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منظمة
الغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

Thirty-fourth Session

1–5 February 2021

DEVELOPMENTS IN *FORA* OF IMPORTANCE FOR THE MANDATE OF COFI

Executive Summary

This document informs the Committee of developments in other *fora* of importance in FAO, for the mandate of the Committee. The document covers the decisions and recommendations by other Governing Bodies in FAO, such as the Conference, the Council, the Regional Conference and other Technical Committees.

I. FAO CONFERENCE

1. At its 41st Session, held in Rome, from 22 to 29 June 2019, the FAO Conference¹ endorsed the Report of the 33rd Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), and in particular welcomed the increasing number of Parties to the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing (PSMA).

II. FAO COUNCIL

2. At its 160th Session, held in Rome, from 3 to 7 December 2018, the FAO Council² endorsed the conclusions and recommendations contained in the Report of the 33rd Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI). In particular:

- a. welcomed the 2018 State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) publication and requested the Secretariat to ensure it is released in a timely manner for future sessions;
- b. welcomed the improvement in the 2018 questionnaire on the implementation of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (the Code) and noted the progress of Members on the implementation of the Code and related instruments, but also identified gaps and constraints and underscored the important role of FAO in assisting Members;
- c. endorsed the reports of the 16th Session of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade and the 9th Session of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture;
- d. welcomed the increasing number of Parties to the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing, and encouraged further adherence to the Agreement; welcomed the launch of the public version of the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessel and Supply Vessels (Global Record); welcomed the global study on trans-shipment and called for in-depth studies to support the development of guidelines on best practices for regulating, monitoring and controlling trans-shipment; and expressed support for the work of FAO in continuing to develop the technical guidelines for the estimation of the magnitude and geographic extent of IUU fishing;
- e. welcomed progress in implementing the Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF) Guidelines and requested FAO to further develop an implementation monitoring system for the SSF Guidelines, with due regard for women and indigenous people; in this regard, welcomed the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture in 2022;
- f. noted the increasing importance of sustainable aquaculture development for food security and nutrition and its potential to meet growing demand to fill the gap in global fish supply, notably in inland areas; recognized the need to implement best practices in aquaculture and recommended that FAO develop sustainable aquaculture guidelines;
- g. acknowledged the ongoing work to establish a new legally-binding agreement for the conservation of marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ), noting that it should not undermine existing relevant instruments and mechanisms; and called for FAO to continue its cooperation with Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs), including Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs);
- h. emphasized the importance of Members achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG14; requested FAO to continue to assist Members in strengthening statistical capacity and delivery of their data and information; requested FAO to review potential opportunities

¹ Paragraph 51, C 2019/REP

² Paragraph 8, CL 160/REP

arising from the Blue Growth and Blue Economy initiatives; and further requested FAO to support Members in inland fisheries and in the development of best practices for the management of inland fisheries;

- i. endorsed the Voluntary Guidelines on the Marking of Fishing Gear;
 - j. welcomed FAO's work on bycatch, including marine mammal bycatch;
 - k. endorsed the priority areas of work for 2018-2019, especially in support of SDG14;
 - l. supported the hosting by FAO of an International Symposium on Fisheries Sustainability: Strengthening the Science Policy nexus, planned for November 2019 in Rome;
 - m. requested that FAO prepare and operationalize a fisheries and aquaculture biodiversity plan as part of its Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors and contribution to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) post-2020 global biodiversity framework;
 - n. noted the support for FAO's provision of scientific advice to the Codex Alimentarius Commission noting the need to ensure sustainable funding for this work;
 - o. noted the progress report by the Republic of Korea on the pilot programme for the World Fisheries University; and
 - p. requested that all COFI documents, including SOFIA, be made available in all FAO languages at least four weeks before the start of the Session.
3. At its 161st Session, held in Rome, from 8-12 April 2019, the FAO Council³:
- a. endorsed the Report of the 126th Session of the Programme Committee, and, in particular, welcomed the evaluation of the strategy and vision for FAO's work on nutrition, and management support to the recommendations presented in the evaluation; and looked forward to reviewing an updated Nutrition Strategy at its December 2019 session with an expanded scope, which would give consideration to nutrition from the perspective of sustainable agriculture and food systems and healthy diets, and addressing all forms of malnutrition; stressed the importance of strengthening capacity, especially in decentralized offices;
 - b. appreciated presentations made on the International Symposium on Fisheries Sustainability: Strengthening the Science Policy Nexus (Rome, 19-21 November 2019).

