more than 200 stakeholders and covered issues of overcapacity, alternative livelihood strategies and, importantly, the issue of access to fishery resources. In this vein, the SRFC noted that its

¹¹ The new categories are used on pp. 37 of SOFIA 2014.

¹² Reference to this discussion is made in paragraph 17 of the meeting report, which is available online: www.fao.org/docrep/017/i3105e/i3105e.pdf

¹³ A total of 24 RFBs responded to information requests for the SOFIA Code of Conduct 2014 report.

¹⁴ CCSBT, IATTC, ICCAT, IOTC and WCPFC.

Member States had adopted a Convention on Access¹⁵ in 2012 and that a new protocol to this convention that is specific to SSFs is in development.

18. The Bay of Bengal Programme – Intergovernmental Organization (BOBP-IGO) stated it had high expectations for the outcome of this COFI 31 agenda item as it was an RFB with a constituency composed exclusively of small-scale fishers. It expressed its anticipation for the adoption of the Small-scale Fisheries Guidelines¹⁶ and, more importantly, the introduction of the Global Assistance Programme for the implementation of the Guidelines.

19. The Chairperson welcomed further comments on the “Instruments combating IUU fishing” agenda item of COFI 31. He noted that 10 of the 25 ratifications required to bring the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA)¹⁷ into force had been obtained. He also stated the relationship between evaluations of flag State performance and the formal process that many RFMOs are currently undergoing of assessing membership compliance with conservation and management measures codified in the decisions of annual meetings. The Chairperson further referred to the development of the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, noting FAO’s engagement with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to create a unique vessel identifier (UVI) system.

20. The meeting noted the procedural difficulties faced by many RFMOs in implementing measures to combat IUU fishing without full PSMA ratification by their member countries, and without entry into force of the PSMA. The RSN highlighted the pressing need to raise the profile of the PSMA and increase the number of ratifications worldwide. The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC) and GFCM described their support to PSMA implementation through capacity building programmes at the country level, ranging from streamlining national legislation to training port state inspectors. The RSN considered that more training and assistance were required, either through FAO or RFBs/RFMOs, if efforts at further implementation of the PSMA were to be successful. Several RFMOs also expressed interest in the development of a fully electronic system for monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS), which was described by the Northeast Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) and IOTC in their statements.

21. The Chairperson opened the floor for RFBs to discuss any remaining COFI 31 agenda items. The meeting noted the importance of traceability and catch documentations in the fight against IUU fishing. The RSN members described their experiences of financing and implementing catch documentation schemes, noting that the experiences of RFMOs such as the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), Convention for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) and CCAMLR might find broader application to inform the schemes developing in other RFBs for different species. The Fishery Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS) described its work with the CWP and other networks to identify and develop global data standards for catch documentation schemes and other information of this type. The United Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea (UNDOALOS) also noted that catch documentation schemes had been introduced into the language of the 2013 United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution on Sustainable Fisheries.¹⁸

22. Remaining discussions of COFI 31 focused on the perception within the RSN that communication between FAO and RFBs/RFMOs is highly limited aside from periodic requests for the provision of data and information. A brief debate over the capacity of RFBs/RFMOs to function as vehicles for substantive issues at COFI ensued, and it was noted that RFBs/RFMOs should collaborate closely with their member countries when raising issues of concern at the COFI forum. The meeting ultimately expressed a desire for FAO to provide improved communication and outreach to RFB Secretariats.

23. The meeting further noted the continued absence of a standing item for RFBs/RFMOs on the COFI agenda despite general consensus among RFBs/RFMOs and others that one should exist. It was

¹⁵ Convention on the Determination of the Minimal Conditions for Access and Exploitation of Marine Resources within the Maritime Areas under Jurisdiction of the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (June 2012).

¹⁶ Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Alleviation.

¹⁷ 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing.

¹⁸ An electronic version of Resolution A/RES/68/71 is available online:
www.un.org/depts/los/general_assembly/general_assembly_resolutions.htm

agreed that providing for such an item at COFI 32 might help to bridge the communication and engagement gap between FAO and the RSN.

Conclusion

24. The meeting agreed that the RSN Chairperson should deliver a message on behalf of the RSN at COFI 31, and that this message should request closer and more regular engagement between FAO and the RFBs/RFMOs.

RFB responses to the application of Blue Growth

25. Gail Lugten, RSN Secretary, presented a paper based on a compilation of data provided by the RFBs to FAO. This paper was titled, “Relevance and application of FAO’s Blue Growth Initiative (BGI) to the mandates and activities of Regional Fishery Bodies.” The BGI is FAO’s response to the Rio+20 meeting in 2012, calling for, “a world that is committed to freeing humanity from poverty and hunger as a matter of urgency.” The BGI is based on three pillars for global and regional processes of fisheries management: the processes must be integrated, sustainable and socio-economically friendly.

26. The RFBs responded well to the pillar of integration. It was evident that integration occurs at several levels: living aquatic resources are integrated; ecosystems are integrated; and global and regional management processes are integrated.

27. On the second pillar of sustainability, RFBs demonstrated how sustainable fisheries management was central to their mandates and work. It was most clearly demonstrated by the ecosystem approach to fisheries and aquaculture (EAF/EAA), a robust application of the precautionary approach, in the fight against IUU fishing and in the strength of science-based advice and decision-making.

28. The third pillar of socio-economically sensitive fisheries management is a developing subject for many RFBs. Notable activities by RFBs in this area included greater emphasis being given to fisher safety, small-scale fishers, fisher livelihoods, family fish farming and the needs of small fishing communities.

29. The presentation concluded that many linkages already existed between RFB mandates and activities and the BGI. It was suggested that these linkages could be built upon to create a policy interface that would enhance both RFB activities and implementation of the BGI at the regional level.

30. The RSN discussion following the presentation noted the similarities between the EAF/EAA and the BGI as means to implement sustainable development. However, the meeting recognized that the BGI might be an important political initiative and result in an increased mobilization of funds. The RSN also noted that they were both ultimately methods to implement the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

PRESENTATION OF ISSUES RELEVANT TO RFBs

International trade in commercially exploited aquatic species

31. David Morgan from the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES) gave a presentation on “CITES and international trade in commercially-exploited aquatic species.” CITES is an intergovernmental agreement that stands at the intersection between trade, the environment and development. With 180 parties, it regulates the international trade in some 35 000 species, including many hundreds of commercially exploited aquatic species. With its principles of legality, sustainability and traceability, it offers the possibility of acting as a complementary management tool for RFBs/RFMOs. New controls on international trade in shark and ray species heighten this possibility. Mr Morgan concluded that the CITES Secretariat welcomed the opportunity to enhance the working relationship between RFBs, the RSN and CITES.

32. In subsequent discussion, several RSN members described frustration with contradictory positions taken by their member countries in their meetings and in other intergovernmental fora such as CITES. The meeting agreed on the need to appeal to governments at the national level to speak to intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) with one voice and coordinate the positions taken by their

departments. Several RSN members also reported species-specific management plans being undertaken by their RFMO that may provide opportunities for collaborative activities with CITES for improving access to data collection or conducting workshops to assist with management. Mr Morgan encouraged these members to contact him and also referred the meeting to the CITES shark web portal, which has educational tools and presentations for general use.¹⁹

Large whale entanglement in debris and fishing gear: understanding and responding nationally, regionally and globally

33. Simon Brockington from the International Whaling Commission (IWC) gave a presentation entitled “Large whale entanglement in debris and fishing gear: understanding and responding nationally, regionally and globally”. The IWC is the global IGO responsible for the conservation of whales and the management of whaling. In 2009, the IWC recognized the welfare concerns that arise when large whales become entangled in fishing gear and some types of marine debris. In response, the IWC convened a specialist workshop, which led to the development of a work programme to build global capacity for responding to entangled whales.

34. Data from the global entanglement response network and scientific reports show an increasing frequency of entanglement events worldwide. The welfare concerns to the individual animals are severe, with average times to death measured in months. Entangled whales perish through drowning, starvation or trauma.

35. Many entanglement events go unreported. Recent attempts to estimate the true extent of the problem seek to identify the frequency of entanglement scars on individuals, and these investigations suggest mortality from entanglement may be about 2–4 percent per annum. This rate is significant in terms of whale populations’ ability to recover from historical overexploitation.

36. The IWC’s work to date has taken place in association with the global specialist entanglement response network and has been focused on responding to individual entangled whales. The next phase of the programme must seek to address prevention (i.e. stopping whales becoming entangled in the first place). Mr Brockington sought the views of the RSN on how the IWC and RFBs could best work together to solve this problem and manage the issue of prevention.

37. The meeting thanked Mr Brockington for bringing the issue of whale entanglement to the attention of the RSN. The meeting highlighted the nexus between prevention and the work of several RFBs/RFMOs to recover lost or abandoned fishing gear. Several RFBs also noted the possibility of designing fishing gear to make it less susceptible to whale entanglement. Other solutions suggested by the RSN included ensuring the traceability of fishing gear, instituting sanctions for unreported lost fishing gear, and developing workshops on the issue, as was done by the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS) in collaboration with the IWC in 2013. Members of the RSN expressed interest in more precise information on this issue area, including data on entanglement hot spots for certain whale species in particular fisheries and which type of fishing gear was more likely to result in whale entanglement. Finally, some RSN members raised concerns over the noxious political climate of the whaling issue and the difficulty of raising the subject at international meetings.

