

Report of the eighteenth session of the

COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

Rome, Italy, 10-14 April 1989



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

REPORT
of the
EIGHTEENTH SESSION OF THE
COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES
Rome, 10-14 April 1989

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PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

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

Distribution:

All FAO Member Nations and Associate Members
Participants in the session
Other interested Nations and International Organizations
FAO Fisheries Department
Fishery Officers in FAO Regional Offices

FAO.

Report of the eighteenth session of the Committee on Fisheries,
Rome, 10-14 April 1989.

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ABSTRACT

The Committee on Fisheries at its Eighteenth Session reviewed the trends and prospects for capture fisheries and aquaculture for the next 25 years and approved the main areas for emphasis and priority attention of the future FAO fishery programmes. It endorsed the policy of concentration by FAO on those issues in world fisheries in which it has a comparative advantage and special mandate. The Committee discussed the functions and achievements of the FAO regional fishery bodies and their role in TCDC and ECDC and expressed unanimous support for the work of these bodies. It concluded that the lack of financial resources was a serious problem for almost all FAO regional fishery bodies and urged donors to give support.

The Committee also reviewed the progress in implementing the World Fisheries Conference's Programmes of Action; it agreed that they should continue to provide an international framework and guidelines for fisheries management and development and endorsed their extension beyond the period 1985-89.

The Committee considered the Report of the Second Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade held in October 1988. It gave general support to the recommendations of the Sub-Committee. It was agreed that the Technical Assistance Programme for Fishery Commodities and Marketing Development was necessary and appropriate.

The Committee also considered a standardized system for the marking and identification of fishing vessels, expressed its support, in principle, to the endorsement of the specifications for such a system to be appropriately amended and recommended that the standards be adopted on a voluntary basis.

The Committee was informed of the results of the Conference for the Adoption of a Draft Agreement for the Establishment of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission.

The Committee noted and supported the main programme priorities selected by the Director-General in preparing his Summary Programme of Work and Budget 1990-91. It agreed that the fisheries programme as proposed was balanced, responsive to the needs of member countries and constituted an acceptable basis for the formulation of the full Programme of Work and Budget in fisheries for 1990-91.



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14 April 1989

Excellency,

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the report of the Eighteenth Session of the Committee on Fisheries, which was held in Rome from 10 to 14 April 1989.

Accept, Excellency, the assurance of my highest consideration.

Zbigniew Karnicki
Chairman
Committee on Fisheries

His Excellency
Lassaad Ben Osman
Independent Chairman
Council of FAO

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MATTERS REQUIRING ATTENTION BY THE COUNCIL

A. MATTERS FOR DECISION

None

B. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

Trends and prospects for capture fisheries and aquaculture in the next 25 years and the role of FAO

The Committee welcomed the opportunity to consider the above issues and concurred with the Secretariat's analysis of the state and prospects of world fisheries. It approved the main areas for emphasis and priority attention for FAO which emerged from the analysis and endorsed a policy of concentration by FAO on those issues in world fisheries in which it has a comparative advantage and special mandate. In this connection, the Committee accorded high priority to the further strengthening of FAO's role in the collection, analysis and dissemination of information and data on all aspects of fisheries. It requested FAO to strengthen its support to aquaculture. It placed emphasis on FAO's present and future role in promoting self-reliance of developing countries in fisheries development and management through training and transfer of knowledge, skills and appropriate technologies. It also placed emphasis upon FAO's function as a centre for policy advice and analysis and for integrated research in fisheries biology, economics and technology. It called upon FAO to give high priority in its fisheries programme to the monitoring and prevention of environmental degradation in both marine and inland waters and in aquaculture and to promote inter-country cooperation in protecting the aquatic environment. It recognized the need for FAO to maintain its key role in promoting inter-country collaboration in fisheries including trade-related matters and strongly endorsed FAO's initiatives to promote the role of women in fisheries. (paras. 12, 15-22)

Review of the FAO regional fishery bodies and their role in TCDC and ECDC

The Committee reviewed the activities and achievements of the FAO regional fishery bodies. It recognized that the evaluation of the achievements was rather difficult as there were many differences as regards the state of development of the member countries, the importance of fisheries in the regions concerned and the length of times the bodies had been active. It was therefore felt that further effort should be made to introduce improved performance evaluation for these regional fishery bodies. The Committee, however, expressed unanimous support for the work of these bodies which had assisted technical and economic cooperation among developing countries in many ways and welcomed the fruitful collaboration that has been developed between these bodies and other regional organizations concerned with fisheries. The Committee gave suggestions with a view to strengthening the future work of these bodies. Special reference should be made of a recommendation that an in-depth review of the structure and functions of the Indo-Pacific Fishery Commission be carried out with a view to revitalizing this body. The Committee concluded that the lack of financial resources was a serious problem for almost all FAO regional fishery bodies and urged donors to give support. (paras. 29-31, 34, 35-41, 43)

The 1984 World Fisheries Conference's Programmes of Action: Progress and Future Priorities

The Committee expressed its satisfaction with the progress made in implementing the World Fisheries Conference's Programmes of Action and for the generous support to the Programmes by donors which had exceeded the annual indicative target of US\$ 15 million in 1988 and 1989 for those activities carried out within the FAO framework. It noted that funds in support of the activities under the Programmes of Action implemented outside FAO amounted to at least US\$ 10 million in 1988. It expressed appreciation on the catalytic role of FAO in mobilizing this support. The Committee, however, observed the imbalances in the financial support provided between regions and between the Programmes of Action. The Committee agreed that the five Programmes of Action should be continued beyond 1989 in order to provide an international framework and guidelines for fisheries management and development. It was agreed that the new indicative target figure for funds to be channelled through FAO in support of the Programmes of Action should be US\$ 20 million annually. It agreed further that the five common issues identified by FAO, namely, the protection of the aquatic environment; improvement of fisheries information; data and statistics; investment; training; and the role of women in fisheries development should be regarded as key factors in the formulation and implementation of activities within the Programmes of Action. It also recommended that fisheries research should receive equal attention. (paras. 45-48)

Report on the Second Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, Rome, 24-27 October 1988

The Committee gave general support to the recommendations arising out of the Second Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, including the continuation of activities under Programme of Action IV on International Trade in Fish and Fishery Products. It concluded that the Sub-Committee's work had been useful and agreed that it should be continued. The Technical Assistance Programme for Fishery Commodities and Marketing Development was considered necessary and appropriate. The Committee expressed concern about the uncertain future of the network of the regional fish marketing information services which had carried out useful work to enhance the international trade of fish and fishery products and appealed to FAO and other donors to ensure continuation of funding for the network. It suggested that the work of this network should also include traditional products originating from the artisanal fishery sub-sector. The Committee agreed that the Director-General should be asked to approach the Common Fund for Commodities in due course, requesting it to designate the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade as an International Commodity Body (ICB) in order to sponsor and follow-up projects on fishery commodities financed by the Fund. It decided that the future sessions of the Sub-Committee be held on a biennial basis unless there were reasons which would require different arrangements, e.g., in connection with its possible designation as the ICB by the Common Fund. (paras. 65, 68-69, 71, 73)

The work of FAO in fisheries during 1990-91

The Committee noted the proposed programme framework and supported the main programme priorities selected by the Director-General for the Summary Programme of Work and Budget 1990-91, among which aquaculture is one. It noted with satisfaction that the Director-General had proposed an increase of 1.9 percent for the fisheries programme as compared with the 1.1 percent for the Organization as a whole. The Committee approved the content and framework, as well as the areas of special emphasis of the fisheries proposals. It agreed that the fisheries programme was balanced, responsive to the needs of

member countries and constituted an acceptable basis for the preparation of the full Programme of Work and Budget in fisheries for consideration by the Twenty-fifth Session of the FAO Conference. It re-emphasized the importance it had attached to the assessment of environmental impacts on marine and inland fisheries; it was felt that greater resources should be devoted to the protection of aquatic environment. (paras. 77, 79, 80, 82, 94)