III. REGIONAL CONFERENCES

A. Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific

4. Due to the evolving situation of the coronavirus, the 35th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Asia and Pacific (APRC), originally scheduled to be held in Thimphu, Bhutan, from 17 to 20 February 2020, was postponed and held from 1 to 4 September 2020 in a virtual manner⁴. With regard to building resilience of small-scale fisheries to ensure food security and nutrition in the Pacific, the Regional Conference:

- a. Recognized the need to safeguard the contribution of small-scale and coastal fisheries to food security and nutrition, while recognizing and prioritizing actions to be taken to accelerate the rebuilding of coastal areas.

³ Paragraph 18. a) and Paragraph 30. b), CL 161/REP

⁴ APRC/20/REP

- b. Recognized the need to build on the existing international and regional goals for coastal and small-scale fisheries within the context of the Future of Fisheries Roadmap, the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication, and the New Song for Coastal Fisheries.
 - c. Recognized that small-scale fisheries are under increasing pressure following the impact of COVID-19 on income, food import and the return of Asian and Pacific populations to rural areas due to job insecurity.
 - d. Acknowledged the challenge to be faced in accelerating and sustaining efforts to more effectively manage, harvest, process and supply coastal fish to domestic consumers to meet current and future demands for locally produced, highly nutritious marine resources and contribution to the economy.
 - e. Emphasised the indispensable role coastal fisheries play in the fight against all forms of malnutrition including undernutrition, micronutrient deficiency and overweight and obesity.
 - f. Noted the importance of improved resilience and adaptation to climate change in coastal fisheries to enable sustained benefits from coastal ecosystems and recovery from natural disasters.
 - g. Recognized that Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing threatens fishery resources in the region and urge FAO to level up assistance to countries on sustainable fisheries and strengthen support to actions to prevent IUU fishing.
 - h. Welcomed the invitation to join FAO in celebrating the importance of small-scale fisheries through International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture in 2022.
5. The Regional Conference recommended FAO to:
- a. Support countries to integrate and mainstream fisheries into healthy diets for food security and nutrition planning as well as into cross-sectoral resilience-building and making fisheries an integral part of disaster risk reduction and management and climate change adaptation.
 - b. Strengthen integrated planning and management of resources in connected ecosystems (e.g. linking land and sea in integrated management and planning, such as in source-to-sea or ridge-to-reef systems).
 - c. Support countries to strengthen the resilience of small-scale fisheries to disasters, other risks and climate change.
 - d. Provide technical support to address fisheries across the food system approaches and reduce gaps in value chains. Effective interventions and capacity development must equally address the different components of the food systems, including production, processing, storage, distribution and consumption as well as enabling the full engagement of stakeholders across the value chain, ensuring gender equity and inclusion of vulnerable groups.
 - e. Assist countries in the implementation of strategies for a sustainable and safe transition from coastal and small-scale lagoon fishing to small-scale pelagic and oceanic fishing including through the improvement of safety at sea for small-scale coastal fisheries and use of small scale fish aggregating devices.
 - f. Facilitate implementation of regional and international policies and goals on coastal fisheries to support good governance and management in small-scale fisheries including combating IUU fishing. As part of this to co-operate with relevant regional bodies with competence in fisheries.
6. With regard to the impact of COVID-19 on food and agriculture in Asia and the Pacific and FAO's response, the Regional Conference emphasized the imperative to build back better through

sound policies and programs that place greater focus on resilient food systems, nutrition-sensitive food diversification, improved fisheries' sustainability given its important role in food security, particularly in the Pacific; improved storage and logistic infrastructure; leveraging of accessible digital innovations and green and climate-resilient technologies; reduced food loss and waste and improved food safety norms. The Regional Conference recommended FAO to provide technical assistance for transformative solutions and long-term recovery and resilience through development of inclusive and participatory policies for sustainable agriculture, fisheries and food systems and natural resource management.

