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منظمة
الأغذية والزراعة
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FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EUROPE

Thirtieth Session

Antalya, Turkey, 4 - 6 May 2016

**Report from the outcome of the debate of the 28th Session of the European
Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC)**

Executive Summary

The Council at its 151st session in March 2015 as well as the Conference at its 39th session in June 2015, in reviewing the document “Assessment of FAO Governance Reforms (C2015/26 Rev.1) endorsed the suggestion “*that the priorities identified by the regional technical commissions on forests and fisheries could be included as an integral part of the Regional Conference reports to Council as regard priorities for the work of the Organization in each region*”.

The European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC)¹ at its 28th Session held in Lillehammer, Norway on 17-19 June 2015², accepted this recommendation and requested for the EIFAAC report to be presented as separate agenda item at the ERC.

Guidance Sought

The members are invited to review the summary report and to:

- Accept that the EIFAAC reports to the ERC
- Request EIFAAC to identify and discuss priorities of work for the region in its future sessions and issues to be brought to the attention of future ERC Sessions
- Note the issues raised by the Commission, especially paragraphs 22, 24-28 and 30-35

¹ www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/eifaac/en

² www.fao.org/fishery/nems/40720/en

*This document can be accessed using the Quick Response Code on this page;
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PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This is the final version of the report as approved by the Twenty-eight Session of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC), which was held in Lillehammer, Norway on 17-19 June 2015. The report was prepared by the EIFAAC Secretariat.

The material in the appendixes is reproduced as submitted.

FAO. 2015.

Report of the Twenty-eight Session of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission, 17-19 June 2015, Lillehammer, Norway. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Report No. 1117. Ankara.

ABSTRACT

The twenty- eighth Session of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC) was held in Lillehammer, Norway, from 17 to 19 June 2015. The Session reviewed the intersessional progress in implementing EIFAAC projects and generated scientific recommendations. The Commission approved a workplan for the next intersessional period.

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OPENING OF THE SESSION AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1. The twenty-eighth Session of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC) was held in Lillehammer, Norway, from 17 to 19 June 2015 under the Chairmanship of Mr Cathal Gallagher (Ireland). The Session was attended by representatives from Croatia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Ireland, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey.
2. The Chairperson, opened the Session, welcomed the audience and cordially thanked the representatives of the Government of Norway for hosting the Session. He then gave the floor to Mr Lars Andreas Lunde, Deputy Minister of the Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment.
3. Mr Lunde welcomed the Session on behalf of the Host Country. He stated that Norway has thousands of lakes and in addition many rivers which host a considerable number of fish species, including trout, salmon, whitefish and pike perch. He gave several examples of nation-wide efforts on the restoration and conservation of fisheries resources for commercial and recreational fisheries. Mr Lunde added that development of recreational fisheries had recently become a national high priority. He mentioned a number of protection measures taken by Norway to progress the objectives of the EU Water Framework Directive. He also underlined the contribution of Norway to regional and international cooperation in the field of fisheries.
4. Following the welcome addresses on behalf of the Host Country, the Secretary of EIFAAC, Mr Thomas Moth-Poulsen welcomed the participants in the name of the Director-General of FAO, Mr José Graziano da Silva. He extended a warm welcome to the participants and cordially thanked the representatives of the Government of the Norway for hosting the Session. He stated that Norway has been one of the leading Nations promoting FAO's international instruments and the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries. In this regard, the Secretary made a special reference to the Nansen Programme and other contributions of Norway for the promotion of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. He also thanked Norway for its great support and generosity in respect of the EIFAAC Symposium on Recreational Fisheries, a successful joint activity held back-to-back with the 28th Session of the Commission.
5. The Commission adopted the provisional agenda without changes, as provided in Appendix 1 to this report. Appendix 2 contains a list of documents submitted to the Commission before the Session.

EIFAAC WORK PLAN FOR THE INTERSESSIONAL PERIOD 2012-2015

Report from the Management Committee (MC)

6. Mr Gallagher updated the Session on the progress made in implementing the inter-sessional activities under the 2012-2015 work plan of EIFAAC as well as on the EIFAAC Management Structure. The Session was provided with information on the changed working model of the Management Committee following the re-structuring of the Commission in 2012 – a change that aimed at strengthening operational efficiency. In this regard, he explained that the former Working Parties- based work model was transformed into a project-driven working organisation where each project is reviewed against clustered priorities identified by the Commission. He emphasised that, being a statutory body under Article VI of the FAO Constitution, the Commission's functionality depends to a large extent on FAO's financial framework. The Chair mentioned that new project templates have been developed, old work programmes were reviewed, several new projects have been developed, and a functional process was introduced for project review, monitoring and reporting. He indicated that the Commission has established effective cooperation with a number of associations and organizations and that EIFAAC was represented as observer at North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO). The partnership in symposiums and other activities of the Commission had also improved significantly. He added that effort has been allocated to the preparation and dissemination of scientific and technical publications which have received wide acknowledgement. He gave examples of the EIFAAC advice offered to varying Members and stakeholders.

7. The Chair opened the floor for general comments and questions. Discussions were centred on possible funding sources, strengthening internal and external EIFAAC communication and how the European Union would consider management and conservation advice from EIFAAC and possibly translate it into decision-making processes. The need to fill vacant positions in the MC was also brought to the attention of Session.