A standardized system for the marking and identification of fishing vessels

The Committee was informed that, pursuant to its recommendation given at its Seventeenth Session, the Director-General had, during the intersessional period, issued the draft specifications proposed for the above system to Ministers responsible for fisheries in FAO Member Governments, inviting comments on the extent to which these specifications met national requirements. Forty-one Member States had indicated that the standards satisfied national requirements. The Committee supported in principle the endorsement of the specifications and recommended that the draft specifications for a standard system for the identification of fishing vessels be amended so as to include the new definition of a deck and to provide, within the text, that the standards be adopted on a voluntary basis. The Director-General was invited to circulate the standard specifications as endorsed by the Committee to all the Member States, relevant specialized UN agencies and international organizations concerned with fisheries. (paras. 97-98, 100, 109-110)

Outcome of the Conference for the Adoption of a Draft Agreement for the Establishment of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission

The Committee noted the outcome of the above Conference and supported the need to reach an early conclusion. (para. 115)

Underutilized species

The Committee requested the Secretariat to include practical topics on the agenda of future sessions of the Committee on the development of fisheries and markets for underutilized species. (para. 116)

OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The Committee on Fisheries held its Eighteenth Session in Rome from 10 to 14 April 1989. The Session was attended by 88 members of the Committee, by observers from 10 other FAO Member Nations, two non-Member Nations of FAO, and the Holy See, by representatives of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the International Labour Organisation, the International Maritime Organization, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, the World Bank, the World Food Programme and the European Economic Community and by observers from 13 other intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations. The list of delegates and observers is given as Appendix B to this report.

2. The meeting was called to order by the Chairman of the Committee, Mr Hassen Akrouf (Tunisia). In his opening remarks, the Chairman stressed the importance of international cooperation in the development and management of world fisheries. The session was inaugurated by the Director-General, Dr Edouard Saouma. The text of his opening address is reproduced in Appendix D. Delegations expressed their appreciation of the address, which they regarded as a concrete demonstration of the leadership provided by the Organization for the development and rational management of world fishery resources.

3. The Committee heard statements made by H.E. Sardar Amjad Hossain, the Minister for Fisheries and Livestock of the Republic of Bangladesh and H.E. Sra Clara Jusidman, Vice-Minister for Fisheries of Mexico.

4. The Minister for Fisheries and Livestock of Bangladesh expressed appreciation of the Organization's efforts in improving the nutritional level of the hungry and the poor and acknowledged its significant contribution to the development of world fisheries. He mentioned that the inland open water fish production of his country had recently declined and the per capita consumption reduced. Efforts were being made to increase the fish supplies through the development of capture fisheries and aquaculture. He suggested that technology for fish production should be improved. He stressed that in order to improve fisheries management, apart from aquaculture techniques, better utilization of fish resources, reduction of wastage and post-harvest losses, there was a need to strengthen technical and economic cooperation both north/south and south/south. He recognized the comparative advantage of FAO in promoting inter-country collaboration and urged it to intensify its role, especially to facilitate investment opportunities in the fisheries sector of developing countries.

5. The Vice-Minister for Fisheries of Mexico referred to the prevailing constraints the Organization was facing and stressed the need for political will among its members in order to maintain FAO as a centre of international cooperation in fisheries. She invited the Committee's members to participate at the session in a spirit of international solidarity. The Vice-Minister praised the Organization for outlining its long-term role to respond effectively to the needs of the member countries and called for the strengthening of the Organization. She pointed out that the principles and guidelines of the Strategy for fisheries management and development adopted by the FAO World Fisheries Conference remained valid. Whilst expressing satisfaction with the progress achieved in implementing the Programmes of Action, she expressed concern about the continued regional imbalance in the allocation of the financial resources for the execution of the Programmes. The Vice-Minister

pointed out the danger of overfishing due to the lack of means for researching and monitoring fisheries resources, mostly due to problems derived from the burden of external debt and decreasing public funding for research activities. She expressed support for the work of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade and referred to the unfavourable balance of trade and tariff and non-tariff barriers such as sanitary and ecological restrictions which restrict the entry of fish products into certain markets.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SESSION

6. The Committee adopted the agenda as shown in Appendix A to this report. The documents which were before the Committee are listed in Appendix C.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

7. As this was the first and only session being held in the 1988-89 biennium, the Committee was required to elect a Chairman, a First Vice-Chairman and four other Vice-Chairmen. Mr Zbigniew Karnicki (Poland) was unanimously elected Chairman of the Committee; Sra Clara Jusidman (Mexico) was elected First Vice-Chairperson, and Madagascar, the Netherlands, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Canada as other Vice-Chairmen.

8. A Drafting Committee was appointed consisting of representatives of: Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, Denmark, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Malawi, Spain, Thailand and Tunisia. It elected Denmark as its Chairman and Malawi as Vice-Chairman.

WORLD FISHERIES AND FAO

(a) Trends and prospects for capture fisheries and aquaculture in the next 25 years and the role of FAO

9. The Committee examined document COFI/89/2, which presented a review of the trends and prospects of world fisheries over the next 25 years and their implications for FAO's future programmes in fisheries. It welcomed the opportunity to consider the major issues emerging from these perspectives which it felt would provide an excellent framework to its more detailed discussions, under subsequent Agenda items, of the role and work of FAO in fisheries, both in the short and long term.

10. It was advised that the document was based primarily upon materials contributed by the Fisheries Department to a review being undertaken, at the request of the Twenty-fourth Session of the FAO Conference in November 1987, of certain aspects of FAO's goals and operations and of means of strengthening further the leading role of FAO in promoting world agriculture and fisheries. The Committee welcomed the analytical, imaginative and forward looking approach of the document which, by identifying the major issues facing world fisheries, permitted a sharp focus to be made on the priorities which should be pursued by FAO in this sector.

11. Some delegations noted the late distribution of some COFI documents and felt that the Secretariat should review this matter so that national delegations had sufficient opportunity to review the valuable work contained in the various documents. The Secretariat explained that this was partially due to the financial constraints the Organization has experienced in the inter-sessional period.

12. The Committee endorsed the analysis of the state and prospects of world fisheries provided in the document. It noted that there appeared to be few opportunities to increase significantly the catch of demersal species and that, while there seemed to be better possibilities of increasing the harvest of small pelagic species, the stocks of these species were subject to considerable fluctuations and, that, in many cases new products and new markets would be needed to bring these species economically to the consumer.

13. The Committee agreed therefore that other opportunities of increasing supplies to meet the ever-growing demand for fish for human consumption must receive continued attention. In this respect, particular emphasis was placed upon the need to sustain fisheries development by managing the resources in a rational and timely manner, to seek the greater and economic exploitation of unconventional species, including mesopelagics, to improve the utilization of fish through reducing post-harvest losses, including by-catch discards and to promote further the effective development of aquaculture. Such policies and actions should recognize the aspirations and needs of small-scale fishing communities and the benefits which can be obtained through collaboration in fisheries management and development in the spirit of TCDC and ECDC.

14. Many delegations informed the Committee of the progress being achieved and the problems faced by their countries as they seek to improve the nutritional, social and economic benefits from the fisheries sector; note was frequently made of the manner in which national experiences in fisheries development and management closely reflected the issues identified in document COFI/89/2. Attention was also drawn to the benefits and efficiencies gained through reforms of institutional structures and adopting an integrated approach to policy identification and to the elaboration and execution of plans for the fisheries sector. A number of delegations outlined the negative impact of the burden of external debts and structural adjustments upon their on-going and planned fisheries programmes and on fish consumption patterns. Reference was also made to the need for further efforts to reduce obstacles to trade, in particular non-tariff barriers, and to promote international fish product quality standards.

15. The Committee approved the main areas for emphasis and priority attention for FAO which emerged from the analysis presented in the document. In particular, it strongly endorsed a policy of concentration by FAO on those issues in world fisheries in which it has a comparative advantage and special mandate.

16. The Committee accorded high priority to the further strengthening of FAO's long-established role in the collection, analysis and dissemination of information and data on all aspects of fisheries; the availability of such data was regarded as a vital basis for the planning of management systems and development programmes. Reference was made to the need to improve the reliability and also to reinforce the quality control of the data collected. Reference was also made to the need to give special attention to socio-economic information as well as data on the fish resources themselves. Several delegations stressed the need for adequate resources to maintain the services provided by the Fisheries Branch Library.