7. With regard to the state of food and agriculture in Asia and the Pacific Region, including future prospects and emerging issues, the Regional Conference recommended FAO to provide technical and policy assistance to help smallholders and family farmers increase labour and land productivity for a wide range of food products, including staples, legumes and pulses, oilseeds, fruits and vegetables, aquaculture, fisheries and livestock products, and further diversify agriculture to make it more nutrition-sensitive.

8. With regard to building sustainable and resilient food systems in Asia and the Pacific, the Regional Conference emphasised that social inclusion is essential for promoting sustainable and resilient food systems that generate and sustain economic growth, gainful employment and livelihood opportunities in agri-food chains for smallholder and family farming and fishing communities, which have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

9. With regard to results and priorities for FAO in the Asia and Pacific Region, the Regional Conference recommended FAO to:

a. Ensure that the expanded Regional Initiatives (RI) on Climate Change and Enhancement of Sustainable Management and Use of Natural Resources includes a strong focus on human, social and economic aspects of water management, Blue Growth for fisheries and aquaculture, resilience of small-scale fisheries, forest conservation and climate change risk reduction.

b. Provide technical assistance for transformative solutions and long-term recovery from COVID-19 and build resilience for sustainable agriculture, fisheries and food systems and natural resource management.

10. With regard to prioritization of country and regional needs, Ministers and delegates:

a. Highlighted the importance promoting sustainable land, water, forestry and fisheries resources management is a priority for the region. Agriculture is a major consumer of freshwater itself and a driver of water scarcity and improvements in productivity and efficiency are required to improve water use, balancing the need for more food with the needs of other sectors and the environment. Pasture and rangelands are also coming under pressure from land degradation. Soil and water management in agriculture is still a key priority for more resilient and sustainable food systems and agriculture.

b. Highlighted the need for strengthened collaboration to support sustainable management and growth in the marine and freshwater fishery and aquaculture sectors, noting that small-scale and industrial operations continue to be an important resource in sustaining regional food security and contributions to the economy.

c. Recognized the vital role of small holders, family farmers and fisher folk, including women and youth, in achieving the Agenda 2030 SDGs and called for comprehensive support in harnessing their full potential, notably in the context of the UN Decade of Family Farming (2019-2028).

B. Regional Conference for Near East

11. The 35th Session of the FAO Conference for the Near East (NERC), originally scheduled to be held in Muscat, Oman, from 2 to 4 March 2020, was postponed and held from 21 to 23 September 2020 in a virtual manner⁵.

12. The Regional Conference adopted a Ministerial Declaration, which acknowledged, *inter alia*, the importance of small family farmers and fishers and of their organizations, and the need to support and empower these organizations to contribute effectively to their countries' economies.

C. Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean

13. The 36th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean (LARC), originally scheduled to be held in Managua, Nicaragua, from 27 to 29 April 2020, was postponed and held from 19 to 21 October 2020 in a virtual manner⁶.

14. With regard to the impact of COVID-19 on food and agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean and the response from FAO, the Regional Conference recommended that FAO, *inter alia*, facilitate the mobilization of public and private investments and public-private partnerships for food system recovery and production of crops, livestock, fisheries, aquaculture, forestry and other non-agriculture rural activities, including those that drive demand for products derives from agriculture, such as tourism, including but not limited to the Hand-in-Hand Initiative.

15. With regard to sustainable food systems to provide healthy diets for all, the Regional Conference recommended that FAO, *inter alia*,:

a. Support governments, upon their request, in the design, application, monitoring and evaluation of public policies that assist the region's progress in achieving SDG 2, in coordination with different government actors, non-governmental actors, parliamentarians and consumer organizations by means of comprehensive strategies that include, *inter alia*, promotion of the consumption of healthy food, including that from family and small-scale farming, including agriculture, livestock, fisheries, aquaculture and forestry, and other sustainable systems;

b. Support the implementation of initiatives originated in the region and that have been adopted by the United Nations General Assembly such as the International Year of Fruits and Vegetable 2021 and the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022.

