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CONFERENCE

Forty-second Session

2021

Report of the 34th Session of the Committee on Fisheries
(1–5 February 2021)

Executive Summary

The Committee:

- a) commended FAO for the 2020 State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) publication. Requested FAO to consider, in future SOFIA reports, methodological improvements to better reflect the regional status of fish stocks recognizing efforts to rebuild stocks, and increasing the number of stocks with assessments, while ensuring the integrity of the time series. Recommended a robust and participatory peer review process, and to share the report with Members well in advance of publishing;
- b) endorsed the 2021 COFI Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture to renew its commitment to the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, recognize the transformations in the sector since the endorsement of the Code, and refocus priorities to secure the long-term sustainability and resilience of the sector;
- c) called on FAO and COFI Members, consistent with the COFI Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture, to bring fisheries and aquaculture fully into the discussions during the preparation of the United Nations Food Systems Summit;
- d) endorsed the reports of the 10th Session of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture and the 17th Session of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade;
- e) recommended further development of the Global Integrated Sustainable Aquaculture Programme (GISAP);
- f) supported the need for an FAO Action Plan on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) for 2021–2025, based on robust scientific evidence and risk analysis, including training and the capacity building needs of Members;
- g) welcomed the publication of the report on The State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and recommended the further development of a draft Global Plan of Action for Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture;
- h) welcomed the holding of the Global Conference on Aquaculture Millennium+20 in Shanghai, China (22–27 September 2021);

- i) welcomed the further development of the voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture in 2021 as a tool towards further development of national policies for the aquaculture sector and requested FAO to consider guidance for concrete actions for the sector – according to national contexts, capacities and priorities – on the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and on climate change adaptation and mitigation;
- j) requested FAO to continue providing technical support in the framework of negotiations on fisheries subsidies carried out in the World Trade Organization (WTO);
- k) requested FAO to continue supporting Members in the development and implementation of national plans of action to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing;
- l) expressed strong support for FAO’s scientific advice to the Codex Alimentarius Commission, reiterating the need for appropriate funding;
- m) called for FAO to continue cooperating with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN);
- n) emphasizing the importance of accurate data to support decision-making, and the relevant function of FAO in collecting, analysing and disseminating statistics, requested that FAO continue to assist Members in strengthening statistical capacity and delivery of data, especially in data-poor situations, as well as in integrating innovative technologies;
- o) welcomed the Draft Vision and Strategy for FAO’s Work in Nutrition and appreciated its comprehensive consultative development process;
- p) requested FAO’s support in capacity development, and stressed the need to strengthen gender equality, and gender and youth empowerment issues within the strategy;
- q) noted the importance of sustainable and inclusive ocean economies, the further implementation of the FAO Blue Growth Initiative in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and requested additional information on the proposal for a voluntary Blue Ports Network for the development of coastal areas in collaboration with Members and relevant organizations;
- r) requested increased work in relation to support for small-scale and artisanal fisheries and to intensify support to Members;
- s) expressed its commitment to the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA) in 2022 and recommended promoting the importance of small-scale and artisanal fisheries and aquaculture in relevant events;
- t) welcomed the progress that Members have made in fulfilling their flag, port, coastal and market state responsibilities, as well as the increase in the number of Parties to the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing (PSMA), but stressed that further efforts are needed to address the challenges faced in combatting IUU fishing;
- u) recognized the role that the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels, and Supply Vessels plays in the implementation of the PSMA and other international instruments and initiatives, and called for the further development of the Global Record;
- v) called upon FAO to proceed with developing draft voluntary guidelines for the regulation, monitoring and control of transshipment, and to convene an expert consultation to review the draft;
- w) commended FAO for the work in developing the FAO Technical Guidelines on Methodologies and Indicators for the Estimation of the Magnitude and Impact of IUU fishing, and called for FAO to keep progressing on the development of these technical guidelines;

- x) commended FAO on its work on achieving sustainable fisheries and aquaculture through collaborative approaches with relevant global and regional organizations, bodies and initiatives and requested FAO to continue strengthening such work;
- y) requested FAO, within its mandate, to continue providing technical advice and relevant information, including on the objectives and implementation of existing fisheries instruments, in the process of deliberation on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ);
- z) underscored the central role of Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) and Regional Fisheries Advisory Bodies (RFABs), within their sphere of competence, in the implementation of international fisheries instruments, such as those aimed at combatting IUU fishing;
- aa) emphasized the importance of safety at sea and working conditions in the fisheries sector and welcomed the close cooperation between FAO and the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), including through the Joint Working Group on IUU fishing and related matters, and requested FAO to further strengthen international cooperation on occupational health and safety issues in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors and to promote decent work for fishers and fish workers;
- bb) requested FAO to enhance technical guidance on mainstreaming climate adaptation and mitigation in fisheries management and aquaculture development;
- cc) welcomed the Action Plan for the Implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors (2021–2023);
- dd) noted the relevance of other effective area based conservation measures (OECMs) to achieving a number of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and global biodiversity targets, and requested that FAO produce and disseminate practical guidelines to support Members in their identification and implementation;
- ee) requested that FAO continue to work with CITES and related fora, to help ensure that decisions made in these fora and their implementation are based on the best scientific information available and relevant technical information;
- ff) noted the important role that RFABs, RFMOs and other regional initiatives play in mainstreaming biodiversity in the conservation and sustainable use of aquatic resources, and requested FAO to strengthen its support to them in this arena;
- gg) agreed to continue a transparent and inclusive consultation process on the proposal of the establishment of a new sub-committee on fisheries management, under the leadership of the Chairperson of COFI, and looked forward to a proposal being submitted at COFI 35;
- hh) welcomed the development of a new FAO Strategic Framework (2022–31), and called upon FAO to fully include fisheries and aquaculture under the four new Aspirations of Better Production, Better Nutrition, Better Environment and Better Life;
- ii) endorsed the identified fisheries and aquaculture priority areas of work for the biennium 2020–2021;
- jj) recommended that the relevant FAO Governing Bodies duly consider integrating actions identified in the 2021 COFI Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture;
- kk) reaffirmed the importance of FAO’s role in collecting, analysing and disseminating statistics on fisheries and aquaculture, including gender disaggregated data when possible, and requested FAO to inform Members on additional needs to improve data collection systems, in particular for small-scale and artisanal fisheries and aquaculture;
- ll) urged FAO, in collaboration with its partners to promote the importance of fisheries and aquaculture in relevant events and initiatives;

- mm) urged FAO to promote good experiences and practices, including through South-South and Triangular Cooperation in the fisheries and aquaculture sector;
- nn) expressed its support for the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture, and requested FAO to ensure that the activities of the International Platform include issues related to digital technology applications on fisheries and aquaculture, and further requested FAO to develop a solid funding concept for the International Platform based on voluntary contributions, and continue developing and refining its terms of reference for further review by the Programme Committee and the FAO Council;
- oo) approved the progress report of the MYPOW 2018–2021 and draft MYPOW 2020-2023 with several recommendations, and underlined the importance of the timely preparation of the documents;
- pp) elected the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the 35th Session of COFI; and
- qq) agreed that the 35th Session of COFI would be held in Rome from 5 to 9 September 2022.

