

Report of the sixth session of the

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES RESEARCH

Rome, 17-20 October 2006



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PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This is the final report approved by the sixth session of the Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research (ACFR) held in Rome from 17 to 20 October 2006.

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Report of the sixth session of the Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research. Rome, 17–20 October 2006

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ABSTRACT

The Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research (ACFR) held its sixth Session in Rome, Italy, from 17 to 20 October 2006. The Committee reviewed the work of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department with a focus on fish trade, small-scale fisheries and aquaculture. The ACFR discussed also other relevant work and activities undertaken by the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department and related, among others, to human capacity development in fisheries, information on status and trends of capture fisheries, FI's communication strategy, etc.

The Committee addressed not only research aspects but also policy matters and provided recommendations to further guide the future work of the Department.

The Committee recognized that much of the trade-related work of FAO was cross-cutting in its nature and that, in the FAO fisheries and aquaculture work programme, care should be taken to integrate the trade and fish utilization work with other relevant fields, especially fisheries resource management, aquaculture production development and social areas such as food security and gender and development of standards and certification.

The Committee appreciated the decision to keep small-scale fisheries as a stand-alone agenda item during COFI. It recognized that there was a need for better assessment tools and methodology for small-scale fisheries but that this would be best developed in considering a number of case studies. It recommended that the current high profile of deepwater fisheries not be allowed to distort priorities at the expense of other fisheries, especially small-scale fisheries in developing countries, which are much more important in terms of human welfare and ecological impact.

The Committee commended the work of FAO in aquaculture and welcomed the timely inclusion of fish species in the Programme of Work of the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, as genetic resources were becoming increasingly important in view of their roles in improved aquaculture production and threats to biodiversity and genetic resource conservation.

The Committee discussed a number of future priorities for consideration at its next meeting (2008) and therefore for work in the interim by FAO/Fisheries and Aquaculture Department.

Distribution:

Members of the Committee
Other interested nations and international organizations
FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
FAO Regional Fishery Officers

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INTRODUCTION

1. The sixth session of the Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research (ACFR) was held in Rome, Italy, from 17 to 20 October 2006.
2. The Session was attended by seven members of the Committee and one observer. The list of participants is attached as Appendix B.
3. The Session was called to order by the Chairperson of ACFR, Ms Meryl Williams.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

4. The Session was opened by Mr Jean-François Pulvenis, Director of the Fishery and Aquaculture Economics and Policy Division who presented an opening statement on behalf of Mr Ichiro Nomura, Assistant Director-General, FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department. He noted the change in the Secretariat of the Committee and welcomed Mr Ndiaga Gueye as the new Secretary.
5. He stressed the important role the Committee had played, and expected to continue to play, in providing FAO with guidance and advice on the general work programme of the Department particularly issues related to fisheries and aquaculture research. He noted that the current meeting would cover many important topics including small-scale fisheries, fish utilization and trade, and aquaculture.
6. Mr Pulvenis invited the Committee to review the work of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department and address not only research but also policy matters and provide recommendations to further guide the future work of the Department. The full text of the opening statement is attached in Appendix D.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

7. The Committee adopted the Agenda as contained in Appendix A of this report. The documents which were before the Committee are listed in Appendix C. Under the agenda item concerning other relevant work and activities undertaken by FAO/Fisheries and Aquaculture Department (FI), the Committee requested more information on activities concerning (i) deep seas fisheries; (ii) marine protected areas; (iii) Committee on Fisheries (COFI) agenda (iv) World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) follow up, and (v) FI's communication strategy.

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRPERSON

8. The Chair welcomed all the members of ACFR and the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department staff in attendance.
9. The Chair recalled briefly the history of ACFR and its functions and strong partnership as a statutory body of FAO. The advice of ACFR had been taken seriously by FAO, which had based several of its activities on the topics recommended by the Committee. Considering the main challenges that the fishery and aquaculture sector is facing worldwide, she encouraged the Committee to look at how it should formulate a new set of key research priorities to guide the work of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department.
10. The Chair also noted the large changes that had occurred in fisheries and aquaculture in the past 10 years and thus, the context for ACFR work needs to take account of:

- Aquaculture now provides an estimated 43 percent of food fish supply.
- Implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries may be slowing down now, more than 10 years after its adoption.
- Fish demand-supply studies indicate a still burgeoning demand for fish.
- Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing is a serious concern.
- High seas fisheries management is drawing considerable attention.
- The sector is receiving increasing attention of people who have not been involved in fisheries and aquaculture, especially on environmental matters.

REVIEW OF FAO'S WORK ON FISH TRADE

11. This agenda item was introduced by the Secretariat based on document ACFR/VI/2006/4. The Committee was reminded that the FAO mission in fish utilization and trade was to: (i) promote the improved utilization of fish resources and the reduction of waste by increasing the efficiency of the operations which take place between harvesting the fish and its ultimate purchase and use by the consumer, (ii) develop codes, standards and guidelines related to utilization, marketing and responsible trade and (iii) monitor and assist in their implementation.

12. In terms of research in fish utilization and trade the Committee was informed about the Department's work to:

- undertake analyses of priorities and emerging issues, as a means to better understand the sector and inform FAO members of policy, market governance, development options and need for national, regional or global initiatives;
- inform FAO clients through publications: meetings reports, papers, newsletters, participation and communications, conferences, workshops, training activities, and electronic documents (CD-ROMs).