17. Convinced of the considerable future potential of aquaculture, it requested that FAO should strengthen its support for this sector, especially in such matters as advice, assistance and training in aquaculture techniques and in the identification of national policies and plans for aquaculture

development, including the planning and execution of aquaculture investment projects. On the technical side, the need for assistance with fish feeds, fish diseases and genetic improvement of fish stocks was also underlined; FAO was also encouraged to follow the new developments in bio-technology.

18. The Committee placed considerable emphasis upon FAO's present and future role in helping to promote self-reliance of developing countries in fisheries through training in all aspects of the fisheries sector and by promoting the transfer of knowledge and skills and appropriate technologies, especially in new fishing techniques and gear and processing and marketing methods.

19. Noting that fisheries management was becoming an increasingly complex and difficult task, calling for a strategic rather than a short-term approach, the Committee also placed emphasis upon FAO's function as a centre for policy advice and analysis and for integrated research into fisheries biology, economics and technology. In this regard, particular attention was required to further studies of management concepts, options and methods, including cost-effective systems for the monitoring, control and surveillance of fishing operations and to such issues as conflicts in the use of coastal resources, the identification and appraisal of investment opportunities, the need for adjustment in specific circumstances and the socio-economic conditions of artisanal fishing communities. It was also suggested that detailed research and analysis into the factors influencing the demand for fish would be valuable.

20. The Committee expressed its serious concern at the growing risks to the sustained development and proper management of fisheries which were arising from environmental degradation, pollution and the deleterious effects of marine debris and waste. It called upon FAO to give high priority in its fisheries programme to the monitoring and prevention of environmental degradation, in both marine and inland waters and in aquaculture, and to promote inter-country cooperation in protecting the aquatic environment. It also encouraged FAO to give more attention to the impact of natural environmental fluctuations and climatic changes on fisheries.

21. The Committee drew attention to the need for FAO to maintain its key role in promoting inter-country cooperation in fisheries, including trade-related matters. Several delegations stressed the proven value in this respect of the network of FAO regional fishery bodies and other organizations established to facilitate regional and sub-regional collaboration. Reference was also made to the benefits obtained from joint ventures, bilateral agreements and other forms of inter-country collaboration.

22. The Committee welcomed the initiatives taken and planned by FAO to promote the role of women in fisheries. It decided, in accordance with Council Resolution 1/94, that the next session of the Committee should analyse a report on the Fisheries Department's actions in this respect.

23. The Committee commended the steps proposed to establish closer relations and greater integration of the activities of FAO in fisheries with other units in the Organization in matters of mutual interest, for example, in aquaculture, overall coastal area development and rural development policies, both through informal channels and the creation of inter-unit, inter-disciplinary task forces.

24. The Committee noted with approval FAO's commitment to continue monitoring fisheries in the statistical Area 41 and to report as appropriate. The

Committee, recognizing the importance of the fishery, requested the Secretariat, within its mandate as a specialized technical agency, to continue this work. The Committee invited countries fishing in the area to cooperate in providing the Secretariat with all relevant scientific data.

25. The observer from the USSR, noting that his country placed particular importance upon the contribution of fisheries to food security, informed the Committee of certain aspects of the USSR's plans for the further development of its fishery sector, both in marine and inland waters. He expressed the USSR's support for the priorities identified for FAO's work in fisheries and reaffirmed the USSR's willingness to collaborate with FAO wherever possible.

26. The delegate of Mexico, speaking on behalf of the Latin American Organization for the Development of Fisheries (OLDEPESCA), provided information upon the policies and a plan of action recently adopted by the organization; he referred to the increased links established with FAO and other organizations and expressed OLDEPESCA's appreciation for their assistance and collaboration.

27. The representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) drew particular attention to his Organization's concerns regarding the protection of the environment. He noted the collaboration established with FAO in the remote sensing of coastal waters and supported FAO's efforts to promote fish as a healthy, nutritional food.

28. The representative of the International Labour Organization (ILO) described recent initiatives taken by his Organization regarding the conditions of work of fishermen, including the adoption of conventions, codes of practice and training guidelines. He informed the Committee of the outcomes of the meeting, held in May 1988, of the ILO Committee on the Conditions of Work in Fishing Industries which, inter alia, produced recommendations on remuneration and earnings systems and on the socio-economic needs of small-scale fishermen.

(b) Review of the FAO regional fishery bodies and their role in TCDC and ECDC

29. In introducing the item the Secretariat noted that nine regional fishery bodies had been established by FAO with responsibilities for conservation and management of fish resources and for fishery development. Three of these bodies were concerned exclusively with inland waters. In reviewing the terms of reference of these bodies four groups of activities were identified as common to all of them: i.e., data collection, research and training, management and development. It was noted from discussion of the previous item on the Agenda that these activities should in the future continue to have high priority in the work of FAO.

30. Evaluation of the achievements of these regional fishery bodies was recognized as a difficult task since, in spite of their basic common activities, there were many differences as regards the state of development of the member countries, the importance of fisheries in the regions concerned and the length of time the bodies had been active. It was felt that further effort should be made to introduce improved performance evaluations for these regional bodies.

31. The Committee expressed unanimous support for the work of these bodies which had assisted technical and economic cooperation among developing countries in many ways. It noted that most of them had held symposia and

workshops at which there had been valuable exchanges of information and experience and recommended that the outcome of these meetings be appropriately followed up. Several bodies had also established working parties in which a wide range of technological and scientific topics had been discussed and which had helped to guide research and to promote technological improvements in member countries.

32. The Committee noted that the FAO regional fishery bodies had helped in other ways, for example, by undertaking and encouraging stock assessment, assembling and publishing statistical data (as well as assisting nationally with improvements in data collection) and by training personnel. These bodies had also, in some cases, encouraged the publishing of scientific papers and had acted as foci for regional intelligence concerning the fisheries situation in their respective regions.

33. It was recognized, however, that the situation had changed in many respects since the establishment of the first regional body 40 years ago. There were now more trained personnel in the regions, management had become a more important issue and the role of socio-economic factors in the management of fisheries was now more widely recognized. The fisheries sector had generally become more complex and it was desirable that the regional bodies should adapt to the changing situation.

34. The Committee welcomed the fruitful collaboration that has been developed between the FAO bodies and other regional organizations concerned with fisheries management and development. It noted that FAO was already working closely with these organizations, e.g., the Comisión Permanente del Pacífico Sur (CPPS), where assistance was being given with the establishment of a regional database and statistical collection system. Delegations urged that there should be even closer cooperation with such bodies as the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC), the Organización Latinoamericana de Desarrollo Pesquero (OLDEPESCA), and the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), to avoid possible duplication of activities and to facilitate the participation of bodies in the work of FAO in the regions.

35. The Committee underlined the key role being played for almost forty years by the General Fisheries Council for the Mediterranean (GFCM) which had led to a better knowledge of the fishery resources. It stressed the need to increase the means available to the Council to allow it to exercise fully its important management responsibilities. The launching of a second phase of the MEDRAP Project was noted with appreciation and it was hoped that UNDP would provide its support at the required level.

36. With respect to the Indo-Pacific Fishery Commission (IPFC), the Committee felt that the time had come for an in-depth review of the functions and structures of IPFC with a view to revitalizing this body and strengthening its activities in the technical and policy fields. The Committee noted with satisfaction the announcement by China of its interest in joining IPFC, thus adding to the Commission's status, particularly in the South China Sea region.

37. With regard to the Indian Ocean, several delegations noted that the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea were not presently covered by any specific subsidiary body of the Indian Ocean Fishery Commission (IOFC) competent to foster cooperation in fishery management and development among coastal countries of these important sub-regions. It was suggested that IOFC should consider the feasibility of incorporating these waters in the area of

competence of its Committee for the Development and Management of the Fishery Resources of the Gulfs which would thus cover the whole northwest part of the Indian Ocean. The efforts being made with a view to establishing an Indian Ocean Tuna Commission were welcomed; some delegations expressed the hope that this would help improve the management of these valuable stocks and combat illegal tuna fishing in the area.