Matters requiring the attention of the Council

The Council is invited to endorse the findings and recommendations of the Committee on Fisheries, and attention is drawn in particular to:

- a) State of world fisheries and aquaculture (paragraph 9 c)
- b) Hand-in-Hand Initiative (paragraph 9 f)
- c) COFI Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture (paragraphs 9 h), 9 o) and 19 f)
- d) Progress in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related instruments (paragraphs 9 k), l) and n)
- e) Decisions and recommendations of the 10th Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture (paragraph 10)
- f) Decisions and recommendations of the 17th Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade (paragraph 11)
- g) The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (paragraphs 12 b), c), e), i), j) and k)
- h) Supporting small-scale and artisanal fisheries (paragraphs 13 d), f), g) and j)
- i) International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA) (paragraph 13 h)
- j) Combatting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing (paragraphs 14 c), d), e), f), h), j), k), m), n) and o)
- k) Global and regional processes related to fisheries and aquaculture (paragraphs 15 i), j), k) and l)
- l) Addressing climate change and other environment-related matters (paragraphs 16 c), e), f), g), h) and i)
- m) Implementation of the FAO Strategy on Biodiversity Mainstreaming across fisheries and aquaculture (paragraphs 17 b), e), f), h) and i)
- n) Proposal for a new COFI Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management (paragraph 18 c)
- o) FAO Programme of Work in fisheries and aquaculture (paragraph 19)
- p) International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture (paragraph 20)
- q) Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) of the Committee (paragraph 21)

Matters requiring the attention of the Conference

The Conference is invited to endorse the findings and recommendations of the Committee on Fisheries, and attention is drawn in particular to:

- a) Coordination with relevant regional and international organizations (paragraphs 9 i), 9 m), 10 d), 11 h), 11 i), 11 k), 11 l), 13 i), 14 k), 14 n), 15 c), 15 d), 15 e), 15 i), 15 j), 15 k), 16 b), 16 i), 17 c), 17 f), 17 h), 17 i), 19 h) and 19 i)
- b) Progress in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related instruments (paragraph 9 k)
- c) COFI Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture (paragraph 9 o)
- d) FAO Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) for 2021-2025 (paragraph 10 d)
- e) Global Plan of Action for Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (paragraph 10 g)
- f) Global Conference on Aquaculture Millennium +20 (paragraph 10 h)
- g) Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture (paragraph 10 j)
- h) The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (paragraph 12)
- i) Vision and Strategy for FAO's Work in Nutrition (paragraph 12 i)
- j) Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (paragraph 13 c)
- k) International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA) (paragraph 13 h)
- l) FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (PSMA) (paragraphs 14 b), c), d) and e)
- m) Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels (Global Record) (paragraph 14 f)
- n) Voluntary guidelines for the regulation, monitoring and control of transshipment (paragraphs 14 h) and i)
- o) FAO Technical Guidelines on Methodologies and Indication for the Estimation of the Magnitude and Impact of IUU fishing (paragraph 14 j)
- p) Voluntary Guidelines on Catch Documentation Schemes (paragraph 14 m)
- q) Voluntary Guidelines on the Marking of Fishing Gear (paragraph 16 g)
- r) FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agriculture Sectors (2021-2023) (paragraph 17 b))
- s) Guidelines to Prevent and Reduce Bycatch of Marine Mammals in Capture Fisheries (paragraph 17 g)
- t) International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture (paragraph 20)

Suggested action by Council and Conference

The Council and the Conference are invited to endorse the Report of the 34th Session of the Committee on Fisheries.

Queries on the substantive content of this document may be addressed to:

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OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The Committee on Fisheries (COFI) held its 34th Session from 1 to 5 February 2021. The session was convened virtually, on an exceptional basis, in light of the global COVID-19 pandemic and the associated public health concerns and constraints. This followed consultations by the Bureau and endorsement by the Committee Members on the alternative arrangements for the holding of the session virtually.
2. Prior to beginning its deliberation, the Committee confirmed that the virtual meeting constituted a formal regular session of the Committee. The Committee agreed to apply its Rules of Procedure and practices to the conduct of this session and to suspend any rules that may be incompatible with the virtual meeting for the purposes of this session. The Committee also agreed to the application of any special procedures or amended working modalities as may be required for the efficient conduct of the session.
3. The session was attended by 96 Members of the Committee, by observers from 12 other FAO Member Nations, the Holy See and Palestine, and one Associate Member of FAO, by representatives from ten specialized agencies of the United Nations and by observers from 30 intergovernmental organizations, two organizations from the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGAIR) and 32 international non-governmental organizations. The list of Members of the Committee is attached as Appendix C. The list of delegates and observers is available as *COFI/2020/Inf.2* on the Committee's webpage¹.
4. Mr Sidi Mouctar Dicko, Chairperson of the 34th Session of COFI, opened the session and welcomed the participants.
5. Dr QU Dongyu, Director-General of FAO, inaugurated the meeting and delivered a statement. The text of the statement is available as *COFI/2020/Inf.3* on the Committee's webpage.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SESSION

6. The Committee adopted the Agenda and Timetable for the session with an addition of Agenda item 17.2: Republic of Korea Progress Report on the Pilot Partnership Programme for the establishment of the World Fisheries University. The Agenda adopted is attached as Appendix A to this Report. The list of documents that were placed before the Committee is attached as Appendix B.
7. The Committee expressed disappointment with regards to the late circulation of the session documents and the availability of the documents in all official languages.

DESIGNATION OF DRAFTING COMMITTEE

8. The following Members were elected to the Drafting Committee: Argentina, Cabo Verde, China, Indonesia, Netherlands, Norway, Panama, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sudan and United States of America. New Zealand chaired the Drafting Committee.

¹ <http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/cofi/documents-cofi34/en/>

STATUS, TRENDS, EMERGING ISSUES AND INNOVATIVE RESPONSES TO ENSURE RESPONSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE: BUILDING BACK BETTER

9. The Committee:

- a) highlighted and emphasized the vital role of FAO regarding fisheries and aquaculture, and stressed the need to enhance the emphasis and visibility of fisheries and aquaculture within the Organization;
- b) commended FAO for the 2020 State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) publication, including the addendum on the impacts of COVID-19, and reiterated that SOFIA serves as the benchmark publication for global status and trends in fisheries and aquaculture;
- c) requested FAO to consider, in future SOFIA reports, additional information and methodological improvements to better reflect the regional status of fish stocks, recognizing efforts to rebuild stocks and increasing the number of stocks with assessments, while ensuring the integrity of the time series. Furthermore, the Committee also recommended a more robust and participatory peer review process, and to share the report with Members well in advance of publishing;
- d) called on FAO to engage more actively in international processes, offering its fisheries management and aquaculture expertise, including through the development of technical guidance, to support climate change mitigation and adaptation, marine conservation, and sustainable and inclusive ocean economies;
- e) reiterated the importance of operational and harmonized national data collection systems to support decision-making processes;
- f) highlighted the anticipated benefits of implementing innovative solutions and collaboration through, for example, the FAO's Hand-in-Hand Initiative;
- g) while welcoming the progress made in some regions, expressed concern for the continued deterioration of the status of marine fish stocks at global level, and emphasized the need to improve fisheries management based on the ecosystem approach, including through building capacities and strengthening the link between decision-making on fisheries management and the best available science;
- h) called on FAO and COFI Members, consistent with the COFI Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture, to bring fisheries and aquaculture fully into the discussions during the preparation of the United Nations Food Systems Summit;
- i) highlighted the importance of reaching an outcome in World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations to prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies that contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, and eliminate subsidies that contribute to Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, and the need to refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the WTO fisheries subsidies negotiations;
- j) underscored the importance of sustainable aquaculture in meeting future food demand and in achieving sustainable food systems, and stressed the contribution of small-scale and artisanal fishers and fish farmers in this regard;
- k) recognized the progress made in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (the Code) since its adoption, whilst noting that further improvements are needed;
- l) called on FAO to continue supporting Members to overcome challenges in implementing the Code, especially in view of the added complexities posed by the COVID-19 pandemic;

- m) called on FAO to cooperate with relevant regional and international organizations working in areas related to fisheries and aquaculture for increased coordination, consistency and harmonization of information requests to limit the reporting burden placed upon Members;
- n) called on FAO to continue to preserve the core purpose of the questionnaire in monitoring the implementation of the Code, while noting that it can also be used to support Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicator reporting; and
- o) endorsed the 2021 COFI Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture (attached as Appendix D) to renew its commitment to the Code and refocus priorities to secure the long-term sustainability and resilience of the sector.

**DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 10TH SESSION OF THE
COFI SUB-COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE, TRONDHEIM, NORWAY,
23-27 AUGUST 2019**

10. The Committee:

- a) endorsed the report of the last session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture (COFI:AQ);
- b) recommended further development of the Global Integrated Sustainable Aquaculture Programme (GISAP), including an implementation plan, considering middle-income countries;
- c) noting the fast growing aquaculture sector, called on FAO and its Members for increased recognition and support to the development of sustainable aquaculture, including small-scale and artisanal aquaculture;
- d) encouraged continued collaboration between FAO, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the World Health Organization (WHO) on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). The Committee supported the need for a FAO Action Plan on AMR for 2021–2025, based on robust scientific evidence and risk analysis, including training and the capacity building needs of Members;
- e) encouraged the development of a multi-donor assisted long-term component of GISAP on aquaculture biosecurity including collaboration with OIE;
- f) welcomed the publication of the report on The State of the World’s Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture;
- g) recommended the further development of a draft Global Plan of Action for Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and continuation of the development of a global information system, including a registry of farmed types;
- h) welcomed the holding of the Global Conference on Aquaculture Millennium+20 in Shanghai, China (22–27 September 2021) and encouraged all Members to participate in this Conference;
- i) warmly welcomed the kind invitation of the Government of Mexico to host the 11th Session of the COFI:AQ in Mérida, Mexico (15–18 November 2021); and
- j) welcomed the further development of the voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture in 2021 as a tool towards further development of national policies for the aquaculture sector, including through the organization of regional consultations towards their development. In that context, the Committee requested FAO to consider guidance for concrete actions for the sector – according to national contexts, capacities and priorities – on the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and on climate change adaptation and mitigation.

**DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 17TH SESSION OF THE
COFI SUB-COMMITTEE ON FISH TRADE, VIGO, SPAIN, 25–29 NOVEMBER 2019**

11. The Committee:

- a) endorsed the report of the last session of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade (COFI:FT);
- b) recalled the crucial function of COFI:FT as the global forum solely dedicated to the discussion of technical and economic aspects of international trade in fisheries and aquaculture products;
- c) underlined the importance of rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable international trade of fisheries and aquaculture products, through cooperation in relevant regional and multilateral fora. Any associated trade and technical measures should be transparent, based on scientific evidence and must not create unnecessary barriers to trade or undermine conservation measures;
- d) reiterated the importance of having small-scale and artisanal actors effectively participating in international trade, including by encouraging more opportunities and market access for small-scale and artisanal fisheries and aquaculture;
- e) emphasized the importance of accurate data to support decision-making and the relevant function of FAO in collecting, analysing and disseminating fisheries and aquaculture statistics;
- f) called on FAO to continue the work to develop fisheries and aquaculture-specific, voluntary, non-binding practical guidance on social responsibility in the fisheries value chains, based on existing international instruments and guidelines, in cooperation with relevant specialized agencies and stakeholders;
- g) supported the continuation of trade-related fisheries and aquaculture services work using a value chain perspective;
- h) recognized the positive collaboration between FAO, WTO and other relevant international organizations, focusing on core elements in trade of fisheries and aquaculture products;
- i) requested FAO to continue providing technical support in the framework of negotiations on fisheries subsidies carried out in the WTO;
- j) requested FAO to continue supporting Members in the development and implementation of national plans of action to combat IUU fishing;
- k) expressed strong support for FAO's scientific advice to the Codex Alimentarius Commission, reiterating the need for appropriate funding, including through multi-year voluntary contributions, as well as for continued collaboration with the OIE; and
- l) called for FAO to continue cooperating with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), including the provision of scientific and technical advice on proposals and issues relating to the listing and implementation of such listing of commercially exploited aquatic species.

CONTRIBUTION OF FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

12. The Committee:

- a) underlined the contribution of fisheries and aquaculture to food security and nutrition, and towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including synergies and interlinkages with other SDGs beyond and within SDG 14;
- b) requested FAO to continue to assist Members in strengthening statistical capacity and delivery of data, especially in data-poor situations, as well as in integrating innovative technologies;
- c) noted that selected information submitted through the FAO Questionnaire for Monitoring the Implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries was used for reporting on SDG indicators 14.6.1 and 14.b.1, subject to validation by Members;
- d) noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified data scarcity problems, jeopardizing timely policy responses;
- e) highlighted that Members would require additional human and financial resources to strengthen independent data collection, monitoring and reporting, and welcomed the establishment of the FAO Multi-Donor Umbrella Programme to fill capacity gaps in national statistical systems;
- f) noted the importance of science and evidence-based measures in the sustainable management of all fish stocks;
- g) stressed the importance of increasing availability, affordability and access to consumers of safe and healthy aquatic food products throughout the value chain, and the role of small-scale and artisanal producers in this regard. At the same time, it recalled that all trade measures must be consistent with WTO rules;
- h) emphasized that according to WHO, the international trade of animals and animal products is not contributing to the spread of COVID-19. There is currently no scientifically based evidence that humans can be infected with COVID-19 through food, including fish and fish products, or the packaging in which they are stored. In this regard, Members were encouraged to refrain from imposing restrictive measures, and the need to avoid unnecessary barriers to trade was emphasized;
- i) welcomed the Draft Vision and Strategy for FAO's Work in Nutrition and appreciated its comprehensive consultative development process. The Committee emphasized the need to strengthen the critical role of aquatic foods in national plans and action for sustainable food systems, food security and nutrition;
- j) emphasized the need to improve data and scientific evidence on the role of aquatic products in healthy diets to support policy and action, including advocacy. The Committee requested FAO's support in capacity development, and stressed the need to strengthen gender equality, and gender and youth empowerment issues within the strategy; and
- k) noted the importance of sustainable and inclusive ocean economies, and the further implementation of the FAO Blue Growth Initiative, in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It took note and requested additional information on the proposal for a voluntary Blue Ports Network for the development of coastal areas in collaboration with Members and relevant organizations.

SUPPORTING SMALL-SCALE AND ARTISANAL FISHERIES

13. The Committee:

- a) reaffirmed the fundamental role of marine and inland small-scale and artisanal fisheries for achieving the SDGs and, in particular, SDG 14.b to eradicate hunger and poverty; achieve food security and improve nutrition; secure sustainable food systems, sustainable resource utilization and sustainable livelihoods; and reiterated the importance of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines) as a tool for that purpose;
- b) recognized that COVID-19 has had a particularly negative impact on small-scale and artisanal fisheries and aquaculture, and stressed the need to provide the appropriate support and foster resilience for the sustainable development of this sector;
- c) commended FAO on progress of the implementation of the SSF Guidelines under the FAO SSF Umbrella Programme and related activities. It reiterated the importance of continuing FAO's efforts and encouraged seeking synergies and interlinkages with global, regional and national processes and relevant organizations;
- d) requested increased work in relation to support for small-scale and artisanal fisheries with:
 - i) better access to markets; ii) fair access to fishing rights, considering potential impacts of competing sectors and activities; iii) improved legal frameworks; iv) strengthened small-scale and artisanal fisheries organizations; v) improved gender equality and gender and youth empowerment; vi) use of information and communication technology; and vii) reduction of food loss and waste;
- e) appreciated the efforts to improve data collection and analysis, and affirmed the usefulness of the Illuminating Hidden Harvests (IHH) study to better understand the challenges and the opportunities facing small-scale and artisanal fisheries and improve related livelihoods through better policies and participation of stakeholders;
- f) requested FAO to intensify support to Members by building on the IHH study, using its findings and conducting further analyses, and to develop capacity on small-scale and artisanal fisheries' data and information, in particular at the national and regional level;
- g) reiterated its support for the Global Strategic Framework in Support of the Implementation of the SSF Guidelines and for FAO to further develop the knowledge-sharing platform and monitoring system for the implementation of the SSF Guidelines;
- h) expressed its commitment to the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA) in 2022, welcomed the proposed planning roadmap and invited countries and partners to be part of the activities; emphasized the opportunity to focus attention on the role of small-scale and artisanal fisheries and aquaculture in poverty eradication, ending hunger, food insecurity and all forms of malnutrition; also emphasized the need for IYAFA to increase awareness and understanding of this sector for the social and economic development of coastal communities and the provision of food of high nutritional value, sustainable use of natural resources, and COVID-19 response and recovery; recognized that IYAFA would also create a positive narrative through promoting partnerships, effective participation of small-scale and artisanal producers and exchange best practices, technical assistance and capacity building, taking into account the diverse nature of small-scale and artisanal fisheries and aquaculture; and
- i) recommended promoting the importance of small-scale and artisanal fisheries and aquaculture in relevant events, such as: the United Nations Ocean Conference, United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition, United Nations Food Systems Summit, Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity, Our Ocean Conference and the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth

Summit 2021, among others, and encouraged collaboration with the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and the United Nations Decade of Family Farming.

