

Report of the twelfth session of the

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**COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES**

Rome, 12-16 June 1978



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS



REPORT  
of the  
TWELFTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES  
Rome, 12-16 June 1978

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Rome 1978

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This is the final version of the report as approved by the Twelfth Session of the Committee on Fisheries.

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ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES POUR  
L'ALIMENTATION ET L'AGRICULTURE



ORGANIZACION DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS  
PARA LA AGRICULTURA Y LA ALIMENTACION

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JUL 25 1978

Dear Sir,

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the report of the Twelfth Session of the Committee on Fisheries which was held in Rome from 12 to 16 June 1978.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'M. Ruivo', written over a horizontal line.

M. Ruivo  
Chairman  
Committee on Fisheries

Dr. Bulcar Shaib  
Independent Chairman  
Council of FAO





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MATTERS REQUIRING ATTENTION BY THE COUNCIL

A. MATTERS FOR DECISION

Proposal to create a fishery commission for the Near East

As requested at the Eleventh Session of the Committee, the Director-General had consulted the 22 countries serviced by the Near East Regional Office on the proposal to create a fishery commission for the Near East. Only eight replies had been received. It has now been suggested that the proposed commission should be responsible for the Gulfs area in view of the need for a permanent mechanism to follow the UNDP/FAO fishery project in that area. The matter will be reported to the Fourteenth Near East Regional Conference and considered by the Steering Group of the project in late September 1978. The relevant recommendations will be reported to the Council.

(Para. 57)

Southern boundary of the Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF)

The Committee invited the Director-General to address a formal communication to Angola and Namibia regarding the possible extension southwards of the southern boundary of CECAF so as to include the waters off these two countries and, in the light of the replies, to suggest appropriate action to the Council.

(Para. 58)

Status of the European Economic Community (EEC) within certain FAO regional fishery bodies

The representative of the EEC raised the problem of the status of the Community within several FAO regional fishery bodies. As its Member States have delegated to it their competence in some fishery matters, this would imply that the EEC should participate fully in the work of the bodies concerned. It was agreed that the problem would be brought to the attention of the Council.

(Para. 29)

B. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

Development of fisheries in economic zones

The Committee agreed that high priority should be given to the formulation of a comprehensive programme to assist developing coastal States in managing and developing fisheries in their economic zones. It requested one of its Sub-Committees to help with the drawing up of this programme, as well as to make recommendations regarding its implementation and financing. Special reference was made to the need for financial assistance from UNDP.

(Paras. 6-18, 39-42)

Future of FAO regional fishery bodies

The Committee considered practical steps by which the decentralization of servicing of these bodies could be achieved, while ensuring that the technical competence of Headquarters would still be available. It recognized that funding was a problem and that implementation would have to be gradual and should take place through careful choice of priorities.

(Paras. 19-32)

Future of the Committee on Fisheries

An overwhelming majority of Members expressed the view that the Committee should remain as a standing committee of the Council under Article V of the Constitution. The Committee recognized that its present terms of reference are sufficiently broad and that it could be more effective if it were to concentrate on a few major tasks.

(Paras. 33-42)

Living resources of the Southern Ocean

The Committee expressed general support for proposed FAO activities with regard to these resources, provided that its work should continue to be carried out in consultation with the Parties to the Antarctic Treaty and with the coastal States in the area. This will include participation in the formulation of a conservation regime for the Antarctic marine living resources.

(Paras. 43-52)

Review of programme of work and budget

The Committee noted that in the past it had usually reviewed the FAO programme of work and budget for fisheries in the non-Conference years. It felt that, in the future, it should return to its previous practice and have an opportunity to study the Organization's programme of work in detail, looking at the proposed programme in one year and the implementation of programmes in the alternate years.

(Para. 60)

## OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The Committee on Fisheries held its Twelfth Session in Rome from 12 to 16 June 1978. The session was attended by 90 members of the Committee, by observers from six other FAO Member Nations and the U.S.S.R., by the Permanent Observer for the Holy See, by representatives of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, the World Bank, the World Meteorological Organization, and the European Economic Community, and by observers from nine other international organizations and intergovernmental organizations. The list of delegates and observers is given in Appendix B to this report.

2. Dr. M. Ruivo (Portugal), who had been elected Chairman of the Committee at the Eleventh Session, was in the chair. The members of the Committee were welcomed by the Deputy Director-General, Dr. Ralph W. Phillips, in an address, the text of which is reproduced in Appendix D to this report.

## ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SESSION

3. The Committee adopted the agenda shown in Appendix A noting that under item 7, "Any other matters", requests had been received by the Secretariat for discussion of FAO's Programme of Work and Budget in Fisheries in the 1980/81 biennium and also of activities of other international organizations in the United Nations system as they related to fisheries.

4. According to Rule I of its Rules of Procedure, the Committee was required to elect a Chairman, a First Vice-Chairman and four other Vice-Chairmen at its Twelfth Session. A Nominations Committee was appointed consisting of the representatives of India, Kenya, Korea (Republic of), Morocco, Panama, Poland, Spain, United Kingdom and Uruguay. The Nominations Committee elected as its Chairman Mr. M. Azzou (Morocco).

5. A Drafting Committee was appointed consisting of representatives of Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, France, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan, Nigeria, Oman, Poland, Senegal and the United States of America. The Drafting Committee elected as its Chairman Mr. F. Zegers (Chile).