16. With regard to Hand-in-Hand for prosperous and inclusive rural societies, the Regional Conference recommended that FAO, *inter alia*,:

a. Provide support to governments to improve the technical quality, efficiency and effects of public policies aimed at promoting and accelerating the sustainable and inclusive development of rural territories in the region, especially those that are lagging further behind in terms of poverty and hunger, including capacity building, the use of technology and innovation so that family farming and artisanal fisheries and aquaculture can produce and trade safe food in accordance with government priorities and requirements.

b. Support strengthening policies and family farming artisanal fisheries and aquaculture organizations, by including technological and financial assistance, access to markets, associativity, rural innovation and extension, access to natural resources and inputs, and South-South Cooperation; helping in the renovation of an institutional framework in accordance with the sector's new challenges

⁵ NERC/20/REP

⁶ LARC/20/REP

and the implementation of the global action plan on the United Nations Decade of Family Farming (2019-2028).

c. Explicitly incorporate artisanal and small-scale fisheries and aquaculture in the programme of work to eradicate hunger and extreme poverty as part of the preparations for the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022 (IYAFA).

17. With regard to sustainable and resilient agriculture, the Regional Conference recommended that FAO, *inter alia*,

a. Increase productivity and the sustainable production of crops, livestock, fisheries, aquaculture, and forestry, to facilitate consumer access to healthy food, to continue contributing to world food security and to create jobs in rural and urban areas, contributing to the recovery from the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic with the vision to build back better.

b. Strengthen conservation, restoration and the sustainable use of biodiversity in agriculture, in line with the FAO strategy on mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors as well as promoting High-Level Regional Dialogue on the Integration of Biodiversity in Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DRANIBA).

c. Develop, upon Members' requests, actions to promote Blue Growth, on the understanding that these aim to promote the sustainable use of aquatic resources, towards economic growth, improvement of people's lives and job creation and ecosystems conservation, in accordance with multilateral trade rules, including artisanal fisheries and aquaculture.

d. Prevent and combat illegal, undeclared and unregulated (IUU) fishing, based on relevant international instruments such as the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA), the development of capacities for monitoring, fisheries management and data collection, as well as raising public awareness about the role of the different actors in this context and discouraging the consumption of products that come from IUU fishing; and furthermore to continue providing technical support in the framework of the ongoing negotiations in the WTO about fisheries subsidies.

e. Strengthen the sustainability of fishery and aquaculture resources through the planning, conservation, production and trade of fish products, as well as efforts aimed at combatting the negative effects of climate change in the sector.

f. Support coastal communities in taking measures for resilience, adaptation and new techniques to address the rise of the sea level and saline intrusion and initiate the development of voluntary technical guidelines to facilitate the speedy adoption of good practices to help fisherfolk, aquaculturists and coastal communities to adapt to ocean warming.

18. With regard to results and priorities for FAO in the Latin America and Caribbean region, the Regional Conference recommended that FAO, *inter alia*,

a. Prioritize its Strategic Framework, *inter alia*, recognition of contributions of sustainable agricultural, livestock, fisheries, aquaculture and forestry practices to achieve the SDGs.

D. Regional Conference for Africa

19. The 31st Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa (ARC), originally scheduled to be held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, from 23-27 March 2020, was postponed and held from 26 to 28 October 2020 in a virtual manner⁷.

⁷ ARC/20/REP

20. With regard to Actualizing Inclusive Food Systems Transformation in Africa through Leveraging Innovation and Digitalization, the Regional Conference recommended FAO to, *inter alia*, to strengthen assistance to countries in agriculture (crops, livestock, forestry, and fisheries) through promoting innovations and broadening their access to small-scale producers, integrated policy support, multi-sectoral approaches.

21. The Regional Conference recommended that the 2021 Food Systems Summit responded to 5 questions, including how to develop agroecological approaches that are evidence and science based, for the restoration of the natural resource base (water, land forestry, fisheries, etc.).

E. Regional Conference for Europe

22. The 32nd Session of FAO Regional Conference for Europe (ERC), originally scheduled to be held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, from 5 to 7 May 2020, was postponed and held from 2 to 4 November 2020 in a virtual manner⁸.

23. With regard to the regional priority areas, the Regional Conference asked FAO to strengthen the work under respective priorities within the FAO mandate in relation to, *inter alia*, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture, and soil and water resources.