COMBATTING ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED AND UNREGULATED (IUU) FISHING

14. The Committee:

- a) welcomed the progress that Members have made in fulfilling their flag, port, coastal and market state responsibilities, but stressed that further efforts are needed to address the challenges faced in combatting IUU fishing;
- b) welcomed the increase in the number of Parties to the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU Fishing (PSMA) and the growing global commitment for its effective implementation, and encouraged further adherence to the Agreement;
- c) expressed appreciation for the technical assistance provided by FAO to developing states and Small Island Developing States to effectively implement the PSMA and complementary international instruments and regional mechanisms, as appropriate, to combat IUU fishing through the Global PSMA Capacity Development Programme and encouraged FAO to continue reinforcing the Programme;
- d) voiced support for the outcomes of the Second Meeting of the Parties to the PSMA, Santiago, Chile (3–7 June 2019), noting the role of FAO as Secretariat to the Agreement, and welcomed the convening of the Third Meeting of the Parties to be hosted by the European Union from 31 May to 4 June 2021, and encouraged Members to attend, as appropriate, and Parties to respond to the questionnaire which aims to monitor the implementation of the Agreement;
- e) reiterated the key role of information exchange in combatting IUU fishing and welcomed the continuation of the work on the development of the PSMA Global Information Exchange System by FAO;
- f) recognized the role that the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels, and Supply Vessels plays in the implementation of the PSMA and other international instruments and initiatives, and called for the further development of the Global Record and increased submission of information by Members on their fleets, including periodic updates, as required;
- g) expressed concern on the risks of inadequately regulated, controlled and monitored transshipment in relation to IUU fishing, and welcomed FAO's in-depth global study on transshipment;
- h) called upon FAO to proceed with developing draft voluntary guidelines for the regulation, monitoring and control of transshipment, and to convene an expert consultation to review the draft, followed by a Member-led negotiation process through the convening of a technical consultation, with a view to forwarding these voluntary guidelines to the 35th Session of COFI for endorsement;
- i) noted that there are different types of transshipment operations, not all of which have negative impacts on the sustainability of fisheries, and that consideration should be made for regional specificities of transshipment operations; furthermore, emphasized that the development of the draft voluntary guidelines for the regulation, monitoring and control of transshipment should strengthen existing regional mechanisms and practices, and meanwhile Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) should not delay actions in this regard;
- j) commended FAO for the work in developing the FAO Technical Guidelines on Methodologies and Indicators for the Estimation of the Magnitude and Impact of IUU fishing, and encouraged

their use. The Committee called for FAO to keep progressing on the development of these technical guidelines;

- k) recognized the important role that FAO, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) Joint Working Group (JWG) on IUU Fishing and Related Matters, including on measures to attain safe, healthy and fair working conditions and improve safety at sea, plays in engaging multiple agencies and stakeholders, and supported the JWG's recommendation to review the terms of reference and develop rules of procedure for the JWG in cooperation with Members through COFI Bureau; called on FAO to facilitate discussions with the Secretariats of ILO and IMO, with a view to presenting them in a timely manner at the 35th Session of COFI and the relevant IMO and ILO governing bodies for adoption, and encouraged FAO to develop a process for COFI to consider the recommendations of the JWG;
- l) reiterated the key role that RFMOs and Regional Fisheries Advisory Bodies (RFABs) play in combatting IUU fishing and expressed appreciation for the actions undertaken to strengthen conservation and fisheries management measures, and encouraged RFMOs to increase cooperation to continue to strengthen these measures;
- m) reiterated the importance of traceability schemes to combat IUU fishing, in line with the Voluntary Guidelines on Catch Documentation Schemes and encouraged information exchange on catch documentation;
- n) considered the latest developments on the negotiations related to the regulation of fisheries subsidies at the WTO and encouraged FAO to continue providing technical advice to the process;
- o) encouraged further FAO efforts to support the achievement by Members of SDG 14.6 through the promotion of FAO related instruments and national plans of action to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing, where appropriate; and
- p) highlighted the importance of technological innovations to strengthen monitoring, control and surveillance of fishing operations.

DEVELOPMENTS IN GLOBAL AND REGIONAL PROCESSES RELATED TO FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

15. The Committee:

- a) noted with concern that the COVID-19 pandemic had affected many global and regional processes related to fisheries and aquaculture, including RFMOs and RFABs;
- b) noted further that countries were facing difficulties in participating in certain RFMOs' meetings that have been organized virtually;
- c) expressed concern that the Part VII Assistance Fund of the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement remained underfunded, and encouraged Members to make additional contributions;
- d) commended FAO on its work on achieving sustainable fisheries and aquaculture through collaborative approaches with relevant global and regional organizations, bodies and initiatives, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Environment Programme, CITES, WTO and IUCN, including the support to the United Nations General Assembly related work on oceans and fisheries, the United Nations Ocean Conference, the United Nations Decade on Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and the United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration, and requested FAO to continue strengthening such work;

- e) commended the regular participation of FAO in the process of deliberation on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction and noted that the outcome of the negotiations of this instrument may have implications for the implementation of fisheries instruments and the role of fisheries institutions; requested FAO, within its mandate, to continue providing technical advice and relevant information, including on the objectives and implementation of existing fisheries instruments, noting that this process and its result should not undermine existing relevant legal instruments and frameworks, as well as relevant global, regional and sectoral bodies, as indicated in the United Nations General Assembly Resolution (A/RES/72/249 paragraph 7);
- f) called on Members to ensure the presence of fisheries and aquaculture experts within their delegations at relevant international fora, both directly and indirectly related to fisheries and aquaculture;
- g) underscored the central role of RFMOs and RFABs, within their sphere of competence, in the implementation of international fisheries instruments, such as those aimed at combatting IUU fishing;
- h) highlighted that RFMOs and RFABs play a key role in supporting and strengthening fisheries science, fisheries management and monitoring, control and surveillance, at both national and regional level;
- i) called upon FAO to further increase its support to marine and inland RFMOs and RFABs, including those bodies with a mandate on aquaculture, particularly in the strategic reorientation of the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission, the Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic, the Regional Commission for Fisheries, and provide technical assistance to the establishment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Aquaculture and Fisheries Organization;
- j) reiterated its appreciation of the role of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats Network in supporting RFMOs and RFABs, and stressed that regional fishery bodies should cooperate to ensure common approaches on a number of cross-cutting issues;
- k) emphasized the importance of safety at sea and working conditions in the fisheries sector and welcomed the close cooperation between FAO, ILO and IMO, including through the JWG on IUU fishing and related matters; requested FAO to further strengthen international cooperation on occupational health and safety issues in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors and to promote decent work for fishers and fish workers; and
- l) noted the developments in Latin America and the Caribbean of sport fisheries to generate new opportunities for small-scale and artisanal fisheries, and highlighted the importance for FAO to continue providing follow-up and support to work on this topic.

ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE AND OTHER ENVIRONMENT-RELATED MATTERS IN FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

16. The Committee:

- a) commended the work of FAO on climate change in fisheries and aquaculture, and noted the progress made in supporting countries' adaptation, resilience and mitigation measures, underscoring the climate vulnerability of small-scale and artisanal fisheries and aquaculture-dependent communities;
- b) emphasized the relevance of cooperation between FAO and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and acknowledged FAO's role in the UNFCCC Ocean and Climate Change Dialogues;

- c) requested FAO to enhance technical guidance on mainstreaming climate adaptation and mitigation in fisheries management and aquaculture development, encouraged Members to support the development of technical guidelines, and welcomed the offer of the Government of Canada in this regard;
- d) recognized the climate change mitigation potential of fisheries and aquaculture and acknowledged the need to support the transition towards more carbon-efficient practices;
- e) called on FAO to continue assisting Members, subject to their request, on the implementation and updating of national determined contributions in accordance with the Paris Agreement and national adaptation plans, and encouraged all Members to ensure the fisheries and aquaculture sector is included in these instruments, as appropriate;
- f) reiterated its concern over the possible negative effects of marine plastic litter (MPL), anthropogenic underwater noise, harmful algal blooms and invasive species, and encouraged FAO to continue supporting Members with evidence and science-based approaches;
- g) in relation to abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear, encouraged FAO to continue promoting the Voluntary Guidelines on the Marking of Fishing Gear and its provision of capacity development at regional and national levels;
- h) welcomed efforts to prevent and reduce MPL through the GloLitter Partnerships project and the Global Ghost Gear Initiative, and encouraged FAO to continue its collaboration with Members, IMO and other United Nations' agencies, RFMOs, the private sector, civil society and relevant international organizations; and
- i) recognized the increased science-based knowledge on underwater anthropogenic noise and encouraged FAO to assess its possible impacts, including its socio-economic consequences, on marine resources in collaboration with relevant international organizations such as IMO.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FAO STRATEGY ON BIODIVERSITY MAINSTREAMING ACROSS FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