Report from the Technical and Scientific Committee (TSC)

8. Mr Teppo Vehanen, Chair of the Technical Scientific Committee, provided basic information for the session on the history, structure, mandate, responsibilities and past work of the TSC. He explained that all projects have timelines and they are updated on a six monthly basis to reflect actual progress against agreed objectives and terms of references. Technical discussions were on the basis of the working document EIFAAC/XXVIII/2015/2.

Status of projects

9. An update on the progress of the EIFAAC Project on Freshwater Aquatic Invasive Species in Europe, which commenced in early 2012, was provided by Mr Joe Caffrey, convenor of the project. In this context, problems created by a number of high impact freshwater invasive species were presented. Mr Caffrey presented the objectives of the project and stressed that most of these objectives were met when they convened an international conference focused on freshwater invasive species. The conference was entitled 'Freshwater Invasives – Networking for Strategy' (FINS) and was held in Galway, Ireland in April 2013. The pillar themes for this conference were Biosecurity, Management & Risk Assessment, Policy and Economics. The session was informed that one of the key outcomes of the conference was the identification of a list of the 20 major issues affecting invasive species in Europe - information which was distributed through focal points to all of the EIFAAC countries.

10. This information was also used to provide focus on the proposed EU Regulation on Invasive Alien Species, which was signed into law on January 1, 2015. The results from the conference relating to the top 20 issues were published in an open access, international, peer reviewed journal, in a paper entitled 'Tackling Invasive Alien Species in Europe: the Top 20 Issues' (http://www.reabic.net/journals/mbi/2014/1/MBI_2014_Caffrey_etal.pdf) in early 2014. A further and more wide-ranging publication relating specifically to this conference was recently published as an EIFAAC Occasional Paper (No. 50), which will ensure a broad European audience for this important theme. It has further been proposed that a presentation on 'aquatic invasive alien species and proposed management measures be considered for the FAO's flagship publication SOFIA 2016. With a view to furthering the objectives of the EIFAAC Project, Mr Caffrey mentioned to the meeting that it is proposed to convene a FINS II conference in Croatia in summer 2016. Mr Caffrey finally informed the Session of one further outcome of the FINS conference that is directly relevant to the EIFAAC Project, namely the formation of an Advisory Group comprising of experts from countries throughout EIFAAC countries that will advise and inform the Project in the future.

11. A report on the Joint EIFAAC/the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) and the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) (or EIFAAC/ICES/GFCM Working Group on Eel, WGEEL), was delivered by Mr Russell Poole, on behalf of Alan Walker, Project Manager of the Group. Since the 2012 Session of EIFAAC, the WGEEL met in September 2012 (Copenhagen), March 2013 (Sukarietta), September 2013 (Copenhagen) and November 2014 (Rome). The Group has been addressing four generic areas of activity within its terms of reference over the recent past: (i) assessing the current status of the stock and trends in recruitment, landings, stocking, aquaculture and glass eel trade; (ii) developing an international stockwide assessment to support the provision of scientific advice; (iii) providing scientific support to the EU and Member States on the Regulation for recovery of the eel stock, including standardisation of data collection, analysis and assessments, and (iv) other factors influencing the decline and recovery of the eel stock including eel quality issues (e.g. parasites, diseases and contaminants), anthropogenic mortality issues other than fisheries and management issues to reduce mortality and increase production and escapement. The WGEEL welcomed the inclusion in 2014 of the countries in the GFCM area into the

group which broadens the assessment of the whole international stock. The WGEEL reports annually to EIFAAC, ICES and GFCM and ICES develop and provide scientific advice in response to requests from the EU. The latest scientific information indicates the stock status remains critical, recruitment increased significantly in 2013 and 2014 but remains below the historic reference level and current silver eel escapement ($B_{current}$) for the assessed areas reported by Member States in 2012 (data not peer-reviewed) is at approximately 6% of the pristine historic (B_0), i.e. below the EU target of 40%. Anthropogenic mortality (ΣA) remains high. Recovery of the stock will be a slow process.

12. A briefing on the progress with the EIFAAC Project on Developing Advice on Sustainable Management Actions on Cormorant Populations was made by Mr. Petri Heinimaa, Project Manager of the project. It was stated that key stakeholders have differing perspectives and positions related to cormorants, populations of which are reported to grow in Europe for a range of reasons with implications for fisheries. Although a number of regulatory management measures and rules have been enforced at local and national levels, a European-wide management approach to sustainable management of cormorants has not been put in place. A satisfactory solution to the problem of overexploitation of fish stocks by the cormorant is still to be found. The project “Sustainable management of cormorant populations”, which was implemented by the EU over the period 2011-2014, was identified as a primary tool contributing to achievement of the EIFAAC project. It was noted that remarkable progress was made in terms of collection, dissemination and reporting of information on the status of cormorants across Europe. However it was noted that the project had limited success in development of dialog for better management practices in the Baltic Sea region. The Session was informed that works are underway to organize a workshop as part of the project.