## PROGRAMME FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF FISHERIES IN ECONOMIC ZONES

6. At its Eleventh Session, the Committee discussed at length the consequences for fisheries of extensions of zones of national jurisdiction recognized as a development of far-reaching effect, and requested that the Secretariat prepare a comprehensive programme to assist developing coastal states in managing and developing fishery resources in such zones.

7. Subsequently, the subject was discussed by the FAO Conference at its Nineteenth Session (November 1977). "The Conference endorsed fully the request made by the Committee on Fisheries at its Eleventh Session in April 1977 that the Secretariat prepare a comprehensive programme to assist developing coastal states in managing and developing fishery resources in their economic zones. It recommended that this should be a medium-term programme, drawn up with the full participation of the countries concerned, with clearly defined objectives, priorities, target dates and balanced proposals for resources allocation aiming at providing training, updating and transfer of technology in all sectors of fisheries. It was felt that such a programme could be instrumental in promoting investment and mobilizing financial and other contributions from donor countries and bilateral and multilateral agencies. It recalled that assistance may be granted only upon request, in the form indicated by the coastal countries concerned, and bearing in mind the sovereign rights of said coastal states over the their natural resources and that assistance should be granted when it is foreseen that it will have beneficial repercussions on the population of the country concerned" <sup>1/</sup>.

8. In response to the Committee's request and the recommendations of the FAO Conference, the Secretariat submitted to the Committee a document (COFI/78/4) which gave consideration to series of factors to be taken into account in preparing a programme of assistance for the development and management of fisheries in extended zones of national jurisdiction.

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<sup>1/</sup> Paragraph 65 of the report, C 77/REP

The basic document was supplemented by information documents dealing with the state of fishery resources, joint ventures, bilateral fishery agreements, related national legislation, external assistance to fisheries and FAO fishery field projects 2/. The Committee agreed that in view of its interest document COFI/78/Inf.8 on bilateral fishery agreements should be supplemented, updated, corrected and distributed.

9. The Secretariat drew attention to the complex effects of extensions of national jurisdiction, including the possible impact on world fish catches during the transitional period whilst coastal countries adjusted to their new rights and responsibilities. It reviewed some of the practical aspects of country programmes to deal with such effects, discussed the assistance already given by FAO to developing countries upon their request with regard to these problems and considered possible elements for a programme of direct assistance by FAO to countries by means of appropriate missions in assessing resource potentials, working out policy options and a plan of action and for follow-up action to assist governments to gain access to development funds and otherwise to assist them in the execution of their programmes.

10. In a lengthy debate the Committee examined the documentation submitted by the Secretariat and considered that it provided a useful general framework for the elaboration of the programme of assistance by the Organization for the development of fisheries of extended economic zones of developing coastal states. Many delegations, however, expressed the view that in order to be more responsive to the relevant recommendation of the FAO Conference at its Nineteenth Session, the programme of assistance needed to be formulated in a more precise and comprehensive form with more clearly defined objectives and priorities while keeping the necessary element of flexibility to respond to specific situations.

11. There was a widespread consensus that the implications of extensions of national jurisdiction give a new dimension to the countries' work in fishery development and therefore high priority should be accorded to the Organization's efforts to assist developing coastal countries to make full use of opportunities for fishery development and to fulfil their new responsibilities with respect to the management of fisheries and conservation of resources. To this end the programme should clearly be designed to increase national capabilities and to foster cooperation between states sharing common resources and common problems.

12. The Committee emphasized that each coastal country itself must decide how it wished to take advantage of the opportunities offered under the new regime and how to discharge the corresponding responsibilities. Consequently, the activities under the programme should be carried out in strict accordance with the wishes of the countries concerned. These would vary from case to case. In planning the programme the wishes of the countries concerned had to be ascertained at an early stage. Where the countries concerned so wished, the activities could be cooperatively conducted in a regional or sub-regional framework and consequently regional bodies and their members would have an important role in the formulation and implementation of the programme. The programme should be responsive to this diversity, be flexible and capable of adaptation to the specific needs of particular countries. The need for quick response by FAO to requests for assistance was emphasized.

13. It was especially important to have an objective basis derived from adequate research, data and analysis for the decisions to be made and development programmes, whether for individual countries or groupings, should be of an integral nature including research, conservation, utilization, marketing and consumption aspects as well as infrastructure and environmental aspects.

14. The Committee also recognized the great importance of stimulating cooperation among countries with developing fisheries, particularly through mutual assistance in introducing or adapting appropriate technologies. Bilateral aid arrangements, including joint ventures and inter-industry cooperation, could also make an important contribution to the overall success of the programme.

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2/ COFI/78/Inf.3, Inf.8, Inf.9, Inf.12 and Inf.13 respectively

15. A number of delegations referred to the special difficulties being faced by some states in their efforts to develop or maintain their fisheries under the new regime and requested that such states, whether they had extended their zones of national jurisdiction or not, should be able to participate in and benefit from the proposed programme of assistance.

16. One delegation pointed to the need for thoroughness in the formulation of development plans so that compatibility between short-term development effort and long-term objectives is assured.