38. Some delegations noted with disappointment that the document submitted to the Committee did not include many details of the activities of the Committee for Inland Fisheries of Africa (CIFA). The Committee stressed that this should not imply that a lower priority should be given to inland fisheries in Africa. Indeed the work of CIFA was of paramount importance for African member countries and, in particular, for landlocked and geographically disadvantaged countries which could not benefit from marine resources. CIFA was urged to develop its activities in the Lake Chad Basin, in cooperation with the Lake Chad Basin Commission. The work of its Sub-Committees on Lake Victoria and Lake Tanganyika in statistics, harmonization of legislation, stock assessment and resources management was commended and the start of the new regional project for Lake Tanganyika was welcomed. The Committee noted the CIFA regional cooperative research programme in Fish Technology in Africa was considered to be a successful TCDC experience. Many members urged that the very useful training activities undertaken until 1987 by the African Regional Aquaculture Centre (ARAC) based in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, be resumed.

39. As concerns the Committee for Eastern Central Atlantic Fisheries (CECAF), appreciation was expressed for the assistance given since 1974 by the UNDP and other donors to the CECAF Project. As a result, there were now more qualified personnel in the region and a research infrastructure had been created. The situation had, however, evolved over the past two decades. For example, there had been a substantial growth in foreign fishing effort, the stocks had become fully exploited and new sub-regional cooperative arrangements had emerged. The changing situation was reflected in the report of the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation between African States bordering the Atlantic Ocean, held in Rabat, Morocco, from 30 March to 1 April 1989, which, inter alia, had encouraged TCDC in the region including the employment of a greater number of local qualified personnel. It was stressed that the Ministerial Conference was intended to complement the work of CECAF which still had a useful role to play in data collection, stock assessment, training and management of resources.

40. Several delegations from Latin America and the Caribbean commented on the activities of the Commission for Inland Fisheries of Latin America (COPESCAL) and of the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC). They agreed that these two bodies, which had recently reviewed their internal structures, constituted useful fora for exchanging information and experiences. The participation in WECAFC of fishing countries from outside the region was considered useful insofar as this coincided with the interests of the coastal countries. It was also suggested that ways should be found to include fishermen in relevant activities of some of its workshops and working parties. It was pointed out that there was a need to plan future activities for the medium and even long term in close cooperation with member countries; this would necessitate making available the required technical support in the form, for example, of regional projects executed by FAO, and in cooperation with other organizations dealing with fisheries in the region. The valuable support provided by the project Support to the Regional Aquaculture Activities for Latin America and the Caribbean (AQUILA) to COPESCAL activities was

stressed and the Committee noted with appreciation the positive attitude of the Government of Italy with regard to continuation of its support to this project.

41. The Committee noted the important work being performed by EIFAC in the field of biological studies, aquaculture and disease control and water quality standards. It noted further that this body composed entirely of developed countries could also be of value to developing countries. In particular, some of its publications were of wide interest. It was also noted that a Symposium on Warm Water Pond Culture would be held in Prague in 1990 to which all interested scientists, including those from developing countries, could participate.

42. Relevant delegations outlined their countries' financial assistance to various FAO regional fishery bodies. Sweden and Denmark were financing the project which was supporting the work carried out in the Bay of Bengal Committee (BOBC). The delegation from Sweden noted that experience from this and other areas indicated that a regional approach was necessary for management and that in the case of the Bay of Bengal encouragement was being given to TCDC. The delegate from Japan indicated that his Government had given substantial assistance to FAO regional bodies through trust funds. In this manner stock assessment work within the Indo-Pacific Tuna Programme had been financed in support of the IOFC Committee for the Management of Indian Ocean Tuna. Assistance had also been given to the development of aquaculture techniques in the South Pacific and in the field of fisheries training both by sending experts to overseas countries and inviting foreign trainees to Japan. The delegation of the Republic of Korea reported that over a period of 20 years his Government had given assistance of a similar nature in the field of training.

43. The Committee concluded that the lack of financial resources was a serious problem for almost all FAO regional bodies and urged donors to give greater support.

44. The representative of UNDP complimented the coastal and non-coastal participating countries of the Indo-Pacific Tuna Project (IPTP) for taking up the funding of this important project. He also referred to a TCDC aquaculture meeting which will be organized by UNDP's Special Unit for TCDC in June 1989 in Mexico.

FAO'S MEDIUM- AND SHORT-TERM FISHERIES PROGRAMMES

(a) The 1984 World Fisheries Conference's Programmes of Action: progress and future priorities

45. The Committee considered this item on the basis of document COFI/89/4 and related information papers. There was a consensus of support for the five Programmes of Action, endorsed by the 1984 FAO World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development^{1/}, and agreement that they be continued to provide

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- 1/ - Programme I : Planning, Management and Development of Fisheries
- Programme II : Development of Small-Scale Fisheries
- Programme III: Aquaculture Development
- Programme IV : International Trade in Fish and Fishery Products
- Programme V : Promotion of the Role of Fisheries in Alleviating Under-nutrition

a valid international framework and guidelines for fisheries management and development. Their extension beyond the period 1985-89 was, therefore, unanimously endorsed.

46. The Committee noted that the funding for activities implemented within and outside the FAO framework in support of the Programmes of Action had increased over the five-year period since the World Conference. Funds committed to activities carried out within the FAO framework had exceeded the indicative target of US\$ 15 million in 1988 and 1989, while funds channelled outside FAO amounted in 1988 to at least US\$ 10 million. Appreciation was expressed within the Committee for the generous support to the Programmes of Action by donors and of the catalytic role of FAO in mobilizing this support. It was agreed that the new indicative target figure for funds to be channelled through FAO in support of the Programmes of Action should be US\$ 20 million annually to take into account increased costs over the period. The need to keep the Programmes of Action under constant review was noted and in this context it was reported that all FAO projects formulated within the Programmes of Action had monitoring and evaluation indicators built into them at project formulation. Regular progress reports would also be submitted to the Committee on Fisheries and FAO's Council and Conference.

47. It was observed that there were significant imbalances in the financial support provided between regions and between Programmes of Action. Several Latin American delegations expressed the hope that the serious situation at present affecting countries in Latin America and the Caribbean region would make it possible to remedy the imbalances registered so far which were hampering the financial support of the Programmes of Action. There had been, however, some reduction in the imbalance between Programmes as a consequence of approval by the Government of Norway of a significant level of funding in support of Programme of Action V. The Committee expressed the hope that this contribution would encourage other donors to support this Programme. It was also noted that the information available on activities implemented outside the FAO framework was incomplete and that the total support to the Programme of Action was likely to have a better balance than the information available shows.

48. The Committee agreed that the five common issues, i.e., protection of the aquatic environment, improvement of fishery information, data and statistics, investment, training, and the role of women, identified by FAO should be regarded as key factors in the formulation and implementation of activities within the Programmes of Action. Furthermore, it was considered that fisheries research should be given similar importance. It was observed that the five Programmes of Action should be considered as an integrated framework with the common issues being fully integrated within them.

49. There was a consensus on the need to protect the aquatic environment and the expectation from FAO to make an important contribution in this area. In this regard, it was suggested that FAO should be careful not to undertake activities in respect of which other international organizations had a major role. There was general recognition of the need to study the environmental effects of fishery and aquaculture projects so that they may be duly taken into account at the time of project formulation.

50. The Committee recognized the importance of improving fishery information, data and statistics. It was suggested that fishermen should be educated on the importance of providing accurate data. The Committee noted that an important responsibility of fishery administrations was the collection and analysis of statistics to provide a sound basis for policy formulation.

51. The Committee agreed on the need for well formulated projects to attract investment funds. In this context a number of countries suggested that FAO should give increased attention to providing Member Countries with assistance and training in the formulation of fishery projects. Many countries observed that investment was a critical area which requires a generous response. Some countries noted that the mobilization of investment at a significant level may encounter difficulties. Other countries emphasized the importance of attracting investment into institution building and support, for example, into statistics collection and analysis, management, and control and surveillance.

