



منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food
and
Agriculture
Organization
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the
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Organisation
des
Nations
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pour
l'alimentation
et
l'agriculture

Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная
организация
Объединенных
Наций

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

THIRTY-FIRST REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Panama City, Panama, 26 to 30 April 2010

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION FOR INLAND FISHERIES OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

1. The Commission for Inland Fisheries of Latin America and the Caribbean (COPESCAL) was established in 1976 with the objective of promoting research into the rational utilization of inland fishery resources; assisting governments of the Region to establish the scientific basis for application of fisheries regulatory measures; supporting the development of aquaculture; and fostering training and education to achieve these objectives.

2. The Commission is open to all FAO Member Nations and Associate Members and is served by the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean. Current members are: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Eleventh session of COPESCAL

3. The eleventh session of the Commission for Inland Fisheries of Latin America and the Caribbean was held from 1 to 4 September 2009 in the city of Manaus, at the kind invitation of the Government of Brazil. It was attended by 21 delegates from 15 member countries of COPESCAL, together with observers from the Central American Organization of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector (OSPESCA), the Centre for Marketing Information and Advisory Services for Fishery Products in Latin America and the Caribbean (INFOPECSA), the Common Fund for Commodities and observers from Brazil.

Main decisions and recommendations of the Commission

Intersessional activities

4. The Commission was informed that only one of the ten main activities recommended at its tenth session remained to be completed, this being the strengthening of cooperation between countries for the management and sustainable utilization of fishery resources in transboundary basins.

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5. The Commission was informed that the other decisions and activities recommended at its tenth session had been satisfactorily implemented, in particular the establishment of a post and appointment of a Fisheries and Aquaculture Officer at the FAO Subregional Office for South America, whose functions included providing technical support to COPESCAL.

6. The Commission was also informed of the establishment of the Intersessional Working Group (IWG) and its meeting in Lima (October 2008), and the convening of a meeting on technology transfer for aquaculture in Asunción (December 2008). It was also briefed on activities relating to the establishment of the regional cooperation network on aquaculture.

Review of the state of inland fisheries in the countries of COPESCAL

7. Inland fisheries play an important economic role in many countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, in terms of generation of employment, income and food supply and, increasingly, as a source of foreign currency. However, their contribution is particularly important for food security and as a livelihood for sizeable rural populations living close to major rivers and lakes, where inland fisheries often contribute significantly to mitigating critical conditions of vulnerability deriving from geographical isolation and social and economic marginalization. Available information is limited, but partial studies highlight the extreme social importance of inland fisheries for poorer waterside populations, often serving as their sole source of high-quality protein.

8. As statistical information and research in the COPESCAL region are incomplete and partial, recorded capture levels may be underestimates of actual production. Bearing this in mind, the figures indicate a regional production of some 500 000 tonnes for 2007, which is 5 percent of global inland fisheries production.

9. The Commission agreed that there was considerable economic potential for recreational fisheries in the Region and that it was important to involve waterside communities in planning the development of this sector so as to avert conflict between fishing for food and fishing for recreation. As regards catches of ornamental species, a study of the situation and recent developments was needed. Such a study should look into the distribution of benefits along the commercial chain and at existing regulations for national and international trade in ornamental fish.

10. The Commission agreed that it would be extremely useful to study the processes of restocking rivers and reservoirs and their results in different parts of the continent, in order to properly assess their ecological, economic, social and other impacts. The Secretariat offered to promote the realization of related case studies in the Region, subject to the explicit interest of respective member countries.

11. The Commission approved a recommendation put forward by the countries of Central America and Mexico, and seconded by Ecuador, that, within its sphere of competence and jurisdiction, COPESCAL should hold a workshop to examine restocking as a tool for inland fisheries based on aquaculture.

12. The Commission agreed that enhancing the gathering, processing and analysis of statistical data on inland fisheries capture was a high priority. The delegate of Brazil informed the Commission of his Government's decision to hold a COPESCAL related workshop during the intersessional period, focused on exchanging information on statistical methodologies for the gathering and analysis of respective data on inland fisheries for food, recreation and ornamental purposes, and on aquaculture.

13. The Commission thought it appropriate to promote the conduct of studies in member countries on the social and economic importance of inland fisheries. Such studies would serve to enhance the formulation of sectoral policies and would help determine priorities for better management of inland fisheries and their associated fish stocks.

14. There is a need for coordinated data collection and for the harmonization of management strategies. The delegates of Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay expressed a strong interest in participating in initiatives of collaboration and information exchange with neighbouring countries with which they shared watersheds and fishery resources.