13. The Secretariat outlined a number of activities that are taking place under the auspices of meetings, workshops, expert and technical consultations, the Sub-committee on Fisheries Trade; *Codex alimentarius*; trade promotion and governance; fish utilization, safety and quality. These included:

- normative activities relating to the relevant Committees, expert and technical consultations such as work on subsidies, ecolabelling, fish marketing;
- issues considered by the COFI Sub-Committee on Fisheries Trade including trade and CITES, technical guidelines for responsible fish trade, fish trade and small-scale fisheries, food safety, quality and traceability;
- *Codex alimentarius* activities including the provision of scientific advice, codes of practice and risk assessments of seafood hazards;
- fish marketing analysis and promotion through Globefish and the FishInfo Network;
- trade promotion and governance including several major conferences organized by the FishInfo Network, World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements, negotiations; distribution of costs and benefits along the food chain and the emerging importance of large retail chains; and
- addressing fish utilization, safety and quality issues including analyses on market rejections and traceability and labelling.

14. The Committee reviewed the activities undertaken by FI on fish trade and noted the emerging importance of retail chains in setting product standards (often claimed to be higher than accepted current practice) and the proliferation of labels indicating the standards on their products. It questioned the costs, especially to small-scale producers and who was benefiting from such schemes. It also noted that certification could relate to food quality and safety and to good environmental practices,

especially in aquaculture. In looking at future activities, the importance of partnerships at various levels was also highlighted.

15. As fish supply chains changed, work on obtaining better information on the spread of benefits in the supply chain, especially in developing countries, as well as having better information on the origin of products was stressed. This under-pinned many of the certification and labelling issues as well as tracking IUU products.

16. The Committee recognized that much of the trade related work of FAO was cross-cutting in its nature and that, in the FAO fisheries and aquaculture work program, care should be taken to integrate the trade and fish utilization work with other relevant fields, especially fisheries resource management, aquaculture production development and social areas such as food security and gender and development of standards and certification.

17. Taking into account the current work of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department and future needs the Committee **recommended** that future work on fish utilization and trade activities should include the following key areas of priority:

- (i) Research to provide a better understanding of the spread of benefits in the fish supply chain. This work would include consideration of the proliferation of certification and labels; the impacts of the concentration of retailers; an examination of price mechanisms in different parts of the supply chain, and how certification links to fisheries resource management and aquaculture production systems. This research should also include studies of fish supply chains in domestic markets, of freshwater fish species, products from different culture practices and the benefits to women in all parts of the fish supply chains studied.
- (ii) FAO should provide guidance for generic certification systems, based on origin of products, and suitable for use for a number of certification purposes, such as food safety, sustainable resource management and ethical concerns, especially animal welfare. The generic certification systems should help establish minimum and harmonized standards and should also address the question of who pays for the certification. FAO fisheries work could examine and help countries learn from the experience of labelling schemes in other products. FAO work on guidance for generic certification systems should help develop standards for fish labelling that allow small scale producers to achieve the standards themselves, rather than having to purchase commercial services in order to comply.
- (iii) Research on fish utilization for fish meal and fish as feed and fertilizer requires greater attention. FAO should develop a quantitative understanding of the uses of fish directly/indirectly for fish feed, pet food and fertilizer, the flow of these fish and fish products from harvest to consumer, recognizing that the prices of and sharply increasing demand for such non-human food uses of fish are dynamic and are placing large pressures on fish production systems.

18. The Committee also **recommended** the desegregation of aquaculture and capture fishery products in trade statistics. Among other benefits, such desegregated information would enable a better tracking of the impacts of improved fisheries management and better/best practice aquaculture production systems.

19. The Committee stressed the importance of partnerships developed by FAO in its work on fish trade and utilization. It recognized the need to strengthen these and to keep working with both the inter-governmental sector, especially the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA) for work on inland and fisheries for domestic markets in Asia, the non governmental and the private sector including small businesses. It is essential to promote partnerships with the private sector, including the small-scale sub-sector, while bearing in mind that partnership platforms should be developed carefully in accordance with the policy of the Organization, including ensuring that no private party was accorded a competitive advantage.

20. The Committee noted that many of the issues concerned with international trade in fish products, such as environmental, safety and quality, IUU and related issues, would benefit from a consistent programme for documenting the origin of fish products. ACFR **recommended** that FAO evaluate suitable schemes and promote broadly the adoption of a system, at least for products that enter international trade.

REVIEW OF FAO'S WORK ON SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES

21. This agenda item was introduced by the Secretariat based on document ACFR/VI/2006/4. Three main topics covered were: (i) Technical Guidelines on "Increasing the contribution of small-scale fisheries to poverty alleviation and food security"; (ii) Interdisciplinary assessment and management of small-scale fisheries and their role in food security and poverty alleviation; and (iii) The PROFISH "Big numbers project".