17. The Committee:

- a) recognized the important role of biodiversity in food production and the entire food chain, sustainable livelihoods and the provision of ecosystem services, and recognized the growing importance of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in light of increasing threats, pressures and shocks;
- b) welcomed the Action Plan for the Implementation of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors (2021–2023), noting that revisions would be needed to incorporate new global goals and targets for biodiversity, and address concerns over actions included in geographical indications and market-oriented biosecurity;
- c) appreciated FAO for its active participation in the process to establish a Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (2021–2030) that would be adopted at the Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 15), and highlighted the concern that the ecosystem approaches to fisheries and aquaculture was not recognized in the targets and indicators for the framework;
- d) noted the importance of considering multiple effective time and area based management tools, such as protected areas and other effective area based conservation measures (OECMs) for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity;

- e) noted the relevance of OECMs to achieving a number of the SDGs and global biodiversity targets, and requested that FAO produce and disseminate practical guidelines to support Members in their identification and implementation;
- f) requested that FAO continue to work with CITES and related fora, to help ensure that decisions made in these fora and their implementation are based on the best scientific information available and relevant technical information;
- g) commended FAO for the publication of the Guidelines to Prevent and Reduce Bycatch of Marine Mammals in Capture Fisheries;
- h) encouraged FAO to continue to actively engage with relevant international organizations and processes, and to highlight the important and positive contribution of sustainable use to biodiversity conservation; and
- i) noted the important role that RFABs, RFMOs and other regional initiatives play in mainstreaming biodiversity in the conservation and sustainable use of aquatic resources, and requested FAO to strengthen its support to them in this arena.

ENHANCING COFI DISCUSSIONS ON FISHERIES MANAGEMENT: PROPOSAL FOR A NEW COFI SUB-COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

18. The Committee:

- a) noted the outcomes of the consultation process developed during the intersessional period between COFI 33 and COFI 34;
- b) recalled the importance of COFI's mandate as the global intergovernmental forum where major international fisheries and aquaculture issues and recommendations are discussed; also acknowledged the importance of having technical discussions on fisheries management before this theme is presented at COFI; and
- c) agreed to continue a transparent and inclusive consultation process on the proposal of the establishment of a new sub-committee on fisheries management, under the leadership of the Chairperson of COFI, and looked forward to a proposal being submitted at COFI 35.

FAO'S PROGRAMME OF WORK IN FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE UNDER THE FAO STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

19. The Committee:

- a) considered FAO's Programme of Work in fisheries and aquaculture under the current FAO Strategic Framework and appreciated the results achieved;
- b) welcomed the development of a new FAO Strategic Framework (2022–2031), and called upon FAO to fully include fisheries and aquaculture under the four new Aspirations of Better Production, Better Nutrition, a Better Environment and a Better Life;
- c) encouraged FAO to also reflect on the importance of SDG 14 in the new Strategic Framework and the significant role of FAO in achieving this goal, as part of the indivisible 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- d) welcomed the proposed Blue Transformation Programme under the new FAO Strategic Framework and looked forward to additional information;
- e) endorsed the identified fisheries and aquaculture priority areas of work for the biennium 2020–2021, and looked forward to considering them in the new FAO planning cycle, noting the

importance of the fisheries and aquaculture sector for livelihood improvement, poverty alleviation, food security, nutrition and human health, and its interlinkages with biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, among others, and the importance of an integrated approach that balances trade-offs;

- f) recommended the relevant FAO Governing Bodies duly consider integrating actions identified in the 2021 COFI Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture, as well as additional actions concerning post COVID-19 response and recovery, as priority areas, while examining the draft strategic framework and the Medium Term Plan, and to improve the visibility of the sector within FAO;
- g) reaffirmed the importance of FAO's role in collecting, analysing and disseminating statistics on fisheries and aquaculture, including gender disaggregated data when possible, and requested FAO to inform Members on additional needs to improve data collection systems, in particular for small-scale and artisanal fisheries and aquaculture;
- h) encouraged FAO to continue to strengthen its collaboration with relevant international organizations, RFABs and RFMOs, to advocate the positive contribution of fisheries and aquaculture to sustainable development, and avoid the duplication of efforts;
- i) urged FAO, in collaboration with its partners to promote the importance of fisheries and aquaculture in relevant events and initiatives such as: the United Nations Ocean Conference, United Nations Food Systems Summit, United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, United Nations Decade of Family Farming, United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration, United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition, Our Ocean Conference and the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit, and encouraged FAO and its Members to highlight the 2021 Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture, in that regard, and in particular in the framework of the activities and celebrations of the IYAFA 2022; and
- j) urged FAO to promote good experiences and practices, including through South-South and Triangular Cooperation in the fisheries and aquaculture sector, in order to enhance food security and nutrition.

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLATFORM FOR DIGITAL FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

20. The Committee:

- a) expressed its support for the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture, and requested FAO to ensure that the activities of the International Platform include issues related to digital technology applications on fisheries and aquaculture, and create synergies between International Organizations and stakeholders, while avoiding duplication of efforts and activities; and
- b) further requested FAO to develop a solid funding concept for the International Platform based on voluntary contributions, and continue developing and refining its terms of reference for further review by the Programme Committee and the FAO Council.

MULTI-YEAR PROGRAMME OF WORK (MYPOW) OF THE COMMITTEE

21. The Committee:

- a) approved the progress report of the MYPOW 2018–2021;
- b) underlined the importance of the timely preparation of the documents and requested to keep the indicator “All COFI documents including SOFIA are made available in all FAO languages at

least four weeks before the session commences” in Paragraph 18(b) of the draft MYPOW 2020–2023, including the annotated agenda, clarifying items for discussion and decision;

- c) recommended to utilize MYPOW to streamline agendas for COFI and its sub-committees in consultation with the Bureau;
- d) recommended to avoid duplication of work with other Governing Bodies and further strengthen coordination with the respective Secretariats;
- e) recommended, for follow up purposes, to monitor the implementation of MYPOW 2020–2023 intersessionally and report, through a reporting matrix, on the progress to the Bureau; and
- f) recommended to add “...and the elaboration of new intersessional working methods and/or the development of the proposed fisheries management sub-committee” at the end of Paragraph 20(c) of the draft MYPOW 2020–2023. The revised MYPOW 2020-2023 is attached as Appendix E.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSONS OF THE 35TH SESSION OF COFI

22. The Committee elected Mr Shingo Ota (Japan) as Chairperson. It also elected the following six Vice-Chairpersons: Canada, Chile, Kuwait, New Zealand, Senegal and Spain. On an exceptional basis, the Committee mandated the Bureau members to identify, from among themselves, the member to serve as first Vice-Chairperson.

DATE AND PLACE OF THE 35TH SESSION OF COFI

23. The Committee agreed that the 35th Session of COFI will be held in Rome from 5 to 9 September 2022.

DEVELOPMENTS IN FORA OF IMPORTANCE FOR THE MANDATE OF COFI

24. The Committee noted the information provided on developments in fora of importance for the mandate of COFI.

REPUBLIC OF KOREA PROGRESS REPORT ON THE PILOT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE WORLD FISHERIES UNIVERSITY

25. The Committee welcomed and appreciated the update provided by the Republic of Korea on the Pilot Partnership Programme for the establishment of the World Fisheries University and looked forward to receiving further information at the 35th Session of COFI.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