13. Mr Teppo Vehanen, Chair of the Technical and Scientific Committee (TSC) gave an overview of in the implementation of the EIFAAC Project “Welfare of Fishes in Aquaculture.” He outlined the efforts allocated to preparation of a report. In this regard, he referred to the workshop held in Langenargen, Germany in 2014 where the final outline of the report was framed against the objectives of the project. It was added that the final outputs of the project (i.e. a report and an EIFAAC statement including recommendations concerning welfare of fishes in inland aquaculture) are planned to be delivered in 2017 through a consultation process.

14. Mr. Vehanen reported on the intersessional progress of the EIFAAC Project “Downstream Passage of Fish at Hydropower Dams” that ultimately aims to provide better management practices, approaches, techniques and methods for effective downstream passage by fish. It was added that the project plans to prepare and publish a technical publication reflecting better management and technical guidelines. He further informed the Session of the specific tasks and proposed activities of the three sub-tasks of the project which were drafted at a Working Group Meeting held in Chatou, France in 2014. The final guidelines are also designed to include downstream fish migration schemes. The project outputs are expected to contribute to better implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive. The Session was informed that the next meeting of the group is scheduled for 26 June 2015 in Groeningen, following the Fish Passage 2015 conference.

15. Report on the project “Development of Guidelines on the Design of Nature-Like Fish Passes” was also presented by Mr Vehanen. The objectives and planned work programme of the project were outlined. The Session was informed that the scheduled activities were not realised mainly due to the work burden of the project team. However it was stated that the guidelines will be drafted soon for circulation.

16. An outline progress of EIFAAC Project on Support to Fish Passage 2015 Conference was presented by Mr Vehanen. The Session was informed that several meetings took place for the organization of the Conference scheduled to be held in Groningen, the Netherlands on 22-24 June 2015. The project was seen as a positive initiative contributing to EIFAAC’s strategic goals to Initiate or enhance formalized collaboration with other organizations and to build stronger partnerships with fisheries-related institutions and stakeholders.

17. The TSC Chair further reported on the EIFAAC Project for the EIFAAC Symposium on Recreational Fisheries. The Session was informed that with successful organization of the Symposium almost all of the expected outcomes of the project have been achieved. The Symposium explained why recreational fishery is important in terms of socio-economic value and in delivering additional benefits including social, health and cultural benefits. The symposium also explored many important topics including the following:

- Engaging new users
- Development of fish stocks for recreational fisheries
- Restoration, conservation and protection of habitat
- The sharing on international best practice in recreational fisheries management

18. The session took note of the intersessional work programme activities carried out after the Twenty-seven Session of EIFAAC and the progress made by the above-mentioned projects.

SHORT REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EIFAAC SYMPOSIUM ON “RECRATIONAL FISHERIES”

19. Mr Cathal Gallagher introduced the report and recommendations from the EIFAAC Symposium on Recreational Fisheries: Managing freshwater recreational fisheries in an era of change, which was held in Lillehammer, Norway on 15-17 June 2015 in conjunction with the twenty-eighth Session of EIFAAC. The symposium, jointly organized by the Norwegian Environment Agency and supported by a number of organizations and agencies, was attended by almost 200 participants from 22 countries. Participants in the Symposium included researchers, industry representatives, and decision-makers from a range of disciplines and they shared novel research findings, practical experiences and management approaches to the sustainable management of recreational fisheries.

20. The Symposium was sponsored by the Government of Norway and fully achieved its goal in providing a platform for discussion of the importance of recreational fisheries in terms of socio-economic value and in delivering additional benefits including social, health and cultural benefits. The symposium also explored many important topics in its discussion on recreational fishing in an era of change including:

- how best to engage and encourage new participants
- how to manage and develop fish stocks for recreational fisheries
- identification of key elements in the restoration, conservation and protection of aquatic and riparian habitats
- how to facilitate the sharing on international best practice in recreational fisheries management

21. The Symposium included plenary sessions, keynote presentations, parallel thematic sessions, oral presentations, and roundtable discussions. The technical parallel sessions were organized in the following three thematic subgroups, the key discussion points and recommendations of which were reported to the plenary session: (i) dynamics of recreational fisheries; (ii) how and why is recreational fishing important relative to other uses and ecological services of freshwater ecosystems; and (iii) management challenges in freshwater recreational fisheries. NASCO sponsored an award for the two best student papers presented at the symposium. Mr. Gallagher also informed the Session that the papers presented at the Symposium were of the highest quality and that delegates provided very positive feedback on the topics discussed.

22. The Symposium made the following recommendations which were adopted by the Commission:

- EIFAAC should consider further evolution into a European Fisheries Society (European form of American Fisheries Society) or similar body as there are a number of areas of concern to fisheries scientists which the EU does not seem have no strong focus such as

- (i) recreational fisheries ii) aquaculture iii) hydropower and iv) predator control.
- In order to support the future of recreational fishing, the academic arena need to strengthen the role and the position of classic / applied fisheries science. It was identified that throughout Europe there has been a decline in applied fisheries science, with many institutions having their focus changed to more wide ranging conservation based organisations with fundamental fisheries science techniques being lost. Also identified was the need to the recruitment and development of applied fisheries scientist to support the future conservation, management and sustainable exploitation of the recreational fisheries resource.
 - There is a real need to increase the understanding of the impacts of management policy on recreational fisheries and how scientific advice drives management and policy decisions with a view to improving this process.
 - There is a need to have a better transfer of information / techniques between freshwater and marine science. It is recommended that there is an increase in cooperation between EIFAAC & ICES.
 - Citizen science presents a great opportunity to gather wide range of data. The process to facilitate accurate and accepted citizen research projects needs to be developed and supported within the fisheries sector. This would enable this valuable resource to support the future management and policy actions required in recreational fisheries.