22. With respect to the Technical Guidelines, the Committee was informed that the guidelines were developed to promote the importance of and contributions by small-scale fisheries in the context of the broader economies of countries and regions. The group developing the guidelines firstly set up a vision for the future for small-scale fisheries, incorporating the need to ensure a greater participation by small-scale fishers and their communities in the formulation of policies, the development of related legislation and regulations and in management decision making and implementation. The Guidelines highlight the central role of effective fisheries management, importance of considering cross-sectoral issues of fisheries and related resources, the special role of women in fish marketing, processing and value adding, the significant scope for trade, and the critical role of adequate financing.

23. The Committee was also informed about the initiation of a World Bank funded project (through PROFISH) on providing updated information on both large-scale and small-scale fisheries, in particular the number of people involved, the relative proportions of each in terms of producing the global catch, and the relative efficiencies of both sub-sectors. It was noted that earlier attempts to provide these "big numbers" had only covered marine capture fisheries. The project will be a joint project between FAO and the WorldFish Center.

24. The Committee was also updated on progress on a project to develop better interdisciplinary assessment and management methods for small-scale fisheries. Following a workshop in September 2005, a concept note was revised and is now being considered for extrabudgetary funding. This is also a joint project between FAO and the WorldFish Center. A work plan has been developed that includes three major work packages: (i) framework and methods for assessment and management of small-scale fisheries, (ii) synthesis of lessons learned and awareness raising and (iii) field testing/case studies.

25. In general discussion, the non-transferability of assessment tools developed for temperate fisheries was highlighted. There was general agreement that there was a need for better assessment tools and methodology for small-scale fisheries but that this would be best developed in considering a number of case studies. The overall difficulties in improving the management of small-scale fisheries were also discussed and the importance of studies to gain a detailed understanding of both success and failures, especially with regards to building better partnerships between fishers and governments (co-management) were stressed. The overall lack of data and the need to assess fisheries in this context was also noted.

26. The Committee expressed some concerns regarding the lack of specificity in the concept note that described the inter-disciplinary project on small-scale fisheries assessment, noting the diversity of small-scale fisheries in the world and need to clarify objectives before commencing assessments. They also stressed the importance of involving the stakeholders and managers in the development of any assessment methodology.

27. The Committee made a number of recommendations under each of the topics discussed above:

The PROFISH “Big numbers project”

28. ACFR strongly supported the update of information on the different capture fisheries sub-sectors and welcomed the inclusion of inland fisheries to the analysis.

29. ACFR stressed that, although a table that summarized these data was an important product, the project was more than just producing this table and should build capacity and awareness of the need for this type of information in the future. In this regard the Committee strongly urged FAO to increase its linkages between the various project activities and the Regular Program responsible for the collection of fishery and aquaculture statistics.

Interdisciplinary assessment and management of small-scale fisheries and their role in food security and poverty alleviation

30. The Committee noted the progress on this project but in addition FAO should initiate research on a number of case studies that will highlight successes and failures in the assessment and management of small-scale fisheries to guide the development of appropriate assessment tools. Case studies needed to incorporate the lessons learnt by FAO technical cooperation project work that often involved assessment and management of small-scale fisheries, involve the stakeholders and managers in the process, assess the relevance of assessment methods used and that could potentially be used (as both diagnostic and monitoring tools), and include an analysis of the history and development of a particular fishery to understand more fully the assessment needs for a particular fishery.

Technical Guidelines on “Increasing the contribution of small-scale fisheries to poverty alleviation and food security”

- (i) At this stage, ACFR noted that there was no need for development of further guidelines but this be reconsidered on completion of the two projects presented to the Committee.

31. The Committee **recommended** that FAO better coordinate its work on cross-cutting topics such as the ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF), small-scale fisheries, marine protected areas, the sustainable livelihoods approach and fish trade and utilization.

REVIEW OF FAO’s WORK ON AQUACULTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

32. This agenda item was introduced by the Secretariat based on document ACFR/VI/2006/3.

33. The Committee was reminded that, at its fifth session, the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department was requested to examine issues related to species choice in aquaculture, i.e. domestication processes, genetic improvement, and genetic conservation in order to improve the sustainable contribution that aquaculture makes to the future world fish supply needs.

34. The Committee was informed that FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department has conducted several activities related to the above recommendation, in particular:

- examination of capture-based aquaculture,
- implementation of genetic improvement training courses and capacity building;
- analysis of aquaculture seed supply,
- improving information on alien species and
- developing policies for genetic resource management.

35. The Committee members were also informed on the outcomes of the third session of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture and on the ongoing or envisaged activities of FI in the field of aquaculture.

36. The Committee commended the work of FAO and welcomed the timely inclusion of Fish species in the Programme of Work of the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, as genetic resources were becoming increasingly important in view of their roles in improved aquaculture production and threats to biodiversity and genetic resource conservation.

37. ACFR **recommended** that FAO strengthen its partnership through the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in work on genetic resource management and aquatic biodiversity conservation.

38. ACFR discussed the issues concerning introduction of alien species including the need for precautionary approach as included in the FAO Technical Guideline for Responsible Fisheries on Precautionary Approach to Capture Fisheries and Species Introductions and the 1997 Convention on the Law on Non Navigational Uses of International Watercourses. ACFR noted the costs and difficulty of eradicating undesirable alien species once established.