Cooperation between regional fishery bodies and regional seas bodies

38. Darius Campbell gave a presentation on “Strengthening Cooperation between Regional Fisheries Bodies and the Regional Seas Bodies.” The Oslo Paris Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR) is a legal instrument guiding international cooperation on the protection of the marine environment of the Northeast Atlantic. The work under the Convention is managed by the OSPAR Commission, which is a regional seas programme and an IGO composed of 16 contracting parties covering five maritime areas and regions.²⁰ The Commission is empowered to adopt decisions that are legally binding on the contracting parties, recommendations and other agreements. The main objectives of OSPAR include: prevention and elimination of pollution; protection of the maritime area against the adverse effects of human activities; safeguarding human health and conserving marine ecosystems; and, where practicable, restoration of marine areas.

¹⁹ The CITES shark web portal can be found at: www.cites.org/eng/prog/shark/index.php

²⁰ These regions include: Region I Arctic Waters, Region II Greater North Sea, Region III Celtic Seas, Region IV Bay of Biscay/Iberian Coast and Region V Wider Atlantic.

39. OSPAR has engaged in cooperation with the NEAFC in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) where its marine protected areas find overlap with the area-based fisheries management measures enforced by the NEAFC. A collective arrangement between OSPAR and the NEAFC has recently been finalized to facilitate the exchange of information and cooperation in ABNJ. OSPAR also welcomes the NEAFC, the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO), with which it has a memorandum of understanding, and ICCAT as observers.

40. In 2008, OSPAR developed a comprehensive list of threatened and/or declining species and habitats in the Northeast Atlantic.²¹ Under Annex V²² of the OSPAR Convention, contracting parties to OSPAR have since passed a series of recommendations for action at the national and collective OSPAR levels. This work in particular could have had the potential for competence overlap between OSPAR and other IGOs. However, as Article 4 of Annex V specifically states: “no programme or measure concerning a question relating to the management of fisheries shall be adopted under this Annex”, the contracting parties were able to negotiate text to respect this faultline. Mr Campbell noted the risks of the same phenomenon of policy fragmentation mentioned in the discussion of the presentation by CITES, for example where contracting parties take contradictory positions in different international fora.

41. Finally, Mr Campbell noted that many of the human activities affecting the marine environment had implications for fisheries. Areas of work that Mr Campbell identified for cooperation with other organizations and that exert pressure on the marine environment included: marine pollution, litter and debris; underwater noise; and fishing. Mr Campbell sought feedback from the RSN on the feasibility of cooperative arrangements between RFBs and regional seas programmes to address the cumulative impacts of these activities, noting the need to have management decisions matching geography and ecosystems.

42. The resulting discussion focused on possibilities for collaboration between RFBs and regional seas programmes. Points were made on the need to reinforce science-based decision-making and encourage communication between organizations to overcome barriers to cooperation. The NEAFC responded to the presentation by sharing its experience of working with OSPAR, noting that it felt a key aspect of its collaboration was the ability to maintain its differences while still cooperating with OSPAR. The North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) described its experience of working with the North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES) as an example of cooperation with a more science-oriented body. NAFO congratulated OSPAR and its partners on creating greater policy coherence in the Northeast Atlantic and expressed the desire to see more coherence in the Northwest Atlantic. The Pacific Islands Forum Agency (FFA) reported that it was deeply interested in OSPAR’s experience in relation to the Pacific Oceanscape Framework. This framework is a Pacific island community initiative to create a coordinated approach to oceanscape activities that supports the Pacific Island Regional Oceans Policy (PIROP). The FFA noted that large marine protected areas (MPAs) covering great swathes of the Pacific were often the result of initiatives driven by environmental NGOs at high levels of government and approved without adequate consultation or appreciation of the economic trade-offs involved. The FFA mentioned that it was seeking a model for the effective implementation of the framework and was interested in building the administrative apparatus to appropriately advise leaders on technical and scientific advice.

Science in support of sustainable resource management

43. Anne Christine Brusendorff gave a presentation entitled “Best available science to support sustainable resource management.” The International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) is an IGO with 20 member countries around the North Atlantic and Baltic Sea. Its work is facilitated through a network of more than 4 000 scientists from more than 350 institutes in member countries and beyond. Through strategic partnerships, its work also extends into the Arctic, Mediterranean, Black Sea and North Pacific Ocean. It was established in 1902 as an IGO. The ICES Convention (1964) and the Copenhagen Declaration (2002) outline its fundamental purpose. Member States have committed to maintaining ICES as a strong and independent scientific organization in order to improve its capacity to give unbiased, sound, reliable and credible scientific advice on human activities affecting and affected by marine ecosystems. The presentation looked at the ICES process for producing scientific advice as well as the ICES approach to integrated ecosystem assessments.

²¹ This list can be accessed online at: www.ospar.org/content/content.asp?menu=00180302000014_000000_000000

²² On the Protection and Conservation of the Ecosystems and Biological Diversity of the Maritime Area.

44. In subsequent discussion, there was broad consensus among RSN members that the scientific advice administered by ICES meets a very high standard of quality and comprehensiveness and that ICES represents an exemplary scientific advisory body. In fact, many RSN members with geographic mandates outside of the North Atlantic expressed regret at the lack of similar institutions in other areas of the world, particularly in Asia and Africa. The meeting requested advice on how RFBs from other parts of the world might enlist the expert advice of ICES and how the advisory process was financed. There was also a question raised during the discussion of the extent to which ICES administers scientific advice on the socio-economic context for fisheries management.

45. Ms Brusendorff responded that the advisory process was based on a 100 percent cost-recovery model. In this respect, ICES has two budgets, which are more or less equally divided, one for advisory requests and another provisioned by the national contributions of member countries. Ms Brusendorff stated that requests for scientific advice from ICES can either be conducted through memoranda of understanding (MoUs) with RFBs or on a case-by-case basis, as long as requests are received early in the year so that they have an opportunity to be incorporated into the ICES annual work programme. Ms Brusendorff also responded to questions on the provision of socio-economic advice, stating that this was an emerging aspect of ICES work that required the consideration of multiple outcomes before reaching a decision.

Inland fisheries

46. Mr Simon Funge-Smith gave a presentation entitled, “Inland fisheries: hidden treasures or a lost cause?” Inland fisheries produce 11.6 million tonnes, constituting 13 percent of the global fish supply. Most of this fish is consumed and traded locally and much comes from SSFs. There are some exceptions where industrial fisheries exist (e.g. Lake Victoria and Tonle Sap in Cambodia). Twenty-seven countries produce 90 percent of the global inland fish catch. Mr Funge-Smith stated that these figures were in all likelihood underestimates, especially for developing countries. The fish caught in inland fisheries are an important contribution to rural food security and nutrition.

47. The threats to inland fisheries are numerous, but many lie outside of the fishery itself and require non-fishery solutions. Increasing competition for water means that rivers will have less flow in the future, as agriculture and cities demand more freshwater resources. When valuing water resources, fisheries seem to come out as a low-value user. Hydropower and agriculture command higher values, although the nutritional impact of inland fisheries may mean these low values are underestimated. Recreational fisheries are growing and in some cases their value exceeds the food value of the fishery.

48. Governance considerations of inland fisheries are diverse and span open-access fisheries to closed concessional arrangements. In all cases, organization and co-management are seen as important ways to strengthen management and improve the voice and visibility of fisheries in decision-making. It seems likely that climate variation will affect inland fisheries more than marine fisheries. Impacts such as increased temperatures, unseasonal rains, flooding and drought all interfere with water flow and quality. They also exaggerate other impacts. Maladaptation to climate threats and other impacts will also adversely affect fisheries, although there are win-win solutions that can produce better integration of fisheries into water management and structures that are more fish friendly.

49. The meeting thanked Mr Funge-Smith for presenting a topic that few RSN members are exposed to in their work. Discussion following the presentation focused on the underestimation of the value of inland fisheries in developing countries. The BOBP-IGO noted that although inland fisheries had been given a standing item on the COFI agenda for years, very little action was taken by FAO on the issue, noting the marine-centric work programme of FAO even with regard to aquaculture. The BOBP-IGO also emphasized the importance of inland fisheries to carp production, which plays a major role in the nutrition and food security of the developing world and may be undervalued from this perspective. The meeting also noted the importance of the habitats of inland fisheries and their ecosystem role in the health of rivers and, therefore, the viability of inland aquaculture. The meeting agreed that FAO statistics for inland fisheries were underdeveloped, and the CWP responded that it was modifying its procedures to assess more completely the contribution of inland fisheries to food security. Finally, the meeting expressed interest in the prospect of creating international river basin authorities, noting that political considerations might make this difficult, in order to integrate and manage the issues affecting inland fisheries in the future.

Update on the activities of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea

50. Mr Michele Ameri gave a presentation that served as an “Update on the activities of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea.” The United Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UNDOALOS) is one of the six units of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs. UNDOALOS serves as the de facto secretariat to the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA). It also functions as the secretariat for a number of General Assembly processes on oceans and the law of the sea.