EIFAAC WORK PLAN FOR THE NEXT INTERSESSIONAL PERIOD 2015-2017

23. Discussions were based on the working document EIFAAC/XXVIII/2015/3. The Chair outlined the proposed next intercessional work plan establishing links with the existing strategy of EIFAAC and the EIFAAC priority areas identified by the Members in 2010. He informed the Session that a request for an update on Members priorities were sent to Operational Focal Points before the Session with a view development of an updated EIFAAC priority list.

24. The Chair opened the floor for comments and proposals for the work plan activities and work, which was followed by discussions. The Commission agreed on the continuation of the on-going EIFAAC projects. Additionally, the following new topics were proposed by the Session for consideration for inclusion in the EIFAAC Work Plan for the intersessional period:

- ***Social and economic aspects of inland fisheries and aquaculture***
The session acknowledged that increased focus should be placed on the socio-economic aspects of Fisheries and Aquaculture. This also comprises of the socioeconomic relations and impacts between recreational fisheries, aquaculture and the commercial inland fisheries sector. A number of Members indicated that in their home research institutes a focus has been brought to this area by internal socioeconomic specialists. It was also noted that FAO fisheries projects normally include the important socioeconomic pillar. In general the Members recommended that consideration should be given to the development of a project focused on an integrated cooperation between fisheries biologists, economists and sociologists.
- ***Enabling Riverine continuity***
The Members recommended that the MC consider the development of a project to support riverine continuity through the removal of barriers. This project should consider all element and stakeholders in its definition. There are many aspects to considers here, including: assessment of barriers for fish passage, economic factors for maintaining and removing barriers, social issues, planning, engineering and hydro-morphology.
- ***Standardization of sampling techniques, protocols and catch reporting***
The Session identified a need to develop international standard to support the comparison of fish sampling programmes across member states. It was also recognized that these standards could benefit from further refinement through international collaboration with

fishery scientist in North America. It was also recommended that management committee consider the development of standard catch reporting requirements for anglers.

- *Citizens to support fisheries science*

The Members were supportive of the use of Citizen Science to facilitate sampling for fisheries research, the benefits of which were highlighted through a number of papers presented at the symposium. The discussion also clarified the need to ensure sampling programmes are well defined and citizens involved well trained. The Members recommended that EIFAAC investigate and document the benefits and limitations of inclusion of Citizen Science when applied to fisheries research. The Session also recommended the development of protocols and procedures to facilitate the efficient introduction of Citizen Science into applied fisheries research.

25. Attention was drawn to potential cooperation with a number of organizations which was regarded essential for improvement of the profile of EIFAAC. The proposed topics were accepted by the Commission although some concerns were expressed about the difficulties in standardization of techniques and protocols. Promotion of citizen science was considered critical for the data-poor fisheries and for the fish species that attract less research interest. Mr Vehanen, Chair of TSC underlined the need to document these proposals against EIFAAC strategic objectives before their approval and enforcement by the Commission.

26. It was mentioned that fisheries institutions are gradually becoming more receptive to the employment of socio-economist. Attention also was drawn to promotion of recruitment of young researchers in respect of recreational fisheries. A need for sustaining collaboration and technical contributions of Member States to the work programme was highlighted.

27. It was suggested EIFAAC should collaborate with the ICES Working Group on Recreational Fisheries Surveys. Furthermore, it was recommended that EIFAAC would engage with the Researcher Exchange Programme offered by American Fisheries Society. It was noted that there exists numerous potential organizations who could contribute to particular activities of EIFAAC. The Chair mentioned the internship positions offered by FAO to EIFAAC. As regards data collection, collaboration with FAO FishStat group was suggested based on the experience of the eel project. Supporting of PhD programmes within EIFAAC structuring and work framework was also seen possible through external financial support, particularly that of the EU.

28. There was a shared view that the Commission should engage more in inland aquaculture issues across Europe where focus today is mostly placed on marine aquaculture and in particular on farmed salmon. EIFAAC needs to fulfil its role in the development of scientific and technical advice for EU e.g. by development of position papers. A role was proposed for EIFAAC in raising public awareness on aquaculture. It was suggested that EIFAAC would re-focus on stocking issues. The positive role of the informal group of land-locked countries (LLC Group) as a partner of EIFAAC awareness-raising on that issue was noted.

29. The Session was supportive of the 2015-2017 Work Plan submitted before the session, (Appendix 3). The Commission agreed on the revision of the additional work programme items referred to in paragraph 24 by MC, in collaboration with TSC, and circulation of the revised Work Plan to Members by the EIFAAC Secretariat after the 28th Session.

REVIEW OF THE NEED FOR AN EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS AND THE FUNCTIONING OF THE REFORMED EIFAAC

30. Following an introductory briefing on the reformed structuring of EIFAAC in 2012, the Chair opened the floor to general comments and proposals. The Session in general went through the last structural changes in terms of operational effectiveness and functioning. Thus no additional structural amendment was proposed. The Commission however identified the following challenges that hinder its works: (i) financial structuring; (ii) attendance at Sessions; and (iii) coordination and networking via Operational Focal Points assigned by Member States.