17. The Committee emphasized that while the activities with which the programme was concerned were not in themselves new, they had become urgent and the scale on which they would have to be carried out would require special efforts not only technically but also financially. The technical aspect should be dealt with in close cooperation between the FAO Secretariat and the Member Governments in the appropriate technical bodies, including particularly the Committee itself. The need for special financial effort in addition to support from the FAO regular budget must be brought clearly to the attention of the funding agencies and the Committee decided as an immediate step in this direction to request the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the financing of the programme and to communicate urgently in this sense with the current session of the Governing Council of UNDP. Following a statement made by the representative of UNDP, it was agreed that members of the Committee who were also members of the Governing Council should encourage their representatives there to support the appeal for additional inter-regional financial assistance for the proposed programme without prejudice to the financing of other fishery development activities already under way or planned. In this respect reference was made to the possible establishment of a fishery development fund.

18. In this connection, the Committee considered the possibility of entrusting a sub-committee or working group with the development of the proposed programme and identification of the measures and means required for its implementation. The sub-committee would also review the progress of the programme in intersessional periods. It was agreed that this matter would be taken up under item 5 of the agenda. Several delegations expressed the view that the practical, organizational aspects of the proposed programme needed fuller consideration and that particular attention must be given to the need for adequate expertise within the Fisheries Department in socio-economic and technical analysis, including international trade; the capacity of and resources available to the Department to undertake the additional responsibilities involved in the proposed programme should be fully reviewed by the Committee when it considers at its next session the proposed programme of work and budget for the Department.

#### FUTURE OF FAO REGIONAL FISHERY BODIES

19. Introducing this item of the agenda, the Secretariat drew the attention of delegates to documents COFI/78/5 and COFI/78/5, Sup.1, and also to COFI/78/Inf.6. It was pointed out that at its Eleventh Session, COFI had requested that three specific aspects relating to the future of FAO regional fishery bodies be taken up for discussion at the Twelfth Session, namely, decentralization of servicing, funding and coordination of FAO regional fishery bodies with other bodies concerned with ocean affairs in their regions. Reference was also made to the steps being taken by most FAO regional fishery bodies to adjust themselves to the changes taking place in the ocean regime and in international relations. The measures of adjustment that were envisaged would have to be gradual and progressive and should avoid causing disruption or undue interference in the activities of these bodies.

20. The Committee expressed its appreciation of the documentation on this item. It noted that FAO's policy on decentralization had been clearly expressed by the Conference, for the enhancement of national and regional self-reliance, and that what was now needed was not a discussion on the concept but an examination of the practical steps by which such a policy could be implemented.

21. Without prejudging the results of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, it was recognized that the changes in the ocean regime might involve new arrangements in

international relations in ocean affairs. In this connection the Committee noted the paper submitted by one delegation on the concept of "region" in marine affairs (COFI/78/Inf.10).

22. The Committee generally supported the principle of decentralization, but several delegations advised caution in the manner of its implementation. It was suggested that it should be a gradual process, enabling member countries to prepare themselves for the more active roles that they would have to play in the regional fishery bodies. It was necessary to examine all aspects of the question.

23. There was general agreement that the secretariats of these bodies should be located in the regions because of the many advantages to be derived from this. They would be in areas of action closer to the problems that needed attention, cooperative endeavours would be facilitated and member countries would have a greater opportunity of participating more actively in the affairs of these bodies. While care would have to be exercised to maximize technical inputs, the aim should be to staff these bodies increasingly with nationals from member countries. The location of the secretariats was a matter that would have to be decided in consultation with the countries concerned.

24. In some technical areas and supporting services the competence of Headquarters needed to be strengthened. Headquarters would continue to have an essential role to play in providing services, a pool of specialized expertise and a channel for securing technical assistance; the role of the Committee itself in coordinating the activities of the bodies and assisting and harmonizing the necessary changes in them would be enhanced.

25. A major problem however was funding. It was pointed out that the funds available to FAO were limited and certainly would not be adequate for the expanded and more active roles envisaged for these bodies; decentralization could therefore only be done through careful choice of priorities. The main trend of the discussion was that the administrative and secretariat costs of these bodies were legitimate charges on the budget of the regular programme of FAO. A few delegations, however, were hesitant and expressed the view that the option of supplementary funding by members should be kept open and further explored by states and by the bodies themselves on the basis of consideration of specific requirements in each case. Activities of an operational nature, including training, would in any case require additional funds and supplementary assistance from other sources in the form of grants from bi- and multilateral agencies, co-financing by Member States, assistance through secondment of national staff to the regional secretariats, assignments of national staff within their own countries, etc. Mention was made of the arrangements made by other FAO bodies in similar circumstances. Economies might be effected in certain cases by locating the secretariats of regional bodies covering adjacent areas in the same place, thereby easing the financial burden on FAO and members.

26. The close links between the regional fishery bodies and the FAO/UNDP inter-regional and regional projects were noted [including the International Indian Ocean Fishery Survey and Development Programme (IOP), the South China Sea Fisheries Development and Coordinating Programme (SCSP), the Development of Fisheries in the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF) and the Development of Fisheries in the Western Central Atlantic (WECAF)] and several delegates expressed their appreciation of the services rendered by these projects at national and regional level. The support rendered by bilateral agencies was also acknowledged and the Committee expressed the hope that assistance from these two sources would continue and be further expanded to cope with demands.