26. The report of the 34th Session of COFI was adopted on 5 February 2021.

APPENDIX A

AGENDA

1. Opening of the Session
2. Adoption of the Agenda and arrangements for the Session
3. Designation of Drafting Committee
4. Status, trends, emerging issues and innovative responses to ensure responsible and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture: Building back better
5. Decisions and recommendations of the 10th Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, Trondheim, Norway, 23–27 August 2019
“*Progress report on the implementation of FAO Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) 2016-2020, and the proposal for a new FAO Action Plan on AMR 2021-2025*” will be discussed under this item.
6. Decisions and recommendations of the 17th Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, Vigo, Spain, 25–29 November 2019
7. Contribution of fisheries and aquaculture to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
“*Vision and Strategy for FAO’s Work in Nutrition*” will be discussed under this item.
8. Supporting small-scale and artisanal fisheries
9. Combatting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing
10. Developments in global and regional processes related to fisheries and aquaculture
11. Addressing climate change and other environment-related matters in fisheries and aquaculture
 - 11.1 Implementation of the FAO Strategy on Biodiversity Mainstreaming across fisheries and aquaculture (“*Draft 2021–23 Action Plan of the FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors*” will be discussed under this item)
12. Enhancing COFI discussions on fisheries management: Proposal for a new COFI Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management
13. FAO's Programme of Work in fisheries and aquaculture under the FAO Strategic Framework
 - 13.1 Terms of Reference of the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture
14. Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) of the Committee
15. Election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the 35th Session of COFI
16. Date and place of the 35th Session of COFI
17. Any Other matters
 - 17.1 Developments in *fora* of importance for the mandate of COFI: *for information*
 - 17.2 Republic of Korea Progress Report on the Pilot Partnership Programme for the establishment of the World Fisheries University

APPENDIX B**LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

COFI/2020/1	Provisional Agenda
COFI/2020/2	State of the world fisheries and aquaculture: Influencing action for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture
COFI/2020/2.1	Highlights of the Progress in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related instruments
COFI/2020/2.2	Outcome of the International Symposium on Fisheries Sustainability: Strengthening the Science-Policy Nexus
COFI/2020/2.3	2021 COFI Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture
COFI/2020/2.3 Add.1	2021 COFI Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture - Explanatory note
COFI/2020/3	Decisions and recommendations of the 10th Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, Trondheim, Norway, 23-27 August 2019
COFI/2020/4	Decisions and recommendations of the 17th Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, Vigo, Spain, 25–29 November 2019
COFI/2020/5	FAO's Contribution of Fisheries and Aquaculture towards achieving the 2030 Agenda
COFI/2020/6	Supporting small-scale and artisanal fisheries
COFI/2020/7	Combating Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing
COFI/2020/8	Developments in global and regional processes
COFI/2020/9	Addressing climate change and other environment-related matters
COFI/2020/9.1	Implementing biodiversity mainstreaming in fisheries and aquaculture
COFI/2020/10	Proposal for a new COFI Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management
COFI/2020/10 Add.1	Proposal for a new Sub-Committee on fisheries management – Addendum
COFI/2020/11	FAO's Programme of Work in fisheries and aquaculture under the FAO Strategic Framework
COFI/2020/12	Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) of the Committee on Fisheries: a progress report of MYPOW 2018-2021 and a draft MYPOW 2020-2023
COFI/2020/Inf.1	Provisional list of documents
COFI/2020/Inf.2	Provisional list of participants
COFI/2020/Inf.3	Statement by the Director-General
COFI/2020/Inf.3.1	Progress Report on the Hand in Hand Initiative
COFI/2020/Inf.3.2	Impacts of COVID-19 on fisheries and aquaculture
COFI/2020/Inf.3.3	Terms of Reference of the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture
COFI/2020/Inf.4	Annotations to the Provisional Agenda

COFI/2020/Inf.5	Follow-up to the decisions and recommendations of the 33rd Session of the Committee on Fisheries, Rome, 9–13 July 2018
COFI/2020/Inf.6	Report of the 33rd Session of the Committee on Fisheries, Rome, 9–13 July 2018
COFI/2020/Inf.7	Progress in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related instruments
COFI/2020/Inf.9	Report of the 10th Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, Trondheim, Norway, 23–27 August 2019
COFI/2020/Inf.9.1	Report of the 17th Regular Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, Rome, 18–22 February 2019
COFI/2020/Inf.9.2	Implementation of the FAO Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) (2016-2020) in aquaculture and new FAO Action Plan on AMR (2021-2025)
COFI/2020/Inf.10	Report of the 17th Session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Fish Trade, Vigo, Spain, 25-29 November 2019
COFI/2020/Inf.11.1	Draft Vision and Strategy for FAO's work in Nutrition
COFI/2020/Inf.11.2	Mid-term Review of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition
COFI/2020/Inf.12	Small-scale and artisanal fisheries: Progress on implementing the SSF Guidelines since the 33rd Session of COFI in 2018
COFI/2020/Inf.12.1	Status update on the global study "Illuminating Hidden Harvest: the contribution of small-scale fisheries to sustainable development"
COFI/2020/Inf.12.2	Draft planning roadmap for the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022
COFI/2020/Inf.13	Transshipment: Summary of the findings of the in-depth study
COFI/2020/Inf.14	Regional Fishery Bodies established within the FAO framework
COFI/2020/Inf.14.1	Safety at sea and decent work in fisheries and aquaculture
COFI/2020/Inf.14.2	Legal frameworks for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture
COFI/2020/Inf.15.2	Position paper on "Ecosystem Restoration" of production ecosystems, in the context of the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030
COFI/2020/Inf.15.3	Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures
COFI/2020/Inf.15.4	Responsible Fishing Operations Workplan
COFI/2020/Inf.16	Developments <i>in fora</i> of importance for the mandate of COFI
COFI/2020/Inf.18	Statement of Competence and Voting Rights submitted by the European Union and its Member States
COFI/2020/Inf.19	Provisional Timetable

APPENDIX C

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE²

Afghanistan	Faroe Islands	Nicaragua
Algeria	Fiji	Nigeria
Angola	Finland	Norway
Argentina	France	Oman
Australia	Gabon	Pakistan
Austria	Germany	Palau
Azerbaijan	Ghana	Panama
Bahamas	Greece	Paraguay
Bangladesh	Guatemala	Peru
Belgium	Guinea	Philippines
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Guyana	Poland
Brazil	Haiti	Portugal
Burkina Faso	Hungary	Qatar
Burundi	Iceland	Republic of Korea
Cabo Verde	India	Romania
Cambodia	Indonesia	Russian Federation
Cameroon	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Samoa
Canada	Ireland	San Marino
Central African Republic	Italy	Saudi Arabia
Chad	Japan	Senegal
Chile	Jordan	Seychelles
China	Kenya	Singapore
Colombia	Kuwait	Slovakia
Congo	Latvia	Somalia
Cook Islands	Liberia	South Africa
Costa Rica	Libya	Spain
Côte d'Ivoire	Lithuania	Sri Lanka
Croatia	Madagascar	Sudan
Cuba	Malaysia	Sweden
Cyprus	Maldives	Switzerland
Czechia	Mali	Thailand
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	Malta	Tonga
Denmark	Mauritania	Turkey
Djibouti	Mauritius	Uganda
Dominican Republic	Mexico	United Arab Emirates
Ecuador	Micronesia (Federated States of)	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Egypt	Monaco	United Republic of Tanzania
El Salvador	Morocco	United States of America
Equatorial Guinea	Mozambique	Uruguay
	Myanmar	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
	Namibia	

² As at the time of the session.

Eritrea	Netherlands	Viet Nam
Estonia	New Zealand	Yemen
Eswatini		Zambia
Ethiopia		Zimbabwe
European Union (Member Organization)		

APPENDIX D

2021 COFI Declaration for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture

We, the Ministers and Plenipotentiaries representing FAO Members, Member Organizations, and Associated Members of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) at the 34th Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) in Rome in February 2021, and celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF), adopted in Resolution 4/95 by the FAO Conference on 31 October 1995,

Recalling the goal of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to end poverty and hunger everywhere, and **Noting** that the world is not on track to achieve Zero Hunger¹, with close to 750 million people exposed to severe levels of food insecurity in 2019, while one in four children under five remain chronically malnourished,

Recognizing fisheries and aquaculture's role in supporting countries to achieve sustainable development, particularly in the fight against poverty, hunger, and malnutrition, bearing in mind the continuous positive growth of the sector, which in 2018 contributed 32 million tonnes of aquatic plants, as well as 156 million tonnes of fish² for direct human consumption, which is a 7-fold increase from 1950, and provides 3.3 billion people with almost 20 percent of their average per capita intake of animal protein³,

Noting also the Agenda's Sustainable Development Goal 14 to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, and the critical role sustainably managed fisheries have in achieving biological diversity outcomes, in line with sustainable and inclusive ocean economies,