31. Members questioned the financial pattern of EIFAAC within the FAO organizational structure. In response, the Session was informed that for the time being, the EIFAAC Secretariat had no individual budget following the transfer of the Secretariat seat to the FAO Sub-regional Office for Central Asia based in Ankara, Turkey. The Session was further informed that the budget previously allocated by FAO Headquarters to the Secretariat was limited and mostly used for essential expenses, including travel of Secretariat staff and translation. The EIFAAC Secretariat was requested to clarify the details in relation to the budget and resources allocated to EIFAAC and to report this information to the Members.

32. The lack of full attendance of Members States at sessions was seen as negative impact on the effectiveness and functioning of the Commission. Several Member States stressed the delays and difficulties in getting the invitation letters by their national competent authorities responsible for inland fisheries.

33. Many comments were made regarding assignment of Operational Focal Points by the Member States and their role in effective communication. Operational Focal Points were expected to be more active in strengthening the communication while providing more feedback and raising an overall awareness to their home country on the EIFAAC and disseminating the outputs of the activities of the Commission.

34. The Commission noted the great efforts made by the Officers of the MC and TSC and the EIFAAC project leaders. The work burden associated with these positions was noted.

35. The Session decided that the following recommendations be considered by EIFAAC members in the management of inland fisheries and aquaculture:

- **Recommendation:** EIFAAC identifies a clear need to calculate the economic value of recreational fishing and inland aquaculture. This emanated from the EIFAAC symposium which discussed many topics around the future of recreational fishing, including technical, scientific, social, welfare, management and socio economic issues.
- **Recommendation:** EIFAAC is concerned about the impact of cormorants on the status of fish stocks and eco-systems; EIFAAC recognises the trans-boundary nature of this issue and recognises the need for international co-ordination and species management.
- **Recommendation:** EIFAAC recommends a pan-European approach to identification, classification and removal of obstructions to fish passage and offers the support of its international network of experts in the achievement of this goal.
- **Recommendation:** EIFAAC recommends that current management actions for eel are fully implemented and further management actions are urgently needed to ensure that all anthropogenic mortality is significantly reduced to support the recovery of the eel stock. The Session noted the respective recommendation of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR Convention) as agreed in June 27, 2014.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

36. A proposal of inclusion of updates and reports of the Commission to the FAO Regional Conference for Europe (ERC) was tabled taking into consideration the following independent recommendation of the Assessment of FAO Governance: “The priorities identified by regional technical commissions on forests and fisheries could be included as an integral part of the reports of Regional Conferences to the Council as regard priorities for the work of the Organization in each region”. The Session was informed that the Conference identifies the priorities for the European and Central Asian Region every biennium in all technical areas of the FAO mandate, including fisheries. It was highlighted that fisheries should have due consideration at the agenda of the Conference as it is the case with agriculture. The Session was informed that currently the respective Regional Fisheries Bodies (EIFAAC, GFCM) do not have a specific reporting line to the Conference. The Commission decided to move forward with the proposed linkage with ERC.

37. The Commission expressed its appreciation to the Government of Norway for hosting the Session and for the great hospitality exerted. The working conditions and well-organized arrangements kindly provided by the Government were appreciated.

38. The Commission appreciated the work and contribution of Mr Gerd Marmulla, former Secretary of EIFAAC, who changed the post during the intersessional period.

39. The Commission recognised and marked the sad and unexpected passing of its former Chairman Mr. Phil Hickley with a moments silence.

ELECTION OF THE EIFAAC OFFICERS

Election of the Chair and Vice Chairpersons of MC

40. Although there was no quorum present at the Session, the Commission decided to progress with the election of the EIFAAC MC and TSC.

41. The Commission re-elected Mr Cathal Gallagher, Ireland, as Chair of EIFAAC. Mr. Petri Heinimaa (Finland) was re-elected as First Vice-Chair and Mr Igor Wawrzyniak (Poland) was elected as Second Vice- Chair, respectively.

Election of members of the MC

Mr Arne Eggereide (Norway) was re-elected and Mr. Ozerdem Maltas (Turkey) and Mr. Reinhold Hanel (Germany) were elected to the MC.

42. The Commission re-elected Mr Teppo Vehanen (Finland) as the Chair of the TSC.

Election of members of the TSC

43. The re-elected members of the TSC were Mr. Joe Caffrey (Ireland), Mr. Colin Bean (UK), Mr Piotr Parasiewicz (Poland) and Ms Marina Piria (Croatia). The Following persons were elected as member of the TSC: Herman Wanningen (the Netherlands) and Cristian Skov (Denmark).

DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION

44. The date and place of the next Session will be determined by the Director-General of FAO in consultation with the Chairperson of the EIFAAC.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT AND CLOSING OF THE SESSION

45. The report was adopted, including its appendixes, on 19 June 2015.

APPENDIX 1**Agenda**Wednesday 17 June 2015*Afternoon, 14:00 – 16.45*

1. Opening of the Session and adoption of the Agenda
2. EIFAAC Workplan for the intersessional period 2012-2015
 - Report from the Management Committee (MC)
 - Report from the Technical and Scientific Committee (TSC)
3. Field study

Thursday 18 June 2015*Morning, 09:00-12.30*

4. EIFAAC activities since the 27th Session (continued)
 - Status of projects
5. Short report and recommendations from the EIFAAC International Symposium on “Recreational Fisheries” that preceded the 28th Session of EIFAAC

Afternoon, 14:00-17.30

6. EIFAAC Workplan for the intersessional period 2015-2017
 - Means of delivery of EIFAAC objectives
 - Workplan
 - New Projects
 - Strategic items
7. Review of the need for an evaluation of the effectiveness and the functioning of the reformed EIFAAC
8. Any other matters

Friday 20 June 2015*Morning, 09:00-12.30*

9. Election of the EIFAAC Officers
 - Election of Members of the TSC
 - Election of the Chair of the TSC
 - Election of Chair and Vice-Chairs of MC
 - Election of the Members of the MC
10. Date and place of the Twenty-ninth Session

Afternoon, 14:00-17.30

11. Adoption of the report and closing of the Session

List of documents

Working documents

EIFAAC/XXVIII/2015/1	Provisional Agenda
EIFAAC/XXVIII/2015/2	Report on Intersessional Activities of the Technical and Scientific Committee (TSC)
EIFAAC/XXVIII/2015/3	EIFAAC Work Plan for 2015-2017

Information documents

EIFAAC/XXVIII/2015/Inf.1	Provisional list of documents
EIFAAC/XXVIII/2015/Inf.2	Provisional list of the participants
EIFAAC/XXVIII/2015/Inf.3	EIFAAC Work Plan for the intersessional period October 2012 – June 2015
EIFAAC/XXVIII/2015/Inf.4	EIFAAC Strategy Plan for 2012 - 2016
EIFAAC/XXVIII/2015/Inf.5	Report of a Workshop on Sea Trout Rod Catch and Effort Data
EIFAAC/XXVIII/2015/Inf.6	Report of EIFAAC Twenty-seven Session

Reference documents

EIFAAC/XXVIII/2015/Ref.1	EIFAAC Rules of Procedure
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EIFAAC Work Plan for 2015-2017

BACKGROUND

The mission of EIFAAC is to promote the long-term sustainable development, utilization, conservation, restoration and responsible management of European inland fisheries and aquaculture, consistent with the objectives and principles of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and other relevant international instruments, and to support sustainable economic, social, and recreational activities towards these goals through:

- providing advice, information and coordination;
- encouraging enhanced stakeholder participation and communication; and
- delivery of effective research.

To support this mission the new EIFAAC Rules of Procedure were adopted at the Special Session on 27 October 2011 in Rome. The new Rules of Procedure, focused on modernization, are designed to improve EIFAAC's efficiency and its support to EIFAAC's stakeholders and members.

The Commission operates via the Management Committee (MC) and the Technical and Scientific Committee (TSC). The Management Committee has to implement the decisions of the Commission and coordinate and monitor the work of the TSC. The detailed operation of the Commission is outlined in the Rules of Procedure and is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

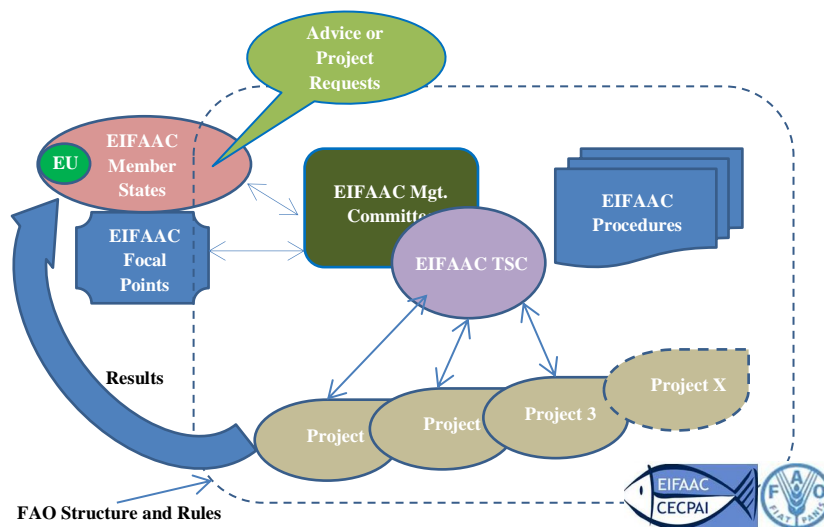


Figure 1: EIFAAC Operational Overview

Main functions of the Technical and Scientific Committee are the recommendation, evaluation and monitoring of programmes or projects. All work of the Commission is now captured and managed within projects. Figure 2 illustrates the operation of the EIFAAC Technical and Scientific Committee.