27. The Committee stressed the appropriateness of coordinating the activities of all bodies concerned with marine affairs at regional level, both to avoid duplication and to increase efficiency. While formal arrangements existed with some bodies there was a need to improve relations with others. In this connection, particular reference was made to the activities of FAO and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) regional associations, as well as to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) regional marine activities. One way of facilitating coordination would be to locate the regional staff of these three regional organizations in one place; but other measures, such as regular consultation, were also necessary. It was noted that the IOC Secretariat was coordinating, on behalf of the Intersecre-



tariat Committee on Scientific Programmes relating to Oceanography (ICSPRO), a study of co-ordination, within the United Nations system, of bodies involved in ocean affairs; this would meet specific requests from the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the IOC Assembly. The Committee requested that the results of this study be made available to it.

28. The overall coordination role of the Committee with respect to regional fishery bodies was noted.

29. Finally the Committee noted the cooperation that exists between FAO and non-FAO regional fishery bodies. The spokesman of the European Economic Community (EEC) raised the problem, already mentioned in the report of the Second Session of the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFIC) held in Panama in May 1978, of the status of the EEC within certain FAO regional fishery bodies now that Member States of the Community had delegated their competence in some fisheries matters to the Community. It was agreed that this matter would be brought to the attention of the FAO Council.

30. The representative of the Latin American Economic System (SELA) gave information about the establishment of the Action Committee on Seafood and Freshwater Products by 13 Latin American countries with a view to establishing mechanisms and promoting joint action for strengthening food policy as part of regional cooperation. He said that the establishment of the Action Committee and the formulation of its programme of activity had been carried out with the broad and effective participation of the member countries and also with the participation of FAO. He provided further details about the information given in document COFI/78/5, Sup.1 regarding his organization.

31. The Secretary-General of the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS) referred to the work being carried out by his body in the sub-region of the Southeast Pacific and expressed the interest of his Commission in collaborating with FAO and the regional bodies in the development of fisheries in the area under the new regime of the sea.

32. The Committee heard with interest statements by the observers for the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) and the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) on their activities and cooperation between their bodies and FAO.

#### FUTURE OF THE COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

33. The Committee considered this item on the basis of documents COFI/78/6 and COFI/78/6, Sup.1 and of additional information provided orally by the Secretariat.

34. The Committee noted that in their replies to the questionnaire addressed to Member Nations by the Director-General, an overwhelming majority of governments had expressed the view that the Committee should remain as a standing committee of the Council under Article V of the FAO Constitution. While a number of these governments indicated that the present status of the Committee is adequate, others specified that they saw no need for changing this status at the present time, at least not until the final outcome of the Conference on the Law of the Sea is known. One delegation reiterated the opinion it had expressed on previous occasions that the Committee would gain more autonomy and flexibility and enlarge the scope of its activities if it were transformed into a body established by international convention under Article XIV.

35. The Committee agreed that it has sufficient authority to discharge its responsibilities. It felt that rather than discussing at this stage its constitutional characteristics it should consider what improvements could be made to its structure and method of work to make it more effective and more responsive to the expectations of its member countries. Several delegations stressed in this regard that a greater involvement of these countries in the activities of the Committee was an essential prerequisite. The suggestion was made that they could, for instance, propose items for inclusion in the agenda or prepare documents for submission to the Committee.

36. The Committee recognized that its present terms of reference are sufficiently broad and that, as suggested at its last session, a strengthening of the Committee could take place by concentrating on a few major tasks. It stressed the importance of its functions regarding the review of the Organization's programmes of work in the field of fisheries and their implementation. Several delegations recalled that in addition to the formulation of a programme of assistance to developing countries for the development of fisheries in economic zones, they had already proposed a number of other key matters including a greater participation in the formulation of food policies so as to ensure that proper weight is given to fisheries; conservation and management techniques under the new regime; information and data systems; trade in fishery products; contribution to the activities of all bodies concerned with the management of living resources of the high seas. Other delegations indicated that the Committee should also give attention among others to education and training; the formulation of policies on small-scale fishery development; programmes to eradicate poverty in fishing communities; reduction of waste; and, generally, socio-economic issues in developing regions.

37. As regards the frequency of its sessions, the Committee noted with satisfaction that the Council had fully supported the request made at its last session that it should meet once a year for at least the next few years in view of the importance of the present changes in the regime of the sea.

38. The Committee noted that under its Rules of Procedure the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen acted as a Steering Committee during sessions. The Committee agreed that in the intervals between sessions the arrangements suggested at the Eleventh Session should continue and that the Chairman and other officers should maintain close liaison with the Secretariat on an informal basis.

39. In the light of the conclusions it had reached in its consideration of item 3 of its agenda, the Committee decided to amend the terms of reference of the Sub-Committee it had established at its First Session so that these will now read as follows:

The activities of the Sub-Committee shall in particular include the following:

- (a) to assist the Committee in developing, with the help of the FAO Secretariat, a comprehensive programme to assist developing coastal states in managing and developing fisheries in their economic zones as recommended by the Conference at its Nineteenth Session and further defined by the Committee at its present session
- (b) to make recommendations regarding the implementation and financing of that programme and to keep its execution under review
- (c) to report to the Committee and to undertake such other related tasks as the Committee may decide from time to time.