Recognizing further that women are critical to all Sustainable Development Goals, in particular as agents in achieving food security and improved nutrition in poor and vulnerable households, and the fisheries and aquaculture sector's potential for growth in opportunities for women,

Acknowledging the important role and contribution of artisanal and small-scale fisheries and aquaculture in poverty eradication and in providing livelihoods, as well as ensuring food security and nutritional needs of local communities,

Noting with concern that the COVID-19 pandemic has the potential to aggravate poverty, hunger and malnutrition, including an unprecedented impact on the fisheries and aquaculture sector,

Recognizing that 65.4 percent of fish stocks are fished within biologically sustainable levels, that where fisheries are effectively managed stocks are above target levels or rebuilding, while where fisheries management is less effective, stock status and trends are worse,

Noting with concern that fisheries management improvements have not been sufficient to reverse the global declining trend of overfished stocks, as 34.2 percent of all marine fish stocks monitored by FAO are currently fished beyond biological sustainable limits, a threefold increase since monitoring started in 1974⁴,

Recognizing that challenges in implementing effective fisheries management measures are complex, region-specific and multidimensional, and are often due to insufficient data to support science-based

¹ FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2020. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020. Transforming food systems for affordable healthy diets. Rome, FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/ca9692en>

² The term "Fish" in this declaration includes all aquatic food production groups, including molluscs, crustaceans and other aquatic animals, but excludes aquatic mammals, reptiles, seaweeds and other aquatic plants.

³ FAO 2020. The state of the world fisheries and aquaculture.

⁴ FAO 2020. The state of the world fisheries and aquaculture.

decisions, as well as limited institutional and human capacity, highlighting the need for a concerted effort in waters within and beyond national jurisdiction that does not only encompass conservation measures but also capacity-building and support, particularly for small island developing states and least developed countries,

Recognizing further that sustainable fisheries management requires integrating fisheries into broader planning and ocean governance frameworks, within the context of the ecosystem and precautionary approaches, and strengthening the political will and capacity to improve the implementation of existing policy frameworks,

Recognizing that aquaculture has been the fastest growing food production industry over the last five decades, is responsible for the doubling of global per capita fish consumption since 1960, and is making increasing contributions to the provision of food and livelihoods for a growing population, **recognizing further** the need to ensure that the sector promotes sustainable feed sources, and develops in a sustainable manner, including by improving aquatic health and biosecurity, reducing the burden of disease and encouraging the responsible and prudent use of antimicrobials,

Noting that the significant challenges posed to the fisheries and aquaculture sectors by changing climate and ocean conditions, in particular where warming water temperatures, deoxygenation, and acidification in aquatic environments are already impacting the distribution and abundance of fish stocks in many regions, there is an urgent need to address these through innovative, inclusive, effective and adaptive fisheries management measures, and by ensuring healthy and productive ecosystems, including through the use, based on the best available scientific information, of effective time and area-based management tools, providing for conservation and sustainable use of fish stocks, including, where appropriate, in accordance with international law and national legislation, protected areas,

Further noting that, if well managed, our response to these challenges can also generate opportunities, including that the fisheries and aquaculture sector can contribute to the reduction of emissions, through the employment of energy-efficient practices,

Acknowledging that urgent targeted action is needed to ensure aquatic foods⁵ and products continue to provide inclusive, effective and sustainable pathways to reduce poverty, secure livelihoods and underpin food security and nutrition, as vital to achieving the goals set in Agenda 2030, and

Noting that the purpose of 1995 CCRF was to establish principles for responsible fishing and fisheries activities, including aquaculture development, with a view to ensuring the responsible conservation, management and development of living aquatic resources,

We

- 1) **Reiterate** our commitment to the objectives of the CCRF, and to the effective implementation of relevant binding and non-binding fisheries and aquaculture international tools and instruments elaborated since the CCRF was adopted, as appropriate,
- 2) **Acknowledge** that in order to scale up recent fisheries sustainability successes we need to implement and improve fisheries assessment and management systems in all regions, particularly in those where fish stock status is declining or unknown, including through coordinated capacity building programmes that address the needs and priorities of developing countries, with particular attention to data-poor regions and towards reducing the digital divide,
- 3) **Recognize** that we need to strengthen the scientific basis in support of fisheries and aquaculture management decisions, including through the use of new technology, such as electronic monitoring and reporting, and the promotion of international scientific cooperation, especially transdisciplinary research, capacity-building, education and training, and ensuring that the best

⁵ Aquatic foods include finfish, crustaceans, molluscs and aquatic plants such as seaweed

available scientific, sector-based advice is duly considered in the decision-making process, taking into account the 2021-2030 United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development,

- 4) **Reiterate** the importance of the ecosystem approach as an effective framework for integrating conservation and sustainable utilization objectives, and promote the application of management measures across all aquatic systems, consistent with the complexity and uniqueness of each resource and habitat, and to reduce the impact of marine litter, abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear, reduce discards and by-catch issues and eliminate harmful fishing practices,
- 5) **Recognize** the potential of aquaculture for further growth, particularly through innovative practices which support environmental stewardship, as well as the benefits of new and ongoing inclusive sustainable aquaculture development programmes, and the need for investments to support capacity building, research and extension services, with a particular attention to regions where population growth will challenge food systems most,
- 6) **Reiterate** the importance of international cooperative governance mechanisms to help improve sustainable fisheries and aquaculture and protect the ocean environment, including supporting efforts to implement international instruments, where applicable, such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and its 1995 United Nations Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the UNCLOS of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (Fish Stocks Agreement) and the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures and complementary instruments to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, including by supporting their associated funds, in order to reduce overfishing and IUU fishing,
- 7) **Remain committed to strengthening**, where applicable, the conservation and management regimes of Regional Fisheries Advisory Bodies and Regional Fisheries Management Organizations, and improve their performance to enhance fisheries governance and better preserve and restore marine ecosystems and biodiversity, while more effectively contributing to food security; sustainable food systems; the fight against IUU fishing; as well as sustainable growth and jobs,
- 8) **Encourage** the consumption of fish, aquatic plants and their products derived from sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, caught in accordance with applicable conservation and management measures, recognizing they are among the healthiest foods on the planet, and especially the consumption of underutilized resources, while acknowledging that warming water temperatures, deoxygenation, and acidification in aquatic environments is expected to rapidly change the productivity and current distribution of target and non-target fish species in the ocean, seas and inland waters,
- 9) **Promote** policies that support and recognize the contribution of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture in food security, employment and income, **improve** data collection systems, especially from small scale and artisanal fisheries, and **further support** the access of small-scale fishers and fish farmers to local, national, and international markets, ensuring equitable and non-discriminatory trade for small-scale fisheries and aquaculture products, including through the implementation of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication,
- 10) **Ensure** that fish are fully considered in national, regional and global food security and nutrition strategies, and contribute to the long-term sustainability of food systems to eliminate hunger and address the triple burden of malnutrition, and reducing diet-related diseases,
- 11) **Encourage** the reduction of pre- and post-harvest loss and waste in the sector, including discards, by implementing internationally agreed standards through appropriate actions, including awareness building, education and training, according to national context, capacities and priorities, in particular, safety and quality standards, to improve fish processing, distribution and consumption, thereby also increasing the value of fish products in support of sustainable and inclusive ocean economies,

- 12) **Recognize** the importance of rule based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable trade of fisheries and aquaculture products, through cooperation in relevant regional and multilateral fora, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, and eliminate subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing and by ensuring that trade and technical measures are transparent, based on scientific advice, non-discriminatory, consistent with internationally agreed rules and standards, and do not result in non-tariff barriers or undermine conservation measures,
- 13) **Promote** the attainment of safe, healthy and fair working conditions for all in the sector, support efforts to prevent and halt forced labour, facilitate access to social protection programmes for fishers and aquaculture producers and their communities, support measures to improve safety at sea, and work towards enhancing the standards of living for all in the sector, in cooperation with other relevant international organizations, including the International Labour Organization and the International Maritime Organization,
- 14) **Ensure** women's empowerment by enhancing women's full access to and equal opportunities in the fisheries and aquaculture sector through gender-based policies, taking effective action against discrimination and abuse in the workplace, facilitating women's access to education and training, technology, credit, entrepreneurship opportunities, natural resources, and providing equal opportunities at all levels, including for leadership and decision making, and by combating systemic gender inequalities that disadvantage women,
- 15) **Support** the implementation of integrated and coordinated multi-sectoral, evidence and ecosystem based management approaches, as well as temporal and spatial planning, noting that our efforts would be implemented in the context of growing external pressures in marine and inland aquatic systems, such as pollution in all its forms, unregulated practices, natural disasters, climate change, biodiversity loss, increased competition for the use of marine and coastal areas and other demands over freshwater and land access.