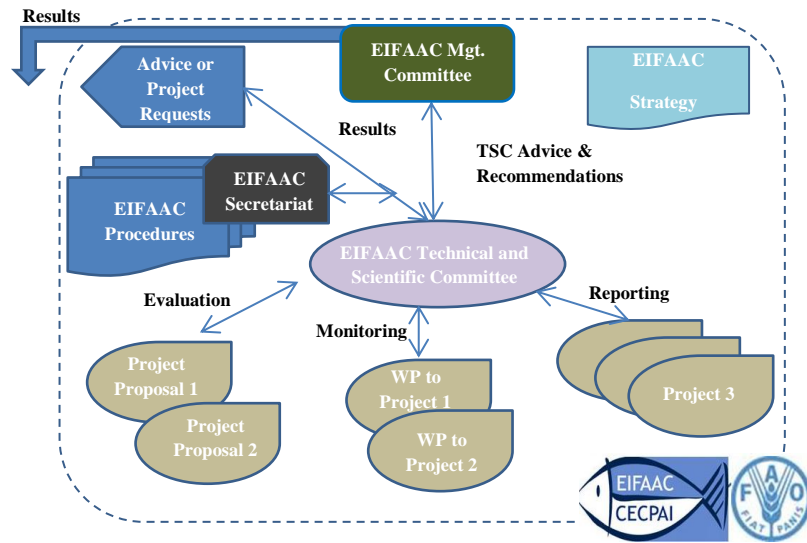


Figure 2: EIFAAC Technical and Scientific Committee operational overview

To support its work EIFAAC has a Strategy Plan for the period covering 2012 – 2016. This strategic plan details the goals and initiatives of the Commission to support achievement of its mission. To support EIFAAC’s work this document contains a work plan which outlines how EIFAAC plans to deliver against this strategy in achievement of its goals. The strategy plan will cover the period 2012-2017 until the 29th Session. A new strategy plan will be developed for the next two intersessional periods 2017-2021.

OBJECTIVES, GOALS AND INITIATIVES

The objectives of EIFAAC are:

- promote the sustainable development, utilization, conservation, management, protection and restoration of European inland fisheries and aquaculture resources based on the best available scientific advice and the application of an ecosystem approach, the precautionary approach and the need to safeguard biodiversity;
- identify and address strategic issues for European inland fisheries and aquaculture and provide advice and recommendations on future policies, measures and related actions needed to address the issues in a rapid and accountable manner as requested by Members;
- provide advice to managers/decision makers of inland fisheries and aquaculture as requested based on scientific, social, economic, legal and other factors; and
- serve as a forward-looking international platform for the collation, validation, dissemination and consideration of information on common challenges and opportunities to European inland fisheries and aquaculture, and to this end, inter alia, proactively identify:
 - o relevant scientific, social, economic, legal, statistical and other information and make recommendations for decision makers taking into account the need to protect and preserve the aquatic ecosystems; and
 - o common problems and solutions, and harmonized approaches as appropriate.

In order to achieve the goals and objectives of the EIFAAC organisation the MC have developed a work plan to support the delivery against the EIFAAC strategic plan. The follow section details actions and time bound plans to support EIFAAC in its work.

WORKPLAN 2015-2017

General issues

Action: It is important that EIFAAC, under the guidance of the Management Committee, ensures that all projects, collaboration and advice are in line with the stated objectives of the Commission.

Plan: The process developed in 2013 will be implemented to ensure that all new project proposals document how the projects will promote EIFAAC's objectives and that the TSC and the MC will review these proposals prior to acceptance. The process also facilitates the review of activated projects to ensure they are operating and supporting EIFAAC's objectives.

Time Line: Follow up that the projects are in accordance with the EIFAAC's objectives.

Action: The EIFAAC MC should report annually on progress against the agreed Strategic Objectives

Plan: The MC will hold a strategic meeting annually to review and plan progress against EIFAAC's Strategic Objectives. The outputs of this meeting will be documented and made available to the EIFAAC Operational Focal Points and to the interested public.

Time Line: Meeting held Q4 annually with report circulated in Q1 of the following year.

Action: A new strategy plan proposal will be developed for the next two intersessional periods 2017-2021.

Plan: The MC will hold a strategic meeting to develop a new strategy plan proposal for the years 2017-2021 to be decided on at the 29th Session.

Time Line: Meeting will be held in Q4 2016.

The specific goals of EIFAAC as outlined in the 2012-2017 Strategy Plan are addressed below:

Goal 1: Continue to develop EIFAAC as the leading pan-European Organisation in Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture in Europe.

Actions:

- Initiate and enhance formalized collaboration with other organisations (e.g. EU, GFCM)
- Build stronger partnerships with fisheries-related institutions and stakeholders

Plan: The MC will formally contact relevant organizations with a view to define areas of common interest and seek collaboration to the benefit of EIFAAC Stakeholders.

EIFAAC will seek to develop a theme for its next symposium which will encourage participation of relevant organization, institutions and stakeholders.

Timeline: To be implemented throughout the entire period of the strategic plan 2012 to 2017.

Actions:

- Maintain and improve the release of EIFAAC advice and Technical Papers.

Plan: The TSC has developed a process in accordance with the EIFAAC Rules of Procedure for reviewing the progress of the implementation of projects and assess the quality of their outputs. This includes a process of formal review of the drafts of intended publications (e.g. Technical Papers and reports) and advice. The EIFAAC Management Committee has put in place a process for reviewing the quality of advice and draft papers produced under the lead of the TSC to ensure they are consistent with the ethos, ethics, goals and objectives of the EIFAAC and FAO.