52. The Committee recognized the importance of training at all levels. In this connection, several countries noted the great value of extension in support of activities under Programmes of Action II and III.

53. The Committee noted with satisfaction the increasing recognition being given to the role of women in production, processing and marketing in small-scale fisheries and aquaculture. It expressed its appreciation also of the institution in the FAO Fisheries Department of a Core Group on Women-in-Fisheries. The Committee expressed the wish that the Fisheries Department of FAO should pay special attention to Resolution 1/94 of the FAO Council on the role of women in FAO activities; particularly, it was suggested that more projects should be formulated which were addressed specifically to the needs of women involved in fisheries.

54. Many countries expressed the view that Programme of Action I was of the greatest importance to them. Programmes of Action II and III were also considered to be of great importance by many countries, particularly in the context of raising the living standards of lower income groups and improvement in food security. With regard to Programmes of Action II and III, several countries stressed the desirability of establishing the potential for horizontal and vertical integration during project formulation. In connection with Programme of Action III, a number of countries noted the emergence of competing demands for land and water and their need for assistance in resolving such issues. Several countries expressed the view that increased attention should be given to providing information to the private sector, for example regarding the costs of inputs and market conditions. The Latin American countries expressed their gratitude to the Government of Italy for its generous support of the regional aquaculture project and their strong desire that this project should be extended. The African delegations registered their wish for a follow-up to the aquaculture training activities, particularly the reactivation of the African Regional Aquaculture Centre which had provided valuable training to senior aquaculturists in the region.

55. The Committee did not discuss Programme of Action IV in view of its link with Item 5.2 of the Agenda.

56. A number of countries welcomed the increase in the support being given to Programme of Action V because of the importance of this Programme to the poorest.

57. The representative of UNDP expressed satisfaction for the recognition afforded UNDP by FAO with regard to the support given by it to the Programmes of Action. He noted that the two agencies must work together to ensure the relevance and sustainability of projects. He expressed support for the reorientation of the ADCP Programme from issues of biotechnical importance to those concerned with planning and management support. Although UNDP inter-regional funding of ADCP will cease at the end of 1989, support to regional

and national aquaculture projects is continuing. He expressed the hope of UNDP that FAO will ensure the continuity of the activities currently carried out by ADCP. UNDP attached great importance to the role of information in stimulating development and, accordingly, had funded the interregional project Clearing House for Fisheries Advisory Services. The emphasis given by FAO to environment, investment, training and the role of women in fisheries was welcomed. On behalf of the other Steering Committee Members, the EEC and the World Bank, he noted the efficient support given by FAO to the Fisheries Development Donor Consultation, Paris, 1986 and to the African Regional Fisheries Development Consultation, Abidjan, 1987 and listed a number of the outputs of the Consultations and their follow-up.

58. The representative of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) advised the Committee that a consultation on the fisheries industry would be held in the Asia/Pacific region during the next biennium. This would be the first regional consultation to be held by UNIDO in association with FAO following the joint Global Consultation in the Fisheries Industry held in Gdansk, Poland, in 1987. The Committee noted with satisfaction UNIDO's activities in this field in close association with FAO.

59. The representative of the World Bank reported on the status of the international fisheries research study which had been recommended by the Fisheries Development Donor Consultation in 1986. He noted that the study, which is being supported by over 17 donor agencies, would make a substantial contribution in assessing the priorities for future fisheries research in developing countries and in analysing institutional weaknesses which may be preventing full use of existing information. The first meeting of the Advisory Committee for this study would take place at the World Bank in Washington in mid-May 1989 and the study is expected to be ready for submission to the next Donors' Consultation scheduled to take place early in 1990. He expressed the hope that governments would encourage institutions dealing with the study team to extend to it as much support as possible.

60. The observer from the European Economic Community stated that the basic principles of the Programmes of Action are key elements in prioritization of the EEC fisheries and aquaculture development programme, and further noted that partner countries and FAO's experience in the context of the Programmes of Action was utilized by EEC in its project design. Fisheries management and research issues ranked high on the priority list. She supported the vertical integration and long-term approach to small-scale fisheries development. With regard to Programme of Action IV, she expressed the hope that more attention would be given to the promotion of domestic and intra-regional trade in lower value fish products, such as are produced by the artisanal sector which plays a key role in the strive of developing countries towards food self-sufficiency. With regard to ensuring that the role of women in all sections of the fisheries sector be taken fully into account, she advocated recruitment of women to the staff and their involvement in project work from the very beginning.

61. The representative of IOC expressed satisfaction with the cooperation established with FAO, particularly through Ocean Science in Relation to Living Resources (OSLR) and the GFCM. He referred to several studies undertaken by IOC in connection with recruitment of commercial species and expressed IOC's wish to further strengthen its cooperation with FAO through OSLR and at the regional level.

(b) Report on the Second Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, Rome, 24-27 October 1988

62. This item was introduced by Mr H.M. Carandang (Philippines), Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, on the basis of document COFI/89/5 which reviewed the topics discussed at the Second Session of the Sub-Committee and summarized its main recommendations. The Chairman particularly highlighted the following conclusions:

- (a) Activities under Programme of Action No. IV on International Trade in Fish and Fishery Products endorsed by the 1984 FAO World Fisheries Conference should continue in order to enhance the participation of developing countries in fish trade, and to assist value-added product development and export promotion through practical measures.
- (b) A Technical Assistance Programme for Fishery Commodities and Marketing Development was endorsed by the Sub-Committee and it had agreed that the core implementation units of this programme would be the Regional Fish Marketing Information and Technical Advisory Services. These services were considered to be the most cost effective and appropriate vehicles for implementing the Programme.
- (c) The Director-General of FAO should approach the Common Fund for Commodities as and when it becomes operational, requesting it, when appropriate, to designate the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade as an eligible International Commodity Body in order to sponsor and follow-up projects on fishery commodities which may be financed by the Fund.

63. In addition to the above conclusions, the Chairman informed the Committee that the Common Fund was expected to become operational in June 1989 and its Governing Council would hold the first session in July 1989.

64. The Chairman also underlined the importance of international trade for fisheries development in many developing countries, with total net receipts of foreign exchange from fish exports having approached US\$ 10,000 million in 1988.

65. The Committee gave general support to the recommendations of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade. It was of the opinion that the work of the Sub-Committee had been fruitful and agreed that it should be continued. A few delegations indicated that further thought should be given to the longer-term role of the Sub-Committee and its relationship to COFI. The Technical Assistance Programme for Fishery Commodities and Marketing Development was considered both necessary and appropriate.

66. In order to prepare for the implementation of the Technical Assistance Programme for Fishery Commodities and Marketing Development, the Regional Fish Marketing Services had consulted with their member countries and were drafting detailed project proposals. These would be reviewed by the Sub-Committee for endorsement before submitting them to the Common Fund.

67. It was brought to the attention of the Committee that the current situations of the four Regional Fish Marketing Information and Technical Advisory Services were quite different. INFOFISH had accomplished a good income position to finance its operations. Expectations that INFOFISH and

INFOSAMAK would be taken over by existing regional organizations, by OLDEPESCA and by the Arab Fisheries Company respectively, had so far not materialized and prospects to that effect were not promising. INFOPECHE had secured funding until the end of 1989 and an extension of the present project with funding from Norway was under consideration. FAO was in contact with member countries and donors in order to ensure continued funding.

68. The Committee expressed concern about the uncertain future of the network of Regional Services, which had carried out much useful work to enhance the international trade in fish and fishery products of developing countries. It appealed to FAO and donors to ensure continuation of funding for the network of regional fish marketing information and technical advisory services. The delegate of Norway indicated that his Government had contributed with about US\$ 5 million to the programme and expressed his Government's appreciation of the work performed over the past several years, which was considered very successful and merited continued support also from other potential donors.

69. It was suggested that the work of the Regional Fish Marketing Services should also pay attention to traditional products, largely originating from the artisanal fishery sub-sector and which would be relevant for intra-regional markets. In this regard the Secretariat informed that INFOPECHE had initiated an activity of monitoring the availability of fish and fishery products on local and regional markets in order to help ensure the availability of such products for domestic consumption and intra-regional trade.