40. The Sub-Committee shall henceforth be known as "Sub-Committee on Programmes to Assist Developing Coastal States in Managing and Developing Fisheries in their Economic Zones" (Sub-Committee on the Development of Fisheries in Economic Zones). It shall have as its immediate task to make recommendations on a comprehensive programme to assist developing coastal states in managing and developing fisheries in their economic zones; for this purpose, the Sub-Committee, at a session to be held in the spring of 1979, should (i) review a detailed report on the needs for assistance of developing countries wishing to enhance their capability to manage and develop fisheries in their economic zones in such fields as fishery research, technological developments, statistics and other data, planning, management, legislation, production and marketing as well as cooperation with other countries, (ii) assess the financial, manpower, training and organizational requirements for meeting the needs, (iii) make recommendations as to how they could best be met and (iv) formulate approaches to the UNDP and other sources of assistance for the immediate financing of the proposed activities.

41. Noting that at present the Sub-Committee is composed of 25 Member Nations of FAO and the U.S.S.R., the Committee decided that the Sub-Committee would consist of these countries and any other interested Member Nations. Paragraph 3 of Resolution No. COFI/1/1, under which the Committee has been established, was amended accordingly.

42. The Committee requested the Secretariat to prepare the detailed report mentioned above as soon as possible before the spring 1979 session of the Sub-Committee. The report should cover the needs of a substantial number of developing countries in several regions who wish to participate in the programme. Preparation of the report might as necessary benefit from the additional financial support requested by the Committee in paragraph 17 of this report.

#### LIVING RESOURCES OF THE SOUTHERN OCEAN

43. This item and the relevant document, COFI/78/7, were introduced by the Assistant Director-General (Fisheries), who also supplemented the information in the document and indicated the activities it now seems appropriate to take within the general framework outlined. He referred to the interest in this region not only of FAO but also of a number of other international organizations. He referred to moves which had been initiated by the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties to draw up a Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources and expressed the view that moves towards the effective conservation of the marine living resources in the Southern Ocean were timely and should be welcomed.

44. The Assistant Director-General (Fisheries) referred also to the results of the FAO/UNDP Southern Ocean Fisheries Survey Programme recently completed and to the fact that the pace of events had already outdated the reports from that Project in some respects. The catches of krill were not yet large but they have been increasing fast and the technology of catching and processing was evolving rapidly.

45. The Secretariat also provided supplementary information regarding progress in the planning of cooperative scientific research on the living resources of the Southern Ocean. The sponsoring organizations of the Biological Investigation of Marine Antarctic Systems and Stocks (BIOMASS) programme, the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) and the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR), had invited the Advisory Committee on Marine Resources Research (ACMRR) to become a full co-sponsor of the programme. In consequence, plans for full cooperation were being considered. The programme would give high priority to research activities of interest to FAO.

46. The Committee took note of a statement by the delegate of Australia, speaking on behalf of the Consultative Parties to the Antarctic Treaty, who reviewed the recent history of steps taken towards the establishment of an effective management regime for the living resources of the Southern Ocean. He emphasized that the instrument now being drafted by the Consultative Parties was not a fishery agreement in the usual sense but rather a broad convention for conservation, in accordance with undertakings by states, under the Treaty, for the conservation of the Antarctic environment and ecosystems. In addition, certain interim measures had been adopted by parties. The delegate of Australia informed the Committee that he had conveyed to the Director-General an invitation for FAO staff to be available for consultation on the occasion of the meeting of Treaty Parties to be held in Buenos Aires in July 1978. At this meeting it was expected that the Draft of a Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources would be completed, with the intent that the Convention would be formally adopted and opened for signature at a conference to be convened at the end of 1978.

47. In the following intervention, delegates expressed their appreciation of the documentation made available, of the further information provided by the Assistant Director-General and his staff, and of the account given of actions taken by Parties to the Antarctic Treaty. Several of them referred to the caution required in intensifying harvesting of a resource which was large but about which little was yet known. There was general agreement that FAO has an important role to play in facilitating the exchange and evaluation of statistics and data emerging from activities in the Southern Ocean. In this connection reference was made to the inclusion in certain regional fishery agreements, such as for ICCAT, of specific provisions for cooperation and special relationship with FAO; the hope was expressed that such

precedents be taken into account in finalizing the new Convention now being drafted. The invitation for FAO presence at the Buenos Aires meeting was welcomed. The action envisaged or taken to associate ACMRR with the arrangements for promoting, coordinating and evaluating the relevant, and urgent, scientific research was endorsed.

48. Reference was made to the fact that the Southern Ocean is a difficult area in which to conduct research and that there were as yet few institutions and scientists involved; hence there is a great need for avoidance of duplication and for effective planning; this was true also for theoretical and laboratory work such as the design of mathematical models of the Southern Ocean ecosystems or elements of them.

49. During the discussion a number of delegates and an observer active in the region provided information about recent research by their countries, pilot-scale fishing, and commercial operations, and about their plans for the 1978-79 season. All expressed their willingness to make their scientific findings and other information available to FAO and to interested countries. The urgent need for the countries concerned to provide FAO with statistics was stressed.

50. There was general support for FAO engagement in the types of activities suggested in document COFI/78/7, paragraph 17. It was reaffirmed that in all its work with respect to Southern Ocean resources FAO should continue to consult parties to the Antarctic Treaty, with coastal states in the region and with other interested states.

51. While fully supporting efforts for the conservation of the Antarctic marine living resources, one delegation wished to record its view that any initiative of a multilateral character in this field must be non-discriminatory. Other delegations emphasized that the living resources of the Southern Ocean constituted an important potential source of human food, although exploitation of krill had not yet proved to be economic because of the distances involved, operational difficulties and a not yet developed market for products.