15. The Commission agreed on the merit of holding a discussion workshop on cooperation in the management of fishery resources in transboundary basins and their ecosystems. The Commission noted with appreciation the offer of the delegate of Argentina to host such a workshop, which should take place before the twelfth session of COPESCAL. The Commission also recommended that early arrangements be made to initiate an exchange of information on the state of fishery resources in transboundary basins and their ecosystems.

16. In this regard, the Commission identified the following tasks:

- a) Identification and mapping of transboundary basins to be considered as priorities because of their importance.
- b) Invitation to relevant countries to exchange information on fishery resources of those basins and their ecosystems, and on matters considered important for cooperation and coordination.
- c) With support from the COPESCAL Secretariat, realization of meetings of the above countries, basin by basin, to formulate bilateral and trilateral projects, with participation and funding of the countries concerned.

Analysis of options to strengthen the role of COPESCAL

17. The Secretariat explained that a study had been conducted on strengthening the role of COPESCAL. It was recalled that the tenth session had examined various options for strengthening the role of the Commission and had established an Intersessional Working Group. The Commission considered each Working Group proposal and adopted the following decisions and recommendations:

Amendment and update of COPESCAL Statutes and Regulations

18. The Commission accepted the Working Group's conclusion that it would not be advisable at this stage to change the regulatory framework of COPESCAL so that it were governed by Article XIV of the Constitution of FAO, as it considered that the conditions did not exist to recommend such a change.

19. With regard to the Statutes, the Commission unanimously approved the recommendations of the Working Group, which are provided in Annex A of this report.

Administrative measures to improve the functioning of COPESCAL

20. The Commission welcomed the findings and recommendations of the Working Group regarding administrative measures to strengthen the Secretariat and to achieve greater coordination and commitment of member countries of the Commission. It reiterated the need for all member countries to appoint COPESCAL National Coordinators who would collaborate actively with the Secretariat and with their peers in the countries concerned. Member Nations also needed to ensure that their delegations to Commission meetings included high-ranking representatives of relevant national authorities with powers of decision.

21. It endorsed the Working Group's recommendation to encourage the participation of donor countries in the work of the Commission and to foster closer collaboration between the Commission and other national and international bodies, such as local watershed authorities.

Complementary mechanisms for financing the Commission, in addition to the FAO contributions

22. Noting that the Secretariat's resources were limited, the Working Group recommended alternative and additional sources of funding to supplement the resources received from FAO's regular budget. In this regard, the Commission approved the following arrangements proposed by the Working Group to cover the cost of certain Commission activities:

- Promotion of cooperative research between member countries and the Secretariat;
- collaboration of FAO projects with the Secretariat on information sharing, exchange of experts, training activities, technical meetings and other matters of interest to the countries involved;
- collaboration with regional projects and programmes funded by international bodies;
- donor contributions for specific activities; and
- the Commission's collaboration with the private sector on research activities, technical studies, analysis of complex issues, training or technical assistance, funded by chambers, associations, clubs, companies or private binational agreements.

Progress in establishing a regional cooperation network on aquaculture

32. The Secretariat reported that FAO had supported the process of reactivation of an aquaculture network for the Americas in response to the recommendations of the tenth session of COPESCAL, the recommendations of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and the fourth meeting of the COFI Subcommittee on Aquaculture.

33. The meeting on reactivation of the network was held in Guayaquil, Ecuador, from 10 to 12 June 2009. Its purpose was to agree a mission, define a vision, design a structure and develop a plan of action that would serve to establish this regional cooperation network on aquaculture. The conclusions and recommendations of the meeting were reflected in a letter of intent signed by the delegates of the countries present. The participants at the meeting in Guayaquil agreed that the network would be an intergovernmental organization open to all the countries of America, without exception. It was also suggested that the network should have a Secretariat, including an Executive Secretary, with financial and logistical support from the host country, at least during the initial phase.

34. Three countries offered to act as initial host of the network: Brazil, Ecuador and Peru. The participants at the Guayaquil meeting chose Brazil as the initial host for the network, until it was formally established, with the understanding that Ecuador and Peru would host it during two successive periods, provided that the proposal was subsequently ratified by the member countries of the network.

35. The delegation of Brazil stated that in accepting the Secretariat of the network, the country had assumed financial, administrative and logistical commitments to support its necessary activities and operation. The delegations of Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic and El Salvador expressed the interest of their countries in joining the initiative and providing it with appropriate support. The delegates expressed their hope that active and fruitful collaboration would develop between the network and COPESCAL.