39. ACFR **recommended** that:

- (i) FAO undertake in-depth studies of the contributions of culture-based and inland capture fisheries to world fish production. Culture-based fisheries are particularly important in many inland water bodies and in certain coastal fisheries of some countries such as China and Japan and yet the production is not tracked in the FAO statistical system.
- (ii) FAO should develop greater formalization of risk assessments for introductions of species and strains for aquaculture, including in cases where the receiving water-bodies were shared regionally, e.g. in watersheds. The risk assessment methods to be developed should include technical advisory, legal and governance dimensions.
- (iii) In order to improve governance in aquatic health management particularly for improving policy, institutional capacity and legal frameworks, FAO should seek to improve dialogue and coordination between relevant national authorities in order to ensure prevention of disease occurrence in aquaculture.
- (iv) FAO should consider strengthening its involvement in work on inland fisheries which provide livelihood for millions of people in rural communities and often provide an affordable source of animal protein.

40. Recognizing the increasing linkages between aquaculture and fisheries, ACFR noted the already effective integration of FAO's aquaculture work with that of other sections of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department and encouraged further improvement. In particular, in light of the COFI Sub Committee on Aquaculture priority to African aquaculture development, FAO is **recommended** to bring a coordinated internal development approach including fish trade, policy and technical dimensions to its African aquaculture development support. In addition, aquaculture development for the continent should encompass consideration of the possibilities of culture of indigenous molluscs, seaweeds, echinoderms and other groups in addition to fish. ACFR **recommended** the formation of an African-based NACA-like network for aquaculture, especially to strengthen sub Saharan African capacity. The Committee stressed that, although South-South cooperation was already occurring to some degree, much greater benefit would be achieved for Africa if such cooperation was more structured and, to this end, FAO in collaboration with NACA should take the lead.

UPDATE ON ACTIVITIES RELATING TO:

a) Improving information on status and trends of capture fisheries

41. Activities relating to the 2003 FAO Strategy were described by the Secretariat (ACFR/VI/2006/2 and oral presentation). The strategy originated from an ACFR recommendation in 1999. Through a Working party, a proposal for an international plan of action (IPOA) on information on status and trends was developed.

42. The main thrust of the proposal was adopted by consensus at the twenty-fifth session of COFI (February 2003) but it was defined as a Strategy not an IPOA. The Strategy was endorsed by the hundred and twenty-fourth Session of the FAO Council (June 2003). UNGA Resolution A/58/L.18 adopted in December 2003 on sustainable fisheries invited States to support the implementation of the FAO Strategy-STF at national and regional levels, giving particular attention to capacity-building in developing countries.

43. COFI at its Twenty-fifth Session recognized the need for extrabudgetary support for implementation of the Strategy and accordingly endorsed a multilateral project to assist implementation of the Strategy-STF. The FishCode-STF Project became operational in November 2004. The main objective was to support the implementation of the strategy at a global level.

44. The Project, working in close collaboration with Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs), carries out:

- inventories of fisheries monitoring systems, fishery resources and fisheries;
- design and follow-up of programmes for improvement of fisheries monitoring and capacity building;
- initial studies and workshops for development of new methods for monitoring of
- small-scale fisheries, with attention to socio-economic information, inland fisheries and use of the ecosystem approach; and
- development of standards for ensuring information quality and security.

45. Since 2004, the project has organised several regional workshops to improve fisheries data collection and information, prepared a large number of country review papers on fisheries monitoring (including small scale fisheries), supported the world wide inventory of fisheries and fisheries resources and developed field activities on capacity building. There is a major focus on enhancing State's capacities to collect data to ensure that the coverage of fisheries information is as complete as possible and includes all sectors, in particular the data necessary to evaluate small-scale and multi species fisheries.

46. The project has reviewed data collection systems in many countries (50 countries world-wide) as a pre-cursor to making improvements in the future. This is based on the "why-what-how" logic that first determines why data are needed, what is needed and then how it is collected and by whom. A major component of the project is also the development of national inventories of fisheries and fishery resources. These cover a wide range of topics including socio-economic information. Regional workshops are then carried out to identify problems and find practical solutions.

47. Field activities in the past year include work on IUU fisheries in the Arafura Sea (Indonesia), OSPESCA working group on statistics, queen conch monitoring in the Caribbean and Central America, small-scale fisheries in Nicaragua, fisheries surveys in China and fisheries monitoring in Brazil.

48. ACFR was impressed with the scope of the project but noted some constraints. These included the approach to small-scale fisheries was still based mainly on assessment of the resources, the limited geographic coverage to be considered, as well as the restriction to marine fisheries. However, it was

pointed out that a step-wise approach was being adopted and as funding becomes available the scope will be increased to include inland fisheries. It was stressed that the project does not collect data but assists national governments in collecting their own data.

49. The method of prioritization of activities and geographical coverage was also discussed. The first priority was to assist developing countries; the second was to focus on small-scale fisheries; and the third was importance of the region in terms of current FAO special initiatives e.g. small island developing States. Donor interests were also considered. As an example, the case of Nicaragua was discussed.

50. It was pointed out that production data alone do not necessarily lead to good policy advice for fisheries management. ACFR **recommended** that more emphasis be placed on socio-economic information and the analysis that support policy advice for improved fishery management..