52. Finally, the observer from the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), referring to the relevant studies recently undertaken by that organization, which derived directly from an FAO activity (the FAO/UNEP project and the ACMRR work on marine mammals), offered collaboration with FAO and undertook to make available the results of these activities as soon as they were completed. Meanwhile the IUCN would be offering a brief for consideration by participants at the Buenos Aires meeting.

#### ANY OTHER MATTERS

#### Activities of other international organizations of the United Nations system as they relate to fisheries

53. The representative of WMO referred to document COFI/78/Inf.16 on Marine Environmental Services for Fisheries submitted by WMO and stated that his Organization had now taken action on the proposals which the Committee had made at its last session concerning meteorology as it related to fisheries. He also drew attention to the current work programme of WMO in those areas where it was particularly beneficial to fishing vessels and fisheries in general. The Committee expressed its appreciation of this work and the speed with which WMO had taken action. It noted that the last paragraph of the document before it contained suggestions for action by the Committee on Fisheries. The Committee endorsed them generally, stating that those which were complex technical matters should be dealt with by FAO expert bodies to which they should be transmitted by the Committee on Fisheries.

54. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the UN Conference on the Law of the Sea referred to the new structures which were emerging from UNCLOS and stated that the importance to the coastal developing countries of the new economic zones would depend on the ability of those countries to manage the resources in their zones and ensure their optimum utilization. One of the basic tasks of the Committee on Fisheries was to assist such countries in finding the means to acquire that competence. The full text of this statement is in Appendix E.

#### Specific activities of FAO regional fishery bodies

55. During the discussion under agenda item 4 on the future of FAO regional fishery bodies, the Committee had agreed that any matters relating to specific bodies and any proposals concerning them should be brought up under Other Matters.

56. The Committee was advised of the action taken as a result of its own request to the Director-General at the Eleventh Session in April 1977, to consult the countries served by the FAO Regional Office for the Near East and to solicit their views on the establishment of a proposed fishery commission for the Near East.

57. The Secretariat reported that as a result of the Committee's request the Director-General had during the summer of 1977 addressed a circular letter to the 22 countries serviced by the Near East Regional Office. By the end of 1977 only six countries had replied and accordingly in early 1978 a reminder had been sent, to which two further replies had been received. Apart from this the Coordinating Committee for the Gulf Project had in early 1978 discussed the need for a mechanism of a more permanent kind than the Project to ensure that the work started by the Project should continue after the Project itself had come to an end. A suggestion had been made that the permanent mechanism could somehow be combined with the proposed new Commission and consideration would be given to this proposal at the next meeting of the Steering Committee in September 1978. The views were expressed that a Near East Fishery Commission should be set up without delay and it was requested that a report on the steps so far taken should be submitted by the Secretariat to the forthcoming Near East Regional Conference to be held later in 1978. It was pointed out further that pollution was causing the death of large quantities of fish in some coastal developing countries and regions where ships discharge oil residues and chemicals which are harmful to human and marine resources, and quick action was called for to remedy this situation by the appropriate organizations.

58. The Committee noted that the Council had not yet acted on its recommendation that the Statutes of the Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF) should be amended in order to extend its southern boundary southwards but had requested full consultation with the member countries concerned. It invited the Director-General to address a formal communication to these countries and, in the light of the replies, to make a further submission to the Council.

59. It was agreed that in future the information in documents dealing with the activities of regional fishery bodies in inter-sessional periods should include all the elements which the Committee had requested at its Eleventh Session 3/.

#### Programme of work and budget

60. The Committee noted that in the past it had usually reviewed the FAO programme of work and budget for Fisheries in the non-Conference years. It had itself decided at its Eleventh Session to have a shorter agenda at this session. At its Nineteenth Session in November 1977 the FAO Conference had approved a new strategy for the Department's future work. The work of the Department on the basis of the strategy would be reviewed departmentally in September this year. The FAO Programme Committee would be also reviewing the current work of the Fisheries Department in October 1978. It was agreed that the departmental review, when prepared, should be submitted to the Programme Committee. The result of these reviews, with indication of proposed programme trends and any new activities for the next biennium, should be sent round to member countries and comments should be invited so as to be taken into account in preparation of the programme of work and budget for 1980/81. The Committee felt that, in the future, it should return to its previous practice and have an opportunity to study the Department's programme of work in detail, looking at the proposed programme in one year and the implementation of programmes in the alternate year.

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3/ Paragraph 63 of the report of the Eleventh Session of the Committee on Fisheries (FID/R196)

Statements by new members

61. The representatives of Angola, Mozambique and Namibia, who were participating for the first time at a session, made statements about collaboration between their countries and FAO and also with the Committee on Fisheries.

DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION

62. It was agreed that the Committee should meet in 1979 at a date to be fixed by the Director-General in consultation with the Chairman. A suggestion was made that if the meeting of the Sub-Committee on the Development of Fisheries in Economic Zones, proposed during the discussions under item 5 of the agenda, could be held in the spring of 1979, then the Committee itself could meet in the autumn in Rome. The Committee agreed not to recommend a detailed agenda for its next session at the present stage.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

63. On the recommendation of the Nominations Committee, Dr. M. Ruivo (Portugal) was unanimously re-elected Chairman of the Committee, bearing in mind the effective and impartial manner in which he had conducted his task and the need for continuity in a difficult transitional phase of ocean affairs; Mr. N. Odero (Kenya) was elected First Vice-Chairman and representatives from Australia, Cuba, Korea (Republic of) and Poland as other Vice-Chairmen.