70. The Secretariat offered the view to the Committee that the designation of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade by the Common Fund for Commodities as an International Commodity Body would not change the legal status of the Sub-Committee with regard to the Committee on Fisheries or to FAO.

71. The Committee reiterated that in establishing its Sub-Committee on Fish Trade it had very much in mind the criteria contained in the agreement on the Common Fund for Commodities for the Designation of International Commodity Bodies (ICB), with a view to seeking recognition of the Sub-Committee as an eligible ICB, if and when the Fund becomes operational. The Committee therefore agreed that the Director-General of FAO be asked to approach the Common Fund for Commodities in due course requesting it to designate the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade as an International Commodity Body in order to sponsor and follow-up projects of fishery commodities financed by the Fund. Some delegations suggested that it would be premature to arrive at a final position on funding from the Common Fund while the future operation of the Common Fund was still under consideration.

72. The Committee agreed that national delegations to the Sub-Committee meeting be encouraged to include representatives of industry and trade as advisors to their delegations. It noted that such participation had been most fruitful for the work of some other bodies, such as the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission.

73. With regard to the date and place of the Third Session of the Sub-Committee there was general agreement that sessions should generally be held on a biennial basis in connection with the sessions of the Committee in Fisheries itself, unless there were reasons, e.g., in connection with its possible designation of an ICB by the Common Fund, which would require different arrangements.

(c) The work of FAO in fisheries during 1990-91

74. The Committee considered this item on the basis of document COFI/89/6 which provided an excerpt from the Director-General's proposed Summary Programme of Work and Budget 1990-91, to be submitted to the Ninety-fifth Session of the Council in June 1989, through the Programme and Finance Committees.

75. A number of delegations drew attention to the late arrival of the document and stated that their comments could only be preliminary as there had not been sufficient time for the document to be considered carefully by their authorities. The Secretariat explained that the late submission of the document was related in part to the tight schedule of preparation of the Summary Programme of Work and Budget and in part to the difficult conditions under which the Secretariat was presently forced to operate.

76. The Committee expressed appreciation for the improvement in the presentation of the document which provided tables showing net changes down to programme element level and brief descriptions on changes proposed within and between sub-programmes.

77. In discussing the programme framework for 1990-91, the Committee noted and supported the main programme priorities which had been included in the Outline Programme of Work and Budget to the Joint Session of the Programme and Finance Committees held on 30 January and 1 February 1989. It also noted that the Director-General's approach was to propose net increases for Chapter 2: Technical and Economic Programmes in which the fisheries programme is included and for Chapter 4: Technical Cooperation Programme.

78. The Committee was informed that the proposals for Major Programme 2.2: Fisheries had been developed, as in the past two biennia, within the framework of the Strategy for Fisheries Management and Development and the Programmes of Action approved by the 1984 FAO World Fisheries Conference.

79. The Committee, in general, noted with satisfaction that the increase proposed for the fisheries programme was 1.9 percent as compared with a 1.1 percent increase for the Organization as a whole. Some delegations observed that increased funding for fisheries would need to be considered in the context of overall budgetary constraints and other competing demands. Others did not accept any approach to zero growth and felt that the proposals were minimal.

80. The Committee noted with satisfaction that aquaculture had been selected as one of the main priority areas. Several delegations noted that among other selective priorities, some had significant implications for fisheries such as sustainable development; agricultural data development; policy advice; and women in development. However, some delegations called for more pronounced reflection of these priorities in the Summary Programme of Work and Budget proposals.

81. The Committee endorsed the proposed areas for specific attention under Programme 2.2.1: Fisheries Information, which aimed at modernizing and updating the systems used to process, store and retrieve information and statistics. It particularly supported the proposed expansion of the Fishery Investment Project Information System (FIPIS) including the establishment of one Fishery Information Officer P-3 post. In the field of fishery data and statistics, the Committee concurred with the major thrust to be given to

improving timeliness and accessibility of the fishery statistical database (FISHDAB), the increased provision for the fishery data centre services, and for improvement of aquaculture statistics. Nevertheless, concern was expressed at the low level of direct support to member countries in the development of their fishery information and statistical systems.

82. The Committee expressed its satisfaction with the proposed activities outlined under Programme 2.2.2: Fisheries Exploitation and Utilization which aimed at bringing all fishery resources in marine and inland waters under properly managed exploitation, accelerating aquaculture development and reducing wastage and post-harvest losses. It re-emphasized the importance it had attached to the assessment of environmental impacts on marine and inland fisheries; a number of delegations expressed the wish to see greater resources devoted to the protection of aquatic environment.

83. The Committee stressed the importance of the work carried out under Sub-programme 2.2.2.1: Marine Resources and Environment, which deals with activities related to the conservation and management of marine fishery resources. A number of delegations requested FAO to seek extra-budgetary funding for projects aimed at the assessment of coastal and inshore fishery resources.

84. Several delegations raised the question of how sustainability of resources is covered in the work of the Fisheries Department. The Secretariat explained that the proper use of resources is the basic principle in all fishery management and development, as stipulated in the Strategy for Fishery Management and Development approved by the 1984 FAO World Fisheries Conference.

85. Two delegations expressed their reservations regarding provision for technical support of the proposed Indian Ocean Tuna Commission and felt that this was premature. The Secretariat explained that this provision would not call for additional resources as it would substitute the support presently given to the IOFC Committee for the Management of Indian Ocean Tuna.

86. The Committee strongly supported the substantial increase in allocations for Sub-programme 2.2.2.2: Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture. It endorsed the proposed establishment of two new posts, viz. a Senior Aquaculture Development Adviser, P-5 and an Aquaculture Specialist, P-4, in order to provide co-ordination and support of the activities of the Aquaculture Development and Co-ordination Programme (ADCP) which would have no extra-budgetary support after the end of 1989. It was pleased to note that inland fisheries would also continue to receive attention under this Sub-programme, although several delegations wished to see a more specific provision for meeting the needs of landlocked States.

87. Under Sub-programme 2.2.2.3: Fish Production, the Committee endorsed the priority given to the implementation of the Clearing House for Fishery Advisory Services in Fishing and Aquaculture Technology and the consolidation of activities related to the cooperative use of vessels for fisheries research, development and training. It requested that increased priority be given to offshore fishing and to the promotion of the utilization of currently underutilized stocks through the adoption of appropriate fishing technology. It also noted that small-scale fisheries would continue to receive a high level of support through the development of fishing vessels and fishing technology and through the support to fishermen's organizations.

88. The Committee noted the important role of women in the fisheries sector. The Secretariat pointed out that support to the activities related to the role of women was an integral part of all sub-programmes in fisheries.

89. The Committee noted that the focus of Sub-programme 2.2.2.4: Fish Utilization and Marketing, continued to be supporting activities related to the implementation of Programmes of Action No. IV on International Trade in Fish and Fishery Products and No. V on the Promotion of the Role of Fisheries in Alleviating Undernutrition with no proposed change in the level of resources. It agreed that the support to the network of regional fish marketing information services should be sustained and the work on reduction of wastage and post-harvest losses expanded to cover also economic and domestic marketing aspects. The Committee was informed that the provision for support to the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade included under this Sub-programme was directed at the preparation of relevant technical material and studies while administrative support for holding meetings of the Sub-Committee were included under Sub-programme 2.2.3.2.

90. The Committee also noted that no net programme changes had been proposed for Sub-programme 2.2.3.1: Fisheries Policy and Planning. It emphasized that training in fisheries development and management planning as well as small-scale fisheries should continue to receive high priority. The Committee reiterated its strong support for the policy advisory services being provided in the planning of fisheries management development and investment under this Sub-programme.

91. As regards the work under Sub-programme 2.2.3.2: International Coordination and Liaison, many delegations emphasized the importance they attached to the administrative and technical support to FAO's regional fishery bodies. The Committee endorsed the proposals to outpost a Headquarters Fishery Liaison Officer for a period of two years to West Africa to serve CEEAF and to promote regional collaboration in the region.