24. The Regional Conference reviewed the Report of the 30th Session of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC) and:

a. Appreciated the Commission's work, particularly the adoption of the five-year EIFAAC Strategy for 2020-2024 and its advice on timely scientific data and research findings to national policy-makers.

b. Discussed priorities of work for inland fisheries and freshwater aquaculture development in the region in line with contributing to the UNFSS and other important global issues as well as achieving the SDGs and the FAO Regional Initiatives.

c. Called upon Members to nominate and support their operational focal points to EIFAAC, as the only pan-European commission on inland fisheries and aquaculture, and to encourage other countries and non-governmental organizations in the region to participate in EIFAAC sessions as observers.

d. Encouraged Members through their operational focal points to participate in EIFAAC projects addressing regional priorities as identified by the Technical and Scientific Committee of EIFAAC.

25. The Regional Conference reviewed the Report of the 6th Session of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish) and:

a. Discussed priorities of work for fisheries and aquaculture development in the CACFish area of competence, in line with achieving the universal goals of the SDGs and the FAO Regional Initiatives, for consideration by the Seventh Session of CACFish in May 2021 in Tajikistan.

b. Encouraged relevant Members of the ERC particularly from Central Asia and the Caucasus to announce their intention to join the Commission.

⁸ ERC/20/REP

IV. PROGRAMME COMMITTEES

26. At its 127th Session, held in Rome, from 4 to 8 November 2019, the Programme Committee⁹:

- a. adopted the Provisional Agenda with the addition of the following discussion under Any Other Business: Hand-in-Hand Initiative; UNSG Summit on Food Systems; briefing on the International Symposium on Fisheries Sustainability.
- b. agreed to hold informal meetings prior to the formal sessions to consider, and agreed on the following agenda items for its informal meeting in January 2020:
 - a) oceans, fisheries and aquaculture
 - b) sustainable management of forestry
 - c) first draft of the Biodiversity Action Plan
 - d) availability of FAO data to countries.
- c. welcomed the progress report on the FAO Action Plan on antimicrobial resistance (AMR), and:
 - a) welcomed the progress report on the implementation of the Action Plan on AMR, especially the country progress as evidenced in the results of the Tripartite AMR country self-assessment questionnaire;
 - b) highlighted the need for implementing the One Health Approach both at the global and country level;
 - c) underlined the need to raise the visibility of FAO's AMR work at all levels;
 - d) reiterated the need for an AMR indicator in the strategic results framework;
 - e) highlighted the importance of capacity building and awareness raising at the country level, as well as supporting countries to develop and implement national action plans;
 - f) stressed the importance of promoting behavioral change on antimicrobial use and to raise awareness on AMR among decision makers;
 - g) requested more detailed information about the development of a data platform for antimicrobial resistance related to food and agriculture, including the expected timeframes and funding;
 - h) underlined the need for a new FAO Action Plan on AMR (2021-2025) and invited COAG and COFI in their upcoming sessions to provide guidance on it;
 - i) underlined the need to build on lessons learned from the implementation of the current Action Plan, especially related to good practices, national surveillance systems, guidelines and data collection;
 - j) appreciated FAO's cooperation with WHO and OIE in the Tripartite and welcomed FAO's commitment to the Tripartite Joint Secretariat (TJS);
 - k) recalled Conference Resolution 6/2019, and requested FAO to have an inclusive process with Members on the content and implementation of the Work Plan of the Tripartite Memorandum of

⁹ Paragraph 3, Paragraph 20, Paragraph 27 and Paragraph 30, CL 163/4

Understanding on AMR, including the Interagency Coordination Group on Antimicrobial Resistance (IACG) report;

- l) requested management to provide progress updates on a regular basis;
- m) requested the Office of Evaluation, if feasible, to expand the evaluation of the project funded by the Fleming Fund to include the programmatic aspects of FAO's work on AMR.
- d. was updated on the status of the International Symposium on Fisheries Sustainability: Strengthening the Science-Policy Nexus, to take place at FAO headquarters, Rome, Italy from 18-21 November 2019.

27. At the Joint Meeting of its 127th Session and the Hundred Seventy-eighth Session of the Finance Committee, held in Rome, on 04 November 2019, the Joint Meeting¹⁰:

- a. welcomed the Director-General's first statement and appreciated his comprehensive, informative and encouraging presentation.
- b. welcomed with appreciation the presentation of his proposals, activities and initiatives and highlighted, besides the issues which are reflected in this Report, the following elements: (i) improving transparency, internal governance including the delegation of authority, and strengthening oversight and accountability; (ii) policies and actions to boost staff morale, and fully supported his recognition of staff as the main asset of the Organization; (iii) emphasis on innovation, including digitalization, as well as sustainable agriculture and biodiversity; (iv) priority given to aquaculture, fisheries and oceans; (v) the Organization's zero tolerance policy regarding harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of power.