51. Packages such as ARTFISH, a computer program developed in 1980s, can be used for analysis but it has limitations. ACFR **recommended** that FAO review the internal harmonization of the software packages used in small-scale fisheries data collection and analysis so as to attain better efficacy amongst users.

52. The Secretariat also provided an overview the other part of the strategy the fishery resources monitoring system (FIRMS). The objective of FIRMS is to provide better monitoring on status and trends and management of fishery resources. It is based on formal arrangements with partners (FAO and 9 RFBs). It is seen as an authoritative source of information at the regional level and thus at the global level. FIRMS provides a layer of processing and reporting through data ownership arrangements, agreed standards and formats and quality assurance. The web site was launched in May 2006.

53. The Secretariat explained that FIRMS provides unique information for selected stocks based on a number of indicators of biological status and trends (exploitation rate and abundance level). It also links the scientific advice with the management recommendations that are developed based on the advice. In the future, it will be extended to the level of national agencies, providing funding is available.

54. ACFR complimented the progress that has been made in FIRMS and noted its potential for the future. It was noted that the status of many species are currently unknown and unlikely to be known in the near future. ACFR questioned its applicability to tropical fisheries, especially small-scale fisheries in developing countries. In response it was noted that as developing countries become involved in RFBs and improved their own reporting and assessment systems, their information can be captured. In the case of multi-species and multigear fisheries, monitoring could be carried out using indicators that reflect the overall condition of the fishery. FAO are developing an inventory of fisheries that will form a framework for this. ACFR also suggested that to include small-scale fisheries, other ecological units will have to be investigated. It was noted that as recommend by ACFR in agenda item 5, a lot more research is needed in terms of the management and assessment of small-scale fisheries. FIRMS will have to be developed in parallel with these developments.

55. ACFR noted that countries have information that is not compiled by RFBs and it should be included (e.g. Chile, Indonesia, Namibia, India, United States of America, Iceland, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) and **recommended** that FAO should endeavour to include this information in FIRMS. The linkages to the "Global Marine Assessment" was also noted and it was **recommended** that FAO gets more involved in a partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the other UN agencies involved in its development. It was also noted that the FIRMS initiative may also promote better networking and capacity building among scientists and managers. The possibility of linking to real-time monitoring in some fisheries was also suggested.

56. The importance of the system in relation to certification and labeling in providing authoritative information on place of origin and status of the resource was highlighted. It may also be useful in terms of IUU and trade issues. In this connection there was considerable urgency to improve the coverage but several constraints to this development were described. These included the great disparity in the availability of information, patchy distribution of RFBs (especially in the Asia Pacific region) limitation of funding, and quality control of national information.

57. ACFR noted that one of the justifications for the Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries, adopted by COFI in 2003, was to document progress toward fulfilling international agreements. The Committee **recommended** that FAO use FIRMS to document progress, in a transparent manner, toward fulfilling the WSSD target of rebuilding fisheries by 2015.

58. ACFR noted that there are obvious risks in relation to the use of this type of information, especially when it is derived from national sources of uncertain quality and where data are not available. Developing countries may be disadvantaged, especially in the short term. FAO will need to be aware of the risks and develop the system carefully and based on agreed protocols, taking these risks, uncertainties and the information gaps into account.

59. ACFR **recommended** that FAO should make this work a high priority and a key part of FAO normative work and that it needs to be resourced, especially to make the system more comprehensive and also to keep the system current. Resources should come from FAO's main program, member country and RFB programs and special extra-budgetary funds. In the short and medium term of its establishment, special funds will be needed. In the longer term, however, systems such as FIRMS will also help focus the work of governments and may improve support by national governments and regional fishery bodies.

b) Human capacity development

60. As a follow-up activity to the ACFR recommendations to improve human capacity development, a FAO "Strategic Framework on Human Capacity Development in Fisheries" was finalized and presented to COFI for endorsement in order to create greater awareness on the subject and further to encourage the use of the Strategic framework. The Strategic framework is now being prepared for publication and is being translated into FAO languages.

61. ACFR was informed that the document is in its final stage of completion and release and welcomed that it would be presented to the Governing Bodies of FAO. ACFR requested that the implementation plans and their progress be presented to its next meeting.

62. It was also noted that many of FAO's Fishery Department Technical Program projects have a strong human capacity building component and are supporting human capacity development in both governments and fishing communities in many countries. There are also regional networks supporting assessment human capacity needs and delivery.

63. ACFR was also informed about work on improving the capacity of fisheries libraries in developing countries, including through a formal partnership with IAMSLIC (International Association of Aquatic and Marine Libraries and Information Centers) which has specific human capacity development objectives. ACFR recognized the central issue of lack of information as a constraint to the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. Work is being done to identify these needs more specifically and address them and to build capacity. Networking among libraries and these organizations is a critical part of the FAO response. In 2005, FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department hosted the IAMSLIC conference on "Information for Responsible Fisheries" As a follow up activity, a new initiative to create a system of integrating and searching grey literature – the "Aquatic Commons" initiative – has been started, to gather and make searchable

through a common interface such literature from all countries and thereby to ensure developing countries information is integrated and available to all.

64. ACFR felt that this work was valuable, in particular in making accessible information relevant to the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. It was pleased to hear about the “Aquatic Commons” initiative and the development of partnerships that were designed to make information more accessible and available, as recommended in the CCRF.