51. In this regard, Mr Ameri provided a brief overview of the ongoing work being undertaken by the General Assembly and by UNDOALOS that has particular relevance to the work of RFBs. Mr Ameri highlighted such meetings as the tenth round of Informal Consultations of States Parties to the UNFSA in April 2014, the fifteenth meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, and a series of other General Assembly processes it services. He also drew attention to the informal consultations of the UNGA on its two annual resolutions, on oceans and the law of the sea and on sustainable fisheries, respectively. The reporting duties of UNDOALOS were also described to explain the timeline for the series of information requests that RFBs receive from UNDOALOS throughout the year. These duties include reports of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea (the first part of which normally addresses the topic of focus of the Informal Consultative Process, and the second part of which provides an overview of major trends and developments in oceans and law of the sea) and reports of the Secretary-General on sustainable fisheries (which are now requested by UNGA to address specific topics, based on information from Member States and IGOs). In addition, UNDOALOS engages in a range of capacity-building activities including fellowship programmes, trust funds, training programmes and seminars, training manuals, publications and technical assistance.

52. Finally, Mr Ameri noted with appreciation the contributions of RFBs to the work of UNDOALOS, and highlighted some potential opportunities for enhanced cooperation between RFBs and UNDOALOS. Mr Ameri identified several possible growth areas for cooperation, including the provision of technical assistance to RFBs, work on the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including socio-economic aspects (including the World Ocean Assessment), increased cooperation on capacity building, inputs into reports of the Secretary-General, and increased participation in meetings.

53. Subsequent discussion covered a range of issues, including minimal RFB participation in the Informal Consultations of States Parties to UNFSA, continued administration by UNDOALOS of the UNFSA Part VII Fund, and difficulties responding to information requests for UNDOALOS reporting. The meeting noted that several RFBs felt the density of technical language in UNDOALOS information requests made it difficult to provide adequate responses. The RSN requested that UNDOALOS attempt to simplify the language of these requests in order to receive more robust and targeted responses.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

54. The feasibility of having the Chairperson make a statement on behalf of the RSN to express the desire of RFBs for closer and more regular engagement with FAO was reintroduced for consideration at the meeting. Extensive discussions ensued on the purpose and development of the RSN, the content of such a statement, and the voice of RFBs at COFI. The meeting agreed that an intervention by the Chairperson at COFI would be warranted under the “Global and regional processes” agenda item, particularly if the performance reviews of the 11 FAO RFBs was raised. It was further decided that the Chairperson’s statement should raise the visibility of the work of the RSN and describe its ongoing activities.

55. The Chairperson requested feedback on the draft Rules of Procedure, and asked whether the RSN felt the document was necessary to its current and future proceedings. It was noted that the RSN did not yet have a Terms of Reference (TOR) for comparison against the draft Rules of Procedure. The meeting agreed to implement the Rules of Procedure as presented to RSN-5. It was further agreed that the Rules of Procedure would be further considered, as a standalone agenda item, at RSN-6.

56. The Chairperson reiterated his thanks to the GFCM for providing facilities for the Saturday meeting. He expressed gratitude for the hospitality of the GFCM Executive Secretary, Mr Abdellah

Srour, and other GFCM staff, including Mr Nicola Ferri, Mr Roberto Emma, Ms Margherita Sessa and Ms Stella Bartolini. He also thanked the meeting Secretary, Ms Gail Lugten, Rapporteur, Ms Angela Abolhassani, and Ms Ariane Acqua for providing administrative assistance. He thanked Ms Lugten in particular for her work with the RSN in past years and thanked her on behalf of the RSN for encouraging communication, collecting RFB-specific information and keeping the Network motivated and dynamic.

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSONS

57. Mr Stefan Asmundsson (NEAFC) accepted nomination to serve as the new RSN Chairperson. Mr Yugraj Yadava (BOBP-IGO) elected to continue as First Vice-Chairperson and Mr Kaitira Ibrahim Katonda (Lake Tanganyika Authority, LTA) continues as Second Vice-Chairperson.

RSN – 13 JUNE – SESSION TWO

Analysis of post-COFI 31 discussion

58. In the second session of RSN, the members conducted a review of the COFI 31 meeting and raised issues of concern arising from the COFI meeting. These included a concern over inaccuracies within the SOFIA report (particularly relating to hake stocks in Argentine waters) and a need for the RSN to have some level of liaison with the COFI Bureau at the time that the COFI agenda is being planned for COFI 32. Most RSN members felt that the RFBs were marginalized within the COFI 31 meeting and this was particularly apparent in the lack of RFB nameplates and the fact that NGOs were sometimes given the floor before IGOs. The RSN reiterated its desire to seek closer liaison with FAO, an increased role in the planning of the COFI agenda and in the COFI proceedings, and during the intersessional period.

Future RSN directions

59. The outgoing RSN Chairperson, Mr Andrew Wright, noted that he was in the process of drafting a letter to Árni M. Mathiesen, Assistant Director-General of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department (ADG FIAQ). This letter would be based largely on the statement that he made in the COFI 31 plenary on behalf of the RSN, but it would also include input from the discussion at the second session of RSN-5, and the question of who would replace Ms Lugten as Secretary of the RSN. The Chairperson noted that he would circulate this letter to the RSN once it was finalized. The Chairperson also recommended raising the same concerns in a letter to Fabio Hazin, Chair of the COFI Bureau and succeeding Chair of COFI 32. The statement by the Chairperson of RSN-5 to COFI 31, the letter to the ADG FIAQ relaying the collective view of RFB secretariats, as stated in COFI 31, on this matter and the letter to the in-coming Chair of COFI, Fabio Hazin, to relay the views of the RSN on the engagement of RFBs in COFI are included in this report (Appendixes 4, 5 and 6, respectively).

60. The succeeding Chairperson of the RSN, Mr Stefan Asmundsson, stated his appreciation of Ms Lugten's enthusiasm and noted that her efforts were a driving force behind the RSN, which he believed to be at its most active in its history. He stated that intersessional contact was very important to the cohesion of RSN and that he enjoyed the humour and passion with which Ms Lugten handled the Network, noting the important role of the RSN Newsletter.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

61. The meeting agreed that the report would be adopted electronically.

CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

62. The meeting closed at 10:10 on 13 June 2014.

AGENDA

OPENING OF THE MEETING

MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

Introduction

Meeting arrangements

REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

RSN – 7 JUNE – SESSION ONE

Review of forthcoming COFI 31 agenda items relating to RFBs/RFMOs

Conclusion

RFB responses to the application of Blue Growth

PRESENTATION OF ISSUES RELEVANT TO RFBS

International trade in commercially-exploited aquatic species

Large whale entanglement in debris and fishing gear: understanding and responding nationally, regionally and globally

Cooperation between regional fishery bodies and regional seas bodies

Science in support of sustainable resource management

Inland fisheries

Update on the activities of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea

ANY OTHER MATTERS

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSONS

RSN – 13 JUNE – SESSION TWO

Analysis of post-COFI 31 discussion

Future RSN directions

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

APPENDIX 2

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RELEVANCE AND APPLICATION OF THE FAO BLUE GROWTH INITIATIVE TO THE MANDATES AND ACTIVITIES OF REGIONAL FISHERY BODIES

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This paper summarizes the responses of Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs) to a request for information on the relevance and application of the FAO Blue Growth Initiative to their organizational mandates and current activities.

As part of the invitation to attend the 2014 Regional Fishery Body Secretariats Network meeting (RSN5), a request was made for each attending RFB to provide information on linkages between their own mandates and activities, and the goals of the FAO Blue Growth Initiative (BGI). Responses conveyed a wide range and diversity of ongoing RFB activities and included valuable discussions of the nexus between RFB mandates and the implementation of the BGI at the regional level.

The following summary of responses illustrates the intersection of the BGI and the work being undertaken by RFBs. Responses have therefore been grouped under the three core elements of BGI, namely fisheries management activities that are: (1) sustainable, (2) integrated and (3) socio-economically sensitive. It is important to note that these categories oftentimes find overlap in the activities of RFBs and have only been grouped broadly for the purpose of clarity. Moreover, owing to the way the question was posed and the limited length of responses, if the activities of a RFB are not mentioned in a category, this does not necessarily mean that the RFB is not active in that category. This report presents a small account of the work that RFBs have chosen to spotlight for the purpose of providing policy links to the BGI and should not be considered inclusive of all the activities in which RFBs are currently engaged.

The paper commences with a review of FAO's BGI. The BGI is based on three pillars of fisheries management: sustainability, integration and socio-economics, and the greater part of this paper examines how these pillars are applied to the mandates and activities of responding RFBs. It will be shown that RFBs are already actively addressing much of the BGI, through their mandates, their programs of work, their conservation and management measures and their collaborative activities.

1.2 The Blue Growth Initiative (BGI)

The Blue Growth Initiative (BGI) evolved from the Blue Economy discussions of global food security at Rio +20 in 2012. The Rio +20 Conference stressed that the growing global population in coming years (predicted to reach 9 billion by 2050) will require increased output from aquaculture and wild capture fisheries to better ensure food security for all. To address this impending pressure on aquatic resources and to meet the objectives of Rio +20, FAO has formulated the BGI.

The focus of the BGI is to support food security for the growing global population by promoting sustainable, integrated and socio-economically sensitive management of oceans and wetlands (seas, lakes, rivers, and reservoirs)

- **Sustainability**

The BGI recognizes that the aquatic ecosystem is under stress from a range of factors including overexploitation (and IUU fishing), pollution, declining biodiversity, expansion of invasive species, climate change and ocean acidification. Sustainable fish stocks need sound aquatic ecosystems.

- **Integration**

Integration occurs on many levels. Living aquatic resources are integrated, ecosystems are integrated, environmental issues such as climate change and habitats are integrated, and global/regional management processes are also integrated.