Timeline: To be implemented throughout the entire period of the strategic plan 2012 to 2017.

Actions:

- Alert, inform and gather specialist on inland fisheries and aquaculture from all over Europe
- Develop new, and improve existing, communication facilities.

Plan: The MC of EIFAAC will seek to communicate frequently and consistently to provide information and to seek inputs from the EIFAAC Focal Points. EIFAAC will seek to modernize communication through enhancement of its Web Page and through the use of business focused social media. EIFAAC will seek through its Technical and Scientific Committee to build expert networks on topics close to EIFAAC's core goals.

Timeline: To be implemented throughout the entire period of the strategic plan 2012 to 2017.

Goal 2: To implement processes and procedures to provide advice through projects and networks in accordance with the requirements of the Members.

Actions:

- To support the EIFAAC Operational Focal Points in the development of a network of experts and stakeholders to assist EIFAAC's specific projects.
- Enhance the communication and the participation of the Operational Focal Points in the decision-making process.

Plan: The MC of EIFAAC communicates frequently and consistently to provide information and to seek inputs from the EIFAAC Operational Focal Points. The MC will specifically request information/contact details from Operational Focal Points on interested experts within their country as projects or networks require. Both the EIFAAC MC and the TSC will provide the Operational Focal Points with the information required to engage with experts across a range of disciplines. EIFAAC will seek to modernise communication through enhancement of its Web Page and through the use of business focused social media, such as LinkedIn. EIFAAC's Operational Focal Points will be provided with updates and requested for feedback in relation to projects and other initiatives as they arise.

Timeline: To be implemented throughout the entire period of the strategic plan 2012 to 2017.

Actions:

- Inform and advise policy-makers

Plan: The MC of EIFAAC will seek opportunities to develop projects to support the development of advice and policies. EIFAAC will increase its communication with EIFAAC member's Operational Focal Points to illicit inputs for policy requirements and in order to distribute information of projects. The EIFAAC Management Committee will also seek opportunities to contribute to policy discussions within the EU, with other agencies/organisations and with stakeholders.

Timeline: To be implementation throughout the entire period of the strategic plan 2012 to 2017.

Actions:

- Seek funding for the realization of the projects

Plan: The MC of EIFAAC will seek opportunities to develop projects and to fund projects while adhering to the Rules of Procedure and operating as an Article VI body of the FAO.

Timeline: To be implementation throughout the entire period of the strategic plan 2012 to 2017.

Goal 3: Development of an international network of organizations, stakeholders, communities and intergovernmental organizations that have an interest in Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture to promote EIFAACs objectives in coordination with these bodies.

Actions:

- Identify organizations, stakeholders, communities and intergovernmental organizations which have an interest in Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture and catalogue their aims and objectives, points of contact and their relevance for EIFAAC.
- EIFAAC will brief these organization on the role of EIFAAC as an FAO regional fisheries organization and the rationale for potential cooperation
- EIFAAC will develop a system of communication with these organizations.

Plan: EIFAAC's Management Committee will identify and assess the key organisations including intergovernmental organisations, stakeholders and communities, analyze their aims and objectives, identify their point of contact and spell out why they are relevant to EIFAAC. Once complete, each point of contact will be written to by the EIFAAC Chairperson with a view to provision of an overview of EIFAAC's goals and objectives and outlining the structure and mode of operation. This communication should also outline opportunities for collaboration and a rationale for the same. The MC will review the progress on communication at each MC meeting and focus strongly on delivery against this goal.

Timeline: To be implementation throughout the entire period of the strategic plan 2012 to 2016. Review of this item to take place at each MC meeting.

Goal 4: Implement EIFAAC structures, process and procedures, in coordination with the FAO secretariat, to ensure efficient delivery for the Members objectives in accordance with best international practice.

Actions:

- Engage and motivate all EIFAAC.

Plan: Yearly the MC of EIFAAC will inform all parties of the developments of the work by the Management Committee and Technical and Scientific Committee. Yearly in Q1 EIFAAC Operational Focal Points will be informed of the status of current projects and requested to provide inputs and comments. This communication will also extend to identify stakeholders.

Timeline: To be implemented throughout the entire period of the strategic plan 2012 to 2017.

Actions:

- Inform and convince the Members of the need for financial and human resource (e.g. secretarial, scientific, engineering) support for EIFAAC

Plan: EIFAAC's MC will draft a letter to each focal point and to the appropriate Ministry within each member state and within the EU Commission informing of the progress in EIFAAC, of the benefits to be accrued from EIFAAC engagement and of the need for continued support through the FAO but also through direct support in the form of financial and expert resources. This specific action will be supported by the communication actions outlined above.

Timeline: This action will be completed in Q4 2015.

Actions:

- Monitor and seek to improve the performance of EIFAAC structures, process and procedures to efficiently administrate and coordinate the EIFAAC business in close cooperation with the Operational Focal Points.

Plan: Annually the EIFAAC MC will hold a meeting to review progress against this plan, key goals and objectives. This review will look specifically at the performance of the Commission, its processes, structures and procedures. This will include a review of progress on the projects and the operation of the TSC. This meeting will also make recommendations on improvements in how EIFAAC's work is being administered and coordinated.

Timeline: This action will be completed in Q4 annually.