65. ACFR also **recommended** that all FAO documents become available in electronic format as these constituted a veritable goldmine of information for fisheries. It was noted that there was a large amount of FAO material to be digitized and there was a need for prioritization of what should be digitized first. It was also requested that these should all be available free of cost.

66. ACFR appreciated the services of the FAO Fisheries library and its support of countries, regional bodies, and non-governmental organizations (e.g. the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF)). There was general concern about the reduced recognition in FAO of the importance of cutting edge library and information services to the work of FAO, e.g., encouraging the implementation of the CCRF, and ACFR **recommended** that the Organization recognize the centrality of the modern library and information functions being delivered by the FAO library.

OTHER RELEVANT WORK AND ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY FAO/FI

The Rent Drain – towards a global estimate of resource rent loss

67. The Secretariat informed the Committee about the study entitled “The Rent Drain – towards a global estimate of resource rent loss project” (ACFR/VI/2006/Inf. 4). This project is a part of the re-emergence of World Bank interest in fisheries. The project provides economic evidence on the importance of investment in the sector by assessing the economic health of fisheries. It is based on earlier estimates of global fisheries loss and the importance of subsidies that propped up fisheries. The situation has now changed substantially and there is a need to re-estimate the rent loss. The study will include:

- a number of case studies;
- a repeat of the global assessment;
- capacity building in rent assessment analysis at the national level.

68. The study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- complement the conservation agenda with sound economic arguments for good fisheries management;
- foster a paradigm shift from focusing largely on Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) to maximizing net benefits from a fishery;
- raise awareness at global and national level by changing the focus of the debate to economic issues at major global and regional fora;
- make a solid economic case for fisheries reform targeted at finance and planning ministers, key development policy actors including World Bank country directors and UN resident coordinators; and
- elaborate an enhanced arsenal of tools and approaches to estimate and capture lost rent and simultaneously address poverty and allocation issues

69. ACFR recognized that the project was important. ACFR also stressed the need to disaggregate the estimates in terms of vessels types, as different vessel classes account for different amounts of the rent drain and the relative shares of rent dissipation need to be better understood in order to support improved fisheries management policy. It noted, however, that comparisons would be hampered by

some of the limitations of earlier studies and recent changes that have occurred in global fisheries. ACFR looked forward to seeing the results of the study.

WSSD implementation

70. There are considerable ongoing activities that relate to meeting WSSD objectives, including meeting marine protected areas (MPAs) targets, fishery resource monitoring improvements, e.g. through the development of FIRMS, and implementing the ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF). EAF is considered to be a key activity of the Department. Recent activities included an Expert Consultation on the socio-economic aspects of EAF. Supplementary guidelines on these aspects have been developed to supplement the first set of Guidelines.

71. The Committee was informed of the recent GEF initiated Sub-Saharan Africa fisheries investment fund that focuses on poverty elimination objectives of World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). It consists of a partnership among the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the World Bank (WB) and FAO. It is to be implemented by WB and guided by a regional steering committee that includes the Large Marine Ecosystem program representatives. FAO's role is to support the African Union to assist countries to develop fundable proposals.

72. ACFR noted the ongoing contributions from project-funded work by FishCode and FAO's regular funding in addressing IUU issues, including recent training work on Port State measures.

73. ACFR requested that a full report on research-related activities in the implementation of the Plan of Implementation of WSSD for fisheries be placed on the agenda of the next Session of ACFR.

COFI draft agenda

74. COFI will be held 5-9 March 2007. The Secretariat presented the draft agenda that included:

- (i) Review of FAO's Programmes in the Fisheries Sector 2004-2006
- (ii) Emerging and/or persistent issues in capture fisheries and aquaculture:
 - a. Social issues in small-scale fisheries.
 - b. Combating Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported fishing through monitoring, control and surveillance, port States measures and other means.
 - c. Implementing the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries, including deep-sea fisheries, biodiversity conservation, marine debris and lost and abandoned gear.
 - d. Strengthening RFMOs and their performances including the outcome of the 2007 Tuna RFMOs Meeting.
- (iii) Work of FAO in fisheries and aquaculture

75. ACFR **recommended** that: i) IUU issues in small-scale fisheries be included under the IUU agenda item; ii) more emphasis on inland fisheries, especially on issues related to socio-economics of small-scale fisheries and other relevant items. ACFR, however, did note that the Department was undertaking several activities relating to inland fisheries including FISHCODE supported work in Africa.

76. ACFR also noted that the COFI agenda tends to reflect the FAO work on intergovernmental agreement and instruments and give less attention to FAO work to develop tools to assess and manage fisheries/aquaculture. The COFI agenda can potentially impact the FAO work program and budgetary allocations.

77. ACFR agreed that the report of this meeting should reflect their input into the COFI topics, wherever possible and **recommended** that FAO take this into account when preparing the COFI papers in addition to distributing the ACFR report as COFI paper.

Marine protected areas and deep seas fisheries

78. The Secretariat reported on FAO work on marine protected areas (MPAs) in response to a request from COFI stimulated by the WSSD call for networks of MPAs. FAO will develop Technical Guidelines on MPAs. A workshop on MPAs was held in June 2006. The next step will be to build up on the report and recommendations of the workshop to develop the Guidelines. The focus of the Guidelines will be on MPAs as a fishery management tool, including both within and outside EEZs.