- **Socio-Economics**

Blue Growth is primarily an anthropocentric initiative. FAO aims to produce fish for food, but also fish as a commodity that is ripe for trade and wealth creation. The socio-economic pillar of BGI includes fisher issues relating to gender mainstreaming, labour laws, safety of life at sea, fisher user rights and the criminal law aspects of both piracy and illegal fishing.

The BGI promotes a multidisciplinary approach to achieving global, regional and national outcomes that increase food security in coastal and riparian communities while supporting the sustainable management of all aquatic resources. Regional Fishery Bodies and Arrangements are primary players in providing fisheries advice and management that is sustainable, integrated and socio-economically friendly, and therefore much RFB activity already demonstrates the substantial application of the BGI at the regional level.

1.3 Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs)

A Regional Fishery Body (RFB) is a mechanism through which a group of States or organizations that are parties to an international fishery arrangement can work cooperatively towards the conservation, management and/or development of fish stocks. FAO currently liaises with 50 RFBs from around the world. These bodies include Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), which have mandates for management measures, plus advisory bodies, scientific advisory bodies, aquaculture networks and management bodies for related species such as whales and seabirds. The FAO facilitates coordination among RFBs through the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats Network (RSN), which meets biennially to discuss issues of relevance to RFBs.

At the time of writing this paper, FAO is liaising with 53 RFBs and Regional Fishery Arrangements through the RSN. These bodies play a critical role in the management of fishery and other living aquatic resources where sub-regional, regional and international cooperation is required for effective conservation and management. RFBs generally serve important advisory or management roles for the regions, species or subjects under their mandates. RFBs can bring countries in a region together to provide a valuable forum for dialogue; to coordinate and exchange experiences; and to initiate or implement important activities related to sustainable fisheries, capacity development and promoting cooperation with partner organizations. In addition they have developed into important implementing bodies for the landmark Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, which urges all RFBs to participate in the promotion of good fisheries governance.

2. SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

2.1 The Role of RFBs in Sustainable Fisheries Management

The first pillar of the BGI is sustainability and RFB feedback emphasizes that sustainable fisheries management is central to the work of all RFBs. In the feedback received for this paper, a large number of bodies stressed that the principle of sustainability was embedded in the founding mandates of their RFB. These bodies included specific citations from their founding instruments to highlight the relationship between the concept of sustainable fisheries management in the BGI and their purpose to conserve, manage and/or develop aquatic resources within the regions under their mandates.

2.2 Common Policy Approaches to Sustainable Fisheries Management among RFBs

Three common policy approaches to sustainable fisheries management were described by RFBs:

- the execution of the ecosystem approach to fisheries and aquaculture,
- the application of the precautionary approach, and
- science-based decision making.

2.2.1 Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries and Aquaculture

RFBs referred to the ecosystem approach in two veins, either in regard to their mandates, or to actions they are taking on implementing the approach.

The Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) emphasized the importance of adopting an ecosystem approach to fisheries management in view of their mandate to protect and conserve albatrosses and petrels. They cited recent research demonstrating the critical role played by marine top predators (such as procellariiform seabird species) in maintaining both ocean health and global climate regulation.

NAFO described recent revisions to the “Convention on Future Multilateral Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries” which recognizes the importance that the wider marine environment plays in ensuring stability of fish stocks. Not yet ratified amendments to Articles II and III particularly seek to integrate measures to protect marine resources. The amended Convention now states that NAFO will, “...ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the fishery resources in the Convention Area and, in so doing, to safeguard the marine ecosystems in which these resources are found” (2007, Article II, not yet ratified). The amended General Principles of the Convention also now include the obligation to, “take due account of the impact of fishing activities on other species and marine ecosystems and in doing so, adopt measures to minimize harmful impact on living resources and marine ecosystems,” as well as the obligation to, “take due account of the need to preserve marine biological diversity” (2007, Article III, not yet ratified).

The North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC) stressed the protection of marine ecosystems in its founding text, which stipulates measures to prevent significant adverse impacts on vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs). Among articles related to the ecosystem approach, Article 3 paragraph (c) of the Convention’s General Principles explicitly refers to, “adopting and implementing measures in accordance with the precautionary approach and an ecosystem approach to fisheries...”¹

In fulfillment of its scientific advisory mandate, ICES called attention to its work producing integrated ecosystem assessments in regional seas as a fundamental link between ecosystem science and the advice required to apply the ecosystem approach to ocean-related human activities.

With regard to specific action on EAF, the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC) has promoted fishery management that implements the ecosystem approach for over a decade, and has jointly developed a regional “Essential Ecosystem Approach to Fishery Management” training curriculum. In addition, APFIC reviewed the impacts of trawl bycatch and convened a Regional Expert Workshop on the subject in 2013 to develop the, “Regional guidelines for the management of tropical trawl fisheries” for the Asian region.

CCAMLR described management responses based on the ecosystem and precautionary approaches to include catch limits (for target species and by-catch), by-catch mitigation practices, temporal and spatial closures, prohibited fishing gears and sustained efforts over more than fifteen years to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing within the Convention area.

CCSBT reported the establishment of an “Ecologically Related Species Working Group” to provide information and advice on issues relating to species associated with Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBT).

NAFO highlighted the ongoing development of its ecosystem approach by closing areas with evidence of vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) to bottom trawling. NAFO has also implemented a protocol for any significant encounters with VMEs outside these areas.

NASCO discussed the adoption of a “Plan of Action for Habitat Protection and Restoration”, as well as “Guidelines for the Protection, Restoration and Enhancement of the Atlantic Salmon Habitat”. The objectives of these agreements are to maintain, and where possible, increase the productive capacity of

¹ It should be noted that the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries has not yet entered into force to establish the NPFC.

the salmon habitat. They also require the development of comprehensive plans to protect and restore habitats in addition to establishing inventories of salmon habitats.

The Central America Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization (OSPESCA) described taking action to implement the ecosystem approach to fisheries and aquaculture through the formation of synergies between institutions, trade unions and civil society. For OSPESCA, the implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries and aquaculture promotes sustainable development, environmental protection and the improved well-being of communities.

The Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) asserted that the ecosystem approach to fisheries and aquaculture is a central tenet of its work. As part of this work, RECOFI reported the development of sound regional cooperation among coastal countries in the Persian Gulf and Sea of Oman to implement a common data reporting system. Progress within RECOFI is also being made towards the completion of regional cooperative stock assessments. RECOFI further mentioned the implementation of a recommendation for minimum data reporting and awareness of the environmental implications of by-catch and measures to address them.

With regard to the aquaculture sector, NASCO has adopted the “Williamsburg Resolution” with the objective of minimizing impacts from aquaculture, introductions and transfers and transgenics on wild salmon stocks. NASCO has also published “Guidance on Best Management Practices (BMP) to Address Impacts of Sea Lice and Escaped Farmed Salmon on Wild Salmon Stocks”. Under this BMP Guidance, the international goals that follow are: (1) 100% of farms to have effective sea lice management such that there is no increase in sea lice loads or lice-induced mortality of wild salmonids attributable to farms, and (2) 100% farmed fish to be retained in all production facilities.

Finally, the ecosystem approach has a broad application to the mandates and work of the majority of RFBs. In this respect, EAF/EAA underpins not only the activities of the RFBs, but also the implementation of the sustainability aspect of the BGI.

2.2.2 Precautionary Approach

Often included in tandem with discussions of the ecosystem approach, the precautionary approach characterises another aspect of sustainable fisheries management tracked through many of the responses.

CCBST and NAFO both noted the incorporation of the precautionary approach into the advice dispensed by their respective scientific advisory sub-bodies.

CCAMLR, NPFC, RECOFI and the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organization (SEAFO) cited specific instances in their founding texts recognizing the importance of the application of the precautionary approach. RECOFI referred to the stipulation to apply the precautionary approach to conservation and management decisions, as well as to take into account the best scientific evidence available to promote the development and proper utilization of the marine living resources within its region.

NASCO offered a brief synopsis of agreements and guidelines developed in support of the precautionary approach which cover such areas of work as: management of salmon fisheries; habitat protection and restoration; minimising the impacts of aquaculture and related activities; use of stock rebuilding programmes and incorporating socio-economic factors in decisions under the precautionary approach.

2.2.3 Science-Based Decision Making

In the RFB responses, science-based decision making comprised an integral part of the strategies adopted by RFBs to achieve sustainable fisheries management. This was made apparent in the advice received by RFBs from scientific advisory sub-bodies and the influence of data and research on the conservation and management actions taken by RFBs. For many RFBs, science-based decision making resulted in the creation of harvest control rules (HCR) through a management strategy evaluation process (MSE) to produce species specific total allowable catch (TAC) limits.

For example, CCSBT, GFCM and SEAFO reported incorporating the advice of scientific advisory sub-bodies into their actions for the purpose of obtaining stock-specific, precautionary reference points.

To this end, CCSBT has implemented an agreed Management Procedure which includes HCR through a MSE process to guide the setting of the global Southern Bluefin Tuna TAC. CCSBT noted that this Management Procedure is tuned to a 70 percent probability of rebuilding the stock to the interim rebuilding target reference point of 20 percent of the original spawning stock biomass by 2035.

The IOTC likewise adopted a resolution on target and limit reference points as well as a decision framework in 2013. This resolution established a similar procedure to that of the CCSBT, whereby HCRs would be derived from a MSE process with involvement from stakeholders. The objective of this process is to test various management interventions and evaluate risk levels of breaching targets and limits to eventually devise agreed upon HCRs for application to different fisheries. Two species under the mandate of the IOTC, albacore and skipjack, are currently undergoing a MSE. Later in 2014, the IOTC expects another two species, bigeye and yellowfin, to go through the same process.