92. While many delegations asked for an increase, some delegations questioned the rationale behind the proposed increase in the budgetary allocation to Regional Offices under Major Programme 2.2: Fisheries. The Secretariat informed the Committee that there was no overall increase proposed for the Regional Offices.

93. Several delegations emphasized that while FAO should continue to play a leading role in the development of fisheries, complementarity had to be ensured between FAO's Programmes and those of other bodies working in the same field.

94. The Committee agreed that the fisheries programme as proposed was balanced, responsive to the needs of member countries and constituted an acceptable basis for the preparation of the full Programme of Work and Budget in fisheries for consideration by the Twenty-fifth Session of the FAO Conference.

A STANDARDIZED SYSTEM FOR THE MARKING AND IDENTIFICATION OF FISHING VESSELS

95. The Committee considered this item on the basis of document COFI/89/7 and related information papers.

96. The need for an international standard system for the marking and identification of fishing vessels operating or likely to operate in waters of

States other than those of the flag State was first identified at the Fifteenth Session of the Committee on Fisheries and subsequently included in the Strategy for Fisheries Management and Development approved by the World Fisheries Conference. The basis for a standard was elaborated at an Expert Consultation on the Marking of Fishing Vessels convened in Halifax, Canada, in 1985.

97. The Sixteenth Session of the Committee had reviewed the Report of the Expert Consultation and invited the Director-General to develop technical specifications as a basis for a standard system. This was carried out at an Expert Consultation convened in Rome in June 1986 and these specifications were presented at the Seventeenth Session of the Committee. At that Session, a number of delegations requested more time to review the specifications and it was agreed that the issue be discussed at the next Session of the Committee.

98. In the intersessional period, the Director-General issued the draft specifications to Ministers responsible for fisheries in FAO Member Governments, inviting comments on the extent to which the draft specifications for a standard system met national requirements. The Committee was informed that 41 FAO Member States replied to the Director-General indicating, for the most part, that the standards satisfied national requirements.

99. The Committee was advised that, whereas the standards had been prepared for all types of fishing vessels, large and small, adoption of the standard specifications on a voluntary basis allows sovereign States to decide on the size of fishing vessels to which the marks should be applied, within the vessel categories set out in the specifications in Part II, Chapter 3, paragraph 3.1.3 of document COFI/89/Inf.10 - Report of the Expert Consultation on the Technical Specifications for the Marking of Fishing Vessels (FAO Fisheries Report No. 367).

100. The Committee supported, in principle, the endorsement of the specifications and their adoption on a voluntary basis. Some delegations, however, explained that it would take time for the implementation of the system because of existing practices, bilateral fishing agreements, and the special problems of small fishing vessels.

101. The observer from the EEC, on behalf of its 12 Member States, informed the Committee that the specifications were not incompatible with the system of marking adopted by the Community and that both systems could be used together. It therefore could endorse the specifications provided that consensus was achieved on a global basis. The Community, however, noted that for technical and practical reasons small vessels operating outside of Community waters should not be required to be marked in accordance with the specifications.

102. Several delegations mentioned that exceptions were required for the application of the specifications to small vessels but suggested that the matter should be left to individual governments to decide.

103. A number of delegations, however, noting the problem of illegal fishing and in some instances poaching by unmarked fishing vessels, endorsed the draft specifications as a basic means to protect the fishery resources and their artisanal fishing vessels and gear. In this connection FAO assistance was requested for drafting appropriate legislation and implementation of the system. The Delegation of Senegal, on behalf of the Member States of the Sub-Regional Fishery Commission, informed the Committee of a meeting of the Working Group on Marking of Fishing Vessels which would be held in Dakar during the first half of May 1989. The Delegation informed that FAO would be invited to participate in the above-mentioned meeting.

104. The Committee was informed that both the International Maritime Organization's Ship Identification Number Scheme and the proposed FAO marking system were not in conflict.

105. Concerning the proposed amendments to the specifications, most delegations favoured the choice of black and white as contrasting colours. There was agreement that the words "including the top of the wheelhouse" be inserted into the definition of a deck.

106. In connection with the marking of fishing gear, the Committee noted that the elaboration of a standard would be of benefit to coastal States but that it would be premature for the Committee to consider this complex matter. It requested that further studies should be undertaken.

107. Most delegations agreed that there was a need for a review of lights and shapes displayed by fishing vessels engaged in fishing, and certain types of fishing gear. The Committee invited the Director-General to bring this matter to the attention of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), and noted that careful consideration must be given to the costs that any changes may imply.

108. The representative of IMO informed the Committee of that Organization's work involving fishing vessels, safety at sea for small vessels, and the reasons for a need for a protocol to the Torremolinos Convention, 1977. In this respect, the proposed marking system, if applied to small vessels, would be of great benefit for the quick identification of casualties by helicopters. The representative confirmed his Organization's willingness to cooperate with FAO on the studies associated with the marking of fishing gear.

109. The Committee recommended that the draft specifications for a standard system for the identification and marking of fishing vessels be amended so as to include the new definition of a deck and to provide, within the text, that the standards be adopted on a voluntary basis.

110. The Committee invited the Director-General to take necessary steps to circulate the standard specifications as endorsed by COFI to all Member States of the United Nations, relevant specialized UN agencies and international organizations concerned with fisheries.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

(a) Outcome of the Conference for the adoption of a draft agreement for the establishment of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission

111. The Secretariat introduced the item, recalling that in view of increased fishing of tuna stocks in recent years, most coastal States and fishing nations of the Indian Ocean region acknowledged the need for a resource management mechanism. The report of the Conference which took place from 3 to 7 April 1989 was made available to the Committee on Fisheries. The Conference had been attended by 25 Member Nations eligible to become members; and by five other Member Nations, one non-member State, and the European Economic Community, attending as observers.

112. The meeting was informed that the Conference had not reached the stage of adopting a draft agreement which had been proposed under Article XIV of the Constitution of FAO. Although there was substantial agreement on the need for the establishment of a Commission, some issues remained to be resolved. These

included the issues of membership, effectiveness of management and the legal framework, in particular whether the Commission should be established under Article XIV. A number of factors would have to be taken into account in seeking a resolution of this issue, including the need to ensure that an adequate degree of technical support and backstopping could be provided by FAO and the desirability of ensuring as full a participation as possible by the EEC in the Commission.

113. The Conference had recommended that, later in the year, a further conference should be convened to discuss a revised draft of the agreement, to be prepared by the Secretariat after consultation with concerned countries and parties. In response to concerns expressed at the Conference about the continued financing of the Indo-Pacific Tuna Programme, a number of countries, UNDP and the EEC had pledged to continue their financial support until a new tuna body was established.

114. One delegation, representing a territorial interest in the Indian Ocean, expressed concern that in its view the excessively restrictive legal framework of Article XIV might counteract the goal of rational management by not offering the possibility of full membership to the EEC, thereby relieving vessels of its member countries from the need to adhere to the management schemes. It suggested that the Secretariat should propose a range of alternative legal structures, giving a full analysis of their financial and membership implications.

115. The Committee noted the outcome of the Conference for the Adoption of a Draft Agreement for the Establishment of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission and supported the need to reach an early conclusion on this matter.

(b) Underutilized species

116. The Secretariat was requested to consider including practical topics on the Agenda of future sessions of the Committee, for example the development of fisheries and markets for underutilized species, a problem of common interest to many countries.