79. ACFR noted that there are many fisheries concerns associated with MPAs including social implications of MPAs, geographical location of the MPAs and what are networks and representative areas and who benefits from MPAs. ACFR was informed that many of these concerns had been considered and that the work in progress would address these further.

80. ACFR noted that an Expert Consultation on deep-sea fisheries will be held in Bangkok in November 2006. This will provide a report that will lead to a Technical Consultation and the possible formulation of Guidelines. ACFR noted that this is closely linked to the governance of the high seas and may be considered as a possible test case for high seas management. If possible, output of the Consultations should be in the form of agreed principles.

81. ACFR expressed concern that deepwater fisheries issues may be diverting attention from other important issues. It **recommended** that the current high profile of deepwater fisheries not be allowed to distort priorities at the expense of other fisheries, especially small-scale fisheries in developing countries, which are much more important in terms of human welfare and ecological impact.

FAO Communication Strategy

82. The Secretariat informed ACFR about the Corporate FAO Communication Strategy as well as Departmental communication plans. These include the Web site, events, news releases, etc. FAO acknowledged the need for FAO to provide balanced information on complex issues to many stakeholders that are often influenced by media images. FI is developing strategies to address these challenges including videos on some important topics, more focused publications, etc.

83. ACFR appreciated receiving the update on the FAO communication strategy and the Department's work and **recommended** it to continue to take a more proactive stance. It noted that the next COFI meeting would be a good case study to provide better communication on issues such as the status of stocks. The Secretariat advised that it would be trying to provide news that would have good uptake, including for the forthcoming SOFIA 2006. The importance of good headlines was noted. Depending on the content of the media releases, ACFR **recommended** that FAO should consider issuing strategic partners from other organizations with a role in the media outreach in order to get maximum impact and good coverage of balanced news stories.

84. ACFR also suggested that FAO should target the news sections with accurate public impacting news items of some special publications such as Science and Nature which tended to have taken a narrow approach to news on fisheries.

FUTURE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

85. The Committee discussed a number of future priorities (attached as Appendix E) for consideration at its next meeting (2008) and therefore for work in the interim by FAO/FI. These included:

- (i) implementation of the strategy for human capacity development;
- (ii) measuring the implementation of the CCRF (indicators and standards);

- (iii) climate change and its linkage to both distributional changes in fisheries and WSSD targets especially those related to rebuilding stocks under changing environment;
- (iv) emergency preparedness, disaster prevention especially mainstreaming this into other FAO activities;
- (v) disease prevention in aquaculture, and capacity building such as in epidemiology, and other relevant disciplines;
- (vi) raising the awareness of the importance of fisheries in integrated management in inland water sheds, particularly rehabilitation of rivers, lakes and reservoirs for fish; and
- (vii) land tenure, property rights and access to resources and its impact on fisheries.

86. Given that the substance of much of the work relevant to COFI's main meeting was now considered first in the two COFI Sub-Committees (Trade and Aquaculture), ACFR should structure its deliberations with a view to having an impact on the agendas of the two Sub-Committees also.

87. The next session ACFR should also conduct a broad review of FAO scientific and research agenda.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

88. The Committee elected the following officers for the Seventh Session:

Chairperson: Mr Kwame A. Koranteng
First Vice-chair: Mr Miguel Petrere
Second Vice-chair: Mr Magdy Saleh

89. The Committee acknowledged the excellent job of Ms Meryl Williams since she was elected Chairperson of ACFR. It expressed its sincere gratitude and thanks to her for the outstanding contribution given throughout her term.

DATE AND PLACE OF THE SEVENTH SESSION

90. The Committee agreed to hold its Seventh Session in the second half of October 2008 at FAO HQ in Rome.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

91. The Committee was informed of a major WWF programme that will address bycatch issues. This will involve change in fishing practices, advocate alternative gears and change in policy. This will focus on Pacific long-line fisheries, tropical shrimp fisheries and North Atlantic cod. ACFR was advised that FAO was already working on by-catch issues including shrimp fisheries and sea-bird catches.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

92. The report was adopted on 20 October 2006.

Agenda

1. Opening of the Session
2. Adoption of the Agenda and arrangements for the Session
3. Introductory statement of the Chairperson
4. Review of FAO's work on fish trade
5. Review of FAO's work on small-scale fisheries
6. Review of FAO's work on aquaculture
7. Update on activities related to:
 - a) improving the information on status and trends in capture fisheries
 - b) human capacity Development in fisheries
8. Other relevant work and activities undertaken by FAO/FI
9. Future work of the Committee
10. Election of Officers
11. Date and place of the Seventh Session of ACFR
12. Any other matters
13. Adoption of the Report