NAFO on the other hand has developed risk-based management plans for three stocks and is in the process of devising HCRs for other stocks in the interests of both sustainability and economic stability.

Other RFBs such as the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) and NASCO have incorporated additional bodies involved with the scientific advisory process.

In 2013, IPHC created a Management Strategy Advisory Board composed of a broad range of stakeholders to guide the development of harvest strategies for commercial, recreational and subsistence fisheries for halibut. The harvest strategies employ biological reference points, control rules and harvest objectives consistent with the mandate of the IPHC Convention. These harvest strategies are evaluated against multiple operating models of halibut stock to ensure that they are robust to a range of uncertainties about biological processes and potential implementation errors. This process is designed to achieve sustainable yield from the fisheries through the integration and evaluation of both biological and socio-economic management objectives.

NASCO has created an International Atlantic Salmon Research Board to develop and implement a major international programme of research on marine mortality, involving coordinated research surveys in the Northwest and North-East Atlantic and enhanced sampling of fisheries. A follow-up telemetry project to provide information on migration paths and quantitative estimates of mortality during phases of the marine life cycle of salmon is currently being considered by the Board.

Alternatively, RFBs such as ICES and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) themselves serve as sources of scientific expertise to related international initiatives and bodies.

The ICES Data Centre manages a number of large dataset collections related to the marine environment, covering the North East Atlantic, Baltic Sea, Greenland Sea and Norwegian Sea. The Centre provides marine data products services to ICES Member countries, expert groups, world data centres, regional sea conventions (HELCOM and OSPAR), the European Environment Agency (EEA), Eurostat and various other European projects. ICES also contributes to the EU process of integrating different national and local data systems into a coherent whole, by participating in the European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODNET) and other data-related international projects.

SPC provides scientific advice to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), the FFA, other regional tuna management agencies and Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). This advice relates to: (1) the levels of fishing effort needed to maintain robust stocks of the four main species of tuna (albacore, skipjack, bigeye and yellowfin) in the tropical and subtropical Pacific Ocean and (2) the effects of industrial fishing on the ecosystem and bycatch species.

CCAMLR also described conducting long-term research and integrated actions associated with the acquisition of operational-level fishery data, fishery-independent observation and biological and environmental data and information, all of which support CCAMLR's efforts to ensure the best available science underpins decision-making.

SEAFDEC has habitually conducted collaborative fishery resources and environmental surveys in the EEZs of its Member Countries.

SRFC noted that scientific advice remains a key consideration in the decision-making process for the management of the shared fishery resources under its mandate, though it did qualify that scientific, traditional and local knowledge are used where appropriate for the management and conservation of these resources and their habitats.

2.3 IUU Fishing

One common sustainability theme across RFB responses was the fight to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. RFB actions to stop IUU fishing reinforce sustainability outcomes by creating accountability for conservation and management measures. Several RFBs reported adopting cooperative instruments; strengthening monitoring, control and surveillance systems and participating in partnerships with other RFBs and IGOs to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing in the waters under their mandates.

The IOTC noted the adoption of a resolution on Port State measures to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing (IOTC Resolution 10/11 on PSM). The resolution, which entered into force on 1 March 2011, is inspired by the 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures, but placed in the context of the IOTC mandate. The fisheries administrations of coastal cooperating non-contracting parties of the IOTC, where foreign fishing vessels offload tuna and tuna-like species, are mainly responsible for the implementation of the resolution. In support of the Resolution, IOTC has conducted capacity building activities at the regional and country levels in Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Madagascar, Mauritius, Tanzania, Oman, Seychelles, Kenya and Mozambique. Furthermore, in late 2013 the IOTC began development of a Port State control online information system for the implementation of the Resolution in the IOTC area. This system will subsequently provide instant access for information sharing related to fishing vessels activities in IOTC designated ports.

The Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission (SRFC) also described the adoption of several instruments related to IUU fishing dating back to its inception, including the Convention on Sub regional Cooperation in the Exercise of Maritime Hot Pursuit (1993) and a series of protocols on the coordination of monitoring and surveillance activities (1993). The first convention allows a country where an offense is committed to pursue offenders' ships in another signatory state. The agreement is currently being updated to take into account recent developments in various relevant international instruments and particularly those measures for monitoring, control and surveillance.

NAFO noted that at the 2007 COFI meeting, it was agreed that an internationally legally binding instrument on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU Fishing should be elaborated. Consequently, during the NAFO Annual meeting in 2008, new measures on Port State Control were adopted and entered into force on 1 January 2009. As part of these measures, it was decided that NAFO would implement a similar system to NEAFC in order to simplify the operation of the systems for each Contracting Party, since all Contracting Parties to NEAFC are also Contracting Parties to NAFO and have vessels operating in both areas, sometimes even in the same fishing trip.

In its response, SEAFO addressed the adoption in 2013 of the "System of Observation, Inspection, Compliance and Enforcement". The System addresses issues of integrated fisheries management by inspection at sea, compliance, observer programmes, infringement procedures, research, authorization and notification of fishing vessels, and Port State measures.

APFIC discussed an ongoing review of IUU issues in the region under its mandate and most recently developed a Port Inspection of Fishing Vessels training course.

OSPESCA reported implementing eight cross-sectoral regulations and one regional compliance related vessel registration for addressing IUU fishing in its region.

NPAFC has instituted a rigorous and integrated programme for defeating IUU fishing. Each year, more than four million square kilometers of the North Pacific are monitored by NPAFC Member countries through the use of over 100 days of ship time and 500 hours of aerial patrols aided by radar satellite surveillance. From 1993 to 2012, NPAFC-related cooperative enforcement efforts in the Convention Area detected 46 vessels conducting illegal driftnet fishing operations for salmon (IUU vessels) and apprehended 19 vessels. NPAFC reported that the number of IUU vessels detected each year has recently decreased from 6-11 in the late 1990s to 0-2 because of expanded NPAFC-related enforcement efforts. NPAFC believes the simultaneous gradual growth in total commercial Pacific salmon harvest in NPAFC countries demonstrates the success of international cooperation among its Members. NPAFC nevertheless stated that the continued threat of illegal high seas fishing requires the international community to remain vigilant and to improve monitoring and enforcement efforts in the North Pacific.

NASCO described addressing the issue of salmon fishing by non-NASCO Parties in international waters in the North-East Atlantic when it arose in the late 1980s/early 1990s. NASCO followed up by stating that there have been no reported sightings since 1993. NASCO mentioned that it has nonetheless developed guidelines on reducing unreported catches.

The Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic (COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO) has signed a MoU to establish a framework for cooperation with the Long Distance Fleet Regional Advisory Council (LDRAC). In 2013, the two organizations jointly facilitated a workshop on “Improving good governance and the fight against IUU through the LDRAC-COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO dialogue”. The aim of the workshop was to find ways to develop a dialogue for improving fisheries governance in West and Central Africa, including through increased transparency and the strengthening of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) standards of coastal States. The workshop also created an opportunity for the EU tuna sector to present the “Tuna Transparency Initiative” to participants as a tool which can help improve governance in tuna fisheries relations between countries. Multiple policy recommendations were expressed and agreed upon at the workshop including, measures to increase cooperation between bodies like COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO, LDRAC, the EU, other RFBs and IGOs in order to improve transparency; increasing policy coherence and harmonization, and regionalizing the approach to combating IUU fishing as well as regional capacity-building, for this purpose.

2.4 Climate Change

The issue of climate change surfaced in a few of the responses that were received and should be mentioned in view of the larger context of the sustainability work being undertaken by RFBs.

For example NPAFC described the significant variation in marine production linked to climate change as a threat to the sustainability of Asian and North American Pacific salmon stocks. The RFB stated that it encourages international cooperative research to provide the best available scientific information on ecological mechanisms regulating production of anadromous populations; climate impact on salmon populations in North Pacific marine ecosystems; and the extent to which salmon populations, as demonstrated by their return migrations to coastal regions, can be used as indicators of conditions in marine ecosystems. Furthermore, since 1993 NPAFC has organised five international scientific symposia and nine workshops on major topics related to sustainability of salmon stocks. The latest NPAFC symposium, scheduled for May 2015, is entitled *Pacific Salmon and Steelhead Production in a Changing Climate*.

In a brief review of its most recent activities related to BGI, APFIC highlighted a review it had conducted of climate change threats and their implications for fisheries and aquaculture in the APFIC region.

The Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS) also noted the serious environmental consequences precipitated by climate change, calling attention to its mention in the document, “Commitment of Galapagos for the XXI Century”. In this document, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs for the Member Countries of CPPS agreed to jointly identify necessary measures to mitigate the impacts of

climate change's negative effects through projects financed from international funds such as the Green Climate Fund and with CPPS regular funds.

3. INTEGRATED FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

3.1 Areas of Focus in Integrated Fisheries Management

It has been noted that integration occurs on many levels of fisheries management. Environmentally, living aquatic resources are integrated, small and large ecosystems are integrated, and environmental impacts such as climate change, pollution and loss of habitats are also integrated with the life span and sustainability of aquatic resources.