64. It was pointed out that re-election of the Chairman should not be taken as a precedent.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

65. This report was adopted on 16 June 1978.

Appendix A

AGENDA

1. Opening of the Session
2. Adoption of the agenda and arrangements for the Session
3. Programme for the development of fisheries in economic zones
4. Future of FAO regional fishery bodies
5. Future of the Committee on Fisheries
6. Living resources of the southern ocean
7. Any other matters
8. Date and place of the next Session
9. Election of officers
10. Adoption of the report

Appendix B

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Appendix D

ADDRESS BY DR. R.W. PHILLIPS,  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL, FAO

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to have the opportunity of welcoming you, on behalf of the Director-General, to this Twelfth Session of the Committee on Fisheries. Both for the Director-General, and for myself, I wish you a constructive and useful session.

You have encountered some delay in the opening of the session and, for those who do not already know the full details, I should explain that the President of the Republic of the Gambia - Alhaji Sir Dawda Jawara - has been visiting FAO today, in his capacity as President of the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS). The presence of the President and his party has inevitably resulted in some exceptional use of facilities, including the holding of a meeting which the President addressed this morning in this room, and some special security arrangements. Your patience in bearing with the delay, and with the inconvenience in registration, is much appreciated.

All of you are well aware that this Committee is meeting at a time when important and far reaching changes are taking place in the regime of the oceans. Even though agreement has yet to be reached on a new convention at the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, the jurisdiction of coastal states over the larger part of the fishery resources off their shores has become accepted in principle, and extensions of national jurisdictions up to 200 miles by many coastal countries, have greatly modified the prospects offered to each country.

These developments have placed large living marine resources under control of many coastal countries. But, simultaneously, they have also placed greater responsibility on these coastal states for the effective management of those resources. Under earlier regimes, management was exercised, if at all, by several coastal states acting together through international agreements, which were sometimes almost impossible to achieve and were often difficult to implement. The new situation provides a basis for effective stewardship and, in most cases, places the responsibility for management squarely on the coastal states acting either individually or collectively. The coastal states have therefore two major responsibilities: to ensure that the most effective use is made of the existing stocks, and at the same time that the resources are managed in a manner to ensure sustained yields.

In reviewing these developments in the regime of the sea and their implications for fisheries, the FAO Conference - at its Nineteenth Session - endorsed the special attention FAO had been and would be giving to help developing countries adapt to the new situations arising from changes in the regime of the seas. Also, the Conference urged that assistance should be given particularly to countries with extended jurisdictions, to help in exploiting and managing their new resources.

At its last session, this Committee made a specific request that the secretariat prepare a comprehensive programme outlining the assistance FAO might be able to offer to developing coastal states in managing and developing fishery resources in their economic zones. The document to be considered under item 3 of your agenda is before you, in response to that request. Assisting developing countries in the full and rational use of their fish resources is not a new task for FAO. Indeed one of its major concerns is to promote rapid and efficient development of food resources. But because of the changes in the ocean regime and the consequent greater responsibility



of coastal states, many of which belong to the developing world, the task of assisting developing countries to build up their national capacities and capabilities to harvest and use the resources at their disposal in the most efficient manner has become more urgent. Thus, item 3 is a major matter for your consideration.

I should now like to turn to the question of the future of the FAO regional fishery bodies - item 4 on your agenda - which is the other major matter before you for consideration. This question is, of course, closely linked with that of the development of fisheries in economic zones. By the very nature of the resources, national efforts cannot be conducted in isolation from regional and sub-regional efforts. Countries exploiting common stocks need regular consultation and coordination in matters of research as well as to ensure that the sum total of national targets as exemplified in national plans is compatible with the potential of the resources. Cooperation is also needed in such fields as training. In several areas coastal countries have already started consultations on how such cooperation could be achieved and in some, the first steps towards joint endeavour are being taken. The FAO regional fishery bodies have provided the fora for these purposes and have tended to act as the coordinating mechanisms. In this connection, I should note that the FAO Conference - in November 1977 - expressed satisfaction with the steps being taken by regional fishery bodies to play a more active role in the context of the new ocean regime in stimulating interest in fishery development activities, in coordination of policies affecting common resources and in providing fora for discussion of common problems.

The Director-General is now looking to you for advice on ways in which the contributions of the regional fishery bodies may be increased. Parenthetically, I should note that we are presently conducting a review of all FAO regional bodies. Those related to fisheries are a part of this complex. However, those which relate to marine fisheries differ from the others in that they relate to sea regions rather than to FAO's traditionally land-based regions, and because they deal with resources that are often highly mobile. As you examine the future roles of these bodies, you will be directing your attention to such questions as:

To what extent are the member countries of the respective commissions prepared to utilize these bodies in the management of their fisheries resources, and as vehicle for regional cooperation in their management?

How should the secretariat and other staff support for such activities be organized to enable FAO to best carry out its key role in world fishery affairs, and at the same time to be of greatest service to the groups of member countries concerned?

If these bodies are to assume enhanced roles, how will the increased activities be financed?