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List of documents

ACFR/VI/2006/1	Agenda and timetable
ACFR/VI/2006/2	FAO's activities on small-scale fisheries: an overview
ACFR/VI/2006/3	Species choice in aquaculture: domestication processes, genetic improvement, and their role in sustainable aquaculture
ACFR/VI/2006/4	FAO's research work on fish trade
ACFR/VI/2006/Inf.1	List of documents
ACFR/VI/2006/Inf.2	List of participants
ACFR/VI/2006/Inf.3	Statement of the Assistant Director-General, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
ACFR/VI/2006/Inf.4	The Rent Drain study
ACFR/VI/2006/Inf.5	Report of the twenty-sixth session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), Rome, 7-11 March 2005
ACFR/VI/2006/Inf.6	Report of the fifth session of the Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research (ACFR), Rome, 12-15 October 2004

**Opening statement by Mr Ichiro Nomura
Assistant Director-General, FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department**

Madame Chair,
Distinguished Members of ACFR,
Colleagues,

Good morning,

On behalf of Mr Ichiro Nomura, Assistant Director-General, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department of FAO who regret for not being able to join your auspicious committee, I welcome you and thank you for accepting to participate to the sixth session of the Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research.

Madame Chair,

Before turning to your agenda, I should like to update your Committee on few changes that have taken place in ACFR since your last session.

As you all know, Dr Benedict Satia, the former Secretary has retired. It is my pleasure to introduce the new Secretary of ACFR, Mr Ndiaga Gueye, who was appointed Chief of the International Institution and Liaison Service in December 2004. Some of you may have met him before when he was representing his country, Senegal, in international fora.

In addition, the Director-General has decided to renew the mandate of all members of ACFR for 2 years and to increase the number by two, so as to be able to appoint, although in their personal capacity, the present incumbents to the posts of Director-General of the WorldFish Center (WFC) and Director-General of the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA), in the understanding that these posts would be, from now on, permanently represented in ACFR. We believe that the permanent inclusion of the representatives of these two organizations on ACFR would permit the Committee to be apprised of recent and emerging issues within the capture fisheries and aquaculture sectors as perceived by eminent experts, the work of whose organizations cover the region in which the highest capture fisheries and aquaculture production is obtained.

Now, Madam Chair, I would like to turn to this session of ACFR.

It is widely acknowledged that small-scale fisheries are playing an increasingly important with respect to key issues as poverty reduction and food and nutritional security, despite many human, technological and financial constraints.

ACFR in 2004 strongly recommended that a larger number of case studies of small-scale fisheries be conducted in order to develop lessons-learned on the reasons for success or failure in sustained small-scale fisheries development and management.

At its Twenty-sixth Session, The Committee on Fisheries (COFI) noted a range of issues that should be addressed in order for small-scale fisheries to make a greater contribution to rural development, sustainable livelihoods, poverty alleviation and food security.

In response, FAO and the World Fish Center are developing a joint programme on “Approaches to the interdisciplinary assessment of small-scale fisheries and their role in food security, poverty reduction and sustainable resource use”.

Your Committee is requested to review the ongoing and planned work in the area of small-scale fisheries, especially as it relates to giving directions on research and capacity-building aspects as well as in relation to the development of adequate data to allow for analysis and better informed decision-making.

Madam Chair,

The Fifth Session of ACFR, “recommended that the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department examine issues related to species choice in aquaculture, i.e., domestication processes, genetic improvement, and genetic conservation” in order to improve the sustainable contribution that aquaculture makes to the future world fish supply needs.

The FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department has been involved in several activities related to the above recommendation. Your Committee will have the opportunity to review the work that was done.

I should also like to draw special attention to the agenda item on fish utilization and trade. You will be reviewing FAO’s programme in this area with a special focus on research. We will, of course, look forward in particular to your advice on shaping our future programme of work.

Distinguished Members of ACFR,

Before I conclude I should like to recall the mission of Fisheries and Aquaculture Department that is to facilitate and secure the long-term sustainable development and utilization of the world's fisheries and aquaculture. Within this framework, the achievements of ACFR are extremely important since it provides high level advice to the Director-General. On his behalf, it gives me much pleasure to acknowledge your interest for the work of the Organization. We also look forward to your continued guidance and advice on the general work programme of the Department and on issues related to fisheries and aquaculture research and policy.

The Report of your session will be made available to COFI at its twenty-seventh session in March 2007 and there is no doubt that it will be of considerable benefit.

I wish you all well for a fruitful and successful meeting. If my colleagues or I can be of assistance during this intense three-day period please do not hesitate to call on us.

Thank you very much.

Major works list

1. Trade: spread of benefits
2. Trade: generic certification systems
3. Fish meal, fish as feed and fertilizer trade flows
4. SSF: successes and failures and assessment needs through case studies
5. Measuring the implementation of CCRF
6. Climate change and fisheries and aquaculture
7. Emergency preparedness, disaster prevention, rebuilding and rehabilitation
8. Disease prevention in aquaculture
9. Fisheries in integrated inland water systems
10. Land tenure, property rights and resource access in fisheries
11. Inland and culture based fisheries
12. FIRMS implementation for national level assessments
13. Catch documentation of fish origin

The Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research held its sixth session in Rome, Italy, from 17 to 20 October 2006. The session covered many important topics including small-scale fisheries, fish utilization and trade, and aquaculture and provided recommendations to further guide the future work of the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department not only on research but also on policy matters. The Committee commended the work of FAO in aquaculture and welcomed the timely inclusion of fish species in the Programme of Work of the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. It discussed a number of future priorities for consideration at its next meeting.