Workshop on the status and needs of cooperation for rural aquaculture development in the Region

36. As part of the eleventh session of COPESCAL, a workshop was held on the status and needs of cooperation for rural aquaculture development in the Region. The main objective was to consider the status of small-scale aquaculture and its scarce resources to stimulate reflection on the constraints that impeded production self-sufficiency, and possible actions to incorporate sectoral producers into value chains to facilitate their economic enhancement at household and community level.

37. The workshop agreed that technical assistance to producers should encourage them to become self-managers and administrators of their activity. Effective policies were needed to

incentivize producers so they did not need constant technical assistance and appropriate public policy was needed for platforms to pursue such approaches. It was noted that the workshop had recommended that regional training projects take into account the emerging regional cooperation network on aquaculture, which would improve the coordination of actions and potentially provide follow-up to a training network for sustainable small-scale aquaculture.

38. The workshop recommended the adoption of extension systems that were effective in transferring technology and promoting producer self-management, with follow-up actions that reflected a framework of ecosystems and interdisciplinarity. It recommended that mechanisms be ensured to convey knowledge and guidance to the field for effective implementation, and that monitoring mechanisms be elaborated and adopted, using simple indicators.

39. The workshop participants recommended that successful experiences of rural aquaculture work with coastal communities in selected countries of the Region be disseminated and replicated in other countries. It also recommended the organization, during the COPESCAL intersessional period, of a regional workshop to standardize methodologies for sectoral evaluation, as a first step towards the eventual formulation of a regional project in support of this sector.

Other matters

40. The observer from INFOPECA gave a presentation on the project "Improving market access to Amazon fishery and aquaculture products" financed by the Common Fund for Commodities and executed by INFOPECA. The project, which started in 2009, has a duration of three years and focuses mainly on Brazil, Colombia and Peru. Its general objective is to develop trade and marketing of Amazon fishery and aquaculture products in order to meet market demand through large-scale environmentally sound aquaculture production. The immediate objectives are to conduct market surveys in Lima and Iquitos (Peru), Bogota (Colombia) and Manaus, Brasilia, Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo (Brazil). The project results will be presented to fishers, aquaculturists and wholesalers as part of training on the marketing of fishery and aquaculture products.

41. The Commission recommended that the date of the twelfth session be determined by the Director-General of FAO in consultation with the Chair, preferably towards the end of 2011. The Commission welcomed the delegate of Mexico's proposal to host the session, subject to official confirmation by his Government. The delegate of Argentina also suggested that his country be considered as an alternative venue for the twelfth session, again subject to official confirmation.

ANNEX A
PROPOSED TEXT FOR THE STATUTES OF COPESCAL

I. STATUTES

The Council,

Recognizing the proven importance of inland fisheries and aquaculture for Latin America, and the urgent need to consolidate activities for the further development of this sector,

Keeping in mind that the need to create an inland fisheries body for Latin America was indicated at the ninth session of the Committee on Fisheries and that the Council, at its sixty-fourth session, had authorized the Director-General to hold consultations with the Governments of all FAO Member Nations belonging to the Region and, in the light of those consultations, to make the necessary arrangements for the establishment for a regional body that would deal with inland fisheries,

Taking into account that most of the consulted Member Nations supported the creation of such a body, and that no opposing views were stated,

“Does hereby set up, under Article VI.1 of the Constitution, a commission called “Commission for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture of Latin America and the Caribbean – COPESCALC”, whose statutes are provided in Annex to this resolution.”

ANNEX TO RESOLUTION 4/70

1. “The purpose of the Commission is to promote the management and sustainable development of inland fisheries and aquaculture activities, in accordance with the principles and rules of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.”
2. “The Commission shall:
 - Foster the development of inland fisheries and aquaculture as an instrument of support to food security.
 - Pay special attention to subsistence inland fisheries and small-scale aquaculture.
 - Be able to establish coordination and cooperation relations with other international organizations in thematic areas of mutual interest.

Interpretation and application of these statutory provisions shall be made in accordance with the principles and rules of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and its related instruments.”

3. All Member Nations and Associate Members of the Organization that are served by the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean may become members of the Commission. The Commission shall be composed of those Member Nations and Associate Members which meet the necessary conditions and notify the Director-General of their desire to join.
4. The functions of the Commission are:
 - a) To support the formulation of national and regional policies and plans for the management and development of inland fisheries and aquaculture, with due consideration of the social, economic, cultural and environmental aspects of the Member Nations.
 - b) To promote and coordinate studies for the management and sustainable development of inland fisheries and aquaculture, as well as national and regional programmes of research and development related to such activities.
 - c) To foster the sustainable development of subsistence inland fisheries and small-scale aquaculture.
 - d) To promote regional activities aimed at protecting ecosystems related to aquaculture and inland fisheries, including, as the case may be, appropriate restocking actions.
 - e) To promote the application of the ecosystem approach and the implementation of adequate certification and biosafety measures in inland fisheries and aquaculture.