DATE AND PLACE OF THE NINETEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE

117. It was agreed that the Committee should meet in Rome in the Spring of 1991. The exact date would be determined by the Director-General in consultation with the Chairman.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

118. This report was adopted on 14 April 1989.

APPENDIX A

Agenda

1. Opening of the Session
2. Adoption of the agenda and arrangements for the Session
3. Election of Officers
4. World Fisheries and FAO
 - 4.1 Trends and prospects for capture fisheries and aquaculture in the next 25 years and the role of FAO
 - 4.2 Review of the FAO regional fishery bodies and their role in TCDC and ECDC
5. FAO's medium and short-term fisheries programmes
 - 5.1 The 1984 World Fisheries Conference's Programmes of Action: progress and future priorities
 - 5.2 Report on the Second Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, Rome, 24-28 October 1988
 - 5.3 The work of FAO in fisheries during 1990-91
6. A standardized system for the marking and identification of fishing vessels
7. Any other matters
8. Date and place of the Nineteenth Session of the Committee
9. Adoption of the Report

APPENDIX B

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APPENDIX C

List of Documents

- COFI/89/1 Provisional annotated agenda and timetable
- 2 Trends and prospects for capture fisheries and aquaculture in the next 25 years and the role of FAO
- 3 Review of the FAO regional fishery bodies and their role in TCDC and ECDC
- 4 The 1984 World Fisheries Conference's Programmes of Action: progress and future priorities
- 5 Report on the Second Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, Rome, 24-27 October 1988
- Add.
- 6 The work of FAO in fisheries during 1990-91
- 7 A standardized system for the marking and identification of fishing vessels
- COFI/89/Inf.1, Rev.2 List of documents
- Inf.2 List of delegates and observers
- Inf.3 Opening statement by the Director-General
- Inf.4 Review of the state of world fishery resources
- Inf.5 Review of developments in aquaculture
- Inf.6 Suppl. Fishery commodities 1988-89 (updated)
- Inf.7 Report of the Seventeenth Session of the Committee on Fisheries, Rome, 18-22 May 1987
- Inf.8 Report of the Second Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, Rome, 24-27 October 1988
- Inf.9 The role of FAO in fisheries research
- Inf.10 Report of the Expert Consultation on the Technical Specifications for the Marking of Fishing Vessels, Rome, 16-20 June 1986
- Inf.11 The role of FAO in fisheries training
- Inf.12 Activities implemented in support of the 1984 World Fisheries Conference Programmes of Action
- Inf.13 Study of international research needs in fisheries
- Inf.14 Observations of the Government of the Republic of Argentina on Fisheries Circular No. 710/Rev.6

APPENDIX D

Opening Statement by the Director-General

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

Welcome to Rome, to the Headquarters of FAO and to the Eighteenth Session of the Committee on Fisheries.

At this Session, your Committee has a task of unusual importance and of some complexity. In essence, you will be asked to examine the major issues facing world fisheries, both in the immediate future and over the longer term, and then provide guidance on how the Organization can strengthen its work in this sector which, in many parts of the world, contributes so much to human nutrition and to social and economic progress.

Major issues
facing world
fisheries

I would like to identify three partners in meeting this challenge, each of whom has a special contribution to make. From the high-level representatives of national fisheries administrations here present, we will hear the experienced views of those daily engaged in leading countries towards sustained exploitation and sound management of their fish resources. You, distinguished delegates, know better than anyone the needs and aspirations of your countries in this respect and can suggest how FAO can best help you to enhance the self reliance and capacities of your countries.

Next I would refer to our colleagues from sister agencies, donor organizations and other bodies concerned with fisheries and marine affairs. With them, we look forward to re-inforcing our long-standing collaborative efforts to promote fisheries management and development.

Thirdly, there is the impartial expertise, depth of experience and dedication represented by FAO and the staff of the Fisheries Department in particular.

The framework for your discussions falls into two main parts. First, you are invited to consider the underlying trends in world fisheries and to examine their long-term implications for FAO's future priorities and programmes of work in the fisheries sector.

The substantive paper we have prepared for you in this regard reviews the major factors confronting those responsible for fisheries and identifies main areas for emphasis and attention by FAO.

There have been profound changes in world fisheries over the last forty years. Production has grown very substantially - from some 20 million tons annually in the immediate post-war years to recent levels exceeding 90 million tons. Trade in fish products has also greatly expanded; its value has increased four-fold in real terms since 1960. We have experienced an historically important evolution in the legal regime of the oceans.

However, the effort exerted on many major stocks of fish now approaches or even exceeds the point of maximum sustainable yield. It becomes increasingly difficult to extract, at acceptable costs, those additional supplies required to meet rising demands.

This situation calls for concerted action on two parallel fronts.

On the one hand, we must give high priority both to better management of the fisheries and to bringing economically to the market species presently under-exploited. We must promote further growth in supplies from aquaculture and give close attention to the effects of environmental degradation.

At the same time, we must continue to wage a vigorous war on waste by making better use of existing catches. We must also continue to safeguard the welfare of the small-scale fisherman and his family.

**FAO's
support for
training and
research
activities**

To assist Member Nations meet these challenges, I am convinced that FAO should concentrate its resources and skills upon those issues in which it has a comparative advantage and unique mandate.

In this connection, we will strengthen our support for training and research in fisheries. We will re-inforce FAO's leading role in the collection, analysis and dissemination of fisheries information and data. Emphasis must also be placed upon the Organization's function as a centre for policy advice and analysis on the intricate problems of fisheries development, management and investment. We must devote special attention to emerging issues such as the inter-relationships between capture fisheries and aquaculture, multi-disciplinary approaches to integrated coastal and rural development and to the protection of the aquatic environment.

I would also like to place special emphasis upon FAO's pre-eminent role in promoting international and regional collaboration in fisheries. We therefore await with keen interest your debate on the functions and activities of the FAO regional fishery bodies and your views on how to strengthen and rationalize these important channels for inter-country cooperation.

I wish to mention that last week, here at Headquarters, most coastal states and fishing nations operating in the Indian Ocean have agreed, in principle, to create a new management body for the tuna resources in that region and have called for the adoption of an agreement later this year.

The second part of your Agenda deals with the most immediate tasks confronting the Fisheries Department.

Results
achieved since
1984 World
Fisheries
Conference

In this respect I have pleasure, and am indeed proud, in presenting to you a further report on progress achieved in implementing the five Programmes of Action endorsed by the 1984 World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development. The report describes the extraordinary diversity of assistance and advice channelled through these Programmes, not only by FAO but by other organizations and bodies. Over the past five years I have been very pleased to note the consistent growth in the external funds contributed to these Programmes. They have now reached levels well beyond the original indicative targets. Once more, I would like to thank the donors and other development agencies which have so generously supported these Programmes.

We must now build upon this sound foundation and consider, in the light of your debate on the emerging world fisheries situation, the ways in which the Programmes can be sustained, strengthened or re-orientated. In particular, your advice will be sought on how best to tackle certain issues which are common to all the five Programmes. For example, we must give attention to the increasing concerns over the effect of environmental changes upon fisheries, to the efficient delivery of training and transfer of competences and skills, and to the role of women in fisheries which embraces many key aspects of the sector.

I am also pleased to report on advances with two other initiatives arising from the World Fisheries Conference. Your Sub-Committee on Fish Trade held its second session last October. Its Report and recommendations illustrate the value already attached by Member States to the objectives and work of this Sub-Committee. I look forward particularly to the prospects of further progress with one of the Sub-Committee's major recommendations - the creation and funding of a special Programme of Technical Assistance for Fishery Commodities and Marketing Development.

Another initiative arising from the World Fisheries Conference concerns the elaboration of a standard system for marking and identification of fishing vessels. This is a difficult and indeed in some ways a delicate matter but one which, if successfully concluded, would represent a very significant step towards the more efficient management of fishery resources. Your comments and, I trust, concrete recommendations on this important matter will be examined with great interest and attention.

Conclusion

Finally, Mr Chairman, I would refer to my proposals for FAO's fisheries programme in the 1990/1991 biennium.

Once again, the financial tensions assailing our Organization have added to the difficulties of drawing up proposals for the next Programme of Work and Budget. However, in making my recommendations, I have continued to adopt the policy of directing the bulk of the additional resources to the technical and economic programmes of the Organization.

I have therefore proposed, despite the overall constraints, a modest increase in the budget of the Fisheries Department. These additional resources, combined with savings from completed activities or areas of lower emphasis, should enable the Department to sustain, and indeed re-inforce, its capacity to serve you by concentrating on those activities which FAO can do best.

Your advice and comments on FAO's immediate work programmes in fisheries will be the culmination and distillation of your earlier debates at this Session on the major issues of concern in world fisheries. I am confident that you will address these important matters in your traditional spirit of cooperation and consensus and that your experienced guidance will be offered with a sense of pragmatism and vision.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