On this question of financing, the document before you indicates that, if there is to be a full development of activities at regional levels, both in the management of resources on behalf of countries and in the provision of technical services, funds and staff would be required substantially beyond the level presently provided for in the Programme of Work and Budget or foreseeable in biennia ahead. Thus, much will depend upon the kind of support the Member Nations of the respective bodies are prepared to provide. As you are aware, there is provision in the instruments establishing most of the FAO fishery bodies for setting up funds-in-trust for the carrying out of work supplemental to that provided for in FAO's Regular Programme. This is an avenue that should be carefully and fully explored.

I should also like to mention briefly another item on your agenda, item 5, regarding the future of the Committee on Fisheries. I understand that the views expressed in response to a recent communication to Member Governments were substantially in favour of maintaining the present constitutional status of COFI. Hence, this should not be a contentious issue in your discussions. Therefore, under this agenda item, it should be possible for you to

concentrate on the types of issues the Committee should consider, and on ways whereby it may carry out its work most effectively, in the interest of member countries.

The fourth substantive item on your agenda, item 6, concerns the living resources of the Southern Ocean. You will remember that at its last session the Committee held extensive discussions on the main policy issues related to the conservation and the rational exploitation of these resources, and in particular, on the role and possible contribution of FAO in this regard. These aspects were also considered in November 1977 by the FAO Conference, which provided a clear definition of what the mandate of the Organization should be. It is therefore expected that at this session the Committee will only concern itself with the developments of a technical nature which have taken place since the last session, and with the activities that FAO proposed to carry out.

The Committee on Fisheries has an important role to play in FAO affairs, and I shall return to this in a moment. But, first, let me mention a few actions the Director-General has taken over the last two years that affect the Organization as a whole. Some of the major actions, which the Council and Conference have endorsed, and which have their impact on the fisheries sector as well as on other sectors of the Programme of Work, have been designed:

To give greater emphasis to assisting Member Nations in obtaining financial resources for investment

To establish a Technical Cooperation Programme to permit the rendering of short-term urgent and emergency assistance to member countries

To decentralize more of FAO's activities to the country level, including the gradual appointment of Country Representatives (of which 20 have now been appointed)

To place greater emphasis on practical, short-term actions directed at results at the country level, including more training that will be reflected down to the rural areas

To make corresponding reductions in such activities as meetings, preparation of publications and documents, and number of posts at Headquarters.

Most of you are no doubt aware of these actions, but I felt that the Committee should be alerted to them, as background for its discussions, particularly of agenda items 3, 4 and 5.

Now, returning to matters with which you are immediately concerned, I should recall that fisheries has had an important place in FAO's work from the time the Organization was established at the First Session of the FAO Conference, in Quebec, in October 1945. The Director-General recognizes the contribution fisheries can make to meeting the world's protein requirements, and particularly its potential for increased contributions to diets in the developing countries. He also recognizes the significance of the changes that are taking place in the ocean regime, both as they may affect food supplies, and as they relate to changes in patterns of international relations.

Over the now nearly 33 years since FAO was established, fisheries has assumed an increasingly important role in world affairs, and FAO has emerged as the leading Organization in world fishery affairs. FAO provides many of the fora through which governments can work together in dealing with their common problems. These include this Committee on Fisheries, and the regional fishery bodies, to which I have already referred. FAO has also provided a great deal of assistance to developing countries through its

UNDP-financed and Trust-Fund projects, and through other channels. Also, because of its central position in world fishery affairs, FAO is in a position to contribute to the coordination of activities in this field. It is the desire of the Director-General to maintain and strengthen FAO's key central role in fisheries, as one means of ensuring that FAO is in a position to be of maximum assistance to its member countries in furthering fisheries development, conservation and utilization. I hope you will bear this point in mind as you consider the matters before you under items 3, 4 and 5 of your agenda, i.e. the development of fisheries in the economic zones, the future of the FAO regional fishery bodies, and the future of this Committee.

In conclusion, may I wish you a week of fruitful discussions, and a most pleasant stay in Rome.

Appendix E

ADDRESS BY DR. BERNARDO ZULETA, UNDER SECRETARY-GENERAL AND SPECIAL  
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CONFERENCE ON THE LAW OF THE SEA

I deeply regret not having been able to attend this Twelfth Session of the Committee on Fisheries from its opening. As many of you know, the Seventh Session of the Law of the Sea Conference will be resumed in New York in August and we have had to face a number of problems with regard to the practical aspects of the organization of our work.

I hope that, in spite of this difficulty that prevented me from deriving all the benefits from your exchange of views, you will kindly interpret my presence here as a reaffirmation of the importance that the Secretariat of the United Nations and in particular the Secretariat of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea attach to the work of this Committee as it relates to the task of making the new legal rules of international law regarding the rights and duties of coastal states that have emerged or are emerging from the Conference a living reality and not simply one more juridical text for the benefit of legal scholars.

All the participants in this session of the Committee seem to agree on at least one major point: that in order to make of the Exclusive Economic Zone an instrument for development that will allow not only developing Coastal States but mankind as a whole to fully benefit from the exploitation of the living resources of the sea, Coastal States and in particular the developing countries among them will have to acquire or increase the necessary managerial ability and technical competence to identify, preserve and rationally manage the fish stocks in their Exclusive Economic Zones and in that way ensure their optimum utilization.

This Committee is in the process of making that evolution possible, and I am confident that through its efforts, the new legal instruments that have been so painstakingly negotiated will become useful tools for the rational management of ocean resources and not simply one more documentary evidence in the rather long list of frustrations experienced by the developing world.



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