- f) To identify the social, institutional and economic factors which hold back the development of inland fisheries and aquaculture, and recommend measures which will contribute to improving the quality of life of stakeholders.
- g) To collaborate in the management and economic and social assessment of recreational inland fishing and its development.
- h) To promote the implementation of good management practices and sustainable technologies in inland fisheries and aquaculture activities in accordance with the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.
- i) To promote good post-catch and post-harvest practices, and good marketing practices for inland fisheries and aquaculture products, in accordance with internationally accepted sanitary and food safety standards.
- j) To contribute to institutional capacity building and to human resource development through training, extension and technology transfer in areas of competence of the Commission, in collaboration with national and regional institutions.
- k) To assist in the generation, dissemination and exchange of data, information and statistics on inland fisheries and aquaculture.
- l) Upon their request, to help Member Nations with the management and sustainable use of transboundary stocks under their respective national jurisdictions.
- m) To collaborate with Member Nations in the formulation of national and regional plans and projects to be executed in cooperation with those Member Nations, and with other sources of international cooperation, in order to attain the objectives set out in the previous paragraphs.
- n) To promote the update and harmonization of national legislations on inland fisheries and aquaculture.
- o) To mobilize monetary and non-monetary resources to facilitate the activities of the Commission and to create, if necessary, one or more trust funds to receive voluntary contributions for this purpose.
- p) To promote collaboration among Member Nations of the Commission, and between the latter and international bodies.
- q) To draw up the Commission's plan of work.
- r) To perform any other functions related to the management and sustainable development of inland fisheries and aquaculture in the Region".

5. Subsidiary bodies

- a) The Commission may set up an executive committee and subsidiary bodies as required for the efficient performance of its functions.
- b) The creation of any subsidiary body shall depend on the Director-General indicating that the necessary funds are available in the relevant chapter of the Organization's budget. Before making any decision involving expenses relating to the creation of a subsidiary body, the Commission shall have a report issued by the Director-General on the consequent administrative and financial implications.

6. Reports

At appropriate intervals, the Commission shall issue reports on its activities and make recommendations to the Director-General so that he may take them into account when preparing the draft Programme of Work and Budget of the Organization or other documents to be submitted to its Governing Bodies. The Director-General shall inform the Conference, through the Council, of any recommendation approved by the Commission that may have an impact on Organization's policy or affect its programme or finances. As soon as they are ready, copies of the Commission's reports shall be sent to all Member Nations and Associate Members of the Organization and other international bodies.

7. Secretariat and expenses

- a) The Secretary of the Commission shall be appointed by the Director-General, to whom he/she shall report on all administrative matters. The expenses of the Commission's Secretariat shall be determined and defrayed by the Organization, without exceeding the relevant appropriations considered in the approved budget of the Organization.
- b) In order to promote the development of inland fisheries and aquaculture, the Organization may also create trust funds to collect voluntary contributions from Member Nations of the Commission, or from private or public entities, and the Commission may advise on the use of such funds, which shall be administered by the Director-General in accordance with the Financial Rules of the Organization.
- c) The expenses incurred by the representatives of the Members of the Commission, their alternates or counsellors, for attending meetings of the Commission or its subsidiary bodies, as well as the expenses of observers during the meetings shall be defrayed by their respective governments or organizations.

8. Observers

- a) All Member Nations or Associate Members of the Organization which are not part of the Commission but which are interested in the development of inland fishery or aquaculture activities in Latin America and the Caribbean may, upon prior request, be invited by the Director-General to attend the meetings of the Commission or its subsidiary bodies, in the capacity of observer.
- b) Nations which are not Associate Members of the Organization, but are Members of the United Nations or of any of its specialized agencies or the International Atomic Energy Agency, may, upon request and with the approval of the Council of FAO, be invited to attend the meetings of the Commission or its subsidiary bodies, in accordance with the provisions relating to the granting of observer status to countries, approved by the Conference of the Organization.

9. Participation of international organizations

The participation of international organizations in the work of the Commission and relations between the Commission and such organizations shall be governed by the relevant provisions of the Constitution and the General Rules of the Organization, and by regulations applicable to relations with organizations approved by the Conference or the Council of the Organization.

10. Rules

The Commission may approve and modify its own rules, which must be consistent with the Constitution and the General Rules of the Organization, and with the Declaration of Principles governing the Commission and Committees approved by the Conference. The rules and modifications to those rules shall enter into effect at the time of approval by the Director-General.