Similarly, global and regional processes for fisheries management are becoming more elaborate as broad subject areas expand in range and detail to interrelate with other mainstream areas of international law and relations including the environment, human rights and areas beyond national jurisdiction. In these contexts, it is becoming necessary for the global and regional processes of fisheries management to be multidisciplinary and take an integrated approach.²

From this broad definition of integrated fisheries management, it is apparent that many aspects of the work conducted by RFBs and described in their responses can be categorised as complying with the integration pillar of the BGI. Integrated fisheries management is central to the founding mandates of many RFBs and their function as regional level governance bodies. The responses to this element of BGI were still broadly parsed into areas of focus, including:

- integration relating to RFB mandates, and
- specific integration efforts involving cooperating non-Members, UN agencies, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and other RFBs.

3.2 Integration in RFB Mandates

In pursuit of its mandate, ACAP described its work with a number of organizations responsible for the management of domestic and high seas fisheries overseeing the adoption of conservation measures to reduce the incidental bycatch of albatrosses and petrels in fishing operations. ACAP's best practice advice for reducing incidental mortality enables these organizations to use a framework which will reduce seabird bycatch to levels that will not impact the long term survival of the species. ACAP is now working with the same organizations to effectively implement these conservation measures, including educating fishers on the effective use of mitigation measures, conducting observer programmes and using electronic monitoring to enforce compliance.

The Commission for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture of Latin America and the Caribbean (COPESCAALC) is currently pursuing its mission to promote the sustainable use of fishery and aquaculture resources within Latin America and the Caribbean by adopting an ecosystemic, watershed approach that extends beyond political boundaries. COPESCAALC reported that this approach is realized through the promotion and facilitation of non-binding agreements for the harmonization of management approaches by countries that share watersheds. During the last meeting of the Commission, delegates unanimously backed the BGI and recommended adopting principles and facilitating actions that fit into BGI and complement its efforts. They also recommended supporting the assessment of transboundary fisheries of internationally shared watersheds in the region to contribute to integrated management.

In accordance with its mandate and in support of the blue growth concept, SEAFDEC described adopting an impressive series of Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) frameworks including: the Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Region in 2011; the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Regionalization of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries; the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership and the Roadmap for Integration of Fisheries Sector under the ASEAN Framework Agreement for the Integration of Priority Sectors among others. In order to operationalise these frameworks, SEAFDEC has declared five programme thrusts, the second and fifth of which relate to

² FAO. 2014. *Global and Regional Processes: A Follow-up to Rio + 20*. COFI/2014/4.1.

integration by, “(2) Enhancing capacity and competitiveness to facilitate international and intra-regional trade,” and “(5) Addressing international fisheries related issues from a regional perspective.”

SRFC cited Article II of its Convention which stipulates a policy of integration: “The Commission aims to harmonize long-term policies of Members in the preservation, conservation and exploitation of fisheries resources and strengthen their cooperation for the well-being of their populations.” The SRFC further supports cross-sectoral integration by, “Developing and encouraging partnerships between governments and the private sector to provide greater opportunities for conserving and enhancing aquatic ecosystems and for advancing stewardship.” In addition, the SRFC enumerated several fisheries cooperation instruments that have been developed since its inception to assist Member States with better managing shared fisheries resources. One of these included the Convention on Minimum Access Conditions (MAC, 1993, revised in 2012), which determines the conditions of access to all vessels operating in waters under the jurisdiction of SRFC Member States. This document serves as a common policy framework for access to resources covered by the SRFC mandate.

OSPESCA articulated its responsibility to coordinate the definition, implementation and monitoring of strategies, policies and projects that address “common issues” related to its region-wide regulatory framework for the sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture. In their response, OSPESCA spotlighted the adoption of “The Political Integration of Fisheries and Aquaculture in Central America” in 2005. This agreement established a common regional system for Central American countries to participate and contribute to the sound and sustainable use of fisheries resources and aquaculture products. Of further note in regard to integration was the adoption by OSPESCA of a regional action plan for the management and conservation of sharks in Central America.

NASCO noted its authority to establish regulatory measures for salmon fishing in the area of fisheries jurisdiction of one party for salmon originating in the rivers of other parties. In exercising this function, NASCO is required to take into account *inter alia* the best available information, including advice from ICES, the conservation measures taken by both States of origin and parties other than States of origin and the interests of communities which are particularly dependent on salmon fisheries.

EIFAAC cited work on the “Development of Guidelines on the design of “nature-like passes” as an example of integration related to BGI, where mitigation measures at weirs and dams were critically analyzed for use in EIFAAC Member countries.

Finally, in 2012 the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Members of CPPS agreed to a series of commitments published in the document, “Commitment of Galapagos for the XXI Century” as part of a new strategic orientation for CPPS to face long-term challenges in the future. This document strongly recommends an integrated approach to sustainable development involving CPPS and the projection of its activities towards the Pacific Basin through the development of joint projects extended between countries of the Latin American Pacific and countries and organizations of the West Pacific.

3.3 Integrated RFB activities related to cooperating non-Members, UN Agencies, IGOs and other RFBs

Several RFBs also mentioned instances of cooperation with cooperating non-Members as well as other organizations including UN agencies, IGOs and other RFBs. These activities represent a notable step towards the integration of efforts to achieve goals in ocean governance that run parallel to those of the BGI.

CCSBT reported that it had adopted a recommendation that all CCSBT Members and cooperating non-Members implement: the IPOAs for seabirds and sharks; the FAO guidelines to reduce sea turtle mortality in fishing operations; and all measures aimed at the protection of ecologically related species from fishing, which are periodically adopted by IOTC, WCPFC and ICCAT.

WECAFC commented that it works closely in the region under its mandate in partnership with a group of organizations including, OSPESCA, Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), the Caribbean Fisheries Management Council (CFMC), CITES, the Secretariat of the Specially Protected Area and Wildlife (SPA) Protocol and the Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME) Project to

apply Blue Growth approaches regionally, and particularly to increase the opportunities of SIDS in the Caribbean region for BGI.

SEAFDEC described the development of approximately twenty-five projects each year in response to the challenges of both the changing environment and emerging issues such as climate change and the growing gap between the increased demand for fish and fishery products and ASEAN's ability to supply these products in a sustainable manner. In regard to an integrated approach within these projects, SEAFDEC has recently focused on: the promotion and establishment of a fisheries *refugia* system under a UNEP/GEF/South China Sea project; the promotion of ecosystem approaches to fisheries under the FAO/GEF/REBYC2 project and the traceability of fish and fisheries products while managing fishing capacity to combat IUU fishing activities with support from the Government of Japan and Sweden.

ATLAFCO has offered financial support to three regional organizations, including SRFC, FCWC and the Regional Fisheries Committee for the Gulf of Guinea (COREP). ATLAFCO intends to use this support to enable these organizations to implement projects and policies structuring the trans-boundary management of stocks in the ATLAFCO zone. This initiative will include: (1) support to the projects of SRFC; (2) development of a leading plan for the common management of small pelagics for the Fishery Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) and COREP and (3) the launching of workshops for each of these organizations. ATLAFCO has also made plans to realize feasibility studies on the establishment of an integrated information system covering all fisheries sectors. Finally, ATLAFCO stated in its response that it ensures the participation of its Member States and supports them in the application of international rules and regulations such as those published by other RFBs and governance bodies including COFI.

4. SOCIO-ECONOMICALLY SENSITIVE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

4.1 Areas of Focus in Socio-Economically Sensitive Fisheries Management

An increasing awareness by RFBs of the socio-economic impacts of their work was evident in the collected responses. In processing the range of responses in this area, broad themes emerged which have been used to organise the following description of RFB actions related to socio-economically sensitive fisheries and aquaculture management. More abstract categories like RFB mandates and ongoing research have been included to detail the basis for current and future RFB activities in this area, whereas initiatives related to aquaculture and small-scale fisheries convey the already robust engagement of many RFBs in this area.

4.2 Awareness of Socio-Economic Aspects of Fisheries Management in RFB Mandates

Some RFBs linked their awareness of socio-economic factors to their founding instruments as well as to current activities being pursued in fulfillment of their mandates.

SEAFO stressed the commitment in its Convention obliging the Commission to recognize the special requirements of developing States in the region as well as the needs of coastal fishing communities that are dependent on the stocks of the South East Atlantic. The Commission is also required to take into account the needs of coastal States, whose economies are overwhelmingly dependent on the exploitation of fishery resources. In addition, Contracting Parties must also give full recognition to the special requirements of developing States in the region when looking to the conservation, management and development of fishery resources.

APFIC cited Article IV of its founding constitution in which paragraph (c) requires the Commission, "to keep under review the economic and social aspects of fishing and aquaculture industries and recommend measures aimed at improving the living and working conditions of fishermen and other workers in these industries and otherwise at improving the contribution of each fishery to social and economic goals".

NASCO made note of its "Guidelines for the Management of Salmon Fisheries", which States in part that fishing on stocks that are below conservation limits should not be permitted, unless on the basis of

overriding socio-economic factors in which case, “it should be limited to a level that will permit stock recovery within a stated timeframe”.

In its response, CCSBT discussed the socio-economic aspect of its primary management measure, the SBT TAC and subsequent allocations of the TAC. CCSBT asserted that TAC allocations allow each Member/CNM to adopt Rights-based Management (RBM) or other socio-economic approaches in use of their allocations. In fact, CCSBT reported five of its six Members adopting either individual transferable quotas (ITQs) or individual quota (IQ) management approaches for their SBT fisheries. Moreover, during the evaluation of the Management Procedure, CCSBT stated industry groups stressed the importance of minimising year-to-year fluctuations in the TAC and setting the TAC well in advance of fishing operations. To meet industry’s requirements, the CCSBT Management Procedure has been designed around 3 year TAC blocks, with maximum (3000t) and minimum (100t) TAC adjustments for each block and with setting of the TAC conducted one year in advance of fishing.