V. OTHER TECHNICAL COMMITTEES

A. Committee on World Food Security

28. At its 46th Session, held in Rome, from 14 to 18 October 2019, CFS¹¹ referred to three CFS Policy Recommendations on Smallholders, including artisanal fisher folk:

- a. Investing in Smallholder Agriculture for Food Security and Nutrition, endorsed at CFS 40 in 2013;
- b. Connecting Smallholders to Markets, endorsed at CFS 43 in 2016; and
- c. Sustainable Agricultural Development for Food Security and Nutrition: What roles for Livestock? Endorsed at CFS 43 in 2016.

B. Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters

29. At its 109th Session, held in Rome, from 21 to 22 October 2019, the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters (CCLM)¹² welcomed the work of the Development Law Branch (LEGN) in providing legal technical assistance to Member, in particular, in developing legal guides and tools, and in making legal information available through FAOLEX, webinars and other platforms. It encouraged LEGN to continue its work on, inter alia: climate change and agriculture; illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (including implementation of the Port State Measures Agreement); and capacity development for Parliamentarians focusing on food security and nutrition.

¹⁰ Paragraph 3, Paragraph 4, CL 163/6

¹¹ Paragraph 30, CFS 46/Report

¹² Paragraph 15, CL 163/2

C. Committee on Forestry

30. At its 24th Session, held in Rome from 16 to 20 July 2018, the Committee on Forestry (COFO)¹³:

- a. requested FAO to ensure more effective cooperation between COFO, the Committee on Agriculture (COAG), the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), and consider organising intersessional joint activities;
- b. supported FAO's initiative to serve as a Biodiversity Mainstreaming Platform covering forestry, fisheries and agriculture, in an integrated manner, and recognized that the implementation of sustainable forest management is important for mainstreaming biodiversity in forestry;
- c. requested FAO to contribute to an improved understanding of the implications of forest biodiversity loss for forestry, fisheries and agriculture, and of responses addressing threats to forest biodiversity as well as the important role of sustainable forest management, through the development and dissemination of knowledge and tools, including the Sustainable Forest Management Toolbox;
- d. requested FAO to strengthen the implementation and monitoring of FAO's strategy on climate change by ensuring food security, agriculture, forestry and fisheries are considered in an integrated and holistic way.

D. Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

31. At its 17th Regular Session, held in Rome, from 18 to 22 February 2019, the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Commission)¹⁴:

Report of the Second Session of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

- a. considered the Report of the Second Session of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and thanked the Members of the Working Group for their excellent work and endorsed the report;
- b. decided to establish the Ad Hoc Working Group as a regular intergovernmental technical working group. It stressed the importance of continuing the valuable collaboration with the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and relevant subsidiary bodies;

The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

- c. considered the document Preparation of The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and took note of the proofing version of The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture;
- d. acknowledged the progress made in the preparation of the report, representing an important milestone, and appreciated the work undertaken towards this first global assessment of aquatic genetic resources and requested that FAO finalize, launch and widely distribute the report and associated in-brief version in 2019;

¹³ Paragraph 12. b), Paragraph 14. b), Paragraph 14. d), (i) and Paragraph 32. f), COFO/2018/REP

¹⁴ Paragraphs 50-56, CGRFA-17/19/Report

Options for follow-up to The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

e. considered the document Options for follow-up to The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture¹⁵ and recognized the need to maintain momentum following the preparation of the report. It requested FAO to review the proposed objectives, overall structure and list of follow-up strategic priorities¹⁶ and prepare a draft Global Plan of Action for Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture for consideration by the Working Group and the Commission at their next sessions; and

f. agreed that the Global Plan of Action should be prepared upon consultation with the regions and in collaboration with COFI and its relevant subsidiary bodies. It was noted that the Global Plan of Action should be voluntary and collaborative and be implemented in line with the needs and priorities of Members.

¹⁵ CGRFA-17/19/8.3

¹⁶ CGRFA-17/19/8.3, *Appendix*