We conclude that the above supports an evolving and positive vision for fisheries and aquaculture in the 21st century, where the sector is fully recognized for its contribution to fighting poverty, hunger and malnutrition, its ability to prepare for and respond to changing climate and ocean conditions, and its commitment to sustainability.

We recommend that the further development of this new vision, as appropriate, be placed under the stewardship of COFI, as the main global forum for discussions and decisions on fisheries and aquaculture-related issues, to further strengthen participatory and science-based solutions.

APPENDIX E**MULTI-YEAR PROGRAMME OF WORK (MYPOW) OF THE COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES 2020–2023****I. OVERALL OBJECTIVES FOR THE COMMITTEE**

1. The Committee on Fisheries (COFI) shall¹:
 - (a) review the programme of work of the Organization in the field of fisheries and aquaculture and their implementation;
 - (b) conduct periodic general reviews of the world situation in fisheries and aquaculture and fishery problems of an international character and appraise such problems and their possible solution with a view to concerted action by nations, by FAO and by other intergovernmental bodies;
 - (c) review specific matters relating to fisheries and aquaculture referred to the Committee by the Council or the Director-General, or placed by the Committee on its agenda at the request of a Member Nation in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Committee, and make recommendations as may be appropriate;
 - (d) consider the desirability of preparing and submitting to Member Nations an international convention under Article XIV of the Constitution to ensure effective international cooperation and consultation in fisheries and aquaculture on a world scale; and
 - (e) report to the Council or tender advice to the Director-General, as appropriate, on matters considered by the Committee.

II. RESULTS FOR 2020–2023**A. Review of the World Situation in Fisheries and Aquaculture**

2. Result:

The Council, the Conference and the international community at large are provided with updated information and specific advice on the world situation in fisheries and aquaculture and in relation to the specific issues of significance addressed during the scheduled sessions.

3. Indicators and targets:

Clear, precise and consensual recommendations that are based on updated information of the world situation in fisheries and aquaculture are presented to the Council and the Conference as a solid basis for its guidance and decision.

4. Output:

Clear, precise and consensual recommendations are favourably considered by the Council and the Conference for its recommendations and decisions.

5. Activities:

The Committee is informed of the current world situation in fisheries and aquaculture, including the report on the Status of the World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA), and undertakes general discussions.

Specific issues of topical significance are addressed during the scheduled sessions.

¹ Rule XXX.6, General Rules of the Organization.

6. Working methods:

SOFIA and the relevant documents are prepared with enough time in advance to the session of the Committee, as a solid basis for discussion at the Committee.

B. Strategy and Priority Setting, and Budget Planning

7. Result:

The Committee's decisions and recommendations provide a solid basis for the Council's recommendations and decisions on strategy, priorities, programmes and budget for the Organization.

8. Indicators and targets:

- (a) The Committee further promotes the FAO's Questionnaire on Implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (the Code) to solicit responses and reduce obstacles impeding responses.
- (b) Members respond to the FAO Questionnaire on the implementation of the Code and provide the relevant information on fisheries and aquaculture for FAO via the Committee and its Sub-Committees.
- (c) Clear and specific recommendations are made by the Committee to the Council regarding the strategies, priorities, programmes and budget for fisheries and aquaculture.
- (d) The Committee's recommendations made on the Strategic Framework, the Medium Term Plan and the Programme of Work and Budget are reflected in the Council Report.

9. Outputs:

The report of the Committee that provides clear, precise and consensual recommendations for the Council on sectoral strategies, priorities, programmes and budgets.

10. Activities:

- (a) Review decisions and recommendations from the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade and the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, statutory bodies and other relevant organs or institutions.
- (b) Review advice from the Regional Conferences in the field of fisheries and aquaculture.
- (c) Review the implementation of the Programme of Work and Budget in fisheries and aquaculture.
- (d) Formulate recommendations on the strategies, priorities, programmes and budget in fisheries and aquaculture.

11. Working methods:

- (a) Close consultation with the Chairperson and other Bureau Members.
- (b) Close collaboration with the relevant FAO Divisions, Centres and Offices.
- (c) Liaise with Sub-Committees on Fish Trade and Aquaculture and other statutory bodies.
- (d) Liaise with the Finance Committee on financial and budgetary matters.
- (e) Liaise with the Programme Committee on strategy and priority matters.
- (f) Report the outcome of the Committee on the programme and budgetary matters to the Council appropriately.

C. Advise on Global Policy and Regulatory Matters

12. Results

The Committee's decisions and recommendations provide a solid basis for the Conference's recommendations and decisions on global policy and regulatory matters.

13. Indicators and targets:

- (a) Member Nations obtain value from the deliberations of the Committee, using the advice and recommendations to guide domestic actions and policies as reported by FAO.
- (b) Clear and specific recommendations are made by the Committee to the Conference regarding global policy and regulatory matters in its areas of mandate.
- (c) The Committee's recommendations made on global policy and regulatory matters are reflected in the Conference Report.

14. Output:

The report of the Committee that provides clear, precise and consensual recommendations for the Conference on policy and regulatory frameworks or instruments.

15. Activities:

- (a) Review the status of relevant international instruments in areas of competence for the Committee.
- (b) Consider possible solutions with a view to support concerted action by Members themselves or collectively through FAO and other relevant bodies in areas of competence for the Committee.

16. Working methods:

Report the outcome of the Committee on global policy and regulatory matters to the Conference appropriately.

III. EFFECTIVE WORK PLANNING OF COFI

17. Result:

The Committee works effectively and efficiently, in an action-oriented, inclusive way.

18. Indicators and targets:

- (a) The focused agendas are appropriately elaborated. MYPOW is utilized to streamline agendas for COFI and its sub-committees in consultation with the Bureau.
- (b) All COFI documents, including SOFIA, are to be made available in all FAO languages at least four weeks before the session commences.
- (c) The sessions are conducted in efficient and effective manner.
- (d) MYPOW is appropriately implemented. The implementation of MYPOW should be monitored intersessionally and reported, through a reporting matrix, on the progress to the Bureau.
- (e) Reports are concise and containing specific action-oriented recommendations to both the Council and the Conference.

19. Outputs:

- (a) Focused agendas and concise reports containing specific action-oriented recommendations to both the Council and the Conference.
- (b) Report published electronically and no longer as a formal Fisheries and Aquaculture Report.
- (c) COFI documents, including SOFIA, made available according to agreed schedules.
- (d) Progress reports on MYPOW and draft MYPOWs prepared and made available for the following four years.

20. Activities:

- (a) Formulate focused agendas in close consultation with the Bureau in a timely manner.
- (b) Prepare results-oriented COFI documents, including SOFIA, and make them available in a timely manner.

- (c) Consider ways to improve the conduct of sessions more efficiently and effectively, including more efficient use of the time available, and the elaboration of new intersessional working methods and/or the development of the proposed fisheries management sub-committee.
- (d) Recognizing the importance and usefulness of side events, facilitate more focused and coordinated side events in line with key issues addressed in the main sessions.
- (e) Strengthen further coordination and collaboration with the Sub-Committees and other Technical Committees, in particular, to avoid duplication of work with other Governing Bodies.
- (f) Pay continued attention to effective arrangements for drafting of the final reports.

IV. WORKING METHODS

21. The Committee collaborates with statutory and other bodies under FAO auspices, liaises with the Programme Committee on strategy and priority matters, and with the Finance Committee on financial and budgetary matters, as well as other relevant FAO Governing Bodies.
22. It liaises with other international organizations active in the areas of fisheries and aquaculture.
23. The Committee undertakes regular intersessional activities facilitated by the Chairperson and the Bureau with support from the Secretariat. Liaison amongst the Bureaus of the Committee and the Sub-Committees is also further strengthened.
24. It encourages and facilitates the participation of observers including civil society organizations.
25. The Chairperson liaises with FAO through the Fisheries Division.