IPHC underscored the goal of optimal yield specified in its Convention which recognizes both biological yield from the stock and modifications to it that may be influenced by social and economic factors. IPHC has facilitated the development of IQ based fisheries and broad consultative and advisory processes to ensure optimal yield has been achieved. The individual quota management framework is designed to improve safety of fishing by allowing harvesters to conduct fishing under individual business plans, rather than artificially imposed fishing periods. This management framework also improves unit value to the harvesters by allowing optimal product marketing, and improves the precision of harvest management by the IPHC.

COPESCAALC reported on the priorities set for the coming biennium at the last meeting of the Commission in March 2014. Among the priorities to be recommended to the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean were intentions to: “(1) support the formulation of policies, strategies and plans for the development of resource-limited aquaculture as a tool to strengthen food security and poverty alleviation...”; “(3) promote fish consumption through better social awareness and include fish in school feeding programmes” and “...(5) make additional efforts to reach agreement on the International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries”.

4.3 Research on Socio-Economic Aspects of Fisheries Management Conducted by RFBs

Some RFBs described undertaking research into the socio-economic context of their work.

GFCM’s response in particular featured its current efforts to gather socio-economic data for the region under its mandate as part of a larger initiative to promote the establishment of fisheries multiannual management plans. For this purpose, GFCM is working to identify sources of information on small-scale fisheries, to collect data and to involve stakeholders in its analysis, all of which it endeavors will help create efficient management plans. Currently, GFCM reported that there is no precise quantitative information encompassing biological and socio-economic data at the regional level and no regional database to provide a complete picture of small-scale fisheries, despite the efforts deployed by the GFCM – which collects this data from its Members.

SPC conducts research as part of its greater mission to assist Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) in maintaining access to the fish required for good nutrition. SPC accomplishes this by encouraging PICTs to make greater use of the region’s rich tuna resources for local food security and by expanding aquaculture. SPC is currently assessing how best to use small tuna and bycatch from industrial tuna fisheries to increase access to fish for urban populations during transshipping operations in the major ports of the region. In addition, SPC supports the installation of nearshore fish aggregating devices (FADs) and tilapia farming in PICTs, which are expected to be ‘win-win’ adaptations for improving the resilience among communities in the region. SPC asserts that these adaptation strategies can help improve access to fish. They should also be favored by climate change as tuna are expected to be more abundant in the waters of some PICTs as seas’ surface temperatures increase and ocean currents change, and warmer air temperatures and higher rainfall will increase the number of locations where tilapia can be grown efficiently.

RECOFI emphasized the cultural and traditional value of fisheries in many RECOFI coastal States despite the fact that their contribution to national economies is negligible due to the exploitation of rich oil and gas fields. Fisheries remain a key component of the national heritage of these States as well as being an important source of livelihood for many. RECOFI reported devising a work plan on understanding the social and economic aspects of RECOFI fisheries, including the development of a socio-economic survey in the areas within its region.

EIFAAC cited research as well to reflect their work in socio-economically sensitive fisheries management, including an assessment of the socio-economic benefits of European inland recreational fisheries (Parkkila, K. et al. 2010. Methodologies for assessing socio-economic benefits of European inland recreational fisheries).³

4.4 RFB Activities Related to Aquaculture

Several RFBs described launching initiatives to expand aquaculture in the regions under their mandates for the purpose of strengthening food security and alleviating poverty. The extensive activity of many RFBs in this area underlines the possible contribution to global food security that may be achieved through aquaculture and why it also serves as a major component of BGI.

In 2013, GFCM launched the Aquaculture Multi-Stakeholder Platform in order to urgently tackle environmental and socio-economic concerns linked to the sustainable development of aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. The Aquaculture Multi-Stakeholder Platform was launched at a gathering in December of that year with participation of more than sixty experts, professionals and stakeholders in the aquaculture field to discuss the future of aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. Based on a shared vision and objectives, the GFCM Aquaculture Multi-Stakeholder platform has been designed as a tool to enhance dialogue and consultation among aquaculture actors in order to propose common solutions for sustainable aquaculture strategies in the whole region.

WECAFC also announced that recently its Bureau and Secretariat developed a concept note called “The Caribbean Blue Revolution”, which complements the approach of BGI. The Caribbean Blue Revolution aims to double total fish production among the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) countries within ten years through investment in sustainable aquaculture development. The concept note was welcomed by the 15th session of WECAFC (Trinidad and Tobago, March 2014) and will be submitted to potential investors in 2014/2015.

In its response, ATLAFCO recognized the importance of aquaculture in particular to increase livelihood opportunities and fulfill global nutrition goals, especially in West African countries. ATLAFCO has proposed a plan to develop aquaculture in its Member States by, (1) listing all projects and initiatives existing in the ATLAFCO zone in order to analyze the possibility of replicating them on a regional scale and, (2) training aquaculture professionals on marine fish.

APFIC reported on working to promote responsible aquaculture, certification and most recently the development of an aquaculture planning and development toolkit to support sustainable intensification.

COPESCAALC alternatively has acted to foster and develop resource-limited aquaculture farmers in a number of countries; namely Guatemala, Costa Rica, Bolivia, Colombia, Antigua and Barbuda and Paraguay, for the purpose of increasing food security and reducing poverty in rural communities. As part of this project, a number of integrated demonstration farms (agriculture-aquaculture) act as showcases and field schools where better aquaculture and agriculture practices are transferred to rural farmers. The Commission has partnered with the Aquaculture Network of the Americas to develop training which strengthens organizational capacity and provides basic management skills to contribute to capacity building and improve the sustainability of aquaculture farmers.

Lastly, the SPC mentioned expanding freshwater pond aquaculture for Nile tilapia to supply rural communities without access to tuna with more fish. The SPC found this kind of project to be particularly important for the large inland population in Papua New Guinea, but also elsewhere in Melanesia.

³ EIFAAC Occasional Paper No. 46. FAO. p. 112.

4.5 RFB Activities Related to Small-Scale Fisheries

Small-scale fisheries represented a substantial portion of the socio-economically relevant work reported by RFBs in their responses.

To this point, GFCM stated in their response that small-scale fisheries have the potential to contribute significantly to food security, economic growth and rural development, and to provide valuable employment opportunities. GFCM recently organized the First Regional Symposium on Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Mediterranean and Black Sea. The symposium attracted over 170 participants from international and intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), fisher associations, stakeholders and civil society at large. Fisheries experts of the Mediterranean and Black Sea met to share experiences and make steps towards a sustainable future for small-scale fisheries in the region. GFCM reports that discussions from the Symposium have now laid the groundwork for a regional project fostering knowledge of all the components linked to small-scale fisheries and involving all interested stakeholders. The event also led to a collaboration agreement signed between fishers from the Northern and Southern Mediterranean shores. The platform established by this agreement is the first ever to enable cooperation between fishers from both sides of the Mediterranean. Other outcomes of the symposium included: the establishment of a Task Force aimed at supporting Mediterranean and Black Sea countries in the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Fisheries in the context of food security and poverty eradication facilitated by FAO; the organization of a second Regional Symposium on small-scale fisheries; focus on the need to integrate small-scale fisheries in marine protected areas; support for co-managed fisheries and the promotion of a strategy to identify opportunities and products of small-scale fisheries for the benefit of local communities and stakeholders.

ATLAFCO described plans to reinforce the African Network of Women in Fisheries Sector (RAFEP) Network. It proposed to accomplish this through a series of actions including, setting up a new national network for two countries, initiating training on hygiene and quality as well as on the new process of valuation of sea products and providing support to the general assembly of RAFEP. The Executive Secretariat of ATLAFCO will be coordinating the preparation and execution of training for a group of women who will in turn disseminate this training to the countries covered by RAFEP. The network, which involves a partnership between ATLAFCO and RAFEP, aims to contribute to the following objectives:

- promotion of the participation of women in sustainable fisheries development and the economic and social development of ATLAFCO Members;
- strengthening of the organizational, professional and entrepreneurial skills of women in the fisheries sector within ATLAFCO Members in order to improve their political and economic power;
- better exploitation of fishery products;
- promotion of the marketing of fishery products at the national, sub-regional, regional and international levels;
- facilitation of the conditions of access to credit for funding women's fishing activities and
- promotion of the social security of women in the fisheries sector.

The SPC has been installing nearshore, anchored FADs near coastal communities to increase the access of artisanal and subsistence fishers to tuna and other large pelagic fish. In addition SPC has been encouraging governments to include FADs as part of the national infrastructure for food security.

OSPESCA emphasized the inclusion of fishermen and farmers as active participants in the process of setting priorities and addressing the various links of the value chain as well as in the implementation of OSPECA activities in these areas. It stated that this has strengthened fisheries management institutions at the national and regional levels while also having a positive impact on trade organizations.

5. CONCLUSION

The existing linkages described in this paper between RFB mandates/activities and the BGI represent only a small fraction of the possible policy interface between RFBs and the BGI. FAO endeavours to build upon this interface by working with RFBs to augment BGI activities at the regional level and as a work program develops.

At the thirty-first session of the UN Committee on Fisheries, the BGI will be presented to FAO Members for comment and endorsement. FAO's hope is that COFI will interpret the BGI as a comprehensive and feasible program of work that can ensure (capture and aquaculture) fish as food for the increasing global population.

**COFI 31 – INTERVENTION, CHAIRPERSON OF RSN5
AGENDA ITEM 4**

Thank you Chair. Firstly, on behalf of all the IGOs at this end of the room, can I ask that the name plates for our organizations be re-instated – as has applied in all previous COFI meetings. It helps people locate each other and gives us a banner to wave if we'd like to be added to the speaker's list. Thank you for giving consideration to this request Chair.

Chairman. I'm taking the floor as Chair of the Regional Secretariat's Network. The Network was established in 1999, as an initiative of FAO, to promote information sharing and discussion on emerging issues among the secretariats of the intergovernmental regional fisheries bodies including RFMOs. The Regional Secretariat's Network doesn't engage in policy issues – that's the preserve of our member States – and we don't take decisions of any binding nature. But we do openly discuss issues of common interest. Fifty intergovernmental fisheries bodies, fisheries management organizations and other agencies with a mandate to work on issues that directly involve the fisheries sector – covering riverine, lakes, coastal, oceanic and polar regions – now engage actively in the Network. Participation in the Network is almost solely through the executive officers of these RFBs.

Thirty-one members of the Network participated in our 5th meeting, here in Rome on Saturday 7th June 2014. Although most were here for COFI some, such as ICES, CITES, OSPAR and the IWC secretariats came only for Saturday's meeting.

Our discussions on Saturday covered a wide range of issues. I take this opportunity to raise one matter that we felt it was important to convey to COFI. This is the relationship between the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department and RFBs:

- The RFBs are of the general view that the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department needs to extend better efforts to communicate and share information with RFB secretariats. In advising this, the Network recognizes that, individually and collectively, they also need to actively promote opportunities to strengthen collaboration with FAO. The RFBs generally have a closer relationship with local and regional fisheries sectors and communities but, we recall, that the member States of the RFBs are also FAO members and RFBs and FAO are working for very similar purposes. Our activities should, for the most part, be complementary. Improved collaboration will lead to more efficient use of limited manpower and financial resources and generally better outcomes for the benefit of FAO member States. Some encouraging opportunities exist – the section in the SOFIA report on RFBs (pages 173–180) was compiled through the direct engagement of the RSN. More effort is required particularly in respect of FAO's general programme of work.
- The Network invites the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department to consider means to improve the engagement of RFB secretariats around COFI itself. A pre- or post-COFI meeting between the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department and the RSN may offer opportunities to strengthen collaboration for the benefit of FAO member States in general. In addition, in raising the topic of RFBs in SOFIA and in COFI documents such as the global and regional strategies paper, improved reporting regarding collaboration on substantive matters of mutual interest between FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department and the RFBs could be highlighted. This matter is currently covered lightly with a focus on institutional process rather than outcomes.
- We'd welcome ideas from the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department on how to strengthen its relationship with RFBs for the benefit of our shared membership. Together we can do more Mr Chairman.

Thank you.

**LETTER FROM THE CHAIRPERSON OF RSN-5 TO THE ADG FIAQ RELAYING THE
COLLECTIVE VIEW OF RFB SECRETARIATS**

18 June 2014

Mr Árni M. Mathiesen
Assistant Director-General
Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
Food and Agriculture Organization
Rome
Italy

Dear Árni,

The Regional Secretariat's Network was established in 1999, as an initiative of FAO, to promote information sharing and discussion on emerging issues among the secretariats of the intergovernmental regional fisheries bodies including RFMOs. Fifty-two intergovernmental fisheries bodies, fisheries management organizations and other agencies with a mandate to work on issues that directly involve the fisheries sector - covering rivers, lakes, coastal, oceanic from the tropics to the poles engage actively in the Network. The strength of the Network has improved significantly in recent years largely through the technical and logistical support provided by FAO's Dr Gail Lugten. On behalf of the RSN, I express our appreciation for this support.

The 37 members of the Network which participated in our most recent meeting, in Rome on Saturday 7th June 2014, discussed, among other matters, the relationship between the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department and RFB secretariats. On their behalf, I raise the following matters with you.

While all RFBs were appreciative of the support provided by FAO to the RSN through Dr Lugten, they are of the general view that, on a one-to-one basis, the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department needs to extend better efforts to communicate, share information and coordinate with RFB secretariats. In advising this, the Network recognises that, individually and collectively, they also need to actively promote opportunities to strengthen collaboration with FAO. The activities of the RFBs and FAO should, for the most part, be complementary. Improved collaboration will lead to more efficient use of limited manpower and financial resources and generally better outcomes for the benefit of FAO member States. Some encouraging opportunities exist – the section in the SOFIA report on RFBs (pages 173-180) was compiled through the direct engagement of the RSN. More effort is required particularly in respect of FAO's general programme of work.

The Network invites the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department to consider means to improve the engagement of RFB secretariats around COFI itself. A pre- or post- COFI meeting between the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department and the RSN may offer opportunities to strengthen collaboration for the benefit of FAO member States in general.


We'd welcome ideas from the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department on how to strengthen its relationship with RFBs for the benefit of our shared membership. Together we can do more Árni.

As I expressed above, for the last three years the RSN has benefitted from the passionate and inspiring secretarial and technical services provided by Dr Lugten.

We are aware that Dr Lugten has advised she'll be departing FAO in 2014. We wish Dr Lugten all the very best in her future endeavors and thank her for the camaraderie and professional support she has provided to the RSN during her time at FAO. With Dr Lugten's departure we are anxious to learn of the possible future support to the Network that might be provided by FAO. We'd appreciate hearing from you in due course on this subject.

Finally, I have completed my term as Chair of the RSN. The incoming Chair of the RSN is Stefan Asmundsson, Executive Secretary of NEAFC. Through him, all RFBs look forward to a productive working relationship with you and your Fisheries and Aquaculture Department colleagues going forward.

With best wishes



Andrew Wright
Executive Secretary
CCAMLR and
Out-going Chair, RSN

cc. Stefan Asmundsson, NEAFC Secretariat

APPENDIX 6**LETTER FROM THE CHAIRPERSON OF RSN-5 TO THE INCOMING CHAIR OF COFI TO
RELAY THE VIEWS OF THE RSN ON THE ENGAGEMENT OF RFBs IN COFI**

18 June 2014

Professor Fabio Hazin
 Director
 Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture
 Federal Rural University of Pernambuco State
 Recife
 Brazil Email: fhvhazin@terra.com.br

Dear Professor Hazin,

I am writing as outgoing Chair of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariat's Network (RSN). Thirty-seven Members of the Network met in the margins of COFI31 to discuss a wide range of RFB-related matters of common interest. One of the items discussed was strengthening RFB collaboration with the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department including, in recognition of the shared membership of RFBs and FAO, through COFI. In the spirit of realizing stronger mutual benefits through the participation of RFBs in COFI, and acknowledging that COFI is essentially a meeting for FAO members, I respectfully offer the following suggestions:

- Reinstate name plates for intergovernmental organizations present at COFI
- Ensure that intergovernmental organizations are given precedence on the Speaker's List ahead of non-governmental organizations
- Make an electronic version of the List of Meeting Participants available on the COFI meeting webpage, or other suitable facility accessible to meeting participants, on the first day of the meeting, and
- Make an electronic version of the Draft COFI Meeting Report available on the COFI meeting webpage, or other suitable facility accessible to meeting participants, when it is circulated on the last day of the meeting.

Congratulations on your election as Chair of COFI32. The incoming Chair of the RSN is Stefan Asmundsson, Executive Secretary of NEAFC. Through him, all RFBs look forward to a productive working relationship with you during your term as Chair.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Wright
 Executive Secretary
 CCAMLR and Outgoing Chair, The Regional Fishery Body Secretariat's

cc. Mr Ární M. Mathiesen
 Assistant Director-General
 Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
 cc. Stefan Asmundsson, NEAFC Secretariat
 cc. RSN contacts

The Fifth Meeting of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats Network (RSN-5) was held in Rome, Italy, over two sessions, on 7 and 13 June 2014. Prior to the meeting, all regional fishery bodies (RFBs) were asked to contribute data on how the Blue Growth Initiative (BGI) was being applied within their organizations. This material was compiled into a summary report and used to launch discussion at the RSN-5 meeting. The summary report and subsequent RSN-5 discussion covered a wide range of subjects, which reflected the three pillars of the BGI: integrated, sustainable and socio-economically sensitive fisheries management. In addition to this discussion, presentations were given by two guests, one from the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora, and one from the Oslo and Paris Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic. Presentations were also given by several RFB Executive Secretaries on: lost and abandoned fishing gear, inland fisheries, and science-based fisheries management. A final presentation was given by the representative of the United Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, who spoke on its forthcoming initiatives and meetings. Thirty-one Secretaries representing a diverse range of RFBs from all geographic regions were represented at RSN-5. They included FAO and non-FAO bodies, marine capture and inland capture bodies, science advisory bodies and four of the five tuna regional fishery management organizations. The meeting fostered collaboration and cooperation among the participating RFBs, and gave consideration to a number of matters that merit the attention of all RFBs, governments and FAO. The session on 7 June examined the agenda of the Thirty-first Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI 31) and issues that might arise of importance to RFBs. The session of 13 June noted concerns arising from the COFI 31 meeting and future directions for the RSN.

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